

Affordance Ecologies:
Practitioner Case Studies in
Musical Composition and Arrangement

C M MULLETT

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Affordance Ecologies:
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Musical Composition and Arrangement

CHLOË MARIA MULLETT

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Abstract

Musical creativity attracts debate about how it embodies self-expression, originality and education. This research approaches those themes as processes, applying affordance theory to the author's musical development and experience of practice (Gibson, 1968; Gibson and Pick, 2000). Beginning with the proposition, 'a perceiver is a self-tuning system' (Gibson, 1968:171), the author's musical creativity is interpreted as sensitisation towards that which is 'of interest' (Gibson, 1968:130;175). Interpreting 'interest' as 'musical values', the research adopts a phenomenological method within the Practice as Research methodology, in which creative courses of action are analysed as autobiographical ('genetic') and/or contemporary ('static') attunement to affordances. The author's skills development from childhood to undergraduate study is accounted for as her sensitisation to instrumental performance, music theory, aural skills, jazz improvisation, composition, and recording. This provides the background for finer-grained analysis of those skills as they are applied and adapted in the specific case study contexts. Each case study presents a 'situation' explaining the author's initial orientation to the project and its theoretical emphasis; each insight has an 'affordance ecology', addressing motivations, actions, and outcomes. The case study practice is varied: *Le Spectre Rouge* (1907), a composition/live performance for a short film; *Instar*, a multimedia dance collaboration; *Purchase, May 14th*, a BBC commission for shop music; performed arrangement for songwriter Gary Daly; arrangement and recording for the band China Crisis; mixed sextet arrangements for John McGrath and The IMMIX Ensemble. The research insights cluster around enacted forms of musical listening, encompassing 'listening-for' musical connection, constraints afforded by musical associations, including those in briefs and musical direction. Completed pieces are conceived as sound objects incrementally 'sculpted' to materialise a specific musical journey for listener exploration, discussed as aesthetic agency for composers. In addition to their academic contribution, the thesis' findings offer a practitioner perspective on how agency is differentiated in composition and arrangement practice. The insights are also evaluated for their potential as developmental tools for creative action by practitioners. Cumulatively, the research insights articulate musical creativity as contextually bound agential arcs of musical values, shown to manifest in the smallest of actions, which can even arc across projects.

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A note on the integration of musical examples

In this Practice as Research thesis, discussion of the author's music is integrated into the written component in three ways. Firstly, the practice under consideration is summarised at the end of the introduction in Table 1, including hyperlinks to online files of all the music submitted for examination (YouTube video of public performances and also higher quality audio files on Google Drive). Secondly, reference is made to the same music within the thesis via hyperlinks, to enable ready reference to specific points on e.g., video examples in Chapter 4 (composition), or short audio examples in Chapter 5 (via Google Drive, to uphold copyright). Thirdly, in the Appendices, the aforementioned hyperlink addresses are given in full, to enable a reader access to them via the paper format of the document.

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1. Introduction

I came to this research as a practicing musician, keen to work out how some creative experiences flowed so much more easily than others. My initial area of interest was musical values and decision making, themes that remain in the completed thesis. The key difference now is that by viewing creative practice through the lens of affordance theory, these curiosities are considered relationally, in terms of action and courses of action with objects and their motivations, in context. That is not to say that other forms of explanation, such as ‘inspiration’, ‘talent’, or ‘originality’ are of less interest, just that in the present enquiry the discussion is grounded in action experienced at first-hand. On this basis, questions of musical value in courses of creative action are answered in pragmatic, contextual terms, with reference to how they are enrolled consciously and affectively in my practice. Taken as a whole, the study offers a detailed examination of musical ‘doing’ from within one musical life through a Practice as Research (PaR) methodology (Nelson, 2013). This is the position from which the thesis’ research narrative is articulated, and Chapters 4 and 5 are based upon the music practice included with the submission.¹ What now follows is an initial introduction to affordance theory, with reference to musical research in this area and how it has been adopted in this thesis. It continues with an explanation of the title and research questions orientating the research, closing with an overview of the thesis’ structure and research insights.

For those new to affordance theory, its ‘relational’ nature is central to its understanding: an affordance may be defined as the relation between a person and an object, that represents a possibility for action, in context (Gibson, 1968: 189). Perceptual attunement, as a feature of learning the affordances of e.g., an object (Gibson, 1968:262;271) is also relational, as it guides exploration based on ‘that which is of interest’ (Gibson, 1968:175;130). The theory originated ecological psychology (Lobo et al, 2018), and is widely credited to Gibson (1968;

¹ The case studies, and links to audio/audio-visual documentation of the completed projects upon which they are based, are summarised at the end of this chapter in Table 1.

1979). Uncontained by its discipline, affordance theory's popularity is likely due to the insights it provokes about interaction with objects, including expert performance (e.g., Araújo et al., 2019) and everyday behaviour 'guided' by object design (Norman, 1988; 2013). Musical research with affordance addresses similar interests, i.e., how musical objects influence creative activity and outcomes, in the form of instruments (Mooney, 2010; Folkestad, 2012; Windsor and de Bézenac, 2012; Windsor, 2017), and computer workstations (e.g., Strachan, 2012), as well as educational contexts (e.g., Barrett, 2012). Musical tools afford a second, parallel relation, to the sound objects they are used to create (Strachan, 2013:9), materialised as waveforms moving air molecules through instrumental performance and/or in recorded form. As music is made, the actor hears it, and it affords a context for musical action (Folkestad, 2012).² Musical listening in creative practice is central to the present enquiry. As DeNora (1999; 2000), and Krueger (2010; 2014a; 2014b) note, musical listening affords affective experience and associations.³ Within an ecological framework, an association⁴ may be interpreted as an aspect of 'information pick-up' about the object in question (Windsor, 2004:183). As responses to musical listening, both affect and association (at first or second hand)⁵ are considered as sources of perceptual attunement for individual action. Further, they are proposed to stimulate and support identification of musical 'interest' through affective experience and observed musical values which (among other things) permit differentiation and selection of ideas, in context. Thus, the phenomenon of musical exploration through listening will be shown to afford creative decision making, by developing an actor's sensitivity towards music's actionable properties.

² This is addressed in e.g., Chapter 3's case study *Purchase, May 14th*.

³ Affect is the sole means by which the unconscious is acknowledged in the thesis.

⁴ Associations are defined as 'a mental connection of ideas, feelings, or sensations' (Collins English Dictionary & Thesaurus, 2021: online).

⁵ i.e., originating wholly in personal experience or communicated by another person (e.g., a collaborator or commissioner).

The thesis' title, 'Affordance Ecologies: Practitioner Case Studies in Musical Composition and Arrangement', reflects the thesis' interwoven, contextual approach to PaR and affordance theory, and its case study form. As Barrett notes, considering creativity as an 'ecology' emphasises, 'that human thought and activity are not isolated phenomena; rather, they occur in social, cultural, and physical contexts that are mutually constitutive.' (2012:206). Consequently, each case study presents insights to within a specific 'affordance ecology', to recognise the distinct context in which the activity provoking the insight arose, as existing or emergent affordances enrolled in courses of action.⁶ The practitioner perspective from which the thesis is written is highlighted by 'Practitioner case studies'; the title's identification of two forms of practice, composition, and arrangement, indicates the two roles I undertake in the research. As such, the thesis offers an opportunity to query whether different forms of creative agency are undertaken in these roles.

The research questions addressed in the thesis are as follows:

1. What do the tools and media used afford the practitioner-researcher, in context?
2. How are aural skills and musical associations present in the practice?
3. To what extent does the research support the idea of an agential arc of musical values, coursing through the practice?

The first question addresses my use of physical objects of the practice, the second considers my perceptual attunement via aural skills and associations; the third focuses on my creative courses of action with reference to the musical values, which are proposed to orientate activity. In combination, they reflect the triadic, ecological basis of affordance theory (Windsor, 2004:193), and the interweaving of theory and practice underpinning the thesis. There now follows an outline of the thesis' structure and content.

⁶ The flexibility of 'affordance ecologies' is also to allow for the aforementioned parallel (concurrent) modalities of experience which typify musical action (Krueger, 2014a:5).

Entitled 'Research Premise', Chapter 2 presents a combined literature review and methodology. It accounts for the thesis' basis in affordance theory and relevant research, with particular reference the 'agential arc of musical values'. PaR's epistemology is established as situated knowledge, wherein affordance is placed in PaR's 'space for reflection' (Nelson, 2013:44) and a 'line through' mapped from the methodology to the method. Chapter 2 also establishes the grounds on which the phenomenological method is applied by locating affordance theory within genetic and static analytical principles. The third chapter surveys my perceptual attunement to music and its practice in my formative years as genetic phenomenology. It accounts for my exploration of music to learn instruments as motivated by interest and experience of music's effects, developing musical values in parallel with my practice. Musical values are thus proposed to be part of processes of enculturation, of learning the aesthetic affordances of instruments, sensitised through sensory familiarity with repertoire, style composition and improvisation, and more. Perceptual attunement to affordances of melody, chords and textures is shown to support aural skills development and creative agency based on interest, compounded by the perceptual discipline and performative articulation of interest encouraged by jazz practice. Thus, alongside familiarity with Western film music conventions developed explicitly in higher education, perceptual attunement is interpreted as a process of enculturation to develop the sensitivity and skills required of established practices. It is also proposed to afford means to agentially differentiate and articulate musical interest within those practices, in courses of creative action.

The case studies are then presented in broadly chronological order,⁷ and separate the practice into composition (Chapter 4) and arrangement (Chapter 5). Each case study 'spotlights' particular affordance/s which were especially apparent or important, or because it best exemplifies the affordance/s under discussion.⁸ Chapter 4 considers compositional courses of action, for which three case studies

⁷ The exception is the commission for the BBC, *Purchase*, May 14th (2019), which is the most recent work.

⁸ Not all affordances are discussed in all cases, as that would exceed the thesis' available space.

exemplify a cluster of affordance insights potentiated by creative listening and orientated by briefs (implicit, or self-imposed, and externally set). The first case, *Le Spectre Rouge*, presents the insight ‘film as score’, illustrating how de Chomón’s film scaffolded the practice by affording explicit conventions⁹ in relation to music and on-screen movement and gendered characterisation. In contrast, the second case study, *Instar*, is a music, dance and media collaboration which identifies orientating activity for validating courses of action to offer the insight ‘touchstone event’. The chapter’s last case study, *Purchase, May 14th*, presents the insight ‘aesthetic agency’, proposed to partially differentiate composition and arrangement practice in this thesis. Initially motivated by interest in specific associations, my creative course of action is proposed to be developed through the aesthetic/aesthetic experience of my music; the music ‘acts’ upon me, to which my response affords me the interest and agency to further develop the composition. In turn, it is proposed that the completed composition affords listeners a specific stimulus; I have ‘sculpted’ a specific journey which ‘acts upon them’ in a ‘slice of time’. This is proposed to be a form of ‘composerly’ influence over listeners’ aesthetic experience, possible due to a (partially) shared cultural context.¹⁰

As is typical for the practice, my starting point as an arranger in Chapter 6 is the work of other composers, to which my skills are applied in a form of creative agency which purposely augments the composers’ own agential arc of musical values. The case study with Gary Daly illustrates affordances of repertoire and movement, as two forms of perceptual sensitisation towards a piece of music. The action potential of associative imagery is identified as affording an agential arc, here termed an ‘actionable analogy’, exemplified in my approach to sounds and words in the affordance ecology for ‘Make Do and Mend’, and is also applied to song lyrics.¹¹ The agential arc of musical values was given an additional, distinct interpretation

⁹ Discussed in Chapter 2 as canonical affordances with reference to Costall and Richards, 2013).

¹⁰ See the discussion of ‘canonical’ musical affordance (Costall and Richards, 2013) discussed in Chapter 3. The discussion of aesthetic agency is also extended to consider China Crisis in Chapter 7, reflecting upon their intimate knowledge of audience responses over decades of touring.

¹¹ Actionable analogy is also discussed with reference to the ‘falling’ of ‘falling like a leaf’ for ‘Autumn in the Neighbourhood’ in the China Crisis case study.

through the example of the tenor recorder arcing across from Gary Daly's solo project to his band, China Crisis. This contributed to the 'window' on his solo practice afforded by the middle-8 in 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood's' re-articulation, which otherwise affords the band's established musical values.

Insights presented in the China Crisis' case study reflect attunement to repertoire in by being afforded via the saxophone's identity, sensitised in my experience via soloing, horn section and big-band membership. Engagement with existing music for creative action is also articulated in the insight, 'listening-for', referring to the practice of 'listening-for' creative musical possibilities in an iterative process, incorporating auditory sensitisation to music's features and their (genetic) resonance with previous experience, including associations.¹² Sensitisation towards music in this way afforded courses of action for 'musical parsing', including inserting a call/answer phrase where formerly there was only one part of that pair. Further, the more prescriptive requirement by a producer for an arranger to create a part 'related' to existing musical material is termed, 'derived parts'. Discussion of 'It's Too Late' presents insights into a novel cover version project. It demonstrates a form of aesthetic agency orientated by the intentional affordance of musical association with existing music, explicitly aligned to a brief, and tacitly aligned to an additional reference point to afford my saxophone solo as a creative course of action. The final case study, John McGrath with the IMMIX ensemble, differentiates courses of action for an arranger by contrasting the 'starting points' afforded by 'traditional' versus more experimental music. In its entirety, viewed as a collective course of action, the project is interpreted as affording reciprocal augmentation of musical identity through a composer-performer's engagement with the affordances of IMMIX's mixed septet, in line with the ensemble's stated goals. Chapter 6 discusses the research insights' relevance for other practitioners and makes academic comment upon them by identifying the relationship of the research to existing research. The thesis concludes with Chapter 7 which evaluates the thesis'

¹² This is theoretically underpinned by the 'perception-action cycle', discussed in Chapter 3 (Gibson and Pick, 2000).

contribution to knowledge and the significance of its PaR methodology and offers suggestions for future research.

Lastly, one of the biggest challenges to carrying out the research was finding appropriate ways to document the practice to legitimately account for the orientation of the activity provided by the project context. The neat list of work below, in Table 1, belies considerably more practice undertaken and excluded from the thesis, in projects that were important partly for resolving these issues. In addition to presenting the thesis' research context, the following chapter explains the methodology and method developed, which reflects those efforts to support authentic development of the practice within the research process. The narrative voice will now move into the third person, in keeping with the conventions of the majority of research consulted in the Research Premise.

Table 1 The practice discussed in the case studies (c. 1 hour and 24 minutes)¹³

COMPOSITION	Sources and creative partners	Title (and link to the work) Starting/ end point		Length ¹⁴	Performance context
	Segundo de Chomón	Le Spectre Rouge ¹⁵		9:44	Mello Mello venue, Liverpool
	Sarah Black and Gemma Breed	Instar		19:02	Music Since 1900 International Conference, 14 th September 2013
	(As above)	Instar II introduction		3:11	Cornerstone Festival 2013
	BBC Ritual of Retail commission PMS show team	Purchase, May 14th		15:00	Liverpool Light Night 2019; BBC Radio (broadcast in May and December 2019)
ARRANGEMENT	Commissioners	Title	Start/end point on recording	Length	Performance/ additional access
	Gary Daly	‘Make Do and Mend’	n/a	0:28	n/a
	China Crisis	‘Autumn in the Neighbourhood’	n/a	3:46	Spotify/ iTunes etc
		‘Joy and the Spark’	n/a	3:14	Spotify/ iTunes etc
		‘It’s Too Late’	n/a	4:15	Spotify/iTunes etc; video
	John McGrath and IMMIX ¹⁶	‘Lanterns’	4:32 - 8:46	4:14	Static Gallery, Liverpool, 19 th November, 2014; Most of the commissioned live tracks are on the album <i>Wake and Whisper</i> (McGrath, 2019a).
		‘Breath’	18:53- 23:39	4:46	
		‘Moreover, The Moon’	25:02- 30:57	5:55	
		‘Duilleoga’	31:56- 37:29	5:33	
		‘Ohlish’	39:16- 42:16	3:00	

¹³ The practice is inserted as hyperlinks within this digital thesis’ narrative, for ease of access; a list of the works with hyperlinks given in full is available in Appendix 8.1.1.

¹⁴ The length of each piece of music is given in minutes and seconds, i.e., ‘5:01’ indicates a piece five minutes and one second long.

¹⁵ This piece was also presented as a video at Open Circuit festival, University of Liverpool, 2015.

¹⁶ Links to concert recording.

2. Research Premise

2.1 Overview

The overarching methodology for this thesis is Practice as Research (PaR) which has been aligned with phenomenology, employed as the method (Nelson, 2006). Phenomenological analysis of the practice has been applied to primarily same-day accounts created using autoethnographic tools, video and photography, and naturally arising documentation (Ten Have, 1999:48) to trigger personal recollection. ‘Layers’ of phenomenological analysis were accrued using autoethnographic tools to ‘surface’ and ‘reveal layers of awareness that might otherwise remain experienced but concealed’ (Pitard, 2019:1829). The most ‘intimate’ analytical content in the thesis draws deeply on phenomenology, to articulate experience as perceptual attunement to practice, focussing on the author’s affordance relation/s to tools, sounds, and contexts.

This qualitative enquiry is formed of six case-studies discussing creative action as it is experienced from the practitioner-researcher’s¹⁷ point of view. The case study facet of the method is used as a valid and defensible means to collect and communicate appropriate depth and richness of information to address the research questions. Chapter 3 effectively prefaces the case study chapters by discussing the author’s formative experience of music practice, addressing her perceptual attunement for the affordance of skills and early interests which remain ‘in play’ to afford aspects of the creativity in focus in the case studies (Chapters 4 and 5). ‘Affordance ecologies’ is the name given to how the selected insights are discussed within each case study. The name recognises the relational nature of the affordances in question, which are specific to the practitioner-researcher, the circumstances of each case, and the area of work in question. The author’s initial orientation to the project is accounted for in the ‘situation’ beginning each case study, and also introduces the theoretical concepts drawn into the case study to orientate the reader.

¹⁷ As previously stated, ‘practitioner-researcher’ is a term used by Prof. Robin Nelson (2013) here used to denote the author’s position within the text as a music practitioner who uses her own practice as the subject of the research.

The research premise below initially expresses the relationship proposed between PaR as situated knowledge and affordance. This is followed by select reference to the research literature, providing a context for the thesis in affordance theory and musical scholarship in this area, with a focus on the research questions' themes, and the thesis' central enquiry into courses of action as agential arcs of musical values. This is followed by an ontological reconciliation of both the method and the thesis' theoretical basis, to assert their epistemic congruence. The chapter closes by defining the thesis' key terms and conceptual tools' application (operationalisation) in the research, to inform the reading of the primary research chapters which follow.

2.2 The research context: PaR, affordance theory and contextualising the 'agential arc of musical values'

The thesis' approach is distinct within affordance research on music for being PaR, voiced from within the practice as situated knowledge (Haraway, 1988). Nelson's theorisation of PaR draws a distinction between established forms of knowledge in the academy, characterised as both 'know- how' (or procedural knowledge), and 'know- why' (or propositional knowledge), which contrasts with PaR, which he defines as 'know- what':

Know- what...covers what can be gleaned through an informed reflexivity about the processes of making and its modes of knowing. The key method used to develop know- what from know- how is that of critical reflection – pausing, standing back and thinking about what you are doing. ... The know- what of PaR resides in knowing what 'works', in teasing out the methods by which 'what works' is achieved and the compositional principles involved. (Nelson, 2013:44)

Affordance theory has been placed in the above-cited space of 'critical reflection', to inform interpretation of the practice. The theory is used to pursue insight into how 'know-what' works and how 'what works' is afforded, in the context of each project presented. Gibson (1968:91) also considered this form of philosophical taxonomy; he identified affordance as being 'knowledge of' the environment, a form of knowledge by acquaintance which is how one achieves 'know- how', i.e.,

the type of procedural knowledge that practice invokes. In this way, and perhaps unsurprisingly for a theory of perception-action, Gibson's affordance theory maps on to the 'practice' of Practice as Research (1968). The thesis' focus uses a Gibsonian form of 'know-how' to tease out the aforementioned ways in which 'what works' is achieved, in the case study projects. Research into music and affordance which engages with practice exists, but it includes practice and practitioner perspectives as a small, informative part of more traditional academic narratives (e.g., Strachan's introductory 'vignettes', 2017), or as collaborative publications between practitioners and academics (c.f. Burland and Windsor, 2014; Windsor and de Bézenac, 2012; Clarke and Doffman, 2019). At the time of writing, the present research is the only known PaR project to sustain an enquiry into musical affordance from an 'insider' perspective, throughout.

The focus for the insights developed in the thesis is the agential arc of musical values, referred to in the third research question. The literature discussed below supports this enquiry, which is concerned with perceptual attunement to the meanings of musical objects, in context. As stated in the introduction, the objects of the practice include not only musical instruments, but also soundwaves as objects (Strachan, 2013:9). Music's dual materiality is proposed to be key to what music affords for practitioners, i.e., how, and why a musical 'slice of time'¹⁸ is sculpted as an object available for attentional, aural exploration by the listener (Sloboda, 2004:194), howsoever s/he chooses to attend to it. The significance of music's dual materiality is apparent in the layers of agency that it affords in musical perception. Krueger (2010), paraphrasing Noë (2009) states that,

there are two conditions under which an object can be said to be perceptually available in experience (Noë, 2009). ...

1. Movement-dependence: movements of the body manifestly control the character of the relation to the object or quality.

¹⁸ 'Slice of time' is adapted from Steinbock's discussion of static phenomenology, denoting e.g., 'now'; the thesis has adapted it to refer to the continuous 'now' spanning a piece of music, experienced over time (2018:225). It has also been used as a phrase by Gibson (1968), but that is not the sense applied here.

2. Object- dependence: movements or other changes in the object manifestly control the character of the relation to the object or quality. (Noë cited in Krueger, 2010:12).

It is proposed that the former articulates the synchronous agency afforded by sounding a musical tool, and the latter is the perceptual experience of the musical object sounded through the air. This last affords attentional exploration, and in a creative context for a composer and/or arranger affords sensitisation, development, or selection, with the goal of creating a 'complete' musical object, i.e., a musical 'slice of time'. The tools of practice are enrolled in agential courses of action to create sounds, which also inhere musical values. The values are proposed to reflect the interests of the person using the tool (to the extent to which they can control it (Windsor and de Bézenac, 2012:108-9)). The values, or interests (to use a more ecological term), that a person using a musical tool is afforded/affords by its use, are informed by culture. This is not to propose a wholly deterministic role for culture, however, to 'sound like' music, is to draw from culture and convention, and enrol sociocultural knowledge which affords material similarity and associative comparison with other music.¹⁹ Part of a creative practitioner's agency is to attune to music for features of interest, and choose which parts of it to discard, based upon interest and how far from convention s/he wishes to 'shape' the music (something that Strachan discusses as 'creative tension' (2013:18-19)).

Attunement to objects and their uses is not a neutral process as Gibson (1968) conceives it, because in his formulation the senses are active rather than passive²⁰ He states that 'A perceiver is a self-tuning system. What makes it resonate to the interesting broadcasts that are available instead of to all the trash that fills the air? The answer might be that it might be reinforcing. [...] A system hunts until it achieves clarity.' (Gibson 1968:271). Affordances are discovered when attunement

¹⁹ Cook (2018:194) takes a similar view to this discussing the creative model of originality active in music's legislation, which he argues is inappropriate for musical creativity which he characterises as 'thinking within the box'.

²⁰ Historically, prior to this, the senses were considered to work passively in a way analogous to a camera (Gibson, 1968:33).

to their invariant specification is learned, discovered through repeated experience of it in various contexts i.e., its critical, invariant aspect is common to all relevant contexts (Gibson and Pick, 2000:168).²¹ Krueger nuances this definition further, with reference to musical listening by infants:

By “invariants”, I mean the structural features of the music that specify an array of possible perceptual interactions. These invariants guide the infant’s perceptual exploration of a piece—they fix a certain range of possibilities, and open up specific valences of exploration—but they simultaneously leave open array of possible engagements. For instance, as a perceiver matures (both physiologically and experientially) and becomes more esthetically sophisticated, she may pick up on and respond to features of a familiar piece that eluded her during past listening episodes (in addition, as discussed earlier, to picking up various cultural and historical associations only possible with age and experience). She learns to hear a piece with “fresh ears”. (2010:13)

Krueger’s statement reinforces the sense in which learning the meanings of affordances, which may expand with further sensitisation towards an object over time, enables selective exploration motivated by interest, perhaps due to having a ‘stake’ in the outcome of what is afforded, and likely related to an existing ‘investment’ of interest (Gibson, 1968:130; 175). This includes canonical affordances, addressed shortly (Costall and Richards, 2013). Musical meaning as musical values, referred to in the second research question, is proposed to be part of the continuum of ‘self-tuning’ towards that which is ‘of interest’ (Gibson, 1968:175), and to motivate differentiation and selection of affordances within the ecological perspective adopted. In this sense, creative music practice may be interpreted as individual adaptation to the environment, to ‘make more available what benefits’ (Gibson, 1979:130).

In this light, the acquisition of musical experience and skill with instruments is anything but ‘neutral’. Perceptual attunement to music and musical tools is a

²¹ ‘...the affordances of the environment must have some permanence to be useful to animals, and what is invariant, despite transformations in moment-to-moment stimulation, must be perceived. Only invariant information specifies an object or a place or a critical aspect of an event. Properties of objects like shape, size, and substance give rise to varying information with movements of either object or observer, but orderly relations specify those properties.’ (Gibson and Pick, 2000: 168).

relational feature of learning their affordances (Gibson, 1968:262;271), guiding exploration based on 'that which is of interest' (Gibson, 1968:175;130), proposed as musical values. The design of artefacts also constrain creativity by reinforcing culturally ascribed aesthetic values. As Windsor and de Bézenac state, 'the instrument does come with a set of carefully designed affordances which guide exploration and constrain action.' (2012:109); they also inhere cultural values by their design to afford particular scales and tunings (Windsor, 2017; Folkestad, 2012). In this respect, tools materialise canonical affordance (Costall and Richards, 2013). This is a theory which contextualises and labels objects with their most common affordance in social convention; in an everyday example, the use of a chair is shown to be conventional: 'A chair is for-sitting-on whether or not anyone happens to be using it for that purpose. And it remains a chair even when someone is standing on it to change a light-bulb.' (Costall and Richards, 2013:86).²² Musical parallels for this, for conventional expectations of performance and creativity, include how a beginner versus a 'good' player or practitioner will likely sound, in terms of tone and technical control; equally, these conventions are dependent upon context (this topic is discussed in Chapter 3). For, if either the chair or the instrument was placed on a stage at a noise music festival, that context would displace some mainstream conventions and replace them with conventions for noise music, so that a player standing on the chair and singing down the saxophone at the 'wrong' end would in fact be somewhat conventional (Mangan, 2013:173). From a composer/arranger's point of view, convention is part of how musical agency is afforded; Mooney contends that, 'to write for violin, for example, he is buying into a certain set of affordances and therefore the musical results will be infused with 'violin-ness'.' (2010:144). Equally, musical styles and genre, proposed to be part of the sociocultural associative knowledge Windsor points to (2004:194), may be regarded as conventional, with features which are typical of their sound, which

²² It should be noted that while this is true of many cultures, there are cultures in which the floor is used for sitting and chairs are less/not conventional for sitting upon, so canonical affordances may be understood to be sociocultural in nature.

have action consequences which may be termed ‘canonical affordances’ (Costall and Richards, 2013). That said, howsoever a creative practitioner decides to include sounds of an instrument in their musical ‘slice of time’, that does not necessarily mean that those associations will all be ‘heard’ or heard as intended. For musicians, aspects of an instrument’s associations originate in the sonic consequences of the actions required to afford playing them:

there are certain movements and acts of sound creation unique to a guitar, trumpet, or xylophone. Within the context of musical performance, agent and instrument form a coupled system in which morphologies of movement and musical structure are mutually constraining (cf. Baily, 1992; Davidson, 2012; Thompson and Luck, 2012). (Krueger, 2014a:5).

Krueger also nuances this view, stating that the sort of musical listening which incorporates the associations Mooney refers to is atypical, and requires a ‘self-conscious broadening of the attentional structure of perception’ (2010:6). However, Krueger proposes that usually, ‘when we engage sensitively with a piece of music, when we listen to it as a source of emotional power and expressivity, we tend to listen to it transparently and immediately’ (2010:6). To take issue with this from a musician’s point of view for a moment, a musician listening to another’s performance on her instrument may stimulate association with the physical action of producing those sounds, and remain sensitively engaged.²³ So, while affectively engaged listening of the kind Krueger describes is certainly supported by relevant literature, perhaps the distinction he makes best serves to illustrate that listening to music may engage different ‘depths’ and modes of attention, depending on the chosen use of the music by the person listening (DeNora, 1999; 2000) and their sensitivity to the ‘information’ it contains.

²³ This occurred for the author listening to the album *Promises* (2021), with Pharoah Sander’s tenor saxophone playing (alongside Floating Points and The London Symphony Orchestra).

In a similar way to how DeNora shows everyday musical listening affords role behaviour and specific courses of action as a technology of the self (1999:37-38),²⁴ it is proposed that perceptual attunement to style associations through listening are part of what affords musical ideas 'actionability' within a creative practice. Musical associations are proposed to convey musical values upon the sounds themselves. Strachan's research identifies a negative example of this, whereby composer and electro-acoustic artist Matthew Herbert habitually overrode his 'gut' responses associated with familiar use of a sound to make a considered compositional choice. Thus, he prioritised novelty over familiar patterns more immediately identifiable by his affective response to his sound materials (Strachan, 2013:18). Further, for Strachan, 'All artists have to traverse a line between novelty and recognition.' (2013:18).²⁵ Attunement to genres and more specific styles of music afford particular musical information which make them both recognisable, and in terms of musical creativity, enable differentiation and identification of novelty or innovation. There is a sense in which this form of differentiation is part of what 'guides' the creative process, orientated by specific information from the project context which frames and contextualises action.²⁶ This informs the thesis' discussion of agential action based upon musical values, whosoever's values are being actioned.²⁷ Musical associations are explicitly referenced in the second research question, alongside aural skills, asking how they are present in the practice. Within the thesis, an association is recognised as an endogenous phenomenon, that comes to mind in as a relevant, 'resonant' response to an interesting feature of the environment.

²⁴ DeNora identifies music's power as a source of cultural context-making in which the act of choosing the music gives the listener agency, and in turn the music acts upon the listener (which DeNora terms aesthetic agency), in ways specific to the situation. Affordance allows DeNora to ascribe agency to her research subjects, who use music to afford affective states and role behaviours.

²⁵ It is proposed that Strachan's creative tension, novelty vs familiarity, is also reflected in Meyer's earlier consideration of audience as conceived by composer creating music: 'It is because the composer is also a listener that he is able to control his inspiration with reference to the listener.' (Meyer, 1956:41-2).

²⁶ This is relevant to the discussion of contextualisation cues in the method, below.

²⁷ This statement acknowledges that it is possible to act on another's musical values in an arranger role.

It is proposed that while listening to music, as a solely aural activity, or listening in tandem with the haptic activity of 'making' the sound, other music sometimes comes to mind, i.e., it is associated.²⁸ A non-musical feature of the environment may be associable with music, too, equally relevant as a musical association in this context (e.g., lyrics to a song). Pertinent to this is Windsor's argument for a semiotic interpretation of affordance theory to extend it into areas of culture, and cultural artefacts, including music (2004).^{29,30} Windsor achieves this by building on Gibson's theorisation of associations:

if one regards the structure of a code as part of the environment...just as Gibson proposed that in an ecological approach "learning by association becomes the learning of association" (Gibson, 1966, p.273) through acknowledging the lawfulness of the natural environment, one should extend this suggestion to cultural and social knowledge. We become sensitive to the associations between symbols and their directly perceivable consequences, we do not impose them upon culture. (Windsor, 2004:194).

For Windsor, symbolic meanings are identifiable as existing information associated with e.g., objects, learned through sociocultural interaction in context. In this thesis, 'musical associations' therefore also stands for the semiotic significance of sounds, derived from a creative practitioner's active interest and individual experience of music practice and wider culture. In this regard, e.g., repertoire knowledge (as part of an instrument's characteristic use) and a developed sensitivity towards some musical values over others as 'taste' is proposed to be part of what a creative practitioner affords, as a composer, arranger, collaborator or

²⁸ As a phenomenological fact of situated knowledge, this is an undeniable occurrence; exactly how it occurs is beyond the remit of the research, however it is here proposed that this form of reflexive, associative musical experience coheres with affordance theory.

²⁹ Windsor also invokes Sander's argument for an expanded view of affordance, 'The environment in which affordances present themselves to human beings ... includes not only a physical component but symbolic components, even purely imaginative and conceptual components. To summarize: affordances are opportunities for action in the environment of an organism, the opportunities in question include everything that the organism can do, and the environment includes the entire realm of potential activity for that organism. If the organism in question can think and imagine, that expands the horizon of activity astronomically into the realm of the conceptual and the realm of imagination.' (1997:108).

³⁰ Semiotic analysis itself is addressed in Chapter 3 as part of the formal perceptual education of the practitioner-researcher.

producer.³¹ On these terms, musical associations offer means to achieve agency for musical values enrolled within the practice and the specific context of the project. It is proposed that the information within associative experience is not exclusive to one modality, and so includes e.g., music, words, and images, and sometimes two modalities together, connected through concurrent experience in their original setting (Krueger, 2014a:5). The associations may be made due to musical similarity, or another feature of the present music's context such as how it is made, or a collaborator's response to the music. This is proposed as theoretical grounds for supporting Folkestad (2012), Mooney (2010) and Strachan (2013) in their respective assertion of music's active affordance/constraint via genre, a framework of associations, and the material action potential of music.

Windsor's above perspective on symbolic affordances also supports DeNora's empirical research into listening practices that enrol musical style for e.g., affective outcomes (1999; 2000). Alongside Krueger (2012), DeNora has expanded affordance to encompass the affective domain as an action consequence of musical listening. The present research recognises this as a valid paradigm for creative practice, as all of the agential activity of everyday listening is as applicable for specialist forms of musical listening within a creative music practice, albeit with different or additional action consequences for creative practitioners.³² Part of the power of music is proposed to lie in the phenomenal everyday experience of music listening, where cultural features of music are inherited, as musical styles, and also associated with other modes of 'being'. Listening to music is arguably the most common experience of music, with audio-visual experience of music performance a close second, which for music specialists most likely begins as an everyday experience, as for everyone else. Even everyday listening may be conceived of as a

³¹ Musical associations are also proposed to represent a relational, and consequently a biographical element that is part of what personalises practice, whether or not that is brought into explicit social discourse with project participants.

³² DeNora explicitly references musical arrangement, stating that 'popular music draws upon conventional materials and patterns of arranging music to 'organise' its recipients, not only via genre, but via the generic patterning of feeling structure in real time.' (2003:140) Thus genre and feeling structure are identified as socially mediated phenomena, which in the present research is identified through canonical affordance and first-hand experience of affect from the practitioner-researcher's perspective.

form of sensory elaboration; Elliot and Silverman illustrate this by drawing an analogy between e.g., the necessity of eating versus the enjoyment of gourmet food (2017). For music, they propose that ‘one of our most basic human necessities: the need to ‘listen-*for*’ sounds’ expands into the capacity for imaginative musical creation and parallel activities of making music/listening to sound/responding to sound (2017:38). The specialist forms of listening discussed in the thesis are proposed as an extension of this, including a form of intentional sensitisation towards objects that attunes the listener towards their affordances. Gibson (who here also speaks on behalf of his researcher wife)³³ identifies this as the education of attention towards the perception of affordances, thus,

the observer learns to look for the critical features, to listen for the distinctive variations, to smell or taste the characteristics of substances (perfumes or wine) and to finger the textures of things (wool or silk). Both she and I now consider this an education of attention to the information in available stimulation.’ (Gibson 1968:270).

The aural skills referred to in the second research question denote a form of specialised listening practice concerned with sensitisation towards musical structures. Outside of this research, ‘aural skills’ is part of the vocabulary of musical education for Western classical music, aspects of which are encompassed by other musical traditions, without the formalisation of graphic notation (Hill, 2018:39). They refer to an enculturated aspect of perceptual attunement that refines the ability to identify and discriminate between musical features such as pitch relationships (melody and harmony), and also textural, timbral and structural aspects.

Gibson and Pick state that agency, interpreted as the ability to take self-directed action as a result of self-tuning, is, ‘richly extended conceptually over time, continuing to develop into old age’ (2000:198). From early years, exploration of action consequences is how Gibson and Pick submit that prospectivity, or

³³ James Gibson and Eleanor Gibson shared research interests and are both extensively cited in this thesis.

intentional planning ahead, develops as part of the ongoing process of how e.g., infants learn about their selves as agential actors within the environment (2000:149). As babies learn that 'some events necessarily precede others, both for their own actions and for external events that they only observe', agential reach grows (Gibson and Pick, 2000:151). Over time, simple 'primary affordances' such as pushing an object are achieved with greater complexity over time to derive secondary affordances, as individual affordances become subunits of longer task structures (Gibson and Pick, 2000:151). Subsuming subunits into tasks in the way described defines nested affordances. In later infancy, prospectivity such as this, planning how to achieve goals, advances to using 'an act as a strategy, or an object as a tool.' (Gibson and Pick, 2000:167). This advancement is part of how affordance connects to music practice, i.e., strategic use of acts with tools to achieve goals invested with musical values, selected based upon the constraints and opportunities of the context. More specific theorisation of the contextual 'matrix' of affordance is offered by Barab and Roth (2006); they consider affordance as/within courses of action in education research, to introduce a coupling of 'affordance networks' and 'effectivity sets'.³⁴ In essence, affordance networks are identified by an actor with a goal as courses of action afforded by the environment, accessible only if the actor has suitable knowledgeable skills (effectivity sets), as well as the necessary behavioural and perceptual ability. For, while courses of action may be socially 'agreed', 'the particular network engaged by an individual is dependent on adopted intentions and available effectivity sets, the attunements and behaviors that an individual can enlist to realize an affordance network.' (Barab and Roth, 2006:3). In this way, sound and/or musical sound afford 'action consequences' for a creative practitioner, relative the practitioner's experience and lifeworld (Strachan, 2013:8).³⁵ A goal may be perceived for the first time in a circumstance of need (or interest), in a subject-environment context that affords

³⁴ There is no conflict between use of Barab and Roth's concept (2006) (with their foregrounding of effectivities) and the theoretical basis of the thesis, as Cutting explains it: 'an affordance is something that is directional from environment to animal, and an effectivity directional from animal to environment. But Gibson didn't need the latter term: an affordance is something that points both way sand is equally a fact of the environment and behavior.' (1982:212)

³⁵ Strachan (2013:8, 2017:16) makes a similar point using Bourdieu's concept of habitus, also citing Toynebee (2000).

both the means (a tool or an act) to afford the meeting of that need. Thus, our knowledge of ways to hold and move an object, such as a stick, enables a secondary affordance by using it to e.g., dislodge a ball caught in a tree. Envisaging a tool-based action (a secondary affordance) affords the potential for a means-ends task, i.e., actions defined by intent (prospectivity) and the achievement of the intended goal. Nested segments of action therefore rely upon secondary affordances, or even more complex 'chains' of affordances, exhibited as 'behavior with functional directed units, having beginnings and ends, with smaller units nested within larger ones.' (Gibson and Pick, 2000:27). In this way, Gibson and Pick theorise longer courses of action based upon experience and mastery of shorter courses of action, based upon 'need'. Nested affordance, alongside effectivity sets and affordance networks are applied in the discussion of skill acquisition in support of more extended agency in courses of action. Chapters 4 and 5 present nuanced applications of those afforded skills. Within the thesis, these concepts are part of how affordance theory underpins interpretation of the 'agential arc' within the third research question, with 'need' usually considered in terms of 'interest' (Gibson, 1968:130;175).

Affordances discovered and/or developed by an actor, and enrolled in pragmatic courses of action, are subject to self-imposed constraint in relation to sociocultural conventions in-play in the symbolic realm, which in this research are phenomenally delineated within music in the realm of associations. Everyday musical experience is proposed as how even individual musical activity is inherently sociocultural, because of our (more or less attentive) experience of music in the context of our everyday lives. Some of the ways we use music have been identified as culturally ubiquitous, as parameters such as a beat affording movement cause 'spontaneous movement happening when people try to stand still' (Zelechowska et al., 2020:1); movement in time to a beat is referred to as entrainment. This is of particular interest to the discussion of aesthetic agency in Chapter 4, and affective synchrony in Chapter 5, this last referring to the pleasure of moving to a beat, individually or

with others (Krueger, 2014a:6).³⁶ Entrainment remains a relational property of music; as Windsor and de Bézenac state,

music with a highly periodic structure might afford rhythmic entrainment (by the head or a foot, for example) that might be distracting to the listener, who might for example be trying to drive, or concentrate on some other task. Another listener, however, might choose to increase the volume of the music in an attempt to accentuate such entrainment. Clearly, just as for affordances elsewhere, there is a relational aspect to perception that cannot be avoided. (2012:112).

Thus, even the most 'irresistible' rhythmic stimulus does not control behaviour.

Also relevant to aesthetic agency is Krueger's discussion of musical texture,³⁷ comparing the sonically complex music containing more opportunity for 'altering responses' than music which is gentle and simple (or thin) in texture, which reduces alerting responses (Krueger, 2010:13). While this does not afford 'control' of those attending to the music, there are e.g., social factors in play that make certain forms of general physical response more visible, evident in performance contexts, where an act such as China Crisis (discussed in Chapter 5) may become familiar with how its returning audience responds over decades of touring.

A simple definition of agency connects action, or 'being-in-action' with the concept of power, by possessing not only the ability to 'do' something, but also the sense of empowerment to do it. It is at once an important and an ideologically loaded concept. This is perhaps obviously the case for agency in musical contexts where, historically, Western cultural images abound of the singular lone composer, or the creative genius, the visionary in solitude pursuing ideas unique to his (and sometimes her) vision. The findings of the research show that agency can be recognised in more nuanced ways, as often 'arcing' in the sense of two connecting points associated with electrical current, as for the grand agential arc of musical values inferred by the final research question, introduced below. This is how affordance theory will be shown to be beneficial for the study of musical creativity,

³⁶ 'Within the context of musical entrainment, affective synchrony refers to the pleasure we take simply in moving our bodies in time with the music, letting musical rhythms (and the movements they solicit) draw certain felt responses out of us – and, when others are present, the pleasure we take in sharing this process (i.e., of getting into the "groove" together)' (Krueger, 2014a:6).

³⁷ This is based upon infant response to music.

by encompassing the micro and the macro in tandem, to permit generalisation of processes and momentary perception, through the contextual analysis of action. For this research project, agency is most obviously evident in the actions, small and large, that advance the practice. The empowerment that enables that activity draws upon resources of the environment, including the practitioner's history and skills, which are identified in this research as affordance networks and effectivities, material objects and sociocultural cues. Agency is also apparent in the choice not to take up an opportunity; it is proposed that perceptual differentiation affords selectivity, necessitated by the finite availability of time as one constraint, and also to demonstrate preference, which leads us to the question of musical values.

The third research question has three parts, proposing an assessment of the extent to which musical values are evident in the practice, as courses of action and their consequences, in the form of an agential arc. Thus, it draws together action as agency, and the selection of musical affordances to articulate musical values. The practitioner-researcher's relationship to musical values is not uniform throughout, partly due to varied role requirements, or the perceived need to 'strengthen' part of the music and consequently pay more attention to that part (e.g., if it does not satisfy in terms of musical values conceptually, or in context, or in terms of associations). While agency may appear explicitly pertinent to solely the third research question, as will be shown, listening permits forms of agency in music practice that is founded upon how music acts upon experience, and in turn may afford further action. Strachan points to music's materiality as offering action possibilities (2013); this thesis explicitly acknowledges, from a practitioner-researcher perspective, that the 'structures of feeling' (DeNora, 2003:140) those material properties afford equally afford creative action, and work in tandem with pragmatic elements. The aim is to present a Practice as Research perspective on courses of action within the practice, as agential arcs carried out in relation to musical objects; musical values enable the practitioner-researcher to differentiate and exercise choice between actions, i.e., to discriminate between musical stimuli and responses. The musical values may either be hers, or those she aligns herself

with in an arranger role, whereby her musical agency furthers the agential arc of the composer commissioning her creative contribution in that role.

Creative constraints upon agency (which may be productive) have been discussed with reference to musical affordance research in ways relevant to the present study to address music's materiality, musical tools and cultural conventions interpreted as canonical affordance. In the thesis, these are the three main areas discussed with reference to perceptual attunement to objects. Music itself is recognised as a significant part of the affordative environment for musical creativity due to its phenomenal materiality which includes not only the aforementioned structural identity but also affordances in the symbolic realm, which last connects to its experience as a sociocultural phenomenon.

2.3 Methodology to method: getting 'inside' experience

There are philosophical connections between the theory informing the research, the literature consulted, and its phenomenological method, due in part to their shared agenda of 'getting inside' and explaining experience. These areas more clearly cohere if we consider that James, most well-known for his 'stream of consciousness' concept (1952 [1890]), was influential on both Husserl, as the commonly acknowledged fountainhead of phenomenology (Husserl, 2008), and Gibson, as the major proponent of affordance theory (1968). Spiegeleberg evidences Husserl's engagement with James's ideas, recounting 'James's place in Husserl's field of consciousness, his admiration for and his debt to James, as attested most movingly in his private diary for September 25, 1906' (1981:105). Perhaps due to their common interest in investigating experience (in common with this thesis), both, Husserl and James drew upon their individual experience to 'illuminate' their understanding of perception (Husserl and Kersten, 1983; Douglas and Carless, 2013:89). James also influenced Gibson, who used his ideas to differentiate between consciousness as sense of self, and perception (Gibson, 1968:276). Further, Husserl was influential upon Schutz's social phenomenology (Schutz and Wagner, 2014) and subsequently Berger and Luckmann (1967),

associated with social constructionism³⁸ and the sociology of knowledge (Eberle, 2014:6). This last is a component of the disciplinary lineage for the music sociology literature cited above, which leans heavily on the interest in ‘everyday life’ espoused by the sociology of knowledge (i.e., DeNora, 1999; 2000). Schutz was particularly interested in applied phenomenology, to engage with common-sense world of everyday life, and ‘taken for granted stocks of knowledge’, reflected in his influence on ethnography as an emergent discipline (Barber, 2021).

Autoethnography shares disciplinary origins with ethnography (Muncey, 2010:32), and in some respects it may appear that the thesis is autoethnographic, however the research is not reduced to ‘themes’ as is more common in autoethnographic writing. Instead, it focusses on affordance ecologies for insight into specific, contextualised forms of action.^{39,40}

PaR is distinct for valuing practitioner knowledge and perspectives. Phenomenology supports that by enabling investigation of perception within courses of action in the service of the research questions. Interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) offers a particularly fine-grained approach, adapted through autoethnographic tools to support PaR’s first-person perspective. Eatough and Smith define IPA as being,

committed to clarifying and elucidating a phenomenon (be that an event, process or relationship) but its interest is in how this process sheds light on experiences as they are lived by an embodied socio-historical situated person. Rather than transcend the particular, IPA aims to grasp the texture and qualities of an experience as it is lived by an experiencing subject. (Eatough and Smith, 2017:195)

³⁸ Constructionism is a term often used interchangeably with constructivism (Hammersley, 2013:35).

³⁹ Muncey notes, ‘If phenomenology is so concerned about the lived experience of the participant, why are so many phenomenological analyses reduced to themes that combine to share experiences or commonalities?’ (2010:42)

⁴⁰ Phenomenology is not wholly unrelated to autoethnography, it has an ongoing historic influence on research methods in other disciplines concerned with lived experience, i.e., that, ‘The uptake and development of autoethnography [...] can be traced back to the late 1970s where a more sophisticated and complex understanding of the field researcher and his or her connection to a particular phenomenon stemmed from post-Chicago School developments in phenomenology, ethnomethodology and existential sociology (P. A. Adler & P. Adler, 1987).’ (Douglas and Carless, 2013:91).

As is characteristic of phenomenology, IPA also attends to the ways in which objects and experiences as phenomena are 'given' to the person, and 'how what is given has a quality of mine-ness.' (Eatough, and Smith, 2017:200). These features of IPA are proposed to align with PaR's ontological commitment to situated knowledge and therefore validate phenomenology as the method. As adopted by the practitioner-researcher, the method applies three layers of analysis the practice. The first layer is description of lived experience, the second is interpretation of the relevant features of interest in context, within the original activity of the practice and the author's later interpretation of the practice's documentation. The third layer considers the practitioner-researcher's orientating interests of emotion and desire, including 'wishes, desires, feelings, motivations...[and] how these manifest themselves or not in behaviour and action' (Eatough, and Smith, 2017:205), within her life-world.

2.3.1 Affordance and phenomenology

Steinbock states that,

Phenomenology is a reflective attentiveness not only to "what" is given in experience, but to "how" those matters are given. Rather than taking our everyday acceptances of reality for granted, it wants "to bracket" them (what is known as the epoché) and trace these acceptances to their origins of sense, namely, to their sense-giving processes (what is known as the reduction). (2018:225).

This phenomenological premise, of not taking everyday acceptances 'for granted', is proposed to be active within the perceptual attunement of the specialist music practitioner, whose practice is based upon close engagement with the materiality of music and how it is enrolled in experience. On this basis, it is proposed that interpreting perceptual experience as an affordance serves to phenomenologically 'bracket' experience.⁴¹ According to the phenomenological method, this thesis brackets the author's experience of the phenomena in question, such as the use of tools to create sound, and traces their 'acceptance' back to their origins of sense, in

⁴¹ See Appendix 8.2.2 for an account of theoretical basis on which affordance theory and the phenomenological method are proposed to be aligned (considering key terms for both).

a reductive analysis. The reduction has two basic 'scales', the first (static) is located in the immediate experience of the projects and objects under discussion, interpreted as situated case studies analysing specific phenomena, and a second (genetic) which is more 'archaeological', with less emphasis on emotional content, more focused on musical skill and perception in relation to objects. The method is therefore primarily static and genetic; generative phenomenology is not directly considered.⁴² The autobiographic chapter describes the author's developing sensitivity to music as demonstrated by the acquisition (or 'genesis') of foundational skills, and so provides an interpretive resource for the emergent case studies, casting a discursive net of genetic phenomenology across the practice case studies. While many of the same skills, e.g., playing the flute, are enrolled in the case studies, the detail of the description in the affordance ecologies is finer-grained, unpacking affordance selection and development of attunement in specific contexts by analysing experience in 'slices of time' (Steinbock, 2018:225). Sometimes analysis is of work on slices of 'musical time', where the phenomenon in focus is the experience that music, and how activity as a practitioner alters the genetic and/or static properties of a musical object, and therefore the 'sense' that it may afford.⁴³ The affordance ecologies are therefore examples of static

⁴² However, it is acknowledged generative phenomenology has potential to map on to the concept of canonical affordance, and elements of the associations. This is proposed on the basis that the majority of canonical affordances discussed transcend the idea of 'lifeworld', and thus static and genetic phenomenology, by virtue of being established across generations, in a depth of their meaning. Steinbock articulates the relevant definition of genetic phenomenology that informs the present argument: 'Stated in a provisional manner, by generativity or "generative" Husserl means both the process of becoming - hence the process of "generation" - and he means a process that occurs over the "generations" - hence specifically the process of "historical" and social movement. Among other things, generative phenomenology both deepens and calls into question a variety of results garnered from static and genetic methods, reveals the lifeworld as a provisional concept, and discloses the process of genetic temporalization as still abstract.' (1995:55).

⁴³ There is a distinction in the sense that J. Gibson (1968) and E. Gibson and Pick (2000) theorise and research the development of perception as a system, which is beyond Husserl's commitment to intuitive and a priori knowledge of objects (Berghofer, 2019); specifically, Gibson's articulation of systematic perceptual sensitisation which is 'tuned' by the active interest of the person (Gibson, 1968:262;271). Perceptual attunement exists in a 'static' and a 'genetic' sense within the practice, the former being attunement as exploration of objects, the latter being the sensitivity towards objects resulting from that exploration, which is arguably limitless. Also, implicitly referring to phenomenology, Gibson disputes the phenomenon of traces as a form of 'working memory' associated with phenomenology (Gibson, 1968:277). He conceives direct perception as the result of previous action, contesting the idea that "'space" is perceived whereas "time" is remembered.' (Ibid). Instead, Gibson's direct perception, as it is adopted in this thesis, proposes consciousness

phenomenology, primarily, describing phenomena and addressing their features as structures of experience, action and feeling in a specific context.

2.3.2 Documentation and presentation

Documentation methods evolved through pilot studies to enable a less intrusive experience of documentation and writing, for all involved. Sartre's sense of 'mauvaise foi'⁴⁴ lessened with the disappearance of 'immediate retrospective verbal accounts' (c.f. Collins, 2005 for an example), and familiarity with the research process. As the research interests developed and using autoethnographic tools became more habitual, the research experience became closer to Grant's (2013) description of writing from within a creative process. Grant speaks about the inherent value of 'imminent description' from a phenomenological perspective: 'Make new tenses and write from different positions- maybe not complete sentences, maybe very repetitive; it does not stand over that which it describes, it participates in the coming forth of that which it describes'. (Grant, 2013: presentation).⁴⁵ The documentation itself includes hand-written idea and score sketches, scores produced with music notation software (Sibelius), and Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) files with in- software notes, providing audio examples of work at different stages of development. For the improvised development of ideas, video and/or recordings in a DAW were made. For collaborative projects, a research diary/compositional journal was kept, for the writing of first-person accounts of experience of the process, written with a view to addressing research questions 1 and 3 (question 2 is evident in the audio data).⁴⁶ Processes of documentation were always overt, but also designed to be minimally invasive, insofar as there may have been static cameras or recording devices, but also the flow of exchange was not

attunes to the affordances of objects in the (connective) sense of 'Adjacent order and successive order' (Gibson, 1968:276). Interpreting music as a series of adjacent and successive event is of particular relevance to the thesis' discussion of aesthetic agency in Chapter 4.

⁴⁴ Figuratively interpreted as 'looking (at yourself) while you leap' (Jefferson, 1989:157).

⁴⁵ For more on Grant's perspective, see his publication (2007).

⁴⁶ For ease of reference, the research questions are: 1. What do the tools and media used afford the practitioner-researcher, in context? 2. How are aural skills and musical associations present in the practice? 3. To what extent does the research support the idea of an agential arc of musical values, coursing through the practice?

hindered by e.g., note-taking, other than for the purposes of the project. Therefore, experimenter effects with collaborators were minimised. All the documented interactions between collaborators used in the thesis were ‘naturally occurring’, that is to say they were not provoked by the practitioner-researcher solely for the purposes of the research (Ten Have, 1999:58).⁴⁷

Chapter 3 presents phenomenological account of attunement to affordance of music practice in the author’s biography, as the genetic phenomenology key to the thesis’ skills base developed from early years to young adulthood. That chapter draws upon documentation, supporting triggering of memories (Pohjannoro and Rousi, 2018:991), to articulate the experience relevant to the discussion. Moving on to Chapters 4 and 5, the originating characteristics of the practice undertaken are used to structure the case studies’ order of presentation, divided into two areas, i) the practitioner-researcher’s individual musical creativity (including cross-arts work) in Chapter 4), and ii) musical arrangement in Chapter 5. Presentation of the practice in case study form is adopted as a valid and defensible means to collect and communicate appropriate depth and richness of information to address the research questions.⁴⁸ Precedent for this in musical research with affordance exists in the work of Strachan (2013), and Burland and Windsor (2014). The case studies themselves present contextually informed insights into select affordances as are most pertinent to the particular case, though as will be shown, the insights are applicable beyond their case study context. The internal structure of each case study is consistent. Beginning with a ‘situation’ (a reference to PaR’s situated knowledge), this accounts for the information available to the practitioner-researcher about the project prior to its start, including framing information (see below) such as resources, expectations, precedents and social context. Reference is also made to the key elements of affordance theory and research, to situate the research insights discussed in the affordance ecologies which follow. Moving on to consider the practice undertaken, the first affordance ecology accounts for the

⁴⁷ Please see Appendix 8.2.1 for a brief acknowledgement of the common ground mixed methods research shares with the thesis’ research premise, and how varied documentation was approached.

⁴⁸ The ‘unit of analysis’ is the practitioner-researcher and her practices, in context.

practitioner-researcher's initial attunement to the project and her practice within it; each subsequent affordance ecology contains detailed analysis of the context/information pickup/choices made etc to enrol specific examples of courses of action, i.e., how those affordances were achieved. Where possible, affordances are identified in the documentation at different stages of development and contexts of use e.g., as emergent affordances, affordances engaged as existing skills (effectivities), and affordances in more complex contexts and longer sequences (such as live performances) exhibiting nested affordances and affordance networks. Examples are drawn from the above-described documentation to illustrate and contextualise the research narrative. Thus, each case study represents an 'ecology' for each group of affordances it discusses, articulated phenomenologically from the practitioner-researcher's perspective, as per the thesis title.

2.3.3 A 'layered' analysis

Within the layered, self-reporting approach to IPA, analysis of the practice interprets phenomena originating internally and externally to the author, related as they are identified and hosted in her perceptual and interpretive apparatus. Due to the author's education, discussed in the following chapter, analysis of internal phenomena of interpretation is informed by partial objectification (and reduction) of the music made through her notation of it. Transcription of the music writing up the thesis is proposed as a layer of analysis by virtue of contributing increased perceptual attunement to the music as an object; as for analysis of e.g., musical notation and music otherwise naturally documented in the practice, this musical documentation is used to trigger memory, as cited above. For external phenomena such as each project's remit and social environment, these offer opportunities to sensitise and 'tune' perception to creative course of action (c.f. Gibson, 1968:277), with the practitioner researcher's information pick-up and interpretation selectivity having the effect of constraining or narrowing the possibilities for action for her practice. For clarity, framing and contextualisation cues are analysed to make explicit how information in the environment is identified and interpreted as constraints upon action. 'Framing' engages with rationales of meaning construction in which a primary belief about a phenomenon is used to rationalise other

information about the same phenomenon, in support of that belief, as DeNora explains (1986). She goes on to cite Meyer's 'preparatory set', which proposed 'it is the belief that we are about to have an aesthetic experience that is responsible for the fact that we do, subsequently, have such an experience' (DeNora, 1986:90).⁴⁹ Scales played in a practice room have a different meaning to scales played on a stage, even if they sound the same (DeNora, 1986:90). A composer may use knowledge of these cues, further constrained by interpretation as related to idiocultural, shared understandings of music emergent (performatively) within specific social groups (Fine, 1979) to e.g., shape musical objects. The context in which tools are used is identified as the wider environment, and the environment created by music's materiality. For the former, two 'tools of sense making' for context have been applied to the practice: 'framing' and 'contextualisation cues', as presented by DeNora (1986). Both ideas are founded on a commitment to the creation of meaning 'through use' (DeNora, 1986:89-90). The conceptual tool of 'framing' engages with rationales of meaning construction discussed by DeNora (1986, citing e.g., Evans-Pritchard, 1937 and Mehan, 1988), in which a primary belief about a phenomenon is used to rationalise other information about the same phenomenon, in support of that belief. A complementary idea to this is Gumperz' 'contextualisation cues' (1977) and also Erickson's 'implicit signals' (1982) which through a person's experience (or use) of them as rituals or conventions, help to prime a person in the work of meaning-making (DeNora, 1984:91), which last is constituted through 'use', i.e., through experience of music making and listening. Both framing and contextualisation cues are applied to discuss musical role, the development of music in a sensitised context, and the interpretation of briefs.

Accordingly, by applying IPA, the practitioner-researcher identified features of affordances in the documentation, and evidenced their presence, if of interest, to draw into the case studies. Sometimes evidence is through autoethnographic written description, or as exemplification in the form of notated examples, mentioned above (which themselves represent enrolled affordances). Where

⁴⁹ DeNora also references Meyer's 'preparatory set' (see Meyer, 1956).

possible, affordances are identified in the documentation at different stages of development and contexts of use e.g., as emerging affordances (Gibson and Pick, 2000), affordances fully enrolled, and affordances in more complex contexts and longer prospective sequences featuring nested affordances (Gibson and Pick, 2000; Gibson, 1968:92) and affordance networks and effectivity sets (Barab and Roth, 2006). Thus, within the case study approach, existing theories of affordance are used as tools to probe the practice documentation.

2.3.4 Operationalising the thesis' key terms for the phenomenological method

This section of the thesis explains the key terms of the research with reference to the phenomenological method, also defining those terms not previously addressed. In Chapter 1, affordance is defined as the relation between a person and an object, that represents a possibility for action, in context (Gibson, 1968:189). Within the method, affordance is identified in the practice by applying Gibson and Pick's criteria, which requires 'both describing the objective basis for an affordance in the perceiver-environment relation and describing the information that specifies the affordance and makes possible its perception' (2000:17). 'Perceptual attunement', as part of an actor's process of personally identifying an affordance in a specific context, is therefore part of the activity sought and evidenced in Chapters 3, 4 and 5. Relevant practice activity for analysis includes exploration and courses of creative action demonstrating novel (static) and established (genetic) sensitivity towards objects (tools and sounds) and contexts. Within each case study project, existing (genetic) perceptual attunement may be increased (Gibson, 1968:277), including (static) sensitivity 'in the moment' to objects, associations, contextualisation cues and framing activity (DeNora, 1986), as well as 'events'. In this research context, an event is an affordance of music, dance or media, with a beginning and end, such as a melody, a section of music, a lyric (see Chapter 5), or a sequence in a danced duet (see Chapter 4).

Tools and media are the objects referred to in the first research question, discussed above but as yet undefined.⁵⁰ Central to the practice, ‘tools’ are the objects which enable musical activity and the creation and manipulation of the musical objects of the practice. A distinction between objects and tools is made because tools are designed for specific forms of action. The term ‘tool’ is preferred to ‘musical instrument’, as it enables inclusion of DAWs⁵¹ and hardware such as such as the BOSS Loop Station featured in Chapter 4, which are as a means to create and refine musical sound alongside traditional instruments (such as the flute).⁵² Thus, the definition of tools is not quite as broad as Mooney’s ‘anything and everything that is used for a musical purpose’ (2010:143) but rather anything used to produce and manipulate sound, for the purposes of a project.⁵³ ‘Media’ refers to the video materials in the first and third case studies (Segundo de Chomón’s short film *Le Spectre Rouge*, (1907), and the visual media created and staged in *Instar*, respectively). In Chapter 5, the audio files supplied by all of the commissioning composers and John McGrath’s recorded performance of early ideas are also considered media objects, however they are more commonly referred to as sound objects.

‘Aural skills’ are in focus for the second research question.⁵⁴ First addressed in the introduction, they identified in the method as learned (genetic) forms of perceptual sensitivity to musical objects which enable the recognition of musical structures and qualities. Performatively, they materialise (as static phenomena) through instrumental/vocal performance of music, including imitation, improvisation, and musical transcription.⁵⁵ Musical transcription, defined in this research as notating

⁵⁰ The first research question is given as, ‘What do the tools and media used afford the practitioner-researcher, in context?’

⁵¹ In this thesis, a DAW is comprised of a laptop and a digital audio interface used with a microphone.

⁵² The ‘instrumentality’ of objects is given rigorous treatment as a topic in Hardjowirogo (2017).

⁵³ Occasionally other objects are important, such as AV recording tools, and modes of transport, but these are broadly recognised as supporting features of specific projects, to maintain focus upon music practice.

⁵⁴ The second research question is, ‘How are aural skills and musical associations present in the practice?’

⁵⁵ This is consistent with Clarke’s interpretation of musical improvisation a form of ‘listening as performance’ (2005:152).

music through aural identification of e.g., its harmonic structure, rhythmic features and internal relationships to represent them graphically as Western staff notation. Transcription thereby makes visible unperformed ‘thinking’ of aural skills otherwise ‘invisible’ to the eye, active in the author’s perception. Further, her transcriptions are proposed to clarify discussion of other affordances in the research narrative by objectively exemplifying elements of the music.⁵⁶ Aural skills also inform musical arrangement as featured in Chapter 5; the author’s genetic development of foundational aural skills and improvisation are attended to in Chapter 3. Thus, within creative contexts, aural skills may be used to act upon ‘musical associations’. In this research, musical associations may be drawn from lived (genetic or static) experience to expand upon ideas, or a brief, or a composer’s sonic starting point. The author’s association of ‘fanfare’ with the ‘formal’ requirement of a commission helped her develop the music for *Purchase, May 14th* (discussed in Chapter 4). Within the approach taken to this research, musical associations are identified as contextual feature of afforded action, including the reasons discussed above in section 2.2 (Strachan, 2013; Mooney, 2010; Windsor, 2004). Overall, the method explores associations as a means to enrol agency in practice, as they enrich and inform the interpretive context in which musical action is undertaken; they occur as perceptual attunement in the moment (as static phenomena) and/or by drawing from prior knowledge, experience or guidance (genetic phenomena).

The third research question uses the term ‘agency’, asking, ‘to what extent is it possible to identify an agential arc of musical values coursing through the practice’. After DeNora, the foundational definition of agency in the method is given as the capacity for, and ability to, formulate action and experience, in relation to the creation of music and musical sounds (2000:161). ‘Musical values’ are identified as a facet of (static) ‘interest’ within musical practice, motivating musical exploration and informing differentiation between and selection of ideas, moving forward. Musical values may be (genetically) attached to features associated (genetically)

⁵⁶ This last recognises that any form of notation is partial, i.e., that notation is not a complete representation of a musical object.

with particular styles, to (static) affective experience afforded, to modes of production, and more. 'Affect' in this research is used to refer to emotions, affect, and feelings, interchangeably, as per Krueger (2014a:1) and Sloboda (in Deutsch et al, 2001:III).⁵⁷ While it is acknowledged that this is not how affect is defined in other areas of research, the two citations given indicate a working precedent in relevant publications which is proposed to validate that interpretation of the term in this research. The 'arc' of agential arc is applied as a flexible concept. It may be applied in the sense of a course of action (as for the courses of action undertaken in the performance of a piece) or e.g., a course of intentional experimentation; it may join two distinct points, or used to denote a new trajectory of interest. Agential arcs of activity are explored in the thesis for their potential to inhere musical values, as enrolment of musical affordances is founded on interest, enacted with tools, to sculpt musical sound relevant to the creative context. In this thesis, the sculpting of sound, and the presentation of the finished sounding object relate to the term 'aesthetic agency'. 'Aesthesis' refers to the ability to feel or perceive through the senses (Dictionary.com, 2021:online); its coupling with agency indicates the ability of an actor to influence perceptual experience, by designing a musical 'slice of time' to afford a specific eventful journey, for the exploration of listeners.

2.4 Conclusion

The thesis' research premise has articulated the relationship between the thesis' PaR methodology, its phenomenological method, and the congruence of these with its theoretical basis in Gibsonian affordance theory. The research questions have been located in relevant existing literature, and conceptual tools and key terms of the enquiry defined as to their use in the method. The Research Premise is the footing for the original research presented in the following three chapters, some of which is revisited for the discussion in Chapter 6 and the conclusion. The following

⁵⁷ 'Affect encompasses many human mental reactions and states that are not traditionally viewed as intellectual. Feelings, emotions and moods are the principal categories of affect. It is one of the most inescapable and characteristic features of music that people report strong emotional reactions to it. Why this is so, and by what means music creates affect, are questions of central concern to psychologists.' (ibid).

chapter connects affordance theory to the foundational skills of the practice, as perceptual attunement to affordance in one musical life-world.

3. Formative Attunement to Music Practice

3.1 Introduction

This chapter considers development of the author's attunement to music practice up to age 21 in a series of insights termed 'affordance snapshots', so termed in recognition of their concise nature and interpretation through the central theoretical lens.⁵⁸ The selected timespan is rationalised to be relevant as the skills afforded within it are foundational, ongoing in her perception. This is proposed to be evident in the case study chapters where the same affordances remain in play on a continuum of perceptual development which is further refined over time in new contexts.⁵⁹ This is consistent with Gibson's statement about intentionally increasing perceptual sensitivity and complexity (Gibson, 1968:147). Evidenced with reference to musical examples, occasional photographs and/or archival documentation, the affordance snapshots interpret developmental aspects of the research themes with affordance theory, including learning to play musical instruments (tools), acquiring aural and transcription skills, sensitivity to musical associations, and early composition and arrangement. Musical values are proposed to motivate musical development when considered as a form of Gibsonian 'interest' (1968) identified in the previous chapter, and assimilated cultural conventions attuning an individual towards the affordances of e.g., a musical instrument. Interest and instrument/sound exploration invoke the perception-action cycle (Gibson and Pick, 2000). By cyclically repeating actions and comparing (perceiving) the consequences of adjustments to a task, learning to e.g., produce a sound on an instrument is a process of incremental improvement towards affording a selected goal, afforded when one learns to successfully enact the musical values of the task. As will be shown, these skills 'accumulate' to exhibit 'overlapping core components

⁵⁸ Please note that this chapter is not presented as an 'ideal', though the author is appreciative of the contexts and opportunities outlined. Further, it is not presumed that the forms of perceptual attunement foregrounded within the thesis are better or worse than anyone else's engagement with music. Simply, they are part of how the practice under discussion is afforded and are consequently relevant to the thesis' narrative.

⁵⁹ Select examples from the author's professional practice are presented to underline the ongoing relevance of the skills represented in the affordance snapshots.

such that children build up “effectivity sets” that span multiple affordance networks’ (Barab and Roth, 2006:11). Thus, each affordance snapshot discusses affordance and nested affordances⁶⁰ for agential course of action in pursuit of musical values. Due to the explicitly reflexive and autobiographical nature of this chapter and the situated knowledge of Chapters 4 and 5, the author’s voice will now move into the first person.

3.2 Affordance ‘snapshots’

3.2.1 A melody is a map: early years singing, playing, and music theory

As Krueger notes, ‘as far as we know, caregivers in all cultures regularly sing to their infants as a means of emotion regulation (Trehub and Nakata, 2001).’ (2014a:1).

This introduces an early opportunity for perceptual attunement to music and its social qualities, a process even identified in neonates (Krueger 2010:8). Pre-school, music was part of my mother’s parenting as singing, which was a daily experience for me and my sister when we were very young. She serenaded us with the likes of *You Are My Sunshine* and *Daisy, Daisy*; we joined in with those and finger-play action songs like *Two Little Dicky Birds*.^{61,62} Before I was born, my dad owned a music shop in Plymouth which sadly folded; left-over stock became part of family life in Milton Keynes, everyday objects in my environment, and their exploration was encouraged. After singing, piano and recorder were the instruments I got to know first, at home, through ‘self-initiated exploratory actions’, purported to lead to ‘evaluation and selection.’ (Gibson and Pick, 2000:154). Reinterpreting Delalande’s research (2009) into children’s exploratory behaviour towards objects with affordance, Menin and Schiavio identify the following process:

when a child explores the environment and produces sounds, these sounds may surprise her/him, leading the infant to hear and produce them again, maybe introducing some variations (see Imberty 1983). This process of repetition with slight changes can be seen as the development of a sound discovery, whose characterization, rather than cognitive, is represented by the advance of the sensory motor modalities of interaction with the object (Delalande 2009:300). This ontogenetic,

⁶⁰ Nested affordances are defined in section 2.2.

⁶¹ For an informative overview of the meanings of care givers singing to/with infants, see Bonnár, 2014.

⁶² My mother had singing lessons at school (her tutor accompanied on harp); she enjoyed singing the alto harmony line in choirs and featured as a soloist.

sense-giving and motor-based process reflects the constitution of the intentional relationship of musical subjects and objects, the only plausible scenario where musical affordances can be observed in infancy. (2012:210).

The above-cited 'ontogenetic, sense-giving and motor-based process' is identified in my process of teaching myself a melody on recorder, to achieve 'the psycho-physical correspondence between physical frequencies and phenomenal qualities of pure colour and pitch' (Gibson, 1968:270).⁶³ The specific invariant I attuned to, to afford playing a melody, is the basic physical logic of 'add next finger down to go lower, lift up bottom finger to go higher'. Attuned to this, and the physical laws which mean that the same principle⁶⁴ is common to the majority of wind and reed instruments is partly why I was able to attune to new instruments with the advantage of familiarity, and experience 'success' relatively swiftly.^{65,66} Both my primary and middle school recorder clubs afforded me an example of what Davidson and Burland termed, 'idols within touching distance', as playing recorder with others who were pretty good at it spurred me on at home (2006:477). I recall sitting on the stairs at home, 'getting a kick out of' (i.e., I was positively affectively engaged in) working out and practicing known melodies, like *Lord of the Dance*, which I knew and liked from communal hymn singing at my primary school. Thus, perceptual attunement to music by listening and enacted through singing afforded me successful exploration to attune to playing the melody, as I had achieved its specificity as a sounding musical object; foreknowledge of the melody was an 'object'-ive means of comparison affording me to work out how to play it on the recorder. I honed an agential course of action to co-ordinate my digital ('finger') knowledge of notes to knowledge of the melody as a nested affordance. This is how, around age 8, I achieved

⁶³ ...which Menin and Schiavio identify improves with practice.

⁶⁴ (of altering pitch by making air come out of a vibrating tube higher/lower)

⁶⁵ The same principle also applies to string instruments.

⁶⁶ On most wind instruments, considering only fingers, playing in the keys of e.g., C, G or D major on most is relatively easy, with few cross-fingerings and a few octave thumb shifts, with the exception of 'C' and 'D', the fingerings achieve a compass of a full octave. The exception is the clarinet, which instead of 'breaking' at the octave with the thumb, breaks at a 12th, though the basic lower/higher pitch invariant is applicable. This is partly why the clarinet has so many side keys.

‘increasing specificity’ within a chosen task frame to afford melodic flow in a course of action as a nested affordance of single notes played in sequence (Gibson and Pick, 2000:150). Thus, the melody became a ‘map’ to the instrument, scaffolding my exploration; achieving it as a performance on recorder afforded me an agential arc of musical values as a course of action by virtue of it playing a melody I liked. In turn, this skill of ‘playing by ear’ to afford particular affective states was part of my sensitisation towards the skills of improvisation, considered shortly.

One last early input of note is the help I had at home learning about music theory. My dad made me a learning aid, a type of ready reckoner for musical scales. It allowed visual demonstration in relation to a keyboard of the pattern of tones and semitones needed to form a range of scales conventional in Western music culture.⁶⁷ It took the form of a cardboard ruler, the middle part of Fig. 1, laid over the counterpart cardboard keyboard⁶⁸ to point to the fixed pattern of intervals marked on the ruler’s relevant scale template⁶⁹ which can be slid up and down the keyboard to create the scale starting on any note.⁷⁰ Knowledge of the piano’s layout⁷¹ is how this learning aid invokes a nested affordance: it makes it possible to play and hear (albeit slowly) any of the intervals and scales displayed on any starting note, and relate to the distance between each note of a scale as an interval,⁷² as well as to hear a scale as a series of (physically adjacent) sounds. By making it easier to visualise the scale, this tool offers a ‘way in’ to exploring scales and sensitising to their features, including developing ‘key-sense’ in parallel modalities, haptic and aural, led by the visual. Towards the end of my middle school years, I was applying this knowledge to playing the flute, supporting technical development which simultaneously developed my ear and interest in particular

⁶⁷ Half of the original learning aid survives and is shown in Appendix 8.3.1.

⁶⁸ i.e., as shown on the left-hand side of Fig. 1.

⁶⁹ Intervals are also articulated in the same way, using the right-hand side part of the aid in Fig. 1 with the keyboard.

⁷⁰ Consequently, it is visibly apparent that the sequence of intervals forming the scale is a fixed pattern, even if the starting note and subsequent movement of the fingers on the piano change.

⁷¹ This is proposed as part of the ‘overlapping knowledge’ Barab and Roth allude to above (2006:11).

⁷² Intervals were given as a set of information on the slide rule, indicated on the right-hand side of Fig. 1.

scalic movement, as I learned to play the scales (and arpeggios) by their sound and 'feeling', attuning to sonic building blocks of Western harmony and aspects of aural skills inherent in jazz practice.

Figure 1 Ben Mullett's learning aid: a 'ready-reckoner' scale ruler (c. 1983)

The image shows a 'ready-reckoner' scale ruler, which is a visual aid for learning scales. It consists of a piano keyboard diagram at the top, followed by five scale patterns, and a legend at the bottom.

Scale Patterns:

- Major scale (ascending and descending):** T, ST, T, T, ST, T, T, T. (Interval: 1')
- Natural minor (ascending and descending):** T, ST, T, T, ST, T, T, T. (Interval: 1')
- Blues scale (ascending and descending - is this wholly definable?):** m3, T, ST, ST, m3, T. (Interval: 1')
- Harmonic minor (ascending and descending):** T, ST, T, T, ST, T, m3, T. (Interval: 1')
- Melodic minor ascending:** T, ST, T, T, ST, T, T, T. (Interval: 1')

Legend:

- minor second (semitone)
- major second
- minor third
- major third

Notes:

- NB align the interval name with the left hand side of the piano key; the arrow should point to the center of each key.
- The number of the interval i.e. major second relates to the visual representation of the notes on the staff.

3.2.2 A piano affords chord patterns in courses of action

In addition to *Chopsticks*, which encourages independent (contrary) movement in each hand, importantly, my dad also showed how to play a simple twelve-bar piano blues by ear. This was pattern-based, the same walking bass ‘riff’ in the left hand, and choice of block chord in the right, slid up or down the piano to hit the right chord for the sequence.⁷³ Once learned, it sustained individual creative variation in the blues tradition by moving chord fingers to sound different rhythms and elaborating on the bassline, without the cultural constraint for the music to be played ‘as written’. I began piano lessons when I started at Stantonbury Music Centre (age 12).⁷⁴ Alongside subsidised, individual flute and piano lessons, as a scholar I had access to music theory lessons and tuition in figured bass, included in scholars’ ‘musicianship’ lessons. Performing keyboard using figured bass encouraged sensitisation towards the expressive qualities of chord inversions and voicings in chord progressions (in the right hand of the keyboard), specifically attuning me to the relationship of harmony to a bass line, and the linear movement within chords afforded by chord voicings, as I had to navigate harmonic lines within my used of fingers.⁷⁵ Figure 2 shows the music a keyboard player would interpret; it has not treble clef, and wherever ‘6’ is written beneath a note, the chord performed is in first inversion (the sixth note above the notated bass note is the root of the chord).⁷⁶ Learning figured bass also attuned me to elements of voice leading, or harmonic lines (see below). The act of performing figured bass also enhanced sense-giving and my motor-based attunement to possibilities for action

⁷³ It was one of the pieces that helped me to form a ‘triad’ shape with my hand, which much like the guitar, affords many chords if the shape is kept, but the hand moves.

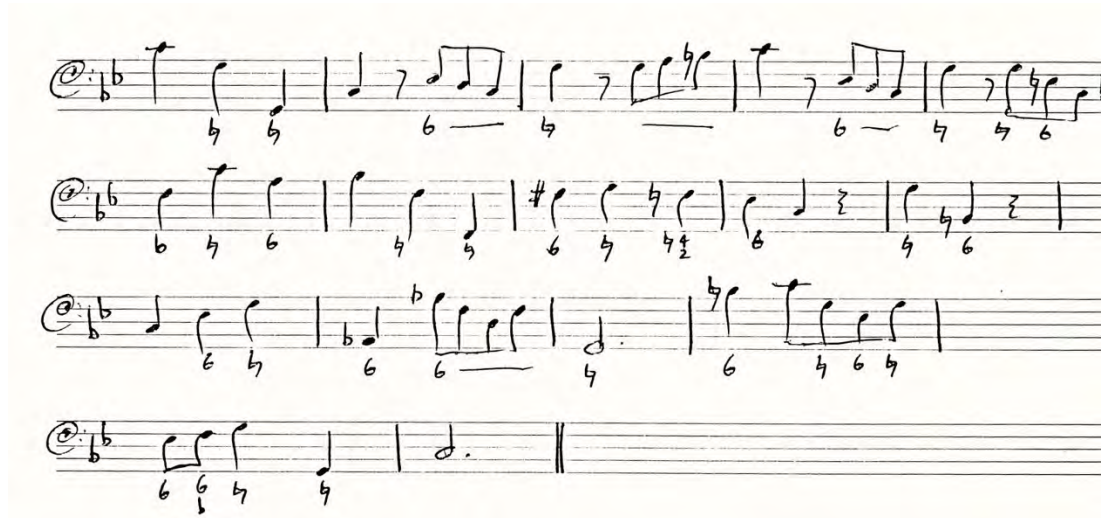
⁷⁴ Soon after I began group instrumental lessons at middle school, I had the opportunity to audition for a Buckinghamshire County Council music scholarship, which I won (as did other people), which extended my musical tuition to subsidised 1-1 flute lessons and piano lessons, as well as a Saturday morning music school at Stantonbury Music Centre, now Milton Keynes Music Centre.

⁷⁵ For example, there is a choice of one out of three or four chord tones to place uppermost in the right hand when ‘voicing’ a chord, meaning the same chord sequence with the same bassline could achieve different expressive qualities upon repetition, based upon variation of those choices.

⁷⁶ The natural symbols below the notes indicate that the third of the chord lies outside of the key signature so that the second chord of the first bar is G major as opposed to a G minor chord. The first chord is a C minor chord, as a root position triad is assumed when no additional information is given.

in relation to chord sequences.⁷⁷ A few years later, I was taught Bach chorale style composition, which sensitised me towards the idea of ‘colouring’ melody through harmonic choices for specific notes, and its relationship to bass line movement as a form of counterpoint. The choice of chord supporting the melody note was part of what defined that note’s identity, as a relational element of its context to which one could sensitise, by trying out alternatives.

Figure 2 Figured bass notation, from lessons at Stantonbury Music Centre



3.2.3 ‘Flute-ness’

I started flute lessons a little later than is typical, at age 12; it appears it is common to be more independent about practice after the age of 10 (McPherson and Davidson, 2006:348). In truth, I enjoyed it, playing my flute made me happy, I was ‘world building’ with my music (DeNora, 2000:44). Also, I really liked my first flute teacher, Fiona Sullivan (conducting me and my peers in Fig. 3), which has been found, empirically, to positively impact progress (Davidson and Burland,

⁷⁷ The first bar of Fig. 2 illustrates the nature of the tacit knowledge that figured bass requires: the first chord is implicitly C minor, as the chord is assumed to be in root position (and defined in terms of the key signature if no other symbol is present). Both the second and third chords are G major, as any accidental applied on its own is applied to the third of the chord. The ‘6’ in bar two denotes that the note written above is a sixth below the root note, indicating that the chord is in first inversion; the following line denotes that the two next chords are also in this relation to the bass note. The different elements of the processes discussed are all proposed as a form of sensitisation towards musical affordances, in courses of musical action.

2006:475). Thanks to my earlier exploratory activity with the fife and support with theoretical/notational concepts, I was well sensitised towards flute playing; I sounded ‘good’ nearly from the start, encouraging in itself, and that was reinforced through positive comment. In this way the canonical musical values of my tone production and phrasing were established and reinforced (Costall and Richards, 2013).⁷⁸ Later, as I matured as a player, I further attuned to my flute tone through exercises designed by ‘legends’ of flute pedagogy, Marcel Moyse and Trevor Wye.⁷⁹ This required patient practice, listening for the differences in tone passing from one note to the next,⁸⁰ aiming to achieve the same tone on both, and adjusting air/lips to achieve this, through exploration.⁸¹ For me, learning to play the flute is proposed as a ‘technology of the self’ that I used to construct who I was, as a developing musician (DeNora, 2000:66).

Figure 3 Performing with Stantonbury Music Centre’s flute choir in Milton Keynes Shopping Centre, dir. Fiona Sullivan, our flute tutor



Regarding scales and arpeggios, which featured in my flute examinations, they became fun to play, for their rhythm, shape and ‘mood’: I had attuned to the ‘sound’ of them such that soon I did not need to consciously think in terms of key signatures or which fingers to move. Instead, I was able to produce a series of

⁷⁸ I did not have to invest time developing my basic tone in the same way that e.g., beginner violinists or those totally new to the flute had to, from scratch, I could get straight into the music.

⁷⁹ Flute tone exercises of this kind broadly subscribe to one of the cultural ideals of classical vocalists, of achieving the same tone across the range of the instrument.

⁸⁰ This is proposed as a clear example of the perception-action cycle being adopted to refine attunement to an affordance.

⁸¹ This form of patient, concentrated listening anticipates some of the characteristics of the insight ‘listening for’, in Chapter 5.

sounds characteristic of whichever scale I intended, proposed as a ‘psycho-physical correspondence’ (Gibson, 1968:270). This is further identified as a form of (genetic) aesthetic development, reflecting enculturation permitted by the aesthetic affordances designed-in to the instrument including diatonic scales (Windsor, 2017). Further, reinforcing the distinction between melodic movement by ‘step’ or by ‘leap’ is central to differentiating the characteristics of melody for transcription, too. Formal aural skills training encourages this, among other things I was encouraged to learn to identify intervals (as melodies and chords) without reference to an instrument. This requires the listener to perceptually attune to each note and hold them in mind as two sound objects (pitch invariants) and then differentiate between them, relationally, to identify the interval.⁸² Unless sufficiently attuned to achieve immediate recognition, identification draws upon perceptual attunement to possible interval types by comparison, perhaps ‘measuring’ the interval through imaginative use of a scale, as a kind of musical ruler.⁸³ However achieved, the process of interval recognition is proposed to be ecological as it demonstrates ‘education of attention to the information in available [musical] stimulation’ (Gibson 1968:270) (my addition in brackets). Further, preparing for performances and flute exams, I learned flute repertoire and was given access to regular rehearsal and performance with chamber music ensembles, orchestras and a wind band⁸⁴ at Stantonbury Music Centre. Thus, through acquaintance with repertoire, I became attuned to ‘flute-ness’, as Mooney would have it (2010:144). This sensitised me to style and possibilities for expression as a flute player, attunement which would also sensitise me to possibilities for action later on, in role as a composer or arranger, and as an improviser.⁸⁵

⁸² This technique may be applied to identify a cadence by treating the bassline as a melody, presuming the cadence is in root position.

⁸³ As alluded to earlier, where interval recognition is a simple a case of ‘recognition’, it represents a high degree of sensitivity. Other techniques exist, including imaginative use of the learning aid in Fig. 1, for example.

⁸⁴ I played in a wind quintet, various baroque ensembles with continuo, a symphonic wind band, three orchestras, and later a jazz band and a flute quartet, with some excellent players. I spent every Saturday morning of term time as well as two evenings per week rehearsing with a chamber orchestra, and a bag band.

⁸⁵ Arguably this is true for anyone learning and instrument, and certainly applied to my learning of piano and saxophone, later on.

Before starting at Stantonbury Music Centre aged 12, I demonstrated I was able to notate music that I made up.⁸⁶ The relevance of this is that the ability to notate what you hear (even with the help of a piano) demonstrates two affordances. Firstly, it demonstrates nested affordances related to the symbolic realm of music notation, including the ability to hold a pencil and control marks made on the page with a good degree of accuracy (I did not have access to music notation software at this point).⁸⁷ Secondly, it is also proposed to demonstrate attunement to some of music's invariant qualities. Transcribing music demonstrates perceptual attunement to invariants of the music in question, i.e., its dimensions of pitch, rhythm, meter, style, tessitura, dynamics, phrasing, etc. It denotes the ability to identify the musical object transcribed, and the invariant information needed for someone else to perform it via notation, broadly speaking. These are skills I would later enrol as affordances for horn section transcription,⁸⁸ composition, arrangement, and jazz practice, enacting an agential arc of musical values to make music of interest to me.

3.2.4 The saxophone and jazz education

Early exposure to playing by ear has been shown to be a strong path to musical improvisation, as is the ability to sight-read (Davidson and McPherson, 2017:14-15, citing McPherson's path analysis (1993)). My development as a jazz improviser initially converged around the opportunity to play in a big band at Stantonbury Music Centre, aged 14,⁸⁹ and an earlier jazz education initiative with Scott Stroman.^{90,91} That said, my first experience with improvisation was in a baroque

⁸⁶ I wrote a piece for my flute teacher.

⁸⁷ NB the position I take is that notation is always reductive, i.e., performance contains more information than is generally notated, and that musicianship is what 'completes' notation.

⁸⁸ I transcribed horn parts for one band before going to university, and one soul covers band I was in in the second year; I also transcribed all the horn parts for *The Blues Brothers* stage musical, the year after graduating, as I was Musical Director. I performed professionally in soul covers bands in my early 20s on the local cabaret circuit, drawing upon the same skillset.

⁸⁹ It was the jazz band which prompted me to take up the alto saxophone, age 14, because the flute was drowned out most of the time.

⁹⁰ At the time, Scott was head of Jazz Studies at The Guildhall School of Music.

⁹¹ I later reconnected with Scott in my professional life as music lecturer. I engaged him to give my choir at Liverpool Hope University a gospel music workshop, which led to gospel music and elements of the improvisatory practice it may afford being incorporated into my professional practice as a

ensemble.⁹² Formal education in jazz improvisation began for me with a guest workshop from Scott, who introduced a large group of young musicians to the concept of the degrees of a scale having individual qualities, or tensions, that can be recognised as a relation based on their position with the scale (scale degree). Using a simple listening/echoing game, he encouraged attunement to those qualities: he played the key note, and then a note above or below, which we tried to imitate on our instruments, alternating between his notes and ours. Thus, he presented an exploratory, enacted means of perceiving what is often first approached in the abstract, e.g., the ‘qualities’ of notes which also characterise voice leading in cadences, Bach chorales, and jazz theory. Instead of it being primarily a paper-based exercise,⁹³ this was sensory exploration synchronously mapped to an instrument.^{94,95}

Scott took a small group of us aside and taught us the jazz standard *Autumn Leaves* on piano, so that we learned it by heart while singing the melody. This introduced the all-important ii-V-I chord progression, an essential building block (or convention/‘musical object’) of jazz harmony. He showed us how to work through the song’s ‘guide tones’, something which is common practice for jazz musicians attuning to the possibilities of a piece of music for improvisation. The idea is to find a ‘line through’ starting on one note of the first chord, and to attune to where the note could move to in the next chord/remain on the same note, depending on the notes of the supporting harmony.⁹⁶ Then, within your improvisation upon the music

choir director.

⁹² The oboe player of that ensemble, Jeremy Brown, is now a professional jazz bassist.

⁹³ Which is not to infer that Bach chorales were solely a paper exercise, but less time was spent playing them on piano than working them out on paper, which is not the case with learning voice leading in jazz standards, in my experience.

⁹⁴ This is a further example of Gibson’s ‘psycho-physical correspondence’ (1968:270).

⁹⁵ This is linked to the ‘singing through your instrument’ analogy discussed below; even the ‘echoing’ skill in this exercise is central to jazz practice- to be able to hear and repeat a sound, and to recognise a note due to its qualities within a harmonic structure, is a way to enable a musical conversation, as you can decide to alter your echo, to create the response for a call and response structure. (This is also an essential affordance of the arrangement practice discussed in Chapter 5).

⁹⁶ The goal is to move as little as possible and make use of the note’s tension in relation to the underlying harmony, whereby e.g., a note resting on the fourth degree falls to the third, the sixth falls to 5, and the second falls to one and the seventh rises to 8 (this part is similar to ‘voice leading’ in Western classical music theory). After exploring this and attuning to which ‘moves’ on that

attuned to, this guide-tone may inform choice of starting point, and where a player chooses to leap to, i.e., jumping from one guide tone pathway to another, to achieve a 'different' effect, breaking with expectation at a strategic point. A similar process is possible with rhythm, and which beat/part of a beat to begin on.⁹⁷

While attending the All-Music Easter Course, I observed Pete Churchill demonstrate to the group the idea of 'singing through your instrument', whereby he sang the same notes that he improvised on piano. His example illustrated that jazz soloing, without singing along, was still potentially connected to singing in that way, if singing represents the 'inner ear' or 'inner voice' of the musician. It was on this course too, where the echoing idea I was initially familiar with through baroque music performance, combined with Scott Stroman's introduction to musical imitation, emerged in an improvised jazz context. As this took place, I was encouraged to hear the ongoing flow of musical conversation between the musicians, where e.g., the drummer's kick drum idea was picked up by the pianist, who 'commented' in the same rhythm in Pete's playing, which idea was passed to the next musician or was interrupted with a new idea, to continue the music.⁹⁸ This is proposed as a clear example of Barab and Roth's 'transfer' (2006), where my existing classical musical skills afforded me a life-expanding experience in a new musical arena. It also helped to sensitise me to the potential for musical dialogue within a piece of music, and the textural possibilities of that in live performance and arrangement (as shown in Chapter 5). One final point about jazz practice, as I know it, is the importance of learning existing jazz solos. Afforded by jazz's extensive recording history, the idea is that a player's ability develops towards improvisation

journey are of particular interest to you as a player, the process is repeated for the other notes of the starting chord.

⁹⁷ This last was something I learned at the 'All-Music Easter Course' I attended at Wavendon after enjoying Scott's workshop. The course was led by musicians who taught at the London conservatoires, including jazz trumpeter and composer Guy Barker and jazz vocalist, pianist, arranger and composer, Pete Churchill.

⁹⁸ This skill, of being able to 'echo' an idea from another player in performance is part of the perceptual sensitivity I brought to professional engagements as a jazz musician and soloist in a range of popular music contexts while a sixth form student, and at university and beyond. See also the related discussion of transcription, below (re. Otis Redding).

which pleases that player by learning the music that is of particular interest. In this way, listening pleasure affords technical development to support performing the courses of action necessary to afford playing and improvising music with those characteristics.⁹⁹ Within the jazz paradigm described it also reinforces the player's sense of agency and identity through enacting musical values of personal interest.

3.2.5 Early perceptual attunement to composition and arrangement

Camargue, was one of my GCSE compositions which I wrote at the piano (see Fig. 4, below). The piece belies my recent experience of playing (and perceptual attunement towards) some of Chopin's compositions for solo piano: it exhibits some of his characteristic textural features, namely a repeated rising arpeggio figure (used in sequence in the piano part to move through chords), and sparse use of melody with 'flurries' of faster notes as the piece progresses.¹⁰⁰ *Camargue* points to repertoire's significance for creative practice, discussed further in Chapter 5, and while it could be deemed a form of style composition (albeit harmonically simpler than Chopin), *Camargue* was nonetheless music that I enjoyed writing by setting out to create a mood, which began with the repeated figure of the first bar. This suggests that through learning to play it, I was affectively attuned to Chopin's style, and that the sensory-motor skills I acquired to play the music were afforded to me within my compositional process, sometimes as improvisation. I was further attuned to musical repertoire through the GCSE and A-Level music curricula I followed, in which I was afforded knowledge of types of musical form, for example, by studying examples from Western classical music history. Class members attuned to how to recognise a style through its canonical affordances, by sensitising towards its characteristic musical style not only in terms of form, but also instrumentation, harmony, texture and rhythm, etc.

⁹⁹ It's a 'you are what you eat' approach, where 'eating' is a line through from listening to performing.

¹⁰⁰ The piece is rather pianistic, in fact, and whilst the melody sounded 'ok' on the flute, it was really a solo piano piece which I arranged for flute and piano.

Figure 4 My first publicly performed composition, Camargue (1991)

Composition I
Piano Andantino
Camargue
written by
Chloe Mullett

The image shows a handwritten musical score for a piece titled 'Camargue' (1991). The score is for Flute and Piano. It is in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major, and consists of 16 measures. The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 1-4) is a piano introduction with a melody in the right hand and accompaniment in the left hand. The second system (measures 5-8) continues the piano introduction. The third system (measures 9-16) features the flute part entering in measure 8 with a melodic line. The piano part continues with accompaniment. The score includes dynamic markings like 'mf' and 'mp', and a 'Coda' section starting at measure 12. The piece ends with a final chord in measure 16.

My first publicly performed arrangement was for my school's production of Edward Bond's war play, *The Tin Can People* (1984) the second play in his trilogy (Bond, 1989). I created (and performed) dystopian jazz duo versions of nationalistic anthems (alto sax and piano), in response to the drama tutor's creative brief. Below, Fig. 5 shows one of my adapted scores from the show;¹⁰¹ the chord symbols were used to interpret the chords for the pianist in shorthand, but in some pieces (not this one) also to re-harmonise the music at certain points, using knowledge from Bach chorale writing technique and piano playing,¹⁰² to create poignant effects. Choices such as substituting major chords for minor chords and changing

¹⁰¹ At the time I did not realise the chord symbols should be above the staff; I have instead placed them where figured bass would go.

¹⁰² A nested affordance within a course of action.

bass notes afforded distinct musical outcomes which were noticeable for diverging from the original, familiar chord movement.¹⁰³ This is proposed to exemplify affordances of harmonic choice combined with some of the canonical affordances of a (loosely) jazz style, demonstrating a degree of musical agency within a constraint set by the director. It engaged my musical values for self-expression and alerted me to the possibility for musical expression to be ‘about’ something beyond the emotional journey of the sound in instrumental music, due to the play’s post-nuclear subject matter.¹⁰⁴

Figure 5 Beginning of arrangement for Tin Can People, showing Jo’s cue, “Or I’ll kill you”

46

30 "OR I'LL KILL YOU!"

RULE, BRITANNIA

Thomson D^f Arne
Arr. by H. A.C.

1. When Bri - tain first at Heav'n's com-mand, A - rose from out the

a zure main, a - rose, a - rose, a - rose from out the a - zure main,

Handwritten chord symbols: G, Em, G/b, C, D, G, G, G, D, G, A7, D, D, D, Em, D, G, D/A, A, D

3.2.6 Characterising music through associations

Rehearsing in original bands¹⁰⁵ such as Stingray (in Fig. 6 below), I noticed how music in development was often nicknamed, labelled with a word which captured

¹⁰³ The choice of a jazz ensemble was also non-standard for such repertoire, the individual ‘freedom’ and personal expression associated with jazz contrasting with the intuitional and national identity associated with the anthems.

¹⁰⁴ I later wrote and arranged music for Stingray (see Fig. 6), a sometime 12-piece funk band and also Marlowe, an alternative indie-rock band which received support from John Peel OBE and was signed to Probe Plus Records (the band went on to represent Liverpool internationally at SXSW (Austin, Texas) and Popkomm (Berlin)).

¹⁰⁵ ‘Original’ in the sense that we created our own music, rather than performing cover versions of existing songs. I joined Stingray immediately following completion of my undergraduate studies at The University of Liverpool.

something of its character. This may link to the style (the 'Latin one'), or the 'feel' of a piece of music, e.g., 'aggro' (aggressive), or an image, e.g., 'flowery one'. This sort of naming is evocative of one of the ways Gibson proposes language acquisition is meaningful, as showing perceptual attunement: 'the learning of language ... is not simply the associative naming or labelling of impressions from the world. It is also, and more importantly, an expression of the distinctions, abstractions, and recognitions that the child is coming to achieve in perceiving.' (Gibson, 1968:281)

Figure 6 Stingray performing at Heebie Jeebies, Liverpool (Photo on the left Clare Danêk: c. 1997)



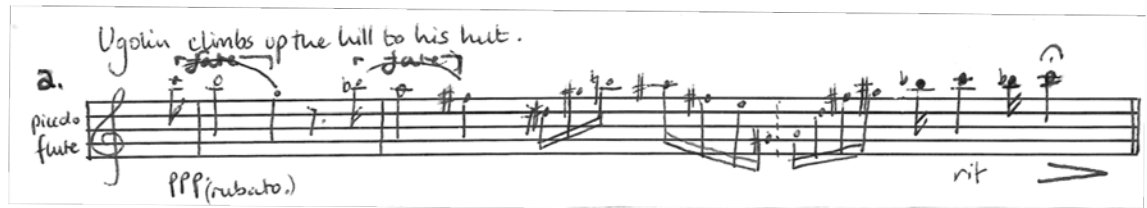
I was attuned to this form of labelling music for its affordances through my undergraduate degree, where Prof. Philip Tagg promoted 'meaningful' musical analysis for 'musos' and 'non-musos' alike with his semiotic method.¹⁰⁶ His modules included musical analysis of a broad range of popular music, including British (modal) folk song, and an open choice of song transcription. This encouraged close engagement with music, and attunement to its details. I completely transcribed Otis Redding's *Hard to Handle* in my first year, in 1993,¹⁰⁷ and under his

¹⁰⁶ Tagg has described his academic path as being afforded by, 'the Mellers parts of *Man and his Music* (1962), ...which had the audacity to suggest that classical music actually meant something outside itself. ...between the music, the composer and the world of ideas and society in which classical composers and their music were active.' (1994:209).

¹⁰⁷ My choice of *Hard to Handle*, which has standard band instrumentation plus piano and a horn section, partly reflects my early professional experience in a soul covers band prior to my undergraduate degree. A horn section is typically comprised of three instrumentalists, e.g., trumpet, tenor sax and trombone. The sensitivity I had developed to music and parallel ability to notate it meant I was encouraged to contribute horn part transcriptions to the group, a practice which is often part of a Musical Director's role (as horn parts were not widely available as publications at the time), despite my being the youngest member of the group. This, combined with the ability to also invent new horn parts/harmonise another's improvised horn riff live in performance, were part of

supervision, in my third-year dissertation I made a complete analysis of the soundtrack for the film *Jean de Florette* (1986), based on the book by Marcel Pagnol. That task sensitised me to the conventional use of modes in film scores; a favourite was the Lydian mode, which features in the last six notes of the example in Fig. 7 below, excerpted from my undergraduate analysis.

Figure 7 Lydian mode in *Jean de Florette* (1986): the last six notes



My education with Prof. Tagg explicitly developed my awareness of musical associations through acquaintance with ‘musemes’ (after Seeger, 1960:76), an analytical term that Prof. Tagg described as the smallest meaningful musical ‘unit’ (Tagg, 1999:31).¹⁰⁸ Labelling musemes requires choosing words that characterise their contribution, by either making explicit existing associations, or if they were illusive, searching for them. In a sense, this naming process identified (at least part of) what each museme afforded the listener-analyst.¹⁰⁹ Further, with ‘museme stacks’, Tagg’s proposes that ‘... the semiotic content of musemes is not

my professional skillset going forward, enabling me to perform professionally in covers bands, and e.g., transcribe favoured melodies for my instrumental students to play, from my final year as an undergraduate, onwards.

¹⁰⁸ Phonemes are, in effect, the musical corollary to phonemes, a basic ‘unit’ of linguistic analysis, itself a component part of Tagg’s method semiotic analysis. ‘Just as replacing the phoneme |b| with |s| changes the morpheme ‘bad’ into ‘sad’, changing one element in one parameter of musical expression (instrumentation, volume, first or second of two notes, underlying harmony) can change the ‘meaning’ of, say, the first two notes of Rule Britannia. But the new note or volume or instrument or harmony is no musical phoneme because each new element is totally dependent on its musical context to acquire meaning and cannot be discretised like the phonemes |b| or |s| or the letters ‘b’ and ‘s’. Music has neither phonemes nor letters. But it does have parameters of expression that act as constituent forces rather than as discretisable elements in the construction of units of ‘minimal meaning’ in music.’ (Tagg, 1999:31)

¹⁰⁹ Tagg’s empirical research extends beyond individual musical associations, to assert wider cultural significance, within a given frame (c.f. *Music’s Meanings*, 2013), however that is not considered in this thesis.

only influenced by their ‘horizontal’ position along the irreversible time axis but also by their vertical context, i.e., by everything [sic] other concurrent sound.” (Tagg, 1999:31). An example of a ‘stacked’ musematic analysis is given in Fig. 8 below. The concept is significant to the research whenever musical ideas are ‘layered’, as on this basis the meaning of each part is informed by the other, proposed as a sonic mutuality informing what each may meaningfully afford.¹¹⁰ The added bonus of Tagg’s musematic method of analysis is that it reflects how musicians sometimes talk about musical ideas, labelling them with nicknames identifying the musical idea’s aesthetic affordance, a phenomenon acknowledged in the discussion of musical ‘nicknames’ in Chapters 4 and 5.

Figure 8 Page one of my musematic analysis for ‘Song for the Dumped’, using Tagg’s method, from my MA course (c. 1999), presented as it was later ‘tidied up’ for use in my teaching

Ben Folds Five, (1997) ‘Song For The Dumped’ (Folds, Jesse). *Forever and Ever Amen*. 550Music 4866982

		Time	0’00”	0’01”	0’02”	0’10”	0’11”
		Section/mood	Introduction		‘No holds barred rockin’ bar blues’		Lighter moment
Museme stack (instruments)	Voice		Shouting count		(Tacet)		(Tacet)
	Piano		(Tacet)		Emphatic, Repetitive, riffing bluesy piano with episodic marker		(Tacet)
	Electric bass guitar, slightly distorted		(Tacet)		Pumping chugger bass	‘Subtler lead in ...’ episodic marker	Short downward slide, then tacet.
	Drum kit		(Tacet)	Snare ‘loud here it comes’ episodic marker	Splashy big drums		Splash into ‘funky drum’ feature

NB not to scale.

3.2.7 Music technology for aesthetic agency

My knowledge and use of recording technology is referenced in each case study in Chapters 4 and 5, and is a skill set initiated and encouraged by my father, who had experience as a mixing engineer and a working interest in the area. In Fig. 9 he is

¹¹⁰ This is proposed to work in a manner similar to the distinct possibilities afforded by chord choice to harmonise a melody discussed above.

Figure 9 Left to right, my father, sister, and I, listening back to sounds we had recorded on the small tape recorder from his work. (Mary Mullett:c. 1978)



showing my sister and I (c. age 2 and 3 years respectively) a project from his job at National Semiconductor; together, we are exploring a tape recorder which has no speaker, listening to a recording we made through stereo earpieces.¹¹¹ This is proposed to exemplify my early, formative attunement to recording music and the encouraging context in which I grew up. Electronic instruments were regularly introduced in the home including a drum machine to perform with one hand which included a sequencer, and a light-sensitive theremin which I built from a kit, soldering the circuits myself. Perhaps most significantly, at around age 13 my father gave me a 4-track tape recorder which we set up in my room for use with a digital piano. With this came help to understand and explore the basics of gain structure and the functions of a channel strip, common to all (specialist) recording devices. Musically, the 4-track afforded me the ability to ‘layer-up’ sounds;¹¹² I recorded *Camargue* and my GCSE blues piano piece with this technology, able to experiment with choices of tempo and to improvise different options for melodies and structure to arrive at a preference based upon experience of the music as a listener

¹¹¹ The tape recorder was part of a project my father was working on for Commodore UK: the PET All-in-one computer.

¹¹² This is the now basic recording technique of overdubbing, or ‘sound on sound’, an innovation widely credited to Les Paul who experiments with this from the mid 1930s into the 1950s were highly influential on music recording techniques used worldwide (Burgess 2014).

to my own recording. Later experimentation at c. age 17, layering up piano melodies to record my string quartet composition, is proposed to exemplify Barab and Roth's effectivity set (2006). By recording my string quartet as described, skills spanning musical knowledge of melody and chords, musical texture, performance on piano, improvisation and string quartet composition were assimilated into recording as an agential course of action. Thereby, these formative uses of music technology are proposed to have significantly extended my performative musical agency and existing attunement to musical texture, so that I could explore and experiment with how ideas related to each other within a composition. This form of exploration and musical 'shaping' with technology for aesthetic outcomes is the basis of the primary insight discussed in Chapter 4's third case study, 'aesthetic agency'.

When, many years later in 2008, I was loaned a MacBook Pro for work, it was relatively easy for me to use it to run Logic Pro software, and to demonstrate digital recording and basic production as part of my lecturing role. In fact, the same MacBook Pro laptop is what I used to record all the case studies presented in Chapters 4 and 5. Logic Pro was accessible to me partly because its editing function is navigable by those familiar with Microsoft Word,¹¹³ and because its graphical user interface (GUI) emulates a recording desk channel strip with which I was already familiar via my first analogue 4-track recorder. This meant I was (genetically) attuned to what to seek within Logic Pro to achieve a recording. The same year, I purchased a USB audio interface to connect the MacBook to microphones, so I was equipped with a home studio.¹¹⁴ Successful recording practice was afforded to me through trial and error (perception-action) to avoid/increase distortion etc, enabling me to attune to and develop affordances of recording and production, and compare the impact of different performances of the same music. Over time, I became more adept at recording and production, to

¹¹³ It uses some of the same shortcuts, 'cut', 'copy', 'paste', etc.

¹¹⁴ Courage to experiment and teach myself was not solely due to musical experience, I had been encouraged to programme using Basic, a computer language, before the age of 8, and while I was no expert, I certainly had no fear of technology, which alongside access to resources, was part of the context which afforded me to teach myself.

the extent that I introduced it into my song writing courses in Higher Education. I felt these skills were essential for songwriters, to be able to make their own demo recordings and develop the knowledge to be able to converse with those recording them in professional studios, for example, and sensitise towards the ability to achieve different effects with microphone choice and placement, to advance their own musical values. Within each case study, the affordances of my music technology skills are identified and shown to have creative consequences as their use is nuanced and refined as I attune to each project. In the arrangement chapter, the uses of recording technology are closer to my early experiences with recording, capturing compositions and layering up textures. Within the composition focus of Chapter 4, the use of music technology includes this, but is also more experimental. *Le Spectre Rouge* shows novel integration and performative use of Logic Pro for a live film score; two of *Instar's* touchstone insights are afforded with music technology experimentation ('boinga' and 'sub-bass'). The last case in Chapter 4, *Purchase, May 14th*, illustrates how sound-on-sound recording can be enrolled in creative course of action to 'self-collaborate', as I respond to and improvise alongside my earlier recorded self.

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter has identified how my musical perception was attuned to creative possibilities through exploration of my instruments, and the attendant sonic consequences. The learning of musical conventions such as scales and chords is recognised as a form of enculturation, part of the wider, rich educational induction I received into a range of music practices,¹¹⁵ within which I developed musical values. These values were identified and pursued as attunement to musical interests, through exploration of instruments, repertoire and jazz practice, so that action taken to create a sound is at once perceptually attuned to culture, by virtue of being informed by it, and also to intentionally 'shaped' to afford specific cultural characteristics in line with my musical values. In this sense, present musical

¹¹⁵ Not even all of which all are listed here: Neil Davison co-administered the Radcliffe Rollers at my secondary comprehensive school, and Colin Morris sought out the professional West End scores for us to perform for the school musical, etc. The team there also ran the only A-level Music course in the north of the city, explicitly to support a few of us who were interested.

affordances also point backwards in time, to past experience of attunement to culture. In the practice under discussion for the thesis, significant amounts of the music made is based on action consequences of listening to sound while playing, and of recorded 'mini-improvisations', played back to sensitise towards their affordances, and to enable selection. Choice of musical ideas is based upon a range of parameters, including musical associations, and how the ideas 'stack up' as a whole and in sequence. In other words, the affordances enlisted are multimodal (Krueger, 2014a), enlisting haptic activity to produce the sound, and listening activity, applied to modify the sound in the moment.

4. Composition

This chapter presents composition case studies orientated by a project remit set by myself or a brief that foregrounds my own intent.¹¹⁶ Firstly, the *Le Spectre Rouge* case study illustrates nested affordances within musical courses of action by probing the creative consequences of canonical affordance in film music. It connects musical instruments, ideas, and on-screen action to structured improvisation, to propose the insight ‘film as score’. The second case study, *Instar*, is a multimedia dance collaboration created in fulfilment of a self-imposed, site-specific brief. *Instar* offers insight into decision making processes as afforded by ‘touchstone events’, proposed to orientate the practice by making explicit emergent creative and musical values and permitting forms of selectivity within the creative process. The third, final composition case study is a piece composed in response to a brief from BBC Radio Merseyside for *Light Night Liverpool*, 2019. *Purchase, May 14th* ‘flips’ DeNora’s aesthetic agency (1999; 2000) to propose that a composer’s responses to her music in creation may afford her ‘aesthetic agency’; the sociocultural information of my response informs my intentional ‘sculpting’ of a musical object comprised of events in ‘Adjacent order and successive order’ (Gibson, 1968:276), as a designed opportunity for auditory exploration in a musical ‘slice of time’. The chapter thus identifies the creative constraints of instruments, media, structural convention and affect as actionable phenomena within courses of creative action, to propose perceptual attunement to musical values as fundamental to affording my creative practice.

¹¹⁶ The commission set a social, commerce-bound context and a subversive goal, rather than any prescription of genre as may be the case with some forms of composer commissions (Weber, 2001).

4.1 *Le Spectre Rouge (The Red Spectre)*

4.1.1 Situation

In 2014, *Silent Liverpool* was a regular event at Mello Mello, a venue local to me where musicians performed their own music live to accompany silent films. From what I saw at the event, it was ideal for developing creative ideas: the curator Matthew Dolan typically cued a very warm reception for musicians and their music such that the music performed ranged from musically 'apt' to more experimental interpretations of the films. As a creative framework, this attracted me, so when Matthew advertised an open call for contributors, I volunteered. In terms of film choice, I suggested science fiction because I thought that could complement the programme while adding a little novelty. More pragmatically, I had relevant resources for such a theme, as I had recently developed ideas by playing around with a hardware pitch shifter applied to the individual melody instruments I played, or whole recordings. This produced 'other-worldly' effects by shifting the music into different registers, often heard alongside the original sound. Science fiction was not an established genre in the silent film era, so Matthew sourced a fantastical film featuring 'magical' camera trickery techniques, relatively common in early film. Made by Spanish film maker Segundo de Chomón, the film chosen was *Le Spectre Rouge* (1907), which translates as *The Red Spectre*.

In my situation, my perception has been attuned by specific analysis of film music conventions (c.f. Chapter 3 and Tagg, 2013), i.e., the learning of associations (Gibson, 1968:273). It is proposed that as these conventions exist as sociocultural phenomena, perpetuated through their repeated articulation and experience within culture, they constitute canonical affordance (Costall and Richards, 2013). Attunement to film music conventions serves to make on-screen events actionable, offering constraints for selection as compositional courses of action. Strachan refers to the 'action consequences' afforded by sound's materiality; in a film context I have re-interpreted this as 'actionable events' referring to the 'events' of film's on-screen content which materially inform the possibilities for action afforded to film composers (Strachan, 2013:8) This is not the same as suggesting that convention

renders creativity a fixed, all-but pre-fabricated phenomenon, but it is proposed that composing film music includes navigating choices in relation to these known conventions. Convention is part of the affordance triad, in its socioculturally constituted environmental sense (Windsor, 2004:193; Costall and Richards, 2013) and in my case connects my practice to the localised set of conventions at *Silent Liverpool*. Broadly, it is the relations between the practice, the enrolment of local and wider cultural conventions, and the courses of action necessary to create and perform my film score which are presented in the affordance ecologies below. Creativity is afforded by on-screen movement and the characters' visual identities, interpreted via cultural convention and the affordances of my practice with its specific tools. The collective term applied to these insights is 'film as score'.

4.1.2 Affordance ecologies

4.1.2.1 Attuning to the film

I did not have lot of time to write the music, the total time spent creating it was eight hours over two days. First, I learned how to import the film into Logic Pro,¹¹⁷ an important tool within the process, enabling synchronised, overdubbed recording and playback to the film and consequently an expansion of my musical agency and sound world beyond what I could individually perform live at the event.¹¹⁸ I familiarised myself with the content of the film, which in ecological terms may be interpreted as sensitisation towards affording a series of actionable events. 'Spotting' events is a convention of film music composition, attuning to visual contents and visual cues within the film, and logging for (selective) musical interpretation (Tagg, 2013:559). This selectivity is one form of agency within the conventions of film music composition. One convention I followed was that the magical commands of the on-screen characters had sonic consequences, when e.g., an object was set on fire. I began my soundtrack by prioritising these magical commands, editing and inserting the aforementioned 'sci-fi' sounding pitch-shifted sound at the 'magical command' cue points for the length of the film.¹¹⁹ At this

¹¹⁷ The specific software was Logic Pro 9, running on an Apple Mac 2008 laptop with a 15" screen.

¹¹⁸ My use of pre-recorded material was new for the event, it later emerged.

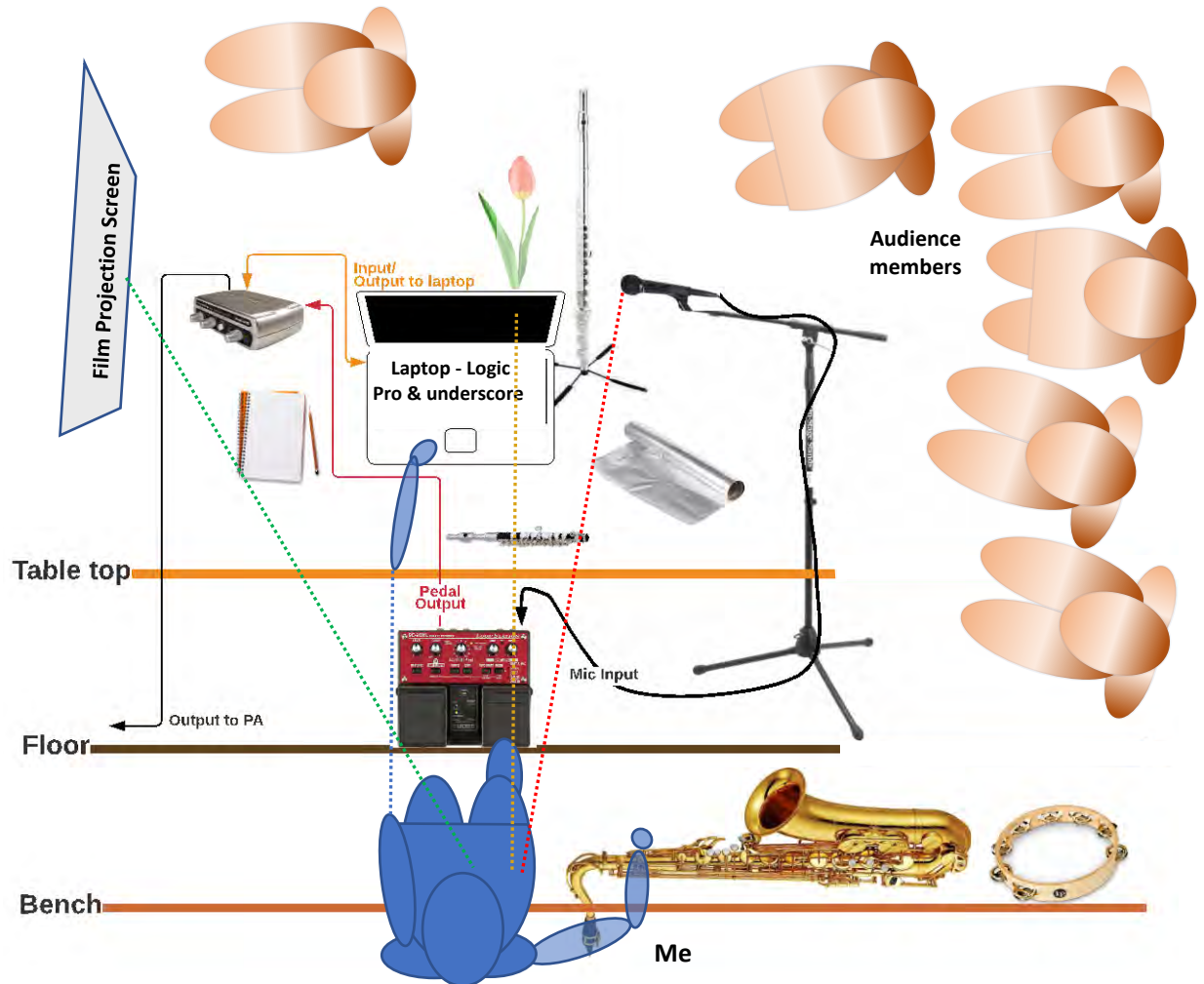
¹¹⁹ In retrospect, these are moments when a contemporary audience would normally expect sound design to be active, while it may have been less so at the time of the film's creation.

point I used slightly higher sounds for the female than male character's magic, beginning the process of gendering the sound world I composed. Carrying out this task further familiarised me with the film's on-screen content, its 'magic' and supernatural activity, and changes in tone, as the content runs the gamut from 'sinister rising coffin' to ritualised levitation and 'living portraits', humorous for being presented by the demonic *Spectre* of the film's title, now keen to entertain. With this range of on-screen content in mind, I considered using my instruments to perform live, as required by *Silent Liverpool*, and specifically how to meaningfully distribute music for flute, piccolo and tenor saxophone across the film. This now forms the thread of the discussion of the music created, to more fully articulate the aforementioned interpretation and application of gender conventions, and also of on-screen movement. This last is well documented as affording conventions in film music composition (Tagg, 2013:540-541; Chion, 2018:11) differentiated by my perceptual attunement in interpretation to afforded my musical selectivity, before considering how I performed my music as a course of action, to exemplify perceptually attuned nested affordance in my structured improvisation.

Attuning to my developing courses of action as I worked at home, I developed a layout which I recreated at the venue, shown in Fig. 10 below. Planning for courses of action is evident in how most tools are to my right (I am right-handed), as I had to configure my musical tools so that I could swap instruments in a timely manner in the small space available to me. This included the microphone, and the foot-controlled looper pedal on the floor. The laptop, looper and mic are configured to afford harmony from my melody instruments, as well as the playback of pre-recorded chordal material, extending my creative agency in the performance event. The sounds heard were created by a) the natural volume of my live instruments b) PA amplification via my microphone and c) the same as b) but either via my loop pedal, storing and playing back ideas I recorded live, or bypassing that and using the pitch shifting tool in Logic Pro, or using both together. Sitting made sense due to the need to see the laptop screen (yellow sight line), and the best available resource was a table, where I also placed my flute, piccolo, notes and the foil for

the Foley levitation scene. The saxophone did not fit, and so I used the bench for that, and also the tambourine.

Figure 10 Layout of tools for my course of action performing *Le Spectre Rouge*



4.1.2.2 On the action potential of gender characterisation

My formative attunement to Western film music conventions afforded me a 'quick' means to characterise the film's two key protagonists in stereotypically male and female ways. While it is nuanced by the rhythm of characters' on-screen movement, this is mainly conveyed by register choice, i.e., low notes for male, high for female. (From a genetic perspective, I became aware of the potential for the use

of register to denote gender and/or age in my undergraduate studies.)¹²⁰ Instrument selection immediately afforded me aspects of this goal. The male character, the Spectre, dominates the on-screen action as the main protagonist; in the introduction, I interpret him with the tenor saxophone as it affords the lowest sounds of my three main instruments, the others being flute and piccolo, more often applied to the female on-screen action. Thinking ahead to myself performing as a soloist in a room full of people, I decide to get the audience's attention at the start, and so begin my structured improvisation using the tenor saxophone to play a loud fanfare. Fanfares are a conventional musical cue to command attention commonly used for that purpose in ceremonies (Tarr, 2001). I nuanced this idea harmonically, melodically sounding out a diminished seventh chord, which is often associated with 'horror' (Tagg, 2014:227),¹²¹ to afford an intense, 'demonic fanfare'. This chimed with the deep red of the film's colouration and as the coffin rose, foreshadowed the male protagonist's (initially) menacing persona. Parallel harmonisation of the saxophone is afforded by my technology setup, playing into the mic (bypassing the loop pedal) and triggering the automated (pre-programmed) pitch shift data in Logic Pro, calibrated for my chosen interval (harmonised below at a compound major third);¹²² in balance with the live input level on its Logic Pro input channel, this achieves parallel harmonisation in two parts. The result is a musically unsettling accompaniment afforded by Logic Pro to augment my musical possibilities in performance.

The film affords the 'shape' of the fanfare I perform, as I loosely track the slow upward motion of the demon's coffin, proposed as static attunement to the film: I start low with longer notes and rise in pitch, increasing rhythmic activity until the demon appears wearing a skeleton costume, in front of the upright coffin. This is shown in Fig. 11 (a), which graphically illustrates the pitch and rhythm of my improvisation, the tenor saxophone's fanfare in the top line, and the lower line

¹²⁰ I wrote an essay comparing the music used to represent children in the silent film era with that written for the 'evil' male and female children of *The Omen* film series.

¹²¹ Tagg identifies this chord with 'horror', as established in the silent film era.

¹²² Unfortunately, in performance the PA level was quieter than the soundcheck, so this is quieter than it should be on the performance video.

showing the pitch-shifted harmonisation of the same. I chose harmonisation at a compound major third by comparing choices of interval; it just sounded the most suitably menacing to me when applied to my choice of harmony for the introduction (see Fig. 11 (b)). This segment concludes with the Spectre standing triumphant, his arms out-stretched and bat-like due to his cape, as the fanfare reaches its climactic resolution.

Figure 11 The 'demonic fanfare'

a) The introductory fanfare shown with reference to the on-screen movement:

The figure displays a musical score for Tenor Saxophone in 4/4 time, marked *ff*. The score is divided into two systems. The first system begins with a title card: 'THE RED SPECTRE 1908 PATHE FRERES'. The music starts with a half note G2, followed by a half note A2, and then a series of eighth notes: B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The second system starts with a half note G4, followed by a half note A4, and then a series of eighth notes: B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7. The score is annotated with brackets and arrows indicating the relationship between the music and film stills. The first system is linked to three stills showing the Spectre character in a dark, red-tinted environment. The second system is linked to three more stills showing the Spectre character in a similar environment, with his arms outstretched in a bat-like pose.

b) The diminished seventh chord affording the introduction, shown in the range performed:

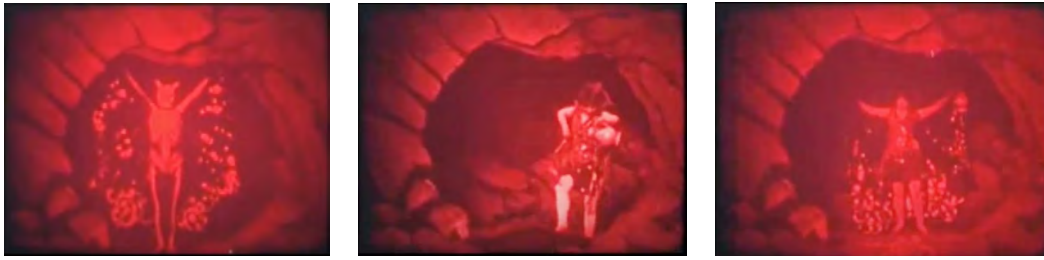
The figure shows a musical notation for a diminished seventh chord in the bass clef. The chord is represented by a stack of four notes: G2, Bb2, D3, and F3. The notes are marked with accidentals: a flat for B and a sharp for D. The chord is shown in a range that is typical for a tenor saxophone.

Figure 11a also illustrates the improvisation's shape, which engages phrase structure through improvisational sub-routines within my knowledge and

performance of a diminished seventh chord. My structured improvisation is afforded by this harmonic choice, which enables a form of prospectivity or 'planning ahead' which 'brackets out' pitch choice, a constraint proposed to free-up some of my perceptual attention to look at the projector screen and follow the film's on-screen action. This is how I successfully track the coffin's rise to synchronise my melodic ascent. Following bar 1, bars 2-4 show the first two notes worked through different rhythmic permutations as two more notes of the diminished seventh chord are added. The improvisation perceptually 'affords itself': the first and fifth bars show a rhythmic phrase structure repeating; hearing myself perform the initial iteration in the first bar is proposed to attune my perception to the potential for its rhythmic repetition within my harmonic choice, shifting up the pitch contour to effect a sequence. This use of sequence is a common practice in jazz improvisation to extend a phrase, or to musically comment upon someone else's phrase. Taken as a whole, these choices and actions are interpreted as a performed, nested affordance which achieves the music for the introduction and the final scene. The film is visually (and musically) 'bookended' by closing with on-screen content similar to that of the introduction. Here, the female protagonist puts down the demon, who evaporates out of his costume with her camera trick 'magic', then dons his cape and takes his powers, assuming his earlier pose of triumph to close the film. This visual similarity is shown in Fig. 12 below, to illustrate the significance of these on-screen events to the music's affordance, as basically same saxophone idea from the introduction plays out the final scene, with slight variation.¹²³ This form of structural affordance is a facet of the proposed insight 'film as score'.

¹²³ The gender conventions applied to this point are thus proposed to be ultimately (locally) undermined by the musical interpretation of the film's narrative device of power attribution i.e., the powerful one is the wearer of the cape, which is how the female protagonist 'wins' at the end of film.

Figure 12 The visual 'bookend', male to female triumph



a) The Red Spectre's 'powerful' arrival at the film's start.

b) In the end, the female protagonist puts him down, and tips out the jug onto him.

c) To end, she takes his cape and assumes his earlier 'powerful' pose, holding aloft the magical jug, triumphant.

The female protagonist, who appears over halfway into the film has an expressly magical visual identity. She first appears on screen via camera trickery, 'magically' appearing from nowhere and disappears the same way. I interpreted these events as synch spots, usually accompanying her arrival and departure on the playback track with 'punchy' sounds (listen at 8:59 in [Appendix 8.4.1.1](#)), in contrast with the relatively high and shimmering 'magical' sounds (created with a hardware pitch shifter)¹²⁴ applied to the other women in the film, who appear in groups (listen at [Appendix 8.4.1.2](#), at 6:44). While the female protagonist's magic underscoring is sometimes similar to that of the other women (i.e., higher and more consonant than the Spectre's magic, listen at [Appendix 8.4.1.3](#), at 12:49), her 'punchy' underscoring is proposed to designate her as his equal, whereas the different 'power' sounds potentially mask her potential to take the Spectre's power. The transition of power to the Spectre's nemesis is paralleled in the visual and musical narrative of the final scene, whereupon she affords the music of the introduction, as triumphant sonically and visually as he was at the start.

4.1.2.3 'Living portraits': nested affordances in focus

At two later points in the film, I continue to use the canonical, gendered register to develop music in relation to women, at a point in the film when the demon has become somewhat domesticated and is presenting magical entertainment. The first

¹²⁴ Aside from the sound FX, all the other pitch-shifting is achieved with Logic Pro software.

'living portrait' the demon presents us with, at 11:32, is set to my classical flute improvisation to accompany a woman, which imagery gives way to present three smaller women who are accompanied by the looped chord, (eventually) being shifted an octave higher (the higher sound maps to the smaller women through a convention of smaller meaning higher, however this is imperfectly synchronised in performance) (see [Appendix 8.4.1.4](#)) I then perform on piccolo, creating higher music again to accompany then changing to the next portrait of a young woman, transitioning to the two men portrayed through a chromatic sequence. Figure 13 below shows how my knowledge of convention was enrolled within a more complex course of nested affordances, including parallel processes (sub-routines) undertaken at the very start of the 'Living Portraits' sequence (see [Appendix 8.4.1.5](#), 10:27-11:01).^{125,126} All six points denoted by the Key illustrate aspects of the nested affordance executed in a course of action; points ①-⑤ are proposed as distinct examples of nested affordances employing more than one modality. By the time the performance reaches point ⑥, the extended affordances of the music technology tools are automated and ongoing, thus the agency afforded for point ⑥ is similar to the strategy employed for the fanfare segment discussed above. Point ① shows afforded co-ordination starting the BOSS Loop Station while playing the flute; this and the sound FX being played back in Logic Pro demonstrate the extended agency afforded to the music by the music technology tools employed.

¹²⁵ The bourgeois amiability of the entertainment in the 'living portrait' segment is what afforded my decision to create my 'Victorian' flute improvisation, voiced as a flute solo constrained to enact a canonical affordance associating femininity with the flute. NB This was not the case in the 18th and 19th century, but as for the command sound FX, the creative response to the film is not claimed as contemporary to the film's production.

¹²⁶ A complete summary of the musical content and film as score insights in this section is available in Appendix 8.4.1.6, for reference.

Figure 13 Nested affordance in the performance of the 'living portraits' scene of *Le Spectre Rouge* (see below for key)

The musical score is divided into three systems, each with four staves:

- System 1 (Measures 1-7):**
 - Flute solo:** A melodic line starting with a circled 1 (①).
 - Foot-operated looper pedal:** Shows 'Record mode on' at measure 1 and 'Recording off, playback only' at measure 7.
 - Flute on Loopstation:** A melodic line starting with a circled 2 (②) and a dynamic marking of *p*.
 - Laptop pitch shifter/FX:** A line with a circled 3 (③) and a 'gliss' effect.
- System 2 (Measures 8-15):**
 - Flute solo:** Continues with a circled 4 (④) and a circled 5 (⑤). A dynamic marking of *p* is present.
 - Foot-operated looper pedal:** Shows 'Overdub recording on' at measure 8 and 'Playback only' at measure 15.
 - Flute on Loopstation:** Includes chord markings for (Am), Am, and a repeat sign with 'x6'.
 - Laptop pitch shifter/FX:** Includes two instances of 'Magic' FX.
- System 3 (Measures 16-21):**
 - Flute solo:** Starts with a circled 6 (⑥) and a dynamic marking of *mf*. It is divided into 'Playing around modulation to dominant' and 'A minor arpeggio'.
 - Flute on Loopstation:** Includes chord markings for Amb⁵ and Am.
 - Laptop pitch shifter/FX:** Includes a sharp sign (#).

Key:

- ① co-ordination of flute performance and loop pedal to the film
- ② correction of laptop pitch shifting
- ③ spacing out starting overdub pedal recording and new note in ④
- ⑤ performing the third note of the triad, avoiding dissonant clashing by not recording it to allow playful use of D#s (e.g., bar 17).
- ⑥ this point to the end of the example illustrated in this Figure is all based on A minor arpeggios/scales, and the aforementioned D#.

That said, the doubling at the octave afforded by Logic Pro was initially mistaken and corrected by bar 3 at point ②; correcting it in performance is proposed to be a further nested affordance. At point ② I stagger adding a new note, initially overdubbing the original note ('A') to ensure the overdubbing function was successful (listening back in performance to check for the thickened texture), before adding the 'C' in bar 11 at point ④. At bar 13 I switch the Loop Station to playback only, completing the minor triad at point ⑤ by performing an 'E'. I did not record this onto the looped accompaniment as I wanted to afford my improvised solo the freedom to include D#s without affording dissonance with the extended agency of the accompaniment; I was 'ok' with that being the case for 'A'/'G#s' as at bar 21. Overall, compared to the fanfare discussed above, Fig. 13 is proposed to exemplify a more complex course of agential action as a nested affordance, due to including more sub-routines.

4.1.2.4 Interpreting on-screen movement for compositional courses of action

For the next four segments of the film discussed, the music is afforded through a concurrent enrolment of conventions to interpret events on screen through gender, motion, and time. Following the film's opening segment, the demon's urgent, up-tempo pacing and searching is what conventionally affords my interpretation of tempo and meter, which I articulate in a tango style on a single line, again improvised (but unharmonized) on tenor saxophone. This is intended to playfully mirror the demon's dramatic searching activity, underlined by the music switching from the relatively free-time meter of the fanfare into the demons' (mostly) regular meter. Irregularities in meter (additive rhythms) are inserted both for interest in a simple musical line, and to mark the demon's frequent changes of direction. The short notes of my monodic tango meant I could concentrate on the on-screen action and respond to my identified visual cue for the longer phrase leading to the next idea, which accompanies the entrance of secondary characters, a quintet of women. I co-ordinate a low note with the demon's downstroke magical command (at 5:55 in [Appendix 8.4.1.7](#)), raising it an octave with the emergence of the female quintet posing in a manner reminiscent of a tableau vivant.¹²⁷ I continue this note and grow it into a melancholic phrase in waltz time as they begin to dance in a circle; when the women transform into flying (swinging) burning rocks, leaving the demon alone on screen, I play the same phrase an octave lower (proposed to also add a note of disappointment). These simple choices of octave represent a course of action proposed to be informed by the conventions of pitch for gender, and also triple-time with dancing.

The next segment, bridged by further magical commands/sound FX, is where the demon 'causes' two women to levitate, in sequence. For this segment, the approach afforded is 'layered'; I use my voice to accumulate notes of a cluster chord, overdubbed with the LoopStation as the onscreen action unfolds, to afford a high, gentle, eerie quality. As the first levitation begins, I afford the chord a rising

¹²⁷ The films later 'reveal' of a larger cave also features women posing in a manner reminiscent of a tableau vivant.

glissando, the pitch shift plugin in Logic Pro affording me to shift the chord's pitch analogously to the woman's rising levitation by sliding my finger on my laptop's track pad, to synchronise arriving at the 'top' together. At this octave, the chord sounds even more ethereal, and 'feminine' (my voice is proposed to be identifiable as a woman's voice). After the first woman is 'risen', she then disappears; the cluster chord continues and is shifted back down to its original performed pitch, to accompany the second levitation. This time, I add to the ongoing vocal cluster chord to perform Foley with tin foil, in an attempt at humour (which got a few laughs) and a nod to the Foley artists of the silent film era and beyond, then repeating the rise, with a more dramatic vocal glissando the second time, to maintain an element of novelty.

One 'magical' segment featured three jars, each with a shrunken maiden inside. Here I underscored the action with harp, tentatively stepping up a scale as the demon moves from one jar to the other, pouring in a liquid which makes the jars' contents more visible, and then creating a more rapid scalar passage, with different harmonic characteristics, for each of the three times he turned a jar. For me, this engaged (genetic) reminiscence of the rabbit scene in the soundtrack to *Jean de Florette* (1986), which I analysed as an undergraduate: while it is not the same idea, as more rabbits enter the discussion, another voice enters the musical texture.¹²⁸ 'Film as score' was applied in a singular fashion towards the end of the film, the last of the 'living portraits' in fact, where the reversal of the film itself made me think of reversing a piece of piano music I had recently composed and recorded for a work in progress. Its use with the reversed film resulted in a somewhat nostalgic effect, to my mind (see [Appendix 8.4.1.9](#), at 11:59).¹²⁹

¹²⁸ The use of fugue is a clever application of textural 'accrual', and very witty in my opinion: see Appendix 8.4.1.7 for my undergraduate transcription.

¹²⁹ The 'smoke' sound immediately prior to the reversed piano is a recording of the steamer from the coffee machine in the same venue, which I had made earlier in the week; I had tried to think of more ways to include the sounds of the cafe, for fun, but for reasons of relevance this is the only one that made it to the score.

4.1.3 Conclusion

Overall, this case study has shown how film may 'scaffold' music composition by offering a template for the placement of musical events and affording application of musical conventions through a composer's agency enacted through selective musical interpretation of on-screen content. In this particular composition, the conventions explored and applied are musical entrainment to movement, and a gendered application of tessitura. In performance, it distinctly demonstrates the creative affordances of my classical training and jazz education, combined with my sensitisation to film music conventions, and the opportunity of the creative context provided by *Silent Liverpool*. The nested affordances exemplified in performance represent a distinct mapping of affordance theory onto this form of musical creativity, familiar to some as 'structured improvisation'. Aspects of the canonical affordances of instruments (Mooney, 2010) are shown to be in play, however, music technology subvert the melodic limitations of my pitched instruments and singing. Further, music technology 'freed me up' to perform Foley, affording a convention of the silent film era, and performatively affording a layer of humour and/or detail to the events on screen. Thus, music technology enabled me to expand my agential arc. The situation and affordance ecologies presented above permit interpretation of the *Silent Liverpool* event as an extended affordance network (Barab and Roth, 2006:5), in which applying my improvisational skills and knowledge of canonical affordance to the interpretation of the film resulted in the insight 'film as score'.

4.2 *Instar*

4.2.1 Situation

Instar is a devised multimedia project in music and dance, performed at the *Music Since 1900 Conference* (2013), and re-worked for performance at the Cornerstone Festival the same year. I initiated the project with artist-scholar Sarah Black-Frizell,¹³⁰ later augmented by artist-lecturer Gemma Breed. Our proposal for the conference (a lecture-recital) sought to explore, 'what it means to situate praxis in informal, formal and virtual contexts' (Appendix 8.4.2.1). Thereby, our proposal was simultaneously a self-imposed creative brief, combining Sarah's site-specific dance practice and emergent choreography with my PaR musical enquiry into values and musical agency in musical creativity. It gave us licence to creatively explore Axis OpenSpace, where I had a residency, and the performance space for the conference at Liverpool Hope University (LHU), The Capstone Theatre. The former felt informal, largely due to its corridor/entrance function and unpredictability, not least as a social entity as people gathered to talk or simply entered/exited the space; The Capstone Theatre felt very different, as it is not only dark and cavernous in comparison to Axis OpenSpace, but it is also much more 'controllable'. Its specialist equipment affords planned alteration of environmental light and sound, with fixed seating formally cueing a likely seated audience, their role likely being to sit still and leave movement to those occupying the stage.

As a specialist practice, our approach to site-specificity is broadly commensurate with Gibson's discussion of specialist information pick-up in wine-tasting expertise. For, while we likely all have the physiological potential to creatively sensitise ourselves to spaces, or to attune our taste buds to the nuances of wine, this requires the conscious education of the senses beyond common levels of interest or motivation (Gibson, 1968:147).¹³¹ Consequently, perceptual attunement to our practice within our self-imposed brief is how we learned to 'detect what have been

¹³⁰ Since completing our project, Sarah received her doctorate.

¹³¹ 'The perceptual system, however, is capable of more discriminations than are usually demanded of it. A man can learn to discriminate wine if he chooses to do so, and a police dog can easily be trained to discriminate among men.' (Gibson, 1968:147).

called the values or meanings of things, educating our attention’, and to respond to their ‘distinctive features, putting them in categories and subcategories, noticing their similarities and differences and even studying them for their own sakes... .’ (Gibson, 1968:285). The ‘things’ in question for *Instar* include the objects, people, environments, sounds and movements with which we developed the practice, to create performative events with a beginning and end affording specific qualities.

The overarching insight for this case study is ‘touchstone event’, proposed as a concept which connects individual and shared experience of practice, i.e., how it ‘touched’ me, and how that experience impacted the value of that practice to inform its selection/deselection for performance within the collaboration. Review meetings were a key context in which touchstone events were articulated to discuss and establish the merits of our recent practice. Phenomenologically speaking, this verbalisation brought specific elements of our practice into shared consciousness, to co-create a narrative context drawing from i) individual, immediate (static) experience of affective, social and pragmatic elements, and ii) responses based on our individual, existing (genetic) attunement to cultural associations and artistic values. By explicitly articulating the felt, ‘given’ connection between the activity afforded by our practice and our individual experience of meaning and values in music, dance and media, we constituted ‘touchstone events’. The term ‘touchstone’¹³² is used here to reflect the sense of something explored, revealed, and tested for consistency; it also reflects the thesis’ interest in enacted musical values, as for the contemporary use of the word, which stands for a test or the means for judgement. These two uses of touchstone derive from its etymology, identified with the practice of using ‘a black siliceous stone related to flint ...to test the purity of gold and formerly silver by the streak left on the stone when rubbed by the metal’ (Merriam Webster Dictionary, ND: online). In this context, an ‘event’ is an affordance of music, dance or media, with a beginning and end, such as a melody, section of music, a gesture or a sequence in a danced duet; ‘meaningful’ activity is proposed as those events, emergent within the practice,

¹³² The term ‘touchstone’ arose in one of the first review sessions with Sarah Black-Frizell on 4/1/13.

which afford pragmatic and/or affective elements. While Sarah and I did not use an actual stone, our discussions of events revealed values in the creative affordances we enacted; we ‘rubbed’ the experience of our eventful practice with words. This is the means by which creative affordances are proposed to be selectively differentiated, by attuning us to touchstone events which consequently legitimated specific courses of creative action within the developing practice, to create the performance *Instar*. The affordance ecologies below present a series of contextualised touchstone events which exemplify some ways in which selectivity was active within the practice, as agential, value-based courses of action.

4.2.1 Affordance ecologies

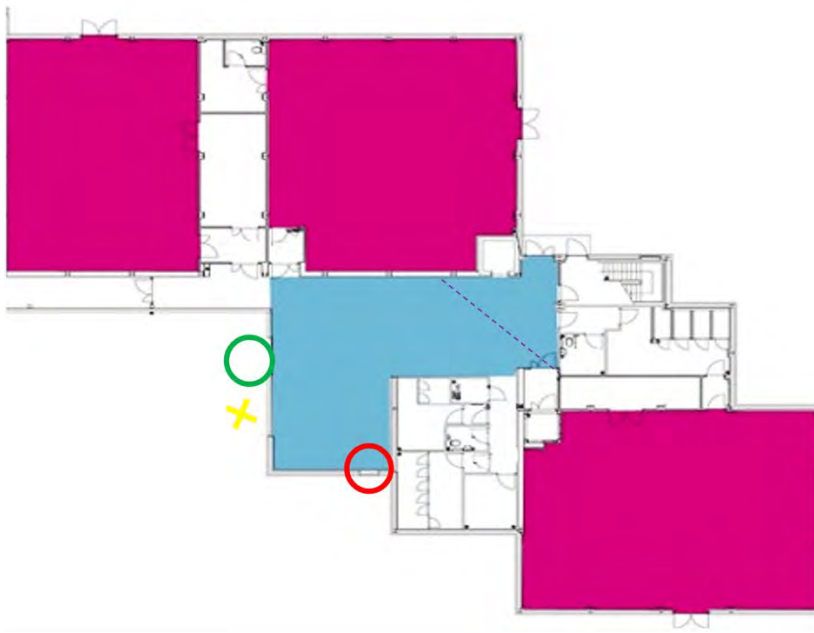
4.2.2.1 Perceptual attunement in the Axis OpenSpace

The practice which Sarah and I developed in the Axis OpenSpace was especially important for establishing our working relationship, familiarising each other with our different areas of practice. The influence of the physical architecture upon our practice developed in that space is possibly most obvious in *Instar’s* initial lighting design,¹³³ discussed with reference to Fig. 17, below, and in the music of the introduction and finale. As a practitioner in the space, its outstanding characteristic is that Axis Open Space is highly social. The floorplan in Fig. 14 below shows the Axis OpenSpace in blue, with its nine entrance and exit points for the staff and students studying on campus.¹³⁴

¹³³ For the first edition.

¹³⁴ More fully doors open on to Axis OpenSpace from the pink shaded performance and lecture spaces, white bathroom and dressing room facilities, corridor, lift, stairs and outdoor access via the sliding glass door, not to mention the fire escape (making 10 entrance/exit points).

Figure 14 Floorplan for Axis OpenSpace (in blue) and its nine entrance points¹³⁵



I had experienced issues in a previous residency in the Axis OpenSpace when experiments with feedback had, understandably, caused other users some discomfort. Musically, I responded to those issues by creating comparatively warm, comforting sounds, layering up ideas in loops and improvising with less dominant melodic ideas. It was to these textures that I returned with Sarah (who brought her new-born daughter with her) and a similar texture features in *Instar's* finale.

The following excerpt in Box 1 is taken from my account of the first day's work with Sarah. It points to features of our early attunement to Axis OpenSpace, each other, and our practice together, which foreshadow elements of *Instar's* final form and content. The excerpt begins by recalling our shared train journey on the way home that first day:

¹³⁵ The key to the symbols is: green circle for the window in Fig. 2, the yellow cross is where I was standing to take the picture in Fig. 3, the green circle is the location of the door in Fig. 5.

[...] Watching the video on the way home, Sarah spoke about terms which are meaningful for her as a dancer, underpinned by Limón technique, such as fall and recovery, breath, suspension, swing, the difference between shape-driven dance techniques and Sarah's chosen approach which is not externally driven- it is not about 'shapes' as such as there is constant movement-transition. There was a movement which came from a specific musical gesture which we both noticed when reviewing the video, and which was a bit like 'catching a wave', or something, which we could draw out. It's a theme or a motif or an idea...

I [...] was conscious of not liking some of the more generic sounds in the improvisation, but there were moments which came through and were more evocative, I wanted the music to be intriguing. I also really like a fulsome, ambient sound, but the more intimate moments when I lowered the volume to be sensitive to the baby's ears was different again, perhaps something to be considered. Mixing pre-prepared and live elements is something to be considered, I'm hoping to develop more musical vocals so that I can watch and respond to Sarah more, which is what I was trying to do more in the second improv. In the last video, chatting with Sarah, I found myself talking about arcs, which I'll review!

We talked about the visual aspect of the space, [...], and the textures and the light

filming the view which would be there if the wall wasn't there, projecting that...

[...]

Sarah noted the character of the space and a diagonal line where the two legs of the 'L' met, diagonally crossing the entrance.

In addition to underlining my preference for ambience, in the account above, I describe developing ways of responding to Sarah's movement, and combining live and pre-recorded sounds; this is in fact what was achieved for the performance of *Instar*, with the finale featuring vocal improvisation in response to Sarah and Gemma's movement. Clearly, I am keen to avoid working with overly familiar, generic ideas, expressing an aspirational value judgment that I wish to develop the music to offer comparatively more 'evocative' associations. This goal was most

likely achieved by the sub-bass section, discussed below, as after reviewing the experience of performing *Instar*, this is the section which orientated a re-working of the introduction. This is also one of the sections where Sarah projected onto the back wall, creating a different 'space' beyond the confines of the theatre, similar to the idea expressed in Box 1. While the lighting design and the projections are not my music, their relevance is that they are part of the environment in which the music was designed to be experienced and is thus part of how we attuned the audience to our performance; this is perhaps most apparent in the discussion of 'boinga', below.

The reference to 'catching a wave' in Box 1 is one of Sarah's phrases, encapsulating a moment of synchronicity that occurred in our parallel exploration of improvised music and movement. Sarah's expertise as a dancer and a dance scholar means that her response to musical pulse is not necessarily one of entrainment (or moving 'to' the beat), it was simply one of many possibilities for movement 'in relation' to music. Equally, some of my music did not have a regular pulse to entrain to, and aspects of the choreography for *Instar* clearly establish their own pulse and/or 'tempo'. This last is the case for the sub-bass section, where movement is conventionally in opposition to the overall temporal 'feel' of the music (discussed below). 'Catching a wave', however, points to a kind of momentary synchronicity, where movement and music catch our attention for being aligned somehow. This is a feature which we afforded the introduction of *Instar's* first performance. Here, sonic and movement events occasionally 'catch a wave', partially, or fully as at 2:18,¹³⁶ occurring towards the end of Sarah's use of the downstage/upstage axis lit to create a door/path (see Fig. 17, below). Sarah loops her movement from the front to the back of the stage on her light path, the third run of which has a faster internal tempo and contains greater incidence of synchronisation. The experience of that synchronisation is what we meant by 'catching a wave'; it draws focus from the overall impression of the music and is an affordance of the combined practices of music and dance.

¹³⁶ [Link](#) to *Instar* (Appendix 8.1.1.2), starting at 2:18.

On our second day in the space, again, Sarah reviewed video of our practice, noting what it was like returning to dancing after time away on maternity leave, and how she was using her body's trunk; she was attuning to her own body, first. Sarah also spoke about my music, sharing her attunement to it, to the layering of the music and its ambience as she worked, as well as these features:

music is continuous- so nothing really stopping- finding ways to link tempo together but thinking about architecture of own body, not really the building yet. Very circular music... slow moving, shifting things- punctuated with a little energy-really nice. Feels sharp, some of the movement (Autoethnographic account, 9/1/13).

Describing the music as 'circular' identifies the looping feature of the music's texture. For my part, I noticed her use of her hands, saying I saw her 'rolling out of hand movements making you like something that is in water.' (ibid). This showed Sarah I was attentive to her practice, and she explained it is something she is known for, a feature of her practice.

At a later point, Sarah's description of her relation to the site and its architecture has qualities in common with the ambient music I was making. She described her approach as 'filling the space –not just play with air skin-muscle-bone/floor-walls-ceiling textures & layers – ... And textures of her body – skin –muscle-bone' (9/1/13). In this respect my practice appeared more explicitly socially informed than Sarah's, but again, reviewing our work (on video), we found a pose I wanted to keep in *Instar*, which drew a specific association from Sarah, likening it to '...Barbara Hepworth sculptures and hugging something' (9/1/13); below, Fig. 15 shows the Hepworth-like stance that Sarah and I were discussing. Exploring (near) stillness was one way for her to respond to busy social moments of the space, as people moved past us, revealing the interventional potential of the practice afforded by the space. It also shows that while practicing Humphrey-Limon technique was central to Sarah's approach to emergent choreography, as a touchstone event, the stance described above was also explored for its affordance as a shape, and for its affective relation to an imagined 'other' under her arm.

The literal 'openness' of the Axis OpenSpace space is shown in Figures 15-17, below.¹³⁷

Figure 15 The Corner in Axis OpenSpace



In review, Sarah noted a diagonal line where the two legs of the 'L' met, diagonally crossing the entrance (shown as a dotted line in Fig. 1, above), indicative of how Sarah was attuning to the physical properties of the site. Similarly, the pattern of paths reflected in the glass as I entered and exited the space caught my eye, and the photograph captured something of the diagonal pathway quality that are emulated in the lighting design for the performance, shown in Fig. 17.

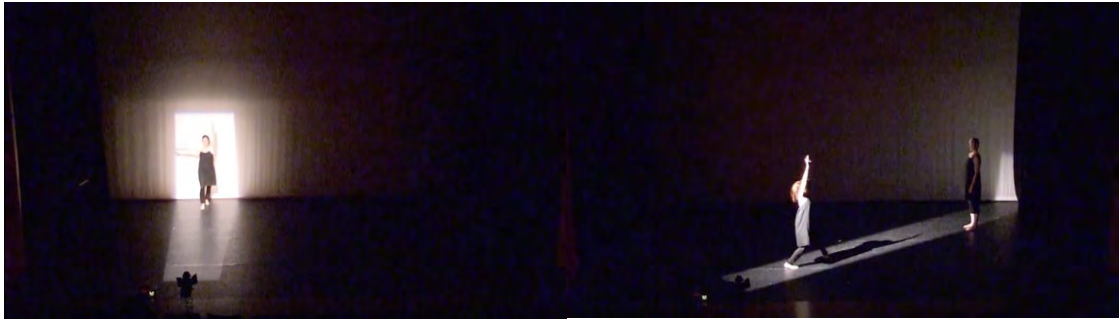
¹³⁷ Figures 15, 16 and 18 may be mapped to the floor plan above via their annotation with red and green circles and a yellow cross.

Figure 16 'Inside-outside': my photograph showing the natural reflection of the exterior on the glass façade acting as a lens to view our practice (Chloë Mullett:2013)



In Fig. 17, below, the left-hand image shows how *Instar's* first performance began, the one on the right shows how Gemma Breed entered the performance, in the following section. The 'doors' and 'pathways' in the lighting design resonate with the journeying theme which Sarah made explicit to a colleague when preparing our second performance of *Instar*, discussed below. For me, the ability to engage so directly in *Instar's* visual identity so directly was a new development for my own artistic identity. Further, as the images in Fig. 17 demonstrate, this process led, collaboratively, to elements of the designed visual context of our performance afforded by the Capstone Theatre.

Figure 17 Axis OpenSpace site transposed in the Capstone lighting design for *Instar*: on the left, a door/window and a path, on the right, a (diagonal) path



The OpenSpace's name affirms not only its social character a corridor with entrances and exits, but also its transparency by virtue of its glass frontage; the outdoors feels on a continuum with the indoor experience, and everyone is visible to everyone else, 'inside-outside'. This last is another of Sarah's verbal characterisations; the photograph I took in Fig. 16, with its layers of reflection, shows Axis OpenSpace's 'inside-outside' character, capturing the natural reflection of the exterior on the glass as I chanced upon it, standing at the yellow cross in Fig. 14. This is the photograph we used in our publicity material for our first performance of *Instar*. It also developed my sense of artistic identity, as it meant I contributed a means to frame the project, visually, beyond my observable, performative choices and physical presence with other performers and choosing what clothes to wear, to give the music a visual identity; despite music's fundamentally sonic definition is often an explicit part of musical communication.

We collected sounds in our time at Axis OpenSpace, recording them to use in the performance, which I drew from to create *Instar's* introduction. The picture below (Fig. 18) shows me recording the sound of the aforementioned sliding glass door (indicated in Figures 14 and 18 by the green circle), part of the glass façade extending along the majority of the wall.¹³⁸ The door made a distinct 'wobble' sound as it slid; we inevitably became attuned to this as it was winter.¹³⁹ This is the first sound of *Instar's* introduction ([Appendix 8.4.2.2](#)), and is followed by sounds

¹³⁸ Its glass façade is partly why Sarah also termed this space the 'goldfish bowl'.

¹³⁹ Fixing the doors open would have made the space even colder for all.

including those I encouraged Sarah to record on pushing her daughter's pram around campus (exemplified in [Appendix 8.4.2.3](#)).¹⁴⁰

Figure 18 Collecting sounds in the 'goldfish bowl', specifically the 'not-so-silent' sliding door, Axis OpenSpace.



In tandem with the practice, we developed conversation about it, making comments in pauses, chatting while packing up, with more formal discussion at the end of the day. After the first day we discussed our progress on site in an adjacent room; we continued this on the way home on the train, reviewing our video documentation (as for Box 1 above). Sometimes there was a sense that we shared affective experience; our connection to the 'sub-bass' and the finale train/accordion music were the most positive examples of this. It was a touchstone event because we established common ground, agreed areas of the practice we considered were working, and what was not working for our individual practice. Less comment was made on each other's practice, for my part this was due to appreciating Sarah's work, but also, we became more explicit in our responses to the practice as the collaboration progressed.

¹⁴⁰ These sounds were presented 'naturally' and manipulated. Appendix 8.4.2.3 exhibits the pram wheels turning, and a section of the same sound repeated in close succession (looped) with EQ effects applied to alter the pitch.

4.2.1.2 'Boinga': A touchstone event in the Capstone Theatre

'Boinga' is the name given to a touchstone event in the Capstone theatre when Sarah and I re-started our collaboration (3/7/13). It is an example of how some previously composite touchstone events, comprising music/lighting/choreography, were split apart and used independently of each other to explore new effects.¹⁴¹ Approaching the conference date, we took the opportunity to work in the space we would perform in at the conference. We moved the tables on the stage to the side, and I set up playback of audio close to Sarah and myself, on a little rig that I brought with me.¹⁴² We were trying out music I had made at home to see how it played out in the theatre space, nick-named 'Boinga', for the bouncing it inspired.¹⁴³ Sarah began to develop movement, and while she was exploring, attuning to possibilities, I decided to experiment with lighting, as the 'work lights' in the theatre seemed to suck inspiration from the space for us both.¹⁴⁴ I played around a little with the onstage panel of 'standard' light settings, an opportunity to adjust the environment to the practice in a way which was 'opposite' to the opportunity afforded by Axis OpenSpace. Fig. 19 shows the 'lit' effect in that moment. The rhythmic effect afforded by alternating between darkness and light to reveal Sarah's continuing movement was somehow powerful, exciting, certainly elevating the effect of the music in combination. This is perhaps one of the intangible experiences I cannot fully explain beyond acknowledging the phenomenon and its significance as affording me a touchstone event.¹⁴⁵ Comparison of the video documentation of the 'Boinga' touchstone event ([Appendix 8.4.2.4](#)) with *Instar's* finale ([Appendix 8.4.2.5](#)) show the influence of this touchstone event, which in fact separated out the

¹⁴¹ This re-working of an affordance a something in common with the musical parsing insight proposed in the next chapter, but the context for that form of development is highly fixed compared to *Instar*.

¹⁴² I set up a Marshall Valvestate amp connected to my M-Audio digital audio interface to playback music from Logic on my laptop.

¹⁴³ (This reflects the discussion of nicknames and affordances in the thesis). On a technical level, I had been experimenting in Logic Pro with the rhythmic effect of close and multiple delay, with multiple 'tap' points. Each tap point specifies the length of the delay, and the volume at which the repetition occurs. I also had a desire that not all the music for *Instar* would be slow-moving, or at least it felt important to explore options, so I had been keen to share 'Boinga' with Sarah, who was receptive.

¹⁴⁴ Sarah speaks of 'passion-killer lighting' in the Axis OpenSpace, too (9/1/2013), which I interpreted to mean she is sensitive to lighting states within her practice.

¹⁴⁵ In retrospect, it resonates with the personal narrative that Sarah voices in the outside-eye event for the second version of *Instar*, but it is not possible to conclude that.

lighting and dance from the music. The static images below in Figures 19-21 give a sense of how we developed the idea, creating an environment to attune the audience's experience to the music and dance of the finale.

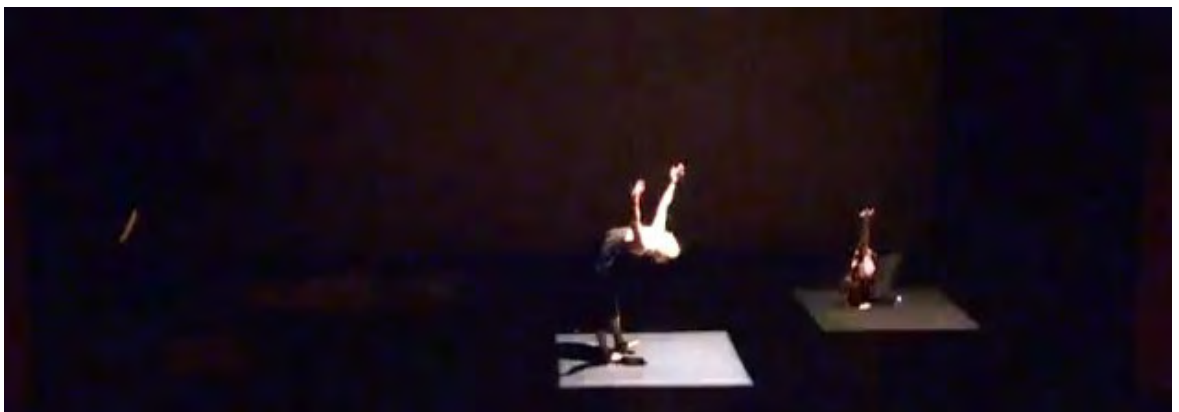
Figure 19 Experimenting with the Capstone Theatre's fixed lighting options, with 'Boinga'



Figure 20 Developing the lighting from 'Boinga' with the technician, with options to focus lights



Figure 21 Still from the final lighting design: image shows two of the three square spots from the first performance of Instar.



Moving the flashing lighting state to the finale reflects a canonical affordance I associated with a 'finale'. My (genetic) sense of it is that as the last part of a performance, a finale conventionally offers a sense of climax and/or resolution; from a Western classical music history perspective it is acknowledged that the last movement of a piece of music has a role to play for being 'the final part', 'rarely would a suitable commencement for a first movement, serve also for the theme of a Finale' (Czerny, 1848, quoted in Talbot, 2001:1). General understanding of a finale in theatre adds to this the idea that 'spectacular effects, music or revelations are used to end the show 'with a bang' and make the audience applaud wildly. In a musical, this often involves a reprise of earlier music / songs' (TheatreCrafts.com:no date).

Within the lighting states explored, the 'Boinga' lighting design is most certainly the most climactic. However, the music for 'Boinga', is not, it is much lighter and was unsuited to placement at that point for other reasons,¹⁴⁶ and the choreography took a different turn too- so the connection to the original touchstone event remains, but only in one modality, to create a new touchstone event in the finale, with music and movement which align with that opportunity. With the opportunity to perform *Instar* a second time for The Cornerstone Festival came a chance to re-work it. In its first performance, the 'Sub-bass' section was where we all felt the piece found its feet, and edits were largely made to the project up to that point. The 'Boinga' music was removed from the piece, leaving behind the lighting design it afforded the finale.

'Boinga' is a touchstone event because it resulted in practice that felt meaningful and essential to include in *Instar's* performance, because the connection between the music, dance and rhythmic lighting afforded an effect which no single element could. The ability to alter the environment to afford creative possibilities

¹⁴⁶ The reasons include the order of events, which is part of the insight best exemplified in the next case study, rather than the present one.

exemplifies the contrast of creative affordances between the Capstone Theatre compared with the original location of the piece at Axis OpenSpace, which effectively forced us to work ‘the other way around’ so that we adapted to the site.

4.2.1.3 ‘Sub-bass’: a touchstone event alone

The section that became named ‘sub-bass’ was an important section of *Instar*, and possibly the most interesting, musically. I took some time in the large dance studio at LHU, to experiment. I had recently been extending my pitch-shifting experiments and had found a means in Logic Pro to make my flute playing dramatically lower, using a sub-bass plugin with a range of filters to develop different effects. I loved playing my flute in the dance studio, it was such a reverberant space, which I found flattered my flute playing, making me feel freer to play. It was a special day; the light in the room was beautiful, as I played, and the sun set, on what had been a very sunny day. I was sure, when I recorded my efforts, that I had hit on something that was going to complement the project; part of the sense of the day and the stillness I felt while playing seemed wrapped up in the phenomenon of the music. I played with the sub-bass material to arrive at a ‘stretching’ of the melody I had performed and recorded, manipulated to playback in the sub-bass range, and then improvised some flute music over the top, which I also harmonised using pitch shifter. This is the section that was augmented with live performers, at Sarah’s request, explaining she wanted something to ‘play off’ onstage. I transcribed the music for musician friends who kindly donated their time to the project for rehearsal and performance (Anna Boggan, flute; Andy Frizell, bass clarinet; Holly Rogers, flute). The pitch shifting is shown in the parallel movement of e.g., the two flutes at the top of page 2 in Fig. 22, below.

Figure 22 The hand-written score for the live ensemble music performance element of *Instar* (first version only)



4.2.1.4 *Instar II*: revising *Instar*'s introduction; an 'outside eye'

The first introduction is the part which most literally represented the Axis Arts Centre, sonically, and contained Sarah's sole solo, which she was ready to let go.¹⁴⁷ For our second edition of *Instar* at The Cornerstone Festival (7th December 2013),

¹⁴⁷ I really liked Sarah's solo performance at the beginning, but she was keen to re-work it as a duet.

we felt able to revise the original introduction, as we were no longer tied to the details of the abstract's premise which originally framed our creative activity. Soon after our first performance, after reviewing the video, Sarah and I met and agreed a few things: a further touchstone event (3rd October, 2013).¹⁴⁸ We agreed that the sub-bass section was where the piece found focus, for Sarah it was 'dark' and got 'darker' from that point, which I did not agree in terms of how the piece developed, but agreed in terms of working on the introduction to lead to the existing strengths of the work. We both wanted to work with the shadow effects produced by the projectors, and include projections directly onto people; Sarah wanted to work specifically with projection onto skin (Appendix 8.4.2.6). These ideas were worked into the new introduction. Six weeks later (17th November 2013: Appendix 8.4.2.6), my further reflection identifies the introduction as 'stark'; I consider how to soften it and become more 'liquid' with imagery, and to experiment with musical atmospheres to find what works to lead to the sub-bass section. Later the same day, I identify the possibility of working with a piece of music I had begun at home and developed in my MMU Cheshire Axis OpenSpace residency (referred to as 'sax tiles', Appendix 8.4.2.6: 17th November, 23:11hrs). The music itself had been an important early step in my PaR journey, when I started to establish making and recording music at home; I had a very strong affective connection to the piece, it was a creative touchstone for me individually, influencing my creative goals. On site at MMU in the OpenSpace, it took on a cowboy theme in collaboration with a young performance artist using cowboy archetypes to explore themes of masculinity. For that project, I had experimented with an instrument I was unfamiliar with, resulting in a drifting, lazy harmonica part, working alongside a flute part and selected train sounds which created a sense of a wide-open space.¹⁴⁹ The overall effect is atmospheric, quite 'fluid' due to characteristics of the flute and harmonica elements, which coheres with the later elements of *Instar for*

¹⁴⁸ Due to other commitments, Gemma Breed was generally less available to meet, but her feedback was taken into account within the process, and she featured in the second introduction.

¹⁴⁹ I had developed a palette of self-recorded, edited train sounds for a midi wind instrument piece, *Singing Trains* as part of my PhD practice. The sounds were collected based upon their musical interest to me, and so represent an element of my musical agency.

the common use of my train recordings, and the shared 'reed' quality of the harmonica and accordion.

Gemma and Sarah developed movement and video materials, I had assisted and got a sense of what they were doing. It retained an aspect of the solo 'facing-off' the audience idea which had been part of Sarah's strategy for the first introduction, but this was a moment which Gemma performed, and which was revealed from a standing start, after moving to the floor, shown in Fig. 23. They asked me for something that could work to accompany the more intimate start in development, and I offered my cowboy music. The tentative quality of its flute melody somehow suited the vulnerable and intimate tone of the choreography and video projection; each has a slow-moving, 'emergent' sensibility.

Figure 23 *Instar II: a new start*



In preparation for performing the second edition of *Instar*, Sarah invited a colleague from the dance department to view a rehearsal. The colleague's feedback prompted Sarah to make explicit a further significance of the piece, explaining that it expressed the relationship between her and Gemma Breed, and their identities as friends, working mothers, and artists. Sarah's cueing of the autobiographical authenticity of the project attuned her colleague to the performance and became significant for my interpretation of the work as a whole. Journeying imagery is present at almost every stage of *Instar*: its lighting design affords paths and doors,

the former apparent through their onstage use ‘channelling’ movement; a train journey is projected onto the back wall; train travel sounds and a harmonica (associated with train travel in blues music) accompany the start. Sarah and Gemma’s choreography of effortful, looped repetition moving across the stage for the ‘Sub-bass’ section tacitly articulates their lives lived in parallel, often while appearing as multiple selves refracted by shadows caused by the projections used to light their dance (shown in Fig. 24, below).

Figure 24 Exploring multiple selves in light and shadow



4.3.3 Conclusion

Within affordance theory, the reviewing process for *Instar* is identifiable as a form of context-making, as it creates a social space for the verbal articulation of what our collaboration afforded us, in practice. In this way it attuned us, collaboratively, to the creative ‘objects’ we created in practice, though these are perhaps more properly termed events as they were enacted over time, and to the experience of making them. It is the latter which is the second component of the ‘touchstone events’ insight proposed, as certain moments of creativity stood out within our emergent practice for their affective impact, or sense of ‘fit’ with the project’s existing and emergent framework. They were important for orientating and

sustaining development of the work in tandem with its tacit, ephemeral and ineffable elements, which it is proposed remain the province of practice. It is therefore proposed that touchstone events may be interpreted as the result of developing a specialist form of selectivity (Gibson, 1968:286), which enables 'clarity' about the 'objects' created within the project's creative framework, which 'reinforces' the project's identity (Gibson, 1968:271).

Sarah's use of language to describe features, often alliterative and/or poetic, helped me to arrive at the touchstone events insight; her characterisation of experience and features of the space and what it afforded us as practitioners helped us to identify the value and use of the sites, and what it was like to be in the spaces: at Axis OpenSpace, we were 'inside-outside', in a 'goldfish bowl'. She also used words to articulate her overarching personal narrative for *Instar II*, changing the context afforded for my interpretation of the work. For my part, I afforded a flexible relationship with my collaborators; Sarah has spoken to me about the connection she felt with the music, which I invited her 'into'; she felt it strongly evoked the different places and spaces in which the work was made.

Associations such as these, emergent within the practice, were essential for our sense of coherence and conviction when performing the project. Of course, the paradox for the abstract, site-specific work we created is that it is full of meaning for us as performers, but for the audience, there is no way they would know the meaning of the connection for the performers without communication, e.g., a conversation, such as the outside eye event. However, as DeNora identifies (1999; 2000), audience members bring their own associations and experience, they provide their own context, and journey through a piece with their own interests, howsoever they are directed by the performance and staging. Whether that performance event becomes a touchstone for them or not is another question, but the touchstone event insight itself points to the significance of genetic and static phenomenal experience to meaningfully connect to artistic practice and afford creative action.

4.3 Purchase, May 14th

4.3.1 Situation

BBC Radio Merseyside's Popular Music Show (PMS) commissioned four composers to write c. 15 minutes of music for *Light Night Liverpool, 2019*. An annual event since 2009, *Light Night* features local and international artists in a night of varied art forms performed beyond usual opening hours, in conventional and unconventional spaces.¹⁵⁰ *Light Night*'s theme that year was 'ritual'; they endorsed PMS's brief framing shopping as a ritual, entitled *The Ritual of Retail*, whereby the music was commissioned to be played in specific city centre shops and broadcast on the PMS radio show the following Sunday/Monday.¹⁵¹ Part of the brief stated that the music needed to be,

attuned to the idea and realities of retail because a) shops are not silent places b) shopkeepers want to keep their customers in-store c) the theme of Light Night is Ritual so some kind of "formal" character will fulfil the descriptive brief.' (Appendix 8.4.3.1).

These requirements frame the creative agency the brief invited, which in the retail context prioritised shopping over music. The 'audience' was not going to be told to 'shhh, be quiet!' to listen to the music as for some dedicated music spaces. PMS's requirement of a musically 'formal' links to convention and ceremony (Dictionary.com, 2021: online), with associated rule-bound behaviour and ritualised enactment of authority (Kustermans et al, 2021). Within these confines, the brief also encouraged some form of provocation, as each composer was asked to engage in their 'characteristic ironies/nuances and strategies of musical ingenuity and subversion/irreverence.' (Appendix 8.4.3.1). Music played in shops is usually chosen to support courses of action that promote sales, or at least it is not designed to make people leave (Asrinta, 2018), as is everything else about the environment

¹⁵⁰ Worldwide, over 120 cities hold similar events annually, including Canada, Chile, and Australia. The first such event is generally acknowledged as taking place in Helsinki, Finland, in 1989, though the main concentration of *Light Night* events, which go by a range of names, is in Europe.

¹⁵¹ The pieces were also aired on the last two shows in December, rounding up the year (complete with composer introductions).

(pathways and placement of wares, etc.).¹⁵² PMS's brief, to provoke with 'formality' in the shopping context is proposed to be a form of creative tension (Strachan, 2013:18-19), which broadly reflects PMS's commitment to 'alternative' music (Percival, 2007).¹⁵³ Prior to the festival, *Ritual of Retail* was publicised by the PMS team, online and on radio, with the intention that people interested in the project may visit the shops involved, which included the feminist bookshop *News from Nowhere*, and Liverpool's flagship *Lush* store.

The overarching insight for *The Ritual of Retail* case study is aesthetic agency. The concept is proposed as a partner term to DeNora's aesthetic agency (1999), such that compositional activity is presented as structuring degrees of sensory experience, dependent up on the listener's relation re. interest and sensitivity, by providing a 'sculpted' musical object for exploration. DeNora formulates aesthetic agency as the constitution of music's active powers through listening, showing how music may be agentially selected by a listener for how it acts upon him or her in specific contexts (1999;2000). This thesis proposes, due to how listening is active in my creative practice, that DeNora's aesthetic agency is equally applicable to my agency as a composer (or arranger), as how music 'acts upon' me is information I attunes to, informing possibilities for (courses of) creative action, 'resonating' (Gibson 1968:271) locally (statically) with my existing (genetic) perceptual attunement to music as a creative practice.¹⁵⁴ This attentional 'looping back' over composed sound for perceptual attunement is proposed as a type of agential arc,¹⁵⁵ significant in this case study for informing the intentional design of my music. Thus, static refinement of this 'composer-listener's' genetic attunement to music

¹⁵² Wares for sale are usually placed within reach and laid out to garner attention, with pathways designed to channel shoppers past goods with labels and titles turned to face them, for marketeers to optimize opportunities to garner shoppers' attention and interaction (Behera, 2017).

¹⁵³ The PMS show is the BBC Radio Merseyside's sole (fortnightly), alternative popular music programme.

¹⁵⁴ This refers to the above-cited 'object-dependence' of the affordance relation to music, where 'movements or other changes in the object manifestly control the character of the relation to the object or quality' (Noë, 2009, cited in Krueger, 2010:12).

¹⁵⁵ This topic is explored in greater detail in the discussion of the 'listening-for' insight in case study 5.2.

affords the enrolment of musical values relevant to the project, in agential arcs of creative action.¹⁵⁶ This is the experience of the practitioner-researcher's musical composition process. The course of action described, equating to the 'auditioning' of musical ideas, includes sensitisation towards the features as affective experiences and musical association, and the relation of ideas to each other in parallel and in sequence. This is information pick-up which supports identification of affordances for subsequent enrolment in courses of action. Some ideas are left, others kept/added to/amended as a consequence of my ongoing perceptual attunement to emergent and existing ideas in parallel with her developing relation to the project frame as a feature of the creative environment.¹⁵⁷ This compositional approach relies upon music technology to record improvisation, engaging listening-in-performance; the sound objects recorded support a response or further sensitisation through playback/looped playback, to afford sensitisation towards further creative courses of action.

4.3.2 Affordance ecologies

The following discussion begins with perceptual attunement to the brief, then turning to address how sound FX were used. Next, the creation of the fanfare sequence is considered, discussing first three (which become four) flute fanfares and the saxophone and clarinet fanfares (as there is insufficient space to discuss all 11 fanfares). This establishes the approach affording courses of action for idea development through contrast, shaped by listening in performance. The penultimate affordance ecology presents insight into the moulding of a compositional 'whole' from the different compositional layers, finishing with a brief comparison of the four compositions created, to support the concluding discussion of aesthetic agency.

¹⁵⁶ This echoes the idea of controlling inspiration in Meyer's comment, 'It is because the composer is also a listener that he is able to control his inspiration with reference to the listener' (1956:41-2), also cited above. In the present case study context, the constraint of 'the listener' is extended to include the constraints of the creative brief.

¹⁵⁷ This is a form of selectivity (Gibson, 1968:286), though it differs from the 'touchstone events' of *Instar*, as that was a more generalised form of orientation, and the focus of this case study is the specific shaping of ideas.

4.3.2.1 Attuning to the brief

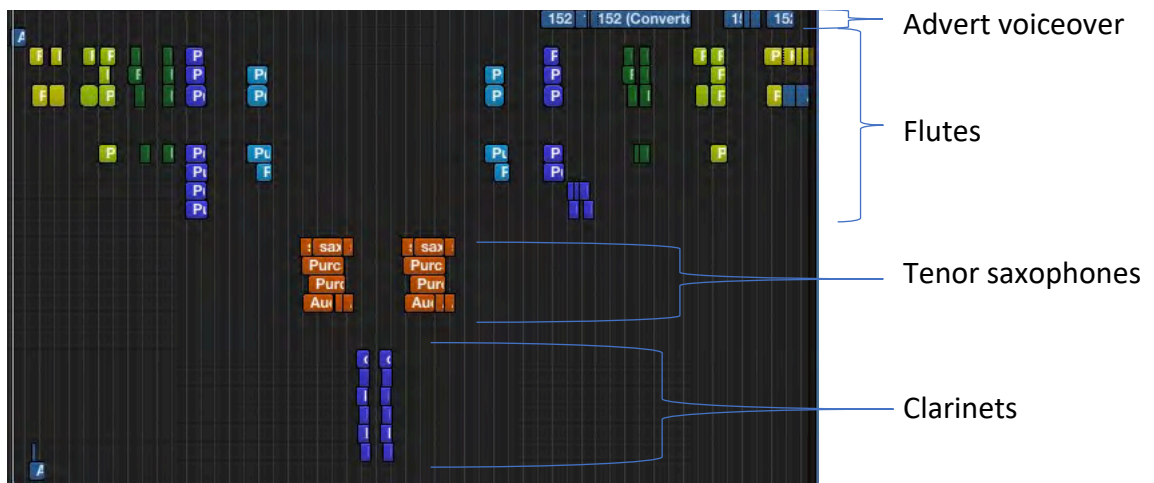
Attuning to and interpreting the brief was an ongoing process as I composed, nuanced each time I revisited the conceptual context when I introduced a new idea. I began with questions, i.e., how to be 'formal' without sounding pompous, how to provoke with subtlety, and wondering how I could be provocative. All shop music risks 'putting off' customers by virtue of not being chosen by any of them, so being invited to be musically subversive in a retail context represents a distinct compositional challenge.¹⁵⁸ It would be easy to fall short of the opportunity to 'subvert' the shopping context as per the brief, by 'playing it safe', or by affording subversion through a musical reference point so subtle or exclusive that few people recognise it. Linking shopping with 'ritual' made me associate it with anti-capitalist ideas, in the sense that rituals may be habit forming, and so represent a compromised form of agency. I wanted to distance my piece from this potential association and avoid any sense of shaming the shoppers or shop keepers. To do this, I connected with the essential kind habitual shopping that people have engaged in for thousands of years, travelling to and from market for food. In this sense, shopping remains essential for wellbeing to this day. I had a set of atmospheric (to me) train recordings I had made, which I planned to include to explore the idea of repeated cycles of journeys to urban markets.¹⁵⁹ Liverpool City Centre's underground railway rumbles underneath many shops, including *News From Nowhere*, so including recognisable 'train journey' sound afforded a sympathetic association on more than one plane. To satisfy the 'formal' requirement of the brief, I worked with an expanded definition of 'fanfares', proposed to be a form of canonical affordance (Costall and Richards, 2013) due to their long-time association with ritual in Western culture. By no means all of the music I created for my piece is recognisable as fanfares in a contemporary Western sense (e.g., brass instruments, playing arpeggiated elements in a ceremonial style); nonetheless, the idea I had in mind as I initiated that element of the composition was fanfares 'drawing attention' in a series of developing phrases (Tarr, 2001). In

¹⁵⁸ The PMS show may well have acted as tacit gatekeepers to the event, approving the compositions to maintain their creative relationship with the festival.

¹⁵⁹ I also considered others from the Freetousesounds website, specifically the subway train recordings from New York City, USA.

terms of structure, I hit upon the idea of adopting a palindromic form, repeating the fanfares in reverse order to reflect the full cycle of a return journey. This was not something I necessarily expected to be ‘heard’ by listeners, but it afforded me a context to develop for the second half of the piece. The agency for this structural decision as a course of action was afforded to me by my instruments and music technology tools (Logic Pro, laptop and H4N recorder), enabling me to record, import and copy-paste the fanfare performances in position to achieve the palindrome of events on the timeline. This may be seen in Fig. 25, below.

Figure 25 The palindrome (penultimate version)



Regarding the brief’s challenge to subvert, I sought a way to ‘walk the line’ of tension I interpreted in the brief’s title to contrast with my existing ‘wholesome’ interpretive base of ‘essential’ shopping. Aware of open-source video available online, which I could import into Logic Pro to strip to strip out the audio track, I decided to search for footage from the U.S.A. in the 1940s/1950s. I associate that period with a boom in materialism and advertising, sometimes satirised in films like *The Truman Show* (1998). With this conceptual ‘triangulation’ in place, i.e., cyclic travelling to market, the idea of the ‘bite’ of a materialistic voiceover, and my palindromic fanfare idea, the strategy for my composition felt defined. Now it was a case of how to ‘colour-in’ my conceptual outline with sound and music.

4.3.2.2 Starting out: a voice of U.S. materialism, and sound FX

The footage I found to use in *Purchase, May 14th* dates from 1942, and is entitled *To Market, To Market* (The Open Video Project, 2001). In it, e.g., a male representative of The General Outdoor Advertising Company explains how repeated cycles of travel by commuters can be commercially exploited through their advertising. The idea of cycles was becoming important and spoke to the project's frame through the repeated nature of ritual, something I later highlighted in my editing of the voice recording. The speaker's voice was commanding (potentially useful for attracting attention in a retail context), identifiably North American, and well recorded while also telling of a 'past' era. I felt these qualities amounted to a suitable distancing strategy to avoid 'shaming', which nonetheless made an arguably subversive comment within a retail context i.e., that shopping may be symptomatic of manipulative materialistic forces in culture, of needs created by advertising in the present day in Liverpool (perhaps even occurring in the shop space), and doing so (hopefully) without causing offence due to the voiceover artist's anachronism.

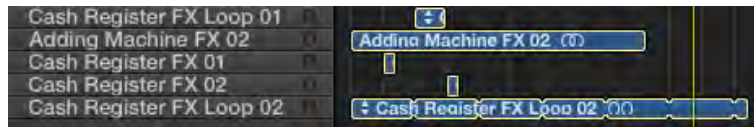
Before launching into the instrumental part of my compositional practice, I decided to explore some stock 'shop sounds', to add some sort of 'fun' element. I found five shop-related sound FX resources in Logic Pro, and experimented with them a little, trying to shape an 'ear-catching' start for the piece.¹⁶⁰ Figure 26 shows my development of an idea as it was displayed in Logic Pro's graphical user interface (GUI), which may be read as each listed sound effect sounding as the yellow vertical line (the 'playhead') scrolls across left to right, across the blue¹⁶¹ oblong/s ('audio region/s'). More than one region may sound at once, hence if were the playhead to scroll from the left-hand side, 'Adding Machine FX 02' would be playing at the same time as 'Cash Register FX loop'.¹⁶² I was not 'sold' on what I had made so far, so I left it in the project file, muted, 'on hold', and turned to my next task

¹⁶⁰ In the past I had developed rapid-fire textures with my collection of 'train bugles'. 'Bugles' is how I term the 'warning' sounds and music indicating 'announcement imminent' at railway stations and on trains, often using very few notes, often resembling a fanfare in some way.

¹⁶¹ Audio regions may be other colours too, as shown in the figures below.

¹⁶² In Fig. 24, as shown, only track 25 playing 'Cash Register Loop 02' would be sounding if the playhead were active.

Figure 26 Shaping shop till sound FX



of performing and recording compositional content. I returned to the cash register sounds when I imported the voiceover and experimented with an introduction featuring both and followed with the fanfares. Listening back, it seemed potentially too overwhelming a start, too comedic/commanding; consequently, I moved the voiceover to the second half of the piece. In the final edit I was aware the piece would be aired on radio, and available as a podcast, such that repeated listening may be possible; this seemed like something I could playfully encourage for anyone curious enough to try. I chose three short sound FX ideas and placed them as ‘Easter eggs’, sounds which in my verbal introduction I explained could be sought out. The first of these was used to add a little momentum to the start of the piece, which begins with a till receipt being ripped off to sonically unleash a train in fluid motion ([Appendix 8.4.3.2](#)).

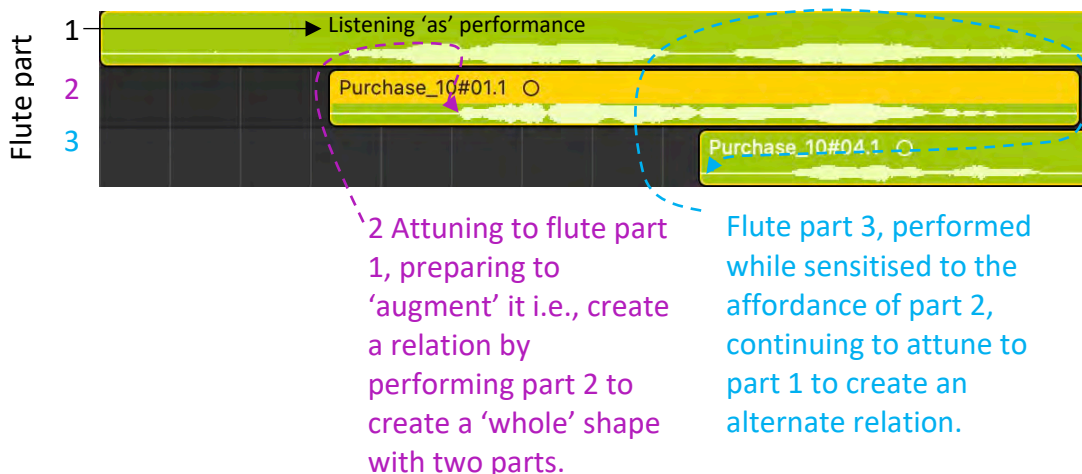
4.3.2.3 Creating the fanfare sequence

As stated above, ‘fanfares’ is what I held in mind as I approached the instrumental music, to create a series of spaced-out, brief, musical ‘events’ initiated as improvised performance.¹⁶³ My strategy was based on my ability to respond to music made with a goal in mind; my response enabled sequential shaping, as well as shaping to refine musical objects to better align with my existing and/or emergent musical values for the project. Consequently, there is a strategic form of contrast in the character of each fanfare re. number of parts, rhythmic and

¹⁶³ In fact, according to Tarr (2001:online), my approach to fanfare composition with improvisation is consistent with 18th century forms: ‘Walther, Altenburg and an anonymous 18th-century author belonging to the Prüfende Gesellschaft in Halle all agreed that a fanfare was ‘usable on all days of celebration and state occasions’ and consisted of ‘a mixture of arpeggios and runs’ improvised by trumpeters and kettledrummers (J.E. Altenburg, 91); a ‘flourish’ in the British Army during the same period was ‘without any set rule’. Heyde has shown that this type of unreflective improvisation, the purpose of which was to glorify a sovereign, goes back to trumpeters’ classicum-playing during the Middle Ages.’

harmonic character, interplay between voices and texture, dynamics, articulation, and timbre. Beginning by playing the flute, I wanted the first fanfare to ‘unfold’; one way to try out materialising that idea was to afford a rise in pitch, meaning I would start by playing ‘low’ in the flute’s range. I recorded this as Flute part 1 ([Appendix 8.4.3.3.1](#)), and then swiftly, with that music ‘in my ears’, I responded with Flute 2 part, ‘joining in’ a little later on the same note, to gently augment the first flute part’s emergence with a unison note, then diverge to add a little harmonic ‘colouring’. I felt the Flute 2 part I recorded started well, but immediately reflected that its second half lost some of the gentle quality I liked, so I revisited that, looping my attention as shown in the dashed lines in Fig. 27 below, with pre-roll¹⁶⁴ set so I could attune to the musical object in design, to record an alternative second half, i.e., Flute 3. Flute part 3 effects a reiteration of fanfare 1’s staggered entry by creating a ‘breath’ of silence and altering the ‘adjacent’ and ‘successive’ relation of the ‘event’ of the two flute parts, as originally the Flute 2 part plays continuously (Gibson, 1968:276). This is revealed by comparing Fig. 27 with Fig. 28. I preferred Flute 3, thus was afforded a course of action, through sensitisation to the musical ideas, to shape the initial phrase as shown below in Fig. 27, resulting in Fanfare 2 ([Appendix 8.4.3.3.2](#)).

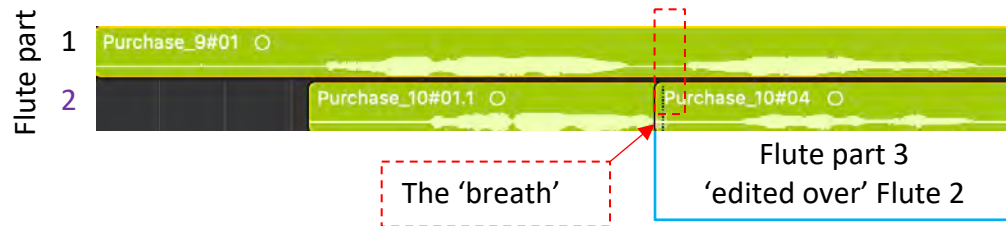
Figure 27 Agential arcs in courses of action: shaping fanfare 1 (which became two fanfares, see Fig. 28)



¹⁶⁴ Pre-roll is the allotted amount of playback time sounding the project prior to initiating recording within that project, enabling a musician to align with the musical context for performance.

The course of action demonstrated in Fig. 28 is proposed as a form of attunement to possibilities for action drawing from my (genetic) skill base in jazz practice wherein creating the Flute 1¹⁶⁵ part through (static) ‘listening as performance’ (Clarke, 2005:152) provided the material source of attunement for then creating Flute part 2, which in turn provided the source of attunement to afford Flute part 3.

Figure 28 Fanfare 1 becomes 1 and 2; re-shaping with flute part 3 achieves a ‘breath’ and ending together



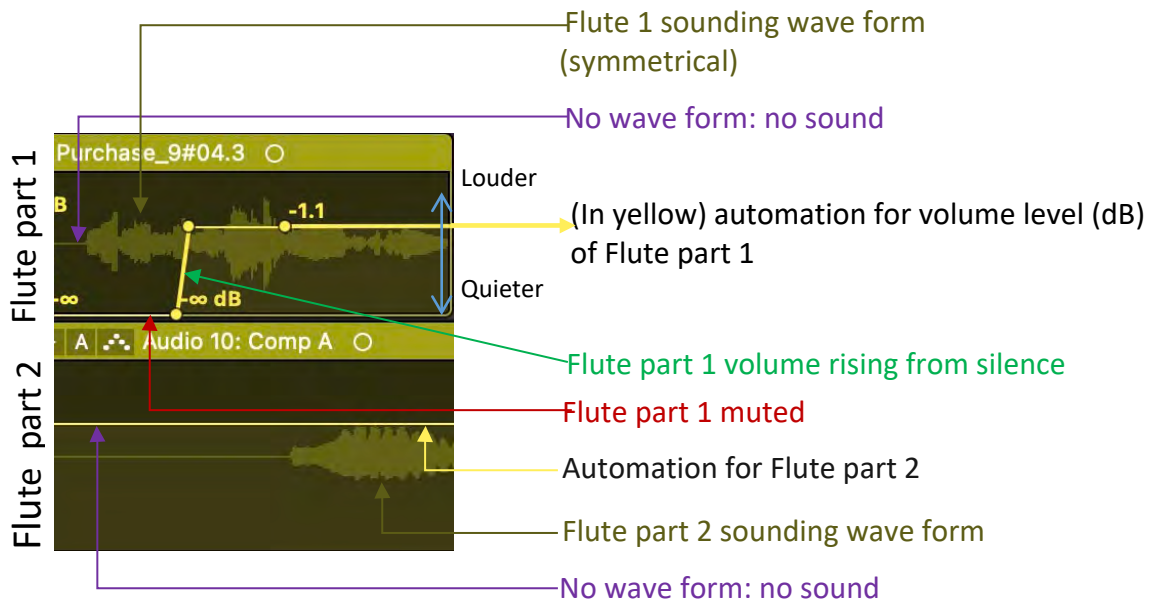
Fanfare 3 ([Appendix 8.4.3.3.3](#)) consequently presented an opportunity to contrast the slow-moving and low-mid range music of the first fanfare pair, again leading with a ‘Flute 1’ part. Initially, I sounded out fanfare 3 in a ‘tick’ shape (✓), playing pairs of adjacent notes in a pentatonic scale moving down to its lowest (mid-range) point then rising quickly to the top note, from where the melody tilted downwards, stepping down holding notes at the interval of a fourth, to finish. Flute part 2 was performed to join underneath Flute 1, rising in contrary motion to Flute 1 with a simple scalic idea, affording Flute 1 a ‘crossing over’ in its descent. As I first performed it, Flute part 1 sounded laboured, too much like a technique exercise, and insufficiently related to the ideas before/after. Figure 28 shows how the first half of the original Flute 1 part was muted at the start: effecting this later, shorter ascent better maintained focus on the ascent’s ‘landing point’ at the top, to my ears. Thus, music technology’s affordances of recording and playback afforded me the means not only to augment my agential listening in performance it also afforded me repeated ‘looping and listening’,¹⁶⁶ with or without recording

¹⁶⁵ ‘Flute 1’ is so designated as it was the first part to be recorded but it also reflects that it is a ‘lead’ part, as for much orchestral writing for flute sections, wherein the second and third parts are usually ‘below’ the others, in pitch. In part, the activity discussed reflects my attunement to this compositional hierarchy from experience playing in orchestras in my formative perceptual attunement to music practice.

¹⁶⁶ Looping and listening is discussed in greater detail with reference to the insight ‘listening-for’ in Chapter 5, in the China Crisis case study.

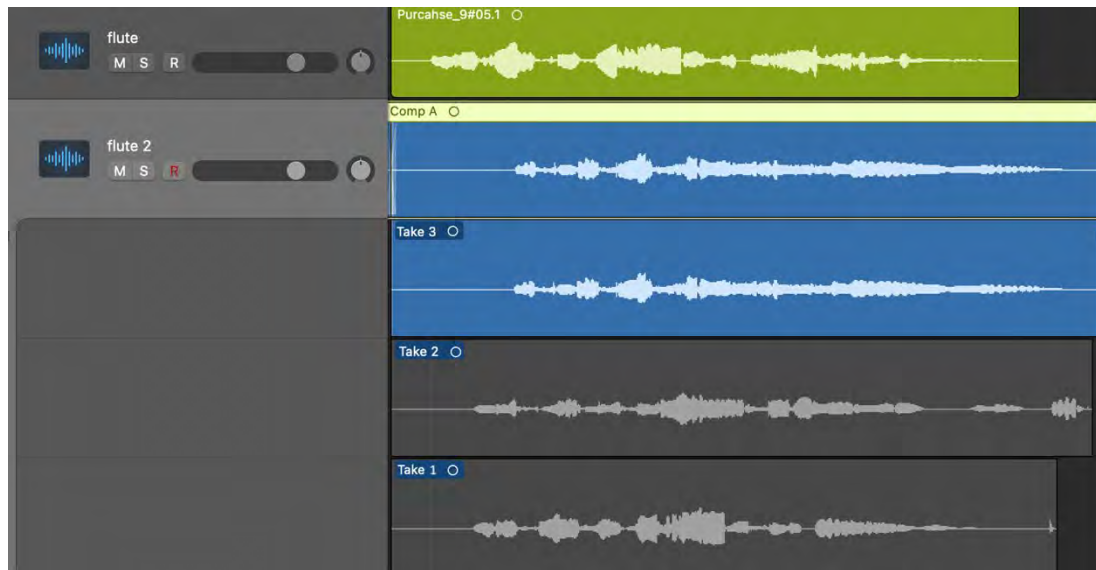
performances, and the agential 'sculpting' and layering up of ideas. This last is exemplified in Fig. 29, which shows Fanfare 3's simple sculpting within Logic Pro.

Figure 29 The start of fanfare 3 showing the 'shaped', muted beginning of Flute 1 using volume automation



For Fanfare 4 ([Appendix 8.4.3.3.4](#)), Logic Pro afforded me sensitisation via comparison of possibilities for harmonising the arpeggio featured in Flute part 1. Within the three takes, I sensitised toward the afforded effects of how closely and precisely the canon was executed, in terms of entry point and starting note selection. The final choice for Flute part 2 was Take 3, which enters later than the first two attempts (shown in Fig. 30, below). This was the material consequence of sensitising my attunement of interest to afford a particular musical value for the Flute part 2. The difference was an adjustment from the straightforward idea of canonical harmonisation to instead to play the first two notes of Flute 1's second sequence before continuing to echo Flute 1, thus softening the overall impression of the canon.

Figure 30 Looping and listening in fanfare 4, two close (takes 2 & 3) and one more distant near canon (take 4)¹⁶⁷



Fanfares 5-11 are now summarised to illustrate their intentional musical value as affording contrasts, as inhered in the course of action taken to create them, proposed as form of selective perceptual attunement to their features in composition. Fanfare 5 ([Appendix 8.4.3.3.5](#)) is unique for delivering a quick contrast ‘hot on the tails’ of the fourth’s slow, layered, canonical approach, initially sounding out a bolder, fanfare-like rhythm in a homophonic phrase which accumulates harmony with four flute parts. The next, Fanfare 6 ([Appendix 8.4.3.3.6](#)), is a flute duet in a high tessitura, contributing a distinct, pointed, harmonic dissonance to the piece, which is repeated¹⁶⁸ with harmonic a variation the second time to afford a harmonic progression; the two parts connect by a pulsing single note, short and up-tempo, representing the piece’s first opportunity for that form of entrainment. In the editing process, Fanfare 6 was positioned to afford a ‘response’ to the train recordings’ sequence of sounds for the doors closing. The seventh fanfare descends to the mid-range and features the only polyrhythmic moment, placed to coincide with some of the light percussive rhythms sounding from the train recording. It achieves a momentary hemiola, building on the pulsing idea of the previous fanfare by harmonised this time

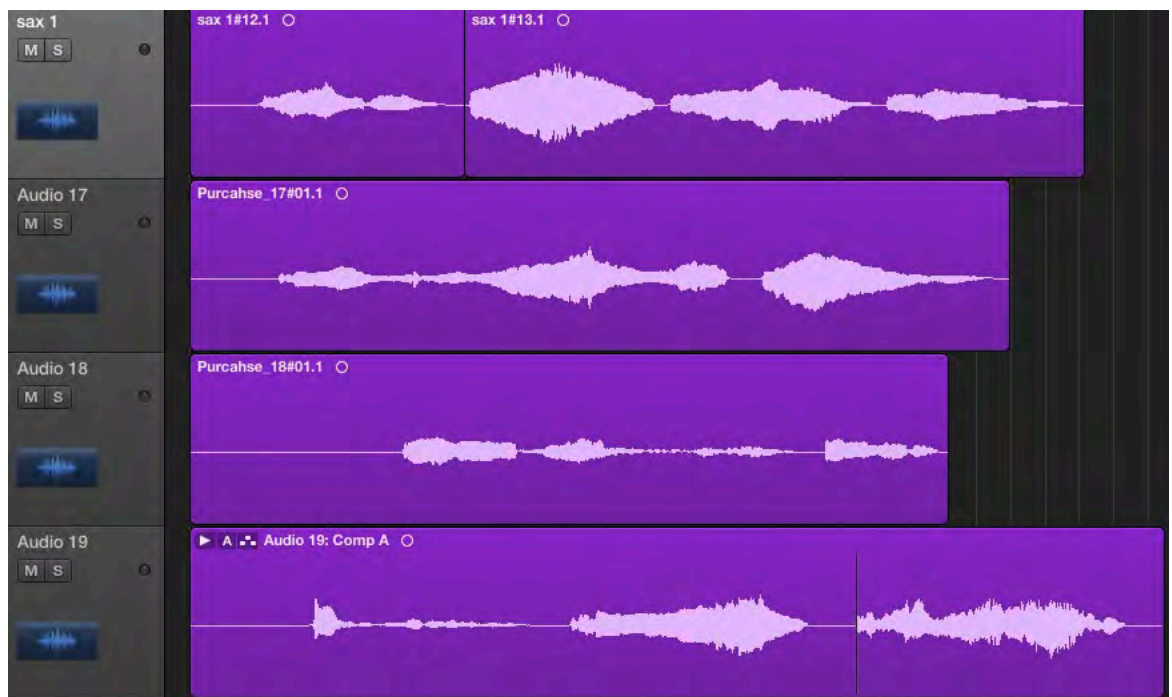
¹⁶⁷ Comp A and Take 3 look the same because they are, Comp A shows Take 3 which was confirmed for the Flute 2 part (in blue and white).

¹⁶⁸ Initially copy-pasted within Logic Pro, the phrase was sculpted with additional part writing and editing.

([Appendix 8.4.3.3.7](#)). The eighth fanfare is placed alongside the pause in motion of the train, ending as the train re-starts; it creates a tender mood from flutes in two groups, the first group starting low affording an accompaniment for the second, high group that soon follows ([Appendix 8.4.3.3.8](#)). Fanfare 9 is formed of a high, slow, 4-part canon staggered one note apart, giving way to the start of the market recording, then overlapped with a train ride recording ([Appendix 8.4.3.3.9](#)); from that point reed instruments feature in the fanfares, marking the centre of the compositional palindrome.

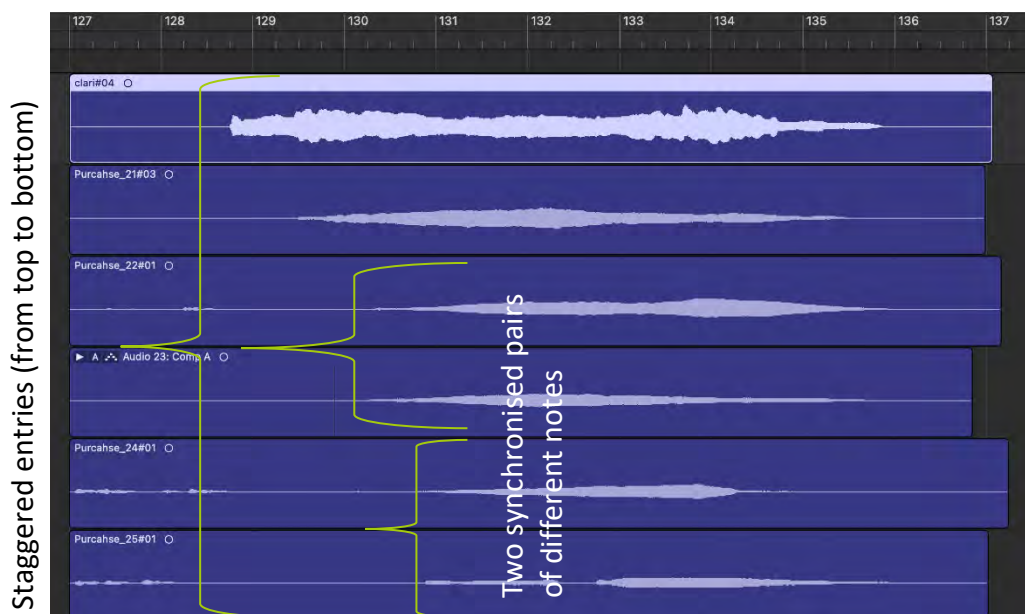
Fanfare 10 switches instrument to the saxophone, achieving a contrast with the previous flute fanfare with more obviously ‘chordal’ writing alongside a change in timbre and lower register ([Appendix 8.4.3.3.10](#)). The waveform graphics in Fig. 31 show fanfare ten’s overall layered shape; each of the three subsequent saxophone parts created following ‘Sax 1’ present a note increasing and diminishing volume, shown in how the waveforms widen and narrow. In a manner similar to fanfare 1, this demonstrates attunement in performance to align/contrast with the dynamic swelling of the previous part, as the change of chord is staggered across the parts.

Figure 31 Passing the attentional ‘baton’ in saxophone fanfare 10



The 11th fanfare introduces and uses solely clarinet (at 6:24 of [Appendix 8.4.3.3.11](#)), affording a brighter in tone as it is written in its middle to high register, which contrasts with the previous tenor saxophone fanfare. In fact, it is positioned to begin immediately following the ‘singing train’ (at the start of [Appendix 8.4.3.3.11](#)) and is followed by a percussive rhythmic feature in the train recording. Its illustration in Fig. 32 is labelled a ‘clarinet wash’, because each clarinet part only has one note (melodic movement has decreased in each fanfare since fanfare 8, in fact). It is the most ‘ambient’ sounding of the fanfares, a genre label which I flag in my verbal introduction ([Appendix 4.3](#) at 48:27, transcribed in Appendix 8.4.3.5), proposed to offer listeners an interpretive frame by referencing contextual information. The wash nonetheless shows some use of dynamic within the parts, to ‘persist’ on long notes, and sometimes with some vibrato. This is the pivot point for the piece, whereupon the music turns back on itself for the return journey, accompanied by The Chicago Advertiser.

Figure 32 The shape of the clarinet ‘wash’ (fanfare 10)



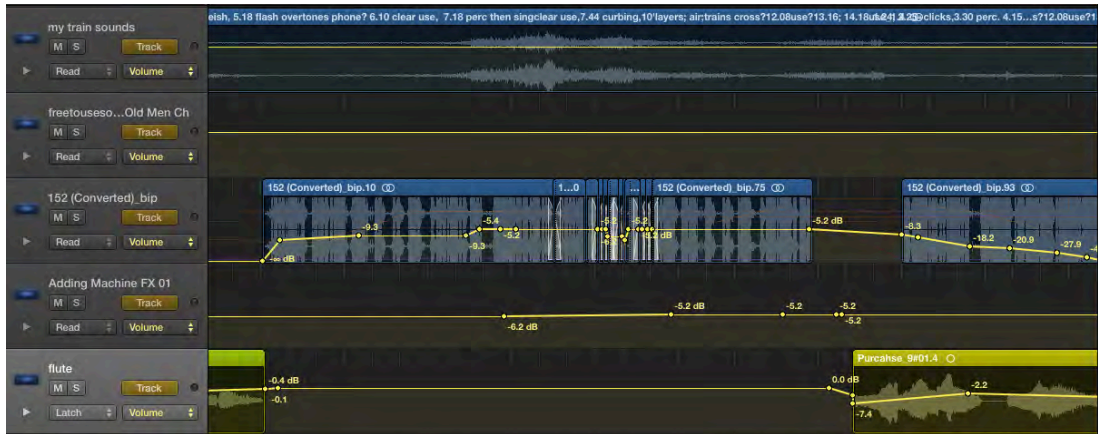
4.3.2.4 Final steps to ‘sculpt’ a whole musical object

The final steps to ‘sculpt’ the composition focused on meaningfully integrating the imported audio files (i.e., train journey, market sounds, voiceover) with the fanfares. The Chicago ad-man’s voice on the palindrome’s ‘return journey’ was

placed last of the three audio files incorporated. For me, the progression afforded development of parallel coherence of the concept and its sound world (alongside the fanfares), from 'train' (with its jazzy, machinic motion and percussive element), to 'market' (sonically 'opening out' into the 'human' market milieu, 'lightening' the timbral palate (at [Appendix 8.4.3.6](#))), to 'comment' (with the Chicago Advertiser, see [Appendix 8.4.3.7](#)), and the train's final departure ending the piece ([Appendix 8.4.3.8](#)).¹⁶⁹ My Parisian train recording was naturally structured as a series of stop-start 'phrases', identifiable as a phrase shape by the rising pitch of the train speeding up, and then the phrase's pitch falling with the train's deceleration. Each cycle marked by the percussive sounds of train doors opening, alert sounds, doors closing, and people's voices. I afforded the train's cycles use as/within musical phrases, subtly adjusting their placement (but not the sequence) of my flute, saxophone and clarinet fanfares (as stated above) to work with the train's phrases dynamics in complementary ways. With regard to the imported Chicago 'ad-man' file, part of my playful approach to the piece was my sonic manipulation of his voice. The 'Easter egg' shop sounds follow the advertiser's 'not once' and 'not twice' statement, lightly mocking him but reflecting the words ([Appendix 8.4.3.9](#)). The ad-man was very emphatic about 'repetition', so I repeated him saying 'repeatedly' ([Appendix 8.4.3.10](#)), shining an 'auditory' light on his advocacy for repetition as a tool for manipulation. I also repeated his statement of 'purchase influencers', to highlight his unabashed strategy to monetise these purchase influencers, i.e., children, shortly afterwards. More noticeable for being a longer gesture is likely how I played with his presence in the piece by audibly moving him away, sending him to the moon and back with automated EQ, creating a sense of distance (beginning at [Appendix 8.4.3.11](#)). Some of the detail of my 'ad-man' editing is visible in Fig. 33 below, where the multicoloured lines in track 152 denote the automation I achieved with 'write' mode latch editing.

¹⁶⁹ My recording device remained static as the train departed.

Figure 33 Refining the music as an object: relative volume and placement of musical 'layers'

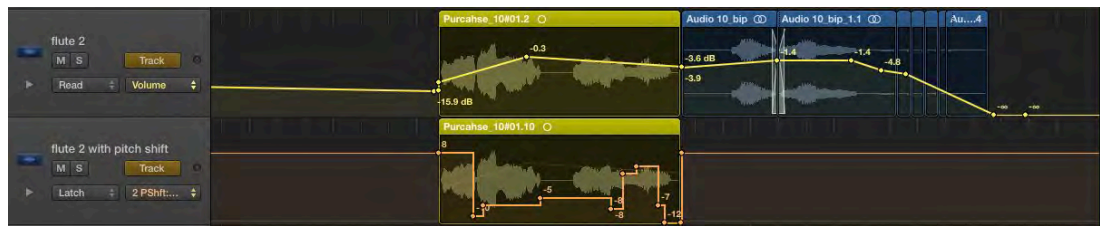


His speech is momentarily accompanied by the tender fanfare 4, and a low-key train sound, flutes rising to the high fanfare entry after the repetition of the word 'repeated'. As his speech continues, the polyrhythmic flute fanfare sounds, placed to synchronise with the advertiser's 'moving to market' statement, affording a more explicit analogical arrangement. When the ad-man's voice returns from its 'cosmic' position, and the flute parts are altered with pitch automation to add additional harmony into the mix (see Fig. 34, below). To close, the train 'sings',¹⁷⁰ taking the melodic interest from the last fanfare (to which I also added variation to through pitch shifting to maintain interest, among other things),¹⁷¹ sounding its slow, rhythmic rumbling and air sounds as it pulls away from my recording device ([Appendix 8.4.3.12](#)).

¹⁷⁰ Part of the reason I collected the train sounds was because I was interested in the 'singing' quality they sounded at particular speeds; all of resources drawn into the projects were created as a result of interested experimentation, this they are imbued with musical values, selected for inclusion in the project.

¹⁷¹ The last fanfare included is fanfare 3- the train departure was the final statement I wanted to make, in the end.

Figure 34 'Sculpting' musical objects with automation¹⁷² to refine volume, and pitch shifting (affording harmony)



4.3.3 Conclusion

Each fanfare contrasts with/comments on the fanfare prior, helping them to feel connected in some way as a series of events, and exploiting the interest that could be achieved through contrast in range and timbre. Commenting contrast, drawing from genetic jazz practice, was employed as a strategy (Gibson and Pick, 2000:167), to afford a little variety to give a reason for listeners to keep listening, as e.g., a flute for 15 minutes might be a bit much for the shop staff to take, and the quality of playback in the shops would not necessarily be hi-fi, making subtlety a risk. My composition, or 'musical object', for *The Ritual of Retail* was sculpted to afford a particular musical journey and to fulfil the brief. This may be thought of as akin to driving through a landscape; in this analogy, the landscape available for sensory exploration is replaced with music, and driving is replaced with listening. Thus, music is interpreted as a series of ecological events in an auditory landscape, in a sonic array that "opens up" in front and "closes in" behind.' (Gibson, 1968:278). The resultant auditory object (i.e., the completed composition) may be said to afford a composer's particular designed 'shape', as a consequence of courses of action, to afford her aesthetic agency.

¹⁷² The automation points are shown by the yellow and orange lines traversing the tracks for 'Flute 2' and 'Flute 2 with pitch shift' respectively.

5. Arrangement

This chapter discusses my arrangement contribution to three projects. As distinct from composition, arrangement begins with an external musical source; an arranger's agency and role identity are consequently framed by the commissioner's expectations of her arranger role, the range of practices she affords, and the extent to which the interaction is conceived of as a collaboration. Typically, an arranger takes existing musical ideas and expands them in some way to afford their articulation in a new context, e.g., taking a song lead sheet and re-interpreting it to afford performance by a big band, a flute quartet, or choir.¹⁷³ Arrangement practice also includes adding a feature to an existing arrangement which did not previously exist, such as a horn section for a song. All of these creative activities result from a course of action which begins by listening and responding to the context provided by the originating music, and the goals of the commission. While a composer may also be recognised as an arranger/orchestrator (e.g., Duke Ellington (Hasse, 2017), and Berlioz (Berlioz, 2002, ed. Macdonald) arrangement is commonly defined in opposition to composition, due to arrangers' creative starting point 'originating' in a composer's work and the brief provided by the composer commissioning the arrangement. Thus, the arranger's musical response is a material outcome afforded by a composer's preceding course of action. In this way, the agency of the arranger's practice is typically understood to be framed by a composer's vision, or musical values and intent, for the project.

In my arrangement practice, the material starting point being someone else's work necessitates a process of orientation of my creative agency towards the musical material and the aims of the composer/s commissioning the work, to sensitise towards and select the most appropriate courses of action to pursue in relation to the project's musical values. This is a practice common to each case study in this chapter, as is prescriptive guidance alongside endorsement of a freer approach, which informed my responses to the varied qualities and entry points for

¹⁷³ Some arrangements are also reductive, e.g., the arrangement of a symphony for piano duet.

contribution. Most of the chapter applies static phenomenology to illustrate different facets of this process, to present insight into select affordances developed within the practice for each project. Genetic phenomenological insight is inserted where static analysis revealed ongoing perceptual attunement 'in play' since the formative period of development addressed in Chapter 3. This relates primarily to perceptual attunement via repertoire, and the sensitisation towards musical possibility afforded by jazz practice.

The first case study with Gary Daly discusses the flute arrangement I created for the introduction to his song 'Make Do And Mend'. It shows how, through imaginative and textural means, a single flute becomes a 'steam-powered' quartet, to present the insight of 'an actionable analogy'. It then introduces my first acquaintance with 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood', Gary's song which became a China Crisis project. The second case study discusses arranging three songs for China Crisis, beginning by considering the action consequences necessitated by re-working 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood' for the band's context, including a further application of the 'actionable analogy' insight. The account presented of arranging for 'Joy and the Spark' provides context for the insight 'listening-for', proposed as enacting the perception-action cycle to create musical invariance¹⁷⁴ on the physical plane in parallel with affect, to 'compose' a form of musical meaning. A related insight was found in 'musical parsing', in which exploratory courses of action are narrowed to 'fix' upon a material outcome in ways constrained/afforded by the musical material itself. The third song discussed is 'It's Too Late', China Crisis' commission to cover King and Stern's 1971 original song. It presents insight into the creative use of musical associations to inform courses of creative action to 'walk a line' of creative tension 'in the pursuit of progression and originality' (Strachan, 2017:116). The third, final case study discusses arrangement as textural expansion of John McGrath's solo guitar composition for the IMMIX ensemble's sextet. Developed to meet the requirements of the creative frame set by IMMIX and John's goals for the

¹⁷⁴ Invariance denotes the 'constant' relation which specifies the affordance (Gibson and Pick, 2000:168; Krueger, 2010:13).

project, the arrangements are in two categories: music which draws from the Irish folk music tradition, and music which features John's distinct, jazz-orientated, minimalist 'glitch' style. The case study's insights are based on the differentiated courses of action these two categories materially afforded to me as an arranger, and the project's consequential expansion of John's agency, articulated in public discourse.

5.1 Gary Daly: 'Make Do and Mend'; 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood'

5.1.1 Situation

My first conversation with Gary Daly was at the second Liverpool Music Awards, 25th August 2013, which revealed we had musician friends in common. In retrospect, this made explicit a shared social context conducive to our work together, reinforced as the project progressed. After discussing my own musical activities, Gary expressed an interest in me 'playing on' some of his tracks, to try out ideas: he got in touch the next day via email. As a rule, Gary's messages were highly visual, bright and colourful, including photographs of nature and images of his art, with playful presentation of text, spaced out for 'e m p h a s i s' (Appendix 8.5.1.1 includes an example). In addition to being welcoming and containing information directing me towards how to approach the music and associations to bear in mind, I propose that Gary's specific form of aestheticised communication impacted my relation to the musical objects he shared with me. He framed the whole experience as an expressly artistic encounter. In his first message, Gary attached a studio recording of his song, 'Make Do and Mend'. This was my starting point for my contribution.

5.1.2 Affordance ecologies

5.1.2.1 Attuning to working with Gary Daly and Carl Brown

Gary Daly and Carl Brown guided me in different ways, both in service of perceptual attunement sensitising me towards the music and musical values of the project.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁵ Further consideration of how Carl Brown shaped my perception within the project is given in Appendix 8.5.1.10, making reference to his use of the terms 'events' and 'sensibilities'.

Aside from writing specific parts for me to perform on one song, Gary more often addressed my process, whereas Carl Brown (a key figure in my experience of the project) tended to lead with discussion of musical specifics. At first, there was no brief for arrangement as such, explicit direction emerged later, when Carl began working with me. Gary's initial guidance was to experience the two songs he had sent me in order, 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood' into 'Make Do and Mend', to get a sense of the flow of the album, and to 'just live with them a little' (Appendix 8.5.1.1). This is proposed to foreground musical listening to appreciate the musical context I was entering i.e., Gary was asking me to attune to the music's action potential (Strachan, 2013). Gary was also 'instrumental' in his influence, providing a musical tool to, tenor recorder, to afford me a specific contribution. Gary supplied the recorder in October 2013 for me to prepare for his planned studio recording, prior to his imminent tour and meeting in person. The instrument uniquely bridged the 'sound' of Gary's solo project at that time, and his ongoing band project, China Crisis.¹⁷⁶ In our meeting on 20th November, Gary taught me to play some of his arrangement ideas (demonstrated using his voice), and I showed him my first recorded thoughts in response to his songs, which he liked. I went on to record three tracks at Whitewood Studios (December 6th, 2013), based in Liverpool's Baltic Triangle. Before going into the studio, Gary put me in touch with Carl Brown, who became the person I communicated with most, for both Gary's project and the China Crisis project to which it led.¹⁷⁷

5.1.2.2 'Make Do and Mend'

This case study discussion focusses on the flute arrangement I developed for the introduction to Gary Daly's song, 'Make Do and Mend'.¹⁷⁸ Gary emailed me this song, introducing (framing) it as 'my olde worldly folk tale Of make do and mend' (Appendix 8.5.1.5). Hence, I felt encouraged to interpret the song with a sense of 'olde worldly' nostalgia to respond musically with the flute, an instrument with a

¹⁷⁶ I interpret this bridge as an agential arc of musical values, discussed further in this chapter's second case study.

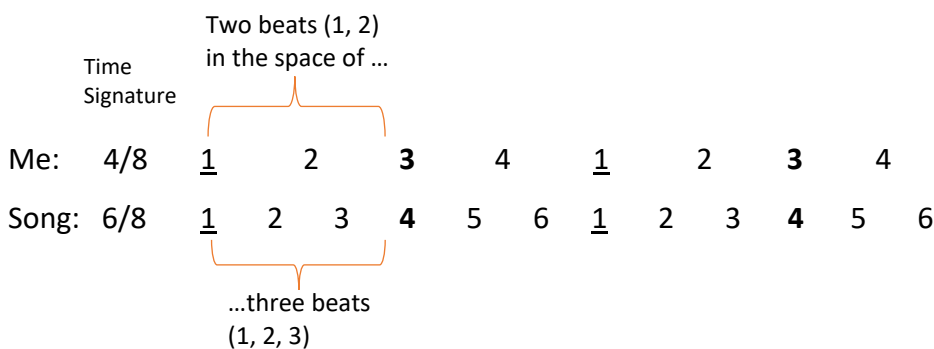
¹⁷⁷ I first met Carl in c. 1996, over 15 years prior, but we had not been in touch for a long time.

¹⁷⁸ The completed arrangement I created for the introduction is available in [Appendix 8.5.1.7](#). NB in the version of the audio that I created for the thesis, the flute arrangement fades up from silence, so the e.g., the first bar in the score below is not audible.

long history as a folk instrument in many cultures (Montagu et al., 2001). I liked the song; I was excited to potentially contribute to it. I set about getting to know it, attuning to it as the musical context for my creative course of action by producing a

Box 2 My hemiola entrainment afforded by the guitar part and genetic attunement to a backbeat

Following the time signatures, the respective pulse and subdivision of the beat express the concurrent, 'felt' hemiola relation, with their common 'backbeat' numbers presented in bold.



chord chart for the full song (see Appendix 8.5.1.6), explicitly documenting the song's structure and basic harmony. To identify where the 'space' was in the texture for a contribution from me, I considered the song's existing arrangement. Towards the introduction's close, a cello line entered with a lyrical, flowing melody; I decided that a solo flute melody adjacent to it could not compete, as it potentially would not offer enough of a contrast (the cello may be heard at 0:28 of [Appendix 8.5.1.7](#)). Another approach was needed. I kept listening, noticing the 'space' within the guitar part (expressed in my notebook: Appendix 8.5.1.8), and found myself moving in a regular, four-beat rhythm in relation to the introduction's guitar part, both with and against the 6/8 flow, enacting a 2 against 3 hemiola rhythm as shown in Box 2, below. I had interpreted the guitar performance's strong fourth quaver within its 6/8 pulse as a 'backbeat',¹⁷⁹ over two bars of the guitar performance with which my movement aligned.

¹⁷⁹ Typically, 'backbeat' is the name given for the emphasis of beats 2 and 4 in a 4/4 time signature, associated with mid and up-tempo rock and roll styles of music, and dancing, as well as popular ballads in 6/8. It is associated with a wide range of popular styles including soul music, and most often is performed on the snare drum, often in synch with rhythm guitar.

Entraining in this way, myself in this way to the music, I enjoyed the individual affective synchrony it afforded me (Krueger, 2014a:6); as a rhythmic response it felt interesting enough to be actionable for arrangement. Something about the ‘meshing’ of the two different rhythmic patterns brought with it the idea of developing something distinctly ‘mechanical-sounding’. Thus, my movement response became the rhythmic template for my flute contribution, which circumvented the melodic characteristic of the solo flute, through the affordance of multitracking, enabling me to create a flute quartet. In this way, my entrainment is shown to be generative within my practice. Since Gary had invited me to chat about it the song after getting to know it, I shared these and other of my first thoughts with him, to sound him out before continuing:

It made me think flutes, in the last part of the song, pedal notes/morse code (but regular) like and [a] slightly miniature steam/clockwork mechanismish. Or not. I do a nice line in fluttering birds and verdant lushness. But that may be too bright/not wholly compliment the cello... (Appendix 8.5.1.9).¹⁸⁰

As is shown in the citation, conventional ideas were offered, such as the ‘fluttering birds’, but following Gary’s positive reception I proceeded to materialise my ‘actionable analogy’. In fact, summarising my ideas for Gary as a ‘miniature steam/clockwork mechanism’ helped to focus my approach, as it required me to loop back on my imagined ideas and encapsulate them, which made them clearer, and more actionable. The ‘steam’ quality, suggestive of an ‘olde worldy’ pre-electric era, was actionable as timbre, by virtue of the distinction I previously learned (genetic awareness) of playing with and without air in my flute tone, the latter being conventional for most classical repertoire. My jazz practice had given me experience of listening to flautists with air in the tone (c.f. Roland Kirk), and playing that way too, thus affording this possibility. The ‘clockwork mechanism-ish’ element is materialised in the regular rhythmic pattern, which mostly ‘tick-tocks’ through the overdubbed, layered-up flute lines. The same rhythmic idea is akin to the

¹⁸⁰ (addition in brackets).

regular 'chuff-chuff' of a (mid-speed) steam train; the flutes' accented backbeat notes stand out, aligned with the guitar's backbeat, and to me, are vaguely evocative of a steam train whistle, compounding the actionable analogy afforded. The 'miniature' aspect is reflected in the range of the instrument, its relatively high register more commonly associated with small than big physical objects, which is obvious if the same music is imagined played on a tuba, by hypothetical substitution (Shepherd et al., 2003:124). The 'actionable analogy' is proposed as a nested affordance, identified through genetically informed perceptual attunement, and enlisted as affordances permitted by my action capability, tailored to the present (static) context discussed. What follows is an elaboration of my processes of attuning to and arranging for the song's introduction, including the influence of repertoire knowledge upon melodic shape and texture.

In creating my arrangement, I worked quickly, repeatedly listening to the song while making notes, taking down the lyrics, structure (in the pink box) on a single page of manuscript paper. The notes show that I identified the essential structure, some qualities in the song's chord sequence, pitches to prioritise on the beat, with spaces for the yet-to-be chosen offbeat notes (discussed below) in a regular quaver rhythm, replicating my earlier movement. As I began to record ideas, I also decided the idea needed an angular melodic quality (notes 'leaping'), as I felt that could help the flute to sound more machine-like and less 'human' (as we don't tend to consistently speak in dramatic leaps), as may be afforded by a smoother (more conjunct) melody.¹⁸¹ Thus, I recorded the first part, shown in Fig. 35 below, avoiding the more common melodic writing associated with the flute. I then added two further complementary flute lines to create clashing cluster-chords, with a fourth part added at strategic points, for emphasis (mostly at the ends of phrases). As I had past experience of playing/leading flute quartets and ensembles, I was (genetically) perceptually attuned to the potential of writing for the flute as a

¹⁸¹ I also enjoyed 'playing against type' as a flautist, something which occurred in the sub-bass section of *Instar*, also.

'chord' instrument, proposed as a less prevalent canonical affordance of 'flute-ness' than solo melodic playing (after Mooney, 2010).

Within my course of action, I prioritised the highest sounding flute notes at certain points, affording an auditory profile below which to 'fill in' the other pitch choices. The top notes felt important to sculpt first, as they would likely be the most audible, the conventional wisdom being that they tend to naturally 'cut through' in a mix compared to lower notes, though their character is 'coloured' by the harmonic choices sounding in synchrony below them. This idea of 'colouring' is central to the idea of harmonising a melody, to which I was first attuned through Bach chorale writing. Similarly, chord voicing, by which is meant the individual notes of a chord can be articulated in one of a range of ways, and more or less spread out, altering how a chord sounds without changing the chord, such that the choice of voicing in context affects the sound of the progression. Within the static context of writing the flute quartet, the genetic features of my perceptual development are evident in the choices apparent to me, informed by my ongoing sense of what is 'of interest' in context.

The lilac boxes in Fig. 35 below show repeated pitch note-heads within the chord sequence, cluster chords created by the addition of chord extensions such as sixths, ninths and major sevenths. When developed to what is shown in Fig. 36, the result is multiple, accented appoggiaturas within the harmonic movement, interspersed with lower consonant dyads with doubled notes. Figure 35's green shaded boxes are ideas that are in my completed arrangement, also shown in the full score in Fig. 36 (also indicated in green).¹⁸² The yellow box in Fig. 35 shows the repeated pair of notes that the arrangement finishes with in Fig. 36, with a simplified harmonisation upon repetition in the last bar.¹⁸³

¹⁸² Shown in bars 3, 4 and 6 of Fig. 36.

¹⁸³ The notes in the orange boxes in bar 8 resolve to chord tones, in bar 9.

Figure 35 'Make Do and Mend' flute arrangement first ideas and workings out

The image shows a handwritten musical manuscript for the piece 'Make do & Mend'. It features three staves of music. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature (C). It contains several musical phrases, some enclosed in colored boxes: a blue box with notes, a green box with notes, and a yellow box with notes. The middle staff is a bass clef with a key signature of one flat and a common time signature, containing several musical phrases, some enclosed in purple and green boxes. The bottom staff contains lyrics and a red box with the text: 'Who → cello', 'vi + v2 + chorus', 'pdr', 'B section → who'. The lyrics are: 'When dave's up for blind & guts & gone, to side dogs of yours. They are junkin'. When night is falling, and clouds are forming, and leaves they leave behind, a path for us to find. We are heading Oh up fair, you, in with her. And you tell of men, of make do, & mend.' The manuscript is written on lined paper and includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and clefs.

Early on, I realised that to write something interesting in the short time I had available, i.e., an evening, it would probably help me to fully notate the ideas on manuscript paper. I decided to write out the music for each flute part to help me craft the clashes and make faster work of writing the three main lines. Making them visible makes them easier to edit using (genetic) harmonic knowledge, which can be (statically) attuned to and selected/amended/rejected through immediate experience of the clash. Reading from a score as I performed for recording would also speed up the process.

Figure 36 The flute quartet arrangement for Gary Daly's song, 'Make Do And Mend'.¹⁸⁴

Make Do And Mend

Flute arrangement
by Chloë Mullett

Gary Daly

♩ = c.74bpm

Flute 1

Flute 2

Flute 3

Flute 4

3

5

mf

¹⁸⁴ The time signature for the music reflects how I interpreted it to overlay my response; on its own 'Make Do and Mend' is arguably in 6/8, as for Box 2, due to emphasis and chord rhythm.

Figure 36 reproduces the arranged flute parts as a score, illustrating the harmonic and contrapuntal relationships within the parts. The harmony alternates between consonant and dissonant cluster chords (i.e., octave unison and harmonisation at a third and sixth versus major and compound major seconds at bars 1⁴, 7², for example).¹⁸⁵ The latter have a jarring and sonorous quality, compounding the steam train whistle idea within the actionable analogy. The pattern of alternation sets up a perceptual expectation through repetition, and it is proposed that the use of contrasted tessitura in the highest part, Flute 1, reinforces the aforementioned contrast. This is achieved through a strategy of establishing and then confounding my own expectations of melody to achieve the mechanistic effect through a subtle

¹⁸⁵ The detail of the reference to the bars indicates the bar number and beat, such that bar 1= bar 1, and the superscript text indicates the beat, so bar 1⁴ denotes bar 1 beat 4.

form of personal aesthetic agency. This can be heard exemplified in the unexpectedly high final note notated in bar 14 of Fig. 36, and bar 5² of the first flute.¹⁸⁶ The repeated content is afforded by the emphasis on the same beats in the down-strokes of the accompanying guitar's strum pattern. While it is not something I thought at the time, when reflecting on the practice the excerpt below in Fig. 37 came to mind, alongside other pieces in the same set by G.P. Telemann (c. 1727).¹⁸⁷ The aforementioned 'leaping' quality, afforded by my static phenomenological attunement to possibilities for my flute writing for 'Make Do And Mend', is proposed as a genetic phenomenological consequence of learning the G.P. Telemann piece excerpted in Fig. 37. The excerpt shows how notes regularly leap from the bottom two lines/bottom space of the staff, to near the top of the lines, graphically indicating the leap in pitch 'up' the page, left to right.¹⁸⁸ Thus, the leaping

Figure 37 Excerpt from G.P. Telemann's 'Fantasie for solo flute in A minor' (1986:18), demonstrating movement by leap and step as for 'Make Do And Mend' (bars 10, 12, and 24-29).



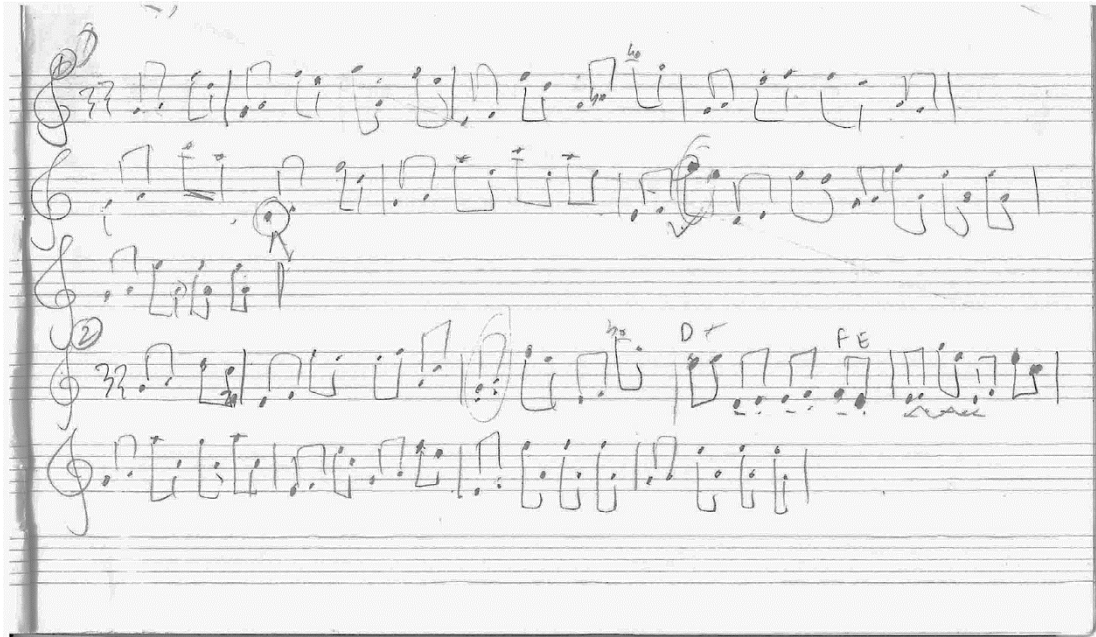
¹⁸⁶ Further, Box one of Fig. 20 shows the first of two instances of unison writing (see bar 9¹ for the second); this initial pair of 'low' notes is contrasted with the pair of 'high' notes that follow (box two), a pattern that is repeated in bars 3, 5 and 7. Bars 2, 3, 6, and 8-9 also begin with this idea of contrast, but beats three and four in each bar repeat the music of beat 2.

¹⁸⁷ The earliest known manuscripts for the *Fantasies* are dated c. 1727 (according to IMSLP Petrucci Music Library).

¹⁸⁸ This leaping characteristic is also a feature of C.P.E. Bach's *Sonata in A minor for Flute Solo* (Wq132, printed twice in 1763), repertoire I studied for my ABRSM Grade 8 flute exam in 1989.

in Telemann's piece affords two-part writing for solo flute, whereby there is a 'top' and 'bottom' part within the writing, which was an emerging feature of flute writing in Telemann's time. Figure 38 below shows the similar 'leaping' of my flute arrangement.

Figure 38 Original flute 1 and 2 flute score for 'Make Do And Mend'



The arrangement for 'Make Do and Mend' can therefore be understood to have been afforded by the 'environment' apparent in the version of the song initially given to me, in its existing arrangement; also, by the movement it inspired, and by my genetic experience of two-part, solo flute repertoire in my development as a classical flute performer. The ability to notate music and to record it multi-tracked enabled me to articulate my ideas and share them with the other people in the project. In this case, the potential cue and constraint of Gary's initial description of the song, as an 'olde worldly folk tale...' (Appendix 8.5.1.5) afforded me use of the flute, however in the studio, I recorded the same parts on tenor recorder, widely understood to be more of a folk instrument than a silver flute. The affordance of the tenor recorder was a possibility that Gary ensured took place, by supplying me with the instrument, a topic I will return to later in section 5.2.

5.1.2.3 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood'

I recorded performances of my arrangements for 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood' for Gary Daly's solo project at home, and at Whitewood Studios, Liverpool. What follows briefly accounts for the characteristics of the song and the guidance that Carl Brown gave me in an email of 3/12/13 (see Appendix 8.5.1.3). It represents my initial context for the work I contributed to the second version of the song recorded by China Crisis (see 5.2.2.1.), placed here to reflect the chronology of my perceptual development with the song. 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood' was first shared with me by Gary Daly (c. 30th August 2013; see Appendix 8.5.1.1) as a high-quality recording, which had a lot of 'space' in it, texturally speaking. The song began with a synthesiser melody, which I considered to be high, subdued, quavering and somewhat ghostly, accompanied on Spanish guitar performing a simple and characterful part. The Spanish guitar's 'organic' quality was underlined by a lyrical cello line, adding a sense of anticipation with an anacrusis that lasted a full bar, descending to its final notes to double Gary Daly's vocal melody, as it entered immediately prior to the beginning of the next phrase. Gary's vocal performance was in a mid-high range, which to me conveyed serious and vulnerable qualities, eventually joined by a 'classical' piano part, a sense afforded to me by the piano's tone, and the extended use of range and texture that are not as common in keyboard synth writing. [Affective coherence of the voice and synth?] A further synthesiser keyboard part provided a pastorate element, conveying a sense of an orchestral wind section featuring a double reed instrument sound, and an ambient, electronic aspect (like an EBow), in a mid-high range. The overall effect was intimate and emotional, mixing electronic and organic sounds, assembled in such a way as to prioritise the vocal content.

Specific guidance from Carl Brown for 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood' was orientated around the lyrics, following the existing parts supporting the line, 'You can clearly see why', and its register placement, as well as the potential to develop a simple, new part from it (Appendix 8.5.1.4). Gary had also vocalized an arrangement idea on the same recording (a three-note motif in response to the lead vocal line) which I was to try on either flute or tenor recorder (ibid). As is

evident, the exchange of ideas typically focused upon characteristics of the arrangement already in place in the recording, extending and enhancing qualities through contrast, including timbral augmentation. The other convention was to record 'a pass', an improvised solo up to e.g., three times to see what was afforded by a given soloist in a specific song context, to develop a sense of what worked best for the track (Appendix 8.5.2.2.1 shows this in relation to 'Joy and the Spark', discussed below).

5.1.3 Conclusion

While I have labelled the contribution I made to 'Make Do and Mend' as being in the role of performer-arranger, the working relationship certainly felt closer to collaboration at points. I felt valued for my individual contribution, beyond contributing a wholly generic response to the music, which may also be what arrangers are understood to afford. This observation may go towards explaining how, despite its origination in an 'exterior' source, it is possible experience arrangement as a form of personal expression. This is partly due to the action potential of the musical context, as compared with the folk arrangements of the final case study, the musical values of the project were apparently more open; Gary's song afforded a less 'predictable' response. As an applied insight extending affordance theory, actionable analogy draws together two of music's common affordances i.e., movement (Krueger's affective synchrony (2014a:6) and my musical association¹⁸⁹ (DeNora, 2000; Windsor, 2004:183) interpreted as an analogy. Together with my instrumental skills and technological tools, they afforded me an agential course of creative action, coherent with my musical values, and informed by the material context of the music to which I contributed. The present case also illustrates the genetic attunement within my contribution; my ability to respond to the musical object of the song is informed by my repertoire experience. Both this insight, and music technology's importance for affording repeated listening for perceptual attunement the tools of the practice, is further evident in the subsequent discussion of China Crisis' interpretation of 'Autumn in the

¹⁸⁹ The above mentioned 'slightly miniature steam/clockwork mechanismish.'

Neighbourhood'. My ideas were performed, stored using the affordances of my home recording tools and skills, leading to selection and subsequent recorded performance in a professional studio, the latter explicitly framing the project as a professional endeavour. In this case, the framing of my identity and agency within the project as an arranger afforded specific material outcomes from my enacted listening experience. The present case is of particular consequence for the arranging opportunity with China Crisis, as the musical consequence of arranging for Gary Daly's tenor recorder, his chosen instrument, was significant enough for it to arc across his solo project into work with China Crisis. This is to suggest that I afforded an expansion of Gary Daly's agency, so by affording use of the instrument that was important for affording specific musical values also important for the China Crisis project, hence I arrived along with it.

5.2 China Crisis

This case study discusses two songs I worked on written by China Crisis, 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood' and 'Joy and the Spark', and my contribution to their cover version of 'It's Too Late' (King, 1971).

5.2.1 Situation

After my work on his solo project, in April of 2014, Gary Daly invited me to develop ideas for the middle 8 of China Crisis' version of 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood' (Appendix 8.5.2.1.1). The song was in fact the title track of what was to be the band's first studio album since 1994.¹⁹⁰ As a contributor to the project, my creative, agential courses of action were directed towards its needs as identified by the band and Carl Brown, acting on their behalf. My working relationship with Carl grew as his role included sensitising me towards perception of specific associations valuable to the music's development. To achieve this, Carl spent time with me in conversation, listening to and analysing music, and conveying guidance and feedback from the band (though Gary also contacted me directly). Importantly, Carl helped me to develop my home recordings into materials that could be used directly on the album (Appendix 8.5.2.1.2). This afforded me time outside of the customarily fast-paced context of studio practice, where 'time is money', in which to attune to and create my contribution. It appears the band and production team were attuning too: I am one of thirty-three musicians credited on China Crisis' 2015 album release.¹⁹¹ This is indicative of the exploratory production process adopted, amassing a range of recorded ideas to explore their affordances and select based upon their addition of interest/musical value, in context.

5.2.2 Affordance ecologies

5.2.2.1 Attuning to the new version of 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood'

'Autumn in the Neighbourhood'¹⁹² was differently produced for China Crisis to align (or associate) it with musical values of their characteristic style. As a pop group, the band is known for its use of keyboard synthesisers, drum machines and a slick

¹⁹⁰ The album *Autumn in the Neighbourhood* is available on Spotify, as of 2018.

¹⁹¹ More musicians were involved who did not 'make the cut.'

¹⁹² The song can be accessed on Spotify, via this link: <https://spoti.fi/2lpJnf7>

studio sound,¹⁹³ but their identity also points to politics and diversity. The band's name appears to be consistent with this idea; John Bush's Allmusic.com biography also offers this characterisation:

A bit fiery for most in the new romantic camp during the early '80s, China Crisis were inspired by similar sources but injected their pop songs with occasional political commentary and bluesy reggae rhythms. (Bush, No Date).

In fact, every China Crisis album has a reggae song on it, so their reggae version of 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood' continues an established aspect of the band's narrative of musical values. It therefore provided a very different musical context for my creative contribution to how I knew the song in Gary's solo version. I was asked to add to the song's new 'middle 8' that Gary explained contrasted again in terms of style and sentiment with the rest of the song, by (in his words) being 'slower', more 'pastoral', 'striking' and 'sublime'; it was a 'link' to the sound world of Gary's solo project (Appendix 8.5.2.1.1). I understood Gary's words (in the inverted commas above) to be cues for the arrangement contribution I was to make.

5.2.2.1 China Crisis' Middle 8 for 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood'

Supplied with a demo of the track to work with, I went ahead and wrote- I was confident as my approach had so far been appreciated by Gary and Carl for Gary's solo project. I wanted my contribution to capture something of the meaning of the lyrics, and for it to be congruent with the new style of the song. I also checked in for feedback with Gary as the ideas were in progress, emailing over early examples. The middle-8 for 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood' occurs at 2:28 of Appendix 8.1.1.6,¹⁹⁴ and is located (as is typical) exactly two-thirds of the way through the song. It is conventional for a middle 8 (sometimes also referred to as a 'bridge',

¹⁹³ The 'slick' studio sound of the band's 1985 album release *Flaunt the Imperfection* was produced by Walter Becker of Steely Dan. Walter Becker was also credited on the album as a band member (keyboards). This connection is possibly a factor in China Crisis' ongoing popularity in the USA, where they continue to tour.

¹⁹⁴ It is, in fact, eight bars long (not all middle '8s' are 8 bars long).

though this can be controversial)¹⁹⁵ to present a contrast to the song up to that point. The contrast is achieved on three fronts, i.e., style, vocal delivery, and instrumental arrangement, which is stripped back to effect a 'breakdown'.^{196,197}

I began listening to the track with a particular purpose, to seek 'interest', as initially it was a challenge for me to connect with the China Crisis version of the song. My established associative context was no longer relevant in the same way; to complete my task I needed to re-sensitise myself to towards the song's musical features as they were articulated to be congruent with the musical values of their new style. Therefore, I listened, getting to know the whole song, and then cycled the significant section in my available DAW (Logic Pro), with e.g., a margin of five seconds at either side, to maintain a sense of the reggae groove context for the 'pastoral' ideas I was asked to develop. Through this recursive listening, I was afforded sensitisation to the music's action potential possibility through perceptual activity that included imagining and singing ideas; I also related to the music with my voice to 'find a feeling' or an association, to make a connection, to essentially acclimatise to and affectively align with the music.¹⁹⁸ Depending on how I respond to music, to create an arrangement I may have to 'dig' more or less for a sympathetic sense of connection, to afford a creative course of action in response to it. If the connection is not immediate, or I am not satisfied with the ideas, I persist with further repeated listening and attention paid to the different elements of the song. Thus, I actively 'hunt' for that which is of interest (Gibson, 1968:175), for an actionable relation to e.g., the words/the musical content/the tone of

¹⁹⁵ 'The bridge serves as a departure, or a release, from the rest of the song. It usually consists of two or four lines of lyric and four or eight musical bars. Occasionally, the bridge might be instrumental, but this is not often the case...' (Blume, 2010:11)

¹⁹⁶ A 'breakdown' is a textural arrangement device which noticeably reduces instrumentation, usually applied to a distinct section of music, or as a short (e.g., 1 bar) prelude immediately prior to repetition of an anticipated section (due to the predictable nature of the device) already introduced within the piece. The 'returned-to' section includes the return of the omitted instruments, creating a sense of 'fullness', achieved by the adjacent contrast.

¹⁹⁷ This section exposes Gary Daly's voice, singing about human fallibility and divine forgiveness, conveyed with natural imagery (falling leaves). Musically, this moment is accompanied simply with spaced-out chords (one per bar, doubling to two per bar in bars 4 and 6) on electric guitar, possibly emulating a Rickenbacker sound with a tremolo effect, doubled by a Fender Rhodes.

¹⁹⁸ This is similar to finding a sense of empathy with the music, it is proposed.

different elements/the 'attitude' in each constituent part, attentionally aligning myself with the different musical features I became sensitized towards. This represents a significant investment of attention- perhaps beyond Gary Daly's request for his solo project music, that I 'live with it a little' (Appendix 8.5.1.5), but nonetheless related to it.¹⁹⁹ The strategy I eventually employed was afforded by a combination of genetic and static attunement. My jazz practice afforded me the musical value of seeking 'space' in the music's texture for my contribution (in terms of avoiding 'crashing' the vocal part),²⁰⁰ informed by my repertoire experience for 'entry points' for the flute, as well as deriving a rhythmic quality from the vocal which I capitalised upon to afford the canonical affordance of word painting (falling like a leaf) and the glitch effect the aforementioned rhythm afforded my contribution's exit from the song.

Figure 39 below shows the transcription of the melody and chords I made (typical of jazz transcription) to give me an overview and sensitise towards some key features of the music (lyrics, melody, chords). In this notated form, I am able to clearly identify the aforementioned actionable 'space' of interest for my contribution as rests or between the moving notes of the vocal melody, and in terms of register, as both are visually apparent. Writing down the lyrics also increased my awareness of them.

¹⁹⁹ Awareness of the affordances within the process just described, exemplifying the perception action cycle and nested affordances, became most apparent when working on 'Joy and the Spark', discussed below, wherein the extent of the listening required to afford my arrangement practice resulted a research insight into the affording musical specificity.

²⁰⁰ 'Crashing the vocal' is where a musical idea detracts from the vocal's usual central position in the sonic hierarchy, by e.g., taking up space at the same time in the same range, or affording melodic interest providing an (unwelcome) challenge to the vocal's primacy for attention.

Figure 39 My initial notes attuning to the middle 8 of China Crisis' 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood'

COMPOSER / SOURCE: c. 100bpm TITLE, NUMBER (OR OTHER CLASSIFICATION):
 Tempo? Grammy Daley Autumn in the Neighbourhood

EM (xxxx) V F EM F# G - Am 7

God loves a tiger
 falling like a leaf

Am / G / | FA

* 2'29" 2'57"

add4
 Dm Eb D E F Gm F# D

1 God loves a tiger, liar and thief, and a thief
 falling like a leaf

Tempo? (fast for a drum...)

1st chorus!
 2nd section (new music)
 3rd chorus?
 → c c. 1'44 → is at the end still?

PADEX SYSTEM - A PANOPUS PRODUCT PRINTED IN ENGLAND

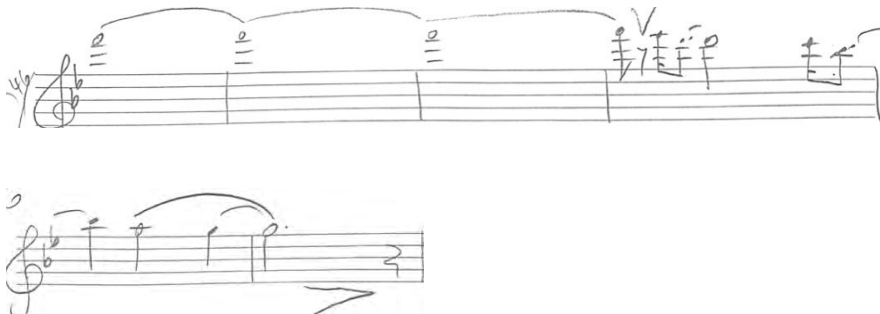
Initially, my arrangement began in the first bar of the middle 8, but I decided to let the phrase 'breathe', delaying entry until after the vocal began, so as to support the vocal as the focus of attention. High, stealthy, quiet entry-points for melody such as I afforded this middle 8 are familiar to me though classical flute repertoire, e.g., Rousel's flute and piano piece 'Pan' from his work *Les Joueurs de flûte* (1924), shown below in Fig. 40.

Figure 40 The solo flute opening, initially high and 'stealthy', of Albert Roussel's composition 'Pan' (flute and piano), from *Les Joueurs de Flûte*, Op. 27 No. 1 (1924)



By beginning high above the vocal performance I 'made way' for it, occupying a different frequency range, in a manner proposed to be genetically informed by my repertoire knowledge (shown by comparing Fig. 41 with Fig. 40).

Figure 41 The top line of the flute parts for the middle 8 in 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood'



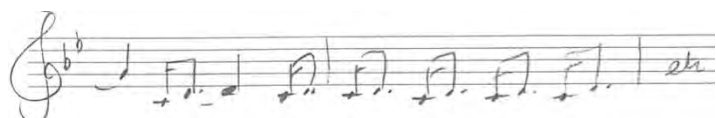
Having decided on a high entry point, I then decided on a simple idea for the moving notes, a Scotch snap²⁰¹ rhythm inspired by the rhythm of the lead vocal as it sings the words 'liar' and 'tryer'.²⁰² I felt my rhythmic delivery brought out the seriousness of the words and had a material relation for being derived from the vocal. To develop the ideas, and select the specifics of my preferences, I tried them

²⁰¹ Also known as the Lombard rhythm, in which the uneven division of the beat reverses the more usual long-short repetition of the time, the resulting short-long division being heard in funk styles in more recent times.

²⁰² The vocal performance itself has a more relaxed rhythm than what I performed.

out, either sung and/or played on C-flute/tenor recorder, playing the same idea but starting on each of the different chord tones of the supporting chord, in different octave registers. This ‘seeking’ activity was how I found an entry point and a way to navigate the phrase, adhering to the aforementioned musical values in relation to the vocal. Through this trial-and-error process, I developed my preferences for the number and relationship of the phrases, by sensitising towards what I play/sing or how I perform it made me feel, and how the ideas ‘play out’ in context. The top line I created in Fig. 41 above was harmonised with flute/tenor recorder parts added underneath, including ‘clashing’ major second intervals. The parts beneath the second stanza of Fig. 41 continue the scalar descent with sequential Scotch snaps, while at the same time the ‘glitch’ feature begins in the lowest parts, shown in Fig. 42 below (and was also harmonised). The ‘glitch’ effect²⁰³ also uses the Scotch snap rhythm; it fades out before the reprise of the song’s A-section. This is how I aimed to afford the flute arrangement a transition sympathetic to both the pastoral, declamatory qualities of the middle 8 breakdown and the ‘slicker’, ‘modern’, groove-orientated band instrumentation of the reggae reprise.

Figure 42 The bottom line of the glitch ‘outro’, without articulation, for the end of the middle 8 for ‘Autumn in the Neighbourhood’

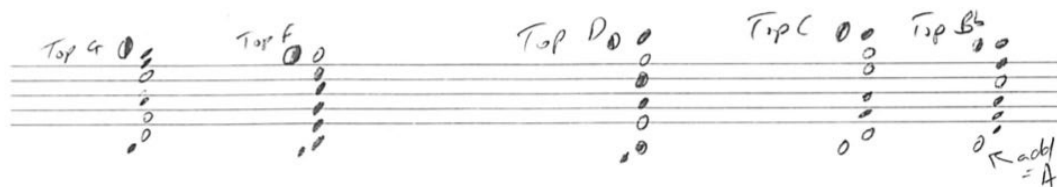


As a whole, the phrase shape I created for the middle 8 starts after the vocal entry, beginning quietly, with a high, sustained note, the volume then ‘fading up’ as if emerging from the distance; it then descends via Scotch snaps (which sound ‘folky’ and also a bit ‘funky’, and potentially dramatic) to a ‘lush’ and more conversational tessitura (also a countermelody idea within my arrangement) at the bottom of the instruments’ ranges. Further embellishment was added following requests from Carl and Gary, to emphasise the canonical affordance of word painting for ‘falling like a leaf’.

²⁰³ The ‘glitch’ effect referred to sounds a little like a ‘stuck’ vinyl record, the needle jumping and repeating the same section of music, by virtue of only repeating two pitches.

As Fig. 43 suggests, I was not only attuning to the music, but also to new ways of playing the tenor recorder, to perform it. I tried the ideas out over a full day on flute and tenor recorder,²⁰⁴ which last required inventing fingering as the high notes were out of the conventional range:

Figure 43 Attuning to the tenor recorder's extended range: developed fingering diagrams hands



Thus, the perceptual attunement I undertook afforded the physical performance of ideas I developed in line with specific musical values, to afford an agential course of action resulting in a phrase related to the melody and its lyrics, sympathetic to the song's renewed musical context aligned with China Crisis' musical values. As discussed, the phrase was afforded as a course of creative action by my static attunement to the song's features, enrolled within courses of action relying on my genetic attunement to flute repertoire and jazz practice.

5.2.2.2 'Joy and the Spark': listening-for, derived parts, and musical parsing

The song 'Joy and the Spark' took the longest amount of time for me to connect with, and yet it is one that I came to closely identify with through listening, and also playing. There came a point where 'playing along', or improvising, made most sense, recording as I went, as I perceived the musical context was actionable for me as a solo saxophonist. One of the distinctive features of the final saxophone performances is the inclusion at certain points of a 'hard' tone with a blunt attack, e.g., as heard at 0:40-0:49, for the 'call' and 'answer' parts, just prior to the chorus ([Appendix 8.1.1.7](#)). The style of delivery is deliberate, it echoes the attack style of a reference track that Carl Brown had highlighted for Gary Daly's solo project,²⁰⁵ specifically the trumpet duo arrangement playing

²⁰⁴ The tenor recorder is the same one that was lent to me by Gary Daly, who had bought it in a charity shop, for me to experiment with for his solo project.

²⁰⁵ See Appendix 8.5.1.3 for my original meeting notes.

with Harmon mutes featured in Joni Mitchell's song 'Harry's House' (Mitchell, 1975). Project guidance from Carl often included reference to music, but also examples or allusions that were visual and/or experiential in character: creating a 'car-like' atmosphere (see email in Appendix 8.5.1.4).²⁰⁶

My home-recorded arrangements were imported into the final production of 'Joy and the Spark'; I felt there was an atmosphere 'caught' on them,²⁰⁷ so was glad the recording quality was found to be appropriate recording. Before finalising, I re-recorded some of the tenor saxophone performances in my original demo recording, with a view to correcting tuning issues at the extremes of my range; the studio aesthetic of the project required that of me, in my view.²⁰⁸ At the time, home recording was a novel way for the band to work with a performer-arranger. For myself, I was glad to work at home, partly because I felt more comfortable playing trickier sax parts at home, without an audience as was inevitable in the studio; in the end, some of the music also felt quite personal and unsuited to public display in performance. This working method allowed me a sense of privacy, and most importantly, it gave me the space and time to I needed to really explore and meaningfully connect to the music, at my own pace.²⁰⁹ The work rate usually expected in a studio did not allow for the time I needed to attune to the music for courses of creative action. In a sense, my approach supports the 'designed' element of the context, cohering with my musical values as an arranger to be sympathetic to the existing music. Thus, attuning to it sensitively, allows my agential courses of action to be afforded by and be 'of' the context reflecting its musical niche to a greater extent than had I recorded a 'couple of passes' in the studio, which would have reflected what my

²⁰⁶ Carl refers to the end section of my saxophone arrangement in visual terms for 'Joy and the Spark', describing it as 'glowing' (see Appendix 8.5.2.2.1).

²⁰⁷ I state this to Carl Brown in my message of September 7th, 2014, Appendix 8.5.2.2.2.

²⁰⁸ A number of times, Gary Daly identified my skillset reminded him of working with producer/performer Walter Becker, whose work epitomises a form of 'smoothness' proposed to be associated with 'slick' studio-production values reliant upon precision and accuracy of pitch and timing. This is most definitely a compliment, and I do not propose my playing epitomises this, more likely that I have an ability to notate and arrange music and work flexibly with a range of instrumentation.

²⁰⁹ The final, released version of 'Joy and the Spark' may be heard on Spotify.

existing musical skills afforded the song, as a more straightforward ‘reaction’. In this sense, even my soloing contributions are proposed as arrangement as opposed to improvisation.

In my contribution to ‘Joy and the Spark’ my saxophone writing moves through different roles conforming to conventional uses and possible associated identities. These include ‘horn section’ (soul, and R&B), ‘breathy tone’ (‘sexy’), ‘improvising soloist’ (jazz, not classical music, ‘spontaneity’ and ‘originality’), and ‘big band’ (classic, nostalgic, potentially). These are summarised in Table 2, below, as they appear in the final version of the song. The table also shows the relationship of the saxophone parts to existing arrangement details in the song, discussed further below in relation to Figures 44 and 45.

Table 2 ‘Joy and the Spark’ structural outline showing arrangement details

Song section and time (minutes & seconds)	Saxophone part/s location and association type	Details of affordance relation
Introduction 0:00-0:18		
Verse 1 0:18-0:33	0:29-0:36 Loosely derived	Tenor sax enters in a call-and-response relation to the words ‘cold to the touch, babe’ with a rising two-note motif (second note held). 0:31-0:36 Second tenor saxophone enters, in relation to the words ‘in the’ (from the line ‘...in the sweetest way’). ²¹⁰
Chorus 0:33-0:47	0:40-0:49 Performatively parsed, derived parts	The tenor sax plays a rhythmically more relaxed version of the first entry, sustains (diminuendo-crescendo). At the ‘peak’ (0:46), the clashing notes sound the tremolo guitar’s three note answering motif.
Introduction reprise 0:46-1:00	0:49- 1:00 Derived parts	The tenor saxophones double the tremolo electric guitar line of the introduction (unison octaves, mid and low register).

²¹⁰ It rests on the last note, creating dissonance (a minor second), intensified by a crescendo, resolved downwards by 0:35, in the chorus.

	0:54-c. 1:02 'Horn section', derived parts	The horn parts are derived from the harp ostinato: two saxophones play a rhythmic variation of their descending pentatonic sequence in harmony, adding a rise at the end
Verse 2 1:00-1:15		
Chorus 2 1:15-1:30	1:15-1:34	High, held tenor sax note, harmonised at a minor third at 1:17 ²¹¹
	1:23-1:24 Actionable analogy	The tenor sax 'turn' (ornament) interprets after the word 'fingers'
Breakdown 1:30-1:45	1:30-1:34 'Sexy sax' framework of associations	'Breathy', low, sax plays a drone note a perfect 5 th above the electric bass pedal. ²¹²
Introduction reprised 1:45-2:00	1:48-2:00 Derived parts	Tenor saxophones double the tremolo guitar as at 0:49, but also doubling an octave higher.
	1:55-c. 2:09 Parsed 'horn section'	Two saxes play rhythmically displaced version of duo as at 0:54, starting on beat 4, originally derived from the harp ostinato, as at 0:54.
Chorus 3 (double) 2:00-2:44	2:06-2:09 Parsed 'horn section'	Tenor duo, in thirds (beginning on the same notes as the 'peak'), playing a curtailed, 'teaser' version of the riff at 1:55
	2:10-c. 2:15 Variation on derived 'horn section'	Full version of the idea with two tenor saxophones at 1:55, ending with a Scotch-snap, continued as a drone.
	2:26-2:28 Solo	A solo 'comment', rhythmic feature: tenor sax triplet figure, foreshadows the solo sax line at 2:36
	2:32-2:44 Big band	Tenor saxophones play a 7-note crotchet phrase in three-part harmony ²¹³
	2:36-2:46 Soloist	Tenor line crescendos, plays a high, 'strident' submediant note, that falls, ending the solo with a triplet feel (five notes).
'Outro' 2:44-3:13	2:50-2:56 Parsed solo	Internally derived: tenor sax answers the previous solo line, beginning with a sustained note ²¹⁴ then falling, ending with two 'turns' characteristic of the 7-note phrase. ²¹⁵

²¹¹ They sound a compound major 9th and 11th respectively, above the bass pedal note.

²¹² The backing vocals feature harmonisation at a perfect fifth, also

²¹³ using the major seventh degree (leading note) for the first time in the arrangement

²¹⁴ on a compound major 9th, mid-range, 'mellow',

²¹⁵ the first turn is anchored around the leading note.

The derived parts within the table were a development following selection of my soloist and big band elements for the project; appreciation was shown especially for the final, 'glowing' part of the saxophone arrangement as I originally presented it (Appendix 8.5.2.2.1), suggesting my courses of action had afforded music well attuned to the musical values of the project. With that decision, Carl Brown wanted to further integrate the saxophones by inserting it in the earlier parts of the song, as heard at 0:49 and 0:54, i.e., within China Crisis' creative production context, action consequences rippled from inserting a 'new' idea at the end of the song. I was directed to create 'derived' parts using, or based on, existing 'loops' (ostinati) in call and response relationships within the arrangement. In 'Joy and the Spark', they were part of what afforded coherence from the track's different musical elements created asynchronously, and in different spaces. Figure 44 illustrates the nature of these relationships, showing the existing ostinato figures and use of call and response before my contribution on the tenor saxophone, at the bottom of the score:

Figure 44 The affordances of repetition, sequence, call and response in 'Joy and the Spark', as courses of action

Ostinato, call and response at the octave, and a canon effect.

Keyboard Swung 16ths *port.*

Harp and acoustic guitar Ostinato

Electric Guitar with tremolo Answer, call and answer phrase; at 0:49- 1:00, tenor sax doubles this line, and adds the octave above.

Tenor Saxophone

Played at 0:54 and 1:55 (starting on beat 4); short two-note sequence derived from the harp and guitar ostinato.

3

Kbd.

Hp.

E. Gtr.

Ten. Sax.

Inversion of the sequence figure

Consequently, I became more sensitive to the significance of affording a call or response to create identifiable relationships between my new ideas and an existing arrangement.

The point at which a repetition took place within the song structure also impacted how the same musical ideas were afforded, strategically materialised as small

variations developed to support the idea's 'fresh' reception, due to their place on the timeline. Thus, the final double chorus receives 'refreshment' through a derived part from the horn parts, based on the two-note figure idea shown in the lower tenor sax harmony entry in Fig. 45. This is harmonised at the new interval of a third, placed in a higher register, and rhythmically varied, materialising the musical value of adding interest on repetition of the chorus.

Figure 45 The last 'derived' tenor saxophones arrangement in 'Joy and the Spark'

♩ = 65 bpm
Swung 16ths (Begins at 2:00)

Tenor Saxophones

Acoustic Guitar

Two-note figure harmonised at a 3rd *

F#(sus4) G#/F# F#(sus4) G#/F#

Two-beat ostinato figure alternates between two chords

3

Ten. Sax.

A. Gtr.

Two-note, harmonised figure repeated... ..and extended through use in a descending sequence

5

Ten. Sax.

A. Gtr.

Variation, inverting the rhythm to create a Scotch snap.

F#(sus4) G#/F#

* the two-note figure has a relationship to the earlier tenor saxophone parts, and the harp ostinato.

The two figures above are proposed to illustrate the affordance of sequence, defined by Drabkin (2001), as:

A melodic or polyphonic idea consisting of a short figure or motif stated successively at different pitch levels, so that it moves up or down a scale by equidistant intervals. It may be true to the diatonicism of the passage or may involve a literal transposition... Sequences can be used in the construction of a melody or theme itself, ... but they usually function in the spinning out of musical material by developing a motif related to a previously stated melody... It is not uncommon for successive statements of a motif to be inexact repetitions of the original form and yet maintain the character of a sequence.

In the case of the saxophone arrangement for 'Joy and the Spark', the use of sequence did not extend the song length in total, instead it extended the affordance of the initial statement of ideas, and afforded variation in terms of timbre. There are also examples where the initial idea is rendered a 'call' by virtue of the placement of a 'response', demonstrating the forms of agential flexibility available to a musician as a composer or arranger to proliferate possibilities through creative courses of action based upon sensitivity to these musical affordances.

Within the description of the creative process I undertook for 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood', and especially 'The Joy and the Spark', it is possible to identify the process of searching for and developing specificity: 'we learn to detect information that best and most economically specifies some affordance.' (Gibson and Pick, 2000:199). Reflecting on the process for the purposes of this research, I identified the perception-action cycle (Gibson and Pick, 2000:27) in use, to develop meaning and the necessary skills of performance to specify affordances that I chose for the project, in context. By this I mean to highlight the repetitive, exploratory process of listening over and over again to the section of the song, in context and initially without my own addition, to explore my imagination and finally to respond to it by playing or singing, recording the ideas, to develop phrases. The phrases are then considered for their qualities, in terms of what

they afford me as a listener, and what they afford in relation to the rest of the musical composition.²¹⁶

5.2.2.3 'It's Too Late': on affording musical associations

In February 2015, Carl Brown contacted me to try out saxophone parts for China Crisis' cover version of *It's Too Late* (King and Stern, 1971),²¹⁷ to be rendered in the style of the band's first top-20 single, *Christian* (1982).^{218,219} China Crisis' cover of 'It's Too Late' (2015) is afforded association with *Christian* from the outset.

Material, which is to say potentially perceptible, similarities are afforded by the choice of instrumentation and its arrangement: the use of particular drum machine sounds, synth pads, 'melodic' fretless bass, the initial melodic lead synth part,²²⁰ and the overall 'dream-like' quality all 'sound like' *Christian's* production (and both feature Gary Daly's voice).²²¹ China Crisis' cover was also afforded arrangement details of the original version of *It's Too Late*. Carl's follow-up email to me reviewed *It's Too Late* (1971) section by section to highlight original elements of the arrangement (see Appendix 8.5.2.3.4). Two features included on the release were the piano's repeated chordal riff which links to the chorus at 1:11 ([Appendix 8.5.2.3.7](#)) and the backing vocals' canon in the instrumental at 1:44 ([Appendix 8.5.2.3.8](#)); these were transcribed and performed on China Crisis' cover (saxophone) at 0:38 ([Appendix 8.5.2.3.9](#)) and voices/flutes at 1:59 ([Appendix](#)

²¹⁶ This is reminiscent of the cyclic, comparative form of listening I undertook completing tone development exercises for the flute in my teens.

²¹⁷ Carole King's original release may be heard via [Appendix 8.5.2.3.1](#).

²¹⁸ This was a significant song choice insofar as *Christian* is one of China Crisis' best-known songs; it was the track from their debut album that peaked at no. 12 in the UK singles chart on 1st February, 1983 (Official Charts: 2019). *Christian* may be heard via [Appendix 8.5.2.3.2](#)

²¹⁹ The song was produced for the *80s Re:Covered* album (MUSIC BROKERS/PMB: 2015). One song produced in the style of another is proposed to be an ongoing legacy of the popularisation of song 'mashups', which saw songs from often less related genres and different eras, mixed together. One example is *Smells Like Bootylicious* (2ManyDJs, 2006), mixing Nirvana's *Smells Like Teen Spirit* (1991) with Destiny's Child's *Bootylicious* (2001).

²²⁰ *Christian* (1982) has an introduction which features a synth 'lead', which begins on beat 1, and moves on beat 4; the synth lead for 'It's too Late' (2015) moves in the same way, with a similar tone, and in the same range; it returns in the song in a number of places, including in the accompaniment to the solo section at 2:27. The melody is also a sped-up version of the synth lead in *Blade Runner's* 'Main Titles' titles (Vangelis, 1982), at 1:27 (listen via [Appendix 8.5.2.3.3](#)).

²²¹ Carl Brown references the cover version's 'dream' quality in his email communications at the time, see Appendix 8.5.2.3.5.

[8.5.2.3.10](#)) respectively. Within the thesis' rationale, these performed transcriptions are proposed as form of derived part, discussed above.

In terms of my soloing, there was a precedent for this in the soprano saxophone solo in the original *It's Too Late* single release (listen via [Appendix 8.5.2.3.1](#), at 1:45), though it takes up less time and has a different character to the solo I perform on alto saxophone.²²² This is partly due to Carl's production guidance, shaping my perception to afford sensibilities to which he made clear and specific reference, on Vangelis' film soundtrack for *Blade Runner*²²³ (1982). This included the 'Love Theme' saxophone solo (Vangelis, 1994 (originally created in 1982)), but also melodies not performed on saxophone ([Appendix 8.5.2.3.11](#)). Specifically, I emulated elements of the tone and attack of the saxophone examples Carl listed, alongside the material source of the 'mood' the music afforded me. My aural skills enabled me to perform the shapes and pace of the melody in courses of action, to afford the cover version moments of material similarity to the music which was the material source of the desired association. As a piece of music used to frame my creative action, *Blade Runner's* (1982) soundtrack cued the use of alto sax (listen via [Appendix 8.5.2.3.12](#)).²²⁴ The alto saxophone's relatively bright timbral quality and higher register (tessitura) as compared to the tenor afforded it a degree of distinction, as most of the cover's arrangement sounded in a mid to low range. I was to try soloing to the second half of the instrumental break (at 2:09-2:56, [Appendix 8.5.2.3.13](#)).

Further sensitising towards China Crisis' cover, I noted the fretless bass part rose up above most of the instrumental texture with a melodic element more or less every second bar at one point. I wanted that to be heard (as it is in *Christian*, in fact) and avoid melodic 'over-population'/cluttering, so afforded an approach closer to a

²²² It is preceded in the instrumental break by a guitar and piano unison melody from 1:35.

²²³ The *Blade Runner* (1982) soundtrack discussed also features synthesisers, fretless bass, and features a 'dream-like quality in much of its saxophone writing.

²²⁴ While available sources do not acknowledge the *Blade Runner* (1982) sax solo is on alto, I chose alto over tenor or soprano saxophone due to my attunement to their differences as a player, reinforced by my attunement to the cover version's musical values.

saxophone duet with the bass part. By inserting ideas ‘in response to’ or ‘in the space between’ the bass ‘licks’,²²⁵ I afforded a variation on the call and response insight of the previous case study (at 2:12 in [Appendix 8.5.2.3.13](#)). The result is a pattern similar to one-bar ‘duelling’ that can happen in improvised group jazz solo structures, without the sense (or sound) of musical sparring associated with that.²²⁶ China Crisis’ cover of *It’s Too Late* may therefore be said to have been intentionally created with reference to material sources of musical associations and afforded through agential courses of action. It expresses agency and musical values within and beyond the cover version’s officially explicitly advertised reference points, to which I further contributed a stylistic and textural response which I materially associate with jazz practice.

5.2.3 Conclusion

The listening practices evident in this case study demonstrate what I will here term ‘listening-for’, i.e., listening to music to attune to it and explore possibilities for musical action, as a musician, in a specific musical context. As discussed above, this entails listening-for the constituent parts of the music, the ‘attitude’ of each and its potential for implications in the form of a response, to create further related ideas with meanings: this I shall term ‘musical parsing’, i.e., the aurally enacted, analytical identification of existing musical ideas for the purposes of further musical action. My attentive listening afforded me the specificity of a meaningful connection with the music, to create arrangements that felt particular to me, and were not prescribed, contributing to the project for its final release in 2015. Both areas were important for the creative development of the record, however for me as a creative practitioner, the reason I continued my involvement was through a sense of personal identification with the music, afforded to me by my jazz practice, and the appreciation of my contribution by those leading the project. In terms of role identity, the distinction of the role is perhaps by omission: I am an arranger because

²²⁵ A musical ‘lick’ may be defined as, ‘Usually licks. Jazz Slang. a musical phrase, as by a soloist in improvising.’ (Dictionary.com: No Date).

²²⁶ See Appendix 8.5.2.3.15 for further discussion of *Blade Runner* (1982) as an intentionally afforded association and my genetic association of ‘jazz’ within the instrumental section and the saxophone solo (the ‘car horn’ sounds and an ‘out of key’ moment, respectively).

I am not in the band, and I am not a producer. The role title of 'arranger' professionalises and distances my contribution from a sense of personal investment and originality, whether or not that is intended by anyone involved. It also means the decision and responsibility for what musical content is released on the record is not my responsibility. While responsibility for a record, even in bands, often falls to one or two band members in a larger group, in the past my arrangement has been on a different footing, by virtue of originating in a band context; this tempers the form of agency which is open to an arranger.

It is also apt to comment on the agency associated with jazz soloing within an arrangement practice. To contextualise this, my arrangement for this case study may be said to sit at different points between two poles. Indicating ways forward for my part in the arrangement of 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood', Carl Brown articulates one end and the centre of the proposed spectrum as follows:

...You can hear it mainly during the line in the chorus 'You can clearly see why' in Chris's parts. Around that register is good I think. Could follow what's there if the whole part is as suggested on that line or develop a simple part from it.... (Appendix 8.5.1.4)

Carl's comment implies that the means of creating an arrangement by doubling up or developing something from what is already present in the existing parts (discussed earlier as derived parts), is a valid, conventional arrangement strategy; variations are a further means to create parts audibly sympathetic to the existing musical context. The horn parts for 'Joy and the Spark' were shown to be created this way, varied through sequence and harmonisation to 'spin out' the material and sustain the style, while sympathetically influence from the drawing from saxophone's horn section identity within in popular music repertoire. At the other end of the arranging 'pole' of this case study, my more idiosyncratic arrangement was afforded by my jazz practice. Specifically, identifiable 'solo's afforded me 'originality' within arrangements via their performative compositional sensibility, if we agree that 'soloing' is conventionally associated with and attributed to an individual, 'originating' performer. Yet the discussion of the solo for *It's Too Late*

(King, 1971) shows how such a 'spontaneous' performance may be directed (though, as shown, the performance produced is not necessarily limited or fully constrained by direction). That said, any soloist with backing is proposed to be 'in dialogue with' her musical context;²²⁷ thus my solo saxophone line in 'Joy and the Spark' is sparse and minimal, reflecting the primacy of the vocal take throughout, and is constrained by the need for the song not to be a jazz track. This last may explain why my 'glowing' saxophone ensemble feature for the outro was later produced to sound alongside additional content, with material which sustained its earlier character.

²²⁷ In the ear of the listener, who arguably hears/experiences any solo in its provided context, even if the performer deliberately does not, hypothetically speaking.

5.3 John McGrath and the IMMIX Ensemble

5.3.1 Situation

John McGrath contacted me about the IMMIX project back in late August of 2014; he later explained that he had heard ‘on the grapevine’ I had arranged music for China Crisis, and he needed an arranger. The IMMIX project came with a defined time frame for performance and set rehearsal time with specialist performers, with the goal of creating 15 minutes of new music for performance on November 19th, 2014. With just under three months left before the performance date, John needed for someone to arrange and manage the parts for the IMMIX ensemble (Appendix 8.5.3.1). In the context of the research questions, the role of arranger clearly frames my agency for the project. The performance itself was made possible by IMMIX’s mixed sextet of professional, ‘reading’ musicians (excellent sight-readers of Western staff notation, pictured in Figures 46-48 below), who on this occasion were: Daniel Thorne, saxophones (also IMMIX’s founder, who has composed and arranged for the ensemble),²²⁸ Hilary Browning, 'cello, Paul Duffy on trumpet, Simmy Singh on violin, Jonathan Guy on bass clarinet, and Michael Walsh on oboe and cor anglais.²²⁹ At the outset, John identified the potential for the performances to be recorded and released as a live recording; the three pieces premiered that evening feature on John’s album, *Wake and Whisper* (2019a).²³⁰

²²⁸ Daniel composed for the ensemble in 2017, and arranged music for one of the projects, in 2012 (IMMIX ENSEMBLE: No Date).

²²⁹ The ensemble does not have fixed personnel, but some players play for most of the projects, e.g., Hilary Browning.

²³⁰ John McGrath has his own record label, Crooked Stem Recordings; *Wake and Whisper* was recorded with the support of Product Records, released on 1st June 2019. (McGrath 2019a)(NB the beginning of *Moreover*, *The Moon* has been edited to start later).

Figure 46 John McGrath in performance with IMMIX, 19th November 2014, also Paul Duffy (trumpet). (Michael Sheerin:2014)



Figure 47 IMMIX^{on} 19th November 2014: Hilary Browing (cello), Jonathan Guy (bass clarinet), Michael Walsh (oboe and cor anglais) Dan Thorn (saxophones) (Michael Sheerin:2014)



Figure 48 IMMIX^{on} 19th November 2014: Simmy Singh (violin) (Michael Sheerin: 2014)



I propose that as a commissioning entity, drawing from cultural parameters originating outside of the project, the IMMIX organisation has a creative agenda to afford specific musical relationships which are reflected in each area of the project, and the practices it touches. IMMIX's website makes explicit its purpose and musical values, describing the project as 'a new musical ensemble focussing on:

collaborations with innovative musical voices from across the UK with a focus on artists from the Merseyside area. Drawing on the talents of some of the country's finest instrumentalists, IMMIX exists as a vehicle to champion the work of forward thinking composers, songwriters, bands and electronic artists, and to cast a spotlight on emerging talent, with an emphasis on artists whose work slips between the cracks of style and genre. (IMMIX, No Date).

This description resonates with critical appreciation for John's work 'pushing' at musical boundaries in his 2013 debut EP release *Lanterns* (2013); *The Wire* magazine reviewed and included a track from his self-released EP in June 2013 ('Four Hills' from *Lanterns*, 2013) on the attached CD sampler:

Dublin born guitarist John McGrath's debut EP of solo acoustic instrumentals combines static drones, glitches and contemporary techniques with rich harmonics and intricate fingerpicking. His versatile experimental approach, reminiscent of Jim O'Rourke, Christian Fennesz and Marc Ribot, pushes at the boundaries of new guitar music and the UK avant folk scene. McGrath recently supported Richard Dawson and performed with Rhys Chatham and Dustin Wong. He has just completed a PhD on Beckett, repetition and modern music, and is currently a lecturer in Music Aesthetics at the University of Liverpool. (*The Wire Magazine*, November 2013).

John's above-cited creative blend of technology, tradition and strong musicianship in live performance (his EP was recorded in live, single-takes, with no overdubs) is therefore aligned with IMMIX's stated musical values. The opportunity that the IMMIX project represented, and the role I played in extending John McGrath's agential arc to widen from solo to group performance of his compositions, is the focus of the more detailed discussion of affordance that follows.

5.3.2 Affordance ecologies

5.3.2.1 Attuning to the project

I arranged five pieces for performance by IMMIX, including two selected from John McGrath's 2013 EP release *Lanterns* (the title track, and 'Breath'). Our initial meetings afforded us the means to talk about John's music, helping me to sensitise to John's musical values and identify courses of action, including identifying the significance of the pieces' nicknames discussed below. This 'feeling out' of the possibilities is proposed to resonate with Barab and Roth's concept of 'transfer', in relation to actioned affordances (effectivities):

Transfer can occur when individuals begin to see different contexts as having similar underlying affordance structures—even in the context of differing contextual particulars. In the best cases, individuals appreciate the power of, or adopt commitments with respect to, a particular effectivity set and begin to assert this "toolset" in multiple situations even when the affordances are not readily apparent on the surface. (Barab and Roth, 2006:11).

In our meetings, our discussions combined my perspective as an arranger with John's perspective on his music, to create a working 'toolset' of prospective possibilities, mapped onto the opportunities for John's music, and its arrangement for the IMMIX ensemble. Parameters of affordance within musical composition were considered, articulated using formal vocabulary of the 'building blocks' of musical material, such as 'melody', 'harmony', 'structure', 'range' and 'texture', 'timbre', etc. This enabled their affordances in context to be mapped out i.e., a particular melody affording a particular instrument in a particular range, constrained by the musical values that afford aesthetic agency within the practice (introduced in Chapter 4). Together, we identified the enlarged 'voicing' possibilities of the ensemble context, of the affordances of melody, harmony, and also assigning bassline movement, and textural and timbral opportunities (see Appendix 8.5.3.2, at 5:03). Specifically, the distinct affordances of each instrument were considered, i.e., sustained notes from strings and winds that are not possible for the guitar; glissandi that were possible for the string instruments, etc (see Appendix 8.5.3.2, at 7:21). This may be understood as a verbalised, collaborative sensitisation towards

the affordances of instruments and textures, and perceptual attunement to each other's understanding to afford appropriate use of my effectivity set as an arranger (Barab and Roth, 2006). Thus, we had begun mapping John's aesthetic agency within the project by delineating aspects of Mooney's instrumental framework of associations (2011), specific to the combined instrumental affordances of the project, and John's musical values. As a whole, it is proposed as an arranger-composer 'touchstone event' (see Chapter 4), orientating my arranging skills as part of my self-tuned effectivity set (Barab and Roth, 2006) to afford an expansion of John's agential arc to encompass the IMMIX ensemble.

Each piece was identified in terms of afforded style characteristics, in a way that resonates with the labelling practices discussed in Chapter 4. *Duilleoga* was nicknamed 'the Reichy one' before being formally named (Appendix 8.5.3.2, at 40:52). Its informal name explicitly referenced Steve Reich, situating the piece within a minimalist aesthetic associated with the compositional device of repetition and variation (among other characteristics). Our discussion on 17th September 2014 (see Appendix 8.5.3.2) opened up many areas for consideration, including constraints. John clearly articulated the need for the arrangement of *Duilleoga* to be distinct, within the aesthetic frame, when I introduced into our discussion an example of a textural motif from Reich's *Electric Counterpoint*. He clarified it was important not to 'rip off' Reich's style, and I described ways to use the motif as a starting point, to move past and develop into a distinct idea, in a musical 'parsing' process previously discussed in the case study for China Crisis (Appendix 8.5.3.2, at 8:31). Other musical references were brought into the conversation (see Appendix 8.5.3.2, at 45:33), and later followed up with online links, to e.g., Jim O'Rourke, in our conversation online (see Appendix 8.5.3.3); these resources attuned me to his intentions for the project, contributing to John's framing activity for our collaboration. John McGrath's acquaintance with, i.e., his genetic experience and attunement to musical repetition goes beyond most people's, due to his academic research interests. John's PhD thesis of 2013 was on the subject of Samuel Beckett, repetition and modern music with a special interest in semantic fluidity, published by Routledge (McGrath, 2019b). At the time of our work together, the sense in

which I found John's music could 'hold the moment' may reflect his extensive knowledge of Morton Feldman's music. 'The Reichy one's' formal title shifts the focus away from the musical field by affording a contextualisation cue as an Irish word, *Duilleoga*. In performance, John explained this translates as 'leaves' as he introduced the piece, and invited the audience to imagine leaves (listen to his introduction and the performance via [Appendix 8.1.1.12](#)). As a performer-composer, in that moment of introduction, John creates an interpretive frame for the audience, attuning audience members to his artistic identity, cueing that he is an Irish musician, and verbally extending his aesthetic agency by 'priming' the audience's attention to the potential for narrative interpretation of the music I arranged, about to be performed.

A further piece's nickname indicated musical qualities: 'the jazzy one' was formally entitled *Moreover, The Moon* (c. 1942-1949),²³¹ which in concert John explained was the name of one of his favourite poems by Mina Loy (1882-1966).²³² Aside from the further allusion to the natural world with 'moon' (i.e., *Duilleoga's* 'leaf' translation), the title makes a use of alliteration, common in song titles; in song lyrics, the word 'moon' has romantic associations, and is a familiar in well-known jazz standard songs from the 1930s and 1940s (*Let's Face the Music and Dance, Paper Moon, Moonglow, Moonlight in Vermont*, etc). The naming of pieces, informally and formally, may therefore be said to be a form of private and/or public context-making, indicative of affordances and associations within creative processes. 'The jazzy one' makes a broad genre reference, without the sociocultural sense of authorial origination that 'the Reichy one' implies. This may point to the sense in which minimalist music has a smaller pool of 'well-known' composers than jazz, and that jazz itself is recognised as much as a practice as a 'sound', i.e., a jazz composition is more likely to be recognised as working within a long-established tradition, easing the creative tension (Strachan, 2013:18-19) that closer reference to a specific composer may afford, and potentially motivate seeking greater

²³¹ This is an estimated date of origination (Gale Publishing, 2016)

²³² The poem is believed to have been written between 1942 and 1949 (other of her poem titles make reference to jazz (Loy and Conover, 1997).

novelty. Each name arises as a result of perceptual attunement to the sound and is used to frame perceptual attunement. *Duilleoga* was developed 'away' from easy association with Steve Reich's oeuvre that afforded it that nickname, for it to be given an Irish title, through which John asserts his artistic identity and aesthetic agency.

5.3.2.2 Music technology affording communication and aesthetic developments

Facility with music technology was an important part of the arrangement skillset I afforded the project as a collaborator. In our meetings, for the 'works in progress', I recorded John's performance of ideas using my Zoom H4N recorder, and imported them into Logic Pro, affording repeatable sensitisation to their features, and development through recording of my musical responses, and their respective refinement. As John endorsed working within the conventional constraints suggested by the EP music's features, which draw from folk and traditional music (Folkestad, 2012); its sociocultural significance as music written within a tradition provided a context for my course of action as an arranger. Thus, for the two tracks from John's *Lanterns* EP, I used Sibelius music notation software, writing in the parts as I imagined them as my ideas came fluidly. Sibelius, not famed for a 'great' sounding sound library,²³³ was appropriate to use for the EP tracks, but not the other three, because their sound worlds were more distinctive. They afforded me more distinct creative responses as an arranger which necessitated more complex courses of action i.e., exploration through performance and sensitisation to possibilities through improvisation, using multi-track recording techniques to capture and 'audition' ideas.

To support arrangement and communication about the wholly new music that John developed for the commission in line with John's direction (e.g., see Appendix 8.5.3.2, at 2:40), I used Logic Pro to rough out the structures and try out ideas.²³⁴ The tools of that arrangement practice, i.e., the software (Logic Pro, Sibelius music notation software) and technology (MacBook Pro laptop) afforded me an audio

²³³ It has improved since I first used it in c. 2000.

²³⁴ The process of sharing files was very similar to that practiced with Gary Daly and China Crisis.

sketch-pad, but distinctly, Logic Pro also afforded me to produce the music a little, and relate to the music as a recording, rather than a live performance. This relation, to arrangement as recording in the process of making it, is possibly an affordance I would constrain in future, without more opportunity to develop live performance sound enhancement for the arrangement. I became accustomed to e.g., the small amount of reverberation that I added parts, to help it to 'gel' and afford a sense of a reverberant performance space (which in the event, it was not). It also has association of ambience, for me, which 'added' to the musical values enrolled in the music, my view. I believe this led to my sense of a 'lack' about the live performance, which is arguably misplaced in a project context celebrating live musicianship, and I was likely the only person in the audience able to compare the live performance with the recording in such a way.

Music technology tools afforded specific performative and aesthetic features of John's established practice, which framed how we considered the opportunities afforded by expanding the music to include IMMIX's musicians. The pragmatics of including a pedal loop, and varying it, impacted the performance planning and constrained possibilities for the arrangement and its performance. This led to discussion of arrangement decisions for the ensemble intended to afford a 'freeing up' John's usual course of action in live solo performance, in which he usually accompanied himself within his textures in their completeness or included audio file playback via his loop pedal. I asked John about the potential to store loops in the pedal, and trigger them in performance, with the idea that the sextet could re-voice his looped material and create a sense of dialogue in live performance. In fact, what was possible (and reliable) performing with the loop pedal was decisive in the aesthetic possibilities for the ensemble for his music, which needed to provide the chordal context for his soloing: 'That's why I was, I kind of, I wanted to use the underlying chord things, that they can do, you know, 'cause it's hard to do all that with a looper...unless you do the whole thing, in real time'. (Appendix 8.5.3.2, 24:11). Evidently, there was less freedom for spontaneous musical dialogue than I imagined, because the looper was best used as a planned, live recording tool in performance (not for playback of pre-recorded music), performatively underlining a

sense of origination aestheticised through the practice of recording, proposed to intensify the sense of ‘liveness’. The technological affordance of John’s practice at the time therefore required the ensemble to be assigned particular harmonic functions; chordal music on John’s guitar would have to be performed, and integrated into the compositional structure, in sequential order (though some melodic material could be presented first, as for *Duilleoga*). With greater clarity as to the affordances of John’s practice with the looper pedal, I further attuned to his performed aesthetic in my arrangement for *Moreover, The Moon*. Inspired by the sound of John’s reversed, ‘slowed’ pedal effect in our meeting (noted at 27:19 in Appendix 8.5.3.2), I afforded its development by associating it with an Ellingtonian, big-band style chorale (discussed at 8:53 in Appendix 8.5.3.2), to create the chromatically moving chordal texture that features in the performance.²³⁵ In this sense, my sensitivity to the textural qualities of John’s looper aesthetic afforded its re-articulation on traditional instruments, adding a novel element for the ensemble to perform which was derived from John’s source material.²³⁶

5.3.2.3 On affording an arranger’s musical values, within a composer’s project

One of the learning curves for me on the project was the convention to not explicitly acknowledge arrangers.²³⁷ This is an oft-followed convention in both popular and classical music arenas (Niles, 2014). The event poster (Fig. 49) does not list the arranger role, which is proposed to visibly foreground the listed composers’ creative agency and the ensemble as instruments of their creative vision. It also arguably avoids any sense of ‘dilution’ of that vision, or negative associations with arrangement which at worst could invite ‘formulaic’ associations with genre conventions.

²³⁵ This may be heard at 27:19 in [Appendix 8.1.1.12](#), which is a complete recording of John McGrath’s IMMIX performance.

²³⁶ This may be considered a form of musical parsing.

²³⁷ Dan Thorne arranged one IMMIX project with the same approach to accreditation, so this was not exceptional. This was the first time I had not also performed or directed my arrangements, proposed to be indicative of the distinct opportunity IMMIX presents composers, and arrangers.

Figure 49 IMMIX poster (Sam Little:2013)



In addition to enjoying arranging the music, I came to appreciate some of the subtler ways my musical values were active within the project. With John's support, I aimed i) to allow the skills of each of the musicians to 'shine' at different points in the 'set list', and also ii) to afford a degree of contrast in the arrangements, as a set, which after all was afforded by the project's central resource: the ensemble. Table 3 below summarises John's programme at the IMMIX event (19/11/14); the far-right column shows how nearly all the performers are featured at one point in the programme (the exception being the saxophone). The two pieces from John's EP, *Lanterns* and *Breath*, draw from an Irish folk tradition and feature the string players, as their instruments are more idiomatic than e.g., brass and reed instruments for that form of folk music. *Breath* was arranged to include a folk melody I felt afforded an eastern European sensibility and included an improvisation section which the trumpeter took up as an opportunity (see [Appendix 8.1.1.12](#) at 19:42) and a notated solo for cello (ibid, at 21:45). John had learned the trumpeter liked to

improvise, and we both supported expression of that part of his musical identity. Bass clarinet featured in *Moreover, the Moon*, which also included textures which individually foregrounded each player. *Duilleoga* made more of a virtue of the ensemble sound, and it had less melodic content to ‘feature’ individual players. The final piece, *Ohlish*, returned to John’s Irish heritage, to feature Simmy Singh’s stylish performance on the violin, providing a lively contrast to the seriousness of the wholly new material. Both i) and ii) are proposed to afford musical values of my creative practice, of being inclusive towards musicians’ talents and support expression of their musical identities, also employed (speculatively) as a strategy to afford maintaining audience attention through the programme. This last is proposed as a form of aesthetic agency operating at the level of programme design (shown in Table 3, below), to afford perceptual stimulation in support of audience members’ sustained attention through ‘sculpting’ the opportunity of differentiation in the music presented.

Table 3 The running order for the IMMIX concert (19/11/13) showing featured instruments and introductions²³⁸

	Pieces performed by John McGrath and the IMMIX ensemble.	Location on full concert recording (m/s)	Piece length (m/s)	Qualities – solo/texture
1	<i>Lanterns</i> (title track from EP, 2013)	4:32-8:46	4:14	Up-tempo, folkish, major key.
2	John McGrath’s collaboration with Lucy Pankhurst			
3	Unaccompanied solo by John McGrath			
4	<i>Breath</i> (introduced with reference to Samuel Beckett)	18:53-23:39	4:46	Improvised trumpet solo (19:42) and notated solo for cello (21:45); minor tonality.
5	<i>Moreover, The Moon</i> (after the poem of the same name, by Mina Loy (c. 1942-49))	25:02-30:57	5:55	Staggered entries of the instruments, ‘Ellingtonian’ chorale; bass clarinet riff feature.

²³⁸ See [Appendix 8.1.1.12](#) to hear John McGrath’s half of the concert.

6	<i>Duilleoga</i> (introduced with reference to its translation as 'leaves' in Irish)	31:56-37:29	5:33	'Avian' idea: translated into a more 'collective' sound, rather than a singular solo.
7	<i>Ohlish</i> (introduced with reference to Irish music).	39:16-42:16	3:00	Irish, traditional sounding piece; violin feature.
			Total: c. 33:18	

5.3.3 Conclusion

My arrangement process for John McGrath's IMMIX project was, as for China Crisis, afforded by listening to his music, which was in turn afforded by recording, which afforded my relational use of singing and performance to arrange the music. The arrangement practice was employed to augment John's musical vision, and his part of the event as a whole may be viewed as a vehicle for the social production of identity. The 'classical' staging referred to above is part of the proposed 'augmentation' of John's musical identity through the sextet linked to the IMMIX project, a view supported by a review of the event itself by Jon Davies (2014), in *The Skinny*:

In the concluding session of IMMIX's highly commended collaboration series, composers John McGrath and Lucy Pankhurst provide a suitably engaging suite, relatively accessible in comparison to the ensemble's progressive outlook. John McGrath's reputation is still bubbling underground, however his appearances in various guitar ensembles and scratch orchestras, as well as his *Lanterns* EP, have made him known for dexterous guitar work and the ability to work folky melodies in with complex arrangements. With the help of fellow composer Chloe Mullett, McGrath's work with IMMIX is less of an overhaul and more of a tasteful augmentation of his music, as if to highlight the ornate nature of his work that is more subtle in a solo capacity. Bringing to mind the likes of Owen Pallett and Grizzly Bear, John McGrath is an artist capable of balancing classical and folk textures to great effect. (Davies, 2014).²³⁹

²³⁹ See Appendix 8.5.3.4 for the article in its colourful online publication format.

Davies' review engages with a discourse of a musical identity in the public domain (as in e.g., *The Wire Magazine* review, 2013, cited above) and rearticulates it in terms of the affordances of the IMMIX project. It identifies the (genetic) characteristics of previous solo and ensemble work and goes on to 'augment' that identity narratively, mirroring the musical augmentation afforded by IMMIX. The review's perspective on John's performed creativity as a soloist is similarly augmented to encompass a composerly identity, dealing in textures and details. Similarly, a review of John's 2019 release including the IMMIX recordings states,

The record's three tracks with other players are where McGrath sounds like he's already arrived. Scored for guitar and a six-piece string and wind ensemble, they're so immaculately performed and reproduced that it's a bit of a shock to find that they are live recordings. The music holds up quite nicely when compared to its most obvious antecedent, Jim O'Rourke's *Bad Timing*. The picking is similarly propulsive, and the tonal mix similarly rich and balanced. But where O'Rourke goes widescreen, McGrath is like a jeweler [sic], crafting small but perfectly formed pieces that tempt you to pick them up and hold them to the light, just to get a better glance. (Meyer: 2019)

Here, Meyer not only praises the performance and recording, but also John's crafting of the pieces for IMMIX in a way that maintains the subtlety and detail of his music, similarly credited in the first review cited above, which refers to the 'intricacies' of John's work. John himself currently maintains references to the IMMIX project and its 'large arrangements' on both his academic and musician profiles online (McGrath, 2021; McGrath, No Date).²⁴⁰

Therefore, in the public discourse of the review, a key goal of the IMMIX ensemble stated at the outset of this case study has, arguably, been achieved- to bring together excellent (classically trained) musicians with a performing artist-composer, whose work was previously understood to lie outside of that world and unite them through collaboration. For my identity and role as an arranger, the review offers some confirmation of what I hoped to achieve. To be 'true' to John's musical intent,

²⁴⁰ Both sites refer to work he was 'commissioned to write for the IMMIX ensemble and performed new music alongside large arrangements of his work with the group.' (McGrath, 2021; McGrath, No Date).

I sensitised to the music, attuning to it by listening and attending to the contextualisation cues. They included as the names given to the music, and the looper aesthetic, to find ways to translate them to the ensemble context. The folk music pieces afforded easier mapping to the ensemble because their textures are relatively traditional (which is to say conventional) and well established as canonical affordances. It was trickier to afford 'derived' parts for the newer works as they were less conventional, however taking a 'textural' approach enabled John's more intricate guitar work to retain its afforded 'event' status and reinforced the minimalist aspects of his practice. The diverse practice I contributed as an arranger shown in this case study (and the others in this chapter) is proposed to demonstrate that there is an agential arc of musical values coursing through my arrangement practice, which is distinctly and principally different to composition, due to the composer's origination of the musical context (Folkestad, 2012) which affords an arranger's starting point.

6. Discussion

6.1 Introduction

Applying affordance theory to my practice was often challenging, but bringing the research insights ‘to the surface’ was ultimately very rewarding. Unexpectedly, it has encouraged a sense of ‘wholeness’ about my practice; the research connected my present musical interests and affective motivation to my past. I feel empowered with answers about how my music practice ‘works’ my experience through perceptual attunement, and how my practice affords me meaningful musical outcomes through forms of agency. Thinking about how the thesis’ insights are more widely present in practice, be that creative practice, performance practice, collaboration, or teaching practice, offers a means to sensitise towards its elements and become more empowered within courses of action. Further, personally identifying relationships between tools (objects), perceptual attunement, and associations, is proposed to shed new light on creative agency, resulting in an opportunity to support, develop and refine affordances in specific contexts. On that basis, this chapter begins by interpreting the thesis’ findings ‘across’ the case studies to address how they may be of benefit to other practitioners, to meaningfully restate the research insights. It progresses to discuss the academic contribution made by the insights, with reference to the existing literature.

6.2 Reflections on the research insights for practitioners

One of the affordances of music as an ‘object’ is its capacity for physical transformation. Based on the thesis’ insights, from a single idea, many ideas may be derived to afford differentiation and a range of sensibilities. However, without a targeted context in mind, however slim, it is proposed that creative agency is less fluid, orientating to courses of action may be harder, making it harder to finish the music, even. Part of the solution to creative ‘blocks’ may include choosing to explore a musical tradition or a style which affords musical values of interest (and/or enjoyment) in their emulation, and then innovate within/beyond that. When musical creativity is viewed as lifeworld building (DeNora, 2000), the opportunity to make choices about the challenges one sets oneself is one to take

seriously. Level of challenge afforded is something we can attune to- we can change the creative environment to be richer in desired affordances within courses of action, on the intellectual and affective plane, to make 'more available what benefits ... and less pressing what injures' (Gibson, 1979:130). Some of the thesis' insights can be used as 'jumping off points' to support such creative musical development. Musical parsing, or 'riffing' on an idea, affords deriving new ideas from existing ideas, and attuning to their differences to afford courses of action. Alternatively, 'sitting with' an idea and opening up to its possibilities through the associative listening practice of 'listening-for' may reveal source material to be richer in inspiration than at first acquaintance. Or perhaps, a lyric will offer an actionable analogy which, whether or not it remains 'wed' to the lyric, may develop a course of action leading to music that suits a preferred different application. Squaring up to habits and sensitising to the processes of a practice in terms of ideas and affect is a way to open new 'lines of creative enquiry'. If 'following a feeling' is no longer fruitful, 'finding a feeling' on an unfamiliar instrument can refresh perception and afford novel timbral and textural possibilities. Recording technology, while not the main focus of this research, has been shown to be an important way to extend aesthetic agency beyond what any individual can perform. Within a practice, without resources such as the IMMIX ensemble or willing musicians, the likelihood is that recording is how expanding aesthetic agency will be possible beyond the immediately performable. More and more resources are available for this, including options with smartphones and online.²⁴¹

By auditioning ideas, practitioners may sensitise towards what each affords, using the information gathered about the music's characteristics and context, to develop from those ideas in some sense. Reviewing musical material in this way is proposed to create an affordance ecology, wherein musical values are brought to awareness through sensitised attunement, typically to enable and enact a 'short' agential arc of musical values to 'test the water'. This is part of creative process identified as a

²⁴¹ For some, 'old school' is best; 4-track cassette tape recording may afford welcome novel inspiration for some, though the convenience of digital recording is undeniable for those with access to it.

central contribution of the thesis, in support of affording practitioners further empowerment for aesthetic agency. If larger structures are an issue, finding a means to 'scaffold' practice is ideal to grow towards affording more independent choices. Writing 'to' *Le Spectre Rouge* (1907), it was not necessary to wholly invent a score, as my aesthetic agency was afforded a collaboration across time with the film's maker, as identified in the insight 'film as score'. Writing for films/dance/spoken word/other performance affords application of existing skills to a new, scaffolded context, sensitising practitioners to their perceptual attunement to cultural norms, awareness of which affords courses of action to compound or dissociate from those norms, according to interest.

Many musicians aspire to tour their work, necessitating performance in a range of spaces. While use of space was addressed by *Instar* in a less conventional sense than touring, the transposition of the practice into difference spaces over longer periods of time deepened the sense of spaces significance for shaping phenomenal experience in performance. Different spaces can 'feel' very different to perform in, as well as exhibiting different physical attributes. Even moving from a practice space to a performance venue affords different perceptual attunement to the practice for a practitioner, as for *Le Spectre Rouge*. A portable, contextual feature for use in each performance space, such as projection, lighting design, or a pre-recorded audio element, is one means to achieve an 'objective' contextual 'constant' across venues/experience. In particular, beginnings are important, as they set the terms for (or frame) perceptual engagement and subsequent differentiation (and exploration) with the performance which follows (Gibson, 1968). Performing live with pre-composed elements thus affords the performer two forms of agency: the agency to explore a familiar sonic landscape of her own making, and agency to make new sounds in a new space within performance which may 'work off' the pre-composed music's materiality in the live context. Together, these are proposed to constitute a 'technology of the self', as the music/film

media's structure aesthetically affords a 'place and space for work' (DeNora, 2000; 1986).²⁴²

6.3 Academic comment on the research insights

The thesis' research insights are proposed to map established theory to new contexts, nuancing affordance theory's application to creative music practice through Gibson's concept of perceptual attunement (1968). Insights extending the research on the symbolic affordances of instruments (Mooney, 2010; Folkestad, 2012) were achieved through evidenced exemplification of (genetic) perceptual attunement to repertoire and 'textural' listening especially typical of jazz performance practice. However, even when exhibiting attunement to repertoire, current (static) courses of action were shown to be perceptually attuned to 'hunting' for strategic coherence beyond 'flute-ness' or 'saxophone-ness' and require identification of a creative paradigmatic framework with the degree of flexibility Mooney proposes, as discussed in Chapter 5. Technology was shown to subvert the conventional framework afforded by instruments in Chapter 4, but more simply, so was the actionable analogy discussed in Chapter 5. Acknowledging the relevance of Folkestad's assertion that, 'music is the context, and the music situates the creator' (2012:193), the present research extends that concept into the materiality of music's malleability through the contribution of derived parts and musical parsing. They result in musically material differences with the potential to simultaneously sensitise their creator to the objects' action potential, and thus afford more refined selectivity. The thesis also nuances genre through practical illustration: Strachan's idea of creative tension conceptualises genre as a 'set of rules, simultaneously taken into account and intermittently broken in the pursuit of progression and originality' (2017:116); Toynbee (2000) asserts that 'genre provides a 'necessary starting point for creative action from which it is very difficult to break away' (cited in Strachan, 2017:116); similarly, Folkestad (2012) talks about genre as a 'recipe'. This thesis does not contest the validity of these positions, just the

²⁴² The aesthetic agency which afforded the 'design' of the piece in the first place may potentiate an affective association proposed as a nested affordance accessible in performance, if that conceptualisation is valid for the performer. This is an extension of the ongoing perceptual attunement of listening as performing in improvisation proposed by Clarke (2005:152).

(potential) inference that to be authentic is to prioritise one genre above all others. The present research demonstrated how genre norms for a piece of music may be expanded and their affordances altered, while continuing to be afforded by invariant features of the music afforded to both versions, as shown by the discussion of 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood' and 'It's Too Late'. Thus the thesis proposes that genre is incomplete as an explanation for musical creativity. Further, the choice of genre for a creative practitioner is first a question of whether or not they are interested in it or like it: it speaks to musical values and agency as much as any sense of derivative practice.²⁴³ Interest is also relevant to how the thesis builds upon DeNora's (1999) and a Krueger's (2014a) research connecting affect with musical affordance, to extend it into creative music practice in specific courses of action, or agential arcs. The affective domain is asserted as a significant, enacted part of the 'why' of 'doing' music practice, and for decision making. This thesis therefore contributes an extension of DeNora's 'technology of the self' (1999), by proposing to show that it is a concept as relevant for musicians as it is for other listeners. For, while affect has received attention as a facet of musical instrument practice (Mazur and Laguna (2019) identify it as an important motivator), affect is less foregrounded in research into musical creativity.

Chapter 3 begins the thesis' consideration of my perceptual attunement to music and its objects. Within the remit of the practice discussed, the thesis builds on research including Gibson and Pick (2000), Windsor (2017), Barab and Roth (2006) and Menin and Schiavio (2012), to present a developmental perspective on musical practice as courses of action, corralled into 'snapshots' of that development in progress, within one musical lifeworld. The 'addition' made by that chapter is proposed to be how it draws together different aspects of perceptual development, and links that to practice. A line is drawn connecting singing to learning by ear on a recorder, to learning to make music in two parts on piano, to learning chords, re-shaping of chords, arranging chords, learning how to attune to a lead-sheet,

²⁴³ Such a comment arguably carries a latent modernist judgement, in any case, presuming that 'derivative' is understood pejoratively rather than in the sense of musical development identified in the thesis re. derived parts and musical parsing.

improvisation as exploration of interest, composition, and arrangement, and sensitisation to musical associations. All of these elements are proposed to support the thesis' insight of aesthetic agency, which 'captures' and extends the reach of agential courses of action beyond live performance.

The composition chapter's central insights, 'film as score', 'touchstone events' and aesthetic agency address creative process from distinct angles. 'Film as score' demonstrates how attunement to convention, partly through education in canonical affordances for film music, affords creative courses of action. This supports part of Strachan's idea of creative tension (2013:18), however the novel element is arguably in the performance, by a 'one-woman band', in a curated event which presented a well-defined affordance network, which was demonstrably met with my effectivity set. The *Instar* case study's 'touchstone event' concept may be interpreted as extending another of Strachan's insights, i.e., the 'materiality of the sounding object is an immovable starting point from which action evolves' (2013:8), which resulted in Herbert going against his gut-felt response to sounds in his creative practice. 'Touchstone' events, in comparison, describes a scaled-up, composite form of selectivity providing 'clarity' that 'reinforces' the project's identity (Gibson, 1968:271). This insight incorporates the creative tension that Strachan asserts but offers it as a component of a series of touchstone events emerging within agential courses of action, as a means to 'course-correct' or re-orientate to emergent practice and musical values (interest, affect, ideas). It was articulated in a collaborative context, here proposed to be equally valid for individual practice. In contrast, 'listening-for' nuances Strachan's 'immovable starting point' by virtue of recognising that the materiality of a sounding object may simply be 'immovable' for practice, i.e., the starting point does not afford an easy entry into the practice, which 'listening-for' addresses by context-making by searching for associations. On reflection, this links back, genetically, to the author's education in associative practices with Prof. Tagg acknowledged in Chapter 3.

Aesthetic agency is arguably the cumulative insight of the practice, as logically, its consequence is a composition or arrangement which enrolls the other insights in

courses of action to achieve that goal. It may be the ultimate nested affordance structure. One of the, possibly answerable, questions about musical creativity is the extent to which is possible to determine musical response, be that for creative, commercial or social reasons. The suggestion here is that to the extent that that can be known, it is dependent upon context, i.e., the extent to which you 'know your audience'. For acts like China Crisis, with decades of experience performing for fans, have an intimate knowledge of their audience. While they do not perform experimental improvisation of the kind under discussion in Burland and Windsor (2014), the act's performance and music is proposed to be equally reliant on the same sort of feedback described here: 'It's the auditory and visual experience from the audience that I'm actually working with, that's the material I'm manipulating.' (Burland and Windsor, 2014:101). Obviously, a live performance is not a recording, but the point is to suggest that aesthetic agency undertaken with a context in mind (Folkestad, 2012) may be based upon a great deal of sensitivity to information about audience interests. China Crisis experienced a great deal of 'joint attention' through touring; such an experience for a songwriter is proposed to mean that s/he may feel, 'I do not just hear the music. I hear the others hearing the music.' (Krueger, 2010:20). In a project such as *Le Spectre Rouge*, the format dictates the creative frame; for China Crisis, their creative frame is their own, familiar repertoire which their fans have also known and loved for decades. Therefore, the choice to create a reggae song for a new release, however different to a song's original style, is proposed to demonstrate investment in sensitivity to and interest in their audience's sensibilities, and also their own flexibility as aesthetic agents at the level of style.

6.4 Arrangement and composition as agential practices

As stated in the introduction, the thesis offers an opportunity to query the difference in the activity of the practice undertaken in composer and arranger roles, which in the wider world are credited very differently in terms of legal status, monetary reward, and recognition. Perhaps the difference between arrangement and composition is that as an arranger, one's own 'interest' is not paramount. One may like one course of action more than another and have afforded the agential arc

which achieved those sounds, but the aesthetic agency for the final musical object, the piece as it is finished fully arranged and recorded, is not in your gift: it is the composer who decides. On reflection, this responsibility is shown by the composer's work bearing his/her name, but perhaps at a more granular level, it is likely that the composer has afforded the arranger a specific sonic environment and direction in which to work, to frame and cue the arranger's response. Conventionally, the arranger's starting point is a composer's full-length composition, for example; this is the fundamental stimulus for arrangers', perceptual attunement, to which their skills and experience afford a creative response.

For arrangement, the affordances enlisted are the same as for composition, as may be some of the 'seeking' of interest or affective connection, but the agential arc extends to the performance choices and physical execution only, not in the ability to 'decide', finally. My arrangement practice prior to the PhD was either in band contexts or for ensembles I led. In the former, I was part of the decision making about the music as a whole, and collaborated to write it, or my contribution was generally a 'good fit' and unquestioned: the aesthetic agency of band leaders was not foregrounded. For anyone moving from a band-centred arranger role, to a professional arranger context, the difference in aesthetic agency is one to anticipate, ideally, as it gives you options as to how much to invest in e.g. 'listening for', versus more generic responses, as you are giving over the value of your perceptual attunement to the music, personalising it by affording it your associations, to the extent that you feel a stronger sense of agency or identification with the project than the role permits. Finally, if adding instruments, discussing register choices, mixes, performance attitudes, and harmonies are arrangement tasks, then Carl Brown and Gary Brown Eddie Lundon are all arrangers, as well as commissioners of arrangement, performers and producers. Perhaps the distinction between what I afford as an arranger and their contribution, is defined by my performative approach to arrangement, and the extent to which I am able to articulate and communicate arrangements as music notation, as for John McGrath and the IMMIX ensemble.

Having considered the relevance of the research to other practitioners, its contribution to academic research in the field and the agential distinctions in practice between arrangement and composition, the thesis moves to its conclusion. In the final chapter, the research insights are reviewed for their future use potential, and possibilities are considered for extending the research into new areas.

7. Conclusion

The basis for the originality of this research is proposed to be its perspective and ‘depth’ of insight into musical affordance for musical composition and arrangement. Other research in this field offers a practitioner perspective (e.g., Strachan, 2017, Folkestad, 2012; Windsor and de Bézenac, 2012; Clarke et al, 2018), but by virtue of the thesis’ PaR methodology, the space and focus given over to the subject of musical making, rather than theorising, is proportionately greater. The thesis is also distinct for its fine level of detail and phenomenological viewpoint from within the practice, such as for the performance of *Le Spectre Rouge*; in this sense, the research is intimate. As for any research project, this thesis has its limitations, but the novel aspects of the insights are significant for foregrounding a practitioner’s perspective on creativity which embraces a definition of ‘interest’ inclusive of affect, ideas, and motivations for perceptual attunement.

This thesis has explored the potential of affordance theory to contribute to knowledge of creative music practices. Music research with affordance has received criticism for inconsistent use of the term (Menin and Schiavio (2012), among others). That point of view is not opposed here other than to say that the contextual contingency of affordance in action arguably merits its diverse definition, at least to some degree. The significance of the attunement of the person affording action demonstrated in this thesis suggests that affordance is necessarily a flexible concept, as its application always has those two variables in play, i.e. actor and context, in addition to the choice of objects.²⁴⁴ There is, however, a case to be made for the value of discussing music in terms of affordance, for the ease it offers to avoid technical language which is often the province of privilege. Other means of discussing the detail of music are offered by e.g., Tagg (2013), which may have potential for development with affordance to

²⁴⁴ Gibson’s argument for the universality of affordance, and its existence regardless of whether or not it is perceived is proposed to be consistent with the assertion made, as Gibson acknowledged the development of sensitivity was required for the perception of affordances, which is the sense in which they are universal applied here (Gibson, 1968:147).

achieve a practitioner-focus, such as using his musematic labelling system to identify perceived qualities of musical ideas.

One of the priorities for the thesis was embracing affect as a feature of music creation. It is not the only feature, and it is not necessarily always the most important feature, but 'musical feeling' is a large part of why many people make music (Lonsdale and North, 2011). Affective experience afforded by music was a tacit fact of the author's music education discussed in Chapter 3, with the exception of jazz, where it was explicitly at its heart (combined with rigorously applied theory). All this is to say that for creative practitioners (and educators), how music affects mood may be 'designed in' to creative processes, it does not have to be left out in place of solely intellectual strategies. Obviously, as highly personal research, the thesis' findings are not generalisable at the level of the detail presented. However, as the above reflections assert, the insights have potential for wider paradigmatic applications addressing common practices, and modelling possible courses of action in relation to music's materiality. It also adds weight to the argument advanced by Rinsema (2021), that improvisation (and not necessarily jazz improvisation) be adopted as a pillar of ecological approaches to creative music education. This is how the thesis' value is proposed to extend beyond an individual's documented journey, and the aforementioned benefit to that individual. Nonetheless, it is proposed that the PaR methodology has resulted in novel re-interpretation and application of affordance theory within the affordance ecologies. By uniting afforded action with affect, the method supports the holistic discussion of creative processes in a way which is grounded in courses of action and music's materiality. This has the consequent benefit of founding insights in activity, which is potentially relatable to musicians if the common ground in practice is able to promote relevance and understanding for creative development or academic insight. To be reflexive about the results as a whole, the musical values I ascribe to make it more than likely that the musical values attributed to improvisation and affective connection would be found to be important.

Some of the insights into musical affordance developed for the thesis have potential to inform music teaching, if pragmatic aspects are enhanced as a means to support attunement to music for creativity. In my musical education, this was a feature of my jazz education, with further specific details such as attunement to bassline and part movement afforded by learning figured bass and Bach chorale writing. With regard to jazz education, as discussed in Chapter 3, its focus was the creative outcome of improvisation, in courses of action sensitised through perceptual exploration of musical objects with a view to identifying the affordances of e.g., a jazz standard²⁴⁵ of particular interest. To clarify, analysis of practice using affordance theory locates an affordance relation in a course of action. In musical practice, that results in a concurrent or subsequent sound. A beginner learning an instrument, as Chapter 3 identifies, may concurrently be afforded the physical skills of sounding the instrument with sensitisation to cultural conventions such as the musical values of the harmonic system ‘designed into’ an instrument’s affordances (Windsor, 2017). Further, the thesis found that perceptual attunement includes autonomous pursuit of sounds which embody musical values for the player, composer or arranger which are appropriate or necessary for a specific context.

Acknowledging the non-generalisability of the research, it is proposed that there is clear potential to develop the research to inform creative development, musical creativity, collaboration, composition and performance. Building on insights presented here, it would seem apt to continue to nuance DeNora’s situated reception theory for creative practitioners with a group of practitioners with a view to generating research from which it is more possible to generalise. This could combine a PaR methodology with an agenda for creating insights accessible to practitioners at different stages of creative experience and maturity. While the depth of reflection (and time) required of me to carry out the method is unlikely to appeal to many, the method nonetheless has potential for adaptation as a professional musical development tool. Further, it supports attending to personal

²⁴⁵ A jazz standard is commonly a song from the ‘standard’ repertoire listed in the ‘Real’ and ‘Fake’ books series drawing from American and British musical theatre from the early 20th century onward, and enhanced with Latin, blues influenced and popular funk repertoire (Witmer, 2011).

musical experience as phenomenology, as opposed to psychology. This is significant for musicians developing in a higher education context, who may be curious about how music is meaningful. The method would be modified from the thesis to extend DeNora's theory of music as a technology of the self to include musical activity as practiced and experienced first-hand by musicians. By proceeding on a music sociology rather than a music psychology basis is an advantage, as higher education's disciplinary and resource requirements for a psychological approach are beyond most music departments,²⁴⁶ and the curriculum space needed would likely exceed that which is reasonably available for reflection on practice. Future research in domestic music making with infants and caregivers could support caregivers' confidence and musical development to also afford making music in the home. This could build upon the existing domestic affordance ecology for self-expression, including learning by ear and attunement to the world-building elements of music practice (Barab and Roth, 2006), for the mutual benefit of caregivers and infants. The thesis now proceeds to the conclusion, voiced in the third person, to address the research enquiry in overview.

The thesis' three research questions address objects, attunement and courses of action, respectively. In fact, the research shows they are in a mutual relation, so that an instrument affords both an associative context and a course of action, based upon attunement to its sound in an enculturated context, to which practitioners may become attuned to through listening and orientate their actions based upon their interests. Music technology enhances and expands agency, by affording creation and sculpting of musical objects as experiences through time, as do aural skills, by making sounding musical objects actionable. Undoubtedly, engaging with affordance theory has deeply enhanced my understanding of my creative practice and its constituent elements. Jazz practice in particular was central to the creative practice discussed, and as Chapter 3 identifies, sensitisation towards

²⁴⁶ The British Psychological Society sets out accreditation requirements which have significant consequences for resourcing, including supervision by lecturers and not graduate students, teaching loads for researchers, and the currency of library resources (The British Psychological Society, 2019).

aspects of that creative practice were underway prior to familiarity with that, through a variety of means in the home, and in formal education.

The insights established by the thesis are underpinned primarily by Gibson's theory of perceptual attunement and selectivity towards that which is 'of interest', in context (Gibson, 1968:286). This enabled exploratory activity within practice to be recognised as perceptual attunement, whereby interest motivated sensitisation towards the affordances of musical tools, media, and in the case of arrangement, existing music. Importantly, perceptual attunement also supported inclusion of affective experience as a phenomenological, 'felt' fact of the creative processes in experience, when identified within Gibson's 'interest' (Gibson, 1968:175;130). Articulated as affordance ecologies, which offer a fundamentally phenomenological premise, the findings are proposed to contribute to research by interpreting creative musical practice in composition and arrangement as intermodal processes (Krueger, 2014a) of perceptual attunement. By applying static and genetic phenomenological analysis, the research nuances the application of affordance, nested affordance, perceptual attunement, and the perception-action cycle to present insights with a high level of detail in 'real-world' professional contexts proposed as novel within the research field. The 'agential arc of musical values', as a motivated course of action, was found to exist in different lengths, depths and formations. It 'surfaces' agency to highlight a composer's augmented agential reach through an arranger's practice, and also nuances concepts of innovation in relation to cultural convention, as I negotiated ideas of originality, derivation, and musical value in pursuit of musical interest.

8. Appendices

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 List of hyperlinks to the creative practice submitted in this thesis

8.1.1.1 *Le Spectre Rouge*

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/Htzzw0HbqmA?t=228>

8.1.1.2 *Instar*

Hyperlink: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDvu0pkGVnM>

8.1.1.3 *Instar II* (introduction)

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/qcp-al21J00>

8.1.1.4 *Purchase, May 14th*

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ>

8.1.1.5 'Make Do and Mend'

Hyperlink:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WJa8G1DesKDJp2L0sSALpf4XZtNCQi80/view?usp=sharing>

8.1.1.6 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood'

Hyperlink:

<https://open.spotify.com/track/4lagpzrV88B4DUQyrnnoo?si=762fce741b39467d>

8.1.1.7 'Joy and the Spark'

Hyperlink:

<https://open.spotify.com/track/6cMJeToTE5cnq1pnJ1XHtd?si=4bb6b4d5f16041f3>

8.1.1.8 'It's Too Late'

Hyperlink:

<https://open.spotify.com/track/0HvS22P2v9ZFe4LyCRemOT?si=f416c59c1ce4452d>

8.1.1.9 'Lanterns'

Hyperlink:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bPuKGMVq7tFeBWHYqFv864SWtLDQsP4E/view?usp=sharing>

8.1.1.10 'Breath'

Hyperlink:

<https://open.spotify.com/track/1rWBAWxSr61XVlivOFFk26?si=a71c9f8bec454f60>

8.1.1.11 'Moreover, The Moon'

Hyperlink: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EN5LFM6-erPu0-](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EN5LFM6-erPu0-lhAVdJqiHztFtT9ksL/view?usp=sharing)

[lhAVdJqiHztFtT9ksL/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EN5LFM6-erPu0-lhAVdJqiHztFtT9ksL/view?usp=sharing)

8.1.1.12 'Duilleoga'

Hyperlink:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vc3CdaL9rRPse0AkImMwCRolzUkukUAi/view?usp=sharing>

8.1.1.13 'Ohlish'

Hyperlink:

<https://open.spotify.com/track/3D31aKkfi8WY73CNou2QQe?si=b38dd1444d034f56>

8.2 Research Premise

8.2.1 Comment on common ground with mixed methods

The approach taken shares some common ground with the flexibility of mixed methods research. 'Mixed methods' is not a clear-cut approach, it has been defined as applicable at the level of the data collection, or the level of analysis, or both, with the mix referring to a blend of quantitative and qualitative approaches, in one or more stages of the enquiry - or in sequence (Gray, 2018:196). The priority is to link back to the source material to maintain the link to primary resources (Shorten and Smith, 2017:74). The mixed method features of this research are apparent in both data collection and analysis, but not in a wholly conventional sense. In the present research paradigm, quantitative research is the 'objective' information represented in the music notation examples, representing elements of the musical structures discussed, for example. Strategies were employed which resulted in varying documentation methods across case studies, to e.g., prioritise audio over video recording for collaborative practice was applied, if it was considered to be more appropriate to the social context (e.g., in someone else's home). This was not

considered to make a material difference to the analytical method, as the resources were all used to trigger memory of phenomenological experience (Pohjannoro and Rousi, 2018:991). Regarding the analytical aspects, this was based upon documented evidence, resulting in a combination of objective (i.e., evidenced with musical examples about process and communication with collaborators) and subjective interpretations (e.g., evidenced with composer-diaries). The description of the layered approach taken to this is accounted for in the Research Premise (Chapter 2, section 2.3.3).

8.2.2 The alignment of phenomenology and affordance theory with reference to key terms.

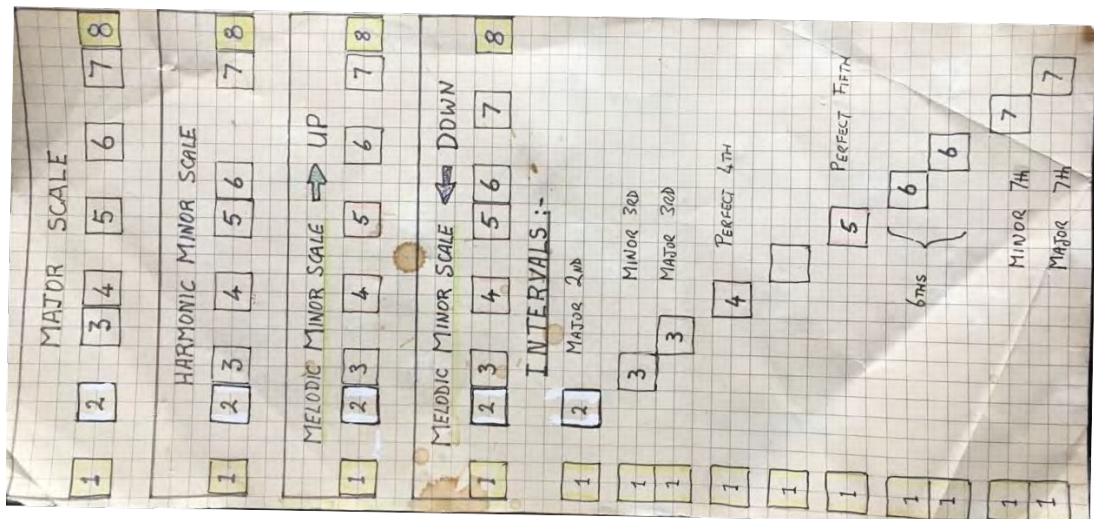
To further assert the validity of aligning affordance theory with the phenomenological method, key terms from each area have been mapped on to each other, to account for this aspect of the research premise. Husserl's noema, i.e., the properties of 'the perceived', and noetic attention, as the attentional ability to notice those properties (Eberle, 2014:3) were instrumental in revisions to empirical research in the 20th century to the present day. They also map on to the ecological idea of educating attention to the affordance of objects sensitised through their exploration (Gibson, 1968:285; Gibson and Pick, 2000:86). Further alignment is apparent in the conception of differentiation and invariance. Husserl's form of differentiation identifies the ability to distinguish a bird from an elephant, and sensitivity to the specific colour (e.g., red not blue) of a bird's breast; Gibson's differentiation includes this form of sensitivity, but also differentiation based on time, before/during/after, as temporal features of events and affordances (1968:76).

Gibson's invariant (1968:262) maps on to Husserl's invariant, or 'eidos', if we consider the example that the eidetic 'essence' of a cube; no matter the material or colour, a cube has six equal sides with rectangular angles (Eberle, 2014:186). Evidently, a cube is not an affordance in itself, but the invariant properties of a specific cube afford specific actions, dependent on its materiality and the prevailing sociocultural context. A die for rolling and a footstool may both be cubes, but are

not interchangeable objects. Though evidently not a complete mapping of invariance, this account serves to illustrate that phenomenology and ecological psychology are concerned with perception of objects in ways which are complimentary, to the extent that their parallel enrolment in the thesis is proposed as valid.

8.3 Formative Perceptual Attunement

8.3.1 Half of the scale learning aid made by Ben Mullett (c. 1983)



8.4 Composition

8.4.1 *Le Spectre Rouge*

8.4.1.1 'Punchy' female protagonist

The female protagonist's 'punchy' arrival and departure sound (at 8:59)

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/Htzzw0HbqmA?t=534>

8.4.1.2 'High and shimmering' women

High and shimmering 'magical' sounds applied to the other women in the film (not the female protagonist) (at 6:44)

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/Htzzw0HbqmA?t=402>

8.4.1.3 Female magic 'higher'

The female protagonist's 'magic' is higher and more consonant than the Spectre's 'magic' (at 12:49)

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/Htzzw0HbqmA?t=766>

8.4.1.4 'Higher' conventionally mapped to 'smaller'

Higher sound maps to 'smaller' women through a convention of smaller meaning higher

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/Htzzw0HbqmA?t=682>

8.4.1.5 'Living Portraits' mapped as nested affordance

'Living Portraits' demonstrating knowledge of convention enrolled within a more complex course of nested affordances (at 10:27-11:01)

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/Htzzw0HbqmA?t=626>

8.4.1.6 *Le Spectre Rouge's* main segments

Table summarising the main segments of *Le Spectre Rouge*

Segment	Timeline ⁴⁷	Select Cues (S=Spectre, N=Nemesis)	Musical choices	Film as Score (FaS) canonical affordance
(Curator's introduction)	0'15"		n/a	
Intro fanfare	1'36"	1'45" Coffin rises 1'56' Spectre's arms aloft	Rising diminished 7th Top note of fanfare	FaS: musical entrainment to onscreen movement (metom) via pitch
Spectre searches	1'58"	1'58" S paces and searches 2'17" S arm waving/magic 2'26" 5 women tableau appears	Two-note Tango Octave leap for women	FaS: (metom) via tempo; character offers interpretive style choice FaS: Canonical affordance for gender-register (Cag-r) based on change of gender focus onscreen
Women's circle dance/ transformation	2'28"	2'28" All women start to dance in circle, S raises himself 2'38" Women disappear/ become high fiery swinging rocks, S chases them, alone	Sad phrase in waltz time, Tango harmony Same phrase echoes, octave lower for S	FaS: interpretation of onscreen dance via canonical affordance of waltz FaS: Cag-r based on change of gender focus onscreen

²⁴⁷ NB minutes and seconds are denoted by inverted commas and speech marks respectively, so that 0'15" represents 15 seconds into the film.

(Synchronisation to soundtrack) The 'show' begins	2'51"	2'51" S magics a torch ablaze, commands two pedestals to appear 3'07" Two women appear on each pedestal	Sound FX for magic commands (I start soundtrack playback in synch with an upswing) Mid-high 'shimmer' sound FX	FaS: synch point convention for magic command movement; Cag-r for low toned 'male' magic FaS: Cag-r for women's appearance
Levitation scene	3'11"	3'17" S moves the pedestals together 3'25" S produces and arranges black sheet on pedestals 3'37" S lifts woman onto sheet 3'46" S wraps woman in sheet 3'55" S levitates the woman 4'10" (Smoking) levitation disappears 4'16" Repetition of 3'37"-3'55" 4'58" 2 nd levitation disappears, S magics a jug and puts 'ashes' into it	Begin singing – foot pedal layers up single high note +Layer note \square major 2 nd +Layer note \downarrow major 2 nd +Layer note \downarrow aug 4 th Pitch shift chord \square Pitch back to normal Foil Foley mapped to sheet action, pitch rises with levitation +Layer notes, higher, sing glissandi to a very high note, held	FaS: Canonical affordance of accumulative action (Caaa): notes added to chord as action unfolds; metom for upward levitation with pitch shift FaS: Foley convention, again movement related, applied & performed for humour in event context FaS: Caaa by notes added to chord as action unfolds

		5'12" S disappears the pedestals, holds jug aloft		
Spectre's Nemesis (N) enters	5'20"	5'20" N & S 'eyeball' each other 5'24"- 5'35" N magics opens & closes secret grotto on right side, showing two women 5'40" N gets S' attention then disappears	N's Sound FX- punchy sound, higher than S's Sync'd to grotto, shimmering mid-pitched jazzy chord sound N's Sound FX- punchy sound	FaS: synch point convention for magic command movement; Cag-r for higher toned 'female' magic
Three carafes	5'45"	5'45" S magics a stand, ²⁴⁸ carries it forward, to show three carafes containing miniature women 5'55" S pours 'wine' from the jug into each carafe making each woman more visible. 2 nd woman plays tambourine 6'16" S rotates each jug in turn 6'27" S lifts & carries stand backwards away from camera	Harp note synch'd to jug 1, new note jug 2 Diegetic tambourine, new note jug 3, ditto jug 3. Rising harp phrase in different scale for each turn ...Third harp phrase continues upward as S empties jug & lifts stand.	FaS: Caaa by notes added as action repeats FaS: Foley convention, again movement related, applied & performed for humour in event context

²⁴⁸ The stand is in the form of a Caduceus symbol, said to be the patron of thieves and outlaws (REF).

Nemesis hit and run	6'40"	6'40" N returns 6'42" N magics away the stand 6'42" S chases N who escapes 6'45" S chases N, bumps into cave 6'46" S reacts to bump, dazed then rallies	Punchy FX for N's arrival Rising FX for N's magic Punchy FX for bump Flute single note repetition anticipating next scene	FaS: sync point convention for magic command movement; Cag-r for higher toned 'female' magic FaS: Caaa by notes added to chord as action unfolds in next segment
Living portraits (see discussion of first portrait in Victoriana section, below).	6'50"	6'50" S magics up a Pathé icon portrait on the carafe stand 6'58" S finishes moving portrait forward to fill shot, rotates first panel 7'05" S rotates 2nd panel revealing woman with flower 7'07" S opens final panel, woman nods, sniffs flower 7'24" S closes panels 7'28" S moves stand etc to rear of stage 7'31" N returns, magics away stand 7'38" N disappears in puff of smoke	Roar sound FX for S's magic Flute adds pedal layer ↑ minor 3 rd Flute plays □major 3 rd (Am) Flute plays improvised solo Flute plays □major 3 rd (Am) with looped notes Flute plays one note syncopating with loop Rising FX for N's magic	(Caaa continued) FaS: character offers interpretive style choice for improvisation FaS: synch point convention for magic command movement FaS: ditto synch point convention for disappearance FaS: Cag-r in higher loop, variation for change from 1 to 3 women

	<p>7'45" S magics a larger square frame showing 3 women 7'54" Image peels back to reveal woman's head and shoulders, smiling</p> <p>8'00" Image peels back revealing two men, clownish 8'06" S indicates the male duo, chatting 8'09" N magics away picture frame 8'12" S covers N in his cape and disappears her, swings cape 8'15" projection artefact on video 8'18" S reveals commands open second new space, left side, with reversed smoke 8'20" Reversed footage of boxes being caught (originally thrown) to build wall with woman & dog projected on it</p>	<p>Punchy FX, flute stops syncopation (7'50") pitch shift pedal loop 8ve↑ Piccolo performance of similar material as 7'07" (higher due to instrument, also pitch shifted up)</p> <p>Piccolo plays chromatic line</p> <p>Loop pitch shifts down two octaves (a little late) (Continues)</p> <p>Projection artefact is given sound FX (low) FX for smoke, coffee machine steamer</p> <p>Reversed piano chord sequence, with EQ</p>	<p>FaS: Cag-r in higher loop, variation for change from 1 to 3 women</p> <p>(FaS: onscreen magical change indicated by chromaticism) FaS: Cag-r, loop shifts downwards for male duo</p> <p>FaS: the visual event formerly ignored is now brought to attention by its synchronisation with sound</p> <p>FaS: music emulates the film technique, piano sequence is reversed.</p> <p>FaS: sync for the visual cue</p>
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		9'07" Smoke disappears scene	automation creating movement FX for smoke, coffee machine steamer	
Nemesis takes over	9'10"	9'10" N appears, commands open both spaces revealing large cave with columns, women and fires 9'30" Projection artefact, N and S walk into grotto 9'45" N magics a rising tiered platform of women 10'10" S puts cape over woman and walks forward with her 10'13" Scenery lowered back into place to hide grotto 10'17" S re-covers woman with cape, who turns into N	Shimmering mid-pitched jazzy chord sound Artefact sound FX (low) Rising magic FX 9'55" Alien singing Punchy FX	FaS: Cag-r for higher toned 'female' magic.
Finale	10'18"	10'18" S reapproaches N 10'19" N puts down S, takes magic jug and pours it on him 10'27" N lifts empty skeleton suit and cape 10'30" N takes cape from S's empty skeleton suit	Sax fanfare music variation with harmonisation	

		10'36" N holds pose, jug aloft and cape open 10'41" scene crossfades to red screen.	High, held final note of 'demonic' saxophone fanfare.	
End				

8.4.1.7 Co-ordinating soundtrack playback

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/Htzzw0HbqmA?t=355> (at 5:55, co-ordinated with the with the demon's downstroke magical command).

8.4.1.8 Undergraduate analysis of the fugal 'accrual' of rabbits in *Jean de Florette (1986)*

12.

Jean de Florette; Music and Dialogue

Detailed Transcription

THE EXAGGERATED RABBIT STORY.

J=Jean U=Ugolin A=Aimee

*DIALOGUE:

J: Malgré votre expérience, vous ne semblez pas avoir une idée exacte de la fécondité de ses rongeurs.
Alors, regardez ce-ci.

U: Ah, je comprends rien. Je sais très bien lire, mais les numéros, ça me mourir.

J: Et moi, je les ...(PTO)

* NB. I have tried to make the French transcription as accurate as possible; however, on occasion, Gerard Depardieu would seem to give nouns the wrong gender!

12 (12+20)

J... comprends fort bien
ici il

fait à partir d'un
seul couple de lapins,
un éleveur

modern peut estimer de
la fin de la troisième
année

une production
mensuelle de cinq
cent lapins

ce technicien affirme
qu'un

0009

1 = 76
TIME 0:00

lockenspiel

Timpani

Harp

Violin 1

Violin 2
mp

Viola
mp

'cello
mp

Double
bass

-1-

(J) élevage qui disparaîtrait
cinq mille têtes deviendrait un
danger public, qu'à
partir d'un minimal,
cinq mille jennettes, se
lève
bouerait
submergé par un
flot de trente
mille
lapins de la première mois,
qui disparaîtrait deux cent

TIME :

Handwritten musical score for four instruments: vl. 1, vl. 2, vla, and cello. The score is in 3/4 time and features various musical notations including notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'mp' and 'tr.'.

8.4.1.9 Film reversal/musical reversal affording nostalgia reversal of the film itself.
Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/Htzzw0HbqmA?t=713> (at 11:59).

8.4.2 *Instar*

8.4.2.1 Proposal for Music Since 1900 International Conference

A situated, collaborative research project in devised music and dance.

Chloë Mullett and Sarah Black present a collaborative performance and practice-as-research presentation initiated at Chloë's composer residency at MMU Cheshire in January 2013. The development of the project, including examples of dialogue in music, live contemporary movement and words, is documented here: <http://figure-groundaxisopenspace.tumblr.com>.

For Chloë, the project is part of ongoing PhD research specifically concerned with valorization and decision making in relation to aesthetic criteria. Sarah's perspective is also informed by her PhD research interests, which include sitespecific dance performance and emergent choreography.

The site-specific aspect of the project is of particular interest as the aforementioned residency was conceived as an interventionist arts practice, undertaken in a public space, which is also an interchange of sorts- a sometime corridor, as people flow through it on their way to music, dance and drama classes, and an open-plan rehearsal space for the same people. As such this paper also considers what it means to situate praxis in informal, formal and virtual contexts.

Performance: up to ten minutes (to be confirmed)

Paper presentations: thirty-fourty minutes in total.

Discussion: ten minutes in total. Request clarification.

8.4.2.2 The 'wobble'

The Axis OpenSpace's sliding door's distinct 'wobble' sound

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/MDvu0pkGVnM?t=13>

8.4.2.3 The pram sound in *Instar*

Sarah Black-Frizzel's recording of pushing her daughter's pram around campus, as it appeared in the first introduction to *Instar*.

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/MDvu0pkGVnM?t=38>

8.4.2.4 'Boinga' documentation

The original 'Boinga' touchstone event

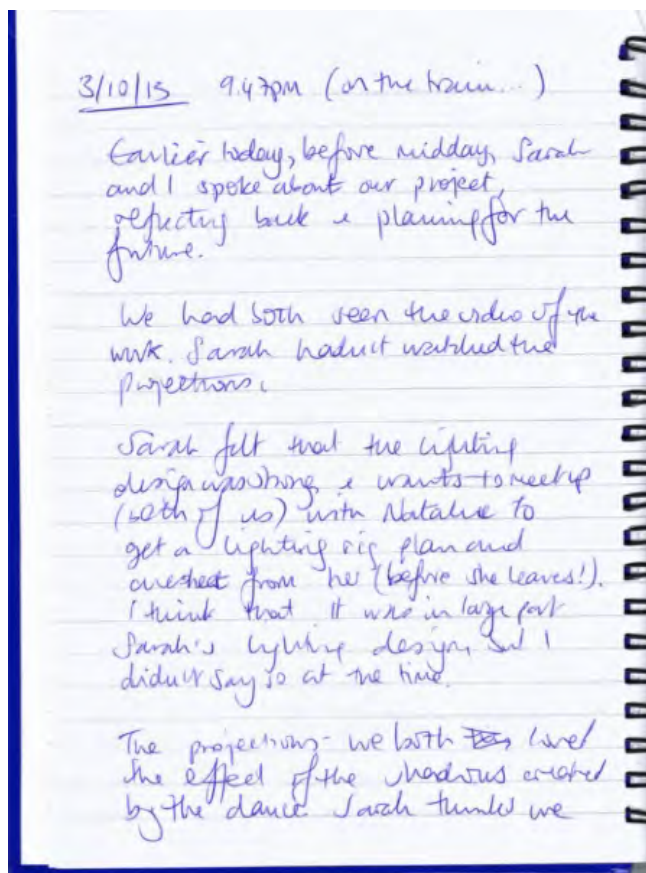
Hyperlink: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zgFISAY9w1dYV-njsIPU6U3NlP93EdL/view?usp=sharing>

8.4.2.5 *Instar*'s finale

Instar's finale, for which the lighting design was developed from the 'Boinga' touchstone event

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/MDvu0pkGVnM?t=932>

8.4.2.6 Autoethnographic entries about *Instar II*'s revised introduction



need to make the presence & startup
of the video projectors themselves & the
film more stark - the cardboard wasn't
cutting it for her. I think this will
be difficult - (but there are remote
controls - 'mute' buttons?) - said so
with regard to the idea of projecting
'black' - which I think is impossible.
The other thought I had was to
project from the balconies, as the
look of the projectors balanced on
boxes & laptops on chairs is
somewhat lo-fi - not that I quite
mind, but it could be said to be at
odds with the overall feel of the
Capstone.

The place we both agree has
some sense of being 'the start of
something' or, interestingly, the
sub-basement / basement projection section,
which Sarah thought was funny
because in terms of the dance it

was probably the hardest. Sarah felt
that that part was dark
& then it just got darker from
that point on. She loved that
about it. I recounted Mason's
comment that it got more 'human'
as time went on, which somehow
is also true.

I said to Sarah that I felt the
music was under-developed in
part, & that it was a good first
draft. The mundanity, position
in the space needs to be renewed
and also, the potential to
project onto them (they could
wear white?) could be explored.
The 'human' reference reminds me
of Sarah's memory of the
projections onto skin which we
did earlier in the process.

Sunday 17th November - on INSTAR

~~So~~ So, I received the video (with better audio) of the piece, & I think what Javali & I discussed holds true - the beginning is distinctly different to the rest of the piece, & the sub bass / train section is the place it seems to hit its stride.

I think the basic quality of the beginning is really stark - Figo graphic, in the literal sense of the word - the blue-red palette of the visual aspect, as well as the diagrammatic aspect of the lights.

I had imagined imposing some liquid into the visuals, but I'd not see how - the falling plumes of indigo ink (we've seen Chris create have been used on clothing adverts now) are also reminiscent of "boddies" in

Harry Potter...
But I think working on
the 'liquid' in the sound might
be possible. The paper sounds
might have a performance for the
opening. I discussed related
to the idea of localised projections,
magnified on the back wall.

... I've got some material I could re-work
to create experiment with
different atmospheres...

I still think a video section at the outset
is a good idea.

The abstract quality of it is notable

I like the 'juicy' quality of the
musical paper noise.

We're sort of playing with space +

Media + Social Space.

25/11 17/11/13

I got to thinking about how the beginning
could work & the possibility of
creating the effect of delay using the
instruments which are to be performed
live, and I found myself thinking
about the music I made for the
first part of sax titles.

8.4.2.7 Overview for research event accompanying *Instar* at The Cornerstone Festival, November 2013

Instar: an exposition of space and place as creative concepts in the collaborative process which developed this mixed-media work in music, dance and video.

The word 'instar' can be defined as, 'the stage in the development of an insect between any two moults'. This presentation about the work named *Instar* previews its next 'moulting', reflecting the insights of the two key collaborators, Sarah Black and Chloë Mullett, as they look back to its first performance, and forward to its forthcoming performance at the Cornerstone Festival.

Begun in January 2013, *Instar* was premièred at the Music Since 1900 conference in September. Broadly following the schema of the work itself, i) Crewe; ii) in tra[i]nsit; iii) Liverpool, this presentation highlights the creative use of the concepts of space and place which are overtly (performance) and covertly (process) present in *Instar*.

At the outset there was a site-specific premise for the generation of movement, and an aspiration that the music develop in an integrated and consensual way between Sarah and Chloë. From this point, the work took many turns, yet space and place remained important both in terms of the associative potential of sound/music to evoke place, and also in the strong internal narrative which is imperative for Sarah's dance practice; the video projections explicitly extend the representations of space and place beyond the performance space itself, and hint at more intimate understandings of social space.

As the first presentation of a collaborative, practice-led research project in music and dance for the Music Research Seminar series, colleagues and students from across the University are warmly invited to attend this presentation.

8.4.3 *Purchase, May 14th*

8.4.3.1 The Ritual of Retail project brief by BBC Radio Merseyside's PMS Show

Congratulations on joining our "Music For Retail" Project for Light Night 2019 on Friday May 17th. Your new, original music will be played on the premises of a wide variety of Liverpool shops for a few hours and on the radio later in the weekend. We will be encouraging people to pay dedicated visits to the shops to hear the music in situ, and we hope that the visits will encourage some shopping as well as appreciation of the music.

We're inviting you to compose something especially for the project, to a duration of about 15 minutes. It's important that it is attuned to the idea and realities of retail because a) shops are not silent places b) shopkeepers want to keep their customers in-store c) the theme of Light Night is Ritual so some kind of "formal" character will fulfil the descriptive brief. We also plan to give all the music a full airing on the Sunday night/Monday morning of Light Night weekend on our

programme. We are adding more shops to the list of participants as time goes on and we'll let you have the full list before too long.

Whatever you compose should complement the act of shopping and work in the specific environment of shops. This does not mean to discourage you from your characteristic ironies/nuances and strategies of musical ingenuity and subversion/irreverance – very much the opposite. Do we think shopping is a ritual? Well, why not? It's what we told Light Night and they agreed.

The information you most need to know before the day/Night is this,-

- the four artists we have commissioned to create music for the Project are - Esa Shields, Steven Cole, Alex Germain and Chloe Mullett and the brief is to compose and produce 15 minutes of music

- we will supply the recorded music to be played on each shop's in-shop system according to the format they normally use – eg, music file, CD, - and pay a visit on the day/Night to check that they have had no problems with playing it.

- if you want to produce and record the music yourself that's fine, but if you want us to record it we will have the services and the studio of "PMS" team-member Rory Ballantyne at our and your disposal.

- the project will be widely publicized, not least on "PMS" - www.pmsradio.co.uk – and you and your music will be referenced in all publicity.

- we will supply a poster for the week running up to Light Night to be displayed in each shop showing images and information relating to the music and artists, to prime members of the public to pay a visit during the music's "broadcast". Images does not necessarily mean photo-portraits....

- each section of the music will be preceded by the recorded voice of the artist/musician introducing themselves and, very briefly, the project.

We shall be keeping in touch in the run-up to Light Night but if you need to contact us in the meantime please mail to roger.hill@ [REDACTED] or leave a message at 0151-708----(daytime hours) Rory's number is _____

8.4.3.2 The first 'Easter egg' sound, starting the piece: the till receipt rip

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ?t=8>

8.4.3.3 Links to the video examples for each fanfare in *Purchase, May 14th*

8.4.3.3.1 Fanfare 1 <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ?t=25>

8.4.3.3.2 Fanfare 2 <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ?t=38>

8.4.3.3.3 Fanfare 3 <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ?t=50>

8.4.3.3.4 Fanfare 4 <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ?t=87>

- 8.4.3.3.5 Fanfare 5 <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ?t=100>
- 8.4.3.3.6 Fanfare 6 <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ?t=128>
- 8.4.3.3.7 Fanfare 7 <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ?t=174>
- 8.4.3.3.8 Fanfare 8 <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ?t=194>
- 8.4.3.3.9 Fanfare 9 <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ?t=267>
- 8.4.3.3.10 Fanfare 10 <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ?t=323>
- 8.4.3.3.11 Fanfare 11 <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ?t=375>

8.4.3.4 My spoken introduction to *Purchase, May 14th*

Hyperlink:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1A9Pg4xccNVond65AFugRkeEWJ3LkYLdl/view?usp=sharing>

8.4.3.5 Transcription of my spoken introduction

Hello, my name's Chloë Mullett. This is my piece of music which was commissioned by the BBC Radio Merseyside's Popular Music Show. So I approached the idea of ritual through cycles, 'cause I, I realised it was a lot to do with repetition. So, there's sounds here that are taken from a recording I made in Paris, of a train journey, there's also ambient sound of a Cypriot market, which is taken from field recordings by Freetousesounds, and then the other piece of sort of found footage, is from an archive, the er Open Video Project, from an advertising firm in Chicago, from, I think, the 1950s. I've placed these alongside music I've made on my instruments, there's mainly flute, some clarinet, and some saxophone, tenor saxophone, and the music I've played on those I think shows it's obviously kind of ambient, but also I wanted to convey a sense of a fanfare, which again, I associate strongly with the ideas of ritual. So I hope you enjoy it – and er there's three shop sounds for you to find in there, just for fun. Thank you!

8.4.3.6 The 'opening out' of the open-air market

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ?t=284>

8.4.3.7 The Chicago Advertiser's entrance

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ?t=586>

8.4.3.8 The final train departure

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ?t=891>

8.4.3.9 'Not once, not twice' Easter egg

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ?t=697>

8.4.3.10 Repeating 'repeatedly' to afford mocking

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/pmJk9ambMnQ?t=621>

8.5 Arrangement

8.5.1 Gary Daly

8.5.1.1 First email about 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood', 30th August 2013

From: Gary Daly <_____@gmail.com__>

Date: 30 August 2013 at 09:35

Subject: Re: hi hello c h l o e g a r y here and also. . . .

To: Chloe Mullett <mulletc@hope.ac.uk>

...

so y e s chloe. . for sure i am well pleased you have musical ideas. . really really. . . i've taken the liberty of adding another song for you. . .i think when you have a minute. . if you could play a u t u m n in the neighbourhood . . . then into Of make do and mend. . you should get an idea of the feel of things. . . i think. . .i hope. . .

and not to worry about recording them for me. . . not yet. . . .i'd rather you just live with them a little. . not a lot. . .and yes. . .i'll mail you and we can sort something along the lines of a play and / or recording . .

...

8.5.1.2 Exchanges on 3rd December 2013 Facebook

03/12/2013, 22:09

(From Chloe to Gary)

Hey there Gary, a little update, Carl just left, we had such a nice time listening and talking about your songs and ideas about them. I'm pleased to announce that I think we are on the same page. I've played him some things I recorded which are ideas which could move within the songs anyway, but you can see what you think, Maestro! Carl has given me some thoughts about what I put down, and it is all very interesting. the tenor recorder is going well... The plan is for me to come on Friday, thanks for being flexible, thankfully Carl reckons that works quite well in fact. Such a pleasure to be doing this, truly. Over to the other e-communication channel...

(From Gary to Chloe, on working with Carl):
... so yes....take on board what he says.....and then use your powers to implement or not what he says...

8.5.1.3 My notes from meeting with Carl Brown, 3rd December 2013

This shows a reference to Joni Mitchell's song 'Harry's House', from her album *The Hissing of Summer Lawns* (1975). (Please see the key below for the relevance of the colour coding.)

Key: Grey for Gary Daly's solo project song titles
Red for a musical reference
Orange for a musical quality
Aqua for arrangement
Green for graphic representation (shapes in music notation or pictorial form);
Lilac for location on recording in minutes and seconds

The image shows a page from a spiral-bound notebook with handwritten notes. The notes are organized into several color-coded boxes and connected by arrows. At the top, a red box contains 'Virginia Astley' and a grey box contains 'Low Tide'. Below this, a blue box contains 'Sax - Harry's House? - Nick Prober' with a note 'some atmospheric riff before chorus - lift it out'. An arrow points from this box to a yellow box containing 'not the loungey aspect.'. Below that, a red box contains 'Harry's entire house'. An arrow points from this box to a blue box containing 'Saxophone chunk' and a green box containing a musical notation snippet. An arrow points from the 'Saxophone chunk' box to a blue box containing 'Sax at end...'. Below this, two blue boxes contain '- chorus push - possibly' and '- sax at end'. Further down, a blue box contains 'A flute behind solo...' and a yellow box contains '(over-ish)'. At the bottom, a red box contains 'J.R. Hartley (fly fishing)' and a blue box contains '↳ guitar solo'.

8.5.1.4 Email correspondence with Carl Brown 3rd December 2013

From: carl brown <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, 3 Dec 2013 at 21:26 Subject: thoughts from me
To: Chloe Mullett <[REDACTED]>

(...)

Low Tide

Add the tight rhythm in the verses, like the bass part,
Do the flourish going into the Chorus and half way, the one the bass line does or an Octave above maybe ? really get the groove right and double it or layer make it an amazing stereo sound for the mix/production A solo from beyond ! Joni 'Hissing Summer Lawns'
Flute could add dimension in the M8 as a texture behind the solo either stepping around doing little harmonic clusters or creating an atmosphere that's car like. Sounds naff and may actually be naff ! Sirenish we would need to play with the sound a little and it may be impossible for a flute anyway, but could also be a bit unique and unusual too as a background sweep.

I think there is a part in the chorus too for the flute but can't put my finger on it just now. Will check some more in the coming days.

Autumn in the ...

You can hear it mainly during the line in the chorus 'You can clearly see why' in Chris's parts. Around that register is good I think. Could follow what's there if the whole part is as suggested on that line or develop a simple part from it. Actually I think what I just said there might be better on your recorder. Not sure yet what should take the aaaah Aaaah aaaahh in the chorus, I guess we'll find out soon enough. Recorder and flute together?

Make do and Mend

Hmmmm? looking forward to it

All this will be probably nothing compared to what Chloe's got in mind. See you Thursday as soon as I can, hope fully lunch time.

Cx

8.5.1.5 Gary Daly's email introducing 'Make Do and Mend'

27 August 2013

On 27 August 2013 00:23, Gary Daly <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com> wrote:

hi hello c h l o e and yay! ! ! ..here we are....in the digital domain. . .

...

and yes. . . .my olde worldly folk tale Of make do and mend

would be great if you could live with it a little . . . and then ..if you likes...chat with me some about it. . . or not. . . .

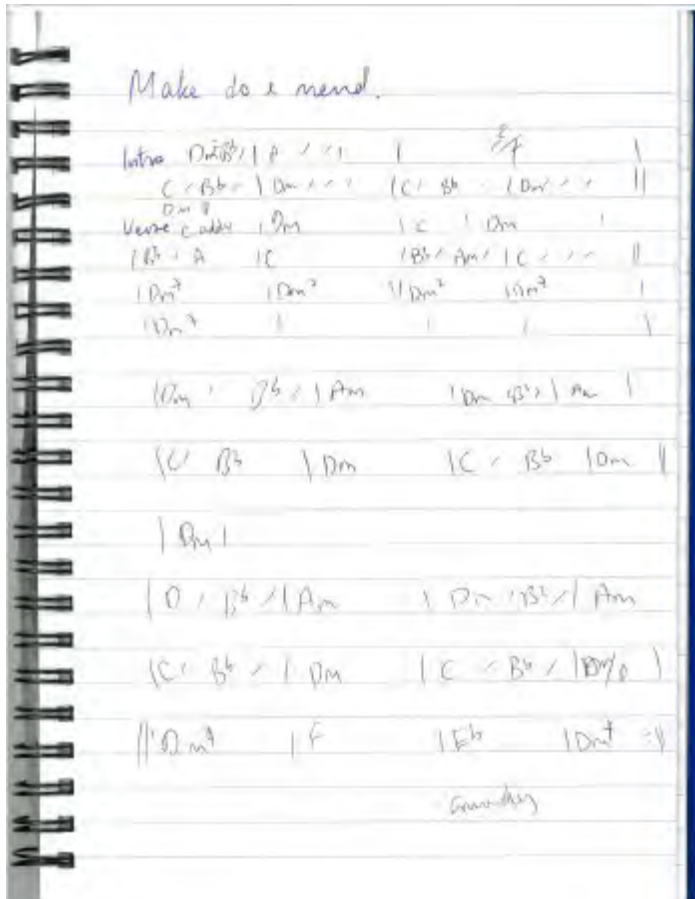
take care

[picture redacted]

all best g a r y

[sent with 'make do and mend cello' attachment]

8.5.1.6 Chord chart created while attuning to 'Make Do and Mend'

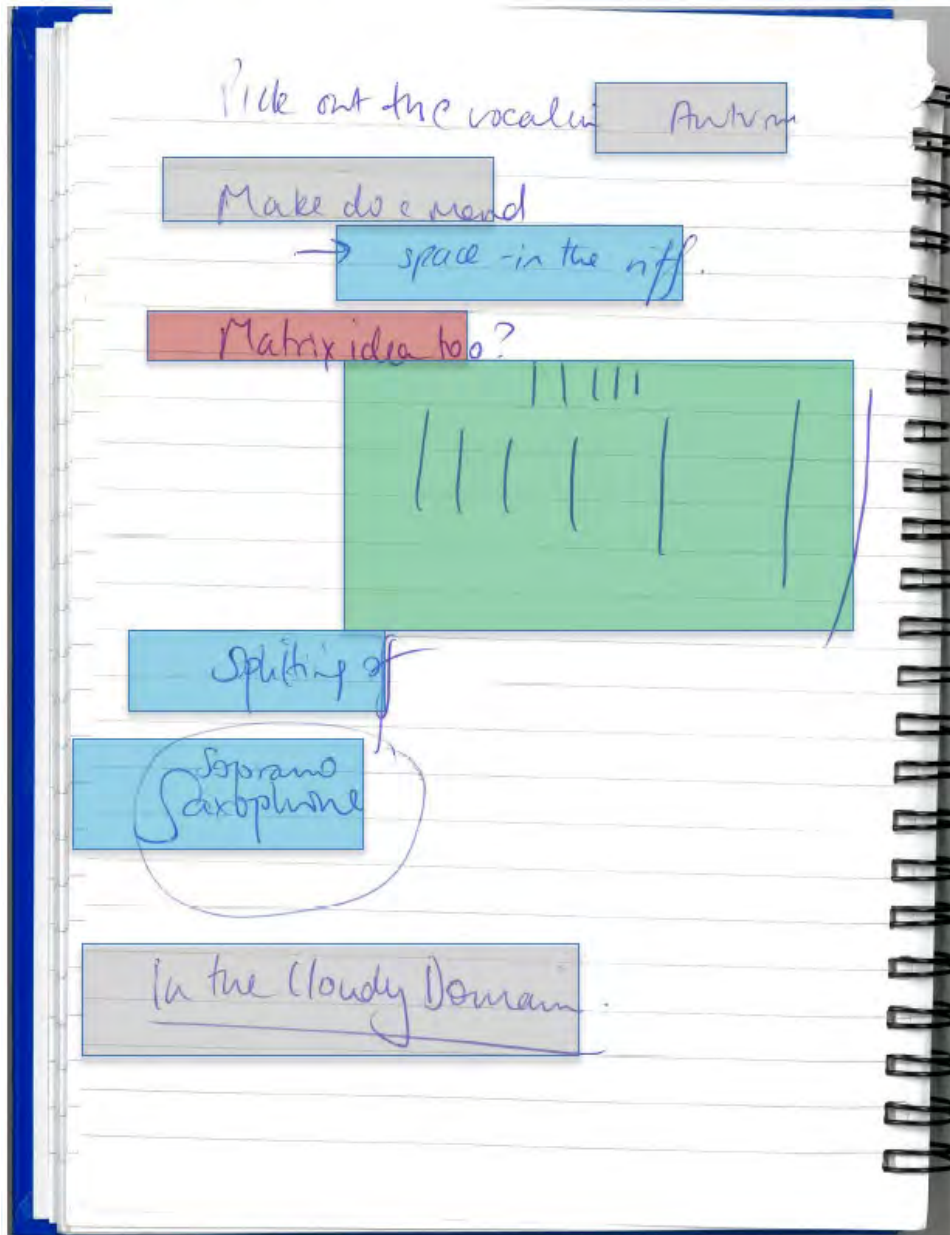


8.5.1.7 Introduction to 'Make Do and Mend'

Hyperlink:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MGv9f_4pDM1kbu9TXLPrMxo36f8SmBKV/view?usp=sharing

8.5.1.8 Notebook page showing 'space' identified in the 'Make Do and Mend' guitar riff (see second grey and first blue box)



8.5.1.9 Email from me to Gary Daly, 29th August 2013 email

On 29 August 2013 10:36, Chloe Mullett <mullettc@hope.ac.uk> wrote:

Hello Gary,

I am happy you got in touch! A lovely consequence of the evening, I enjoyed your company.

I've been away to see my mum, so sorry not to reply sooner.

What a beautiful song. Compelling.

I am concerned that (in the past, and probably in the future) my various musical wares can clog up a song and gild the lily, so to speak.

But I have had some ideas, which in my head sound good.
Maybe I can get them down and send them to you and we can chat about it.
Or maybe I've got that in the wrong order.

It made me think flutes, in the last part of the song, pedal notes/morse code
(but regular) like and slightly miniature steam/clockwork mechanismish. Or
not. I do a nice line in fluttering birds and verdant lushness. But that may be
too bright/not wholly compliment the cello (Jonathan's?). I need to live with
it, indeed.

What say you? Now I've heard it I'd love to try something.
Hope you had a sunny bank holiday with your family.
Chlo

8.5.1.10 Perceptual attunement via Carl Brown for Gary Daly's project

Working with Carl, a producer for Gary's solo album, engaged me in a form of distributed agency such that 'creative processes are distributed across times, places, people, materials and social processes' (Clarke et al, 2017:118). So defined, distributed agency is arguably apparent in any work an arranger undertakes. Gary encouraged me to listen to what Gary wanted, asking me to 'take on board what he says.....and then use your powers to implement or not what he says.....' (Appendix 8.5.1.2). To me this suggested that Gary had gained confidence in my approach from our meeting, i.e., that the outcome of my arrangements to that point were sufficiently of interest to him to want to see what further action potential his music held for me, through my own creative agency. Carl was also open to what I came up with, and further engaged me in details of production and arrangement for specific outcomes, as well as more contextual forms of guidance. In our first meeting (December 3rd, 2013), Carl played music, pointing out specific details to sensitise me towards their action potential (Appendix 8.5.1.3). His follow-up email also expressed more poetic guidance, e.g., 'car-like' atmospheres, as well as highly specific guidance, i.e., to draw out the groove in a bassline by doubling it at the octave, considering the best range of an instrument to use, as well as possibilities for creating cluster chords and solo improvisation (see Appendix 8.5.1.4).

Within Carl's guidance he frequently referred to 'sensibilities', which in this research context are proposed to be musical affordances stipulated as musical qualities desired to be afforded to listeners on Carl's part. This may be interpreted

as a variation on the idea of aesthetic agency, but within the discourse of practice is does not bear the burden of objective proof. In terms of affordance theory, I interpreted Carl's information about 'sensibility' as associations of interest to support my attunement to the action-potential of Gary's music, to afford selectivity in courses of creative action and in the review of ideas. Further, the musical sound objects and ideas Carl placed on my creative path afforded me attunement to the sensibilities in question through their materiality. I could attune to the music with the strategies of a jazz musician, to pursue features of mutual interest to me and the project, to afford their authentic enrolment in my course of action to respond creatively to the music. These two spheres of attunement, associative (affective) and material, are consistent with definitions of 'sensibility', which has two interpretations of particular relevance, given as i) the 'capacity for sensation or feeling; responsiveness or susceptibility to sensory stimuli'; and ii) 'mental susceptibility or responsiveness; quickness and acuteness of apprehension or feeling', respectively. (Dictionary.com: No date). Thus, within the affordance triad, in fulfilment of his producer role, Carl afforded me access to the objects of his perceptual context, to establish a form of social agreement (Windsor, 2004) about the perceived value of particular musical ideas for creative courses of action, which afforded me elements of my performer-arranger role. Carl also introduced the idea of discussing my arrangement details as 'events'. This term encourages a 'real-time' understanding of what an arrangement detail affords within a continuous stream of musical experience, as well as an accessible means to discuss its relationship with other arrangement features on the timeline. It points to questions of idea saturation and space, in the musical texture/production; these are often the concerns of an arranger, in fact, because they are concepts used to conceptualise 'managing' listener attention, i.e., aesthetic agency. Carl's use of the terms 'sensibility' and 'event' are thus proposed to support the concept of aesthetic agency discussed in Chapter 4, and also to articulate a negotiation of creative agency in play which reflects my role as an arranger (and Carl's producer role) in service to Gary's creative agenda. I interpret Gary and Carl's input to my process as purposeful attunement of my perception to specific details of the music, to fit into a

broader design scheme in progress being used to construct the aesthetic objects under discussion in this case study, and the next.

8.5.2 China Crisis

8.5.2.1 'Autumn in the Neighbourhood'

8.5.2.1.1 8th April 2014 Facebook exchange between Gary Daly and Chloë Mullett

(...)

chloe how do you feel about the song Autumn in the Neighbourhood. . . . Song Autumn in the Neighbourhood. . . .

Chloe

I like it a lot

GD

i have been busy with the new china crisis record. . . .and we are doing a version ..which will be the title trk. . . .

i was kinds hoping you would do a tenor recorder / flute arrangement for the middle 8 section. . . .

Chloe

ooh!

GD

.....the ...god loves a liar and a tryer and a thief...falling like a leaf. . . .section. . .

Chloe

yes. What sort of process are you thinking?

GD

. .i have dannys place booked for 14th 15th 16th next week. . . .do you think you could do sometime on the wednesday. . . .

Chloe

Yes, that works for me. If you want to give me pointers, I'm all ears!

GD

ok...so the version the chinas are doing is sort of reggae - ish. . . .but the middle section isn't . . . so i'm thinking ...quite slow and pastoral. . . .i could

Chloe

Cor

GD

chat with you if you likes . . . over the blower...or quickly call by or. . .

yes....i know....it's quite different...but i very much like the idea of the song linking both albums ..at some point . . .

and i know it's only a small section. . . .but it will be very striking. . . .in a sublime way. . . .

ah ha . . .right i should stop now. . . .my choice of words are not good. . . .

Chloe

yes, a lovely idea to link-It might help to hear a bit of the new version, but I imagine that may be tricky? Let's have a chat, and let's see what suits us, I'm not away or anything beforehand, just at work tomorrow. ...

GD

yes..great..i'll try and see you before the weeks out.great and thanks. . .

8.5.2.1.2 Carl Brown's guidance on preparing audio files

From: carl brown <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com>

Date: 13 February 2014 at 15:52

Subject: Re: Happy New Year and Hello Again

To: Chloe Mullett <mullettc@hope.ac.uk>

Hi Chloe,

WAV files bounced from the start of bar one can be imported into pro tools or logic so that's the type to aim for when exporting. If you need any help getting sounds or maybe I could get hold of a mic for you just ask, no problem. Finally, thanks for the info and I may have another session for you to get involved in a couple of months down the line, fingers crossed and I look forward to working with again soon.

Carl

8.5.2.2 'Joy and the Spark'

8.5.2.2.1 Carl Brown's

2nd August 2014

From: carl brown <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com>

Date: 2 August 2014 at 20:09

Subject: Hi there... To: Chloe Mullett <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].uk>

So I've done a little rough balance and sent them through to Gary and Ed. Thought I'd send to you to so we can be on the same page. Would you like me to dropbox the updated logic files?

Some initial thoughts are,

Of the three intros for Autumn you first sent through, be sure you are solid on what makes each. I got a bit lost (daft) and the plain one I know Gary said he liked last week. I looked at everything else first, got tired then tried something else then got lost! Fresh ears I'll be fine.

Joy, I think the glowing end section sounds so beautiful and must be in earlier. I think just make sure you know again what makes that up so it can be placed earlier and the

variations are a little different if poss. We may just be able to move the one from the end you do then add another pass to the end section to give us a little development and variation. It's too good to just sound looped.

I think the sax solo stuff could really work. Again I'd have a few phrases in the bag that means it could really feature up front should it be a goer.

OK have a listen and I'll get their feedback and we can chat.

Thanks again so much for your contribution. I'm really enjoying what it does, hope the guys do too.

Carlox

8.5.2.2.2 Communication about recording: 'atmosphere'

On Sun, Sep 7, 2014 at 11:18 PM,

Chloe Mullett <[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].uk> wrote:

Hi again,
Not so easy today. My verdict, which I'll make clearer, is that a lot of the parts already recorded succeed in the atmosphere stakes in a way that is hard to reproduce whilst trying to address (albeit relatively minor) pitching issues. I have improved some of it, and recorded a set of takes for chorus 2 which I'll edit into a shaped arrangement, and I also recorded the phrase in the instrumental section that doubles the guitar.
I'll keep working on it tomorrow, I've lost perspective and I can't imagine the neighbours are best pleased for me to carry on...
Speak soon,
Chloe

8.5.2.3 'It's Too Late' (2015)

8.5.2.3.1 It's too Late (King and Stern: 1971)

Hyperlink:

<https://open.spotify.com/track/12q3V8ShACq2PSWINMc2rC?si=1e0bd14eb9634a55>

8.5.2.3.2 *Christian* (China Crisis: 1982)

Hyperlink:

<https://open.spotify.com/track/7dfTafZhqXb5XgK25LJ8U?si=98579d49c29247a6>

8.5.2.3.3 Vangelis 'Main Title (1994) from the *Blade Runner* soundtrack (1982)

Hyperlink:

<https://open.spotify.com/track/6baN5nSUIVTsUyugSuAj7U?si=76f4a4db5bfe44bc>

8.5.2.3.4 Attuning to *It's Too Late* (1971): first email from Carl Brown to Chloë Mullett

From: carl brown [REDACTED]@gmail.com
Date: 18 February 2015 at 13:07
Subject: List for too late
To: Chloe Mullett <MULLETC@[REDACTED]>

C1

Chorus figure in might be useful, I've used the original piano on the current version which I do like, as some kind of memory. See what you think

V2

OOoooo, you were light and breezy

C2

Make it Make it

Solo guitar/piano

Vocal parts do do do do and

Guitar Solo

Sax Solo

I think it sound very much like there are two performances on the record level wise it's pretty clear. It would be great if you could play whats there, but in my head I'm wondering if there's a more Blade Runner dreamy 80s feel available? What do you think, lets talk on the telephone if you like

V3

C3

Backing vocal arrangement, maybe swells if sticking with the vocal rhythm seems odd.

Outro

If we did get some Blade Runner type riffs it would be lovely to hear them or more of that style here,
sorry for vagueness

regards,
Carl

8.5.2.3.5 'Dream' associations to afford via Carl's framing activity

From: carl brown [REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com>

Date: 18 February 2015 at 12:21 Subject: too late ideas and a simple mix

To: Chloe Mullett <MULLETC@hope.ac.uk>

too late ideas and a more simple mix that may be useful to work over.

sorry for the delay, been beavering and forgot to send you the list to try. As always your experience and ears are hugely valuable so please feel confident to do what you think this dream version of the song asks for. The list was a starting point a few days ago and our version is still in transit as it were! Such is life sorry I don't have more for you to go on. I will do by the middle of next week if that suits you better.

Regards
Carl

8.5.2.3.7 Piano riff from *Its Too Late* (1971) transposed for China Crisis' cover version

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/VkKxmnrRVHo?t=70> (at 1:11)

8.5.2.3.8 The canon in the original's instrumental section

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/VkKxmnrRVHo?t=103> (at 1:44)

8.5.2.3.9 Piano riff on China Crisis' cover version (on saxophones)

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/4GgFxY7hAtw?t=35> (at 0:38)

8.5.2.3.10 The canon on voices/flutes in China Crisis' cover

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/4GgFxY7hAtw?t=118> (at 1:59)

8.5.2.3.11 Further attunement guidance for *It's Too Late* from Carl Brown

On 18 February 2015 at 13:22,
carl brown [REDACTED]@gmail.com> wrote:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2x3UNHNo1LA>

the main theme is around 21:33 - 22:15

other sax work at

11:32

12:35

13:10

21:10

This is just to explain a sensation I had, a whiff of something that may lead
me somewhere, you gotta try I believe

Carl

Xxxxxxxxxx

8.5.2.3.12 Vangelis' 'Love Theme' from the Blade Runner soundtrack (1982)

Hyperlink:

<https://open.spotify.com/track/2oDR7QWoLBk9VYMwsFbRGq?si=621295ffcdf8472d>

8.5.2.3.13 2nd half of Instrumental break (inc. sax solo) 'It's Too Late' (China Crisis: 2015)

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/4GgFxY7hAtw?t=128> (at 2:09-2:56)

8.5.2.3.14 'Out of key' moment: jazzy association

Hyperlink: <https://youtu.be/4GgFxY7hAtw?t=148> (at 2:29)

8.5.2.3.15 The 'car-horn' and 'out of key' moments in the saxophone solo

My last saxophone contribution in the instrumental section is a 'siren', which sounds a little like a car horn, as I afforded 'flattening' the note to afford emulation of a Doppler effect. This is the last of four such instances at slightly different pitches and intensity (at 2:11; 2:18; 2:43; 2:46 in [Appendix 8.5.2.3.13](#)). They afford a further 'layer' of association with the *Blade Runner* (1982) soundtrack. In (among other sections) the soundtrack's 'Main Title, a similar idea is featured with a longer, more pronounced glissando, usually in a higher range (examples include at 2:09; 2:24;

3:30; 3:40, in [Appendix 8.5.2.3.3](#)). One last association of note is afforded by my momentary improvisation ‘out of key’ (at 2:29, [Appendix 8.5.2.3.14](#)); this reflects my interest and attunement to ‘sounding jazzy’, consolidated with supported exploration at a Berklee School of Music summer school. As a sound afforded by conventional musical values of jazz practice in improvised courses of action, it is proposed to be a further association with ‘jazz’ afforded to the cover version, beyond the musical sources cited which were given to me as framing information for my practice.

8.5.3 John McGrath and the Immix Ensemble

8.5.3.1 John McGrath’s invitation to arrange

26/08/2014 14:05

John McGrath

Hi Chloe, hope you're well. Not sure if I told you but I've been commissioned to write 15 minutes of new music for the IMMIX performance on either Nov 18/19th. The concert is planned to take place in Static and later be released on Product records. Due to my lack of arranging / orchestration experience I was wondering if you would like to help me out with the orchestration and I'll split the commission money with you (£250 to you). If you are interested we could meet at the house for a chat and plan it out. No worries if you can't do it. John

8.5.3.2 Transcription of conversation with John McGrath 17th September 2014

JM= John McGrath, CM= Chloë Mullett

[JM has looped what I called the ‘avian’ riff]

0:13 So coming in with just the open chords first

1:36 That’s kind of once around, I guess. I don’t know if it’s maybe a bit too slow maybe for that. I dunno, but. [loop continues]... I think it started off faster.

1:49 [Recommences phrase, call and answer, takes is a different way on repeat, to two more phrases and final flageolet chord]

2:30 Something like that, anyway; those last couple of chords there, its, not completely written,

2:35 CM mmm hmm

JM but that, those kind of bass notes, anyway.

2:40 CM Nice

JM But that’s the main ki- this is the-[plays] -I like that kind of thing, anyway

Mm, then the one on the ‘A’ – [plays] And then [begins longer answer phrase] going on (up?) [plays]

3:08 JM Could be that kind of thing

CM Mmm. mmm

JM And then there’s, ah

[into playing the ‘virtuosic’ rapid descending riff]

3:26 So it’d be nice to have that with the changes going underneath, too.

CM It's definitely come on loads since last,
JM Yeah
[plays]
GM That bit going, anyway (plays more rapidly)
Yeah
(Continues, interrupted cadence)
4:03 Stops loop
JM Yeah, 'cause I was thinking about having [plays a different riff; introduces melody on the top]
4:41 JM Yeah that' the kind of melody, anyway,
CM Yeah, yeah
JM you know, where would that start, could be the verse anyway, without the, the refrain, thing, or not, without the background thing. Or it might be good the whole way through, I'm not completely sure yet.
CM There's some lovely, it's lovely the way that comes over differently with you, with harmonising, it's lovely – um, how-
5:03 JM So it would be like the bass clarinet and the cello doing those (demonstrates). You know.
CM Yeah.
JM or it could be just like one being held
CM (mm) Yeah
[JM continues to play]
5:45 CM Yeah
5:46 So it could, I mean, it could just be really simple, and that kind thing twice around and then this as kind of a bridge, or something [plays rapid descending riff]
CM Yeah
5:57 Yeah, with the kind of, ah – yeah, could even do the half-time kind of thing [demonstrated reversed loop and rapid riff].
6:14 That's probably what I'd do even as a solo thing. And then come back into that, for the [plays]
CM Yeahp.
6:37 JM I'm not sure if it's, if it needs something else in there, but, er, maybe, maybe that'd be long enough for that piece.
6:49 CM I think um, if- [looper and playing pause] 'cause the things that came to mind, 'cause like, obviously, erm, I suppose, *Electric Counterpoint*,
JM Yeh
CM Is that there's a 'g-g-g-g-g-g-g-g-' (getting quieter)
JM Yeah
CM Those sort of, lovely, low things, I just think there might – I, I can hear quite a lot of things happening, sort of, independently of you,
JM Yeah
CM as well as things being triggered, so like, you know you do the, lovely, 'koom'
JM Yeah
CM you've got that flageolet,
JM Yeah
CM chord out – I can imagine that cuing a response from the group
JM yeah
CM with a 'here's a chord- here's a response', sort of moment
JM Yeah, really cool

CM Yeah, I think it might be, w- try it out, but there's a moment where, um
JM Especially with the brass, and the strings, maybe
7:21 CM yes. 'Cause I suppose, the thing, the thing, that a guitar, the things that I guitar
can't do that wind instruments *can* do, is things like crescendo through a single note,
JM Yeah
7:31 CM And, and, um...and -what the other thing is-I get the feeling that, you're just
able to be, really 'feel in the moment', with when you place your, where you place your
phrases-
JM yeah
CM and that might be what it needs to be
JM Yeah
CM um, and so what, what, I think what, what I suspect is, happened, is that you've got
your order of phrases,
JM Yeah
CM And that you kind of like, so you know the shape of them, and there might be small
variations, but its basically that
JM yeah
CM, and that's, probably that's what I'll need to do is rough out a cue for
JM yeah
CM for everyone, so that and then, there might be certain textures, and there might be
certain kind of cue-points,
JM yeah
where that particular thing, means 'ok, that goes into much more metered (claps lightly,
a beat) 'we're doing *that*' sort of thing,
JM yeah
CM y-, so, I think that's - 'because I think it's important not to feel, I think it's really
important that you need to feel really comfortable just performing- don't you
JM yeah
CM and like, not feel like you are completely compromising your usual way of working
JM yeah
CM so it's getting enough
JM that's true
CM control of it
CM so I can imagine that working. So if I get the phrases down. (pause, writing). But I
also think, you know when you went to you-
JM Yeah, some of those real staccato things might be cool, actually.
CM What's that, sorry?
JM Some of those staccato-e things would be nice,
CM Yeah
8:31 JM Not, I mean not, too ripping off Steve Reich, but I mean, I do like that thing
CM Things like have some of the ideas and then mess with them, because there's things
like glissando
JM yeah
CM (sings 'g-g-g-g-g-g-g' with a rising glissando), we could give them some more
shape, but just put it in the ball park,
JM yeah
CM or, make it *move* more,
JM yeah

CM but I think a sort of, a little bit of a wink towards it (laughs) wouldn't necessarily be a bad thing.

JM Yeah yeah, definitely

8:53 CM But um. The other thing is, you know when you went, I think, was it, did you reverse it or did you slow it down, the?

JM Ah, both, yeah

CM yeah, ok, cool, um. Because sometimes, you know sometimes, like a chorale, chorus thing,

JM yeah

CM I suppose it's bits of Mozart and Haydn I've played in, there's, there'll be like, the orchestra and strings, doing all this busier stuff, the, there's like a chorale going over the top,

JM yeah

CM 'cause that'd be another way to add some drama

JM yeah yeah

CM to kind of try out

JM yeah because I wanted to bring in the um, like the kind of pitchy thing over the top, at one stage, if that was, over the reverse, maybe... like the kind of ah,

Like the kind of ah

[demonstrates]

Reverse or slow down- both – it of

The orchestra doing all this 0- then something really like a xx over chorale over the top – the pitchy thing onstage

10:14 something improvised in there

Maybe we could use

One thing I've used in the past – use the pedals to generate harmony and transfer Transfer stuff that's been generated with pedals and stuff and then put those on instruments- maybe we

Created an echo opportunity in the instruments and things

13:40 I'm not sure if I should just start it off

Pedals and things

That sounded good though

Try it

15:41

16:50 And end probably the versey bit

17:08

To reverse that riff works really well

The effect you put with the second pedal – with the I [sings] it sounds more focused rather than random, when you use just a couple of notes rather than a whole chord

18:16 JM there might be a use for that, half-time

No-one would see it coming if you started with that

It's quite far away. Transformation

19:05

19:50 I don't know if that little bit has a place in it or not, yet- you know that [plays low 'Spanish' riff]

CM Mmm

20:00 CM It's a bit more Spanish-'guitarry', isn't it

JM yeah [continues playing]

[Listening connoisseurship Stefani- my simple Spanish association]

20:34 JM It's just those kind of, that kind of reaction anyway, ah
20:37 CM Yup, great.
JM Yeah
[plays]
CM Do you want some of this chocolate?
JM Alright, yeh.
CM [laughs]
JM So I mean, I can get away with it, that structure now, but I dunno, it might need something, I'm not completely- sure about it.
CM Well there might be a place for them to be just -for the, for the, the rest of the ensemble,
JM Yeah
CM same way as there's moments where it would be best being just you, wouldn't it
JM Yeah
CM There might be moment to kind of like
JM It'd be nice to have just the ensemble
CM Yeah, there might be a way, there might be a 'feature' moment
JM Yeah
CM 'cause what you wanna leave people thinking- I mean, that, basically it seems like it kind of goes from- it's gonna, it's sort of like, slowly grow off- grow and grow and grow, and then it's like, it's really, really, powerfully fa- you know, it, it, -it's really dynamic, isn't it
JM Mmm
CM it goes somewhere, so
JM and I'm not sure whether I should start- I should play it on my own, or with the looper, first, and then, they all come in in the verse, or, by doing that, you know. Or whether they come in with doing it ah, right first, you know, I'm not sure which is better yet.
CM It think it, I reckon- it's often good to start with one someo-I mean people will have seen you in the first half, won't they, with
22:00 JM yeah -I'm just thinking impact impact-wise, like
CM yeah-p
JM gonna be a big blast when they all come in, or is it just bring them in, individually, d'you know?
CM That's another point, actually
JM (with those..
CM to feature each instrument, isn't it, somehow
JM Each instrument comes in with one of those things, you know, or [plays avian riff]
JM Ah, 'cause I mean, it could be more than those two licks, like, it could be a few different ones.
[John plays, CM singing along, harmonies]
JM They're the only two I was doing. Yeah, you could have those kind entry can bows of bones to
22:39 CM What I'm thinking is like, weaving with the lines you've got, and then also, also getting them to peel off
JM Yea
CM And do different shapes, and work in parallel in the shapes the same, but giving it extended harmonies.
CM I'm just getting Sibelius up, so I can write some of this down.

[John continues to play]
CM It is interesting when you break the riff up, it did, I did enjoy when you er,
JM Yeah
CM You kind of put spaces in it, and um,
JM Yeah, I like syncopations, like, uh, with the [plays]
CM Has your pedal got the function where you can, um, switch between more than one loop?
JM Errr, I can just undo one, on this one.
CM Right
JM Like I have, one layer, and then put the other one on and take that off, and then do a new one. Erm-
CM I suppose you could-
JM I have got another looper as well, I could use.
CM It's just think, 'cause it might, if you wanna, if you wanna use pre-prepared loops,
JM Yeah
CM by the end of the thing, it switches to it and gives another- another variation on the phrase, or something, as a backing, or, alternatively, obviously the ensemble could do that, as well
JM Yeah,
CM Anyway
JM Yeah, that'd be nice. If the ensemble can do that, that's kind of using it, for what it can do.
CM yeah, (as if writing) 'variations on...' [John plays]
24:11 JM That's why I was I kind of I wanted to use the underlying chord things, that they can do, you know, 'cause it's hard to do all that with a looper,
CM Mmm
JM unless you do the whole thing, in real time, yeah.
CM That's, that's, definitely we can do that. So it was like, bringing out the bass line on the lower instruments
JM Yeah, the chord things,
CM Yeah.
[JM plays]
CM I think it's going to be beautiful, John.
JM Yeah, I mean, I don't think, I think, 'cause I was originally thinking that would be much longer, I can see it being a nice, like, 6-minute thing.
CM, yeah, I can see it, being that, yeah.
JM And then the other one, the other one that's not completely set as well, you know, the jazzy one, you know the
[plays]
25:48 JM When I was playing that thing earlier, when I just had it clean [plays]
26:23 So kind of skipping like at the end, that tag, so just going straight from [plays]
Or actually even that-mm [plays]
JM I mean that's obviously had a bit of a, a diff-, alternating bass going on [plays]
CM Yeah
JM So it was just that little A-section, and then going into the – probably two of those, and then going into the [plays B section, pedal effects applied]
CM yeah (as JM plays)
28:07 – CM sings a note over the top
28:38 Monty joins in

So its just back to the A
 Instruments just coming in an out
 [plays]
 JM Yeah, so
 [plays]
 JM could even be African-y
 [plays]
 Yeah anything can go over it, it might just be a melody over it or something
 CM yeah
 [JM plays]
 JM Monty! Go on, back off! Go-way
 Very musical- could actually use that for when the chords come, or something, really good!
 I really like the random chord, like the chord on you first play
 Monty- go away, go on
 ...Monty...
 [laughing]
 32: 24 JM Yeah, I mean I could start off with that I was starting off with that originally, the glitchy thing,
 CM It's very striking
 [JM plays]
 CM Will you have used that setting earlier in the gig?
 JM That's my favourite setting. I kinda turn it off for the [plays]
 JM you know, it'd be nice to have a double bass in there, come in there, and do some different basslines.
 CM yeah
 JM The cello could do something like that
 CM Yeah,
 JM or
 CMI I mean, or I think bass clarinet's
 JM yeah
 CM amazing
 JM Just kind of a jazz, jazz- taste-y thing., not jazz, obviously, without being
 33:44 CM I was thinking sort of like, kind of, Ellingtonian sort of chords, so it's kind like a kind of conversation
 JM yeah
 CM [sings] sort of placing 'round it.
 JM yeah
 CM It'd mean you'd need, I suppose once, once it's clearer what the instruments are doing, you may decide you're ok with that being fixed, and you being freer within it that
 JM Yeah
 CM As long as they can be, they can keep -doing what they're reading, you know what I mean?
 JM Yeah. It'd be nice to play around there, a bit.
 34:18 CM There's um – there's a lot of melody in what you're doing, as well. It's whether, wi-along with you, it'd be cool if, maybe when it returns, or if it's repeated within a given section, is whether instruments can double with you,
 JM yeah, yeah, yeah, definitely,
 CM It'd just mean that you'd need to

JM be set
 CM be set enough, for that to work
 [plays]
 35:09 CM Do you happen to know, do you happen to know which saxophone it is that the saxophonist plays, or is it more than one?
 JM I think he does tenor or alto, I think he did tenor last time, I can't remember, actually.
 CM Tenor or alto
 JM I can't remember actually, Tenor or alto, yeah.
 [plays]
 JM I'm just not sure whether to right into that chord, or [plays] 'cause I could do from there into the 'D', [plays] 'cause I don't really like that D that much, actually [plays].
 CM do you mean at the beginning?
 JM Yeah
 CM At the very, very beginning?
 [plays]
 JM Yeah, so
 CM I think it's more of a statement to, personally, to go with the angular stuff [sings], 'cause I think, it makes it sound, erm, kind of quite, conversational, the, the kind of more swings, [sings] da goo-da-goo da, that makes it more, kind of like, moseying,
 JM yeah
 CM whereas I think, that's bit [sings] that' a bit more of a sort of, 'listen to this' sort of thing, but you might prefer the conversational quality
 JM That little bit there [plays]
 CM That bit there [sings two notes]
 JM I mean I could do [plays] or just go straight from [plays]
 CM yeah. Yeah, that bit, or you could even milk it, even more (laughs)
 JM laughs
 CM [sings]
 JM or skip it altogether. [plays] that could be even more towards the end
 CM exactly
 [plays]
 38:32 JM 'cause if I was improvising around it, that seems nicer [plays] [Chloe sings, john does a solo]
 39:07 Yup- it just goes easier, doesn't it like, it's kind of a, rather than doing the [plays] 'cause it's kind of a slowing down, rubato-y kind of thing,
 CM It's lovely, as well,
 JM yeah
 CM It's lovely, you should do whatever you feel, 'cause I think, this is your [plays]- thing. But I can hear how this chord would work really nicely behind you, on the instruments,
 JM yeah
 [sigs]
 CM I'll make sure, next time we meet up, I'll, I'll have a file, which means I can make sure I've transcribed them right,
 JM yeah, cool, yeah,
 CM and we can work from that. I think, mostly, what I'll do is I'll get the bits off here, and like, er, and have it in sections,
 Yeah
 And then you can tell me what I've got wrong.
 JM That's cool yeah

CM And we can shift it all around
Yeah
CM So would you like, would it be cool, if I made up melodies, just to try stuff out, and then you can change it as well.
JM yeah
CM and all that business. That's cool
JM I mean, the other ones are pretty set, then, those ones are the most iffy, like
CM yeah
JM we played those last week
CM the one that's a bit more like a ragtime?
40:19 JM yeah [plays]
CM lovely (in the pause)
JM [plays]
CM We can have fun with that one, like, make it, make it a bit more like a Harold Lloyd film soundtrack or something [sings]
JM Yeah yeah, could be
CM Yeah make it really fun.
JM yeah
40:52 CM Um, are any of these in the same key?
JM yeah, they're mostly D, that's, that's why I was originally thinking they'd be a suite. 'Cause I actually had that one, well that one's in A, isn't it, the Reichy one
CM Yeah [CM sings]
JM But I had it in A because it was the fifth,
JM but, er, it was in 'B'
CM ah, so, cool
JM originally.
CM I was just thinking about transitions and like whether it would work
JM Yeah
CM, you know, could, could make a virtue of it,
JM yep
CM sort of, by having some transitions,
JM but that one they could easily put it in a different key, this one as well,
CM really, ok
JM If you wanted to vary it up a bit
CM good to have the option, isn't it
41:19 JM Could put the capo or whatever
CM Yeah
JM It would be nice in E, this one
CM cool. So that's the same as the recording last week?
JM did I play the whole thing last week?
CM I don't know?
JM [plays, ends 42:23] So I mean, if there was enough, if, if, it depends, like how much time we're talking about with those four, really, 'cause it could be nice to have a [plays]. Actually when I first came up with that, I was like [plays it slower]. It was kind of, a [plays bass notes]. You know, I was hearing like funny brass, doing something like (scats)
CM (repeats the line) Well we should definitely do that, then
JM do you know the Jim O'Rourke, *Bad Timing*,
CM No
JM It's bit like Van Dye parks, it's a bit like Burt Bacharach,

CM oh, yeah
JM in a funny way.
JM *Bad Timing* is just like a long piece with loads of instruments that come over it.
[plays]
I can't believe I didn't think of that, that would be perfect for this [plays]. Something else doing that kind of thing.
CM [sings echoing John's line].
JM yeah
CM yep
JM Well, um, ... well, I can forward you it.
CM yeah, man,
45:33 JM There, it's in there. ... I'll stick it on. And then the other one is the kind of Irish-y one. [plays] We did that one, didn't we.
CM Nice
CM Okidoki
46:00 ish JM [plays] Ohlish?
CM I'd like to know, that's lovely. I think you can kind of how minimalist to be, picking that out, things like that, I think it could sound really great, like, and it would sort of bridge the styles, a little bit.
JM Yeah that's good
I think it could be in that little bit as well
CM yeah
JM [plays] So I mean they could be doubling that
CM Eventually, but- it also sounds amazing,
[Laughing] That could be a section that gets longer and longer and longer, doe a little vamp that gets longer and builds it
JM So I mean, that little thing, they could be doing the same thing over it [plays] [Chloe sings] It's all that kind of motif.
CM I didn't know If that could segue into the (sings avian riff)..
I don't know if that could be a way to have a link, as a way of fashioning?
JM I did have to change that string,
CM We could work that into the composition I'm sure, in some way that's the least...
CM In terms of your opener for your second half, in terms of your actual playing...
JM It's kind of formed, anyway,
CM And all those techniques in the first 20 seconds
JM Yeah
...
CM But I love the sound of people tuning guitar (sings)
JM (yeah)
CM If you don't want to stop in between (claps) ...
JM But in term of the other ones that need some parts,
JM Its off the EP I don't know if you've heard the 'Double' one,... it's another kind of old timey one
CM What's this one called?
JM 'Double'
CM
[plays]
52:32 then that again
[plays]

52:42 when I'm doing that live, well, I do a leap on this one: [plays]
53:00 in reverse, and then come in with the A

8.5.3.3. John McGrath's follow-up email with musical references

18/09/2014 11:50

John McGrath

here's some of that jim or rourke album i mentioned:https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ra7jwdG_8Ng

Jim O'Rourke - 94 The Long Way

www.youtube.com



18/09/2014 11:51

John McGrath

also, can you send me along a short couple of lines of bio? I'll get Dan to put you in the program as orchestrator extraordinaire

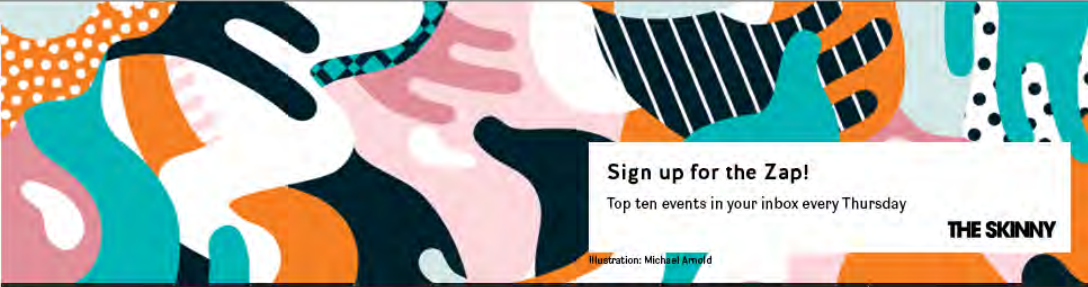


18/09/2014 11:55

Chloe Mullett

Thanking you! Will get to a desktop pc and distill my essence accordingly, pronto.






8.5.3.4 Jon Davies' review of the IMMIX concert (27th November 2014)



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Immix with John McGrath and Lucy Pankhurst @ Static, Liverpool, 19 November

★★★★★

Live Review by Jon Davies | 27 Nov 2014

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John McGrath by [Michael Sheerin](#)

In the concluding session of **Immix's** highly commended collaboration series, composers John McGrath and Lucy Pankhurst provide a suitably engaging suite, relatively accessible in comparison to the ensemble's progressive outlook. **John McGrath's** reputation is still bubbling underground, however his appearances in various guitar ensembles and scratch orchestras, as well as his *Lanterns* EP, have made him known for dexterous guitar work and the ability to work folky melodies in with complex arrangements. With the help of fellow composer Chloe Mullett, McGrath's work with Immix is less of an overhaul and more of a tasteful augmentation of his music, as if to highlight the ornate nature of his work that is more subtle in a solo capacity. Bringing to mind the likes of Owen Pallett and Grizzly Bear, John McGrath is an artist capable of balancing classical and folk textures to great effect.

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FEATURE



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FEATURE



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Texturally complex yet playful, **Lucy Pankhurst's** compositions highlight her fantastic understanding in blending technology with her studies in brass and wind instrumentation. Despite opening with a fanfare reminiscent of Benjamin Britten's neoclassicism, Pankhurst's musical approach is anything but conservative, evident on her performance of *Cantabiles*, playing tenor horn and singing simultaneously. Finishing her suite with the amusing M6

Troll and Signal. Lost., using a stopwatch instead of a conductor, Pankhurst is another example of the rude health in which modern composition is in the UK.

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