

The creative process in performance: a study of clarinettists

Emily Payne

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Music

St. Peter's College, University of Oxford
Trinity Term, 2015

88,115 words

Abstract

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This thesis examines creativity in performance through the study of the performance practices of professional clarinettists. Creativity research has tended to emphasise the innovative, revelatory qualities of the creative process, rather than the more pragmatic activities related to notated performance. This corresponds to a tension between the perceived creative opportunities of improvisation and notated music, and has resulted in a discourse that associates improvisation with spontaneity and novelty, and notated performance with repetition and reproduction. How might this discourse be challenged?

Through a series of case studies documenting clarinettists working in a variety of collaborative settings, I examine how performers' constructions of creativity might complement or challenge the perceived creative affordances of notated music, and how the presence of, and/or collaboration with a living composer affects the creative process. A broadly ethnographic methodology is employed, drawing on thematic analysis of qualitative data obtained through semi-structured interviews with musicians, and audio-visual footage of workshops, rehearsals and performances. Conceptually, the thesis adopts an ecological perspective (Ingold 2011; Clarke, Doffman, and Lim 2013), proposing that creativity is a distributed phenomenon, entangled within a complex interweaving of social, material, and historical influences. It draws on work by Richard Sennett (2008) and Tim Ingold (2013) on craft and

material engagement, suggesting that the interaction between a practitioner and a tradition entails a synthesis of action, perception and prior experience.

I argue that this orientation is useful for developing an analytical framework that accounts for the dimensions of performance that might otherwise be taken for granted. The research offers insights into the performance practices of contemporary concert music – a line of inquiry that remains largely unaddressed. More broadly, it makes room for a more forward-looking model of creativity based on processes rather than outcomes, and one that better appreciates the fluid pathways between performers and scores.

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Acknowledgements

I am grateful to my supervisor Eric Clarke for his encouragement, inspiration, and continual support throughout the preparation of this thesis. His balance of intellectual generosity and rigour has benefitted my research immeasurably and it has been an enormous pleasure working with him.

This research would not have been possible without the generosity and goodwill of the musicians who were involved in it. I particularly wish to thank those who participated in my case studies: Margaret Archibald, Lucy Downer, Edmund Finnis, Alexander Goehr, Roger Heaton, Evan Johnson, Víkingur Ólafsson, Nick Planas, Nick Parker, Antony Pay, Carl Rosman, Clíodna Shanahan, and Mark Simpson. Thanks also the Kreutzer String Quartet and ensemble musikFabrik for kindly inviting me to attend their rehearsals.

I wish to acknowledge the sources of financial support that I received towards my research and conference expenses, both from the University of Oxford and from further afield: the Faculty of Music, St. Peter's College, the Music & Letters Trust, the Royal Musical Association, and the AHRC Centre for Musical Performance as Creative Practice.

I have benefitted from guidance and support from the following friends and colleagues in the academic community, who offered advice, moral support, and feedback on my work: Rachel Beckles Willson, Georgina Born, Julie Brown, Sarah Callis, Kyle Devine, Byron Dueck, Amanda Hsieh, Leanne Langley, Noel Lobley, Emily MacGregor, Sarah Nelson, Marilou Polymeropoulou, Cayenna Ponchione-Bailey, John Rink, Floris Schuiling, and Sarah Smith. I owe a particular debt of thanks to Laura Anderson for her friendship, her willingness to read numerous drafts of my work, and her invaluable comments and suggestions. Finally, I wish to thank

my examiners, Mark Doffman and Neil Heyde, for our stimulating and engaging discussion during my viva examination.

My research has also been shaped by the thought-provoking academic communities at various conferences, in particular the CMPCP Performance Studies Network conferences, and the Tracking the Creative Process in Music conferences, where I presented early drafts of chapters.

Finally, I feel incredibly lucky for the constant support I have received from my family: Janet and Gerald; Kate, both for her practical support and her positivity; and Greg, for the material sacrifices he has made to enable me to pursue my academic ambitions, but most importantly for his love, care, and friendship which have sustained me throughout my research. I owe him my deepest thanks.

Chapter 1

Introduction

What does it mean to be creative in music? Is it only composers and improvisers that we should regard as the truly creative agents, or, can the activities of concert music performers – apparently tied to the notes in front of them – also be regarded as part of a more collaborative and distributed creative process? This thesis examines the creative process in musical performance through the study of the performance practices of professional clarinettists. Using a series of case studies that document clarinettists working in a variety of collaborative settings, I question what it means to be creative in musical performance – both in terms of working with others, and also in terms of engaging with the score. This opening chapter commences by sketching the current landscape of the field of musical performance studies, in which my thesis is situated, followed by a discussion of my research approach, and the ethical and methodological considerations it raises. I conclude by providing an overview of each of the chapters.

1.1. Musical performance studies: a move to the ‘real world’

Developments in musicology over the last thirty years have provoked a shift from the analysis of music as text to music as performance, turning attention towards an understanding of musical workings rather than the musical work, and encouraging a view of music(ing) as action rather than object (see Cook 2013; Rink 1995, 2002; Small 1998). More recent work has been directed towards investigating the processes of live music-making, an orientation reflected in the research programme of the AHRC Centre for Musical Performance as Creative Practice (2010-2015)¹ and the

¹ Further information on CMPCP may be found on its website: <<http://www.cmpcp.ac.uk/>>.

ongoing series of Tracking the Creative Processes in Music international conferences.² These programmes bring together scholars from a variety of disciplines whose work shows a growing recognition that musical creativity is not an isolated and self-sufficient activity undertaken solely by the composer, but rather is a complex process that is socially and culturally situated. Moreover, such work acknowledges the contingency of performance on a variety of factors and demonstrates the importance of situating research in ‘real-world’ contexts.

This epistemological shift and broadening of the field has brought with it diverse methodologies that allow for a richer analysis of the attributes of live music-making – what Nicholas Cook terms the ‘ethnographic turn’ (2013: 255) in musical performance studies. This growing attention to performance has led musicians to become increasingly involved in the research process, whether as participants or as researchers themselves. A recent but rapidly expanding body of literature seeks to document the creative process from ‘within,’ with performer-researchers investigating their own professional practice (Barrett et al. 2014; Dogantan-Dack 2012; Fitch and Heyde 2007a, 2007b; Hayden and Windsor 2007; Kanga 2014; Roche 2011; Roe 2007). A study by Eric Clarke et al. (2005) was one of the first of its kind to incorporate the perspectives of the composer, performer, and analyst, synthesising qualitative and quantitative methods in order to investigate the preparation and performance of a complexly notated piano work. Building on this approach, Amanda Bayley’s sustained research with the Kreutzer String Quartet and composer Michael Finnissy (Bayley 2010, 2011; Bayley and Clarke 2009, 2011; Bayley and Heyde, forthcoming) illustrates the kinds of rich detail that audio-visual recordings and interviews can provide the researcher in tracing creative processes. Within this area of

² Most recently in Montreal (see <<http://tcpm2013.oicrm.org/>>) and Paris (see <<http://tcpm2015.ircam.fr/>>).

research, audio-visual material has been shown to be a valuable resource, whether as a documenting medium (Archbold 2011) or as a tool to prompt further reflection from research participants (Bayley 2011; Clarke, Doffman, and Lim 2013; Clarke, Doffman, and Timmers, forthcoming; Donin 2009; Donin and Féron 2012; Donin and Theureau 2007; Seddon 2004; Seddon and Biasutti 2009). This body of work demonstrates the advantages of employing a qualitative approach to explore the many facets of musicians' experiences.

In tandem with the epistemological and ontological developments in musicology, creativity research has undergone a complementary turn towards the socio-cultural, and away from the romanticised notion of creativity as a personal attribute residing within the artist's psyche (see Abra 1994; Amabile 1996; and, specific to music, Clarke 2012; Toynbee 2012). Although definitions of creativity are numerous and varied, it is now generally acknowledged that creativity is a collective phenomenon (Sawyer 2003b; Sawyer and DeZutter 2009) that must be considered in relation to the field in which it is situated (Amabile 1996; Csikszentmihályi 1988, 1996; Gardner 1993; John-Steiner 2000). These dual reorientations are reflected in a recent surge in research addressing collaborative composition and performance (Archbold 2011; Barrett et al. 2014; Bayley 2010, 2011; Bayley and Clarke 2009, 2011; Bayley and Heyde, forthcoming; Clarke, Doffman, and Lim 2013; Clarke, Doffman, and Timmers, forthcoming; Fitch and Heyde 2007a, 2007b; Hayden and Windsor 2007; Hooper 2012; Kanga 2014; Östersjö 2008; Merrick 2009; Roche 2011). Yet, studies of creativity have tended to emphasise the innovative, revelatory qualities of the creative process, rather than the more pragmatic activities associated with notated performance. This corresponds to a tension between the perceived creative opportunities of improvisation in relation to notated music, and has resulted

in a discourse that associates improvisation with spontaneity and novelty, and notated performance with repetition and reproduction. How might this discourse be challenged?

The aim of this thesis is to consider what might it mean to be ‘creative’ in the performance of notated music; how performers’ constructions of creativity might complement or challenge the perceived creative affordances of notated music; and how the presence of, and/or collaboration with a living composer affects the creative process.

1.2. Approach

With these aims in mind, I now turn to the process of identifying an appropriate research approach to support my work. Reflecting musicology’s ‘ethnographic turn’, recent studies of creative practice in music utilise a broad range of methodologies that have been developed from the fields of the social sciences, bringing together several strands of material to analyse ‘real-world’ contexts (see Bayley 2010, 2011; Clarke et al. 2005; Clarke, Doffman, and Timmers, forthcoming;). Interviews are a common approach used to gather data, which are then analysed using methods drawn from grounded theory (Berliner 1994; Clarke, Doffman, and Lim 2013; Clarke, Doffman, and Timmers, forthcoming; Csikszentmihályi 1996; Doffman 2008, 2011; John-Steiner 2000; Sawyer 2003b). The study of music-making can be significantly enriched by analysis of the visual dimension of the performance event (Stock 2004: 27), and video recording is employed by a number of recent studies (Archbold 2011, Bayley 2010; Clarke, Doffman, and Lim 2013; Clarke, Doffman, and Timmers, forthcoming; Clarke et al., forthcoming; Doffman 2008, 2011; Östersjö 2008) in order to capture interactions and visual data that would otherwise be lost with audio

recording. Moreover, video recordings are a richer medium with which to undertake analysis using repeated playback and discussion with participants, in order to reflect further on the performance event (Clarke, Doffman, and Timmers, forthcoming; Doffman 2008; Seddon 2004).

This thesis documents in real time the experiences of professional clarinetists and their collaborators in preparing and performing new music. Given the experiential focus of the study, the methodology takes a broadly ethnographic approach, using as its foundation a body of qualitative data obtained through semi-structured interviews with composers and performers, analyses of sketch material and score annotations, and audio-visual footage of a number of workshops,³ rehearsals, and performances. Data collection took place in several stages. During the first year of my research I identified a number of professional clarinetists drawn from a range of musical backgrounds who work across various performative contexts. Having received their informed consent to participate in the study, semi-structured interviews were then conducted, transcribed verbatim, and subjected to thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006; Guest, MacQueen, and Namey 2012) using the software nVivo (see Bayley 2011; Doffman 2008) to draw out themes for further investigation and to establish case studies for the project based on the participants' current professional engagements.⁴ Interviews were structured around a series of questions aimed at gathering information about the musicians' backgrounds, musical formation, current performance engagements, and the ways in which they characterised creativity in

³ In the specific context of the thesis, the term 'workshop' denotes an environment (either face-to-face or online) of artistic work, trial, and development in which composers and/or performers interact during a work's compositional stage. As such, I make a distinction between the activities of 'workshopping' and 'rehearsing', in contrast to the definition proposed by Zubin Kanga (2014) who includes rehearsing within the definition of workshop. I do not mean to suggest that the musical 'work' is a fixed and final object by the rehearsal stage, but my understanding is based on the language employed by the participants of my research. As one musician put it, 'The word "workshop" can mean about a million different things. Every single so-called "workshop" I've ever attended has been an utterly different entity' (Edmund Finnis, interview, 10 April 2013).

⁴ See Appendix I for a list of interview participants.

relation to these activities. For example, I asked performers what the word ‘creativity’ meant to them, what it might mean to be creative in performance, and how they might experience opportunities for creativity across different contexts. While the primary material presented here comes from clarinettists, material from composers and other musicians with whom they have worked are also included. The musicians are largely UK-based, have experience in a range of musical genres, and have played in ensembles including, among others, the London Sinfonietta, Lontano, Michael Nyman Band, musikFabrik, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and the free improvisation ensemble AMM.

Four professional performance projects⁵ were chosen as the case studies that form the primary empirical material of the thesis: a recording made by the clarinettist Antony Pay of Alexander Goehr’s *Paraphrase on ‘Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda’* by Claudio Monteverdi for solo clarinet Op. 28 (1969); *Four Duets* for clarinet and piano (2012) by Edmund Finnis, a new commission for the clarinettist Mark Simpson and pianist Víkingur Ólafsson; *To My Father* for basset clarinet and piano (2014) by Nick Planas, written for the clarinettist Lucy Downer; and Evan Johnson’s ‘*indolentiae ars*’, *a medium to be kept* (2015) for eighteenth-century basset clarinet, composed for the clarinettist Carl Rosman. As well as undertaking semi-structured interviews with the case study participants, I undertook video and audio recordings of workshops, rehearsals, and performances.⁶ The video material was captured using a Sony Handycam HDR-XR200, and a Zoom portable digital recorder was used to undertake audio recordings. In the digital version of the thesis video and audio examples are provided as hyperlinks to an online repository; a DVD containing video and audio examples accompanies the physical thesis (Appendix IV). In those

⁵ Biographies of the case study participants are provided in Appendix II.

⁶ See Appendix III for a summary of the audio-visual material collected during fieldwork for each case study.

examples in which I draw particular attention to the participants' discursive interactions I have provided transcriptions of the episode in question; in other cases I provide a descriptive commentary to illustrate my point.

I had initially planned to undertake a case study that examined Roger Heaton and the Kreutzer String Quartet making a recording of Mihailo Trandafilovski's *Lava, Magnets, Crystals* (2011) for clarinet quintet. Unfortunately the sound quality of the video recording was too poor to be employed in the thesis, but having conducted interviews with the musicians, I have included material from my interviews with these participants that is relevant to my discussion.

While situating my research in the 'real-world' experiences of musicians has obvious advantages in terms of the rich empirical material it offers, my approach also poses certain ethical and logistical considerations. In discussing my research with Pay, he commented: 'I hope you'll write something useful.'⁷ This remark captures some of the difficulties inherent in using the experience of individuals as an object of study. Pay's comment reflects the distance that exists between the academic character of my thesis, with its research questions and concern with a research field; and the everyday experience of Pay's musical practice, in which the theoretical questions I discuss might not play an obvious role, or seem relevant. This is not to single out Pay specifically, who is certainly interested in a number of areas of academic enquiry, and indeed, several of my participants have undertaken their own doctoral research. But what happens when researchers and participants do not share the same motivations or agenda? As Cook (2013: 253-4) has observed in discussing a study by Roger Chaffin, Gabriella Imreh, and Mary Crawford (2002), there is a risk of tensions arising if

⁷ Interview, 10 April 2012.

participants resist being treated as ‘passive’ subjects, or if they feel alienated or misrepresented by researchers.

A related potential difficulty arises from writing critically about the professional lives of musicians. The music profession is a small world (and the clarinet profession is even smaller), and careers could easily be damaged by sensitive information being published about individuals. In the light of this consideration, I redacted sections of my interview transcripts that touched upon sensitive subjects, and I have been conscious to keep a reflective and responsive relationship with my participants: they were sent full drafts of my written analyses to review and were invited to make comments. This open approach facilitated my understanding of varying (and in some cases, contradictory) interpretations of events, and has greatly benefitted my analysis, whilst also ensuring that the participants felt that their views were expressed as effectively as possible.

Another concern is that in ethnographic work the observer is almost never a neutral non-participant in the relationship they observe. When working with professional musicians (particularly those with whom I am familiar as a clarinettist myself) there is a risk of a perceived imbalance in our relationship, whereby I am viewed as a student rather than a researcher.⁸ To what extent might this influence my ability to challenge or contradict their perspective? These are difficult questions to answer, since in a way they were beyond my control, and on one level being conscious of these potential challenges helped to overcome them. Spending as much time as possible with my participants during fieldwork, as well as adopting an open approach to sharing my work, has helped me to cultivate positive relationships with them, and has gone some way towards alleviating this potential problem. Moreover,

⁸ In fact, this was hinted at by a comment that Pay posted on an online clarinet discussion forum about the project, in which he referred to me as ‘My Oxford student’ (Pay 2013a).

although these are important questions to consider when undertaking all types of interpretative approaches that employ qualitative methods, I believe they should not hinder this type of research approach. It is inevitable that my participants have personal agendas that are influenced by their interpretations of my research and my identity, just as my research has been shaped by my own personal frames of reference (Collins and Gallinat 2010). In response to this, I have attempted to reflect on the influence of my background and experiences throughout the processes of data collection and analysis. The other side of the argument is that as a clarinettist myself, I bring a level of technical understanding to my work which has enriched my discussion, as well as creating opportunities for dialogue with my participants.

Using professional performance projects as objects of research also places potential logistical constraints on the researcher, such as the timeframe of fieldwork being governed by the participants' own schedules or the formality of the concert setting affecting data collection (Bayley 2011: 408). I was sometimes conscious of my reliance on the goodwill of my participants, and have at times felt reluctant to push for a response to an email for fear of alienating my participant. From the point of view of the participants, moreover, I was conscious of the need to have as little impact on their activities as possible. As part of the process of obtaining informed consent, participants were given the opportunity to withdraw from the research at any time. Moreover, when documenting performance activities I positioned myself and the video camera so as to be as unobtrusive as possible. On the other hand, my presence also had a number of positive consequences: I assisted Pay with making his recording, and I undertook the role of page-turner for two of the performances. Johnson remarked on the benefit of having video recordings of his workshops with Rosman for his compositional process, since it obviated the need for him to make his own notes,

and it allowed him to review the material of their discussions in detail at a later date. In summary, despite the potential ethical and methodological challenges outlined above, enormously valuable insights are afforded by documenting the working practices of professional musicians.

1.3. Overview of the thesis

Having clarified the research methods that I employed and the considerations that they raised, the rest of this chapter provides an overview of the remaining chapters of the thesis.

Having used this chapter to set out the scope and aims of the thesis and the approach that I employed, chapters two and three can be grouped together as presenting my theoretical framework and research agenda. Chapter two provides an interdisciplinary examination of existing literature relating to the study of the creative process in performance, encompassing areas that include psychology, socio-cultural studies, anthropology, and performance studies. The chapter is bipartite in structure: the first section presents a wide-ranging overview of creativity research drawn from the social sciences, and discusses the epistemological developments and questions that are relevant to my research; the second section reviews a more recent but rapidly expanding body of research addressing collaboration in composition and performance. I conclude by summarising my position in relation to the existing literature, and setting out the direction for my research.

Chapter three brings perspectives from the literature outlined in chapter two into conversation with statements from performers from my interviews in order to examine the asymmetries that exist in discussions of creativity in musical performance, and to question the assumption that the score exerts a constraining force

on performers. Drawing primarily on the work of Richard Sennett (2008) and Tim Ingold (2000; 2011; 2013) I propose a reappraisal of musical performance within a framework of craft. Theorising performance in this way takes account of the development of skill and expertise through activities such as repetition, problem-solving and -finding, and material engagement, as well as suggesting an ethical dimension; and provokes a reconsideration of dimensions of performance that might otherwise be taken for granted.

The theoretical discussions of chapters two and three are investigated in a practical manner in the following four chapters, which comprise the primary empirical material of the thesis. Chapter four presents a scenario that is perhaps the least typical of the four case studies. During my first interview with Pay in which we discussed the relationship between composer, text, and performer with particular relevance to solo clarinet pieces, our conversation turned to Goehr's solo clarinet piece, *Paraphrase*, and Pay's relationship to it. It was this discussion that motivated Pay to make a new recording of the work. Consequently, it was not an existing performance engagement of Pay's, but an opportunity that arose as an outcome of our meeting, and I assisted him with the logistical arrangements necessary to make the recording. Pay's view of the situation was summed up in a comment he made at the end of the recording session:

Thank you for the opportunity for doing it because I'm doing this for me, not for you really. Well I am doing it for you, but I wouldn't be doing it if I hadn't wanted to do this, if you know what I mean. It was a happy coincidence.⁹

Using interviews with Pay and Goehr, audio-visual documentation of the recording and editing sessions, as well as my email correspondence with Pay, the chapter

⁹ Recording session, 15 January 2013.

uncovers the history behind *Paraphrase* and examines Pay's relationship to the score in making his recording.

Chapter five addresses the creative process from a different angle: the rehearsals of Simpson and Ólafsson in which they prepared a new commission, *Four Duets* for clarinet and piano by Finnis, for its premiere at the Royal Festival Hall. Employing interviews with each of the participants alongside video footage of three rehearsals to explore the duo's shaping of the work and their interactions with the composer, the account demonstrates the ways in which the musicians negotiate subtle changes in their interpretation, particularly in relation to rhythmic shaping and timbre, and raises a wider question about the creative opportunities of engaging with, in Simpson's words, 'deceptively simple'¹⁰ notation.

The affordances of an instrument (two distinctly different basset clarinets, one modern, and one historical) and their role in the creative process are a key theme of chapters six and seven. Chapter six traces the creative contribution of Downer to a new commission: *To My Father* for basset clarinet and piano by Planas. The first section of the chapter draws on video footage to examine Downer's role in a compositional workshop with Planas and addresses the ways in which her interactions with the composer shaped the musical material of the work. Using video recordings from three rehearsals in the lead up to the premiere and close descriptions of Downer's interactions with her instrument, the focus of the second section of the chapter narrows to address Downer's embodied relationship to the less familiar physical affordances of the basset clarinet. A second perspective is provided from the clarinettist Margaret Archibald, who performed movements from *To My Father* at around the same time as Downer, using a basset clarinet of a different design.

¹⁰ Rehearsal, 5 December 2012.

The focus of the final case study of the thesis, chapter seven, turns back to a solo work, but continues the discussion from the previous chapter on the finely tuned bodily interactions between performer and instrument and the influence of those interactions on the creative process. Johnson's commission for Rosman, '*indolentiae ars*', a medium to be kept for eighteenth-century basset clarinet, the physical and cultural affordances of which differ significantly from the 'standard' modern clarinet, had several consequences for the collaboration. The chapter documents three workshops between performer and composer in which they explored new instrumental techniques and sonorities, and traces their subsequent interactions through a rich body of email correspondence. As well as a close analysis of the different working practices employed by Rosman and Johnson, the chapter provides an account of the wider historical, cultural, and social factors that underpin their collaboration.

My eighth and final chapter draws together threads from across the thesis as a whole in order to summarise my conclusions, and to reflect on the issues that both complicate and enrich my perspective on creativity in performance. I trace the connections between the four case studies in order to situate them within the clarinet's wider historical ecology. Having identified the primary contributions of the thesis, I consider the questions that could stimulate further directions in research. The chapter concludes by revisiting craft in light of my case study material, and identifies some of the consonances and dissonances that arise in relation to skill, creativity, and improvisation.

Chapter 2

The creative process in performance

This chapter examines the literature related to the study of the creative process in musical performance, in order to set out a framework for thinking about the nature of creativity – a complex and contested term. The chapter is bipartite in structure, reflecting the two distinct areas of research in which my research topic and questions are located: the study of creativity in joint work broadly from the perspective of the social sciences; and a more recent body of musicological scholarship that examines composer-performer(s) interaction in musical performance, and which draws on perspectives from anthropology, ethnomusicology, performance studies, psychology, and sociology. Thus, the first section articulates the broad theoretical developments in creativity research, drawing out models and themes within the literature. Following on from this discussion, I examine the more targeted area of studies that address collaborative composition and performance, in order to gain preliminary insights into the key issues at play and the methods by which they might be investigated and understood. As my discussion will show, there are various overlaps and connections between these two fields of research. I conclude by presenting the theoretical framework employed in this thesis.

2.1. Perspectives on creativity

[C]reativity involves a multitude of definitions, conceptualizations, domains, disciplines that bear on its study, empirical methods and levels of analysis, as well as research orientations that are both basic and applied—and applied in varied contexts. (Kozbelt, Beghetto, and Runco 2010: 21)

Since J.P. Guilford's presidential address to the American Psychological Association in 1950, where he lamented that fact that 'psychologists have seriously neglected the

study of the creative aspects of personality' (1950: 454), creativity has been a significant focus for academics in disciplines ranging from anthropology and psychology to neuroscience, generating a substantial body of work attempting to capture and categorise this complex phenomenon. In light of this breadth and diversity, the aim in this section is not to provide a comprehensive definition of creativity, but to explore some of the connections and tensions within creativity research and to present the key theoretical issues that are relevant to the thesis. I will provide a short background discussion of some early developments in creativity research, before moving on to discuss more recent directions in greater detail.¹¹

A dominant model of early creativity research was concerned with identifying creativity as a personality trait within eminent or 'gifted' individuals.¹² This approach to creativity is evidenced by the psychometric tests employed by Guilford (1967), who developed a tool for measuring the extent of 'divergent thinking', leading him to propose the concept of 'divergent production' (1967). Later variations of Guilford's work include Paul Torrance's tests of creative thinking (1974). Sarnoff Mednick (1962) adopted an approach similar to Guilford and Torrance in proposing a theory of creativity as an *associative* process, by testing, in his words, 'high creatives' and 'low creatives', in order to attempt to 'delineate processes that underlie all creative thought' (1962: 220).

Since the 1980s, however, academic focus has shifted beyond the somewhat narrow confines of this paradigm, towards understanding the cognitive and social processes of creativity, entailing a move away from a conception of creativity as a talent or trait (see Abra 1994: 2; Amabile 1996; and, specifically to the sphere of

¹¹ A comprehensive overview of the theories, developments, and trajectories of creativity research is provided by Robert J. Sternberg (1999) or, writing more recently, James C. Kaufman and Sternberg (2010).

¹² Ravenna Helson (1996) reviews the 'creative personality' research of the 1950s.

music, Clarke 2012; Toynbee 2012), and towards a phenomenon that is developed over time and fostered by social structures. Thus, attention shifted from the individual to the social and contextual environments within which creative work occurs (Amabile 1996; Csikszentmihályi 1988, 1996; Gardner 1993; John-Steiner 2000). This socio-cultural turn in creativity research acknowledges social and cultural perspectives as valuable to its study (Hargreaves, MacDonald, and Miell 2012). A fundamental tenet that underpins this field is the work of the psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978) which asserts that creative activities are inherently social, and that the self and the other are reciprocally related. In this way, creativity is embedded in interaction between a range of cultural and social factors (Glăveanu 2011: 474), for example, an individual's background and family history (Amabile 1996) or extrinsic motivational influences (Hennessey 2003).

However, in some opposition to the cultural and social factors of creativity outlined above, dominant research foci from a broadly cognitive perspective are creative problem-solving and expertise: where an expert practitioner applies domain specific knowledge in order to find an innovative solution (Kozbelt, Beghetto, and Runco 2010: 33). This category of creativity theory has attempted to account for the cognitive processes that demystify the 'eureka' moments of discovery and revelation, for example, by demonstrating that expert knowledge is developed over an extended period of time (Weisberg 2006).¹³ K. Anders Ericsson has published widely on creative expertise in performance across a number of domains including music. He writes:

¹³ A different, but complementary, approach is evidenced by the empirical studies of skilled practice and the development of expertise in musical performance beginning in the 1990s, by scholars such as K. Anders Ericsson, Andreas C. Lehmann, and John A. Sloboda (see, for example, Ericsson, Krampe, and Tesch-Römer 1993; Krampe 1997; Lehmann 1997a, 1997b; Lehmann and Ericsson 1993, 1996, 1997, 1998a, 1998b; Sloboda et al. 1996). By focussing on the training and mechanisms that mediate expert performance, these authors also seek to critique the mythologised notion of innate talent and ability.

[D]evelopment of reasonably high levels of performance, even in well-defined task domains, involves the acquisition of mental representations and skills to generate and select the better products and better actions under conditions requiring flexibility and creativity. At the highest levels of performance in traditional domains, elite performers have to go beyond the shared knowledge of their competitors in the domain to reach a consistently superior level. (1999: 332)

Ericsson's somewhat 'head-bound' description of expert performance leaves a number of questions unanswered: for example, what are the particular skills that enable the performer to, as he puts it, 'select the better products and better actions'; and moreover, how might 'better products' and 'better actions' be judged or determined? For instance, how might this description relate to a performance of a piece of complex music that seeks to unsettle the notion of expertise? Ultimately, this characterisation of expert performance is limited by its reliance on outcomes rather than processes, and neglects the role of material engagement, as well as the phenomenological and embodied dimensions of performance. What's more, although creativity is mentioned, Ericsson does not get any closer to what it might mean to the musician to be creative in performance. Discussions of problem-solving and creativity have tended to rely on examples of composers toiling away at writing a symphony over a number of years; when the discussion turns to performance, the relationship between problem-solving and creativity receives less attention, and the discussion turns instead to skill.

Creativity has been shown to be an elusive phenomenon to pin down. Most writers acknowledge a broad spectrum of activity that can be described as creative, and numerous models have been proposed that seek to capture and categorise its influences. One major distinction to be identified is that between 'high', or significant, creativity and ordinary, everyday, creativity. Mihály Csikszentmihályi (1996), for example, proposed the 'Two Cs' model of creative magnitude: Big C and

little c, where 'Big C' denotes significant works of creativity that impact the domain (for example, Einstein's theory of relativity); 'little c' refers to more everyday creative activities, which might be highly creative without being socially valuable. Building on this somewhat reductive dichotomy, Kaufman and Ronald A. Beghetto (2009) put forward a 'Four Cs' model, distinguishing between 'mini-c' to indicate creativity involved in the construction of personal knowledge and understanding, which might be meaningful to the individual but not others; and 'Pro C', that is, professional level creativity, for example, professional artists who might not have achieved an eminent status, but who are well beyond the 'little C' creators such as an art student. In her computational approach to creativity, Margaret Boden (2004) differentiates between P (i.e., psychological) and H (i.e., historical) creativity. P-creativity indicates that the creative output is fundamentally novel 'with respect to the individual mind which had the idea'; and H-creativity represents an output that is fundamentally novel 'with respect to the whole of human history' (2004: 43). At various levels then, attempts have been made to identify and classify creative activity.

Moving beyond questions of creative magnitude or categorisation, other scholars have proposed frameworks through which to investigate the environmental factors that influence creativity. Nuancing the four dimensions of creativity described by Mel Rhodes (1961), Mark A. Runco (2007) put forward the 'Six Ps' taxonomy of creativity, which suggests that creativity can be classified in terms of its *Process* (meaning the processes that occur when an individual is engaged in creative activity); *Product* (the outputs that can be judged as creative or not); *Person* (i.e., the individual and their personality traits); *Place* (the environment in which the activity takes place, and thus the various pressures that might be exerted on the person). The two more recent categories to be added to Rhodes's framework are *Persuasion* (i.e., an

individual's capacity to exert change on a domain) and *Potential* (i.e., an individual's creative potential that might not yet have been realised).

Demonstrating a similar concern to address the contexts of creativity, Csikszentmihályi's 'systems' model of creativity (1988; 1996; and see also Sternberg 1988; Sternberg and Lubart 1991, 1995) has been particularly influential in advocating an understanding of creativity not as a personal attribute, but as a function of an individual in an environment. The 'systems' model proposes the three main influencers of creativity and explores the ways in which the elements of the system can facilitate or constrain an individual's generation of creative products. Within this system, creativity is contingent upon the interaction of three factors: 'a culture [or domain] that contains symbolic rules, a person who brings novelty into the symbolic domain, and a field of experts who recognise and validate the innovation' (Csikszentmihályi 1996: 6). In this understanding, creative ideas need a receptive audience to record and implement them; creativity is not an exclusively cognitive process, but is a phenomenon contingent upon the interplay between an individual and a socio-cultural context (: 23). Moreover, research undertaken by Teresa M. Amabile (1988) investigating organisational climates and their influence on creativity, suggests that an individual's creativity may be affected by even very slight changes to her immediate social environment. The models above capture different degrees of collaborative interaction, and pose questions that shed light on different aspects of creativity, for example, what is a creative product and how is it achieved? What makes an individual creative, and perhaps more significantly, what conditions are conducive to creativity? In sum then, although definitions of creativity are evidently numerous and multi-faceted, it is now generally acknowledged that creativity is mediated by, and must be considered in relation to, the field in which it is situated.

Yet, although departing from an understanding of creativity as an individual attribute, these frameworks retain a focus on the *outputs* of individuals as indicators of creativity, rather than the actions that give rise to them.

Building on Csikszentmihályi's 'systems' model, more recent research (John-Steiner 2000; Paulus and Nijstad 2003) has examined creativity as a phenomenon that is contingent on *group* interaction rather than solely within individuals (Sawyer 2003b: 25), and advocated the study of creative *processes* rather than products or outcomes. Creativity has been characterised as a social phenomenon in a number of different ways, and it is helpful to clarify briefly some of these categories. Vlad Petre Glăveanu (2011) makes a distinction between two forms of 'collective' creativity: 'creativity in collaboration' where individual collaborators carry out an activity in partnership; and 'group' or 'team' creativity, where labour is divided between a group, without being necessarily collaborative (2011: 480-1). To these two definitions, I will add a third, which is closely related to the latter: 'distributed' creativity.

Creative collaboration

Creative collaboration is perhaps most obviously illustrated by the activities that take place between composer and performer in the creation of a musical work. The musical outcome is the result of cooperation, negotiation, and division of labour, as illustrated by Howard Becker's notion of the 'art world' ([1982] 2008). Becker's central argument is that creating art is a form of joint work, whereby

the network of people whose cooperative activity, organized via their joint knowledge of conventional means of doing things, produce(s) the kind of art works that art world is noted for ([1982] 2008: xxiv)

This kind of interaction is characterised by ‘Long-term engagement, voluntary connection, trust, negotiation, and jointly chosen projects’ (Moran and John-Steiner 2004: 82). Vera John-Steiner (2000) surveys a range of historic collaborations in the fields of arts and sciences, in order to propose four categories of collaborative partnerships: *distributed collaboration*,¹⁴ where information is exchanged informally; *complementary collaboration*, where labour is divided based on complementary expertise; *family collaboration*, where roles are flexible or may change over time; and *integrative collaboration*: partnerships which are long-term and motivated by the aim of transforming a field of knowledge (2000: 197-203). Yet, John-Steiner’s research is limited by its focus on the creative *outputs* of individuals, rather than the actions that generate them. Moreover, her hagiographic tendency to focus on celebrated historical figures – for example, Braque and Picasso, Pierre and Marie Curie, and Einstein and Grossmann (: 196-203) – and their creative outputs as evidence of creativity, is problematic, and difficult to relate to the potentially more everyday encounters that take place between musicians.¹⁵

An understanding of the ways in which socio-emotional, motivational, and identity factors simultaneously shape and are shaped by collaborative activity is a common thread of the socio-cultural literature. Dorothy Miell and Karen Littleton (2004) attempted to shed light on collaborators’ sense of identity and motivation during collaboration. Two critical underlying factors for creative work are identified: cooperation and trust (Glăveanu 2011; John-Steiner 2000; Moran and John-Steiner 2004; Seddon 2004; Seddon and Biasutti 2009). Trust is essential to sustaining successful long-term partnerships, and creates a complementary working

¹⁴ John-Steiner’s definition of ‘distributed collaboration’ should not be confused with ‘distributed creativity’, which is discussed further below.

¹⁵ Several other authors use historic ‘greats’ as case studies. See Abra (1994), Gardner (1993), and Hennessey (2003).

environment. Indeed, Glăveanu asserts that a productive collaborative situation can only be achieved ‘if members communicate with one another, don’t withhold information, and allow the free flow of ideas’ (2011: 483). The importance of trust in the context of creative collaborations is highlighted by Seana Moran and John-Steiner, who suggest that:

Trust is the foundation for collaboration that makes possible the development of true sharing, openly negotiated conflict, and a long-term relationship despite the uncertainties and risks. It sets up conditions for cooperation and higher performance to occur [...] by creating a comfortable shared social space and understandings. (2004: 21)

Collaborative activity is thus not only interactive, but contingent on interpersonal dynamics. But it could be argued that an emphasis on trust presents the relationships between collaborators in an overly positive light. How might the following (rather provocative) characterisation from Finnissy¹⁶ on the potentially more mercenary social dynamics between performers and composers, be interpreted in light of the above discussion?

Sometimes (not the best scenario), the composer comes to you as a punter does to a whore. You comply with their wishes, fuck as magnificently as you are able, and hopefully neither party loses any dignity. (2002: 77)

It is important to recognise that when working under the everyday pressures of the economic and time constraints of certain professional performance circumstances, trust may be a luxury that not all musicians can afford.

Group creativity

Group creativity has been identified as a real-time and unpredictable phenomenon, contingent on the interactions between group members (Sawyer 2003b). For example,

¹⁶ On this occasion Finnissy is writing from his perspective as a performer, rather than as a composer.

Paul B. Paulus and Bernard A. Nijstad (2003) investigated creativity and innovation in brainstorming groups from a socio-psychological perspective. In contrast to collaborative creativity, which might involve joint contributions to a task over an extended period of time, group creativity can be attributed to the ‘in the moment’ interactions between individuals. Keith Sawyer’s extensive work on creativity (see, for example, Sawyer 2000, 2003a, 2003b, 2006a, 2006b; 2014; Sawyer and DeZutter 2009) has been particularly significant in proposing a more interactional and social approach than previously, attempting to pin down the complex systems that occur between participants during group performance. Sawyer addresses the creative mechanisms that are manifest during performance and the relationships between group members, identifying improvisation, interaction, and emergence as three significant characteristics of creativity (2006b: 149). The following discussion pursues each of these (related) attributes in further detail.

Arguably ‘the most conspicuous illustration of creativity in performance’ (Clarke 2012: 23), improvisation has been identified as offering conditions conducive to creativity by a number of scholars, and has rapidly expanded as a focus of academic study in recent years, to the point that Derek Bailey’s now well-known claim that ‘Improvisation enjoys the curious distinction of being the most widely practised of all musical activities and the least acknowledged and understood.’ (Bailey 1992: ix) has lost some of its force. While early psychological approaches to improvisation took a cognitive or computational approach to modelling creative processes (see, for example, Clarke 1988; Johnson-Laird 1988, 2002; Pressing 1988, 1998), more recent work has been undertaken that recognises its social embeddedness. Indeed, while advocating an understanding of improvised practices ‘in their broadest manifestations’ (2012: 253), Raymond MacDonald, Graeme Wilson,

and Miell consider such practices to be rich sites for socio-psychological investigations of creativity, because of their highly interactive and social conditions.¹⁷

Sawyer's research on creativity focuses on improvisational genres of theatre and music, asserting that improvisation affords a greater level of unpredictability and moment-to-moment contingency, and thus fewer constraints to the performer.

In group performance genres, the creativity of the performance depends on an intangible chemistry between the members of the group. We are perhaps most likely to associate this type of group creativity with improvised musical performance, because an improvising group of musicians is one of the best examples of group creativity. (2003b: 4)

Of particular relevance to my discussion is the distinction Sawyer makes between improvised musical genres and those which are 'ritualized':

Some genres of group creativity are highly improvised, with relatively few constraints or pre-existing bits or ready-mades, while others are relatively *ritualized*, so much so that they almost seem to be scripted. (2003b: 138-9; original emphasis)

According to Sawyer, 'ritualized' performances present greater constraints to the performer, and consequently define and limit their role more rigorously. 'Ritualized' music is not necessarily notated, although 'notational systems are typically developed primarily to record the more ritualized genres of performance' (: 148). For example, Sawyer views scored and conducted performances as having 'an extreme degree of shared structures [...], and they have a well-specified problem (to perform the piece accurately and with an appropriate interpretation)' (: 176). While notated chamber music might appear to be highly scripted and ostensibly non-improvised, the activities of rehearsing and performing a piece of music, whether as a soloist or as a member of an ensemble, are not as structured and easily predictable as Sawyer suggests.

¹⁷ More recently, MacDonald (2014) has examined the role of improvisation in the negotiation of identity in creative collaboration, in a music therapy setting.

Privileging ‘authentic’ improvisation in this way risks obstructing deeper questioning about where the creative potential might lie for performers’ close engagements with the score.

Interaction and intersubjectivity are significant communicative aspects of performance that are tackled by socio-psychological and socio-cultural literature on improvisation. Fred Seddon (2004) appears to agree with MacDonald, Wilson, and Miell’s perspective in his study of jazz musicians’ creative engagement during performance. Seddon proposes a mode of communication defined as ‘empathetic attunement’ to describe the phenomenon of musicians engaging in the moment of performance, and which affords optimum conditions for both a cohesive performance, and spontaneity and experimentation. He writes: ‘By listening and responding to other musicians a collaborative, and inter-subjectively generated performance is produced. No-one acts as a leader directing the performance; instead the performance emerges out of the actions of everyone working together’ (2004: 67-8).¹⁸ This interactive and reciprocal phenomenon has similarities to Sawyer’s concept of ‘group flow’, a development of the phenomenon of ‘flow’ identified by Csikszentmihályi: a state of heightened awareness that occurs in the practitioner during peak experiences (Csikszentmihályi 1996: 110). ‘Group flow’, Sawyer argues, represents the shared experience of a group of improvisers that can occur when they become collectively attuned:

In group flow, everything seems to come naturally; the performers are in interactional synchrony. In this state, each of the group members can even feel as if they are able to anticipate what their fellow performers will do before they do it. (2003b: 44)

¹⁸ See also Seddon and Biasutti (2009) for an analysis of the processes of attunement during string quartet performance.

‘Group flow’ is attained when the group achieves a balance between the unpredictability of improvisation and the coherence of their shared knowledge and skills. Although participants might experience their own states of flow simultaneously, this is not a prerequisite for ‘group flow’ to occur. As Sawyer asserts, ‘[g]roup flow is an irreducible property of performing groups, and cannot be reduced to psychological studies of the mental states of the subjective experiences of the individual members of the group’ (: 46).

Addressing improvised interaction from an ethnomusicological perspective, Ingrid Monson (1996) and Paul Berliner (1994) have analysed the interactional and conversational exchanges that take place between jazz musicians, identifying phenomena similar to those proposed by Seddon and Sawyer. In discussing an interview she conducted with the drummer Ralph Peterson about his composition *Princess* (1988), Monson identifies the reciprocal exchange of ideas between Peterson and the other members of the trio during a particular episode of the recording.

Peterson commented:

[A] lot of times when you get into a musical conversation one person in the group will state an idea or the beginning of an idea and another person will complete the idea or their interpretation of the same idea, how they hear it. So the conversation happens in fragments and comes from different parts, different voices. (Ralph Peterson, cited in Monson 1996: 77)

Monson concluded that ‘There is a great deal of give and take in such improvisational interaction, and such moments are often cited by musicians as aesthetic high points of performances’ (1996: 80). Like Monson, Berliner (1994) provides a rich exploration of interaction in jazz performance, describing the phenomenon of ‘striking a groove’: a profound state of interpersonal communication where musicians experience a shared

sense of synchrony (1994: 349).¹⁹ This emphasis on interaction and communication during the moment of performance has moved discussions of creativity beyond the individualised definitions described earlier on in this chapter and towards the dynamically creative practices of face-to-face work.

According to Sawyer, group creativity results from an ‘emergent, ephemeral, interaction’ determined by the group as a whole rather than one individual (2003b: 120). Defined as ‘the creation of something new that was unpredictable, even given a full and complete knowledge of the world prior to its emergence’ (2003a: 13), emergence describes a phenomenon in which the outcome cannot be planned, and is greater than any one individual’s input. Thus, like ‘group flow’, it is irreducible: to use a well-worn phrase, ‘the whole is the greater than the sum of the parts’ (2003b: 10-11). Sawyer identifies four factors that are conducive to collaborative emergence: the outcome is unexpected; the action unfolds unpredictably from moment to moment; the direction and magnitude of interaction is contingent on the actions of other participants; and equal contributions are made by each participant (2014: 273). He draws on examples from improvised verbal performance to illustrate his argument: the creativity of a scripted play, he argues, is determined by individuals such as the playwright and the director, and mediated by the script; an improvised performance, by contrast, does not rely on an object to structure its participants’ dialogue, gestures, or actions: the creative process takes place collectively between the actors. As a consequence, ‘studies of improvisational performance must be foundationally focussed on its processual, emergent qualities.’ (Sawyer 2003a: 37). By the same token, in musical performance, ‘The extreme situation of collaborative emergence would be a fully improvised performance, one that did not begin with any score, and

¹⁹ Mark Doffman (2008) offers an empirical exploration of the nature of groove and temporality in jazz trio performance.

one performed by an ensemble that was not controlled by a conductor' (Sawyer 2014: 273). It seems somewhat contradictory that Sawyer should place so much emphasis on collaborative emergence in 'unscripted' performance, yet abandon it completely in discussing 'scripted' performance. He presents a rather entrenched view of the creative role of the conductor, and makes no attempt to account for the ways in which the roles of the playwright, the director, the conductor, the script, or the score might be understood rather more fluidly within collaborative activity.

This discussion of improvisation and emergence points towards the degree to which literature about creativity tends to rest upon a characterisation of the creative process that results in innovation and novelty.²⁰ Boden, for instance, characterises creativity as a transformative process: 'the ability to come up with ideas or artefacts that are *new, surprising and valuable*' (2004: 1; original emphasis), and in his 'systems' model of creativity, Csikszentmihályi asserts that an integral component of creativity is 'a person who brings novelty into [a] symbolic domain' (1996: 6). Kaufman and Sternberg (2010) synthesise various prevailing definitions of creativity to propose their own, which emphasises the generation of new products or ideas: 'a creative response is novel, good and relevant' (2010: xiii). The term 'integrative collaboration' is proposed by John-Steiner (2000) to define the collective work that results in new forms of knowledge or art forms. The work of Tim Ingold (2000; 2011; 2013; Ingold and Hallam 2007) is useful in posing a counter-argument here: rather than understanding form as an outcome of a predetermined design (i.e., 'backwards'), Ingold and Hallam suggest that form is grown out of the engagements *between* maker and materials (i.e., 'forwards') (2007: 3-4). Consequently, 'These are truly creative

²⁰ Juniper Hill proposes the term 'non-conformity' (2012: 88) rather than 'innovation', in order to account for variance from a model that is still considered to conform to a tradition. I would argue that this term is still somewhat limited in its suggestion that creativity involves the departure from an objective 'norm'.

engagements, in the sense that they actually *give rise* to the real-world artefactual and organic forms that we encounter, rather than serving – as the standard view would claim – to transcribe pre-existent form onto raw material (Ingold 2000: 345; original emphasis). This argument serves to problematize a characterisation of creativity as the antithesis of imitation – an assumption that is pursued further in chapter three.

Distributed creativity

Building on Sawyer's sustained research on group creativity, in recent work Sawyer and Stacy DeZutter (2009) have identified distributed creativity as an emergent phenomenon that occurs in 'situations where collaborating groups of individuals collectively generate a shared creative product' (2009: 82). Drawing on theories of distributed cognition (Greeno 2006; Nersessian 2005), the authors acknowledge the particular skills and knowledge that individuals bring to the task in hand. Yet, despite referring briefly to Edwin Hutchins's (1995) work on distributed cognition, Sawyer and DeZutter adopt a particular understanding of distributed creativity that is located in the 'here and now' of collaborators' immediate verbal and gestural interactions, but which neglects the wider social, cultural, and historical dimensions that play a part in creative work.

In contrast to the somewhat narrow concept of distributed creativity put forward by Sawyer and DeZutter, scholars from wide-ranging disciplines including anthropology, psychology, and sociology have directed increasing attention to a broader understanding of the distributed nature of music-making. Even the most ostensibly solitary activity such as solo performance relies on existing musical sources, is situated within a musical tradition, and is supported by the set of materials (a score, an instrument, and so on) that are the result of interaction between a network

of other people and materials, as well as taking place in front of an audience. Gabrielle Ivinson (2004) claims that ‘collaboration can take place on individual, interpersonal and socio-cultural planes as individuals draw upon traditions and conventions in their everyday practices’ (2004: 96). In this way, creativity is a ‘manifestly cultural process’ (Toynbee 2012: 111). Georgina Born (2005, 2010, 2013), drawing on the work of Alfred Gell (1998), advocates the concept of ‘distributed creativity’ to account for the relational qualities of the creative process; emphasising the role of social interaction, mediation, and representation in shaping it. She writes:

Music is perhaps the paradigmatic multiply-mediated, immaterial and material, fluid quasi-object, in which subjects and objects collide and intermingle. It favours associations or assemblages between musicians and instruments, composers and scores, listeners and sound systems – that is, between subjects and objects. (Born 2005: 7)

As Born suggests, the relationships involved in music-making are rather more latent and convoluted than they might appear on the surface.

More recently, ecological theories of perception and action have been employed by scholars who are concerned with understanding a distributed and relational approach to creativity and cultural improvisation. Psychologist James J. Gibson’s ([1979] 2014) pioneering ecological theory of perception has been influential in challenging ‘information-processing’ or cognitive theories of perception, whereby the perceiver’s brain is active in constructing meaning; proposing instead that perception is a function of the organism in its environment, and that environmental stimuli are directly perceived without any additional cognitive construction or processing taking place. Gibson proposed that action and perception are directly coupled, as are organism and environment. In this way, the organism adapts to and is actively engaged in a constant learning process. Central to his

argument is the notion of ‘affordances’: an object is perceived in terms of what it affords (for example, its medium, substances, and surfaces): ‘[W]hat it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes [...]. [...] It implies the complementarity of the animal in the environment’ (Gibson [1979] 2014: 119). This fluid understanding of the relationship of an organism within an ecosystem has also been proposed by the anthropologist Gregory Bateson ([1972] 2000), who employs cybernetic theory to consider the tangled relationships between mind, body, tools, and the environment. Drawing on ecological theory in his approach to cultural anthropology, the work of Ingold (Ingold 2000; 2011; 2013; Ingold and Hallam 2007), mentioned above, has been particularly influential in challenging some of the ontological assumptions in creativity research, and will be important to the theoretical framework employed in the thesis. A valuable contribution that Ingold makes is his criticism of the *hylomorphism* that permeates much thinking about creativity, in which production is assumed to involve the application of an existing form to shapeless matter. The object-centred model of the work-concept in music (Goehr [1992] 2007) exemplifies hylomorphism acutely. In order to challenge this model of production, Ingold proposes a *morphogenetic* approach that enacts making as a contingent process of growth. Making becomes a process of practitioners entering ‘the grain of the world’s becoming and to follow its course while bending it to their evolving purpose’ (2011: 211), shifting attention away from the ‘textuality’ of an object, and towards the ‘textility’ of a practice, that is, the ‘tactile and sensuous knowledge of line and surface’ (: 211) that constitutes creative engagement. Ingold’s work thus unsettles a number of the assumptions and ideologies that underpin creativity research, and will be pursued further in chapter three. Ecological theory has been applied to music by a number of scholars concerned with understanding the distributed character of

perception and musical meaning (see, for example, Clarke 2005; Emmerson 2007; Windsor 1995, 2000), and more recently, the processes of performance (for example, Borgo 2007; Clarke, Doffman, and Lim 2013; Clarke, Doffman, and Timmers, forthcoming; de Souza 2013; Östersjö 2008; Simpson 2013; Windsor and de Bézenac 2012). I discuss ecological approaches to distributed creativity in music in the next section of this chapter.

The methodologies employed by the studies discussed above are largely qualitative and analyse aspects of verbal communication. Focussed interviews are a common approach used to gather data (Berliner 1994; Csikszentmihályi 1996; John-Steiner 2000; Sawyer 2003b). One key methodological contribution of Sawyer's work is the use of interaction analysis, which uses multi-staged analysis of verbal and non-verbal modes of communication drawn from video-recorded material (see, for example, Sawyer and DeZutter 2009).²¹ The advantage of this approach is that a series of encounters are analysed, enabling the researcher to observe how the interactions take shape over time. MacDonald, Wilson, and Miell (2012) combined the procedures of grounded theory and discursive psychological approaches in order to understand musicians' experiences of improvisation in a broader sense. Littleton and Neil Mercer (2012) use a hybridised methodology of socio-cultural discourse analysis because of the 'importance of language and other communicative tools for pursuing and achieving common goals' (2012: 233). As Seddon acknowledges, trying to uncover the complex processes at play during musical performance is methodologically problematic, 'because at that time [musicians] do not have access to their own sub-conscious processes' (2004: 69). In response to this challenge, he conducted his research using a combination of two qualitative techniques: grounded

²¹ However, Sawyer and DeZutter provide the caveat that in some cases where distributed creativity is less observable, more individualistic methodologies might be better suited to drawing out the creative processes at work (2009: 91).

theory analysis of video-recorded material and Retrospective Verbal Protocol (RVP), a method which prompts retrospective accounts from participants through playback of video-recorded material. The latter has advantages in that it is conducive to determining significant moments from the participants' perspectives, and it facilitates analysis of non-verbal and gestural communication. Yet, RVP is a time-consuming process; in the case of my research participants – a number of whom are based overseas or spend a lot of time travelling – finding the time and the place to watch hours of video footage is unlikely to be practical. The most significant methodological point to be drawn from these studies is the need to draw on both audio and video material where practical,²² in order to capture as many layers of data as possible.

The various contributions brought together in my discussion so far have evidenced a number of different approaches to understanding the creative process. There has been a general shift away from individualised and product-centred models of creativity, to a focus on processes and interactions in joint creative activity. A corollary of this change of direction is an increased focus on improvisation and moment-to-moment phenomena such as group flow and collaborative emergence. The distinction made between the creative opportunities afforded to the performer by improvisation and notated music is a line of enquiry that I intend to pursue further, and it will be particularly important to consider creativity's relationship with improvisation more closely, invoking Sawyer's (2003b) conceptions of 'ritualized' and improvised performance. The studies above demonstrate a diverse range of broadly qualitative and observational methods. Within the literature there is an emphasis on language as a means to share knowledge and negotiate a collective representation of identity. Non-verbal modes of communication are also addressed,

²² Video recording might be too intrusive to carry out in the formal circumstances of a concert setting, for example, or in the initial stages of a research project where the participants are less familiar with the researcher. Bayley discusses this point further (2011: 391).

but inevitably what is lacking in this literature is a close reading of the musical aspects of creativity. In order to understand how the psychological and socio-psychological dimensions of collaboration relate to the *musical* decisions made by performers, I now narrow my focus in examining investigations of collaboration from the perspective of performance studies.

2.2. Approaches to collaborative creativity in composition and performance

As outlined in chapter one, over the past thirty years musicology has undergone an ontological and epistemological reorientation, shifting from the analysis of music as text to music as a practice. Greater attention has begun to be paid to the processes and practices of live music-making, directed towards understanding phenomena such as (among others) creativity, collaboration, and improvisation.²³ This relatively recent performative turn (Cook 2013; Rink 1995, 2002) has challenged the romanticised view of the composer as the source of all musical creativity, whose authority and intentions are reified in the score,²⁴ instead recognising the relational qualities of music-making, and the more permeable boundaries of creative ownership. A corollary of this development is the increased scholarly attention to the role of the performer, no longer seen as the subordinate executor of the composer's work, but as a contributing agent within the creative process.²⁵ Collaboration in music-making might be classified into two at least partly distinct categories: first, the interactions that take

²³ This development is reflected in recent and forthcoming publications including Hargreaves, Miell, and MacDonald (2012), Piekut and Lewis (forthcoming), and Clarke and Doffman (forthcoming).

²⁴ Cook describes this way of thinking as 'Plato's curse' (2013: 8-32).

²⁵ This is not to overlook the number of studies that examine compositional genesis 'in isolation' from the performer. Sketch studies, for example, have extended their reach beyond conventional notated works – see François-Xavier Féron's (2015) analysis of scoring systems and gesture in Lachenmann's *Pression* for solo violin, Jonathan W. Bernard's (2011) studies of Ligeti's sketch materials, as well as the variety of approaches presented by Patricia Hall and Friedemann Sallis (2004). Moreover, Nicolas Donin has combined approaches from sketch studies with empirical methods to investigate creative decision-making in composition in a number of publications, employing a 'stimulated recall' method to draw out composers' retrospective accounts of the compositional process (see Donin 2009; Donin and Féron 2012; Donin and Theureau 2007).

place between composer and performer during the genesis and/or the rehearsal process of a solo work; and secondly, in the more 'direct' face-to-face encounters and negotiations between ensemble members and composers. The following discussion is organised according to these two broad categories. Recent musicological studies have increasingly engaged with the creativity research from the social sciences discussed above, particularly the work of John-Steiner (2000), Sawyer (2003b; Sawyer and DeZutter 2009), as well as ecological theories by authors such as Bateson, Gibson, and Ingold.

Following studies of expert pianists' rehearsal and performance practices led by Chaffin (Chaffin, Imreh, and Crawford 2002; Chaffin et al. 2003), a paper by Clarke et al. (2005) investigated Philip Thomas's preparation and first performance of a complexly notated piano work, Harrison's *être-temps* (2002) for piano. This research marked the beginning of a new direction for the field of performance studies, both in terms of its subject matter and its methodology: it was one of the first musicological investigations to be located in the 'real-world' situation of a contemporary commission; it was innovative in that the composer, performer, and analysts all participated as co-researchers; and it synthesised qualitative and quantitative research methods. The research analysed a number of aspects relating to Thomas's rehearsal and performance: his highly detailed approach to working with the score (particularly his practice strategies in relation to rhythm and timing), questions concerning rhythmic variability at the micro and macro level; and broader questions concerning the role of the score in offering, in Thomas's words, a 'prescription for action' (2005: 39) rather than a description of sound content.²⁶

Although ostensibly concerned with interpretation rather than creativity *per se*, the

²⁶ Thomas develops his conception of notation as a 'prescription for action', particularly in relation to experimental music, in two other recent publications (Thomas 2007; 2009).

authors' conclusion that 'performers take an active role in the creative act of forming the material' (2005: 41) was indicative of questions that underscore the research agenda of the Centre for Musical Performance as Creative Practice, specifically its research project led by Clarke, 'Creative practice in contemporary concert music' (CPiCCM).²⁷

Whereas Clarke et al. (2005) investigated a performer's interactions with a finished score, in more recent research (and as one of the case studies of the CPiCCM project), Clarke, Doffman, and Renee Timmers (forthcoming) have documented the co-present interactions between performer (Peter Sheppard Skærved) and composer (Jeremy Thurlow) in the creation, preparation, and performances of *Ouija* for solo violin and electronics (2013). The musicians' collaboration was tracked over the course of eight months, documenting two workshops, a rehearsal, and four performances, as well as conducting multiple interviews and Retrospective Verbal Protocol sessions with the participants. In a manner similar to Clarke et al. (2005), the researchers used a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods; thus, alongside this wealth of qualitative material, timing analysis was undertaken using performance data from two workshop episodes and two performance episodes. Three aspects of the collaboration were examined: the dialogue between performer and composer; changes in Sheppard Skærved's approach to tempo across workshops and performances; and his embodied engagement with his instrument and the piece. The paper shows how these three threads of the collaboration are intricately interwoven; more broadly, it demonstrates the role of interaction in facilitating a mutual understanding between performer and composer. This development serves to problematize some of the characterisations of creativity presented in the previous

²⁷ See <<http://www.cmcp.ac.uk/cpiccm.html>> for an overview of the CPiCCM research project.

section of this chapter: first, in terms of creativity being understood as resulting in an innovative or unexpected outcome, since ‘the development that occurs between these two musicians is [...] incremental and cumulative’ (Clarke, Doffman, and Timmers, forthcoming: 47); and secondly, in terms of Sawyer’s conception of emergence, which is critiqued on two levels, the first of which is Sawyer’s overemphasis on the moment-to-moment encounters between group members that neglects the macro-social dynamics of co-present collaboration. The authors write: ‘Collaborators are not simply known to each other as named individuals; they also inhabit generic roles [...] with particular cultural histories that are brought to bear in the work’; in sum, ‘history matters’ (: 47). The second modification to Sawyer’s model of emergence relates to the magnitude and constancy of an individual’s input into a collaboration: in suggesting that that collaborators contribute equally and consistently, Sawyer does not take into account the rather more convoluted nature of shared compositional creativity. In the case of *Ouija*, for example, the composer undertook a significant amount of work writing the piece in ‘isolation’ from the performer – which is not to diminish the value of face-to-face interaction, but to suggest that the reality of joint work is more complex than Sawyer’s model allows for.

A recent and rapidly expanding body of literature has developed that seeks to document the creative process from ‘within,’ with practitioner-researchers investigating their own professional practice and engagement with composers. Fabrice Fitch and Neil Heyde (2007a, 2007b) reconsider the notion of artistic collaboration in working together on a new commission, *Per Serafino Calbarisi II: Le Songe de Panurge* (2002-3) for speaking cellist. This paper documents Heyde’s involvement at an early stage of the work’s trajectory, and his contribution to the discovery of new instrumental techniques and sonorities during workshops with Fitch. Their work is

particularly valuable in its examination of the relationship between the performer and his instrument. The authors draw on Helmut Lachenmann's (1996) metaphor of composition as 'building an instrument' (2007a: 92) to capture the gradual tuning, or integration, of the performer and instrument, evident in a figurative sense in relation to the new instrumental techniques and sonorities that the musicians develop; and in one particular instance – the specialised execution of *scordatura* – quite literally. The final composition is tightly intertwined with Heyde's own performance idiom to such an extent that Fitch concludes that from his perspective, 'there is no doubt that the piece in its final form would be unthinkable without the input of this particular performer' (: 93).

If Fitch and Heyde emphasise the blurring of the relationship between composer and performer, then a paper by Sam Hayden and Luke Windsor (2007) is concerned to delineate that relationship. Reflecting on the former's experience as a composer, the authors distinguish between three categories of composer-performer collaborations: *directive*, where the notation retains its traditional function as instructions to the performer; *interactive*, where the composer negotiates more closely with technicians or performers during the compositional process; and *collaborative*, where the music is developed through a 'collective decision-making process' so that there is no single author or hierarchy of roles (2007: 33). Hayden and Windsor identify an important point, which will be crucial to consider in my thesis: composer-performer collaborations are shaped by the role of notation in performance and (in relation to the latter) issues of creative ownership. Indeed, both Hayden and Windsor (2007) and Fitch and Heyde (2007a) suggest that collaboration is inevitably a potentially problematic activity for the composer in terms of being able to relinquish creative control, a point that recognises the deep-seated authority of the composer

within the culture of Western art music.²⁸ Yet, Fitch and Heyde assert that the tensions that arise between collaborators need not necessarily be detrimental to a productive working relationship, and can be fruitful in provoking new directions for creative exploration (2007a: 73).

Pursuing a line of enquiry that is highlighted by Fitch and Heyde (2007a), the role of instrumentality in collaborative work is a primary concern in Stefan Östersjö's (2008) doctoral research, which engages with his practice as a classical guitarist working with composers on a series of new performance projects in order to problematize two concepts which dominate the sphere of musical performance: the ontology of the musical 'work', and interpretation. His focus on instrumentality is particularly relevant to my discussion, since the final two case studies of this thesis examine engagements with instruments with which he is less familiar. Employing an ecological framework, Östersjö proposes a reframing of interpretation into two categories that account for performer-instrument interaction: analytic interpretation; and 'thinking-through-practice', which identifies the role of embodied knowledge in the performer's engagement with her instrument. For Östersjö, his relationship with his instrument appears to be as significant as his relationship with the composers with whom he collaborates, and in a statement that sums up the fluid and convoluted interrelations that shape his experience as a performer, he writes:

[I]t is not possible to separate my critical reflections on my own practice as a performer from issues of the musical work, musical interpretation, authenticity and intention, nor from the influence of an absent or present composer, from technology, my instruments, the score and other 'texts'. (2008: 27).

²⁸ Fitch and Heyde (2007a) cite the example of the difficulties encountered by postgraduate students participating in a collaborative project set up between performers and composers at the Royal Academy of Music. See also Doffman and Calvin (forthcoming) for a discussion of the social dynamics of composer-performer collaboration in a higher education setting.

This sense of creative enmeshment is also conveyed in a more recent publication (Clarke et al., forthcoming) in which Östersjö participated both as a co-author and a practitioner, investigating an outcome of his long-term creative collaboration with the composer, David Gorton, *Forlorn Hope* for solo eleven-string alto guitar (premiered in 2012). Employing wide-ranging models of creativity, from the cognitive (for example, Johnson-Laird 2002; Wiggins 2012), to the distributed (for example, Gibson [1979] 2014; Sawyer and DeZutter 2009), the authors examine the fluctuating boundaries of creative ownership between Östersjö and Gorton in their interactions with a less familiar instrument, over several phases of the work's genesis. The paper draws out the shifting identities of performer and composer, at times experienced as 'stable and "essential"', and at others 'socially constructed and more contingent' (Clarke et al., forthcoming: 21). Perhaps most significantly, the 'independent' compositional work undertaken by Gorton is revealed as being shaped by 'an exceptionally fluid and distributed interpenetration of partially dissolved roles, instruments, tuning systems, living and dead composers, and embodied thinking-through-practice' (: 21), challenging the conventional view of composition as an individualised and isolated activity.

Although writing from the perspective of researcher rather than performer,²⁹ Michael Hooper (2012) has also considered the role of the instrument as a potentially powerful 'agent' within composer-performer collaboration. In an examination of the oboist Christopher Redgate's collaborative interactions with the composers Dorothy Ker and Fabrice Fitch, employing the redesigned 'Redgate-Howarth' system oboe (see Hooper 2013; Redgate 2007, forthcoming) Hooper analyses the close interactions between performer and instrument that deconstruct the traditional understanding of

²⁹ In more recent work, Hooper (2015) draws on his experience as a performer in considering the value of utilising confusion as a performance research strategy in preparing Finnis's *Confusion in the Service of Discovery* for mandolin and pre-recorded mandolins (2000).

the relationship between a performer and her instrument. Although he firmly states that ‘This is not an article of grand philosophical aspiration’ (2012: 27), his conclusion hints at a sense of the relational and distributed processes at play:

What this article explores is a wide collaborative network that includes Ker, Redgate, an oboe, works in the oboe’s repertory, past practice, obsolete mechanism, new keywork and much else besides. (2012: 36)

Perhaps one of the most valuable contributions of Hooper’s work lies in the attention he pays to the open and ‘in-progress’ dimensions of collaborative work, rather than attempting to address creative outcomes in an overly determined manner.

Informed by studies from both bodies of research presented in this chapter (Clarke et al. 2005; Csikszentmihályi 1996; Fitch and Heyde 2007a; Hayden and Windsor 2007; John-Steiner 2000; Sawyer 2008) Kanga (2014) was the first researcher to employ an autoethnographic approach to examine the creation and performance of solo piano works. Rather than presenting the ten collaborations as stand-alone case studies, Kanga grouped them according to a particular ‘catalyst’ that influenced the collaboration’s manner of communication, the nature of the relationship, and the type of musical material that resulted from the work. Structuring his case study material in this way facilitated a wider view of the collaborative practices under examination. Kanga’s work is particularly valuable in its critical reflection on a number of ‘mythologies’ – the received knowledge that permeates collaborative composition and performance – including, among others, the ‘work’, virtuosity, notation, the piano, and resistance.

A small body of studies have evaluated the composer-performer relationship from the perspective of the clarinettist. Drawing on John-Steiner’s (2000) taxonomy of collaboration, Paul Roe (2007) documented a series of case studies of the creation of new solo works for bass clarinet, in order to evaluate the effects of engaging with

composers on his creative practice. He found that collaboration had a positive effect on socio-psychological factors such as motivation, creative stimulation, and communication, and proposed recommendations for good practice in collaborative work. Linda Merrick (2009) examined her role commissioning British clarinet concertos, with the wider objective of reassessing the traditional composer-performer relationship. Drawn from her own professional experience, Merrick's findings highlight the expediency and contingency of the collaborative process, and the influence of external factors and other creative agents such as conductors, recording engineers, and producers (2009: 113-114). Taking an autoethnographic approach, Heather Roche's (2011) practice-based research reflected on her collaborative encounters with composers resulting in seven new pieces for clarinet and bass clarinet. Roche's work addressed the role of dialogue in collaboration, with the aim of considering how to facilitate more effective collaborative practices. These studies, while valuable in providing detailed accounts of performer-researcher practices, and rich in terms of their artistic outputs, demonstrate a lack of consensus, both in terms of how best to 'define' collaboration, and regarding methodological approaches to documenting and analysing collaboration. Indeed, Merrick concluded that the various levels of interaction, which she experienced in her three case studies, suggested that every collaboration was context-dependent (2009: 48). Moreover, in comparison to the research of Östersjö and Kanga, the work of Roe, Merrick, and Roche lacks a certain theoretical depth, their collaborative practice being understood purely on its own terms, without attempting to present a mechanism that might account for their experiences.

Ensemble-composer collaboration

Until relatively recently, studies of ensemble interaction have been largely concerned with musicians' negotiations of technical and interpretative issues, particularly coordination in rehearsal contexts (see, for example, Davidson and Good 2002; Ginsborg and King 2011; King 2002, 2004; Weeks 1990, 1996a, 1996b). However, synthesising certain analytical methods employed by the latter (Davidson and Good 2002) and those pertaining to ethnography (see, for example, Clarke et al. 2005; Kisliuk 1997; Rice 1997), Bayley's sustained research with the Kreutzer String Quartet and Finnissy (Bayley 2010, 2011; Bayley and Clarke 2009, 2011; Bayley and Heyde forthcoming) addresses the face-to-face interactions between performers and composer in a rehearsal context. Bayley's work illustrates the kinds of rich detail that audio-visual recordings and interviews can provide the researcher in tracing creative processes and drawing out the 'space' between notation and performance (Bayley 2010: 209). Her most recent publication (Bayley 2011) combines quantitative content analysis (recording the amount of time that the performers spend engaged in a particular topic) and qualitative analysis of the musicians' discourse in order to consider more closely the relationship between verbal interaction and sound. While Bayley's work is concerned with composer-performer interplay at the point of rehearsal rather than during the compositional stage – for example, in describing Finnissy's Second String Quartet (2007), she states that 'the roles of composer and performer are distinctly separate; the composition is in no sense collaborative' (2010: 213) – the ways in which the performers work to prepare Finnissy's music for performance certainly provide evidence for the role of creative interaction. Bayley's detailed and multi-staged approach to data collection is demonstrated by her diverse

research outputs, including an interactive software tool (Bayley and Clarke 2011) that assembles the various source materials: score-based sketches, audio clips of interviews, rehearsals and performances, video recordings of performances, and transcriptions of the questionnaire responses by the performers. This builds a system of connections between the sources that is arguably more comprehensive than a method presented in written form alone.³⁰ This multimedia means of sharing information greatly enhances and contextualises the findings of Bayley's project, as well as facilitating dissemination of the research to practitioners.

String quartet rehearsal is also the subject of Paul Archbold's documentary film (2011) of the Arditti String Quartet preparing and rehearsing Brian Ferneyhough's Sixth String Quartet (2010) for its first performance, both with and without the composer present. Collaboration is documented on multiple levels: between the composer and the ensemble in a 'workshop' rehearsal, and in the real-time interactions between members of the quartet itself. Like Bayley, Archbold also offers rich layers of case study material: video recordings of rehearsals, preliminary discussions between performers, the dress rehearsal and the premiere; and interviews with Ferneyhough and Arditti. This is accompanied by written documentation of Ferneyhough's compositional techniques, issues of notation, a transcript of the documentary, and examples from the score. Like the Kreutzer Quartet's relationship with Finnissy, although the Arditti Quartet does not have an obviously 'collaborative' relationship with Ferneyhough, Archbold's work demonstrates the fascinating interplay between the ensemble and the composer in shaping the work for performance, which perhaps relies on negotiation and cooperation rather than

³⁰ See Bayley and Clarke (2009) for a detailed technical discussion of the software.

collaboration, and points towards the broader issues relating to creative authority that underpin performance.

In recent research that examines the interactions between a larger ensemble, conductor, guest soloist, and composer (and another CPiCCM case study), Clarke, Doffman, and Liza Lim (2013) document the preparation and performance of *Tongue of the Invisible* (2011) by Liza Lim for the Cologne based ensemble musikFabrik. The paper addresses a musical context where improvisation, composition, and performance overlap, and demonstrates the layers of sociality operating during a group collaboration, including the musicians' roles and their sense of creative ownership, and the ensemble's institutional history. This is exemplified particularly vividly by an improvised episode where the guest pianist Uri Caine slipped in the final cadence from 'Happy Birthday', first during a rehearsal which coincided with his birthday, (having received flowers and an impromptu rendering of 'happy birthday' from the ensemble earlier on in the rehearsal); and then again two weeks later at the concert, which celebrated the ensemble's twentieth birthday. The paper thus demonstrates the ways in which social factors operate at multiple levels. As the authors summarise:

Caine both incorporates the material into the music and articulates a social bond, weaving a 'local' and serendipitous musical and social exchange back into the material texture of the work as well as into the historical fabric of the group. The second repetition [...] takes that interaction a stage further [...] it illustrates in microcosm the diverse ways in which musical creativity is distributed across time, traditions, individuals' lives, and personal/institutional engagements. (2013: 31)

Drawing on Ingold's metaphor of a fungal mycelium – an organism with a mass of branching threads and filaments – the authors propose an ecological model of distributed creativity, which allows for the myriad and convoluted connections

at play in what they describe as a ‘complex creative ecosystem’ (2013: 32), capturing the web of fluid connections and interrelations at work during a performance event.

In a group-authored paper that draws together the perspectives of the composer, commissioner, and performers, Margaret Barrett et al. (2014) track the trajectory of a new commission, *The Scattering of Light* for piano quartet, from its initial instigation through to its first performance, using material from group and individual interviews, video footage from rehearsals, as well as written documentation including email communication and the composer’s personal notes. Employing models of creative collaboration from Hayden and Windsor (2007), John-Steiner (2000) and Sawyer and DeZutter (2009), the authors conclude that collaboration can be manifest in a number of ways during the ‘life’ of a work. Like Clarke, Doffman, and Timmers (forthcoming), the authors’ findings lead them to critique some of the arguments expressed in Sawyer’s research, demonstrating that collaborative emergence can occur even when a musical work is fully notated, since the interactions of an ensemble in preparing a ‘novel and appropriate performance of the composer’s intentions as outlined in the score’ rely on ‘the exercise of improvisatory qualities’ (Barrett et al. 2014: 18-30). Their argument, whilst adding nuance to Sawyer’s discussion, is still somewhat limited by its reliance on an understanding of the score as the solitary creation of the composer, and could go further in attempting to understand the more permeable boundaries of creative ownership that is evident in some of the other publications discussed above.

Over the last decade, then, the rapidly growing area of research into creative musical practice has sought to examine the processes of rehearsal and performance that had remained previously overlooked or undocumented, by addressing the ways in

which performers engage with the score, their instruments, and their collaborators. More recent work demonstrates a critical engagement with the arguments put forward in existing creativity research, particularly those of John-Steiner and Sawyer, and a turn towards frameworks and methods drawn from diverse fields such as anthropology and cultural studies. These interdisciplinary approaches have led to a considerable richness in the literature, and provided the potential for exploring the embodied, relational, and distributed aspects of the creative process in music-making.

2.3. Conclusions

This chapter has presented a critical examination of two areas of research that are pertinent to my thesis: creativity research, particularly from a psychological and socio-cultural perspective; and studies that address the collaborative character of music-making. I have clarified three definitions of the ‘collective’ manifestations of creativity: creative collaboration, group creativity, and distributed creativity; and considered the implications of interactive phenomena such as group flow and emergence for my own research. Perhaps most importantly, the studies written from a musical perspective present a counter argument to the lack of significance that creativity research has ascribed to the score and wider materials of performance.

This last point leads me to the most significant issue to be drawn out of this chapter: the relationship between improvisation and innovation. Improvisation evidently presents scholars with fertile material from which to develop theories about the creative process in performance. Yet, it would be easy to overemphasise the degree to which improvisation can be considered as offering optimum ‘unconstrained’ conditions for creativity in musical performance, and to assume too direct a relationship between innovation and creativity. Sawyer’s binary opposition between

improvised and ‘ritualized’ performance therefore warrants further scrutiny. Indeed, chapter three will consider more closely the relationship between improvisation and creativity, particularly with regard to Sawyer’s work. Having briefly introduced Ingold’s research on cultural production and creativity and considered its implications for my discussion, I will pursue his work further in the next chapter, which considers the way in which the score might be re-conceived as a space that invites interaction, rather than a ‘negative’ category against which the creative process in performance can be measured – a discussion that will set the theoretical agenda for the rest of the thesis.

Within the burgeoning area of studies that examine composer-performer collaboration, perhaps the most fruitful are those which do not seek to apply some of the frameworks presented by creativity research too directly, and instead seek to draw out the asymmetries and contradictions within their material. This thesis will follow a similar approach, which is facilitated by its four complementary case studies. The contexts that the case studies explore – the making of a recording several decades after its premiere by another performer; the rehearsal of a clarinet and piano duo and composer in preparing a new commission for its first performance; the composition, rehearsal, and performance of a new work for modern basset clarinet; and the development of a new instrumental rhetoric for a historical basset clarinet – raise questions that resist qualification by a single over-arching research approach. This lack of uniformity is deliberate, and reflects the fluidity and irregularities that are the realities of performance. Rather than seeking to provide an ‘objective’ model or construction of the creative process in music-making, my intention is to draw out the dimensions of performance that might be contradictory or paradoxical, and which might otherwise be overlooked.

If the foregoing discussion has articulated an excessively optimistic perspective on the creative process, to conclude this chapter, I consider some of the more critical views that have been expressed in response to the subject. Bound up with a multitude of social, musical, and individual factors (Clarke 2012: 27) and conditional upon so many variables, creativity seems to resist qualification through its breadth of meanings, and perhaps as a result has become too broad, and too much of a loaded term. Given creativity's apparent opaqueness and myriad definitions, a number of scholars have expressed dissatisfaction or discomfort with the word and have suggested that it should be substituted by another or abandoned altogether. Arguing that creativity has become an ubiquitous and devalued term, Hargreaves, MacDonald, and Miell (2012) propose 'imagination' as an alternative that reframes performance and 'invention' (i.e. the more obviously 'productive' activities such as composition and improvisation) alongside more perceptual activities such as imagination. Simon Frith goes a step further in arguing that 'the concept of musical creativity is more of a hindrance than a help in understanding music-making practice, hence [...] we should cease to use the term altogether' (2012: 71). While I am sympathetic to Hargreaves, MacDonald, and Miell's intentions of trying to move away from a product-based conception of creativity, I would argue that employing an even more inclusive term potentially serves to further obfuscate its meaning, and does not alleviate the problems that are associated with it. What's more, 'imagination' comes with its own ideological baggage and potentially contentious idealistic connotations. While it is important to recognise that the term 'creativity' can be problematic, I resist the redefinition or outright rejection of the word, since this only serves to sidestep the issues that it presents, rather than to engage with them. Creativity is certainly an elusive and perhaps problematic term, but nonetheless it is a word that carries a

variety of meanings. And that is its virtue: it is *because* of this very fluidity that creativity invites further investigation, a matter that is pursued more intensively in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Creativity beyond innovation: musical performance and craft

The concept of creativity as ‘doing something different’: it’s not that I think it’s wrong, but that I think it’s not useful. As a starting point, it doesn’t get you anywhere. [...] What I like to do is hijack the word and say that we are being creative, but we’re being creative in a different sort of way. What we’re doing is bringing something which is dead – just marks on a piece of paper – and we’re giving it life; we’re finding out how it wants to be alive. That’s as creative as you can get. (Antony Pay)³¹

As outlined in chapter two, although creativity has been defined in a multiplicity of ways across disciplines, scholars generally agree that it involves the generation of ideas or products that are novel, of value, and appropriate to the field (Amabile 1996; Boden 2004; Csikszentmihályi 1996). Yet, by too readily connecting creativity in musical performance to innovation, does this model neglect the more inconspicuous and unrecognised, but no less valuable, dimensions of creativity in the apparently more constrained circumstances of notated performance? This chapter presents the experiences and discourses of professional musicians to examine more closely the relationship between notation and performance, and thereby shed light on the latent freedoms and constraints in performing notated music. I begin by questioning the too-easy assumption that is made about the creative affordances of improvisation and the performance of notated music, using performers’ perspectives on the creative process drawn from my interview data. Next, I explore how musicians construct notions of creativity in relation to their practice with the broader aim of reassessing what it might mean to be ‘creative’ in the performance of notated music. The chapter concludes by proposing an alternative model of musical performance situated within a framework of craft, drawing primarily on the work of Sennett (2008) and Ingold (2000; 2011;

³¹ Interview, 10 April 2012.

2013). This discussion is not intended to ‘redefine’ creativity by any means, but it seeks to prompt questions about how an alternative model of creativity might begin to be characterised, and to draw out themes for further investigation in the case studies of the thesis.

A striking aspect to emerge from a number of my interviews is the intimate relationship between the performer and notation, which is suggestive of the score’s importance in performance without reducing the performer’s role to one of subservience. It is clear that for performers, notation functions beyond a set of instructions or a specification of sound content. My argument draws attention to ‘everyday’ aspects of music-making, in which musicians through their engagement with their work make decisions which are less explicit than the conventional ‘moments of revelation’ that are prevalent in the literature, but which are nonetheless significant. Acknowledging these attributes of musicians’ performance practices can serve to move beyond a paradigm that opposes notated permanence to performed and/or improvised transience.

It should be acknowledged at this point that while the words ‘craftsman’ and ‘craftsmanship’ seem to be regarded as universal terms in the work of Sennett and Ingold, they are problematic in their gendered associations. The term ‘craftsman’ suggests a skilled manual labourer: a man at work in his studio with a hammer and chisel, and a blacksmith working in the heat of his forge wearing a leather apron are two immediate examples. Sennett himself opens his book with such an image (2008: 19). Conversely, ‘craftswoman’ evokes images of domestic skills and handicrafts such as knitting, cooking, and gardening, activities which have a devalued status in comparison to skilled ‘male’ professions. Whereas Ingold employs the words without any apparent reflection, Sennett acknowledges this gender divide and touches on its

etymological roots, identifying the Aristotelian shift in understanding of the word ‘craftsman’ and the implications of this development for female workers:

The development of classical science contributed to the gendering of skill that produced the word craftsman as applying to men. This science contrasted the man’s hand dexterity to the inner-organ strength of women as childbearers; it contrasted the stronger arm and leg muscles of men to those of women; it supposed that men’s brains were more ‘muscular’ than those of women.

This gender distinction sowed the seed of a still-living plant: most domestic crafts and craftsmen seem different in character than labor now outside the home. (2008: 23-4)

Yet, this gender distinction is not explored any further, and there remains an incongruity in his employment of a term that, essentially, does not serve the interests of women. Ultimately, Sennett’s work does not address gender with any critical depth. In light of this, in this thesis I employ the words ‘craft’ in place of ‘craftsmanship’, and ‘practitioner’ as an alternative to ‘craftsman’ (or the deliberately gender-neutral but somewhat clumsy ‘craftsperson’). Practitioner, defined as ‘A person engaged in the practice of a particular skill, art, or discipline’ (Oxford English Dictionary 2015a) seems to convey effectively the sense of praxis that being a professional musician entails, but in a less gendered manner. I do not mean to suggest that these terms are without their own limitations. For example, the notion of ‘craft’ seems to suggest a stasis that loses some sense of the agency and expertise that accompanies ‘craftsmanship’; but it is certainly a less loaded term than the latter. Moreover, as I discuss later on, craft can also be understood in the sense of a trade or school of skilled work (Godlovitch 1998) relating to the occupation of being a professional performer, including the exercise of skill in music-making.³² I will consider the wider limitations of craft in the conclusion of this chapter.

³² Stephen Cottrell describes musicianship as ‘the “craft” of music-making’ (2004: 33).

As was demonstrated in the previous chapter, a dominant model of the creative process emphasises its innovative and revelatory qualities. In light of the importance placed on novelty and innovation as defining attributes of creativity, it is perhaps inevitable that improvised performance has been identified as a locus of creative activity.³³ Indeed, the opposition between improvisation and the performance of notated music seems self-evident, with clearly defined differences between the two practices. The conventional view takes improvisation as a much more immediate activity where musical material is freely generated in real time, a characterisation captured by Gary Peter's description of improvisation as 'the makeshift, the cobbled together, the temporary solutions to problems that remain unsolved' (2009: 9). The stereotypical improviser is spontaneous and inventive, appearing to undertake, as Bailey defines it, 'in the moment' composition (1992: 208). By contrast, notated music seems to offer fewer creative opportunities and is widely represented as an *interpretative* practice, involving close adherence to a score to realise a composition that has been 'created' beforehand. The notion of a successful performance of a notated work is bound up with achieving an accurate representation of a score – a restriction that seems redundant in relation to improvisation (Godlovitch 1998: 83). Thus improvisation (equated with orality and novelty) is seen as more creatively 'authentic' than notated performance. Bailey exhibits a level of scepticism regarding the creative function of notation in improvised performance, emphasising the polarity between improvisation and notated performance:

³³ It is important to acknowledge that improvisation is a broad term that can denote a wide variety of practices (MacDonald, Wilson, and Miell 2012), and that the association of improvisation with creativity is a recent development, and a significant change in direction from the traditional view of improvisation as inferior to the 'high art' practices of the western notated music. For example, Laudan Nooshin's (2003; 2013; 2015) work on Iranian classical music has been influential in showing the ways in which musicians' practices cross the boundary between the 'compositional' and the 'improvisational', a boundary that Nooshin herself has problematized since it relies on the concept of a musical 'work'. Indeed, Nooshin demonstrates how Iranian classical music's oral medium has led to its misinterpretation by western ethnomusicologists as 'improvised'.

Whether reading music is a disadvantage to an improviser [sic] is a question which gets quite a lot of discussion amongst improvising musicians [...] There is an unmistakable suspicion that the acquisition of reading skill in some way has a blunting effect in improvising skills, an acceptance that these are very often two things which do not go together. So, of course, in musics where there isn't an 'accurate' notation system, that possible problem, or distraction, disappears. But more important than the removal of a possible inhibition or contrary discipline from the performer is the fact that the absence of a music writing/reading tradition gets rid of the composer. (1992: 10-11)

For Bailey, moreover, a fundamental characteristic of improvisation is the elimination of a referent, which emancipates the performer from the authority of the composer. In discussing group creativity, Sawyer describes collective improvisation as the 'purest form of group creativity, a Weberian ideal type' (2003b: 18). Aside from his ideologically questionable employment of the term 'pure', the implication of Sawyer's statement seems to be that, in a similar vein to Bailey's comment, notation contaminates ensemble performance by impeding social interaction, the agency of the performers, and hence the possibility of creativity itself.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the work of Sawyer has been significant in advocating a reorientation to a process-based understanding of creativity based on the analysis of the interactional and emergent qualities of group improvisation. However, although he purports not to present improvisation and notated performance as mutually exclusive practices, there still exists a strong sense of polarisation in his understanding of their creative affordances. Sawyer emphasises 'free' improvisation as offering the optimum conditions for creativity where 'group creativity and interaction play a more significant role' (2003b: 146). Indeed, 'free' improvisation's apparent avoidance of rules and prior agreement of a musical outcome certainly appear to be conducive to a high level of unpredictability and moment to moment

contingency.³⁴ By contrast, ‘ritualized’ performance is defined by Sawyer as an activity that presents greater restrictions to the performer, and thus affords fewer creative opportunities (: 143). Not all notated music is necessarily ritualised, but his assertion that ‘notational systems are typically developed primarily to record the more ritualized genres of performance’ (: 148) certainly suggests a characterisation of notated performance as a ritualised activity. Similarly, his assertion that improvisation and ritual are not ‘opposite ends of a continuum’, but instead represent ‘points maximally opposed in a multi dimensional space’ (: 139) nevertheless implies an understanding of the practices as binary categories. Sawyer’s reading is thus reductive; the situation is more complex than he suggests. First, any performance genre could be viewed as having ritualised qualities, since genres are typified by distinct forms, and stylistic idiosyncrasies and purposes. Christopher Small (1998) has identified the ritualistic significance of a number of formal and informal manifestations of musicking.³⁵ Thus ‘free jazz’ – classified by Sawyer as being ‘extremely nonritualized’ (2003b: 139) – exhibits ritualistic properties in its goal of avoiding structure; such resistance to formality evidences specific aesthetic conventions that organise the behaviour of its participants. What’s more, while Sawyer locates ‘real innovation’ in moments of a performance that are ‘maximally indeterminate’ (: 155), I would argue that the two are not necessarily causally related. A performance might comprise indeterminate elements without being necessarily innovative; for instance, during an improvised performance an unexpected gesture

³⁴ See, for example, Sawyer and DeZutter’s (2009) analysis of the creative process as an emergent phenomenon of the interactional dialogue in freely improvised theatre.

³⁵ Indeed, Small asserts that ‘The word *ritual* [...] has a bad press these days, being taken in common speech to mean any action that has been repeated so many times that it has lost any meaning it may once have possessed. [...] This interpretation of ritual does little justice to a practice that retains a powerful hold on the human imagination and an important place in human life [...]. We should note also that ritual is *never* meaningless; even when the ritual actions do become ‘ritualized’ [...], that ‘ritualization’ is itself full of meaning’ (1998: 94-5; original emphasis).

might occur that is not capitalised on by other performers. Indeterminacy is not necessarily a catalyst for innovation – arguably the converse might be true: it could have disruptive consequences, inhibiting the performer so that she retreats into playing predictable material, or even to the extent that the performance is completely derailed. Finally, Sawyer’s paradigm of the creative process cannot be reconciled with the fact that innovation in musical performance cannot be completely contingent on indeterminacy. Ornamentation in Baroque instrumental music, for example, might be highly innovative whilst also conforming to generic conventions; and, by the same token, improvisation in jazz standards can involve spontaneous melodic invention within a relatively structured and determined harmonic and rhythmic context. The situation is thus not as clear-cut as Sawyer’s model suggests, and it does not account for the varieties of creation that constitute different musical practices.

The over-emphasis on improvisation’s creative opportunities relies on a too-easy assumption that creativity in performance is predominantly associated with deviation from a fixed object: the score. The platonic objectification of music as text was identified by Lydia Goehr in her seminal work on the emergence of the ‘work-concept’ in the nineteenth century, and its consequences for the shift in relations between performers and compositions so that ‘Performances and their performers were respectively subservient to works and their composers.’ ([1992] 2007: 231). The role of the performer became denigrated as, in Cook’s words, ‘a mediator, and as in the case of all middlemen, this involves a kind of contractual relationship: it is the performer’s obligation to represent the composer’s work to the listener’ (2013: 13). This state of affairs has been summarised succinctly by Born:

The ontology of the musical work envisions a hierarchical assemblage: the composer-hero stands over the interpreter, conductor over instrumentalist, interpreter over listener, just as the work ideal

authorizes and supervises the score, which supervises performance, which supervises reception. (2005: 26)

Central to this discourse is the disjunction between notation's dual functions of description and prescription, both representing musical works and providing instructions for their performance (Kanno 2007: 231). On the surface, the score seems to serve a contradictory function: on the one hand exerting a constraining force on the performer by presenting a model or a set of rules that should be adhered to, and on the other triggering creative decisions and actions. Yet, it is the former function – what Cook has described as the 'ocularcentric identification of the score with what the music is' ([2004] 2007: 21) – that has dominated discourse and practice.

Goehr (2014) identifies the dangers of the crude yet persistent opposition between improvisation and notated performance, where the former is held up as 'utopian in intent: to pave the way for a free music or a free future in a society of constraint' (2014: 2). Performance is surely a much more mixed economy, and indeed, Goehr shows how performance involves the distinct but overlapping phenomena of *improvisation impromptu*, where a performer reacts in the moment to unexpected obstacles or grapples with resistances, in contrast to what she calls *improvisation extempore*, the kind of overt improvisation in response to a creative stimulus. Cook ([2004] 2007) similarly unravels the false distinction between improvisation and notated performance, claiming that at the heart of the issue lies a misapprehension of the relationship between improvisation, composition, and performance. Drawing on Alfred Schütz's (1964) concept of 'inner time', Cook proposes that in both jazz and classical music, performance is a matter of social interaction, a 'mutual tuning-in' (Schütz 1964: 161) of performers that 'giv[es] rise to a shared, communal temporality' (Cook [2004] 2007: 15).

This preoccupation with creative innovation has been described by some commentators as a sort of ideology (Osborne 2003; Rehn and de Cock 2009), and has provoked a number of dissenting voices, of which perhaps the loudest belongs to Thomas Osborne (2003), who is highly sceptical of the value placed on ‘compulsory individualism, compulsory ‘innovation,’ compulsory performativity and productiveness, the compulsory valorization of the putatively new’ (2003: 509). Alf Rehn and Christian de Cock (2009) take a similarly critical stance, expressing concern that a focus on innovation reflects neo-liberal, market-focussed doctrine, where ‘The emphasis on novelty is needed to ideologically position creativity as part of an economic movement and to connect it to the modernist ideology of progress’ (2009: 225).

3.1. Improvised and notated performance: unpicking the binary

A polarisation of the creative affordances of improvised and notated performance is thus limited: the two practices are not as categorically opposed as Sawyer’s model suggests. Using material from my interviews, the following section will present some of the ways in which performers’ experiences of improvised and notated performance resist being categorised as diametrically opposed. Improvised performances can be constrained by certain parameters; and, moreover, some aspects of improvised performance are not necessarily as freely ‘creative’ (in the innovative sense) as they might appear at face value.

Like all modes of musical performance, some improvised practices are embedded within strongly defined social and cultural conventions. Thus, the conduct of performers can be governed by the rules (both spoken and unspoken) which are determined by the roles that they inhabit. For example, Becker (2000) describes the

strict 'etiquette' that can govern jazz jam sessions, where collective rules are learned and obeyed through continued socialisation within the performance environment (2000: 172). Byron Dueck (2013a) has observed the sociability of jazz practices, such that, even in highly improvised moments of performance, musicians participate in musical 'publics': drawing on shared knowledge and performance practices, 'orient[ing] their minds and embodied practices toward those of other, imagined musicians' (2013a: 92).

In addition to the macro-social dynamics that permeate improvisation, aesthetic conventions are evident in the pre-existing musical structures that are prepared and drawn upon by the improviser in the course of performance. In jazz improvisation, performers typically employ a lexicon of preconceived licks or riffs to formulate their musical material, and to navigate their way over a musical progression (Berliner 1994: 383). Indeed, certain improvisers can be recognised by their distinctive musical vocabulary. A similar point can be made about the 'indeterminate' works of John Cage, which, despite being seen as epitomising the dissolution of the hierarchical relationship between the composer and the performer, were accompanied by an 'aesthetically bounded and highly refined' (Thomas 2013: 94) performance aesthetic of 1950s experimentalism (Lochhead 1994, 2001).

As well as improvisation's wider social and aesthetic influences, the physical dimension of performance has significant consequences for improvisation, as David Sudnow (1993) demonstrates in his account of learning to play jazz piano. He analyses the ways in which his hands learn to gauge the distance between keys on the keyboard, and how the irregularities of the placement of black and white keys shape his improvisational rhetoric. Sudnow conveys a strong impression of working within physical constraints – both of his hands and of the keyboard's terrain. So, for Sudnow

then, as could potentially be argued for all improvisers, his capacity to improvise is profoundly grounded in his bodily experience. Embodied knowledge has also been shown to play a role in group improvisation. Sawyer himself has identified a phenomenon of ‘attunement’ in improvisatory group performances, whereby performers

have to monitor the other performers’ actions at the same time that they continue their own performance, to be able to quickly hear or see what the other performers are doing, and to be able to respond by altering their own unfolding, ongoing activity. (2005: 51-2)

Murphy McCaleb (2014) has shown how Sawyer’s description emphasises the *reactive* qualities of improvised interaction, at the expense of the proactive interactive and communicative dynamics of ensemble performance and their relationship to performers’ embodied knowledge. An equally important aspect of ensemble interaction, McCaleb argues, is the ability of performers to *infer* meaningful information from their colleagues. This mode of engagement – simultaneous ‘reflection and action’ – is developed through performers’ ‘assimilation of and application of environmental knowledge’ (2014: 98-9). In this way, improvisers’ comprehension of each other’s gestures and glances, and their creative possibilities, relies on a broad base of pre-existing experience, both individual and shared. A sense of the inescapability of the performer’s prior experience and environmental knowledge is summed up by the somewhat provocative statement from the clarinetist Carl Rosman:

In some moments I like to say ‘Improvisation doesn’t exist’, at least ‘pure’ improvisation as in nothing is ever completely unplanned, spontaneous, whatever. You’ve played that instrument before? Play another one. You’ve played an instrument like that; you’ve done a performance before... [...] At least the degree to which an improvised

performance is actually improvised is worth interrogating in every instance that it actually happens.³⁶

From this discussion it is apparent that improvised performances can be shaped by a number of social, aesthetic, and physical factors, albeit some tacit and some more explicit. By the same token, practices of notated performance can overlap with improvisation in a number of ways. As discussed in chapter two, a particular development of twentieth-century compositional practice was the shared experimentation that took place between composers and performers, with composers taking inspiration from musicians who extended the possibilities of their instruments ‘beyond accepted idiomatic writing’ (Heaton 2012: 98). Through a process of shared experimentation and investigation, improvised material might be incorporated within the compositional rhetoric of the resultant piece, such as new instrumental sonorities and techniques (as evidenced in Clarke et al., forthcoming; Fitch and Heyde 2007a; Östersjö 2008). The clarinettist Andrew Sparling gave an account of how his novel microtonal fingering method was incorporated into a work by a composer after hearing him improvise, and that incremental changes in pitch were discovered and documented through their joint exploration of different fingering configurations:

There was a composer who, when I was doing some impro [...] he liked it and so he used it in the piece in a way that I wouldn’t have thought of using it. And so it developed the way I used that technique. I’ve got big enough hands so that if you’ve got the top two side keys, one or other or both, I can still cover all the holes in the right or left hand so you’ve got an incredible range of very, very tiny microtonal fingerings. There are three lots that I hadn’t thought of until the composer wanted to notate them. [He asked me] ‘What happens if you press that one, and then that one? What happens if you do both?’ We actually worked out what pitches they were.³⁷

³⁶ Interview, 9 November 2013.

³⁷ Interview, 2 April 2012.

Sparling's statement conveys a sense of the reciprocal nature of their collaborative engagement. Here, notation acted as a tool that both 'concretised' and opened up Sparling's improvisation, motivating him to investigate the possibilities of his embodied relationship to his instrument and to uncover new instrumental timbres.

A polarised understanding of improvised and notated performance also overlooks the reality that improvised practices can be identified in all manner of notated musics. Immediate examples are experimental compositions that explicitly engage the performer in 'an exploratory, investigative mode of music making' (Thomas 2009: 90) whereby the musical material is largely determined by the performer rather than the notation. Such an approach is exemplified in John Cage's *Solo for Piano* (1957-8), whose graphic notation varies in its specificity and ambiguity, but usually requires the performer to make her own realisation in advance of performance. In this way, the piece has been described as 'less a score and more as a resource or a portfolio from which material may be generated.' (Thomas 2013: 96). In addition, notated works can challenge the boundary between notation and improvisation through their approach to structure. The clarinettist Lucy Downer cited the example of *Two Dots and a Line Between* for bass clarinet and cello (2013) by Ewan Campbell, a piece that employs, as Campbell describes it, a 'map-based score'³⁸ where the notational material is prescribed but fragmented. The performer chooses the order in which the fragments are performed and therefore assumes responsibility for the structure of the piece. Downer described to me her experience of performing the piece with the composer:

So we started in the middle and he said 'That's where you start', and he'd written it in such a way that whichever way you go, you either move up one, across one, or repeat the same one before you move on. [...] So as well as deciding where I want to go, and which fragment I

³⁸ Email correspondence from EC to EP, 18 June 2013.

was going to play next, it was also about listening to what Ewan was doing and thinking ‘Where is he? I’m playing that one, he’s over there, so I’d better try and sort of generally try and get in that direction.’ [...] I do like that kind of music where you can just have a bit of extra responsibility to make the piece.³⁹

Downer’s description of the performance evidences the way in which the more malleable structure of the piece led to a heightened awareness of her co-performer’s moves. Moreover, her final sentence suggests that she experienced a sense of greater creative authority in contributing to the work’s architecture: perhaps not surprisingly, the under-determination of the score magnified the player’s sense of having a role as creator of the musical outcome.

In a broader sense, improvised interactions are necessary in all notated performance because no score can ever fully determine a performance. In repeated musical performances, although notation might contain directions that govern variables such as tempo, pitch, rhythm, articulation, dynamics, and expression, the ways in which these are interpreted will vary from player to player, and from performance to performance. Each time that a phrase or even a note of a piece of music is played, slight variations in nuance alter the musical outcome and can – potentially – convey radically different aesthetic meanings. During performance, the player will make minute adjustments to these parameters, based on decisions that are made in response to the immediate performance situation. For example, a study by Peter Weeks showed that musicians in a conductor-less ensemble used ‘collaborative manoeuvres’ to conceal and recover from errors during performance (1996b: 211). In this instance, improvisation functioned as a tool employed spontaneously in order to restore synchrony to the performance. Performance of notated music has therefore greater variability than at face value, and might draw on improvised elements for both

³⁹ Interview, 4 June 2013.

expressive and practical purposes, if in less explicit ways than improvisation ‘proper’. Stan Godlovitch (1998) argues that in determining certain aspects of a performance, scores invite performers ‘to exercise that much more ingenuity and to expand invention in areas remaining open for musical elaboration’; if this were not the case, ‘performing works would be akin to minting coins’ (1998: 84-5). The following comment from Rosman articulates a similar position to that of Godlovitch:

Some of what’s the most interesting to me in music is the relationship between the text and the performance. When you have that static background, you can make actually very subtle things tell against that for an audience, in a way that wouldn’t happen if the audience didn’t know that background, didn’t have that background at all. Which doesn’t mean that everybody in the audience has to know every note of the score you’re playing from to get that kind of effect.⁴⁰

As well as emphasising the increased opportunities for engaging with a ‘static background’ in a more subtle and detailed manner, Rosman’s statement also considers the impact of these performance circumstances on the audience. His comment ultimately points towards the powerful communicative potential of paying close attention to a score. Similarly, in discussing the opportunities for creativity in Stockhausen’s works for clarinet, which at face value might appear to be heavily prescribed, the clarinettist and long-term collaborator of Stockhausen, Suzanne Stephens, challenges the idea that performances of his music will be without variation. She provided the following example from her experience of teaching his music:

Stockhausen did not want or expect carbon copies of his original performers, but rather welcomed the individuality and life that every new performer brought into the works, as long as the music and movements were performed according to his instructions in the score. I once organized a concert of five of my *Der Kleine Harlekin* students, one performing right after the other, to prove how different even the most thoroughly determined piece can be. Everyone there was amazed,

⁴⁰ Interview, 9 November 2013.

and changed their minds about there being no room for creativity or interpretation in Stockhausen's works.⁴¹

Stephens's statement expresses an apparent contradiction in Stockhausen's approach to performance, in that he welcomed a variety of interpretations with the caveat that the performance should abide by the score. Yet, for Stephens, a performance can be determined without being fixed. While it should be acknowledged that as a proponent of Stockhausen's music, Stephens is likely to adhere to a certain agenda, her resistance to the idea that his notation does not afford creative engagement certainly raises questions about the extent to which complex notation is viewed as restrictive to the performer.

A close analysis of my own interpretation of a moment in Alban Berg's *Four Pieces for Clarinet and Piano* Op. 5 (1913) serves to illustrate the depth of a performer's response to ostensibly 'fixed' notation. The density of expressive markings in the pieces demands minute attention to detail, and might suggest that the performer will be significantly restricted by the notation. However, I would argue that the converse is in fact true: the very specificity of the notation requires careful consideration and a multiplicity of tiny adjustments in order to realise the notation in sound. I had initially intended to use the opening phrase as an example (Fig. 3.1), but it became apparent that just the first note of the work – a B₅ marked *piano* and *leicht* – would provide ample material for discussion.

⁴¹ Email correspondence from SS to EP, 22 September 2012.



Figure 3.1. Opening phrase of Berg’s *Four Pieces for Clarinet and Piano* Op. 5 (bars 1-2) (Berg [1913] 1953: 1).

The first issue for the clarinetist to address is sound production, determined primarily by breath control. Sufficient air and diaphragm support are required for the B \flat 5 to sound, but with an extremely light and delicate attack to maintain the *piano* dynamic and *leicht* timbre. Since the clarinet has a tendency to rise in pitch in softer dynamics, this necessitates a slightly looser embouchure to lower the pitch and control the intonation. Articulation is another crucial consideration; I explored different methods of starting the note with and without the tongue. As the phrase is unaccompanied, there was less need for a definite ‘downbeat’ on the note, but it still needed to start precisely: it would not be appropriate to ‘breathe into’ the note with a gradual increase in air pressure. I decided to begin the note without the tongue but with a decisive ‘push’ from the diaphragm so that it ‘spoke’ cleanly. How might *leicht* be interpreted in terms of timbre, particularly given that the sound should transform into *schwerer* in the subsequent bar? This was addressed through experimentation with different ‘resonance’ fingerings⁴² for the B \flat 5, in order to adjust the timbre and pitch, deliberating between using the conventional fingering of the left-hand index and middle fingers and the side B \flat 5 key, and the alternative ‘long’⁴³ fingering

⁴² It is common practice for clarinetists to utilise different ‘resonance’ fingerings to make microtonal and timbral adjustments to notes for expressive and technical purposes. See Rehfeldt ([1977] 1994: 21-39) for a survey of monophonic fingerings and their resultant sonorities.

⁴³ The ‘long’ fingering pattern is achieved by effecting the conventional B5 fingering and putting down the index finger of the right hand, which flattens the pitch to B \flat 5. The term ‘long’ signifies that the

configuration. The long fingering results in a more hollow-sounding timbre which is flatter in pitch, and has ergonomic implications in that it allows a smoother transition to the subsequent F5.⁴⁴ This timbre should also be interpreted with reference to the B \flat 5 in the third bar of the second piece, marked *Echoton*, in order that the two are distinct in colour. Sound production is contingent on a number of external variables. For example, the choice of reed: a harder reed would need a slightly looser embouchure and an increase in air pressure to effect a precise start; a softer reed would respond more quickly, enabling a swifter attack on the note, but might be more volatile in its response. The acoustical and climatic properties of the performance space will have implications for all of the above considerations, and require further micro-adjustments by the performer. A reverberant acoustic will necessitate projection of the articulation, in order that it is not subsumed in the delay; a space with less acoustic warmth will mean that the sound will project more clearly, but its timbre will be less resonant. The moisture levels in the space will affect the responsiveness of the reed, and the air temperature will constrain or be conducive to finger dexterity.

This analysis has revealed the many considerations that I felt were encouraged by Berg's notation. While some elements might be determined through active decisions made during the preparation stage, a number of them will become more embodied and inactive as they are familiarised through deliberate practice, and during the actual act of performance these factors will form a synthesis that must be internalised and realised instantly, and will change from performance to performance.

fingering pattern is spread across both joints of the instrument. See Rehfeldt ([1977] 1994: 28) for a diagram.

⁴⁴ This is because the clarinetist has only to place down the middle and ring fingers of the left hand to reach the F5, which is a smoother manoeuvre than changing from the conventional fingering for B \flat 5, which involves readjustments of the fingers of both hands.

The cellist Neil Heyde describes similar considerations in his account below of the layered temporalities that he experiences during performance:

I always like to talk about a performer existing in two major time zones. There's a planning time zone (which is a slightly compositional thing – if I've got a triple *forte* later I need to be careful now otherwise I won't have anything left for it). And that never goes away, so you sort of monitor that. You don't really listen to it but you check, and things change as you're going. And then there's this other time zone where from micro-moment to micro-moment you're listening to what was just happening and you're adjusting in relation to it.⁴⁵

Heyde emphasises the necessarily moment to moment contingency of performing in real time, even when careful attention has been given to the preparation stage.

Negotiating a performance involves a continual dialogue between the performer's sense of internal and external time, which can operate in a state of flux.

In sum then, the foregoing discussion has gone some way to characterising the changeable nature of performers' experiences of working with a score. Whether encountering notation that deliberately unsettles the relationship between the score and performance, engaging with subtle details in a score that might appear to be highly specified, responding to the conditions of the performance environment, or even in terms of the essentially transient experience of realising a performance, there are lots of ways in which the reality of performing with notation challenges the static understanding offered by Sawyer's work.

3.2. Performers' characterisations of the creative process

Having proposed a more fluid and nuanced understanding of improvised and notated performance, the following section presents performers' constructions of creativity in order to demonstrate some of the inherent tensions in a model of creativity that

⁴⁵ Interview, 1 November 2012.

prioritises innovation or novelty. It was striking how disinclined some performers were to describe their practice as necessarily creative in an innovative sense. This reluctance is summed up in the following statement from Pay, which opened this chapter:

The concept of creativity as ‘doing something different’: it’s not that I think it’s wrong, but that I think it’s not useful. As a starting point, it doesn’t get you anywhere. [...] What I like to do is hijack the word and say that we are being creative, but we’re being creative in a different sort of way. What we’re doing is bringing something which is dead – just marks on a piece of paper – and we’re giving it life; we’re finding out how it wants to be alive. That’s as creative as you can get.⁴⁶

Pay understands the performer’s role to be highly proactive, and not in any way subservient to the score or the composer. He is concerned with the utility of the performer’s approach: creativity is not necessarily conducive to an effective performance because ‘It doesn’t get you anywhere’. For Pay, then, creativity can be characterised as bringing to life a dead score, but he rejects the idea of creativity as necessarily innovative. Similarly, Sparling sees his role as facilitating rather than intentionally creative:

I’ve always thought that it’s an interpretative skill rather than a creative skill, which I suppose puts you into the role of a facilitator. I don’t think of myself as a baseline creator. [...] We are the composer’s voice [...] because the composer doesn’t have a voice. They only have their [...] notation.⁴⁷

While Sparling’s use of the term ‘facilitator’ conjures up an image similar to that of Cook’s ‘mediator’ (2013: 13), suggesting that he understands his position to be separate and subordinate to that of the composer, the metaphor of being the ‘composer’s voice’ conveys a sense of the performer’s empowerment, because the composer’s voice is the crucial means through which the music is communicated. He

⁴⁶ Interview, 10 April 2012.

⁴⁷ Interview, 2 April 2012.

makes a clear distinction between the positions of composer and performer, and emphasises the primacy of the performer's role, which is highly active and productive. His comment also suggests that the separation of the roles of performer and composer need not be problematic. Both performers make reference to the role of the score in performance, while also emphasising the primacy of the performer's role, which is highly active and productive. In a similar manner, Heyde has challenged the assumption that a densely notated score exerts a constraining force on his opportunities for creativity; for him, in fact the reverse was true: 'In general (and it really is in general) I like reasonably heavily notated scores, because although it looks like the composer's occupying more of the performer's creative space, you've actually got more to interact with'.⁴⁸ These performers approach the score as a stimulus for creativity through interpretation and engagement, but without the intention of necessarily creating something new in performance.

This is not to suggest that every performance will be the same, as Pay expresses in his disavowal of trying to 'do something different' in performance:

As a performer, it's not that what I do *can't* be different, and it probably *is* different every night; but that's not because I'm trying to *make* it different. [...] It's somehow looking at the thing in the wrong way to say that what I'm doing is trying to make something different.⁴⁹

Pay's statement identifies a fundamental issue at the core of this debate that has been observed by Cook: that while a musician's responses to a score might prioritise accuracy, this should be understood as a '*means* rather than an *end*' (2013: 284; my emphasis). Citing complex music as a case in point Cook challenges the assumption that notated music is creatively restrictive and suggests that it can serve as a stimulus for interaction between the musician and score. Precision can be read on one level as a

⁴⁸ Interview, 1 November 2012.

⁴⁹ Interview, 10 April 2012.

way of creating a performative energy or, as Cook puts it, ‘a manifestation of real-time presence’ (: 284). On a broader level, it has an ethical imperative, so that ‘the score scripts a process of personal development, a form of *Bildung*’ (: 285). Indeed, I consider the ethical dimension of performance later on in this chapter.

A provocative final comment from Pay presents the performer as an engineer, whose function is highly skilful yet practical. He talks about how a central part of preparing a piece for performance is what he calls ‘workability’; music can be ‘sorted out and made to work’ by engineering: ‘You need to have an engineering vision of performance if you’re going to play music with any sophistication. [...] The thing about engineering is, it doesn’t sound terribly creative does it?’.⁵⁰ According to Pay, engineering involves careful contemplation of the effect of notational details and how they affect the workability of the piece, achieved through repetition and rehearsal. The term engineering also suggests a kind of ingenuity, a dexterity and resourcefulness in applying knowledge to develop solutions that best match the practical requirements of the performance situation.

These brief characterisations of the creative process from performers offer alternative perspectives on the nature of the performer’s role, challenging the idea of notated performance as being limited to reproduction, and provoking a re-evaluation of how creativity might be conceived of beyond innovation. The important point, as argued by Cook (2013), is to shift attention from ends to means, or from outcomes to *processes*. In pursuit of this aim, I now turn to outline some of the attributes of a craft-based model of creativity in musical performance, and ultimately to consider the relationship between creativity and craft.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

3.3. Musical performance and craft

In light of the foregoing discussion, this chapter proposes an alternative paradigm of creativity that situates musical performance within a framework of craft, where musical notation is not understood primarily as a formal model but as one of the materials with which musicians work. The concept of craft has been approached from a wide variety of disciplinary perspectives including philosophy, sociology, anthropology, and design theory. Ingold uses craft to examine the relationship between practitioners and their materials,⁵¹ and his assertion that the practitioner ‘*thinks through making*’ (2013: 6; original emphasis) serves as the point of departure for this chapter. Summarised succinctly by Sennett as ‘the skill of making things well’ (2008: 8) craft resonates with musical performance on a number of levels. Indeed, both Ingold and Sennett draw on their personal experiences as musicians in their work (coincidentally, they are both cellists). Sennett seeks to elevate the role of the practitioner beyond a concern with the manual and the technical to one that is founded on ‘the ability to localize, to question, and to open up’ (2008: 277). For Sennett, the practitioner is epitomised by the conductor, whose commitment to refining a passage of music eclipses the economic considerations of an orchestra rehearsal running into overtime. And, although this presents a somewhat mythologised view of the creative relationship between the conductor and the orchestra, it serves to illustrate certain similarities between music-making and craft. Writing from a philosophical perspective, the institutional similarities between the professional sphere of musical performance and the craft tradition have been observed by Godlovitch. Performance, he argues, can be conceptualised as ‘*agent using means applies skill to (raw) material for result*’ (1998: 55; original emphasis), but he does not seek to explore this

⁵¹ As Östersjö has asserted, the definition of musical materials can extend beyond written scores to include ‘musical concepts transmitted aurally, or musical structures imagined in the inner listening of a musician’ (2013: 202).

paradigm empirically. Indeed, the activities of musical performance have not been investigated in any detail within a framework of craft.

Material engagement

A crucial dimension of craft is the way in which knowledge is rooted in the performer's physical encounters with the world. The practitioner has an inherently bodily relationship with her materials and tools, and a highly developed awareness of how they respond to her intentions and actions (Sennett 2008). In paying attention to the ways in which a performer's practices are intertwined with her materials and environment, a craft-based model of performance points to a broadly ecological approach, situating the practitioner in the context of an active engagement with the constituents of her surroundings. Ingold's characterisation of craft whereby 'both the practitioner's knowledge *of* things, and what he does *to* them, are grounded in intensive, respectful and intimate relations *with* the tools and materials of his trade' (2011: 239; original emphasis), highlights the significance of the relational qualities of actions and processes.

Skilled practice

A central component of musical performance is skill and expertise, developed over time and embedded through routine. Performance involves both technical and interpretative skills, which are rooted in the physical (Godlovitch 1998: 54). Skill is obviously a concern in musical performance. Yet, it would be short-sighted to equate craft solely with technique, an argument proposed by David Pye in his seminal volume on workmanship ([1968] 1995), which, despite expressing a disavowal of engaging with skill, puts forward a detailed discussion of skilled work (Adamson

2007; Frayling and Snowdon 1982). Pye draws an analogy between musical performance and workmanship, but strongly distinguishes between design and execution. He argues that ‘the quality of the workmanship is judged [...] by reference to the designer’s intention, just as the quality of an instrumentalist’s playing is judged by reference to the composer’s’ ([1968] 1995: 30). Such an understanding reduces the role of the performer to an operative who unthinkingly implements the composer’s instructions. Although Pye’s argument should be situated in its historical context and understood in part as a reaction to the moralising rhetoric of the Arts and Crafts Movement, Ingold has observed that this dichotomy between conception and action is present across a number of other domains, including architecture (Ingold 2000: 295) and engineering (Mitcham 1979, cited in Ingold 2000: 295). Moreover, it echoes the stubborn hierarchy that persists in certain musical spheres (and discussed above), which assumes that the performer’s role is to transmit the composer’s intention to the listener. Pye’s comments touch on a wider philosophical debate about the relationship between art and technology, which Ingold argues obstructs the construction of a meaningful account of the nature of skilled practice (2000: 290). Howard Risatti (2007) has proposed a counter-argument in response to Pye by suggesting that conception and action need not be mutually exclusive categories. Craft, Risatti asserts, ‘is not limited solely to the execution of sophisticated technical manual skill [...]; it also involves the creative imagination in the employment and guidance of sophisticated technical manual skill through the hand’ (2007: 168) Following this line of thinking, the relationship between conception and enactment is inextricable and reciprocal: a performer’s aesthetic and technical decisions and actions are intimately connected.

Problem-solving and problem-finding

As discussed in chapter two, a prevalent paradigm within creativity research is problem-solving, where an expert practitioner applies domain specific knowledge in order to find an innovative solution (see, for example, Ericsson 1999; Sawyer 2003b; Weisberg 2006). During performance, musicians must have the capacity to seek out solutions to the challenges presented by the score, but this is not to suggest that performance is a solely reactive activity. Sennett emphasises that craft is driven by the practitioner's practical yet *proactive* engagement with her materials; the ability to *problem-find* as well as to *problem-solve* through, a 'dialogue between concrete practices and thinking' (2008: 9). For Sennett, solving and finding are two sides of the same coin. Sometimes on encountering a problem, a practitioner might explore her material, getting to know all its details ('identifying with it') in order to solve it; but sometimes a practitioner *pursues* problems in order to develop a closer relationship to her material (2008: 214-231). Osborne proposes a similar argument in his celebration of inventiveness: 'not just [...] seeking an answer to something but [...] locating, deepening, embellishing a *problem*' (2003: 520). In this way, the challenges offered by musical materials can be a valuable source of creativity.

The problem-solving/-finding dichotomy that underpins performance can be illustrated by the following examples. Problem-solving is most immediately exemplified in the approaches that musicians employ in response to the practical challenges of notation, in order to successfully unpack and translate the score into sound. This could have particular relevance to contemporary music where the notation can be highly complicated and technically demanding, in terms of the variety of specified detail and the challenging instructions that can exist in the score: obscurities or non-idiomatic instructions may require that the performer responds creatively in

order to find a technical solution. For example, in describing her motivations for performing contemporary music, the clarinettist Kate Romano asserts:

I love a challenge, and there's definitely often an intellectual challenge, often a technical challenge. Yeah, I love the challenge of it, of something that says on paper that's not possible, and finding a way to do it. It's like a puzzle, like a stimulus. I don't think I'll ever quite lose that. [...] I think I'm very influenced by how things look on the page, and I think I get a lot of clues by the way the composer has chosen to notate something as to what they want (that's maybe because I've got a bit of a composition background). [...] So I think I have an idea what I think they're getting at because of the way they wrote it, so I suppose then it's my job to try and work that out.⁵²

Romano articulates the strong sense of personal satisfaction that she experiences in engaging with both the technical and the conceptual challenges of contemporary music, and the significance of the visual dimension of notation. Her final sentence about her 'job' raises a broader question about the role of the performer in its implied separation from the composer, to which I will return in the conclusion of this chapter.

Problem-solving strategies are evident in several case studies in the literature. Archbold (2011) shows the Arditti String Quartet verbally 'enacting' the music without their instruments, and annotating the score in order to develop an interpretative strategy. A similar approach is demonstrated by Thomas in his response to the complex notation of Bryn Harrison's *être-temps* (2002) for solo piano (Clarke et al. 2005), and the highly detailed calculations he made in preparing the work for performance. The performers discussed here engaged closely with the score, uncovering problems and responding with an investigative approach, in an effort of 'pragmatic experimentation' (Frith 2012: 70).

The following example from the clarinettist Ian Mitchell illustrates how working with a score might involve a conceptual shift to uncover an underlying

⁵² Interview, 21 November, 2012.

problem. He described to me how he had struggled with the extreme leaps in pitch in Cornelius Cardew's *Mountains* for bass clarinet (1977), until he found a way of thinking about the material differently:

A friend of Cardew, the pianist John Tilbury, said to me, 'Oh that's just Bach: tune and accompaniment.' And once I realised that, rather than it was three and a half octave leaps, I could try to bring out the music, and I knew how to tackle it technically, which was different from what I was trying to do which was just almost random notes as high as you could go and as low as you could go, following on from each other very fast.⁵³

Tilbury's comment helped Mitchell to locate the problem that he was experiencing in his approach to the notation. By changing his conception of the music he was able to find coherence in the material and a way of understanding the conceptual ambiguities that the score presented.

If the previous instances of problem-solving/-finding show how performers engage with notation to locate and negotiate its practical challenges, the following discussion concerns what could be described as more of an expressive 'anti-strategy' that is achieved by deconstructing the performer's performance approach in order to 'free it up'. While Thomas employed analytical practices to form representations of the musical material, he reflected on the need to avoid a static relationship to the score.

You kind of do it so much, I've practised it, and then you get used to it, and it gets compromised again, so I've got to keep kicking myself in the arse to kind of take it apart again, I think that's the problem, I've got to keep unravelling it. (Clarke et al. 2005: 45)

Bayley (2011) documents a similar phenomenon experienced in rehearsal by the Kreutzer Quartet, in which the need arose to 'de-learn' a section of Finnis's Second String Quartet, as the musicians' familiarity with the music led to the texture risking

⁵³ Interview, 9 May 2012.

becoming over-coordinated. Finnissy's conception of the music was that 'It should have that feeling of initially not really being within reach, as if an unattainable plateau that they're on and you're desperate to reach it [...] And then you see it gradually become more possible' (2011: 398-9). The acquired knowledge of the quartet had to be disassembled in order to guard against routines and habits and to convey a sense of spontaneity, the significance of which is summed up succinctly by the following statement by Mitchell: 'I like that challenge of trying to keep it fresh',⁵⁴ but which gives little indication of the means by which this freshness might be achieved. This challenge was reflected in a number of my interviews with performers. Romano described to me her concern with trying to avoid performing in a manner that sounds 'Too elegant' or 'Too easy': characteristics of a performance that might be symptomatic of having achieved a secure technical relationship to a piece to such an extent that a sense of excitement or risk is lost.

How can you really *convey* a sense of angst when actually if you're playing [a complex work] it's going to take a year to learn? You virtually know it from memory so in a sense you're not worried about it, and there is no element of surprise when you turn the page because you know what's there. What do you do? Do you just take it up a notch on the stage? Play it a bit faster? I don't know, I still don't know the answer to that, but it's something I think about, an awful lot. [...] It's not a tangible thing, there isn't a formula for it. [...] It's really difficult to achieve.⁵⁵

The clarinettist Max Welford articulated a similar sense of the challenge of, on the one hand becoming intimately familiar with a score, but on the other hand maintaining a feeling of liveness in performance. For Welford, however, this phenomenon is experienced regardless of the date of the work's composition.

[Y]ou need to be playing the piece as it unfolds [...]. I guess that's the difficult thing because you need to get to know these pieces so well!

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Interview, 21 November, 2012.

Whether it's Brahms or whether it's Birtwistle, whatever. You need to get to know them so well, but then at some point in that process you need to, not forget, but step back a bit. But I guess that's the main thing about spontaneity. Finding spontaneity – not playing it like you know what's coming.⁵⁶

Welford's use of the phrase 'playing the piece as it unfolds' echoes Heyde's earlier comment about the significance of the temporal dimension of performance. The statements from the performers express a certain paradox in trying to create a liveness or a sense of unattainability in their performances despite having completely internalised the music. Problem-solving/-finding is therefore integral to notated performance, in terms of an intensive engagement with the score and its challenges, and also in terms of self-reflection to resist skilled practice turning into habitualised automatism.

Repetition

Musical performance is grounded in the complex interactions between musicians and their instruments. Performers develop skilful competencies through repeated practice, where tactile resistances are encountered and engaged with. Instrumental practice routines and rehearsals often draw on the organised repetition of gestures, through which ways of playing are incorporated into the performer's own bodily sensibilities and can occur without conscious attention. Indeed, etymologically, the verb 'rehearse' is derived from the Anglo-French *rehearser* or 'to repeat' (Oxford English Dictionary 2015b). At face value, repetition might appear to be a prosaic activity, largely due to the value placed on originality in the Western art tradition, yet it need not be mindlessly mechanical. Studies have shown that prolonged and dedicated work is required both to acquire (Chaffin and Lemieux 2004; Ericsson, Krampe, and Tesch-

⁵⁶ Interview, 21 February 2014.

Römer 1993; Sloboda et al. 1996) and to maintain (Krampe 1994; Krampe and Ericsson 1996) the skills of an expert performer. Repetition is crucial to cultural practices such as handwriting, where children are initially taught to develop fluency and precision by ‘copying models’ (Ingold 2007: 148); or Japanese calligraphy, where imitation and reproduction are highly valued attributes that are central to training (Nakamura 2007). Repetition’s devalued status rests on an emphasis on products and outcomes over actions and processes. ‘Work involves repetition,’ Osborne writes, ‘Not repetition of the same object or specific theme necessarily, but repetition of the same activity, repetition in the name not just of seeking an answer to something but of locating, deepening, embellishing a *problem*’ (2003: 520; original emphasis). Rehn and de Cock similarly stress that creativity could indeed be dependent on carrying out routine actions over and over again, since ‘It might be that it is the very process of working that shows us creativity, rather than it being revealed in the final product’ (2009: 227). Ingold adopts precisely this perspective in his detailed account of the seemingly mundane activity of sawing a plank of wood.

Although a confident, regular movement ensures an even cut, no two strokes are ever precisely the same. With each stroke I have to adjust my posture ever so slightly to allow for the advancing groove, and for possible irregularities in the grain of the wood. Moreover I still have to watch to make sure I keep to the line, since even though the saw is constrained to slide within the existing groove, the groove itself is slightly wider than the blade, allowing for some slight axial torque. This is where the index finger of my right hand, stretched along the handle of the saw, comes into play [...]. In effect I use it to steer within the tight margins afforded by the groove. The actual width of the groove is determined by the setting of the saw’s teeth, which are bent outwards, alternately to one side and the other of the blade. The point of this is that it allows clearance for the blade to slide within the groove. It would otherwise become jammed. (2011: 52-53)

Ingold shows that the repetitive movements that constitute seemingly everyday activities, from sawing a plank of wood, to striking iron on an anvil with a hammer

(2000: 353), to looping string to weave a bag (: 354-61), are guided by attentive engagement. The precise outcome is never guaranteed and will vary – either minutely, or in more significant ways – each time, and as a consequence, no work is ever finished – performance is *itinerative* (i.e., involved in a journey) rather than iterative (simply repetitious; see Ingold 2011: 216). ‘Going over things’ is thus central to craft, and more broadly contributes to the practice of performance.

Moral craft

A number of the performers above expressed a commitment, either implicitly or explicitly, to quality in their practice. Perhaps the fundamental tenet of Sennett’s work on craft is the practitioner’s ‘desire to do a job well for its own sake’ (2008: 9), which suggests an ethical value that goes beyond mere expert performance. For Sennett, good skills are inseparable from good ethics. This resonates with Cook’s point earlier about the role of accuracy in performance as an integral element of a performer’s formation, and is suggested by the following statement from Pay:

If you can make your vision of the piece fit with what the composer actually wrote, then you’ve probably reached deeper inside yourself. It’s not so much that you’ve got to do what he or she wanted, but that you’ve reached deeper inside yourself to find something that comes from a deeper source, rather than simply doing what you happen to fancy at the time that you’re playing it. And I think that trying to find deeper ways of playing what we have, that resonate with whatever magic music is, is what our job is really. [...] So I do think there is an ethical dimension to doing all of this, but perhaps not ethics in the sort of thing of following rules, but ethics in the sense that you have to be true to yourself as a performer.⁵⁷

As well as expressing a strong sense of professional responsibility, Pay’s comment suggests that pursuing an accurate representation of the score has consequences that go beyond merely achieving literal ‘correctness’. For him, approaching a piece with

⁵⁷ Interview, 10 January 2013.

self-discipline is ultimately a more rewarding process, a subject which is pursued further in the next chapter.

3.4. Conclusions

In summary, by re-evaluating what it might mean to be ‘creative’ in musical performance, this chapter has challenged the polarised understanding of ‘improvised’ performance as free, and notated music as restrictive. This is not to diminish the creative opportunities afforded to musicians by more overtly improvised musics, but rather to suggest that the two practices are not fixed; they share elements and overlap, but they can also have different aims and prompt different actions from the performer. A reappraisal of the relationship between notation and performance helps to move away from this polarity. Two significant themes to emerge from my interviews were performers’ disavowals of innovation in their practice, and an emphasis on their proactive yet pragmatic engagement with their musical material. Considering dimensions of craft in connection with the performance of notated music allows for a close examination of the social and material engagement involved in preparing a work for performance. Indeed, the metaphor of the performer as practitioner or even engineer, rather than creative agent, might offer a more persuasive and richer representation.

Does this characterisation risk devaluing creativity? A sceptical reader might question whether this model is over-inclusive. Does this mean that *every* decision and action a performer makes is creative? It might be tempting to argue the affirmative, if only to subject creativity to critique, to provoke a reassessment of how it might be understood beyond a binary of innovation versus conformity, or freedom versus constraint. Such binaries fall into the trap of accepting rather than challenging the idea

of notation determining performance. Close attention to a score need not necessarily result in the performer being a slave to accuracy; performers can have extraordinarily intimate, fruitful, and, perhaps most importantly, as Ingold (2011) has suggested, *reciprocal* relationships with their materials. Performing can thus be understood as akin to the process of weaving, with the performer situated ‘in amongst a world of materials, which [s]he literally draws out in bringing forth the work’ (2011: 10).

Using craft as a lens therefore has the potential to enable a broader and deeper analysis of creativity. I conclude by reflecting on the potential disadvantages of relying too heavily on a craft-based model of performance. This point relates to my earlier discussion of gender. Fundamentally, there is a romance attached to the skilled practitioner as singular ‘expert’ that Sennett identifies in the carpenter, citizen, instrument maker, and artist. He demythologises the concept to an extent by situating his discussion in the practices of modern society, including open-source software, parenting, and the NHS. Yet, his tendency to focus on the practitioner’s individual mastery of skill glosses over a significant dimension of music-making that is of critical importance to this thesis: collaboration. Sennett has much to say about the passing-on of skilled practices from master to apprentice and the apprentice’s journey from novice to expert, but has less to offer on what it means for practitioners to work together to share their expertise, or the co-constitutive nature of creative decisions.⁵⁸

A second risk in examining musical performance through craft in a too uncritical manner – and one which I touched on in discussing Stephens’s perspective on the music of Stockhausen: it is the danger of neglecting the wider social and historical dimensions of performance. For example, how might a performer’s sense of creative authority be shaped by the wider institutional forces at play in her profession?

⁵⁸ I would argue, for example, that his account of the ‘public craft’ in the online workshops of Linux (Sennett 2008: 21-7) misses an opportunity to engage critically with cooperative work.

Or, how might the performance agendas differ between a proponent of Historically Informed Performance and a member of a free improvisation ensemble? The performer's sense of her roles and responsibilities, and her relationship to the composer, must be approached with this in mind, in order to draw out a richer account. It is important to acknowledge, therefore, that craft can only provide a partial view of what goes on in performance.

In light of these lacunae, the following case studies will use craft as a *starting point* to tease out the dimensions of performance that might otherwise be overlooked. Such an approach makes room for a more forward-looking model of creativity based on processes rather than outcomes, and one that better appreciates the fluid pathways between performer and score. Although my case studies can all be broadly categorised as contemporary concert music projects involving clarinettists interacting with composers, the specific character of each of these is quite distinct; with differing timescales, co-performers, outcomes, divisions of labour, and levels of expertise. Given this diversity my discussions will be informed by other theoretical work from a broadly ecological perspective, depending on the issues that are raised by the particular circumstances of each case study. Together these methods can open up further questions about the distributed and relational qualities of the creative process in performance.

Chapter 4

Recording *Paraphrase*: a ‘social occasion’?

While composer-performer collaborations are commonly constituted through face-to-face work, this case study presents a collaborative encounter of a different kind.

Antony Pay’s 2013 recording of Alexander Goehr’s *Paraphrase on ‘Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda’* by Claudio Monteverdi for solo clarinet Op. 28 (1969) affords an alternative interpretation of what it means to work together – an understanding of collaboration that is bound up with history rather than co-presence. *Paraphrase* had been composed over forty years before Pay made his recording, and was dedicated to and premiered by another clarinetist, Alan Hacker (1938-2012), whose contribution and collaborative stamp on the work are fully acknowledged by Goehr. Pay’s final recording (**Audio example 4.1**) has no collaborative depth in terms of co-present work between composer and performer, Goehr responding to an invitation to attend the recording session:

I couldn’t contribute a great deal because Tony knows much more about the piece than I do. It would be purely a social occasion, and of course being supportive I’d be pleased to be there, but I don’t think I’d serve any great useful function. I’d be happy but I could offer no advice! He knows it better than I do.⁵⁹

On the surface, this scenario seems far-removed from the kind of overt face-to-face engagement that one might expect to observe in a study of co-creative work. What sort of collaboration can possibly take place more than four decades after the work was completed, and with a performer who is not the original dedicatee?

This case study examines the processes involved in creating a new recording of *Paraphrase*, demonstrating the ways in which the work is bound up with a wide variety of factors and their relationship to Pay’s creative decisions. I begin by

⁵⁹ Interview, 12 November 2012.

providing an overview of the historical and cultural background to Goehr's composition of *Paraphrase*, and how these circumstances fed into Pay's conception of the work and his performance choices. This is followed by a discussion of episodes that evidence Pay's sustained engagement with the score, both in the preparation stage and in rendering his new recording. Concluding reflections from Pay and Goehr on the finished recording and their wider views on performance are presented, in order to closely examine Pay's performance agenda and his relationship to Goehr. The case study lays bare the social and material influences behind Pay's ostensibly solitary recording process, including the performer, the composer, and the score, along with past performers and recordings, and considers how these elements are foregrounded in Pay's final recording.

The majority of the case study material was gathered over a period of twelve months, beginning with my first semi-structured interview with Pay in April 2012 and concluding with a recorded discussion between Pay and Goehr in April 2013.⁶⁰ During this time I undertook a series of interviews with Pay and Goehr, filmed Pay's recording session, and made an audio recording of the editing session. Since then I have conducted some follow-up interviews with Pay, and corresponded with him over email. My research also draws on Pay's written notes of his reflections during the process, and some of Pay's posts on the online clarinet discussion forum, *The Clarinet BBoard* (Pay 2009a; 2009b; 2013a).

4.1. Compositional background

Goehr composed *Paraphrase* in the summer of 1969, during a residency at Tanglewood Music Festival. It was performed by Hacker at the Edinburgh Festival in

⁶⁰ See Appendix III for a summary of the audio-visual material collected during fieldwork.

1969, in a programme that included Monteverdi's *Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* (1624) performed by the Music Theatre Ensemble under Goehr's baton.⁶¹ Goehr's engagement with Monteverdi is evident in a number of his compositions: *Naboth's Vineyard* (1968), a dramatic madrigal that includes an episode based on the *Notte* movement of *Il Combattimento*; the cantata *The Death of Moses* (1992), described by Goehr as 'Monteverdi heard through Varèse' (Goehr 1992: 8); and the opera *Arianna* (1995), composed using a Rinuccini libretto for *L'Arianna*, a lost opera by Monteverdi. Moreover, Goehr claims that *Il Combattimento* is one of his 'source pieces', that can be traced in two other works: *Shadowplay* (1970), a music theatre piece conceived of as 'an imitation of the *Combattimento*'; and *Broken Lute* (2006) for solo violin, which has a narrative similar to *Il Combattimento*.⁶² This interest in Monteverdi was cultivated in his youth through his father, the conductor Walter Goehr, who himself was a strong proponent of the composer. Alexander Goehr asserted:

Monteverdi's always big in my life, always was. My father more or less invented Monteverdi and as a schoolboy I copied out most of it because he didn't want to pay for a copyist so got me to do it for him. And great benefit it's been.⁶³

Indeed, Walter Goehr made a number of recordings of Monteverdi works, including *Il Combattimento* (Goehr 1951), and he produced editions of the *Vespers* and *L'incoronazione di Poppea*. The inspiration behind *Paraphrase* can thus be partly attributed to Goehr's own personal history.

Regarding the work's original dedicatee, Hacker is perhaps one of the most influential clarinetists of the twentieth century, but little has been documented about

⁶¹ This programme is replicated by a 2009 recording of *Paraphrase*, which includes Jean-François Verdier's recording of the work alongside *Il Combattimento*, performed by Adriana Fernandez, Juan Sancho, Furio Zanassi, and Les Sacqueboutiers (Verdier 2009).

⁶² Discussion, 4 April 2013.

⁶³ Interview, 12 November 2012.

his influence on the development of contemporary clarinet repertoire beyond limited biographical accounts.⁶⁴ As a founder member of the Pierrot Players ensemble (later becoming the Fires of London), Hacker was the dedicatee of a number of works by composers including Harrison Birtwistle and Peter Maxwell Davies. As well as pushing the technical boundaries of new repertoire for the clarinet, as I will discuss in chapter six, Hacker was also an influential figure in the Historically Informed Performance movement.

Paraphrase was strongly influenced by Hacker's distinctive performance style, with Hacker claiming that it 'embodied his technique and performance personality: altissimo register, extremes of dynamics, the notation of tone-colours, the exaggeration of gesture, the quick-fire edits between contrasting moods of aggression and calm.' (Heaton 2006: 88). Goehr himself expressed the impact that Hacker's exaggerated articulation and timbre had on his compositional rhetoric, commenting that 'I can't compose for wind instruments without thinking of [Hacker] [...] I once caught him saying "In a sense, I wrote [*Paraphrase*]"' (Kaleidoscope 1981). Goehr first worked with Hacker when composing *Naboth's Vineyard*. The two spent time devising ornamentation in the clarinet part of this earlier work, inspired in part by the extended techniques in Bruno Bartolozzi's recently published *New sounds for woodwind* (1967). According to Goehr,

We were interested in finding new forms of ornamentation. At that time multiphonics was topical; there was a book by [Bartolozzi] which was much heralded. [...] Alan found that basically the book is nonsense. [...] And we also decided that although those chords looked very attractive, in fact that's not remotely what they sounded like.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ See Rehfeldt ([1977] 1994: 154) and Weston (1989: 119-25).

⁶⁵ Interview, 12 November 2012.

Hacker's description of Bartolozzi's treatise as 'more stimulating than authoritative' (1968: 29) in a review for the journal *Tempo*, corresponds with this account. Clearly – even if indirectly – the book motivated the two to investigate the clarinet's multiphonic possibilities further. Goehr acknowledged the technical expertise that Hacker brought to this stage of the compositional process, and his significant role developing this new method of ornamentation.

[...] My contribution to this of course was not fingering the clarinet – I wouldn't have been able to do that – my contribution, I said: 'The important thing is about how you get into those sounds and out of them again.' And that's what I did and that's how we did it. Because Alan said 'New sounds for their own sake are absolutely uninteresting.' [...] And so we worked out [*Naboth's Vineyard*] [...] we worked out the ornamentation entirely to do with fingering, because Alan's great discovery, [...] he produced technically the same pitch with different fingerings, and by doing that you change the colour. [...] So we were trying to ornament in that sort of way.⁶⁶

Goehr credited Hacker with a similar involvement in the compositional process of *Paraphrase*, agreeing that Hacker 'can say yes he did [write *Paraphrase*]', despite the fact that 'he didn't actually write the notes'.⁶⁷ From Goehr's perspective then, Hacker's influence over the work lay in the distinctive colours and nuances he created, which are captured in what Goehr described as his 'breathtaking' and 'amazing' recording (Hacker 1977). Despite Hacker's contribution to the timbral aspects of *Paraphrase* in this way, Goehr also acknowledged that aspects of the extended techniques were indicative of the wider compositional developments of the time. For instance, he described the key-clicking direction in bar 26 as 'conventional; everyone was doing that'.⁶⁸

Hacker's connection to *Paraphrase* and to Goehr himself was evidently very strong, raising questions about the collaborative space left for Pay. But Pay's

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

involvement with *Paraphrase* actually began at the same time as Hacker's, bound up with the initial circumstances that surrounded its composition. Both Goehr and Pay have commented that the piece was composed to resolve a programming conflict at the Edinburgh premiere, which brought together musicians from the Music Theatre Ensemble and from the London Sinfonietta, where Hacker and Pay were principal clarinetists respectively. Pay was the preferred performer for the concert, creating a dilemma about the role that Hacker might play. Goehr responded by composing *Paraphrase* for him to perform as a soloist. According to Goehr:

It was written because of a frightful quarrel. [...] There was a deal that the Sinfonietta were going to become the Music Theatre Ensemble. [...] And in joining it there was a little problem, and that was that Tony Pay was the first clarinet of the Sinfonietta, and Alan Hacker had to be used. And there was sort of a very touchy situation, and we got out of it by me writing a piece for Alan Hacker so he could appear as a soloist. And Tony played in the orchestra, and in fact it had very happy endings because Tony is a remarkable man, and, as it were, saw the point.⁶⁹

Pay's account of the circumstances corresponds with that of Goehr's, and further emphasises his own close relationship to the work:

What happened was there was a sort of competition for turf between the newly formed London Sinfonietta and the newly-formed Music Theatre Ensemble, and people were closely connected. [...] When David [Atherton, Director of the London Sinfonietta] conducted the Music Theatre Ensemble in the Edinburgh Festival, with various new pieces, he wanted me to play and not Alan. There was a conflict. And Sandy [Alexander Goehr] said 'I know what I'll do. I'll write a piece especially for Alan, and he can play it. He'll be the soloist and all the rest of it. So that will solve the problem.' So he wrote this piece, and now we have that piece. Funnily enough then I played it quite a lot! [...] It's an example of the social dynamics that will make a piece be created which is not quite for somebody who's a charismatic performer.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Interview, 10 April 2012.

So while Pay was not the original dedicatee of the work, he played an indirect role in its composition, was present at its premiere, and has performed it many times over the intervening years. Pay recalls how, on hearing Hacker first perform the work, ‘I was totally entranced with the experience, and with his playing, and quite quickly wanted to play it myself’ (Pay 2013a). These factors partly explain the motivations behind making his own recording, but Pay’s primary objective with recording *Paraphrase* was to present an interpretation that would ‘fill the gap that I felt was there’,⁷¹ specifically by communicating, as he saw it, ‘aspects of the score that aren’t represented on any recording I know’.⁷²

I found that Alan had recorded [*Paraphrase*] [...] but when I listened, it seemed that he had been so free with the text that it really wasn’t much use to a student looking to begin afresh for themselves, starting with what was written. And unfortunately, none of the subsequent recordings has been that much better either, in that regard. (Pay 2013a)

Indeed, whereas Hacker’s recording adopts a distinctly liberal approach to Goehr’s notation, Pay’s adheres much more closely to it, founded on his performance strategy of ‘starting with what was written’ (Pay 2013a). On the surface this disciplined attitude might seem to dissociate Pay further from any collaborative activity, but his interpretation is nonetheless underpinned by his experience of attending the 1969 premiere, where he remembers Hacker performing the piece amongst the discarded props of the preceding Monteverdi performance: some ‘helmets and a couple of “broomstick” horses’ (Pay 2009a).

The history of the events that culminated in Goehr writing *Paraphrase* reveal how its composition was contingent upon a variety of factors, both material and social. These can be traced as far back as Goehr’s connection to Monteverdi through

⁷¹ Interview, 12 February 2013.

⁷² Email correspondence from AP to EP, 15 November 2012.

his father's work as a conductor, Bartolozzi's treatise on new instrumental techniques, Goehr and Hacker's enthusiasm for exploring new sounds, as well as institutional forces such as the interpersonal relationships within the Music Theatre Ensemble and Pay's consequent connection to the work. Moreover, the programming of the premiere, where *Paraphrase* was presented alongside the piece on which it is based, further reinforces the connection between the two works.

4.2. 'Starting with what was written'

Having laid out the compositional background to *Paraphrase*, I will now explore the ways in which Pay engaged with the score and drew meaning from the links between *Paraphrase* and *Il Combattimento* and how this shaped his subsequent performance decisions in preparing to record the work, particularly with regard to portraying the two eponymous characters simultaneously.

Drawn from Torquato Tasso's epic poem *La Gerusalemme Liberata* (1581), the libretto portrays the story of a battle between a Christian knight and a warrior, Tancredi and Clorinda, during the first Crusade. Tancredi loves Clorinda but does not recognise her in armour. A challenge is made and the two commence battle in the darkness. Clorinda is mortally wounded in the ensuing combat, but her identity is not revealed until the end when Tancredi removes her helmet (Carter 2002: 114-16). For Pay, this extramusical narrative is expressed through various elements within the score: programmatic gestures and imagery, dynamics, timbre, and tempo. Pay's deep engagement with the musical material and the original performance is striking, and points to the long reach of his relationship to the work. Inspired by this plot and his experience of encountering the work in such a vivid setting, Pay sought to portray

Tancredi and Clorinda's battle in Paraphrase with minute attention to notational detail.

Immediate relationships between *Paraphrase* and *Il Combattimento* are suggested by Goehr's borrowing of descriptive titles of episodes from Monteverdi's work: the *Trotto di cavallo* (bar 10), *Passaggio bellicoso e grave* (bar 13) *passaggio più ristretto* (bars 14-35), and *[Guerra] Moderato, marziale* sections (bars 68-77; 116-130). The first and most explicit reference to Monteverdi's work is the *Trotto di cavallo* in the opening: a rhythmic triple-time device that imitates the motion of a horse (Fig. 4.1; [Audio example 4.2](#))



Figure 4.1. *Trotto di cavallo* passage (bar 10) (Goehr [1969] 1973: 2).

This is a more complex rendering of the *Trotto di cavallo* that appears in the introduction of *Il Combattimento*, where rhythmic diminution – a semibreve to minim figure is shortened to a minim to crotchet figure – is employed to suggest the metre of a horse gathering speed. In Goehr's rendering of this gesture, the rhythm contracts from a repeated crotchet to quaver figure to a repeated quaver to semiquaver figure, effecting an *accelerando*. As Pay asserts, this is somewhat concealed by Goehr's

notation, as the rhythm is displaced by a semiquaver (Pay 2009a). For Pay, the metaphor of the horse has practical implications for the way he paces tempo in this section.

You get a gear shift. And what happens when a horse starts is it shifts from one gait to another. So I think that that's a very important and powerful rhythmic device. [...] You see, the thing about a horse galloping is that it's not particularly aggressive is it? It's just a horse. [...] And so when the horse gallops, you don't want to make it like a huge, and perhaps here [sings end of *trotto* phrase] perhaps it's a challenge or something, but when the horse is starting to gallop, it's not snarling or anything! So I think that there's a certain sort of sense in which we want to reserve the aggressiveness for the [later] scenes;⁷³

In Pay's view, as well as the imagery of charging horses, Goehr's use of *fortissimo-piano* dynamic markings in the opening of the work sets the scene of the crusades:

[The dynamics are] sort of representative of nobility and pride, and the sort of address to the code of chivalry, let's say, of knights and that sort of thing. It's a sort of seriousness of purpose and all the rest of it, so it doesn't want to be too screamy.⁷⁴

Dramatic action is also suggested by Goehr's use of the indication *quasi martellato* (bar 13), a term usually used in string playing, meaning literally 'hammered'. Thus the rhythmic figures, the dynamics, and Goehr's use of expressive instructions create a rich sound world strongly rooted in the *Il Combattimento* narrative.

The 'Guerra' episodes: 'Trying to be two people at the same time'

The two *Guerra* sections are immediately comparable to their counterparts in *Il Combattimento* through the use of repeated semiquaver iterations. The first *Guerra* episode is the most highly charged section of *Paraphrase*, opening with aggressive

⁷³ Interview, 10 January 2013.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

repeated *piano* and *pianissimo* semiquavers interjected with *sforzando* acciaccaturas (Fig. 4.2; **Audio example 4.3**).



Figure 4.2. Interjecting *sforzando* iterations in *Guerra* (bar 68) (Goehr [1969] 1973: 4).

The strict march-like metre of this new episode contrasts starkly with the previous rhythmically flexible passage. The following discussion will consider the way Pay understands the notational details in the score as characterising Tancredi and Clorinda’s battle, and the approach he took to rendering them in performance. Pay views the contrasting dynamics of these phrases as representing the two protagonists:

It’s quite an unnatural musical gesture it seems to me, to go [sings bar 69] but it makes you think ‘What’s going on here?’ It doesn’t sound natural as a thing played by one instrument, but it does sound natural if you interpret it as two things going on at the same time. It’s quite hard to do that but then I think that that’s the problem that [Goehr] sets us really. You can do it, but you have to spend quite a lot of time trying to be two people at the same time.⁷⁵

These dual characters are suggested more literally later on in the *Guerra* sections where the music divides into two quaver lines superimposed over each other, one at *subito fortissimo* and the other *pianissimo* (bars 81 and 130; see Fig. 4.3 and **Audio example 4.4**; Fig. 4.4 and **Audio example 4.5**).

⁷⁵ Ibid.

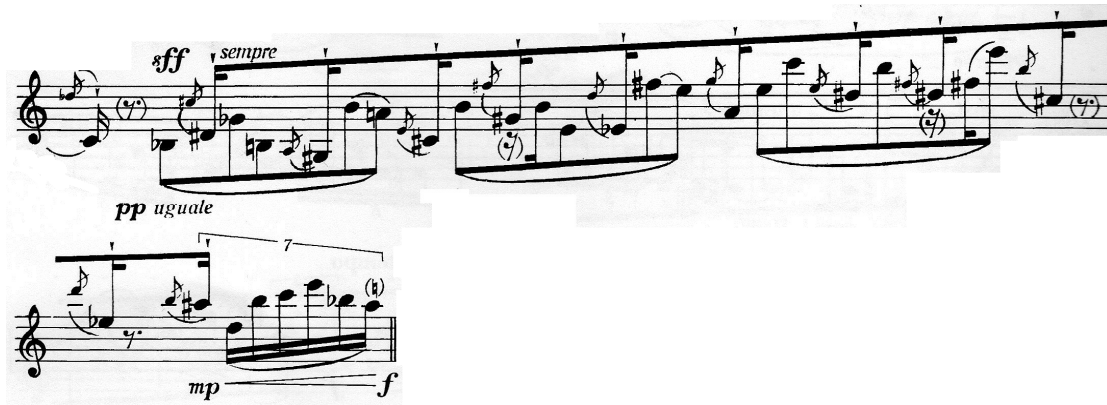


Figure 4.3. Second half of first *Guerra* (bar 81) (Goehr [1969] 1973: 5).

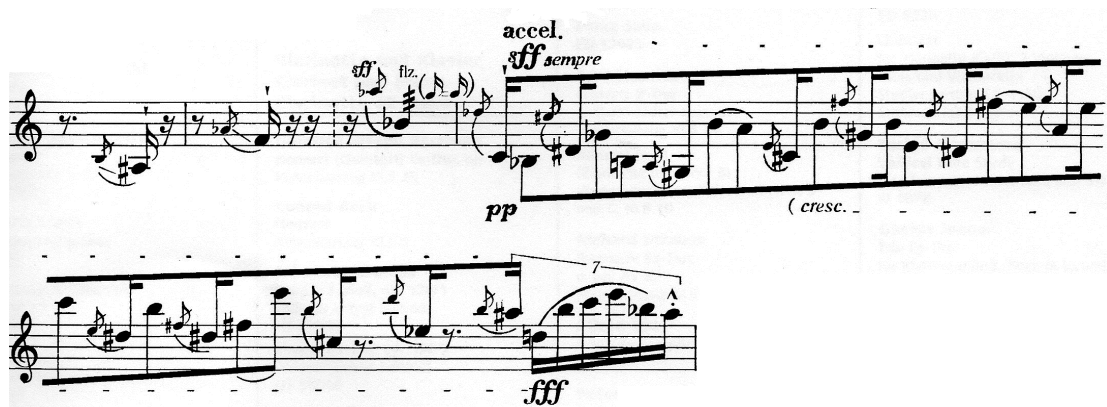


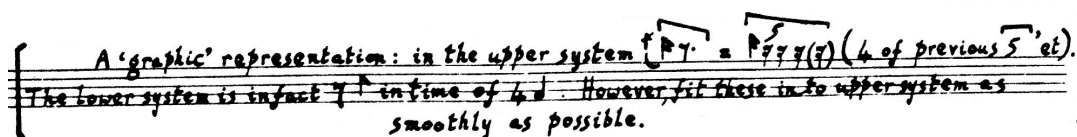
Figure 4.4. Second half of second *Guerra* (bar 130) (Goehr [1969] 1973: 7).

Pay views these passages as ‘explicitly represent[ing] Tancredi and Clorinda simultaneously: the one of them making violent gestures that I think of as sword-slashes, whilst the other rises gently’ (2009a), a characterisation reinforced by the contrasting the dynamic indications, but the identity of the protagonists is not always clear-cut:

There’s a sort of issue as to who is who. You don’t want Tancredi always to be winning because pretty clearly in the story, they’re equal aren’t they? He wins in the end but she damages him as well. And so you don’t want her always to be the *pianissimo* line, so I don’t necessarily identify the *pianissimo* line with Clorinda. I imagine that perhaps they shift around. [...] [I]n fact indeed, Clorinda, if we imagine it to be her, she here [sings bar 126] So this lower line, having been

piano to start with, suddenly becomes *sforzando* [...] So it's not all one-sided: one of them being loud and the other being soft.⁷⁶

Pay's conception of these episodes is influenced by his copy of a manuscript of *Paraphrase* (Goehr n.d.) that predates the 1973 Schott edition, written in what appears to be a copyist's hand.⁷⁷ This manuscript includes performance directions relating to the two-part notation in both passages that do not appear in the Schott edition (Fig. 4.5 and 4.6).

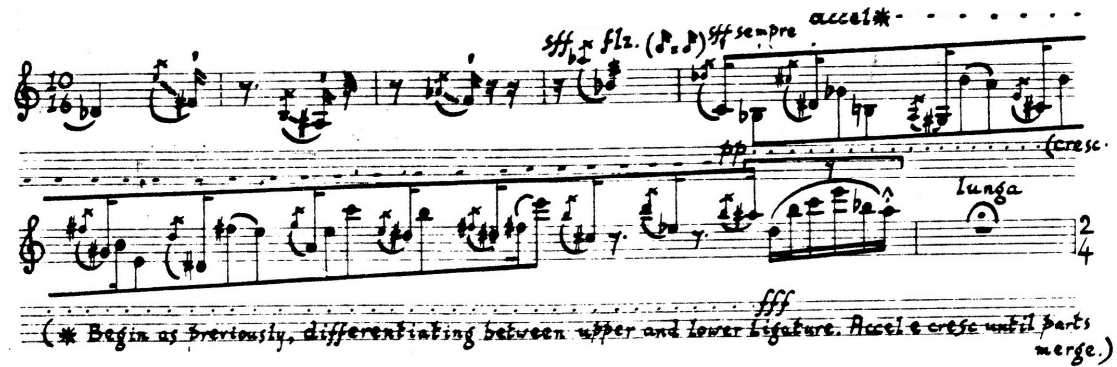


[A 'graphic' representation: in the upper system the semiquavers at quaver intervals occur every four quintuplets of the previous tempo. The lower system is in fact seven quavers in the time of four crotchets. However, fit these into the upper system as smoothly as possible.]

Figure 4.5. First performance direction regarding two-part passage in Pay's manuscript (bar 81) (Goehr n.d.: 5).

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Goehr agrees that this manuscript is likely to have been written by a copyist (the autograph score has been lost). When I drew his attention to the discrepancies between Pay's manuscript and the Schott edition, he stated '[The publisher] probably forgot it and I probably didn't notice it when I was proofreading' (Interview, 12 November 2012).



[Begin as previously, differentiating between the upper and lower ligature. *Accel* and *cresc* until parts merge.]

Figure 4.6. Second performance direction regarding two-part passage in Pay’s manuscript (bar 130) (Goehr n.d.: 7).

For Pay, these directions suggest a way of tackling the notation and reinforce his conviction that the music expresses two characters simultaneously. On its first appearance the upper line is marked *sforzando sempre* and the lower *pianissimo uguale*; when it returns in bar 123, the upper line is marked *sforzando sempre* and the lower line *pianissimo*, crescendoing to *fortississimo*. Pay reads these dynamics as further representation of the two duellists. The points of intersection between the two lines signify the blows of battle between the two protagonists, in Pay’s words, the ‘Fast sword stokes [...] “Wha! Wha! Wha!”’⁷⁸ Goehr’s indications create a metric modulation into an accelerated tempo at bar 82, where the battle reaches its climax. After this point, there are brief moments of altercation, for example, in bar 87 (Fig. 4.7; **Audio example 4.6**), where the abrupt shifts in dynamics – the ‘feeble [*mezzo forte*] gesture’ enabling the opponent to ‘leap in and take advantage of it’ – suggest a struggle between the two characters.

⁷⁸ Interview, 10 January 2013.



Figure 4.7. Abrupt dynamic changes suggesting an altercation (bar 87) (Goehr [1969] 1973: 5).

As well as finding opportunities to express aspects of the narrative at the micro-level through gestural and dynamic detail, Pay also intended to convey a broader structural impulse that adheres to the score whilst simultaneously portraying the *Il Combattimento* programme. Examination of tempo indications in the two *Guerra* sections reveals several highly explicit ‘gear changes’ to progressively faster tempi in the first version that are missing in the return. This difference, which Pay considers to have been mostly ignored in recordings of the piece, corresponds to the plot, where the protagonists are increasingly exhausted in the second fight, and digging into their ‘last resources’. He discusses this in his performance notes:

The ‘Guerra’ section plainly occurs in two versions, one modulating metrically into an accelerated tempo, and one not. (The second one is therefore ‘more tired’, as in the story.) In my view this should be made clear; but it is not, in any recorded performance I’ve heard.⁷⁹

He used the indicated ratios in the score to devise tempo plans for the sections (Tables 4.1 and 4.2).

⁷⁹ Pay’s personal performance notes, 10 January 2013.

Bar number	Indication in score	Tempo
68-71	<i>Moderato, marziale</i>	♩=50
72-3		♩.=67
74-77		♩ _{of 5} =83
78-79	(♩ = ♩.of 5)	♩=83
80		♩=104
81		Upper line ♩=83
		Lower line ♩=146

Table 4.1. Pay's tempo plan for first *Guerra* section (bars 68-81).



Bar number	Indication in score	Tempo
116-119	<i>Moderato, marziale</i>	♩=50
120-121		♩.=67
122-125		♩ _{of 5} =83
126-129	(♩=♩)	♩=50
130		Upper line ♩=40
		Lower line ♩=70

Table 4.2. Pay's tempo plan for second *Guerra* section (bars 116-130).

Pay's calculations show that because of the ♩=♩ indication in bar 126, when the *Guerra* episode returns later in the piece (bars 116-130) the metric modulation is omitted and the passage lacks the sense of momentum of its earlier appearance. By mapping out the changes of tempo in this way, Pay was able to shape the broader

Paraphrase according to his characterisation of Monteverdi's dramatic narrative. The fight continues to the last bar, where insistent *forte* D₄ acciaccaturas punctuate the gradually fading semiquaver line:

That D₄ comes back; perhaps said this time by Tancredi; perhaps that's [Clorinda] dying. And then [sings final phrase] it's sort of like he can't let go of his crusader-like personality, even right at the very end. It's still obstinately there.⁸⁰

In the *Guerra* episodes the performer must find a way to achieve a polyphony that is impossible to realise literally on a monophonic instrument. Pay devised a rhythmic device in order to deduce the precise 7:4 relationship and to pace the two passages against each other effectively. Rather than fit the seven quavers into the four crotchets as Goehr suggests, a process that Pay views as 'tricky to get right [because] we're not used to thinking in sevens, [his approach was to] do it the other way around: namely, to fit four crotchets into seven quavers'⁸¹ by subdividing each quaver into seven demisemiquavers. He then calculated the relative tempos of each line so that he could effectively ascertain the cross-rhythm of seven against four. By subdividing the rhythm in this way, Pay could devise corresponding tempos for the two lines. He explained this process further in interview:

If you want the top line to be ♩ = 83, then the bottom line has to be at ♩ = 146. [...] It sort of seems a bit complicated but all that you do is you write this rhythm [Fig. 4.8] [...] When you do that, it does sound as though the 'cha' [downbeat] is occurring at equal intervals you see. Whereas otherwise it's quite difficult to fit this in properly.⁸²

⁸⁰ Interview, 10 January 2013.

⁸¹ Email correspondence from AP to EP, 22 May 2014.

⁸² Interview, 10 January 2013.



Figure 4.8. Pay's transcription of the rhythmic figure to calculate the relative cross-rhythm in bars 81 and 130.

Pay's comment 'all that you do is...' reveals his high degree of familiarity and intimacy with his material. Indeed, his manuscript contains additional markings in connection with these calculations (Fig. 4.9).

A 'graphic' representation: in the upper system $\{7\} = 7 \times 7 (7)$ (4 of previous 5' et).
 The lower system is in fact $7 \uparrow$ in time of $4 \downarrow$. However, fit these in to upper system as smoothly as possible.

Figure 4.9. *Guerra* (bars 78-82) (Goehr n.d.: 5).

Pay's annotations here serve three functions: the heavier black lines 'box in' the crotchet pulse that continues at the same tempo throughout the bar; the vertical arrows occur at the points where the seven and the four intersect; and the rhythmic indications along the top of the line relate to Pay's subdivision of the four quavers into seven demisemiquavers.

These sorts of calculations not only show a close engagement with the score in order to seek out practical solutions to notational ‘problems’; they are also tightly bound up with Pay’s conception of the extramusical narrative that he ascribes to the music. His workings out in this way are not in pursuit of accuracy for its own sake. In fact, since making the recording, he has expressed a degree of dissatisfaction with this passage, stating,

It seems to me that though the strict instructions of the score are obeyed, I didn’t fully ‘inhabit’ the character of the pianissimo participant (who I assume to be Clorinda). I think I've done it better in previous live performances; and given another shot, I'd make the sound of that line more focussed, and therefore more representative of an almost equal combatant.⁸³

For Pay then, careful attention to a score can be a powerful means through which to release a free and ‘creative’ performance: the two activities are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

Pay’s detailed consideration of the notation leads to the broader question of how working with the score does not just build a familiarity with it, but is also a process of personal development and acquiring a sense of ownership. Re-transcription of musical material is perhaps the most explicit evidence of the problem-solving/-finding activity discussed in the previous chapter. In some cases, however, it is questionable whether the performers’ markings serve to simplify the score or make it more complex. In Archbold (2011) we see what Irvine Arditti describes as ‘kitchen table pre-rehearsal analysis’ where the performers re-transcribe Ferneyhough’s score, making ‘mathematical calculations to simplify the understanding of the music for us – change bar lengths, change tempi – in order that we can more clearly access what Brian wants’ (2011). Although Arditti views this process as one of clarification that

⁸³ Email correspondence from AP to EP, 22 May 2014.

enables the musicians to elucidate the composer's intentions more effectively, it is questionable whether the performers' annotations simplify the material, or show an attempt to reclaim it for themselves. There is a sense of the performers asserting their authority over the music: reclaiming the musical material and demonstrating their expertise. In this way, the score becomes a territory on which the performer's markings are evidence of a tightening up of ownership over the piece. This way of working is indicative of the limitations of notation — an extra layer of labour on the part of the performer is needed in order to clarify or to realise the music. It also suggests a broader ethical imperative; indeed, the ethical dimension of Pay's performance agenda is a subject I pursue further in the following discussion.

4.3. Making the recording

The recording was made in a two-hour session in Magdalen College Auditorium, Oxford, with only Pay and myself present, and was edited into a final version by Nick Parker, a classical recording editor and producer. This section examines the knowledge and decisions that played a role in constructing Pay's recording, in particular, his relationship to his tools. Making a recording that successfully represented Pay's conception of *Paraphrase* involved continual engagement with a variety of practical details, such as the instruments and materials at his disposal, and their function within the performance environment. Rather than viewing this 'action' stage as separate from the 'conception' stage, however, the practical considerations of crafting the recording underscore how the practical and the aesthetic are closely intertwined. What's more, and as I discuss, Pay's pragmatic decisions point towards a wider ethical imperative that underpins his stance on performance.

Video example 4.1 is a clip from the recording session with Pay playing the first nine bars of the piece. The recording session inevitably deviated from the conventional model (for example, see Barrett 2010: 95) of classical music production, in that I assumed the role of quasi-sound engineer. However, undertaking the recording process in this way had a number of advantages: there were no time constraints, which allowed Pay the opportunity to record as many takes as he felt necessary; moreover, the absence of a professional sound producer gave Pay greater control over the recording process, particularly with regard to the placement of the microphone, which had significant implications for the timbre of the clarinet on the final recording. Pay commented:

It's very unusual for me to be able to say 'Well actually I think that sounds much too close', because the bloke who's doing the balancing won't let me do that. He's got his own idea of what he wants it to sound like. And so the idea that we could move the microphone that far away and that I would then be satisfied with it. He says 'Oh it sounds boring! I want to give the listener the illusion that they're right up close to the player.' I don't want that! [...] So what he wanted from my recording is different from what I want. It's his job you see.⁸⁴

This remark at the end of the session underscores the macro-social dynamics at work in a more conventional recording studio, and reflects the tensions that might arise between a producer and performer with conflicting recording aesthetics.

Whereas Pay's preparation had focussed largely on aspects of tempo, phrasing, and dynamics, in the recording situation his primary concern was 'what it sounds like' – namely, the timbral quality.⁸⁵ During interview in the week before the recording session, he commented on how he had spent time weighing up the sonic possibilities of his choice of instrument against its practical properties:

⁸⁴ Recording session, 15 January 2013.

⁸⁵ Interview, 10 January 2013.

I tried it on a number of different [instruments]; I've hesitated between one thing and another. The instrument that I'm probably playing it on [an 1889 Buffet] has got some notes which are not so good for some bits of the piece. But on the other hand, I think the way in which the instrument responds probably allows me to get better nuances. It's just that you choose an instrument, if you have a few lying around, which seems to give you the most possibilities.⁸⁶

On the day of the recording session Pay described his continuing indecision regarding which instrument and mouthpiece to use:

I was fiddling around with mouthpieces and instruments until the middle of the morning yesterday. I still don't know what's going to be the best thing.⁸⁷

He eventually decided to use his modern Buffet clarinet, rather than the older model, because it offered greater reliability, and consistency of sound and intonation. A similarly pragmatic approach was expressed in his choice of reed. When I asked him about the type of reed he was using (a brand called Pilgerstorfer), he initially responded 'It doesn't matter what it is really', before proceeding to describe its physical affordances and their effect on the timbral and multiphonic possibilities:

[It's] a different sort of reed. It's heavier; [...] The chords work differently on this sort of reed. It's a German-style reed so it's heavier along its length; it doesn't get thin towards the tip. [The sound is] less shiny; it's more homogeneous.⁸⁸

These comments suggest a more embodied and practically directed approach to the tools and materials he had at his disposal. This perspective is further exemplified in the following statement from a more recent interview we conducted on the subject of historical instruments:

You can always choose a different reed, mouthpiece, setup, to bias an instrument more in one direction or more in another direction. You might want to say, 'This instrument, for a given mouthpiece, is brighter than that instrument', but that doesn't mean to say that you

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Recording session, 15 January 2013.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

can't do something about that. That's just true, it seems to me. It's like the whole ligature question: people say 'This ligature is better than that ligature'. If you take one reed and change lots of ligatures you can say 'Well actually I prefer this ligature to that one', but if you take another reed then that one's better. It's a question of what you want the thing to do.⁸⁹

Although this comment relates to period instrument performance, it could be applied equally to Pay's approach to tools in the present case study. Pay's outlook on instrument technology favours a pragmatic position – he chooses the tool that enables him to carry out the task most effectively. But it is important to note that he does not overstate the significance of tools as influencing his creative agency. This emphasis on practical expediency suggests that his sound quality would be the result of close engagement with the tools and materials at his disposal, rather than the tool itself. During performance, Pay is concerned with the work of *making* the sound, rather than the tools that he employs to make the sound.

A particular topic for discussion that emerged during the session were Pay's technical decisions, particularly relating to the harmonic notes and multiphonics. Having the clarinet in his hand, Pay was able to demonstrate his choices of fingerings, for instance, for the A5 at the end of bar 26 (**Video example 4.2**). His eventual choice, based on a harmonic of A₃ (the root of the preceding *glissando*), offered a technical advantage in that it allowed him to make the smoothest transition through the *glissando* to the concluding A5. Far from being fixed and predetermined, his experimentation with different fingering configurations evidence continual adjustments and adaptations to his performance strategy. Another intersection between technical pragmatism and interpretive choice was exemplified by Pay's

⁸⁹ Interview, 13 April 2015.

approach to playing the multiphonic B3 quaver in bar 38 that occurs at the bottom of a descending F6 *glissando* (Fig 4.10; [Audio example 4.7](#)).



Figure 4.10. Descending F6 *glissando* to multiphonic B3 quaver (bar 38) (Goehr [1969] 1973: 4).

The effect is not technically possible to execute on a B3 and Pay explained that since ‘there isn’t really a very sensible interpretation of the B multiphonic’, he had decided to change the fundamental note to C4 in order to retain the multiphonic effect. This solution meant adjusting Goehr’s indications in the score in order to produce a sounding result that was both technically achievable and which Pay found convincing. His approach here is comparable the problem-solving/-finding activity discussed above suggested by his notational engagement. In contrast to the mathematical calculations, however, here Pay reformulated his approach in relation to the physical resistance he encountered on account of the notation’s technical ambiguity.

Somewhat paradoxically, one area of the piece emerged as being of particular concern for Pay during the recording session which had not been apparent during the preparation stage was what appears to be one of the least complex phrases in the piece: the repeated semiquaver march-like gesture that appears at the beginning of the *Guerra* sections (bars 68-70 and 115-17; see Fig. 4.2). Towards the end of the recording session Pay indicated that he wanted to record some more takes of these sections ([Video example 4.3](#)). He spent time experimenting with dynamics and

articulation, and it took several trials and repeats in order to execute the phrasing evenly enough that he felt satisfied. Pay's comments (for example, 'I never did that as perfectly as I imagined I want to do it') draw attention to his aspiration for quality, and underscore the challenges that can lie in realising apparently simple notation.

As well being driven by musical ends, the decisions Pay made during the recording process were motivated equally by a desire to find workable solutions to practical challenges of realising the score in performance, including employing the most appropriate tool, devising solutions to fingering problems, and adapting his approach in order to hone certain phrases. Yet, Pay's way of working was not just about knowing how to bring about a given end by the most efficient means. While this is evidently one aspect of performance, Pay's creative engagement with the concrete demands of the performance situation goes further in expressing an essentially ethical dimension of performance. Indeed, such a philosophy is manifest in the following two quotations that Pay gave me during one of our interviews. The first is from the conductor Rudolf Kempe, with whom Pay worked for ten years as principal clarinetist of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra; and the second is from a volume by Charles Rosen, *The Frontiers of Meaning* (1998):

One must not search, one must find. Searching implies conscious manipulation. Finding is a result of devotion to a composer and his music. (Rudolf Kempe)⁹⁰

It is the moral duty of a performer to choose what he thinks is the musically superior version, whatever the composer's clearly marked intention – it is also the moral responsibility of a pianist to try to convince himself that the composer knew what he was doing. (Rosen 1998: 22)

Both texts point to one of the core principles of craft: the moral imperative to do good work (Sennett 2008), and both invoke an asceticism in their focus on the composer.

⁹⁰ This quotation does not have a published source.

Elsewhere, Pay (2009b) has elaborated on his position in relation to Rosen's statement:

The two halves of [Rosen's] dichotomy speak to us as moral beings, telling us that there is no easy answer. We have to engage with each case on its own merits – and for ourselves. Another way of saying it is that you can do what you like – but that you must not underestimate the difficulty of finding out what you REALLY like. (Pay 2009b)

Here Pay suggests that performers should possess the self-discipline to be sceptical of their own personal judgement, and instead work to exacting standards. Anthony Gritten (2000) understands Rosen's position on the nature of musical experience as indicative of *phronesis*: an Aristotelian concept of 'practical wisdom, or the cultivation of memory and moral judgement' constituted by 'individual and unrepeatable acts of care and attention.' (2000: 48). Pay's performance philosophy exhibits similar characteristics: his sense of moral responsibility is underpinned by a pragmatism evidenced by his motivation to find, in his words, 'sensible' and 'workable' solutions in the reality of performance. Thus musicians should exhibit ingenuity in performance by being versatile, subtle, and adaptable. While advocating the responsibility of the performer, the statements on performance from Kempe and Rosen are striking in the authority they attribute to the composer, and it is to the relationship between performer and composer that I turn now.

4.4. 'It's got to fill the gap that I felt was there'

Having traced the creative and technical decisions from Pay's preparation to the recording process, this final section presents the reflections of the performer and composer on the finished recording, before moving onto a wider discussion of their views on nature of performance. In this case study then, could it be argued that the creative authority lay with Pay, downplaying Goehr's ownership of the work once the

compositional process was complete? Yet, as the following discussion shows, the boundaries of creative ownership are not quite as clear-cut as they might seem.

Once the final recording had been made, Pay uploaded it to his SoundCloud site (Pay 2013b) and posted on an online clarinet discussion forum (Pay 2013a), explaining about the project and asserting somewhat provocatively:

I'm putting it up as a statement of my own position with regard to performance. If you're interested, I invite you to look at the score, and compare what I did with what others have done. Or, you could just enjoy the piece. (Pay 2013a)

Pay's comment encapsulates his motivation for making a recording that differs from existing ones, and emphasises the primacy of the score. In interview, he expressed a similar view on his ambition for the recording:

It's got to fill the gap that I felt was there, and if it doesn't then it's just me playing it. So what? [...] I don't want people to listen to my recording and do it like that; it's just that it represents a side of the argument about what we think music is about in the first place.⁹¹

These statements reflect the dual purpose that Pay ascribes to the recording: on one level it functions as a representation of his interpretation of *Paraphrase*, which expresses a different perspective in comparison to existing recordings, and thus makes a contribution to how the piece is understood. More broadly, however, the recording can be understood as a statement on the relationship between the performer and the score, embodying Pay's wider stance on performance.

Goehr and Pay met some months after the editing session to discuss the finished recording. When asked for his view on Pay's interpretation of *Paraphrase*, Goehr's response was extremely positive: 'I thought it was lovely. I've listened to it

⁹¹ Interview, 12 February 2013.

two or three times. I thought it was very convincing. Wonderful.’⁹² A particular element that he commented on was Pay’s use of silence in the fermatas: ‘They’re very striking because they’re very exactly observed.’⁹³ Goehr also remarked on the differences in interpretation of Pay’s recording in comparison to that of Hacker:

I think your performance, I said it was classical: it was in opposition to Alan’s, which I wouldn’t describe as classical in any sense. I’d describe it as rather expressionistic, and there’s a lot of his clarinet improvisations where the *glissandos* and the false fingerings and all the rest of it [...] create a kind of expressionist effect. [AP agrees] And I don’t think that’s really what you’re after.⁹⁴

In describing Pay’s recording as ‘classical’ and the fermatas as ‘exactly observed’, Goehr’s comments seem to acknowledge Pay’s approach of close attention to the tempo, dynamic, and rhythmic indications in the score, and the way in which the performance is driven by a structural impulse, in contrast to Hacker’s arguably more florid but also more liberal response to the notation.

Goehr seemed to have a conception of *Paraphrase* that corresponded less explicitly with the dramatic narrative of *Il Combattimento* than Pay’s. In an earlier interview, when I suggested that Pay conceived of the dual lines of the *Guerra* sections as representative of the two characters, Goehr responded ‘You could call it that but it’s just out of Bach, it’s just writing polyphony for one instrument. [...] I didn’t [imagine it as representing two characters] but that’s neither here nor there, if that helps him to realise the polyphony.’⁹⁵ During the discussion, Pay questioned Goehr more deeply about his intentions regarding the relationship between *Paraphrase* and *Il Combattimento*, appearing almost to seek Goehr’s authorisation of his interpretation.

⁹² Discussion, 4 April 2013.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Interview, 12 November 2012.

- AP I sort of hesitate to ask this question in a way. I approach this piece in rather a naïve sort of way perhaps, in that what I clearly try to do is be two people at once, and I try to sort of separate the way in which I play one line from another line, whether it's *echotone* and *normale*, or whether it's *ppp* or *piano*, whether it's sword strokes or whatever they are, and something else which is quite often very quiet but sometimes resists. Now, did you have that sort of thing in mind or was it compositionally generated? I know, if you've got two people and they're having a fight I suppose it's normal to think that you try and characterise one and the other, and dynamic difference and tonal difference is a very noticeable thing. Most people don't do it as much as I tried to do it. Do you approve of me trying to do it more, or not?
- AG I think, obviously the inspiration of this piece, the episode in the Tasso. There is a man and there is a girl, and the girl's dressed up as a warrior too, and they're fighting and then she dies; and it's a very moving little episode. It moved Monteverdi and it moved Tasso come to that. And Monteverdi picked it out to do that. And so I was bound as I was involved with the Monteverdi, to reflect that, and to do it too. I'm not a scholar. I wasn't trying to make a literal reproduction. I was just like a butterfly who settled on that flower and picked up little bits here and there, and then flew off again. So I can't remember now to what extent, but I was moved by bits and I was trying to realise them so that if you tried to characterise – which is what you're saying I think – different parts according to some extramusical thing (the text in this case), it's as if it were a vocal work. You're providing the voice and words to some extent. That's good, if it enriches it, it's good.
- AP Did you always think that Clorinda was the *pianissimo* one and Tancredi was;
- AG Yes basically I didn't have a very advanced view of the sexes at that time!
- AP Every now and again I think to myself 'I've got to have Clorinda fight back here', because she wouldn't always be on the defensive. She wounded him as well.
- AG Yes indeed, but on the other hand, as far as I can think back to the time, it wasn't that.⁹⁶

Goehr's responses suggest that his view of the connection between the two works corresponds with Pay's to a certain degree, but in a looser manner.⁹⁷ For Goehr, the *Il*

⁹⁶ Discussion, 4 April 2013.

Combattimento plot served as compositional inspiration with regard to the narrative and certain aspects of characterisation, but this does not extend down to the micro-level details that Pay draws on in his interpretation. Their discussion confirms the interrelation of *Paraphrase* and *Il Combattimento*, although in a less clearly defined manner than Pay's reading of the music, which was motivated by a more explicit imagining of the dramatic narrative.

The foregoing discussion has suggested that Pay's attitude towards performance shows a strong commitment to the score, yet this is not to suggest that he views the performer's role as one of subservience. Indeed, he firmly states that 'I certainly would not want to reduce a player's role to that of "reproducing the text"' (Pay 2013a). Rather, in striving to render the notation effectively he finds opportunities to develop a highly personal interpretation of the music that he finds convincing, whilst in his view, remaining faithful to what has been written. He stated,

I think that the most crucial thing about the business of playing is that you use yourself in the process of finding solutions. You get presented with the composer's text, and then you have, as it were, to find a territory that corresponds to the map that is that text. There are many possible territories; but your job – in real time – is to find the one that is the most convincing. Your job is not to change the map, or express your 'self'. You express 'it'. Your 'self' is what you can never avoid.⁹⁸

Indeed, here, and in interview, Pay's description of the score as 'a map but not a complete realisation',⁹⁹ is revealing. A map, as Pay asserts, is a tool which is used to navigate a territory. Although the coordinates of a map might seem fixed, the map-holder might choose any number of pathways, depending on the lay of the land. Routes might be suggested by the map, but the journey is not predetermined. In this way, the score is ascribed the role of a tool within the performance process, albeit a

⁹⁷ It should also be acknowledged that Pay's perspective is likely to have been influenced by his recent rehearsals of the work, whereas Goehr is reflecting on a piece of music that he composed over forty years ago.

⁹⁸ Interview, 10 April 2012.

⁹⁹ Interview, 10 January 2013.

starting point. His statement echoes Bateson's argument in his essay 'Form, substance and difference' ([1972] 2000), on how a map can only ever be an imperfect representation of the territory it attempts to depict:

We say the map is different from the territory. But what is the territory? Operationally, somebody went out with a retina or a measuring stick and made representations which were then put on paper. What is on the paper map is a representation of what was in the retinal representation of the man who made the map; and as you push the question back, what you find is an infinite regress, an infinite series of maps. The territory never gets in at all. [...] Always, the process of representation will filter it out so that the mental world is only maps of maps, ad infinitum. ([1972] 2000: 460-61)

Pay's attention to the 'map' afforded him the opportunity to realise his own representation of the music; not to achieve a literal 'reproduction' of a text, but a performance as an emergent and changeable event. For Pay, this process is best summed up by the verb, 'to realise', in the sense of making real, or bringing to life: 'I think it's in the word "realise" that that notion of creativity lives, because you make it real in the sense that it is what it originally started out as. Not turned into marks on a piece of paper'.¹⁰⁰ Realising a performance involves a deep engagement with musical material in order to take ownership of it. As Pay himself summarises his relationship to the score: 'What we're doing is we're bringing something which is dead – on a piece of paper – and we're bringing it to life; we're making it come alive. That's as creative as you can get.'¹⁰¹ Indeed, during discussion of Pay's approach to tempo in the two *Guerra* sections, he justified this decision as being led by the score:

It seems to me that Sandy has invited me to. I don't feel as though I'm imposing anything there because it's just what's in the score.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Discussion, 4 April 2013.

¹⁰¹ Interview, 10 April 2012.

¹⁰² Interview, 10 January 2013.

While this statement emphasises self-discipline and appears to assign creative control to Goehr, and away from Pay, his suggestion of the score functioning as an invitation also conveys a sense of intimacy that can be cultivated with a composer through close attention to the score.

Goehr's apparent reluctance to have an involvement in the recording process, as discussed in the opening of this chapter, warrants further discussion. Although unreservedly positive about Pay making a recording of the work – stating 'It would be lovely. He's such a good clarinettist and he's played it a great deal, and it's a shame that it isn't on record.'¹⁰³ – when asked whether he might attend the recording session, he appeared to ascribe limited significance to the role that he could play in the process. His comments such as, 'I couldn't contribute a great deal because Tony knows much more about the piece than I do' and 'I don't think I'd serve any great useful function' underplay the role Goehr might have in the process, and appear to give little weight to his authority. On the face of it, Goehr's statement could suggest that his role as a composer is perfunctory, but to dismiss it in this way would overlook the many close relationships with performers he has maintained during his career (not least with Hacker and Pay). Rather than reading this as a lack of interest, it surely reflects his regard for, and trust in, Pay's approach to performance, to the point that he was prepared to assign creative authority to the performer, because, as he put it, 'he knows it better than I do'. As he expressed later on in the same conversation:

That's the best thing that can happen to one in life, is that one – for a very short time possibly – relates to a performer, an instrumentalist or a singer, in such a way that it isn't you imposing on them, or them imposing on you, but something happens. And when I look back, that's made my justification for being a musician at all.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Interview, 12 November 2012.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

This comment expresses the significance that Goehr places on working with performers, which is fundamental to his work as a composer. He articulates here his sense of the mutuality of the composer-performer relationship, and his willingness to accept the many potentialities of performance.

While Pay and Goehr appeared to differ with regard to their perspectives on the nature of the roles and responsibilities of performers and composers, they both place a value on the highly skilled yet practical elements of performance. Goehr asserted to Pay:

I'm suggesting that you've got to find the solution that is viable when you've got your instrument in your mouth. I don't have an instrument in my mouth when I'm composing.¹⁰⁵

It is interesting that Goehr also described the role of the performer as 'finding solutions', which echoes Pay's earlier statement about the role of the performer (see page 114) and emphasises the pragmatic and embodied dimensions of performance.

Pay expressed a similar view of the relationship between composer and performer:

I would like to say that you set us problems which are worthwhile solving. The problem is to do with how we respond to something which is just a set of instructions, and to what extent we can make that be something alive, and that's the problem.¹⁰⁶

Pay seems to delight in opening up and problematizing his material. For him, there is an inherent value in challenging oneself, and a sense of pride is conveyed in the way he discusses his working practices, which go beyond a concern with mere technical accuracy.

A final area of discussion that emerged between Goehr and Pay concerned questions of creative authority and ownership. Goehr's stance on the performance of

¹⁰⁵ Discussion, 4 April 2013.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

his music seemed strikingly open, in contrast to the authoritarian position commonly ascribed to composers. Indeed, in discussing the role of the performer, he stated:

I don't regard performers as clerks. They're not carrying out printed instructions. I want to know what they're going to do, how they react, and therefore the performances can be very different, and I'm prepared to learn from them. I don't want to impose on them. [...] You see I think as a composer, when I write my double bar at the end, I've done my job.¹⁰⁷

Goehr's statements suggest that he regards the relationship between performer and composer as reciprocal, and that he views the performer as playing a valuable role in the creative process. When asked about his relationship to performers, Goehr replied:

I write pieces for performers. [...] The only people I care about are the performers because that's the only reality; if I go to a rehearsal and they're playing something of mine, then I'm tested very hard whether I got it right and whether what comes out more or less approximates to what I imagined. And that is part of the compositional process, but my part is finished when I write my score because I can't play it. [...] Because the performer, the instrumentalist has a life too, and therefore I've done my work when I've written my dots. And I don't necessarily have a fixed view of how it should be performed.¹⁰⁸

In contrast to Goehr's apparently flexible attitude, Pay was rather more reluctant to elevate the role of the performer:

But if I approach a piece by you [Goehr] and I say 'I have my own life, and I do it my way', I lose the possibility of finding more of my life in working at and trying to do what you've set me to do. [...] In the end what comes out of it is the result of my putting myself under the discipline of [a] piece. Then I still get to express myself, but more richly.¹⁰⁹

Pay's statement suggests that engaging more deeply with the music and putting himself under the discipline of the piece leads to a greater sense of agency, enabling him 'to express myself, but more richly'.

¹⁰⁷ Interview, 12 November 2012.

¹⁰⁸ Discussion, 4 April 2013.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

There are a number of contradictions at play in the above discussion, since on the one hand Pay seems to argue against the performer asserting herself in performance, whilst on the other he proclaims his sense of ownership through a close commitment to notational accuracy. How can Pay express himself without saying, as he puts it, ‘I have my own life, and I do it my way’? And how can his belief that the performer should start with what is written be reconciled with his disavowal of ‘reproducing the text’? What’s more, could Goehr’s apparently hands-off attitude be as much to do with a prevailing sense of confidence in his own underlying authority as his trust in Pay, since after all, his name will remain on the piece? In this particular situation the traditional roles of performer and composer are blurred, to say the least.

4.5. Conclusions

This case study has shown the ways in which Pay’s recording of *Paraphrase* emerged from a particular combination of factors, drawn from the circumstances in which the work was composed and first performed, and also related to his close consideration of elements of Goehr’s indications – tempo, dynamics, articulation, and timbre – and how these could be approached in relation to the dramatic scenario of *Il Combattimento*. In the recording these factors were recalled and synthesised within Pay’s performance, alongside practical considerations such as his choice of tools and technology within the recording environment.

While Goehr’s description of his potential attendance at Pay’s recording session as ‘purely a social occasion’ is an accurate characterisation of his place in the production of the recording, he underplays two collectively shaped histories that were crucial to it, and to which he alludes. First, the interpretative history of the piece, stretching back to Pay’s witnessing of the first performance and its impact on his own

interpretation; and second, the friendship and trust that characterise the personal history of the performer and composer. Yet, although Pay and Goehr have an unquestionably meaningful relationship through *Paraphrase*, it could not be described as collaborative in the conventional sense. There is a sense in which the creative process could be characterised as a close engagement between the performer, score, and composer, albeit distributed across temporal and spatial disruptions. Pay argues persuasively for the primacy of the score in a way that empowers the performer through problem-solving and -finding, and close engagement with notation. As Pay's 'personal statement' on performance, this recording provokes a reassessment of the relationship between the performer and the score. Moreover, it clearly goes well beyond 'filling a gap': it constitutes a diachronic encounter between performer and composer that brings to the surface the interdependence of the latent relationships – musical and social – that lie within this work. This problematization of the composer-performer relationship is a point to which I will return in chapter eight. While integrated composer-performer partnerships are a widespread phenomenon, and although Hacker and Goehr's relationship represents a more prototypical account of collaboration, Pay's recording reminds us of the convoluted, indistinct nature of joint work and is suggestive of ways in which we might widen the scope of collaboration as a concept. The composer may not have been present at the recording, but neither was he absent: the recording distils a significant collaborative attunement reached over a long period of time, and represents much more than, a 'social occasion'.

On a methodological point, my narrative has given less attention to my own participation in the recording session, and the involvement of Parker in editing the final recording. I will consider my role within the case studies as both a researcher and in some cases collaborator, and the potential tensions of this 'dual identity', in

greater depth in chapter eight. This is not to neglect the influence of such participants, but the aim of the case study was to focus on Pay's experience of preparing and making the recording, and the creative opportunities that arose in selected episodes, rather than to provide an exhaustive account of the production of the recording. Indeed, perhaps the most powerful aspect of the case study is the fact that Pay has clearly lived with *Paraphrase* for a number of decades; his sustained engagement with the piece is fundamental to his motivation behind, and his approach to, making his recording. By contrast, the following chapter explores the relationships between multiple instrumentalists in preparing a first performance within a much shorter timeframe.

Chapter 5

Rethinking creativity within notational ‘constraints’: *Four Duets*

Having opened the thesis with a case study that problematized the notion of collaboration in a number of ways, this chapter addresses an arguably more typical example of joint creative work. Like the previous chapter, this case study also examines the preparation of a performance using a score that has been composed beforehand. However, this is where their similarities end. Here, I examine the realisation of a first public performance through the face-to-face interactions between composer and instrumentalists. *Four Duets* for clarinet and piano (2012) was composed by Edmund Finnis for Mark Simpson and Víkingur Ólafsson, and commissioned by Simpson for his Martin Musical Scholarship Fund recital at the Royal Festival Hall on 8 December 2012 (**Video example 5.1**). Whereas the previous chapter drew on Pay’s sustained personal engagement with *Paraphrase* over the several decades since its composition, Simpson and Ólafsson worked with *Four Duets* within a much more compressed (but arguably more typical) timeframe: the performers received the score from Finnis in mid-November, and prepared the piece over three rehearsals during the week preceding its first performance, within an hour-long programme of twentieth- and twenty-first-century repertoire.¹¹⁰ Moreover, in the present case study, the composer had a more obviously active role in the rehearsal process, as he attended two out of the three rehearsals. But perhaps the most striking contrast between *Four Duets* and *Paraphrase* is the notational material. At first glance, *Four Duets* appears to present few technical challenges for performance, with Simpson describing the notation as being ‘deceptively simple’¹¹¹ and Ólafsson

¹¹⁰ The programme comprised Debussy’s *Première Rhapsodie* (1911), Poulenc’s Sonata for clarinet and piano (1962), Jonathan Harvey’s *Cirrus Light* (2012) for solo clarinet, and one of Simpson’s own compositions, *Echoes and Embers* for clarinet and piano (2012).

¹¹¹ Rehearsal, 5 December 2012.

agreeing that ‘It’s a pretty sparse score’.¹¹² Finnis suggested that the music looks ‘pretty simple on the page but to get the right atmosphere is really difficult [...] it takes a bit more time than it looks like it will’.¹¹³ While the score might appear outwardly spare, however, the apparent simplicity of the musical outcome was not reflected in the efforts involved to reach a successful outcome. The musicians worked meticulously with the score and the composer towards achieving specific goals in performance that were particularly centred on rhythmic coordination and sound quality. Drawing on dimensions of the craft-based framework of creativity proposed in chapter three, these two areas are the object of focus in the following discussion. The ways in which performance choices were reached and implemented reveal the everyday character of musical creativity, and illustrate the close relationship between the conceptual and the practical. Having explored and problematized the perceived creative affordances of notation, the chapter concludes with some broader reflections on the function of notation in the creative process.

The primary material¹¹⁴ on which this chapter is based consists of video recordings of the three rehearsals that took place before the premiere; a video recording of the final performance; and recorded semi-structured interviews that I undertook with the composer and performers. The second interview with Simpson included a Retrospective Verbal Protocol session, where he was presented with the audio-visual material of the rehearsals and invited to comment on it.

In considering the rehearsal practices of contemporary music, two publications outlined in chapter two are immediately relevant to the current case study, both of which examine the processes involved in realising a piece for performance from the moment of receiving the score. Clarke et al. (2005) document Thomas’s highly

¹¹² Interview, 4 February 2014.

¹¹³ Interview, 10 April 2013.

¹¹⁴ See Appendix III for a summary of the audio-visual material collected during fieldwork.

focussed approach to working with the score, and challenge the traditionally held view that notation serves as a fixed representation of the musical work. Instead, the authors propose that close engagement with notation can be understood as a creative act. Echoing Pay’s perspective on performance expressed in the previous chapter, Thomas’s position is articulated as follows: ‘that the notation is something to explore, within which as yet unknown discoveries can be made — but that those discoveries depend on engaging with the notation in detailed and serious terms’ (2005: 63). Bayley’s (2011) approach differs to that of Clarke et al. in that she analyses the co-present interaction that takes place between a composer and members of a string quartet in rehearsing a new work for its first public performance. She details the objects of discussion and the strategies employed by the musicians, demonstrating the crucial non-linear relationship between composer-performer discourse and performance practice in realising the work, summarising the findings of her study in a model of rehearsal (Fig. 5.1).

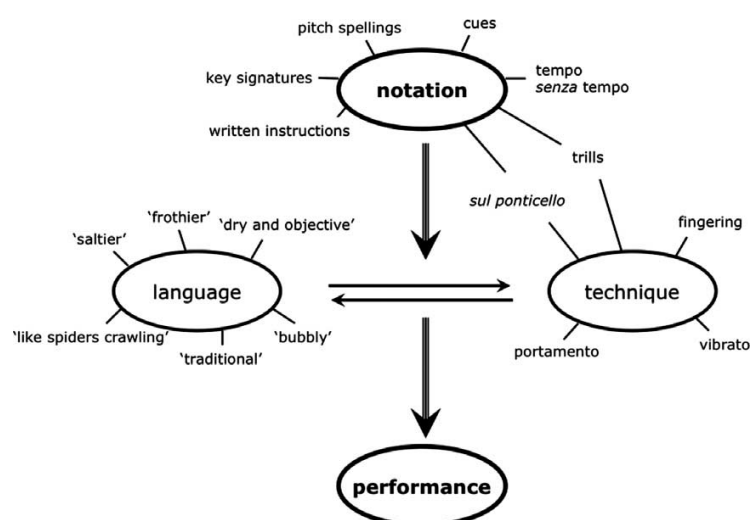


Figure 5.1. Bayley’s rehearsal model: ‘the path from notation to performance’ (2011: 405).

Despite drawing attention to the reciprocal relationship between language and action that facilitates the trajectory from score to performance, Bayley's model does not show the interconnectivity of these factors in a nuanced manner: for example, it does not account for the way in which some notational considerations might require a more flexible way of working, and others might be less negotiable. Moreover, as Bayley herself acknowledges, since in this particular case study her work drew solely on audio data,¹¹⁵ the model neglects the non-verbal and gestural dimensions of collaborative communication, which play a fundamental role in joint work (2011: 405). In an attempt to refine Bayley's model, the research presented here seeks to understand the relationships of immediacy within a more complex tangle of different factors – which aspects were apparently more fixed, and which were more ambiguous and thus more negotiable.

5.1. 'Working with parity': the material of *Four Duets*

Before Finnis began to write the music, he and Simpson had an initial workshop meeting¹¹⁶ which according to Finnis, centred on discussion of sounds.¹¹⁷ Finnis sought to avoid the traditional workshop model where the performer presents a range of techniques and effects to the composer, which are then employed within the subsequent piece, characterised by Fitch and Heyde as the performer giving the composer access to a 'box of tricks' (2007a: 93), commenting 'I don't like the idea of "OK, now we're going to go through all the extended techniques and you're going to

¹¹⁵ Indeed, more recent research analysing the interactions between members of the Kreutzer String Quartet and Finnis in realising his Third String Quartet (2007-9) (Bayley and Elverdam 2011, 2013) draws on audio-visual data.

¹¹⁶ The workshop meeting took place prior to the start of my research, and thus has not been documented.

¹¹⁷ Finnis and Ólafsson had not met in person before the first rehearsal.

pick some that you like...”.¹¹⁸ Indeed, the eventual clarinet part contained few extended techniques: a *glissando* between B₆ and C₆ in bar 60 and a *glissando* from B₄ to G₄ in the final bar. Finnis felt that to employ a number of effects in the context of these pieces would feel ‘contrived [...] I really don’t like it when you feel like an effect or a multiphonic is there to tick a box or to show your credentials [so that the audience might think] “Oh, he knows about that does he?”’.¹¹⁹ The score was in its final form when the performers received it in November, and no further revisions were made other than some corrections to minor errors of notation. Simpson ascribed little significance to his contribution to Finnis’s compositional process:

Ed had definitely heard me play. I don’t necessarily know what he thought of my playing or what he heard me play. [...] I don’t necessarily know what he was after. [...] I don’t know to what extent that affected his creative process.¹²⁰

As Finnis himself acknowledged, the material he wrote could not be attributed directly to a specific aspect of Simpson’s performance idiom, commenting that ‘I would be lying if I said that it was like “I know that he can do that and I wrote it like that with that in mind”’.¹²¹ Despite this firm separation between the roles of performer and composer and an apparent lack of tangible input from Simpson in terms of shaping the notational material, Finnis suggested that the project was underpinned by a sense of mutual aesthetic engagement between the two which was cultivated during their time together as composition students.¹²²

I don’t think I talked about [my ideas] with Mark specific to that piece, but then I think part of the reason that he asked me to write something anyway was that he just knew what I was about because we’d talked

¹¹⁸ Interview, 10 April 2013.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Interview, 16 January 2013.

¹²¹ Interview, 10 April 2013.

¹²² Finnis and Simpson both undertook postgraduate studies in composition with Julian Anderson at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

quite a lot anyway, and I guess in that sense he did know what sort of things trigger off music ideas for me.¹²³

At the outset then, it is apparent that Finnis and Simpson already had a sense of each other's musical aesthetics and working methods, and a degree of creative empathy was evident in their relationship. These factors implicitly played a role in the material that Finnis composed, and in the more explicitly collaborative engagement that took place in preparing the piece for performance.

The 'duet' aspect of *Four Duets* is evident in the way that Finnis approached the relationship between the two instrumental voices. He was motivated by a desire to avoid the conventional 'solo and accompaniment' texture that is often implicitly assumed with the combination of clarinet and piano. The instruments are presented as equal partners and their tessituras are matched, with a large proportion of the piano material pitched in the treble register. In a magazine interview shortly before the premiere, Finnis stated: 'That parity is something I've really enjoyed working with [...] When I started working on the piece I was thinking a lot about how I wanted to make those two sounds blend' (Stevens 2012: 21). Each of the four pieces focuses on the rhythmic and timbral interplay between the two instruments. Finnis creates constant but subtle tensions and resolutions of texture through his use of counterpoint and a close pitch correspondence between the two instruments.

'I (After Josquin des Prez)' is a slow canon, based on the opening of the eponymous composer's motet *Memor esto verbi tui*. Finnis extends the melody, which steadily ascends in pitch throughout the piece. 'II' is faster in tempo, almost a *perpetuum mobile*, comprised of three superimposed rhythmic cells in the clarinet and the right and left hand of the piano. Finnis described it as 'a polyrhythmic thing [...] a

¹²³ Interview, 10 April 2013.

sort of play with patterns' (Stevens 2012: 21). By contrast, in the third piece the two parts are in slow rhythmic unison, moving between quaver duplets, triplets and quintuplets. After the rhythmic displacement in the preceding two movements, the sense of synchrony here is particularly apparent. The clarinet has a more prominent role, with the piano instructed to 'shadow' its partner from the outset. Indeed, the *ppp* clarinet melody is almost completely doubled by the *pppp* right hand of the piano. 'IV' is another canon, but at a much faster tempo, with the clarinet melody displaced from the piano by a quaver, creating, in Finnis's words, 'an almost merged sound. I wanted it to seem like one instrument' (: 21). In our interview he described intending to evoke 'this perception of almost like a blurring or like a friction between two very close things'.¹²⁴

This sense of visual perception has particular compositional significance for Finnis, who described his approach as being influenced by the visual arts. He outlined these creative influences as follows:

[More recently] I get a lot of ideas from visual things. It's never in the way of synaesthesia; it's never like colour makes me think of a particular harmony or whatever. It's more like ideas about design and how things can be put together, and trying to think about sounds in quite a sort of neutral way. Not think about what is the most expressive melody that I can think of, but instead how can I treat a sound, in the case of that piece, two sound sources that are very different but kind of have some, to my ears, some weird connection at the same time. How can you make patterns out of them? And so, when I think about it in terms of patterns, then visual things become very suggestive.¹²⁵

Finnis described his approach as being influenced by artists such as Joseph Albers and Bridget Riley, particularly Riley's later works that employ colour such as *Achæan* (1981) or *Ra 2* (1981), where 'She has very carefully put together different colours

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

and put them side by side, and that's totally what I'm doing in [*Four Duets*].'¹²⁶

However, he felt that these aspects of his approach were purely personal to him: he did not discuss them with either Simpson or Ólafsson during the collaboration.

Neither did he view them as necessarily fixed: he described these references as being significant to him 'at the moment' or 'more recently'.

Finnis's concern with 'treat[ing] a sound' rather than necessarily producing an 'expressive melody' is evident in his approach to notation: the dynamic indications of *Four Duets* are abundant and carefully specified, but he is relatively sparing with expressive instructions. In the opening of 'IV', for instance, the clarinet is instructed to play '*legato*, "fusing" with piano dynamic', before *piu espressivo* is later indicated in bar 150 (Finnis 2012: 10). The score of the third piece contains the most performance directions, with the opening of the clarinet part marked '*ppp delicate*, yet quietly expressive echo tones' (: 8), but within a limited dynamic range. While not complex conceptually, these indications are certainly specific and require consideration, a characteristic of his notational style that Ólafsson observed:

[In the first piece] he has all these very refined dynamic markings. [...] You will see *pianissimo* in both parts and then he has these little hairpins with *poco* on all of them, and *simile*. And for me, immediately when I looked at the music, it's a pretty sparse score [...] he says 'Flexible, never rushed'. At the same time, while this should be flexible, he's also extraordinarily particular about the markings. So that immediately caught my attention: these sort of seemingly contradictory two elements, of flexibility and then very detailed markings.¹²⁷

For Ólafsson, part of the creative potential of the music arose from Finnis's approach to notation and his precise yet subtle performance instructions. He felt that working closely with a relatively fixed notation was a way to release a carefully considered and creative performance.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Interview, 4 February 2014.

I like very much, a very strict and strong framework within which you can actually be quite free. What I like about it is how highly defined all the decisions were, and to me that ultimately can lead to paradoxically as it may sound, more freedom. So if you actually have to work within a range of *pianississimo* or something and then you go to *pianissimo* or *mezzo forte* at most, that kind of framework can lead to some very specific details that in the end to me are very rewarding.¹²⁸

This precise yet understated notation sparked Ólafsson's curiosity, and also had a psychological effect by focussing his awareness on his playing: 'I like the fact that everything can be heard. [...] I like the fact that you can't get away with anything. [...] You feel you can't do an unnecessary gesture, [because] it'll be heard'.¹²⁹

Simpson agreed that the music had an exposed quality which was afforded by its restrained dynamic levels.

[The music is] all about subtlety. I suppose from a harmonic point of view it's relatively simple: it's very approachable, diatonic harmony. But what he does within that, the little interplays he has with these kind of motives are what gives the piece this alluring sophisticated texture on the top. It's so beguiling, I find it just really draws you in. It's hypnotic and mesmerising at the same time. [...] There were these very, very distanced, very frail sound worlds. [...] What I find interesting is actually the dynamic level of the whole piece is fairly consistent. It's pretty much *piano* all the way through apart from the odd outburst. It's this kind of fleeting (especially in the faster movements) this fleeting kind of change.¹³⁰

In light of Finnis's approach to notation, *Four Duets* offers the opportunity to examine the creative opportunities of working with apparently unambiguous and comprehensible notation. In the following sections, I examine the collaborative processes that are manifest in preparing *Four Duets* for performance with regard to two aspects: first, the rhythmic coordination between the two instruments; and second, the sound world of the four pieces.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Interview, 16 January 2013.

5.2. ‘Quintuplets are always a little bit dangerous’

The first rehearsal of the third piece presents an opportunity to observe the creative processes that were involved in working towards an apparently simple and fixed musical outcome at a very localised level. A significant proportion of this rehearsal¹³¹ was spent cultivating a mutually agreed shaping of rhythms in the movement, the first page of which is shown in Figure 5.2 below (**Video example 5.2**).

¹³¹ Approximately twenty-five minutes out of a rehearsal that lasted one hour and twenty-five minutes in total.

III.

Calm, focused ♩ = c.56

Clarinet in B♭

ppp delicate, yet quietly expressive
echo tones

Piano

pppp possibile sempre, 'shadowing' clarinet

Ped
Soft pedal throughout movement

115 (short) **E**

Cl.

(short) *5^{ma} 1 (loco)*

Pno.

120 rit. (long) **F** a tempo

Cl.

poco più espressivo

Pno.

rit. (long) a tempo

alternate freely between hands

125

Cl.

Pno.

Figure 5.2. 'III' (bars 110-128) (Finnis 2012: 8).

This is the slowest and most restrained movement of the work, and certainly the most exposed, with the clarinet instructed to play ‘*ppp delicate*, yet quietly expressive echo tones’ and the piano ‘*pppp possibile sempre*, “*shadowing*” *clarinet*’ (Finnis 2012: 8). The dynamic remains in this range throughout the piece. The rhythm of the melody continually shifts between different combinations of tied dotted quavers, triplet quavers, and crotchets, duplet quavers, and quintuplet quavers, which are often tied (see for instance, bars 117-19) and thus result in a displaced sense of pulse. As mentioned above, following two movements that are canonic in texture, here the sense of synchrony becomes all the more perceptible. This was the first piece that the performers rehearsed together, and after an initial run-through of the complete movement it became clear that they were both dissatisfied with their rhythmic shaping. As **Video example 5.3** illustrates, Simpson was the first to raise the issue for discussion, suggesting that they try playing with a metronome. In this clip, although he expressed dissatisfaction about the coordination of the triplet and crotchet rhythms, the exact nature of the ‘problem’ was not immediately established.

The performers proceeded to repeat the same bars several times, trying different strategies to achieve coordination, through discussion and playing. First Simpson tried counting the five quavers aloud and shifting the emphasis of the beat (**Video example 5.4**). Having identified that the problematic element was coordinating the quintuplet rhythm, they repeated the entire piece again but were still dissatisfied. Their exchange is documented in **Video example 5.5**, and transcribed below (Table 5.1).

Participant	Dialogue	Action
MS	Would it be worth doing it without us playing once, just to get the rhythm? No pitches, just going bah bah bah bah.	
VO	Tap it to me, or say it to me?	
MS	We can click the beat. We'll just go bah bah bee bah [clicks crotchet pulse underneath], because I don't think we're agreed. Or have a metronome, because I don't think the notes are the problem. It's just the actual rhythm.	
VO	[Starts metronome] OK.	
MS and VO		They start from figure E, just speaking 'bah bah bah...'
MS	I feel as though I wait for you on the fives.	
MS and VO		They both speak parts: 'bah bah bah'; [Laughter] VO plays the piano line underneath and MS clicks along with the metronome. MS then whistles the clarinet line over the metronome.
VO	It's so hard. Bah bah bah bah bah. One two three four five;	
MS	The way I'm trying to do it is feel those two crotchet quintuplets as separate from the first quaver. So if you go like this: buh bah buh buh buh.	
MS		Beats crotchet pulse with right hand and gestures heavily on the final beat.
VO	That was not good. Bah bah bah bah bah...	
VO		Shakes head and pauses.
MS	[Over the top of VO] Tee tee...	
VO	One two three four five one.	
VO		Gestures each quaver beat with his right hand.
MS	Because the downbeat changes.	
MS and VO		MS sings the line; VO plays quintuplet.

VO	But you're always too early with the 'Bee'. One two three four five one. [MS plays quintuplet underneath]	
VO		Plays piano line, subdividing the quintuplet figure into separate quavers
MS and VO		Plays quintuplet twice alone, and then with VO.
MS	Dee dah dee dah dee dah dee dah dee dah ...	
VO	[Interrupts] I know. But it's the context of it that's difficult. Like the E _b at the end, it has a tendency to be a second sixteenth note you know.	
MS and VO		They both play the quintuplet.
VO	You are too early with it.	
VO		Plays and sings quintuplet: 'yum bah yum bah bah bah'.
MS		Plays quintuplet.
VO	You sound like a second sixteenth note. Dah dah dah!	
MS and VO		MS plays quintuplet, with VO tapping quintuplet quavers underneath.
VO	That was it.	

Table 5.1. Transcription of Video example 5.5.

Various strategies were employed during this episode, including speaking the figure using numbers and different configurations of syllables, using a metronome, whistling, clicking, subdividing the quintuplet figure into its quaver components, and speaking over the piano and clarinet parts. After the initial technical problem was identified, the performers reflected and tried to articulate an awareness of their own bodily sensations (for example, Simpson's comments: 'I feel as though I wait for

you...’ and ‘The way I’m trying to do it is...’); this was followed by a period of diagnosis, with Simpson observing, ‘Because the downbeat changes’ and Ólafsson responding ‘You’re always too early with the “Bee”’, and ‘It’s the context of it that’s difficult’.

Despite this overt discussion to clarify how each performer was ‘feeling’ the rhythm, much of this activity was non-verbal and apparently spontaneous, as if they were musically ‘feeling their way’ by playing, singing, and gesturing. This sustained period of negotiation enabled the musicians to reach an agreed rhythm, approaching it in different ways repeatedly to refine and embed it. At one point during the rehearsal, Ólafsson commented half jokingly that ‘quintuplets are always a little bit dangerous’, acknowledging the challenge that the ambiguity of rhythms presented when the performers were attempting to achieve synchrony. In a later interview, he elaborated further on this comment: ‘[I]t looks rather simple when you’re actually looking at the page, but to play together as if you’re one person, it’s extraordinarily difficult’, but he placed little emphasis on the strategies they employed, stating simply ‘I think we did metronome stuff’.¹³² The performers assumed this way of working was a fairly obvious and unproblematic aspect of the rehearsal process.

This episode illustrates the point that even the most ostensibly straightforward music can generate highly detailed responses from the musicians. Indeed, notation can often be highly complex in what it *omits* rather than in its specification of musical details. On one level, this exchange might be understood simply as a matter of competence: with more experience of playing together, this kind of rehearsal practice would become redundant. But this would be to do the musicians a disservice, as once they had found a way of playing with which they were satisfied – signalled by

¹³² Interview, 4 February 2014.

Ólafsson stating ‘That was it’ – it was not revisited. On another level, we might view the musicians as having conflicting understandings of the nature of a quintuplet, with Ólafsson’s literal ‘correctness’ conflicting with Simpson’s somewhat more fluid and questioning approach. Yet, neither of the performers’ interpretations could be defined as necessarily ‘right’ or ‘wrong’; as Simpson commented to Ólafsson, it was a matter of ‘agreement’ – they were seeking to align their ongoing movements rather than execute pre-existing rules. Achieving and refining a mutually agreed rendering of the rhythmic nuances required sustained working and reworking of the material, with the solution found through practical enactment. The pursuit of rhythmic synchrony provides an example of the score serving as a framework within which the performers’ perceptions and actions were ‘coupled’ (Ingold 2011: 55); not mechanistically, but as a way of coordinating the two parts in the right kind of way. This points towards those itinerative qualities of performance that were outlined in chapter three. Rhythmic accuracy was an area of focus, not as a means of restricting their performance, but as a way of fitting the parts together to achieve, as Simpson asserted in his statement above, ‘The little interplays Finnis has with these motives which are what gives the piece this alluring sophisticated texture on the top’.¹³³

5.3. Finding a sound quality

The discussion thus far has examined the performers working towards the relatively objective outcome of rhythmic synchrony; timbre arguably presents a much less definable performance goal. As has been widely observed, sound quality is arguably the aspect of a performance that is the least possible to determine through notation (Bayley 2011; Cottrell 2004; Waterman 2003). Described by John Rink as an

¹³³ Interview, 16 January 2013.

‘intractable parameter’ (2004: 248), timbre is a more complex musical attribute than rhythm or pitch, both of which have a more direct relationship to notation, and consequently it has received less attention within the field of empirical performance studies (Doğantan-Dack 2011: 248).¹³⁴ Timbre is shaped by a variety of factors, not solely through instrumental technique or the ways in which performers work with the score. In the case of *Four Duets*, for instance, it was contingent on Simpson’s choice of reed, the piano, the other repertoire in the concert programme, and the stage layout at the venue. The following discussion concentrates on three interrelated ways in which sound quality was negotiated and shaped: through the performers’ engagement with materials, the embodied and gesturally determined aspects of sound production, and their collaborative interactions with the composer.

In a forthcoming paper on the subject of the communicative potential of Finnissy’s notational conventions in his Second String Quartet as the Kreutzer String Quartet prepare it for performance (Bayley and Heyde, forthcoming), the authors describe how, in the words of the first violinist Peter Sheppard Skærved, Finnissy’s ‘economy of expression’ serves a creative function in stimulating the performers’ interpretative strategies: ‘you [Finnissy] encourage us to use our imaginations and to a degree you don’t circumscribe it’ (forthcoming: 16). Although Finnissy’s compositional aesthetic is clearly distinct from that of Finnis, a similar point could be made regarding the latter’s restrained use of performance instructions and the effect of these on the performers’ approach to timbre. By paring down the number of elements in the material, sound quality was brought into sharper focus, both in terms of the individual instruments and the relationship between the two in combination. This was intentional on Finnis’s part, as he articulates below:

¹³⁴ Although as Mine Doğantan-Dack observes, the limitations of notation in determining timbre is just one of several reasons for its underrepresentation in scholarly research (2011: 248).

I'm interested in when you kind of become aware that you're perceiving something. So in the last movement you're aware that 'OK I'm listening to this succession of one pitch after another', but also the relationship between the two [instruments] hopefully becomes ... I don't know ... when I listen to it anyway I think 'I don't know what thing I'm listening to now. I don't know which one I'm hearing at any point.' [...] I feel like you can set that sort of experience more if you don't clutter the music. [...] I'm not talking about the look of the thing on the paper; I just mean like how many different elements are there in the music [...] [T]o me it's like when the number of elements are reduced, my perception of what remains is more keen, and I find it interesting.¹³⁵

Whereas Finnis's statement expresses a concern with the listener's experience of the music, for the performers, his approach also provoked a number of questions regarding his sonic intentions and how they might be realised in performance. For example, Ólafsson was particularly curious about Finnis's pedalling instructions and the effect of these on the piano's timbre:

I definitely had questions about what sort of sound I should be going for, and what kind of pedal. It's very long pedals in the piano [part],¹³⁶ and it would be a matter of whether I would be doing a quarter pedal or one eighth pedal or a full pedal or half a pedal, depending on how far down I would press the pedal, given that the duration of each pedal is in general long, at least in the first [piece]. That was a question I had for him, which we got through and, I think, answered.¹³⁷

Aside from the score, Simpson found that the most significant material factor in formulating his sound was the means of sound production: his choice of reed. Video footage from the rehearsal shows at least a dozen reeds laid out on the lid of the piano (Fig. 5.3), arranged in order of use, and Simpson made reference to the need to find a suitable reed several times during rehearsals.

¹³⁵ Interview, 10 April 2013.

¹³⁶ For instance, the first piece is marked 'With soft pedal depressed throughout movement' (Finnis 2012: 1).

¹³⁷ Interview, 4 February 2014.



Figure 5.3. Image from first rehearsal with Simpson’s reeds laid out on the lid of the piano (5 December, 2012).

Choosing a reed involved a certain amount of compromise in trying to find a balance between technical and timbral affordances, as he reflects below:

I used a very soft reed that allowed me to play as quietly and as simply as possible, but that actually meant that when I played the louder stuff in the rest of the programme, that other end of the register – both in terms of pitch and dynamic – faltered slightly. Maybe I should have changed reed for a different piece but I like to play contemporary music on a softer reed because there’s more agility and there’s more scope to bounce up and down. The harder the reed is, the more difficult it is. You might have a nice richer tone, but there’s a certain amount of compromise that you’ve got to make in that situation.¹³⁸

Simpson’s perspective on his tools expresses a pragmatism similar to Pay’s position in the previous chapter, and is indicative of a common practical concern experienced by reed players.¹³⁹ The best reed would afford him technical flexibility, but his choice was not simply a matter of technical proficiency; it would also enable him to express a certain style and aesthetic. Simpson’s search for the aesthetically appropriate timbre

¹³⁸ Interview, 16 January 2013.

¹³⁹ See also Roche (2011) for a discussion of the effect of clarinet reeds on extended techniques.

was also illustrative of a wider performance concern: that of sound being emblematic of certain musical genres (Cottrell 2004).

This is generalising somewhat, but there's almost a routine kind of approach to the sound quality that a lot of new music has, (if you group new music as being one particular thing, or one particular preconception) which would be like violent, hard, raspy, hard-edged, aggressive, vast. All those gestures; the gestures used a lot in new music are [...] very virtuosic, all this kind of stuff, and you notice that you physically manifest this tension, this aggressive tension. [...] That kind of quality of sound was not what Ed's music's about at all. It's all about subtlety.¹⁴⁰

There is a sense that Simpson was aware of the need to find an aesthetically appropriate timbre for Finnis's music, an issue which was further compounded by the concert programme, which included a variety of musical styles spanning a century. Simpson's comment also underscores the embodied nature of timbre: 'aggressive' timbres can provoke physical tension in performance. By contrast, Finnis's music encouraged a converse approach – a sense of fluidity and effortlessness – which had significant implications for Simpson in performance.

Doğantan-Dack (2011) observes that this embodied relationship to timbre is fundamental in creating a sense of ownership over the music, whereby the performer “own[s]” these tone colours through the skilfully honed bodily gestures and kinaesthetic sensations that generate them’ (2011: 250). Indeed, a significant aspect of the rehearsal interaction between Simpson and Ólafsson concerned corporeal sensations of sound production and their resultant timbres, such as the following discussion that took place after the performers had played a complete run-through of the third movement (**Video example 5.6**). This short exchange touches on a number of factors that influence sound quality: gesture, dynamic range, and the interrelation of the two instruments. It also conveys a sense of the performers' familiarity with

¹⁴⁰ Interview, 16 January 2013.

each other's playing; despite Simpson's sense of uncertainty, expressed in his comment, 'I want to try and make my playing more effortless in the way that yours is kind of just...' and hand gesture, while Ólafsson's response, 'Without any kind of...' and his corresponding hand gesture suggested a tacit understanding of the kind of performance ideal that Simpson was striving for. Ólafsson then turned the conversation towards a discussion of balance and the notation's dynamic shaping, since these too would contribute to the overall timbre.

Simpson's embodied sense of timbre was also demonstrated after the performers played all four pieces through to *Finnis* for the first time. One of Simpson's immediate comments articulated a dissatisfaction with what he felt was his failure to externalise his concept of the music's sound world, expressed in his comment that he had 'Tried a bit too hard to get that kind of magic world at the beginning'.¹⁴¹ As in the previous day's rehearsal, this was closely connected to the physical means of sound production, a matter that Simpson reflected on when watching footage from the rehearsal during our interview:

There was a lot of stuff in that performance there that I was unhappy with in terms of my playing. The very first note. Even just looking at the way I was moving around, I hadn't found a stillness in the sound quality yet, and I hadn't really got that centre.¹⁴²

Simpson discusses his sound in physical terms: achieving a 'stillness' and a 'centre', and his sense of tension was manifested in his body movements. Herein lie the essential gestural properties of timbre: Simpson's experience of timbre is rooted in the physical, consistent with Doğan-tan-Dack's assertion that 'The performer develops a memory for tone colour that is based on their kinaesthetic sensations.' (2011: 250). At

¹⁴¹ Rehearsal, 6 December 2012.

¹⁴² Interview, 16 January 2013.

this stage, while Simpson had a sense of the sound quality he was pursuing, he struggled to achieve this in practice.¹⁴³ He acknowledged this in interview:

Again, finding the sound world, it's such an ethereal kind of abstract thing to talk about; in terms of kind of banal facts, I tried to play it quieter. I tried to have less presence in the sound. I had to tell myself physically to relax. Once I'd physically relaxed and told myself to stand up straight, concentrate, breathe.¹⁴⁴

Later in the interview he recalled that he was struggling to achieve 'a simplicity and a purity; I think that the music requires a pure tone'.¹⁴⁵ While Simpson ascribed less significance to the physical means of sound production, characterising them as 'banal facts', his comment indicates the highly embodied considerations that were at play in producing his desired timbre.

Towards the end of the first rehearsal the discussion returned to sound quality and expression in the opening of the first movement, with Ólafsson's suggestion that it should sound more 'mystical' in response to Finnis's pedalling instructions (**Video example 5.7**). Rather than describe the sound verbally, Ólafsson communicated by playing the opening phrase whilst looking to Simpson for his response. Simpson did not give an explicit reply other than agreeing to repeat the opening again, but there was a striking transformation in their approach in the second run-through. They played the first movement from start to finish at a much lower dynamic and slightly slower tempo. Both performers made fewer movements and gestures: Ólafsson looked more poised and still, and the change in Simpson's posture and bodily movement was particularly noticeable in that the physical tension in his shoulders seemed to visibly dissipate. Simpson's phrasing was more legato and apparently effortless, and their

¹⁴³ This corresponds to Cottrell's observation that although 'professional musicians have very sophisticated perceptions and conceptions of sound, these are not supported by or expressed through a rigorous, analytical verbal framework' (2004: 50).

¹⁴⁴ Interview, 16 January 2013.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

overall timbre had a more veiled quality. In this episode there was a sense that the performers felt that they had found a way to move closer towards realising their timbral goal. As in the previous example, Simpson seemed to immediately comprehend Ólafsson's performance intention without needing to articulate it. Having played through the movement, the musicians agreed that the timbre had been improved, with Simpson concluding that 'It makes much more sense, doesn't it?' without discussing of the nature of the change, or how it had been achieved.

The above examples show the tacit communication between performers in addressing timbre; more explicit conversations were evidenced in the second rehearsal, when Finnis was present, where a considerable amount of interaction was centred on achieving a mutually agreed sound quality, often using metaphorical language to facilitate understanding.¹⁴⁶ In this way, the indeterminate nature of timbre allowed for a greater degree of creative give-and-take between performers and composer. Discussions relating to the opening bars of the first piece (Fig. 5.4) provide an example of where the musicians' attention was focussed onto the timbral relationship between the two instruments.

¹⁴⁶ This supports Bayley's assertion that (depending on the frames of reference of composer and performer) metaphorical discourse can facilitate a shared understanding of the music (2011). Indeed, Finnis himself remarked during interview that from his perspective as a composer, 'In certain situations, those sorts of images that are not directly musical, technical expressions, [...] can convey things quicker with a kind of non-musical image like that, than you would trying to explain exactly what to do.' (Interview, 10 April 2013).

Flexible, never rushed ♩ = c. 66

pp *poco* *sim.*

pp *ped.* *sim.* RH: LH:

With soft pedal depressed throughout movement

Figure 5.4. ‘I (after Josquin des Prez)’ (bars 1-4) (Finnis 2012: 1).

This passage received particular attention during rehearsals due to the clarinet’s intonation relative to the piano. The reiteration of the clarinet’s G3 against the sustained soft pedalled sound of the G3 in the left hand of the piano has the effect of concentrating attention onto the two sounds in relation to one another. The G3 on the clarinet has a particular propensity to rise in pitch, which is exacerbated by playing at a softer dynamic. Simpson was immediately aware of this in the first rehearsal, and addressed it through experimentation with different resonance fingerings¹⁴⁷ in order to adjust the pitch. His different configurations had consequences for the sound quality: certain fingerings that resulted in a flatter pitch led to a duller sounding timbre. Simpson raised the timbral implications of resolving this issue with Finnis early on in the second rehearsal (**Video example 5.8**). Throughout the rest of the rehearsal he continued to experiment by occasionally switching fingerings on the G3. It is interesting that Simpson felt the need to seek ‘permission’ from Finnis (but not Ólafsson) to employ this solution to the problem of intonation, which might appear to be a relatively objective standard to work towards, but he was particularly concerned

¹⁴⁷ Resonance fingers are discussed in chapter three (pages 66-7).

with finding a solution that would both work practically within the phrase and result in a timbre that appealed to Finnis. By inviting Finnis's direction on his timbre Simpson was opening out the performative decision-making to include Finnis, whilst also reaffirming their roles as performer and composer, a position that was further emphasised by his response to Finnis's comment 'I didn't know that!' of 'It's fine, not many people do'.

Throughout the second rehearsal, the duo continued to encourage Finnis to take an active involvement in shaping the sound world, often posing targeted questions to him and offering various interpretative options, as illustrated in the following episode, which deals with the piano phrasing and its relationship to the clarinet in the opening of the second piece (**Video example 5.9**). Here their interaction was less concerned with the targeted 'problem-solving' of the intonation episode, and more searching in terms of opening up interpretative possibilities. Ólafsson's repeated open questions, 'What kind of sound do you want?' and 'What exactly do you want it to be?', and Simpson's more reflexive comment, 'It depends if you want...' appeared to direct the creative decision-making towards Finnis, whose somewhat open response, 'I feel like the left hand could be...and the right hand could be...' suggested that he felt open to suggestion from the performers. Indeed, during interview he expressed an outlook that discouraged an overly forceful approach to working with performers:

I like it when you can take a back seat for quite a lot and then let them do what they're doing (and in that case they were doing it so well anyway). A few general observations, and then a few maybe really specific things, but then maybe the specific things also help unlock what you're trying to get at. So if you sort of say 'This bit of phrasing would work well if you did it like that', then although that's about one detailed moment in isolation, actually that helps shape the whole thing as well.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸ Interview, 10 April 2013.

At the end of the episode, after the performers had played the piece through in response to Finnis’s input, both parties seemed satisfied, with Finnis praising the piano playing and Ólafsson complimenting the timbre.

At other times during the rehearsal (**Video example 5.10**) the performers looked to Finnis for more concrete input on how short sections of the music might be performed, such as asking for clarification regarding the detail of the dynamic shaping in the climax of the first movement (Fig. 5.5).

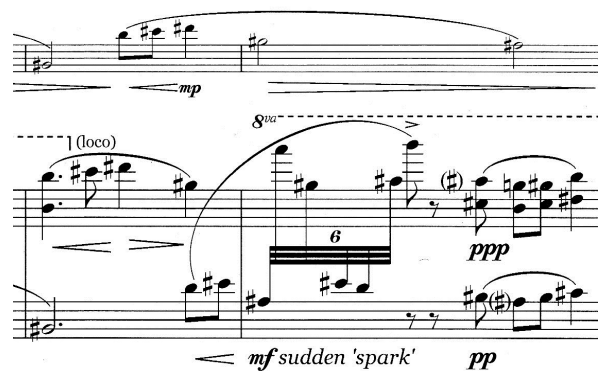


Figure 5.5. Dynamic shaping in ‘I’ (bars 17-18) (Finnis 2012: 1).

After Finnis’s positive response to Simpson’s question about his preferred magnitude for the crescendo in bar 17 (‘Just like you were doing – that was nice’), Simpson seemed to remain uncertain, asking, ‘Is that OK? Because I’m not doing that much’. Ólafsson expressed a similar uncertainty about the ‘sudden spark’ piano gesture in bar 18, asking, ‘You want it like that?’. In these instances, Finnis responded more prescriptively than in the previous episode, and seemed to have a very definite sense of the sound quality he was looking for. His comments were practically directed, for example, his suggestion that Ólafsson should think ‘of the left hand as being the main line’ and his instruction to keep the pedal depressed throughout. In contrast to the

previous section, here the roles of performer and composer seemed to be much more firmly defined.

The following episode (**Video example 5.11**) provides an opportunity to explore the decision-making processes involved to achieve a mutually agreed interpretation of the new *semplice* sound in bar 86 (Fig. 5.6).

Figure 5.6. Change of sound quality in ‘II’ (bars 84-87) (Finnis 2012: 6).

In this example, the musicians spent a considerable amount of time working on the transition between the two sections. Although Finnis made one reference to making the music sound more ‘aggressive’, his feedback was generally directed towards the more abstract characteristics of the music, such as his instruction to make the sound have more of a ‘pulsating feeling’ or feel more ‘machine-like’. It was clear that he had a specific sound in mind for the piano part in particular, and spent time listening to Ólafsson experimenting with the pedal into bar 86 to amplify the resonance of the piano’s bass notes. After playing through from bar 81 to the end, Ólafsson immediately looked to Finnis for his feedback on their approach to articulation in the *semplice* section, asking, ‘Was that good? You liked that “Bom, bom, bom”?’ to

which Finnis responded positively, but with further suggestions on the balance between the two instruments. This longer example thus illustrates the more gradual shaping of the sound world, involving a high level of participation between the performers and the composer.

Other interactions between the performers and composer, while less focussed on the ‘conceptual’ characterisations of sound quality, concerned practical issues such as balance which had a tangible effect on the overall timbre of the performance. Ólafsson described being concerned with how the sound world they had created during their rehearsals in the intimate and rather dry acoustic of the rehearsal room would translate into the significantly larger space of the Royal Festival Hall. During the final rehearsal at the venue the performers were reliant on Finnis to give them a sense of how the sound, and the balance in particular, was affected by the space. At one point Simpson asked Finnis: ‘Ed, can I get away with playing that quiet? Because I feel like I’m playing a lot quieter than I expected to’.¹⁴⁹ In interview, Simpson acknowledged that both he and Ólafsson were uncertain of how their sound was projecting.

Both Vik and I were very surprised at how intimately we could play, how quietly we could play, and how full it sounded, it really did. It carried right to the back, well at least the back of the stalls at the bottom. It was a surprise.¹⁵⁰

Video example 5.12 shows how the performers adjusted the position of the piano and the clarinet on the stage, rotating the piano anticlockwise, so that Ólafsson and Simpson were in line with each other horizontally, with Simpson was nestled further

¹⁴⁹ Rehearsal, 8 December 2012.

¹⁵⁰ Interview, 16 January 2013.

into the curve of the piano. This change of position raised the dynamic level of the piano, and, in Finnis's view, made the sound more 'fused'.¹⁵¹

The foregoing discussion demonstrates that although there had been very little composer-performer interaction during the compositional stage, the musicians worked in a very focussed and detailed manner during rehearsals, with Finnis exhibiting varying degrees of authority. Often very short passages or even single bars would be subject to intense revision in terms of sound quality and balance between the two instruments, despite Finnis acknowledging that 'It'll be slightly different every time that you do it'. The pursuit of detail in this way, and the performers' close engagement with the notation, opened up a variety of musical possibilities, such as the subtle changes to phrase shapings evidenced in Video example 5.10. In this way, the notation acted as a mechanism for collaboration through the performers' careful engagement with minute details and experimentation with different approaches.

Timbre was a dominant concern throughout the rehearsals and was approached from various angles. First, through the ways the performers worked with their materials: from Simpson's experimentation with reeds to the performers' adjustment of the piano on the stage at the Royal Festival Hall. Second, in terms of the embodied relationship between the performers' conceptions of the timbres suggested by the score and their external realisations, such as achieving a physical stillness or a sense of effortlessness. Most significantly, however, timbre was the aspect that afforded the greatest degree of collaborative engagement between the performers and Finnis: it was only through their extended discussions that a shared approach to sound emerged. Thus, the examples discussed above demonstrate that negotiating timbre is not simply a case of the performer orientating herself to the

¹⁵¹ Rehearsal, 8 December 2012.

score. It also involves intensive practical engagement with other materials and collaborators. This point has implications for Bayley's rehearsal model discussed above, to which I will return in the conclusion of this chapter.

5.4. Trust in collaboration

A final point should be made about the extent to which trust underpinned the present collaboration, at two (related) levels: a personal and intimate trust between Finnis, Ólafsson, and Simpson; and also a professional trust or respect between performers and composer. Trust affords a way of working that is conducive to decision-making (Gritten 2013), but how was this the case in this collaboration? The musicians' positive personal and professional relationships had practical consequences for their working practices, facilitating the shaping of a performance that occurred within a very limited timeframe. Simpson's familiarity with Ólafsson contributed significantly to their collaborative work during rehearsals: a sense of empathy was evident, and their intimate understanding of each other's ways of working meant that they could make decisions efficiently and often with very little verbal dialogue. Ólafsson seemed to agree that he and Simpson had a sympathetic relationship that afforded an effective way of working:

Yeah, it's easy to work with [Simpson]. He's done so much new music and he's premiered so many pieces and of course he's written so many pieces that have been premiered. He understood quite well what was needed in terms of the preparation to make it all work, and I think it did in the actual event. We're very good friends and we always have a good time.¹⁵²

While emphasising their personal friendship, Ólafsson's statement also articulates a sense of his professional respect for, and trust, in Simpson's competence as a

¹⁵² Interview, 4 February, 2014.

performer of new music. For Finnis, trust was a fundamental component of a productive rehearsal process, in that he trusted Simpson and Ólafsson's judgement as performers. As he put it:

That trust thing is 'I know that Mark as a composer and Vik as a curious mind, they're going to be responsive when I say things about atmosphere.'¹⁵³

Simpson similarly ascribed significance to the sense of professional trust that he felt Finnis conveyed during rehearsals:

I think Ed respected us in terms of the players that we are, and how seriously we take what we do. So he only had to say very slight things for them to materialise quickly, and I think that was evident because he was aware of that.¹⁵⁴

His comment expresses his sense of feeling valued professionally, which was conducive to their interactions during rehearsal. Such trust was certainly evident in the way that Finnis worked with the duo in the first rehearsal. While there were some uncertainties in the initial stages of the rehearsal he attended, since it was only the second time that the performers had played the music together, Finnis held back from making too many comments initially. In fact, Finnis saw this sense of mutual trust as one of the fundamental motivations underpinning the commission:

EF One of the reasons that Mark asked me to write him this piece was probably to do with the fact that he was aware we had some general shared musical ideas. I think that helps. Again, it's kind of unspoken.

EP Do you mean like a kind of empathy?

EF Yeah, sort of like 'Oh I know where that's coming from and can get on board with it.'¹⁵⁵

Although the collaborative relationship between the performers and the composer was limited during compositional stages, this unspoken empathy that Finnis identifies was

¹⁵³ Interview, 10 April 2013.

¹⁵⁴ Interview, 16 January 2013.

¹⁵⁵ Interview, 10 April 2013.

crucial to their interactions during rehearsal. Trust also operated more broadly with regard to the commission as a whole, in terms of the respect that was evident between the performers and composers, and the commitment that the performers exhibited in their pursuit of achieving a successful performance. As Simpson reflected,

I think there was a huge amount of trust as well, and a huge amount of respect between both Ed, me, and Vik, because Ed had written us this wonderful piece and we wanted to do it justice, what it deserved.¹⁵⁶

Simpson's assertion of the performers' commitment to do the pieces justice is illustrative of the pursuit of quality-driven work that Sennett (2008) identifies as an intrinsic motivator of participating in a craft practice. Clarke, Doffman, and Timmers (forthcoming) have pursued Sennett's work in relation to the sociology of collaboration:

[I]n collaborative work, craft assumes a more rhetorical, persuasive character as collaborators try to understand one another through the shared crafting of a piece of work. Competence constitutes the public assertion of one's right 'to be there' as well as the incremental development and maintenance of craft, and competent work is not only a matter of self-satisfaction but of acquiring social capital within a working relationship. (Clarke, Doffman, and Timmers, forthcoming: 28)

In this way, the musicians' comments are indicative of a mutual respect and recognition of their competence, but taking a broader view, they contribute to the production of a positive working relationship.

5.5. Conclusions

As discussed in chapter three, studies of creativity have tended to view the score as exerting a constraining force on performers' creative possibilities. This case study thus explored and problematized the perceived creative affordances of notated music,

¹⁵⁶ Interview, 16 January 2013.

and paints a more nuanced picture of what it means to work creatively with a score. The musicians' rehearsal practices demonstrated the development of a performance through activities such as repetition, problem-solving, and material engagement, supporting the characterisation of craft proposed in chapter three. A framework of craft therefore has much to offer in facilitating an understanding of the relationships between individuals, objects, and decision-making in creative work. Simpson and Ólafsson's repetitive rehearsal practice enabled them to achieve a shared understanding of the rhythmic figure as they gradually became more attuned to one another. The ways in which performance choices were reached and implemented reveal the sometimes mundane nature of musical creativity, and illustrate the close relationship between the conceptual and the practical. At first glance, the performers might be regarded as simply trying 'to get a job done' within a limited time frame, a way of working that could characterise all manner of rehearsals and artistic work. Yet the everyday nature of their exchanges and interactions belies an intimate relationship with their materials and fellow collaborators. Applications of skill in pursuit of discrete details are common attributes of a musician's performance practice that often go unacknowledged, and constitute one of the many aspects of performance that are not represented in the score. The practices outlined in this case study are certainly not immediately striking moments of creativity in an innovative sense. Yet, while they might seem somewhat quotidian and might even be taken for granted by the performers themselves, a subtler and more pragmatic kind of creativity is very much in evidence.

While the pursuit of rhythmic synchrony showed the performers working together to reach an agreement; timbre was demonstrated to be a means through which the performers negotiated their agency and ownership of the music, and it

offered an opportunity for a more active engagement between the performers and the composer. This was on one level perhaps inevitable: as discussed above, timbre is arguably a less ‘concrete’ quality of performance that arguably requires a greater degree of interaction in order for musicians to reach a shared conception of it. Nevertheless, interactions relating to timbre were shown to be diverse and shaped by a number of factors. In light of this discussion, Bayley’s (2011) model of rehearsal could be refined in several ways. First, as mentioned at the outset of the chapter, the diagram inevitably neglects the role of visual and embodied dimensions of performance in rehearsal. The musicians’ embodied sense rhythm and timbre was shown to be of fundamental importance in the strategies they employed to refine their interpretation, both in terms of their personal characterisations of sound quality, and the ways in which they communicated about the issue during rehearsal. Second, in this case study the role of tacit and implicit communication between collaborators was shown to be a significant factor in their interactions relating to timbre. It should be acknowledged that the nature of this particular commission, where the performers were already familiar with one another’s playing and working practices, cannot be representative of all group performances. Even so, the way in which the performers seemed to have a shared sense of a successful interpretation in the moment of rehearsal, without needing to discuss it, was striking. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, what is missing in Bayley’s account is the messiness of these connections and their interplay, and the macro-social dynamics that underpin joint creative work.

This leads to a broader theme to emerge from this case study relating to creative authority and ownership. A significant factor in how the musicians understood their roles was the extent to which they felt that they had a sense of

responsibility for their work. As the above discussion has demonstrated, during rehearsal the performers showed a strong commitment to achieving a result that Finnis was looking for. Simpson's sense of duty was summed up by the following statement from our interview: 'My role as a performer I suppose [...] is to realise what the composer wanted.'¹⁵⁷ Moreover, a later comment seemed to reinforce the sense that he felt his role to be subservient to that of the composer: 'I don't necessarily see my creative process as a performer as important as the composer's, because at the end of the day, they wrote the piece.'¹⁵⁸ For Simpson, who works as both a performer and a composer, 'writing the piece' privileges the composer's authority over the performer and determines her as the sole creator of the work. According to Clarke, Doffman, and Lim (2013) 'Much of the discussion of ownership in artistic work is preoccupied with two related areas of control: the economic control that relates to issues of copyright; and ownership in the broader sense of the ways in which groups or individuals exercise their cultural rights.' (2013: 661). Simpson's position relates to the latter sense, as the following statement suggests:

I commission a lot of pieces and [...] with every piece I've commissioned, I feel a sense of ownership in the sense of 'I made this happen. I was the instigator' but I don't feel ownership over the music in the sense that 1) I don't want other people to play it; or 2) I have that much of an ego involved in it. It's a certain sense of pride as opposed to ownership. [...] The whole point of me commissioning it is getting the music out there for the composers to be heard.

For Simpson, ownership lies in the feeling of satisfaction he gets from expanding the instrument's repertoire, rather than having economic control over it. He was quite clear that he is determined not to hold exclusive rights over the works that he commissions, in order that they can be performed by as many musicians as possible. In this way, his comment reflects the wider dynamics of collaboration: performers and

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

composers can inhabit what might appear to be deeply entrenched and traditional roles that attribute creative authority firmly to the composer, but in the rehearsal room, while these roles might shape the interactions they do not necessarily represent a problem. I will explore this issue in further detail in chapter eight.

Having presented two case studies where the performers' relationships with their tools were important but assimilated within their everyday practices without necessarily provoking reflection, the next chapter presents a collaborative encounter that raises questions about the disruptions between practitioner, instrument, and skilled practice, and the implications of these on the creative process.

Chapter 6

A close engagement: performer, composer, and instrument interplay in

To My Father

In the thesis so far, the performers have been shown to possess a strongly embodied relationship with their materials and surroundings, and a highly developed awareness of how they respond to their intentions and actions (Sennett 2008). Yet, although the case studies touched on the role of the instrument in skilled practice, the clarinet has so far been an apparently passive object within the creative process. In the case study presented in this chapter, however, the clarinet's physical affordances take on a much more obviously active role. In writing *To My Father* for basset clarinet and piano (2014) for the clarinetist Lucy Downer, Nick Planas's decision to employ a basset clarinet, which Downer had not played before and whose physical properties differ from the standard soprano clarinet in a number of subtle but significant ways, had several consequences for performance. Thus, in this case study the focus is shifted from the close engagement between performer(s) and notation that was evidenced in the previous case studies, to examining the performer's experiences of instrumental action.

The chapter explores three aspects of the collaboration that offer opportunities to investigate the interplay between composer, performer, and instrument. First, the face-to-face workshop interactions between performer and composer are examined, in which various extended techniques were trialled. Here the discussion addresses issues relating to negotiation and authority within the hierarchies that traditionally structure composer-performer relationships. The second section considers exchanges between the performer and composer relating to notation within the piece, and how they might be understood in terms of creative ownership. Having examined the factors

contributing to the compositional process, I then turn my attention to Downer's physical relationship to her instrument in preparing the work for performance. Drawing on existing phenomenological accounts of the close relationship between performer and instrument (Henderson 2009; Le Guin 2006; Sudnow 1979, 1993) an exploration of the way in which Downer got to grips – literally as well as figuratively – with this less familiar instrumental setup reveals how the interplay between the performer and her instrument plays a powerful role in performance. The broader aim of the chapter is to illuminate the ways in which skilled practice is highly distributed across musicians, their instruments, and their environments.

6.1. Compositional background

To My Father is a suite of five pieces composed in memory of Planas's father, the clarinettist and instrument maker Edward 'Ted' Planas (EP)¹⁵⁹ (1924-1992). EP played a significant role in developing the basset clarinet during the 1960s, in close collaboration with Hacker. As a consequence, the basset clarinet has particular personal significance to NP, and motivated him to compose a work that would 'show what the basset clarinet could do',¹⁶⁰ and also that 'Ted would have enjoyed both hearing and playing, in styles with which he would have been familiar' (Planas 2014). Each movement of *To My Father* has a distinctive character, and could be performed independently as a piece in its own right. The metre and rhythmic quality of the first movement, 'Pastorale', is suggestive of the 'Forlana' movement of Gerald Finzi's *Five Bagatelles* (1945).¹⁶¹ The melody exploits the extended compass of the basset

¹⁵⁹ To avoid confusion between father and son, I refer to Nick Planas as NP and Edward Planas as EP throughout this case study.

¹⁶⁰ Interview, 26 March 2014.

¹⁶¹ Gerald Finzi's *Five Bagatelles* for clarinet and piano (1945) is a popular and frequently played work in the clarinet repertoire. NP acknowledges that 'As I was writing ['Pastorale'] I felt that it reminded me of the Finzi.' (Interview, 26 March 2014).

clarinet, extending as far up as C7 and down to C3 at the very bottom of the instrument. The second movement, 'Romance', is less settled in character. Indicated '*Adagio con rubato*, disjointed' (Planas 2014: 4), the rhythmic relationship between the two instruments is often asynchronous, resulting in a disrupted sense of metre. The connection to the composer's father is made more explicit in the third movement, 'Czardas', which is based on a theme from a record of Hungarian gypsy music belonging to EP. NP described this movement as 'very traditional [...] [EP] just loved that sort of thing, that would probably have been his favourite movement I think.'¹⁶² The fourth movement, 'Clouds', is more complex in character, exploring a number of extended techniques on the instrument, including jaw vibrato, multiphonics, microtones, air sounds, registral extremes, and flutter tongue. The suite concludes with 'Calypso Finale', another explicit reference to EP, who grew up in Trinidad.

By contrast to the previous chapters, in this case study the performer had a greater involvement in shaping the musical material during the compositional phase. NP began writing the work in the summer of 2013, and arranged a workshop with Downer in at the end of October to trial some of his material, which had significant implications for the 'Clouds' movement. The piece then had a somewhat staggered premiere: although Downer collaborated with NP on the suite and is its dedicatee, Margaret Archibald, a specialist in period performance and a friend of NP, gave a pre-premiere of the first three movements with pianist John Flinders on 3 February 2014. Downer then premiered the work in full with pianist Clíodna Shanahan on 8 March 2014. Given this background, the perspectives of both Downer and Archibald are relevant to my discussion, but greater emphasis is given to Downer's perspective, since she had a more active role in the compositional process. The material presented

¹⁶² Workshop, 29 October 2013.

here¹⁶³ draws on semi-structured interviews with Downer, NP, Archibald, and the instrument maker Daniel Bangham, who provided a historical perspective on EP's work. In addition, I filmed Downer and Shanahan's three rehearsals where they prepared the work for its premiere, and I made audio recordings of the two public performances. Since the aim of this case study is to investigate in detail particular problems or issues that were raised by the collaboration rather than to offer a detailed blow-by-blow account of the entire collaborative process, certain participants (the pianists, for example) receive less attention in the discussion, and the movements of the work that elicited the greatest degree of discussion and interaction (such as 'Clouds') are prioritised.

6.2. 'I will try it, if you like...'

With this compositional background in mind, this section addresses Downer's role in shaping the musical material of the work during the workshop with NP, which was used for the most part to experiment with the extended techniques he intended to use in 'Clouds'. Two areas of discussion during this meeting have been chosen that demonstrate the points of negotiation and resistance within the composer-performer relationship, with Downer demonstrating varying degrees of creative influence within the collaboration. The workshop was significant in informing NP's compositional process with regard to the development of a 'breath sound'¹⁶⁴ cadenza; and the employment of the 'teeth on reed' technique.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³ See Appendix III for a summary of the audio-visual material collected during fieldwork.

¹⁶⁴ Breath sounds (or 'air sounds', as they are also known) are produced by the clarinettist exhaling or inhaling through the instrument with very little embouchure pressure, so that the resultant air column lacks focus and does not cause the reed to vibrate, or at least very little. The resultant 'breathy' sounds can be pitched or unpitched. See Rehfeldt ([1977] 1994: 69) and Roche (2014) for more detailed discussions of clarinet air sounds.

¹⁶⁵ This effect requires the performer to execute an extremely high pitch by untucking the lower lip so that the lower teeth come into direct contact with the reed. The result is a thin, high pitched and

In interview, Downer described her role as being largely practically directed, in terms of ‘technically *how* to create what NP wanted on the clarinet, rather than actually *what* to create in the first place.’¹⁶⁶ NP’s view seemed to correspond with Downer’s, in that he came to the workshop with fairly developed ideas for the composition, seeking to find out ‘What was doable and what wasn’t’¹⁶⁷ rather than inviting Downer to contribute aesthetically. As a flautist and clarinettist himself, and having composed for the clarinet on a number of occasions in the past, NP had a fairly developed knowledge of how to write for the instrument, but nevertheless, he expressed his reliance on Downer’s knowledge of extended instrumental techniques for ‘Clouds’ in particular:

I know what I want to get but I don’t know how to get it. So it’ll be more a case of Lucy sitting in here going ‘Well I could do this, or I could do that’ and me saying ‘Yes I like that. No I don’t like that.’¹⁶⁸

As a consequence, their workshop was composer-led, and focussed largely on considerations of technical detail. NP sent Downer a ‘trial sheet’ for the movement, which presented material for the basset clarinet part of ‘Clouds’ (Fig. 6.1).

unstable sound, with a portamento effect being achieved by drawing the teeth across the reed whilst blowing (Rehfeldt [1977] 1994: 64).

¹⁶⁶ Interview, 20 March 2014.

¹⁶⁷ Interview, 26 March 2014.

¹⁶⁸ Interview, 25 July 2013.

Trial sheet - multiphonics

BARLINES / BAR NUMBERS NOT AS IN FINAL SCORE (there may not be any!) BUT HERE FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY

Slow and completely free

Basset Clarinet in A

5

7

9

11

13

14

pp *mf* *p* *pp* *mf* *p*

f

p *ff*

mp

p *f*

mp

raise 1.h.2 = finger as notated but without l.h.1

6 6 6

6 6

pp *mf* *p* *pp* *mf* *p*

f

p *ff*

mp

p *f*

mp

6 6

2

15

16

18

19 speaker key only for D

20

teeth on reed
"seagull" effect

22

as *f* as poss. *pp* subtone *pp* subtone *mp*

as *f* as poss. *pp* subtone *mp*

25

p *mp* *mf*

28

M *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

33

M *mf* ???

Figure 6.1. 'Trial sheet' sent from NP to Downer before their workshop (28 October 2013).

In the musicians' interactions during the workshop, their relationship can be seen as fluctuating between 'directive' and 'interactive' (Hayden and Windsor 2007: 33): in the breath sound discussion, Downer's contribution can be interpreted as akin to a consultant or advisor, fulfilling the technical capacity that she identified during interview. In the 'teeth on reed' exchange, however, the collaborative process was more discursive, and her position was more negotiated.

The discussion of the breath sound passage that occurs at the end of section H¹⁶⁹ of the final score of 'Clouds' shows Downer offering feedback of a practical nature on the execution of the sounds.¹⁷⁰ NP was interested in exploring the possibilities of creating an improvisatory passage using breath sounds based on a descending widening intervallic motif from the left-hand piano part in section G (Fig. 6.2).

¹⁶⁹ 'Clouds' is the only movement of *To My Father* that does not employ bar numbers.

¹⁷⁰ This technique was not included in the trial sheet, although NP and Downer had discussed it before they met.

Figure 6.2. Section G, ‘Clouds’ (final full score) (Planas 2014: 24).

The technique was first discussed at the beginning of the workshop ([Video example 6.1](#)). NP’s immediate concern was one of projection, since the clarinet’s dynamic capabilities for air sounds are very limited, but he wanted to avoid using amplification. He therefore solicited ideas from Downer regarding potential solutions. Downer demonstrated the various possibilities of inhaled and exhaled sounds. His question, ‘Do you think it would work...?’ opened up the compositional decision-making process, and allowed Downer a greater degree of input into the shaping of the material. She responded by demonstrating articulated breath sounds, but was concerned that the use of a firmer embouchure to achieve the articulation would produce too much of a ‘pitched’ sound. Having discussed employing microtonal material, Downer expressed a preference for NP to notate the section fully rather than leaving it to her to improvise the passage. Towards the end of the workshop they

revisited the technique (**Video example 6.2**), and experimented with two further possibilities: use of flutter tongue and combining chalumeau fingerings with right-hand trill keys, but NP was still concerned with the dynamic level.¹⁷¹ It became clear from Downer's playing that the chalumeau fingerings produced the strongest sound; she also demonstrated transitioning from the breath sounds into a full tone multiphonic, and exhaling rapidly before stopping the sound with the tongue, to achieve a heavily articulated 'stopped' sound. The interaction in this episode was much more direct in character, with NP asking a series of targeted questions such as 'What about...?' and Downer responding by demonstrating. The day after their workshop, NP emailed Downer with a completed version of the movement, which included a fully notated breath sound section concluding on a harmonic fingering of F4 (Fig. 6.3).

¹⁷¹ Having decided not to amplify the performer for this section, NP reflected during interview that he was somewhat disappointed with the level of projection at the premiere, asserting that in future performances he would use a microphone for this section alone.



Figure 6.3. Breath sound passage, section H, ‘Clouds’ (final bass clarinet part)
(Planas 2014: 17).

NP’s approach to notating this section takes into account a number of the points that were raised during their discussions: the material is pitched in the more resonant chalumeau register and employs the ‘stopped’ ‘Fft’ articulation. He decided against using microtonal fingerings, asserting that the sound quality was more of a priority than the individual pitches. The above episodes evidence a fairly conventional pattern of interaction between performer and composer, with Downer exploring the technical possibilities of NP’s intended material and offering him advice to find a practical ‘solution’, without making strong statements on the specific notational content of the passage. Nevertheless, her contribution is certainly tangible in the final score. NP’s wider views on the roles of the performer and composer seem to correlate with their approach in these examples, in that he sees the composer as retaining creative authority in a collaboration, but with the performer nonetheless contributing significantly, if less directly, to the process. He expressed his position as follows:

I feel that [performers are] the people; it's like you can have an idea for a painting and you can put it on the wall but they're the people who switch the light on. And that's very oversimplifying, because of course they have to come to it from their own angle. Lucy will come to that and she will have a particular experience of playing particular pieces and it will be different from Margaret's.¹⁷²

Although his statement seems to emphasise the creative authority of the composer in 'having the idea', it also attributes a valuable responsibility to the performer in 'switching the light on', or expressing the ideas to the audience. Moreover, his comment reflects a willingness to accept a variety of performance possibilities.

In contrast to Downer's apparently open and adaptable approach in exchanges relating to breath sounds, one element that underwent more extensive negotiation was the 'teeth on reed' effect, to which she was initially somewhat resistant. Figure 6.4 shows how NP originally notated the technique on the trial sheet.

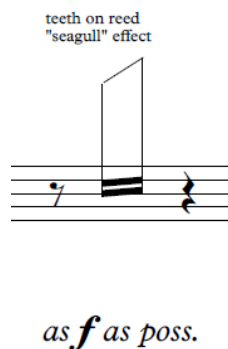


Figure 6.4. 'Teeth on reed' effect (Trial sheet, 28 October 2013).

NP's intention to include this effect led to a stronger response from Downer, and an extended exchange ensued between them. Downer was reluctant to employ this technique, as she had a strong physical and psychological aversion to the sensation of playing it. In interview she explained her position further.

¹⁷² Interview, 26 March 2014.

I think if you can create the same pitch or sound using any other means;
I think I'd almost rather bite through my lip than have to actually touch
the reed with my teeth, but that is a personal thing.¹⁷³

Downer was the first to raise the issue when they met, acknowledging that she had not addressed it in her practice, and that she would seek to find an alternative solution that would be acceptable to NP (**Video example 6.3**). Her question, 'If I can produce that without putting my teeth on the reed, would you accept it?', followed by, 'I will do it...!' conveyed her resistance but still suggested that she would defer to NP's final decision. After this brief exchange the discussion moved onto another topic and remained unresolved until NP returned to it towards the end of the workshop. A longer dialogue ensued and they agreed to reconfigure the technique on Downer's terms (**Video example 6.4**). The overall dynamic of the discussion was more stilted in tone, with a number of pauses in the dialogue. Although good natured, it was clear from this extended exchange, and in particular NP's comment 'Can we try something out now?' that he was keen to resolve the matter and find a workable solution. Downer was more hesitant, and although she did not refuse to use the technique, neither did she volunteer a solution immediately. Yet, somewhat contradictorily, despite having achieved the desired sound through embouchure pressure rather than by putting her teeth on the reed, Downer nonetheless demonstrated the 'authentic' effect to NP, and suggested that he should include the instruction in the score. This more flexible attitude is suggestive of showing a commitment to carry out NP's original intentions, despite her personal resistance to the technique. On one level this exchange might be read simply as a 'personal thing', as Downer describes it, but when NP mentioned the effect to Archibald

¹⁷³ Interview, 20 March 2014.

(misrepresenting Downer as having refused to try it), she raised a more significant point.

NP There was one bit of [‘Clouds’] where I said originally I wanted teeth on reed, and she said ‘I refuse to do that.’

MA Quite right.

NP But she said ‘I’ll impersonate it instead’ and she did!

MA Yes, quite right. [...] Well anyway, it’s a shortcut to destroying your reed. To find a decent reed is such an effort that to then deliberately destroy it by putting your teeth on it is so counterintuitive to any clarinet player. You’d be lucky to get anyone to do that for you!¹⁷⁴

Archibald’s comment that this kind of technique is ‘counterintuitive to any clarinet player’ echoes Downer’s earlier assertion that ‘If people can do it without then they’ll always choose to do it without’. It is certainly possible that other performers might have acceded to this request,¹⁷⁵ and in a later interview Downer acknowledged ‘I did slightly hesitate over complaining about it, because obviously it is entirely possible and it’s just the fact that I hate doing it. I thought “Is that a good enough reason to object to it?”’.¹⁷⁶ Yet the effect certainly subverts conventional clarinet technique: at one point NP even joked to Downer that ‘You don’t teach enough beginners do you?’, since placing the teeth on the reed is a common mistake in novice clarinet students. NP decided to remove the ‘teeth on reed’ instruction from his final version of the score, leaving it more open by amending it to ‘as high as possible’ (Fig. 6.5).

¹⁷⁴ Interview, 14 April 2014.

¹⁷⁵ In the following chapter, for instance, Rosman demonstrates the teeth on reed technique without hesitation, although there is some discussion of its detrimental effect to reeds.

¹⁷⁶ Interview, 20 March 2014.

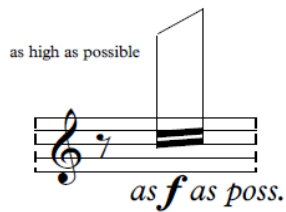


Figure 6.5. Extreme pitch indication, section E, ‘Clouds’ (final basset clarinet part) (Planas 2014: 14).

The resultant notation is less prescriptive in terms of the means of achieving the extreme pitch. NP’s willingness to accept Downer’s position with regard to this technique shows a trust in her approach to performance, and a pragmatic position on the means of realising the effect. The development of this particular element of the piece (although fairly minor within the overall composition) unsettled the roles of the composer and performer, and raised questions about the ethics of performance: should a performer adhere to the composer’s directions, even if they conflict with her preferred performance practice? Moreover, if NP had insisted that the ‘teeth on reed’ direction should remain in the score, would it have been acceptable for Downer to use her alternative approach to achieve a similar result? In a statement that echoed Pay’s sense of moral imperative (chapter four), and Simpson’s desire to ‘Do the piece justice’ (chapter five), Downer described feeling compelled to ‘Do a good job in the right way rather than get around it your own way’.¹⁷⁷

What are the implications of the above discussion for the collaboration? Despite Downer expressing the view that her role was limited to the technical application of NP’s intentions, their engagement in developing ideas during the workshop show Downer demonstrating a certain amount of responsibility for compositional changes in ‘Clouds’. While NP retained control over the overall

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

aesthetic decisions and Downer's main contribution related to issues of execution, it was clear that she felt able to challenge the composer's authority in relation to the 'teeth on reed' effect. Although NP could be understood as having a largely directive role in their relationship, he demonstrated an openness with regard to the processes of achieving his desired sonic outcomes, and a high regard for Downer's expertise. Moreover, neither party expressed dissatisfaction with their roles within the collaboration, and Downer certainly did not express a strong desire for a more collaborative relationship. There seemed to be a tacit agreement between composer and performer that their roles were clearly demarcated and their working process was demonstrated to be positive and productive.

6.3. 'Usually you'd expect to find them yourself'

While Downer had a subtle yet demonstrable role in shaping the breath sounds and extreme pitches in 'Clouds', her interaction with the trial sheet opened up further questions of creative ownership within the collaboration. Before meeting with NP Downer had worked through the sheet and recorded her choices of microtonal fingerings for each note. An extract from her copy is shown in Figure 6.6.

Figure 6.6. Trial sheet for ‘Clouds’ (bars 11-14), with Downer’s annotations.

The trial sheet served two functions: first as a tool, both to ascertain whether NP’s sonic aim could be produced effectively and to act as a ‘key’ to learning the passages (Downer remarked that notating the fingerings helped her to remember them); it could also be understood as fulfilling the role of ‘workbench’, with the notation becoming an object of interaction between performer and composer in the collaborative process. NP had provided some prescriptive indications for fingerings, such as the direction to raise the left-hand middle finger to execute the D#6 in bar 13, but further discussion led him to remove it from the score, favouring the timbral outcome of Downer’s choice of fingerings (**Video example 6.5**). Downer’s annotations map her technical relationship to the material at the initial stages of preparing the piece for performance. Interestingly, in the workshop she advised NP to leave out microtonal fingering suggestions, saying ‘Usually you’d expect to find them yourself. [...] The chances are someone else is going to look at that fingering and say “Oh that doesn’t work for me”’

and ignore it anyway.¹⁷⁸ As well as emphasising the contingency of such techniques on the particular properties of the instrument and the individual practice of the performer, her suggestion that the fingering indications should be left out entirely so that other performers may find their own ways of realising the music assumes the performer's creative agency from the very beginning of working with a score, which Downer seemed to regard as a totally obvious and unproblematic aspect of the performance process.

In the example above, the notation was left open in the final version of the score, but there are other moments in 'Clouds' where NP took a more prescriptive notational approach. The first instance occurs at the beginning of section C, where he has indicated that the square note heads of the descending chromatic sextuplets mean that the performer should execute them as written, but in removing the left-hand index finger from its corresponding tone hole, the sounded pitch descends chromatically through quarter tones from the approximate pitch of D \sharp 6 (Fig. 6.7).

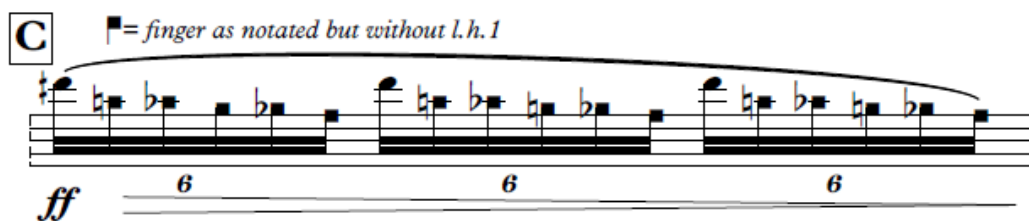


Figure 6.7. Prescriptive fingering indication, section C, 'Clouds' (final basset clarinet part) (Planas 2014: 12).

NP's use of this notational device was inspired by Matthias Mueller's Fifth Etude for Clarinet, *homage* (2010), which both NP and Downer had encountered at a clarinet

¹⁷⁸ Workshop, 29 October 2013.

conference they attended together. In adopting Mueller's effect within 'Clouds' in this manner, NP expressed a concern with determining the technique itself than its resultant sounding pitch, explaining to Downer that 'I didn't try and pitch those [notes]. What I did was I worked it the other way and said "OK, you just lift 'left hand one' up"'.¹⁷⁹ NP's notation in this instance assumes a shared knowledge with Downer, since the effect relies on their mutual understanding and musical vocabulary. This perhaps explains why, in contrast to the previous example, Downer did not suggest that the fingering indications should be left open: the sound represented by the notational detail is immediately familiar to her because of their shared frames of reference. In employing this notation, therefore, NP is directly engaging a shared history that lies behind the compositional process.

While *To My Father* makes use of largely traditional notation, certain ambiguities in 'Clouds' became a source of interaction between performer and composer during the workshop. The performer's personal relationship and sense of ownership over the material is clearly visible in Downer's assertion that NP's fingering indications might not be suitable for other performers, who will need to spend time working with the material in order to develop their own relationships with it. Downer's annotations have similarities with those of Pay (in chapter four) in the way that they interrogate the material and assert her creative authority, but they also trace her embodied relationship with her instrument, suggesting that part of a performer's sense of ownership over the music is achieved through finding her own gestural relationship to the notation. Downer's presence in the work is thus tangible in the final score of 'Clouds', both explicitly, in terms of NP's knowing reference to the

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

Mueller study with which they were both familiar; and more implicitly, with regard to her reworkings of NP's instructions to make them more effective.

6.4. The 'clarinet-knowing' hand¹⁸⁰

Having examined the creative engagement between Downer and NP in shaping the overall material of *To My Father*, my focus now narrows to address the embodied relationship between Downer and her instrument. NP's choice of instrument had immediate practical ramifications: Downer had not played the basset clarinet before, and neither she nor NP had access to an instrument until the second rehearsal, which took place two days before the premiere. As I will discuss, the basset clarinet is largely similar to the standard soprano clarinet, yet, the slight variations in its design compelled Downer to adapt her skills. It should be acknowledged that a longer period of rehearsal time with the instrument certainly would have diminished some of the problems that she encountered, but the time constraints heightened the urgency for her to re-orientate her approach.

The modern basset clarinet

In order to understand the consequences of employing the basset clarinet, I will first provide a short overview of the instrument's physical affordances.¹⁸¹ The basset clarinet is an extended version of the standard modern clarinet in A,¹⁸² with additional keys on the lower joint to increase the lower range by four semitones, from E3 to C3. It was originally developed as a twentieth-century 'reincarnation' of the boxwood basset clarinets of the eighteenth century, and was designed with the intention of

¹⁸⁰ After Sudnow's 'piano-knowing hand' (1979: 17).

¹⁸¹ For more detailed accounts of the development of the modern basset clarinet, see Hacker (1969), Hoeprich (2008: 121-2), and Lawson (1987).

¹⁸² Although some basset clarinets in the key of B flat are in existence, the standard model is in the key of A.

performing Mozart's Clarinet Concerto K. 622 (1791) and Clarinet Quintet K. 581 (1789).¹⁸³ Rather than designing and building a new instrument from scratch, and since there was no definitive eighteenth-century model to work towards, instrument makers would modify existing nineteenth-century instruments. Bangham described the process as follows:

So right from the beginning, they didn't start making instruments from scratch, they took originals and tried experimenting and extending them; including making barrels by cutting and gluing them, and then cutting the bottoms off and extending them, making up new saddles to put the keys on, and having to reposition some holes occasionally.¹⁸⁴

Since only the bottom joint of the instrument was modified, much of the clarinet's familiar interface is preserved, with the only altered mechanism being the additional right- and left-hand keys. This is evident in Figure 6.8 (Hacker 1969: 362), which shows an image of Hacker's Boehm system¹⁸⁵ clarinet alongside the modified basset version, which largely resembles the soprano instrument apart from its elongated lower joint and supplementary keys and tone holes at the bottom.

Alan Hacker's basset clarinet (below) by Edward Planas, seen next to his normal A clarinet

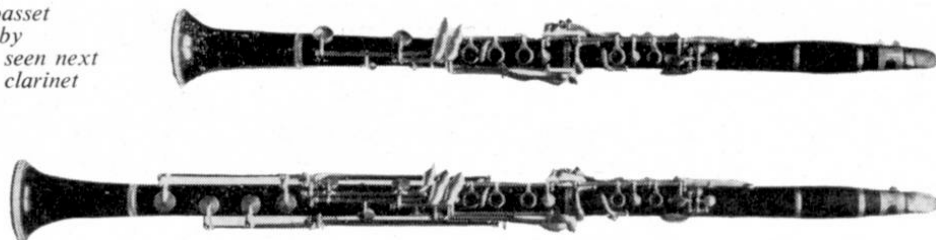


Figure 6.8. Alan Hacker's basset clarinet and standard A clarinet (Hacker 1969: 362).

¹⁸³ Hacker was one of the first clarinetists to give a performance of the basset clarinet version of K. 622 in April 1969, using a clarinet that had its lower joint extended, or 'bassetised', by EP (Hacker 1969: 362).

¹⁸⁴ Interview, 15 April 2014.

¹⁸⁵ The Boehm system clarinet, with keywork designed in the nineteenth century by the clarinetist Hyacinthe Klosé and the maker Auguste Buffet (Shackleton 1995: 28) is now the standard model of clarinet used in the UK.

In addition to the extra keywork, the basset clarinet's greater length means that the instrument is heavier, and will respond differently to the player's breath pressure, usually necessitating softer reeds. Since the instrument's development, composers including Peter Maxwell Davies¹⁸⁶ and Harrison Birtwistle¹⁸⁷ wrote new works for it, but its repertoire remains somewhat limited.

Although the basset clarinet's additional keywork does not appear to be a radical departure from that of its predecessor, it alters the way that the performer interacts with the instrument in subtle yet significant ways. On the Boehm system clarinet the low note keywork for the notes E₃, F₃, F₃[♯], and G₃[♯] is usually consistent across all models: four keys for the right-hand little finger, with three (or sometimes four)¹⁸⁸ corresponding keys for the left-hand little finger. The corresponding mechanisms of these keys mean that most musical passages employing these notes can be executed by using configurations of the right- and left-hand fingers in an alternating pattern.¹⁸⁹ The ability to manoeuvre fluently around these keys is an elementary yet integral aspect of clarinet technique. Different models of the basset clarinet, however, do not have this uniformity,¹⁹⁰ meaning that the configuration of duplicate keys for the left and right little fingers at the bottom end of the instrument can vary significantly from instrument to instrument. For instance, the keys for E₃[♭] might be located on either side of the instrument, but not necessarily on both. Some models provide multiple keys for the right thumb for the basset notes (D₃, C₃[♯], and C₃), and some avoid thumb keys in favour of additional little finger keys. The

¹⁸⁶ *Vesalii Icones* for dancer, solo cello and ensemble (1969).

¹⁸⁷ *Linoi* for basset clarinet and piano (1968), *Four Interludes for a Tragedy* for basset clarinet and tape (1968).

¹⁸⁸ Certain models, for instance those in the Buffet Prestige range, include a duplicate G₃[♯]/A₃[♭] key on the left-hand side.

¹⁸⁹ For example, the standard practice for executing the first three notes of the E₃ major scale is to use right-hand E₃, left-hand F₃[♯], and right-hand G₃[♯].

¹⁹⁰ The reason for this is that modern basset clarinets have been developed by extending existing instruments both from German and French makers.

consequence of this variability is that certain sequences of notes that might be easily accomplished on some instruments can only be achieved on others by the performer ‘sliding’ or ‘jumping’ the little finger from one key to another on the same side of the instrument, which, at faster tempos can disrupt the flow of the passage and compromise the efficiency of the action.¹⁹¹ On encountering such sequences the performer must therefore reconfigure what would usually be a very routine and automated action.

Musical performance and skill

In light of the above discussion, the particular instrumental circumstances of this case study offer an opportunity to investigate performers’ experiences of instrumental action and to re-examine the apparently routine ways of working that constitute skilled practice, which might otherwise be taken for granted. In chapter four, for example, Pay’s intimate relationship with his instrument enabled him to focus on his actions rather than to direct conscious attention towards his instrument. Gritten (2011) describes the dual affordances of musical instruments: ‘first, a tool through which she can exercise and embody her intentions with respect to her performance and, second, a prosthetic extension of her body’ which reward ‘a particular kind of trained manipulation’ (2011: 189). Or, as Pay himself summarised his position: ‘It’s a question of what you want the thing to do’.¹⁹²

Performers’ phenomenological accounts of becoming skilful in performance offer vivid descriptions of the gradual physical attunement to an instrument that Gritten observes. Echoing Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s account of a skilled organist’s ‘comprehensive grasp of his instrument’ ([1962] 2002: 168), Sudnow (1979) writes of

¹⁹¹ Problematic little finger combinations on the ‘standard’ clarinet are discussed further in Rehfeldt ([1977] 1994: 7-9).

¹⁹² Interview, 13 April 2015.

the ‘piano-knowing hand’ that has a deep but continuously refined knowledge of the piano scale, in a way that goes beyond knowing how to move fingers.

Put a person with a piano-knowing hand above major-scale pedals on the floor of an organ, and the feet learn their ways and the pedal’s spaces faster than the feet of a body without a piano-knowing hand. Put the piano-knowing hand over a child’s-sized toy keyboard, and in a few moments the piano-knowing hand displays perfect familiarity in moving about. Put a pencil in the knowing hand and watch a scale get played, a melody picked out. That scale and its distances are thoroughly incorporated for the body, an inner acquisition of spaces somehow arrayed all over as an ever-present potential. And when fingers in particular learn piano spaces in particular, much more is in fact being learned about than fingers, this keyboard, these sizes. (1979: 17)

David Henderson (2009) has also reflected on the apparently embedded familiarity of bodily knowledge that he gradually achieved over the course of his Nepalese drumming lessons from which it was impossible to disentangle himself.

I could not make my body feel as if it did not know how to play. I could sit down at any of these drums and tell my hands to pretend they did not know anything, and make them behave as if they didn’t, but this was only a feigned absence of knowledge. (2009: 185)

For Elisabeth Le Guin (2006), the embodied engagement of her ‘cellist-body’ with the music of Boccherini has a powerful effect on the subjectivity of performance. The tactile act of performing, she argues, forges an empathy between the instrumentalist and composer (a cellist himself), which is physical to the point of carnal: ‘I become aware of a poignance of presence, the unmistakable sensation of someone here—and not only here, but inhabiting my body.’ (2006: 25).

But what happens when the intimate relationship between a performer’s body and her instrument is disrupted? While offering rich descriptions of the embodied nature of performance, these accounts assume certain continuities of the terrain that the performer engages with, and they do not attempt to suggest a mechanism that can account for their experiences. How would Sudnow’s hand adapt to the keyboard of a

Bösendorfer Imperial grand piano, for instance, which is not merely scaled up or scaled down (as it is in the case of the toy piano that he cites in the earlier extract), but whose bass range is extended by five notes? For the pianist Robin McCabe, who has made a number of recordings with the Imperial, the extended compass can be highly perceptually distracting, both visually and physically. She asserts: ‘One’s “southern sight-lines,” so to speak, can be seriously skewed because of the extra footage in the bass. Ending a piece such as Debussy’s “L’Isle Joyeuse,” for example, with its nose-dive final gesture to the low A of the piano, becomes a bit more problematic when that A is not the lowest note on the piano!’ (Cited in Bargreen 2002).¹⁹³

Jonathan de Souza’s (2013) discussion of the perceptual consequences of altered instruments for performers has particular relevance to the present case study. In his analysis of instances where guitars have been retuned, prepared, or redesigned, he shows that while changes to an instrument’s affordances can open up new performance avenues, they can ‘frustrate expected connections between particular actions and particular sounds, [and] they interrupt learned associations between hand and ear.’ (2013: 97). These interruptions can be conceived of in relation to Csikszentmihályi’s (1996) model of flow, discussed in chapter two: immersion in an activity can be achieved through an optimal relationship between challenge and capacity. Part of a successful performance is thus to find ways to work productively with resistance, a process described by Sennett as ‘reconfiguring the problem into other terms, readjusting one’s behavior if the problem lasts longer than expected, and identifying with the problem’s most forgiving element.’ (2008: 222). Indeed, resistance can act as a catalyst for creativity (Callis, Heyde, and Sham 2013; Kanga 2014: 223-8), challenging the performer’s conventional response to the performance

¹⁹³ The visual disorientation McCabe describes is perhaps one of the reasons why the extra keys of the Imperial are usually coloured black.

situation. But what if the level of resistance encountered outweighs the performer's skill? As a skilled clarinettist, Downer was able to adapt her technique to the resistances of the less familiar instrument. But as she acknowledged during the second rehearsal:

[A]ll the virtuosity stuff and everything that's hard would probably be fine if you play it all the time because you'd just get used to it. [...] So all the things that I'm finding absolutely impossible, I'm sure are actually perfectly fine; it's just because I've been playing it for about twenty-four hours! [Laughs]¹⁹⁴

Thus, while it would be wrong to over-emphasise the impact of the instrumental affordances on the performer – as Luke Windsor and Christophe de Bézenac (2012) observe, musicians' actions cannot be entirely determined by the instruments that they play – it is useful to think of affordances as 'creat[ing] selective pressure on the behaviours of individuals, inviting, sustaining and also restricting certain bodily actions and action consequences' (2012: 109).

An example of Downer's ability to reconfigure her skilled practice in response to the changed affordances of the basset clarinet was demonstrated during the third rehearsal. The resistance that she encountered here arose from the instrument's acoustic properties, rather than its modified keywork: its longer bore affected the execution of notes in the altissimo register, such as the G_b6 at the end of a *glissando* in the penultimate bar of the 'Czardas' movement (Fig. 6.9). In the following example (**Video example 6.6**), Downer grappled with finding an effective way to execute the G_b6, and had to modify her conventional fingering approach.

¹⁹⁴ Rehearsal, 5 March 2014.

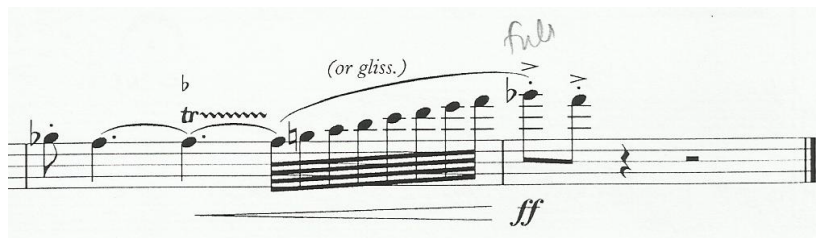


Figure 6.9. *Glissando* in ‘Czardas’ (bars 84-5) (final bass clarinet part, with Downer’s annotations) (Planas 2014: 24).

Her usual choice of fingering for the G \flat 6, an ‘overblown’ B \flat 5 (described by her as her ‘go-to’ fingering), did not work on the bass clarinet. Rather than execute the *glissando* using the conventionally fingered scale, as notated, Downer expressed a commitment to employing portamento using her embouchure and throat, which would result in a smoother and more continuous sound (in fact, earlier on in the rehearsal she remarked, ‘I refuse to give up and just play a scale!’). She experimented with fingerings for the G \flat 6 and decided to use a ‘full’ fingering,¹⁹⁵ which although less reliable in terms of intonation, felt more secure. Although this is a brief example where only a minor adjustment of fingering was needed, it shows how Downer quickly adapted her technique in response to the problem presented by the instrument’s altered acoustics. Having experimented with the alternative fingering, she swiftly arrived at a sense of technical stability such that the fingering was reliable and successfully employed during the premiere.

Once Downer was in possession of a bass clarinet, its most immediately apparent difference in relation to the standard clarinet was its increased weight. A heavier instrument increases the strain on the player’s wrists, and this strain is exacerbated on a bass clarinet with right-hand thumb keys because the right-hand

¹⁹⁵ The ergonomic consequences of ‘full’ (or ‘long’) fingerings are discussed in chapter three (pages 66-7).

thumb must move independently in order to operate the keys, rather than fulfil its usual function as a point of support. The thumb's more active role can therefore compromise the performer's hand position and unsettle her sense of support. Some performers employ a spike to support the instrument on the floor while playing, in order to transfer some of the weight away from the right-hand wrist and also to liberate the thumb. Other players choose to use a neck strap, which shifts some of the weight onto the neck, but does not assist with the thumb dexterity. Archibald, who prefers to use a spike, discussed the destabilising effect of operating the thumb keys in interview:

[To execute C#3] you have to dive for the thumb, which can be a real nuisance. Because it destabilises the instrument so much, I find, messing about with the thumb. [...] I borrowed X's instrument actually, years and years ago, and he'd only got it on a sling. I couldn't play it [...] because every time I went for a thumb note, the thing slips. So that was a nightmare. [...] Because I find that messing about with my thumb, even though Ted put cork on the back of these thumb key instruments so that you can wander around; but I still find that I tend, if I'm not very, very careful, to come off holes on the front, so I need to do a lot of practice to get that slick and safe.¹⁹⁶

The model of clarinet that Downer used (a Yamaha) came with a neck strap (Fig. 6.10), and the implications of the strain on her right hand and wrist quickly became apparent during the second rehearsal.

¹⁹⁶ Interview, 14 April 2014.



Figure 6.10. Image from second rehearsal showing the neck strap in use (5 March 2014).

Having practised with the instrument for just one day, Downer had begun to develop a blister on the tip of her right thumb, and was experiencing pain in her right wrist and numbness in her thumb. These were issues that might have been resolved if she had had the instrument for a longer period of time, and she acknowledged that the discomfort had subsided somewhat after the first day.

A secondary repercussion of the instrument's weight was that using the neck strap restricted Downer's movements during performance, therefore compromising her expressive gestures.¹⁹⁷ During the second rehearsal, she described how raising the bell of the instrument assisted with ergonomic fluency in executing wide intervals in a legato manner, for example, in bar 34 of the second movement (**Video example 6.7**). In the video footage, Downer is evidently uncomfortable with the physical setup of

¹⁹⁷ For a discussion of the ergonomic consequences of clarinetists' gestures during performance, see Wanderley and Vines (2006).

the instrument; while discussing the problems with Shanahan she repeatedly shakes out her right hand and flexes her fingers, and touches her throat. In interview she described this experience in greater detail:

I struggled I think with the angle [of the instrument]. Probably one of the reasons I didn't enjoy the slow movement so much was going up high to those [notes] on my clarinet. What I'm used to doing is [...] going up [i.e., lifting the bell] so that you open up and don't chew it down by mistake. But I just couldn't do that because I was attached, and if I moved I was just going [makes choking gesture] [...] I felt really constrained. Which is possibly part of the reason I just felt so uncomfortable in that slow movement. I just didn't feel like I could move at all. It's like you pick an angle and that's your angle; you can't change it.¹⁹⁸

For Downer, being able to raise the bell had the effect of maintaining a relaxed embouchure, enhancing a smooth transition to the altissimo register. Limiting this movement generated physical and psychological tension. Such gestures might be imperceptible to the audience and might even be taken for granted by the performer herself, but the physical constraints of this particular instrumental setup exposed the embodied experience of music-making of which she might otherwise have been less aware.

Aside from the physical constraints of playing with a heavier instrument and a more restrictive setup, the primary performative challenges that emerged related to the basset clarinet's altered mechanism. The C \sharp 3 and E \flat 3 keys were located on the right-hand side of the instrument, with the C \sharp 3 key activated by the right-hand thumb, on the underside of the instrument. This meant that some passages of *To My Father* could not be accomplished by using the conventional alternating fingering patterns discussed above. Downer articulated the technical difficulties that the keywork presented:

¹⁹⁸ Interview, 20 March 2014.

I suppose the obvious [technical challenge] would be all the extra notes, the E_b, D, C_#, and C, because I didn't know where they were going to be on the instrument. They weren't quite the same as on my bass and I didn't have the alternatives that I'm used to on my bass either. I didn't have an alternative A_b, and C_# was on the same side as E_b, whereas on my bass it was on the back with the C. So having to learn where they were, so when I went for C_# I was accidentally getting C[_b] because I was used to that being where it was.¹⁹⁹

For Downer, it was not so much a case of having to learn new notes, but that her physical perception of where the notes – or perhaps more importantly, *combinations* of notes – lay on the instrument had been obscured. Sudnow's sense of 'perfect familiarity' (1979: 17) was disrupted, and Downer had to adapt her embodied patterns of fingerings, acquired and embedded over years of practice, to this new, less ergonomic performance situation. As a result she had to direct more conscious attention to the objective actions of her fingers in order to develop new movements with which she was less familiar.

Such disruption can be observed in Downer's encounters with three instances of problematic little finger combinations occurring in 'Clouds'. For example, during section I there is a demisemiquaver figure comprising E_b3, F_b3, D_b3, F_b3, and D_b3 (Fig. 6.11).

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

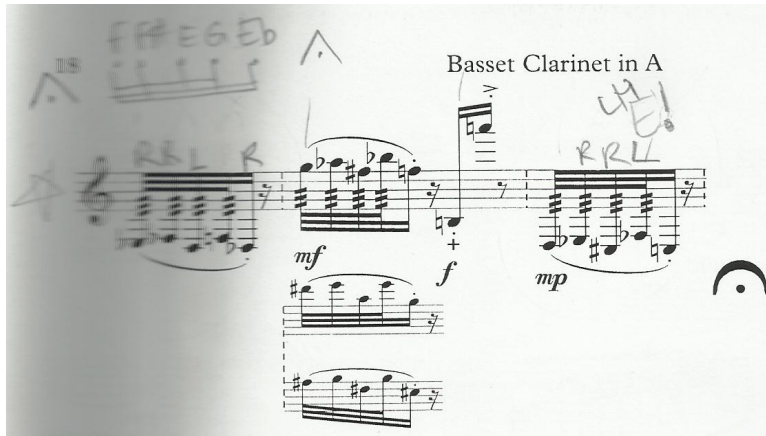


Figure 6.11. Problematic fingering combinations, section I, ‘Clouds’ (final basset clarinet part) (Planas 2014: 18).²⁰⁰

Downer annotated her copy of the score with reminders that the E \flat 3 and the F \flat 3 are both on the right-hand side, the D \sharp 3 is on the left-hand side, and the D \flat 3 is on the right-hand side. Two bars later a similar figure is indicated, moving from D \sharp 3 to E \flat 3 to C \sharp 3 to F \flat 3 to C \sharp 3. Again, Downer’s fingers had to jump from right-hand E \flat 3 to right-hand C \sharp 3. This is followed two bars later by a passage that includes a jump from right-hand E \flat 3 to right-hand A \flat 3 (Fig. 6.12), as well as an *accelerando*, indicated by the feathered beaming over the notes.

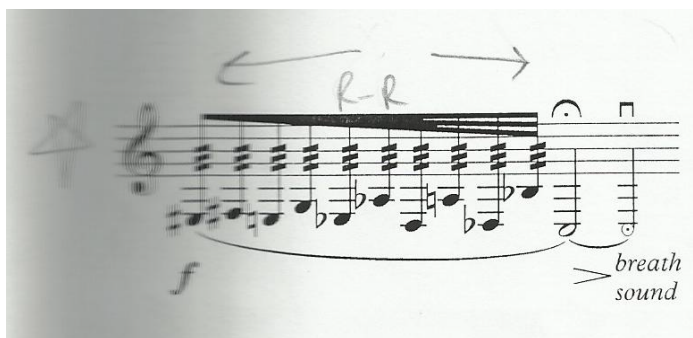


Figure 6.12. Problematic fingering combinations, section I, ‘Clouds’ (final basset clarinet part) (Planas 2014: 18).

²⁰⁰ The cue notes in this example indicate the piano part.

Here, the solution Downer developed prioritised the execution of the notes at the expense of the phrasing and tempo, rearticulating the notes that occurred on the same hand, which although breaking the slur that NP has indicated, allowed her to execute the note more ‘cleanly’. The annotated arrows in the above example correspond to her decision to play these figures at a slower tempo in order to execute them more effectively: the reversed arrow reminds her to delay the *accelerando* until she reaches the particularly awkward A₃. Downer discussed this section with Shanahan during their second rehearsal.

It’s just all on the same side [of the instrument] so that’s not going to be in time at all. [...] It’s just those three I’m going to take my time over, while I kind of go from there to there. [Indicates the three problematic phrases]²⁰¹

In the final performance the duo played these passages at a slower tempo than NP had originally intended (within a range of ♩ = 40 instead of the ♩ = 60 that he suggested during their workshop), and with a great deal of rubato. Downer is noticeably hesitant, and stumbles slightly over the phrases, in contrast to the other phrases that employ idiomatic fingerings, which sound fluent and secure. She described feeling a lack of control over the instrument.

It definitely felt less free, and less in charge I suppose, to some extent. [Laughs] Not like the basset was controlling me, but certainly I didn’t feel quite as in charge.²⁰²

In this instance, the lack of standard keywork on the basset clarinet combined with the limited amount of time that Downer had to practise with it, compromised the final performance because she was alienated from her usual way of working. These factors,

²⁰¹ Rehearsal, 5 March 2014.

²⁰² Interview, 20 March 2014.

initially operating outside of her reflective processes of thought, materially affected her body and thus her capacity to perform.

An unforeseen consequence of the additional basset keys was the psychological effect that they had on Downer in disrupting her embodied relationship to the ‘standard’ keys on the instrument. She first expressed this to Shanahan in their second rehearsal, having just received the basset clarinet:

What’s kind of bizarre is the notes I’m more likely to get wrong are the normal notes, not the basset notes. Because I’m used to F being the furthest one on that side and now it’s somewhere in the middle! So I’m going to accidentally get C# or something instead, which would be a bit interesting.²⁰³

On the standard clarinet, players will be accustomed to E3 being located at the ‘bottom’ end of the instrument.²⁰⁴ To a skilled clarinetist such as Downer, these keys are familiar anchor points on the instrument. The little finger knows that it does not have to reach beyond E3 or F3; and in executing an E3 or F3, the little finger knows that it always has to move in a downward direction, a sense of familiarity with the instrument’s interface that becomes embedded through repeated practice. The slight change in topography of the keywork therefore disrupted Downer’s sense of alignment to the instrument, as she described in more detail during interview:

I found bizarrely as well, that it wasn’t just those [basset] notes that I was suddenly not able to find, but all the other little finger keys like Es and Fs, because they’re no longer the lowest ones. So it’s quite mind-bending to go up to an E, if that makes any sense. So that was a bit of a challenge in some ways as well. To hit an E when I wanted to hit an E, and not accidentally. When I’ve got six keys there instead of four and I want to get the middle one, which I’m used to being the lowest one. Not that it’s in a different place, but it’s just a different feeling when you’re going up to it.²⁰⁵

²⁰³ Rehearsal, 5 March 2014.

²⁰⁴ On the right-hand side of the instrument, for instance, E3 is deployed by pressing the lower right-hand key of the group of four little finger keys.

²⁰⁵ Interview, 20 March 2014.

Downer's characterisation of the consequences of interacting with the modified keywork as 'mind-bending' illustrates the feeling of perceptual disalignment outlined by de Souza, whereby an altered instrument '[M]ay surprise, resist, or provoke its player' (2013: 96). The phenomenon that Downer described was demonstrated when rehearsing the apparently straightforward semiquaver chromatic 'turn' figure in bar 51 of 'Czardas' (Fig. 6.13).

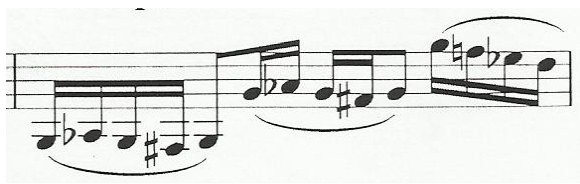


Figure 6.13. Chromatic 'turn' figure in 'Czardas' (bar 51) (final basset clarinet part) (Planas 2014: 8).

In executing the first group of four semiquavers, the clarinettist begins on the G3, depresses the right-hand A \flat 3 key with the little finger, releases it to play the G3 again, and then reaches down to the left-hand F#3 key with the little finger, before returning 'home' to the G3. This is a relatively elementary gesture to accomplish on a standard clarinet, but during rehearsal Downer found that her finger was reaching for the left-hand E key instead (**Video example 6.8**). Downer's experience echoes McCabe's description of feeling 'skewed' at the beginning of this chapter: the relationship between perception and action (discussed in chapter five) had been destabilised, which meant that she had to consciously attend to the trajectory of her little finger.

In considering the relationship between a performer and an altered instrument, the inclusion of Archibald's perspective on her experience of preparing for the pre-premiere provides further insights, particularly given that she used a model of basset

clarinet that differed from Downer's. In contrast to Downer's instrument, Archibald's Selmer prototype model had a number of duplicate keys that had been fitted by EP, resulting in what she described as a 'forest of keys'²⁰⁶ on the lower joint: seven on the left-hand side and six on the right-hand side, as well as two thumb keys. Although her ergonomic situation was the converse to that of Downer, with the instrument offering a number of alternative fingering options to play the lower notes, her perception of the instrument's interface was similarly disrupted. Archibald felt that the increased performance choices led to a sense of greater perceptual ambiguity. During interview she demonstrated an ascending chromatic scale from C3, describing the various fingerings that were possible and their consequences (**Audio example 6.1**). This extended discussion and exploration of the instrument's lower notes conveys a sense of Archibald's embodied relationship to the instrument. Her step-by-step account reveals the complexities of gestures that might otherwise seem very simple to execute. In a similar manner to Downer's description of the effect as 'mind-bending', for Archibald the extended choice of keys 'Fries my brain'. And, like Downer, in her copy of the score she indicated the required coordination of the right- and left-hand little fingers in passages such as bar 61 of 'Czardas' as the melody swoops down to the lower register of the instrument, but she also included arrows as reminders of the direction her fingers needed to move in, prompts that she described as 'sat nav stuff' to assist with navigating the 'geography' of the instrument's keywork (Fig. 6.14).²⁰⁷

²⁰⁶ Interview, 14 April 2014.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

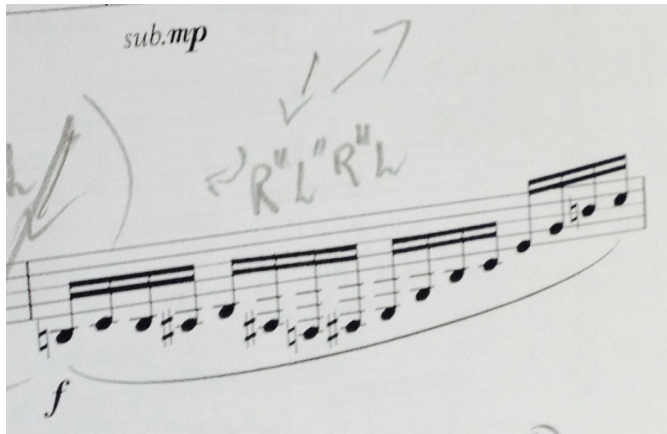


Figure 6.14. ‘Czardas’ (bar 61) (final basset clarinet part, with Archibald’s annotations) (Planas 2014: 8).

Archibald described the arrows as reminding her

That my right finger has to go up there and my left finger has to go down there! [Laughter] In a word, it’s a map! And this [the curved arrow] means, ‘Tuck your little finger round to the far right- and left-hand bottom corner you twit!’ [Laughs] You see, I’m missing it, because this [the F#3 key] is much further away down the corner than I think ever, so I always miss it. Unless I’ve recently practised it I always hit one of these, and I need *that* one!²⁰⁸

The arrows are an instance of gestural reinterpretation of the visual relation to musical notation. Although Archibald and Downer were working with instruments that were distinct in terms of the configuration of their basset note keywork, there are a number of similarities in terms of the issues that they were faced with. The annotations on their scores show the ways in which they both grappled with the less familiar properties of their instruments, negotiating their musical knowledge and their embodied relationships to their instrument. These kinds of indications will be familiar to most musicians, but while they might be a widespread and everyday aspect of a performer’s practice, they point towards the highly refined physical relationship between performers and their instruments, which are usually taken for

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

granted. Comparison of the experiences of Downer and Archibald in their interactions with their instruments shows that performance involves not merely engaging with the material properties of the individual tools in a habitual manner, but continually adapting embodied knowledge according to the challenges that arise in the moment of performance.

6.5. Conclusions

This chapter has widened the scope of the thesis in two ways: first, by examining the role of the performer in making material contributions to a work at an earlier stage in the compositional process. While Downer downplayed her role as merely practical, her input into shaping the score ultimately had greater significance than she acknowledged. Moreover, her perspective on notational practices raised questions concerning performers' negotiation of creative ownership in working with notation.

Secondly, by focussing more closely on bodily technique (in this case in response to an altered instrument), this case study has highlighted the significance of material engagement in the process of performance. While the disruptions between the performer and instrument outlined here might seem to contradict chapter four's emphasis on performer-tool integration, in fact this discussion adds nuance to the ecological perspective in drawing attention to the *dynamic* nature of the relationship between performer and instrument (de Souza 2013: 97). Performances are produced through the complex interrelation of bodies, instruments, notation, and practices, and the particular performance circumstances of *To My Father* brought a number of these relations into sharp relief.

The foregoing discussion raises a wider point about the nature of skilled practice in musical performance, which has been less explored, or largely taken for

granted within musicological research. There has been a tendency to address the subject from two (related) angles: either from a pedagogical perspective in terms of analysing the strategies required to enhance and maintain expertise in performance;²⁰⁹ or through psychological investigation of the components of expert performance (for example, practice routines,²¹⁰ memorisation,²¹¹ and sight-reading²¹²). Within this literature, skilled practice is generally treated uncritically and traced along a somewhat linear trajectory: novice performers employ various strategies in order to acquire the refined and sophisticated abilities and techniques of an expert; crudely put, they learn to play their instruments better. What's more, it seems to be assumed that once musicians attain the level of 'expert' (however that is judged), this expertise is a universal and static attribute that is sustained indefinitely, rather than a dynamic – and as this case study has shown, volatile – phenomenon. The relationship between novice and expert is treated in a similarly uncritical manner in Ingold's (2000) description of the development of skilled practice, whereby 'Through repeated trials, and guided by his observations [the novice] gradually gets the "feel" of things for himself – that is, he learns to fine-tune his own movements so as to achieve the rhythmic fluency of the accomplished practitioner.' (2000: 353). Ingold's emphasis on the integral role of embodied knowledge corresponds to the argument presented here, yet, as this case study has demonstrated, the experiences of skilled musicians on encountering new instruments are quite different from those of a novice or beginner, as they possess a variety of existing knowledge which is adapted to the altered performance situation. This is a point that will be developed further in the following chapter.

²⁰⁹ Some examples of this approach are Hallam and Bautista (2012), Lehmann, Sloboda, and Woody (2007) and Williamon (2004).

²¹⁰ See, for example, Araújo (2015).

²¹¹ See, for example, Bernardi et al. (2013); Chaffin (2007).

²¹² See, for example, Drai-Zerbib, Baccino, and Bigand (2012); Lehmann and Ericsson (1996).

What are the wider implications of this discussion for the creative process in performance? The particular circumstances of this case study have perhaps emphasised more strongly the problem-solving nature of performance outlined in the previous two chapters. Downer and Archibald's responses to the disruptions to their relationships with their instruments evidence an ingenuity in adjusting their skilled practices to the less familiar performance environment. Their score annotations bring aspects of the less perceptible dimensions of music-making into sharper relief, and evidence the practical concerns that drive performance, shaping the musical outcome and – potentially – conveying different meanings.

Finally, one dimension of this collaboration that has received less attention in my account is the significance of the instrument maker, EP, who was something of a 'silent' participant within the collaboration. Little has been documented of his role in the development of the basset clarinet; indeed, the contributions made by instrument makers working with performers to develop new instruments and practices are a neglected area of musicological research. In this case study, instrumental alteration intersected with the clarinet's past: the development of the basset clarinet represents a particular moment in the historical narrative of the instrument. There is much more to say about instruments as 'potent social and cultural phenomena' (Dawe 2012: 195); the powerful historical and cultural significance of instruments is central to the following case study, which examines a new work for a reconstructed eighteenth-century basset clarinet so as to consider questions relating to the creative affordances of employing a historical instrument in a contemporary collaboration. Here I will pursue two points raised by the present case study to a more extreme degree: the relational nature of musical skill, and the latent histories and practices that lie within musical instruments.

Chapter 7

Repurposing the past? The historical basset clarinet in creative collaboration:

'indolentiae ars', a medium to be kept

This piece is tailored in every possible way to Carl Rosman: his unusual instrument and his explorations upon it (and therefore his multiphonics, his fingerings, his microtones), his transcendent virtuosity, his penetrating intellect, his tolerance of ambiguity, his immersion in musical history, his voice, his stage presence, his control of silence, even his page-turning technology. In gratitude for almost ten years of a relationship that has become one of the foundations of my musical life: nothing I've ever done has been dedicated so profoundly. (Johnson 2015: i)

In his dedication to *'indolentiae ars', a medium to be kept* for nine-key basset clarinet in A (2015), Evan Johnson is generous in ascribing ownership of numerous aspects of his work to its performer, Carl Rosman. As was suggested in chapter six, it is arguably the case that all musical works are contingent on a particular combination of the performer's body, skills, and instrument; and this case study demonstrates this reality particularly acutely, since the piece hinges entirely on Rosman's individual skills, the specific instrument in his hands and mouth, and his relationship to the composer. Indeed, *'indolentiae ars'* distills a sufficiently significant collaborative attunement such that Johnson acknowledges that it might never be performed by another musician:

[U]nless I wind up making a version for a modern instrument (which I may or may not do), it will be absolutely for the combination of Carl and this particular instrument—nobody else will ever play it—and, from his end, it involves developing a technique, creating a relationship with an instrument, that will likely be useful primarily for this one piece, even if there turn out to be others written for the instrument. It would not be at all surprising if Carl's repertoire for this instrument turned out to be this piece and the Mozart Concerto and Quintet.²¹³

²¹³ Email correspondence from EJ to EP, 15 April 2014.

'indolentiae ars' was commissioned by the Cologne-based ensemble musikFabrik for Rosman, and it will be premiered in 2016. This case study focuses on the 'production' stage²¹⁴ of the work's trajectory spanning approximately eighteen months.²¹⁵ Although Johnson and Rosman had worked together before, the 'start'²¹⁶ of the collaboration can be identified as their first workshop, which took place in Cologne in April 2014. This was followed by two subsequent workshops, one during the Darmstadt Summer Course for New Music in August 2014 and one in Cologne in December of the same year. I attended and filmed the first two workshops, and the participants made and shared with me an audio recording of the third. This period of face-to-face interaction in the workshop could be characterised as the first phase of the collaboration, while the second phase takes place in a virtual space. Since there is a considerable distance geographically between composer and performer (Johnson is based in Massachusetts and Rosman lives in Cologne) they have pursued a regular and lively email correspondence since their most recent workshop.²¹⁷ This has included sharing score fragments, sketches, fingering charts, and recordings of techniques and passages; culminating with Johnson sending Rosman a 'complete' score in June 2015.²¹⁸

Somewhat paradoxically, in a thesis that is sceptical of a characterisation of creativity that relies too heavily on innovation, there is much about this collaboration that is unprecedented. This is the first contemporary commission ever written for a

²¹⁴ Although the premiere and rehearsals will take place beyond the scope of my thesis I will continue to document the project.

²¹⁵ See Appendix III for a summary of the audio-visual material collected during fieldwork.

²¹⁶ By 'start' I mean the point at which the musicians began to focus their attention on the project. Johnson had previously heard Rosman demonstrate the instrument, but only very briefly. He recalls that Rosman 'took [his instrument collection] out and played them for me a couple of years ago and I chose that one at the time just based on the way it sounded' (Interview, 6 April 2014).

²¹⁷ The material from their emails has been lightly edited for clarity of content and format. Rosman and Johnson employed the Helmholtz notation system in discussions of pitch – this has been amended to Scientific Pitch Notation to ensure consistency with the rest of the thesis.

²¹⁸ All examples refer to this score (Johnson 2015), unless otherwise stated.

solo historical basset clarinet, whose extant repertoire is even narrower than that of the modern basset clarinet discussed in the previous chapter.²¹⁹ Moreover, while Rosman has a reputation as an internationally leading performer of new music, he had never performed on this instrument in public before this project, commenting at the first workshop that ‘I’m not quite there yet with it to do something beyond just playing it to myself.’²²⁰ A significant aspect of the collaboration between composer and performer has been to develop a new instrumental rhetoric and forms of notation without having the opportunity to draw on influences and sound worlds from existing compositions and recordings. By contrast to the previous three chapters, where much of the musical material had been composed before any interaction between performer and composer took place,²²¹ in this case study the development of new material was highly contingent on the interaction that took place between Rosman and Johnson through their face-to-face workshops and over the course of their correspondence.

However, while on the one hand this collaboration explores a number of uncharted territories, on the other it is firmly embedded within a complex entanglement of historical, social, and aesthetic factors. The piece also represents the outcome of a close professional relationship and rapport between the two musicians, who have worked together on a number of projects in the past and inhabit overlapping professional spheres. Although Rosman has played a number of Johnson’s ensemble pieces before²²² and has been the dedicatee of one of his works,²²³ this is the first time

²¹⁹ The aria ‘Parto, Parto’ in Mozart’s *La Clemenza di Tito* K. 621 (1791) includes a part for basset clarinet in the key of B flat, but the Clarinet Concerto K. 622 and Clarinet Quintet K. 581 are the only two extant solo works. Whereas the modern basset clarinet has been employed in contemporary compositions (as discussed in chapter six), it is reasonable to argue that historical basset clarinets are made today with the sole intention of performing the Mozart repertoire. Hereafter, I refer to this particular model of basset clarinet as simply a ‘basset clarinet’.

²²⁰ Workshop, 4 April 2014.

²²¹ Although in chapter six Downer and Planas workshoped *To My Father*, Planas had written much of the material prior to their first meeting.

²²² Rosman also gave the premiere of *A general interrupter to ongoing activity* for solo voice (2011).

²²³ *Apostrophe 1 (All communication is a form of complaint)* for two bass clarinets (2008).

that the musicians have worked closely together on a solo work.²²⁴ However, Rosman and Johnson are friends, and Rosman is certainly familiar with Johnson's compositional aesthetic. Johnson viewed their close relationship as particularly important in this project, where there are a number of unknown factors.

Carl knows, to a greater or lesser degree, everything I've written for clarinet, solo or ensemble; he knows why I'm interested in the project, and what I would be interested in the instrument itself – and conversely, I am looking forward to taking advantage of the extremely rare combination of Carl's musical intelligence and a relatively 'raw' relationship to the instrument in a contemporary/experimental context, so that we can together develop an instrumental technique that doesn't really exist yet as such, and he can develop a fluency that is quite specifically tailored to the idiom of the piece, whatever it may turn out to be. [...] [T]he nature of this project itself – the use of the antiquated instrument – emerges quite specifically from our shared interests in particular periods and practices of music history, which (at least on my end) has deepened and been strongly influenced by discussions with him.²²⁵

7.1. An accident

The following episode from the second workshop in Darmstadt captures some of the questions that underpin the case study. We had arranged to meet in the Lichtenbergschule towards the south of the city, where we found an empty classroom to use for our meeting. As Rosman set up his instrument, its bottom angled 'knee' joint came loose and cracked on the concrete floor. Rosman explained that while practising in Cologne in particularly cold weather he had adjusted some of the joints by removing the cotton threads that are wound around the tenons. The change in climate in Darmstadt resulted in the joints loosening. Rosman seemed less concerned than I expected, and remarked that he would glue the joint back together himself when he got home, as a temporary 'fix' before sending it to the maker to be repaired.

²²⁴ On *Apostrophe*, Johnson asserts 'I just sort of wrote it. I had never met [Rosman] at the time; we didn't really correspond at all; and as a piece it wasn't that elaborate.' (Interview, 6 April 2014).

²²⁵ Email correspondence from EJ to EP, 15 April 2014.

The workshop continued, with Rosman taking care to hold the bottom joint, to avoid it slipping free again (Fig. 7.1).



Figure 7.1. Image from second workshop with the ‘knee’ joint visible (Darmstadt, 3 August 2014).

The event itself was fairly unremarkable, but several days after returning from Darmstadt, Rosman included the photograph below in an email to Johnson and I (Fig. 7.2) joking that ‘The knee joint is semi-authentically convalescing.’²²⁶

²²⁶ Email correspondence from CR to EJ and EP, 10 August 2014.



Figure 7.2. Rosman’s ‘Semi-authentically convalescing’ ‘knee’ joint.

The image shows the joint held together with the cord usually used as a ligature (a common feature of early clarinets) placed alongside the tube of synthetic resin adhesive that Rosman had used to mend the joint. This photograph, and Rosman’s joke, struck me as representing some of the issues that are at play in this project, where the particular historical affordances of the basset clarinet are encountered in a contemporary context. The design of this particular instrument, with its angled globular bell, was unknown until the 1990s when an engraving of a basset clarinet in a concert programme promoting a tour by Anton Stadler, the clarinetist for whom Mozart wrote his Concerto and Quintet (see Shackleton 1995: 32) was uncovered in Riga, Latvia (Poulin 1991). Historical instruments are powerful cultural signifiers that are connected to particular repertoires and practices, and raise aesthetic questions, such as the extent to which the instrument’s inherent mechanical instabilities or timbral variability should be eradicated or celebrated.

With this discussion in mind I turn now to the aims and research questions of the chapter. This case study examines the compositional trajectory of *‘indolentiae*

ars', focussing on the processes through which new practices and musical materials were encountered and developed. Drawing on ecological theories of distributed cognition proposed by Ingold (2000; 2011) and Hutchins (1995; 2010) I begin by considering the ways in which the conditions of this collaboration demonstrate a distinctive way of sharing knowledge and expertise. Following this theoretical discussion, the case study analyses the way in which the musical material was shaped from three angles: the wider historical and cultural dimensions of the creative ecology (relating both to the instrument that is employed and the musicians' own creative cultures); the development of techniques and musical materials through various categories of engaged interaction; and Rosman's embodied relationship to his instrument and his developing technical expertise. The structure of the discussion moves from the broad to the specific, from the wider aesthetic discourses that pervade the collaboration to the momentary and in some cases 'accidental' outcomes that occur as a result of a specific interplay between body and instrument. By structuring the discussion in this way, the aim of the chapter is to trace the micro processes within the larger collaborative trajectory; to understand how the particular historical, social, and ergonomic affordances of the instrument are enmeshed into the 'here and now' of the present collaboration.

7.2. 'Growing into' knowledge

Ingold's (2000; 2011) work has been influential in overturning the view that knowledge is an objectified entity that can be acquired or transmitted, by demanding instead a perspective that situates the practitioner, right from the outset, in the context of an active engagement with the constituents of her surroundings.

[P]eople do not acquire their knowledge ready-made, but rather *grow into it*, through a process of what might best be called 'guided

rediscovery'. The process is rather like that of following trails through a landscape: each story will take you so far, until you come across another that will take you further. This trail-following is what I call *wayfaring* [...] it is through wayfaring, not transmission, that knowledge is carried on. (Ingold 2011: 162; original emphasis)

Ingold challenges what he describes as the 'genealogical' paradigm of knowledge transmission, emphasising both process and intersubjectivity as crucial to how learning takes place. This model, he asserts, is underpinned by the assumption 'that persons are brought into being – that is, generated – independently and in advance of their entry into the lifeworld, through the bestowal of a set of ready-made attributes from their antecedents' (2000: 136). By arguing that knowledge is 'ecologically' rather than 'culturally' produced, Ingold highlights that knowledge is not a static cultural tradition that is passed on by processes of learning from generation to generation, but is 're-grown' in each, responding to the specificities of a particular ecology. Knowledge is therefore not ready-made and context independent, but rather *storied* (2011: 159). An expert is not someone who knows more, but knows *well*, so that 'It is in the art of storytelling, not in the power of classification, that the key to human knowledgeability – and therefore to culture – ultimately resides' (: 164).

Ingold's model of storied knowledge is particularly pertinent to the present case study, where the musicians worked together, exploring the technical and sonic possibilities of the instrument together – to, in Johnson's words, '[develop] an instrumental technique that doesn't really exist yet'.²²⁷ However, this relationship differs from that of the 'expert and novice' that Ingold alludes to. Rosman is clearly an expert performer, but his relationship to the basset clarinet was somewhat transitional at the outset of the project. And although Johnson was initially unfamiliar with this distinctive instrument, he certainly could not be described as a novice

²²⁷ Email correspondence from EJ to EP, 15 April 2014.

musician, and has composed for a number of wind instruments in the past. In this case then, Hutchins's (1995) model of distributed cognition might offer a less romanticised theoretical framework to study the propagation and transformation of processes across social groups, illustrating the active way in which material culture participates in human activity, in a manner that 'expand[s] the territory of the human mind beyond the skin and skull of the individual' (Malafouris 2013: 67).

Hutchins's research on the navigation of a US Navy vessel demonstrates the way in which the crew of the ship operate as a distributed system, with each agent contributing to the shared cognition that is required to operate the vessel, illustrating 'the web of mutual dependence among the elements of an ecosystem' (Hutchins 2010: 706). He provides a highly detailed description of a number of the navigational instruments that are employed during the ship's journey; tools that can be understood as a set of 'representational media' that are manifestations of cultural knowledge, often functioning in 'simultaneous coordination':

Physical artifacts became repositories of knowledge, and they were constructed in durable media so that a single artifact might come to represent more than any individual could know. Furthermore, through the combination and superimposition of task-relevant structure, artifacts came to embody kinds of knowledge that would be exceedingly difficult to represent mentally. (Hutchins 1995: 96)

There have been few empirical investigations of distributed cognition that address the practice of musical performance,²²⁸ but de Souza (2013) is one such scholar to apply Hutchins's work to the relationship between performer and instrument, showing how music cognition is grounded in the performer's relationship with her tools. He writes,

The interaction of body and instrument—with all its cognitive consequences—is an interaction of individual and culture, of the present and the past. Instrumental mediation engenders cultural learning

²²⁸ Linda Kaastra (2008; 2011) has investigated distributed cognition in ensemble coordination, but her work is more concerned with processes of live music-making.

beginning from the haptic level of physical skill. Instruments, in other words, ground modes of music cognition that are embodied, technically conditioned, and historically situated. (de Souza 2013: 50)

In drawing attention to instruments' physical, technical, and historical affordances, de Souza offers a fruitful framework to approach the basset clarinet in this case study, which has powerful historical and cultural resonances. However, de Souza's interests ultimately lie elsewhere, in that he is concerned with unpacking the direct relationship between the performer's body and instrument, rather than the distribution of knowledge and developmental processes during co-present collaboration. While useful in considering one dimension of the collaboration, de Souza's work does not address the more explicitly social aspects of the engagement between collaborators during a creative encounter.

Hutchins offers an analysis of 'developmental trajectories' of practitioners in 'cultural contexts' (1995: 263), recognising that in undertaking a joint activity, the knowledge of individuals cannot exist in distinct, non-overlapping states. He illustrates his argument by mapping out the varying expertise of the plotter, bearing taker, and bearing time-recorder in performing an operation²²⁹ of the ship's navigation. Rather than each practitioner's knowledge existing in strictly defined, bounded categories, the system is much more dynamic, with each individual's knowledge growing and overlapping through interactions with one another (Fig. 7.3).

²²⁹ The specific activity is an 'input portion of the basic fix cycle' (Hutchins 1995: 264).

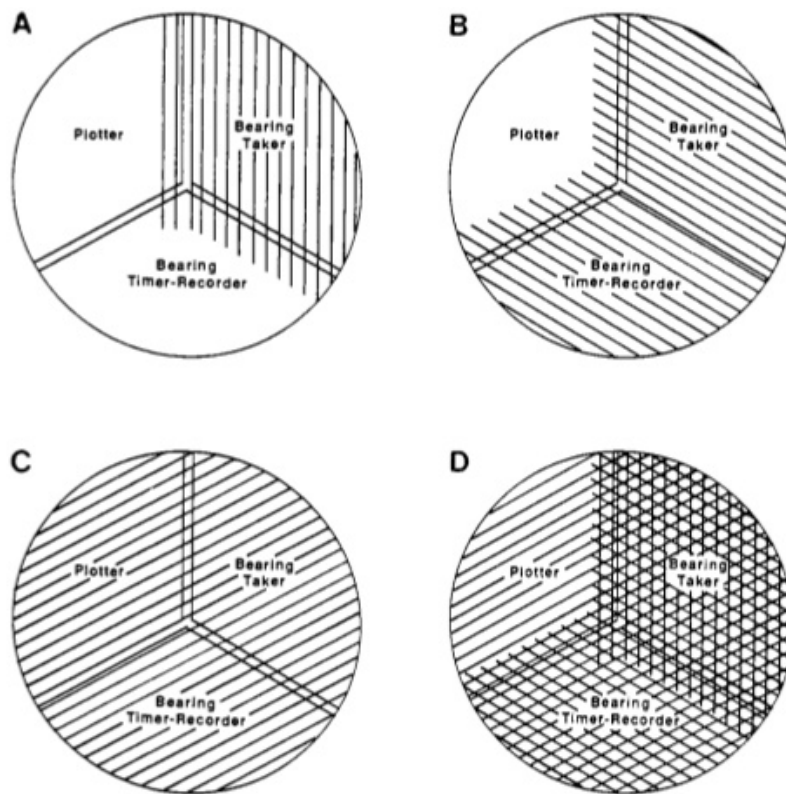


Figure 7.3. ‘Overlapping distributions of knowledge among the members of the navigation team’ (Hutchins 1995: 266).

As the knowledge of each individual increases, the pattern of expertise becomes increasingly overlaid, to the extent that diagram D shows the task represented ‘most redundantly’ (: 266), since the greater the level of expertise, the lower the demand of the task. However, one criticism that could be levelled at Hutchins’s overlapping model of distributed cognition is its overly rigid and tidy structure. James Hollan, Hutchins, and David Kirsh (2000) refine Hutchins’s model by proposing three ‘tenets’ of distributed cognition: 1) ‘socially distributed cognition’, that is, concerned with how cognitive processes are distributed across a group; 2) ‘embodied cognition’, which recognises the role that the external environment plays in cognitive processes; and 3) ‘culture and cognition’, which denotes the influence that cultural ecologies and social practices have on cognitive processes. Yet even this more nuanced model fails

to capture the fluidity of the interplay between collaborators, and the unstructured nature of their relationships. Joint work is arguably a much messier and more processual activity, and later in the chapter I will show how Rosman and Johnson's workshops are highly emergent in nature and follow less linear trajectories. This is where Ingold's (2003) mycelial model of ecological knowledge perhaps has more to offer in attempting to characterise the developmental networks of a collaboration. A fungal mycelium, consisting of a complex mesh composed of interconnected thread-like 'hyphae', conveys more effectively the heterogeneous, asymmetric, and most importantly, *dynamic* qualities of co-creative activity. Ingold emphasises the unboundedness of the relational qualities of knowledge as 'the *entanglement* of things [...] not a network of connections but a meshwork of interwoven lines of growth and movement' (2008: 4; original emphasis). As discussed in chapter two, Ingold's concept of a meshwork is invoked in Clarke, Doffman, and Lim's (2013) study of the broader collaborative context of a composer's interactions with an ensemble and a conductor. The authors' 'musical ecosystem' captures the phenomenologically complex connections and interrelations at play in a performance event, 'constituted of objects and processes whose affordances criss-cross the physical and the social, the synchronic and the diachronic' (2013: 630). However, although they acknowledge the role of the physical in their ecological model of distributed creativity, they do not examine the relationship between performer and instrument in any detail, and their work is not primarily concerned with questions of skill.

In the present case study, Johnson was reliant upon the technical expertise of Rosman during the workshop stage in order to create a relationship with an unfamiliar instrument and performance practice. Part of Rosman's role was to share with Johnson a sense of his embodied relationship to the instrument to such an extent that

he was able to compose for the instrument, but not so much that he would ever perform with it. Equally, Rosman was obliged to interrogate his individual performance practices in order to develop a skilled practice that is heavily intertwined with this instrument and the specific performance circumstances. In this case study then, the development of knowledge can be observed as distributed across the interactions of performer, composer, and instrument, and importantly, is crucial to the creative agency of the collaborators. This meant that their creative relationship was arguably symbiotic: as Rosman's technique developed he was able to share his increasing proficiency with Johnson, which in turn enabled Johnson to explore new aesthetic avenues during their workshops. As a consequence, it could be argued that employing this instrument in a contemporary context afforded a distinctive way of working together.

7.3. Background to the collaboration

To understand the significance of using this particular basset clarinet in a contemporary commission, and to distinguish it from its modern counterpart that was presented in the previous chapter, I will begin by providing a brief overview of the instrument, before moving onto the main empirical material. Figure 7.4 shows the model of basset clarinet, made by the Dutch instrument maker Peter van der Poel,²³⁰ which is based on a design by Theodor Lotz (1747-1792), the Viennese maker who is directly associated with Stadler (Poulin 1991).²³¹

²³⁰ The following account is not intended to be an exhaustive investigation of the basset clarinet, but aims to attend to the properties that were pertinent to this particular instrument within the context of the collaboration. For a wide-ranging and detailed organological discussion of the eighteenth-century basset clarinet, see Hoeprich (2008) and Shackleton (1995).

²³¹ The only surviving Lotz model is in the key of B flat, but Rosman's is in A (at 430 Hz), as is common for most historical models.



Figure 7.4. The ‘Lotz’ basset clarinet in A.²³²

As Figure 7.4 demonstrates, this basset clarinet bears very little resemblance to its modern counterpart. Aside from the most immediate difference of its extended range down to B2 rather than E3, the instrument possesses a number of properties that are distinct from the ‘standard’ modern model. It is constructed from boxwood rather than the grenadilla that is used today, and as a consequence it is much lighter – in both colour and weight – as well as being more susceptible to changes in temperature and humidity (as was evidenced in Darmstadt!). The mouthpiece is narrower, and requires smaller and softer reeds.²³³ It has a wide bore, with larger tone holes that are positioned lower down the instrument, particularly those of the right hand (van der Poel 2014). The B2 is executed by covering an open hole located on the ‘knee’ joint, usually with the performer’s leg. In contrast to the modern clarinet, which can have in the region of seventeen to twenty-two keys in addition to between four and seven ring keys,²³⁴ the historical basset clarinet usually has nine keys, five of which correspond to the five keys of the ‘standard’ eighteenth-century clarinet (Shackleton 1995: 19),

²³² Image used courtesy of Peter van der Poel. Some players (including Rosman, as in Figure 7.1) rotate the bell so that it faces inwards rather than outwards, in accordance with a surviving engraving of the instrument in a concert programme promoting one of Stadler’s performances (see Poulin 1991).

²³³ The reeds are closer in relation to those used with German system clarinets than the Boehm system (Shackleton 1995).

²³⁴ A ‘ring’ key is a metal ring that surrounds a tone hole, thus keeping it uncovered when not in use. When a finger covers the tone hole the ring key activates another padded key to cover a hole located elsewhere on the instrument.

and an additional four that operate the ‘basset’ notes. This minimal mechanical system, with keys that operate independently from one another, has a number of consequences for the performer. On the one hand, the lack of fully chromatic keywork presents ergonomic constraints in that the player must employ cross-fingerings,²³⁵ and intonation is extremely variable. Tuning the B $\frac{3}{4}$ is problematic, for example, as it is approximately a quartertone flat, requiring a ‘half hole’ fingering and change of embouchure to adjust the pitch. On the other hand, the open tone holes and lack of linkage between keys means that many more fingering configurations are possible, affording huge flexibility of timbre and intonational variability. Moreover, there is a lack of timbral uniformity between registers, with the chalumeau register and basset notes having an almost bassoon-like sonority. As well as its powerful cultural significance, the instrument clearly offers a large number of possibilities in relation to harmonic and timbral material – the question is the extent to which, and the manner in which, they were explored within the collaboration.

Johnson describes his music as being concerned with ‘physical and bodily underpinnings of performance’ (Johnson 2014), a point he elaborated on further during interview:

[With] a lot of my work, I aim for this result which is this very gentle, very delicate, very sort of lyrical almost, sort of ornamented, sort of graceful thing, but (especially in solo pieces) I like to try and get there through ways that take a lot of energy. So things that barely sound that the instrument has to force out and you get a little squeak at the end; or things that are just really awkward or really tiring to do but generate these really soft and gentle results. So I’m really interested in those things that require the sense of the body, the sense of the musculature and the embouchure and the lungs, but completely privately. It’s not overly athletic, that sort of thing. [...] I make scores where things are going to go missing, where things aren’t going to be audible, whether

²³⁵ Cross-fingerings are fingering configurations where the fingers are raised and lowered out of serial order, a technique that was eradicated with the development of the Boehm system of keys. Colin Lawson (1995; 2000) discusses cross fingerings in classical clarinet performance in further detail.

it's the precise rhythms or the expression markings or the slurs or whatever, and I kind of like that.²³⁶

Johnson's music is often characterised by extremely low dynamic levels, canonic structures, and elaborate rhythms (such as nested and overlapping tuplets) that are divorced from a sense of pulse. The performer is often pushed to an extreme position, but in a manner that might not necessarily be conveyed to the audience. This compositional intent, suggestive of Helmut Lachenmann's concept of *musique concrète instrumentale* (Lachenmann 1996), is illustrated in the following two examples. In one of Johnson's pieces recently performed by musikFabrik, *die bewegung der augen* (2012),²³⁷ sections of the oboe part are performed using the cor anglais, but at the top end of the instrument's compass. Johnson commented in interview that '[It's] sort of perverse, right? There's only one note in the entire piece that an oboe couldn't play, but it's because I wanted that special quality of strain to come out. Things that aren't going to quite be under control.'²³⁸ A similar concern with provoking instability and undermining a sense of control 'behind the scenes' was demonstrated in a discussion during the second workshop, when Johnson described workshopping his string quartet, *inscribed, in the center: '1520, Antorff'* that was being premiered later that week, and encouraging the performers to 'play a lot of little parenthesised open strings, trying to get them to play those accidental contacts. It's very hard to get! "Don't *actually* play it!"'²³⁹

The scores that Johnson produces are very intricate and laden with instructions and parameters. However, there is a particularly private quality to the relationship between the performer and notation – the material is less about eliciting a specific

²³⁶ Interview, 6 April 2014.

²³⁷ I attended a rehearsal of this piece during my fieldwork in Cologne.

²³⁸ Interview, 6 April 2014.

²³⁹ Workshop, 3 August 2014.

sounding result than setting up a particular circumstance of performative ambiguity. Such an approach suggests that Johnson is more concerned with exploring the tactile properties of producing extended techniques than their timbral qualities. As well as his professed interest in music of the eighteenth century, we can begin to see why the basset clarinet, with its inherent instabilities, fragilities, and inconsistencies, might be particularly attractive to him.

7.4. The wider historical and cultural dimensions of the collaboration

The 'Mozart problem'

Having provided some contextual background to the commission, I turn now to the case study material of the chapter, which begins by addressing the wider historical influences that pervade the collaboration. Most immediately, for example, there are the historical performance practices and discourses relating to the basset clarinet and its connection to Mozart. Indeed, the 'Mozart problem'²⁴⁰ was a term used by Rosman and Johnson implying the cultural weight of Mozart's repertoire for the basset clarinet in composing for this instrument. Employing an instrument that is so deeply connected to a composer, and in particular, two of his most prominent works, raises a number of questions. To what extent might this historical lineage play a role in the collaborative process? Or, as Johnson put it, 'To what degree is this just an exotic quasi-clarinet, and to what degree is it a specifically *eighteenth-century* instrument?'²⁴¹ When asked during the first workshop whether it was possible to approach the basset clarinet in isolation from Mozart, Rosman replied: 'Not for me! [...] With this [instrument] it is very clear that Mozart or Mozart-type music just fits

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Email correspondence from EJ to EP, 15 April 2014.

it.²⁴² As well as the instrument's aesthetic signifiers, Mozart is also impressed upon Rosman's embodied relationship to the instrument, since at the outset of the project his practice routine consisted largely of working on the repertoire that exists for the instrument. While Johnson acknowledged the significance of the instrument's historical context, he was keen to avoid the piece having any pastiche qualities, commenting,

It's certainly not going to be based on Mozart and any sort of quote, but it'd be sort of a shame not to have some thought given to that. [...] It would be nice to have a special thing that somehow implicitly addresses the historical context in some sense. [...] It would not surprise me if there's some sort of idea of Mozartian gesture or ornamental practice or scales or something that wound up somehow hopefully subtly. I'm really allergic to pastiche.²⁴³

In the first workshop, much of the discussion and playing was centred around Mozart.

Video example 7.1 is a short excerpt from the beginning of the workshop, showing Rosman improvising with material from the first movement of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto. Indeed, throughout the session he played sections from, and improvised with, material from the Concerto and Quintet. There was also extended discussion of the instrument's properties in relation to eighteenth-century performance practice, such as particular cross-fingerings and timbral qualities.

An example of the connection between the technical properties of the instrument and its historical context is discernable in **Video example 7.2**, where the musicians discuss the intonational changeability of the B3. This episode is transcribed below (Table 7.1).

²⁴² Workshop, 4 April 2014.

²⁴³ Interview, 6 April 2014.

Participant	Dialogue	Action
CR	Down here you have C [plays C4], B natural [plays B3, and then moves between the two notes].	
EJ	What just happened?	
CR	What just happened is B natural is a half hole...	
CR		Fluctuates between the two notes, and then plays bar 295 ²⁴⁴ from the Concerto.
CR	B natural is a half hole. It's a bit hard to tell what they actually did back then. If they just played...	
CR		Plays rapid scale descending from C4 down to F3 and up again, without modifying the tuning of the B3.
CR	If they just played that, were happy with that. Of course if they <i>were</i> happy with that then that raises all sorts of other questions. That's the only option. Or if they did do this half hole thing...	
CR		Plays bar 8 ²⁴⁵ of the Quintet, which includes a B3.
EJ	So what exactly are you doing to make that – is it a pressure issue or placement issue in this case?	
CR	Come over here [shows the half hole].	
EJ	Oh I see.	
CR	Specialist players have different ways of getting around this. There are different ways to divide the hole. There's having the finger off in this direction; there's having the finger off in this direction [plays different tunings] which I don't tend to do. There's having it lower. Or one particular player, for example if he's got in the orchestra a B natural that comes in after a while, he knows where the nail has to go. [Plays different tunings using fingernail] But that's very unwieldy if you're doing textures, but if you're in an	

²⁴⁴ Bar numbers refer to the Bärenreiter Urtext edition of the Concerto KV. 622 (Mozart [1791] 2013).

²⁴⁵ Bar numbers refer to the Bärenreiter Urtext edition of the Quintet KV. 581 (Mozart [1789] 2008).

	orchestral tutti or something and it's got to be in tune and it's got to be stable, then the nail's a better way.	
CR		Plays ascending F3 major scale,
EJ	So that's the only diatonic pitch that's;	
CR	The only white note pitch that's a shambles, yeah! To that extent.	

Table 7.1. Transcription of Video example 7.2.

The B \flat 3 appears frequently in the Mozart Concerto, particularly in the first movement, where it is used in an exposed oscillating quaver figure alongside A \sharp 3, first appearing in bars 118 and 120. Its prominence in the Concerto was subject to some discussion between Rosman and Johnson in the first two workshops, in such a way that suggested it might become a significant compositional element for Johnson. Although this has not been the case in an obvious manner, the wider sense of intonational instability is an important element of the work, not only in its microtonal inflections, but also in Johnson's performance notes, which specify that the performer should use 'An unspecified "alternate" fingering for the given pitch, presumably with a less centred, less reliable tone' (2015: iii). He asserted that this fascination with 'specific "off-center" fingerings for particular pitches at particular moments' is motivated by a desire to ensure that 'the gestural and pitch material of the piece in the abstract is adequately reflected in the comings and goings of timbre and intonation and convenience (or lack thereof) of fingering.'²⁴⁶

One characteristic aspect of Mozart's writing for the basset clarinet observed by Johnson was its wide leaps that exploit the extended range of the instrument.

²⁴⁶ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 20 May 2015.

During the second workshop he commented that this might be fertile material to consider in his own compositional process:

When I got back from Cologne I sat down with my pile of period instrument recordings of the Concerto, and compared the modern ones, and one of the main differences when you're not paying attention to every little detail of articulation and timbre is the leaps, because the register's expanded. And also when I think of the Mozart Clarinet Concerto on boxwood basset I think three-and-a-half octave leaps and so on, and Mozart obviously loved that about the instrument and kept doing it over and over again. So that's the sort of thing that might find its way into the rhetoric of this piece. As someone who tends to work within very narrow or horizontal registers moving relatively slowly most of the time, the idea of these massive leaps as one of the specific cultural signifiers associated with the instrument, those may be useful.²⁴⁷

While it would be a crude simplification to overstate the case for the inclusion of leaps and triadic material as being solely related to the influence of Mozart, the first page of the piece contains a number of wide intervals that span three registers of the instrument, and some triadic gestures, for example in bar 5, which although microtonal, is suggestive of the key of F sharp major (Fig. 7.5).

²⁴⁷ Workshop, 3 August 2014.

Figure 7.5. Wide intervallic leaps (bar 5) (Johnson 2015: 1).

Indeed, during an email exchange after Rosman had sent Johnson a recording of the first page of the piece, Johnson commented that the triadic character of this gesture was more prominent in the recording than he had expected.

EJ [...] The main practical impact of [hearing the recording], though, may be the realization that the triadic element to the third gesture is much stronger than I had accounted for, though obviously it's there, and I may have to run through that bar pushing some pitches around, or we can muck about with fingerings later.

(Although looking at it again, re. the triadic bit, I do think that being up to tempo and with more acute rhythms will help significantly.)²⁴⁸

CR Mate, if you've written F sharp major then that's what you've written, you're not going to get out of it by saying 'when he's practised it'll go by quicker' ;) ²⁴⁹

EJ On the contrary I most certainly am! Or at least 'with more varied microgestures, tunings, and a more fragmentary rhythmic profile ... and a bit quicker'! ²⁵⁰

CR Oh, well that's all right then. (There are a lot of major-thirty-things going on, that's all I'm saying. I think you may have to embrace your tonal self there ;)) ²⁵¹

EJ You're talking to someone who began a fairly substantial two-piano piece with a big honking first-inversion minor triad, and signalled the largest structural juncture in that piece with a big honking first-inversion major triad. I'm not shy about these things when it suits my purposes ;) ²⁵²

This short and clearly light-hearted exchange gives some sense of the dynamic of the collaboration – a friendly rapport and strong sense of playfulness is evident in many of their interactions, as well as a willingness to challenge one another. The teasing is

²⁴⁸ Email correspondence from EJ to CR, 9 April 2015 20:42.

²⁴⁹ Email correspondence from CR to EJ, 9 April 2015 21:05.

²⁵⁰ Email correspondence from EJ to CR, 9 April 2015 21:38.

²⁵¹ Email correspondence from CR to EJ, 10 April 2015 07:47.

²⁵² Email correspondence from EJ to CR, 10 April 2015 18:17.

indicative of their good-natured relationship, but its undertone could also be attributed to the macro-social dynamics of the collaboration. The musicians' comments articulated their identities (of composer and performer) with Johnson slightly suggesting that the responsibility for the shaping of the pitches lay to an extent with Rosman's execution, whereas Rosman's response – which expresses a view of 'You do your job, and I'll do mine' – seems to assign creative authority to Johnson.

In a later email, when asked about the extent to which aspects of Mozart might have permeated his compositional process, Johnson confirmed that some had, although privately and not in a literal sense:

Although leaps are also just leaps, the gestural content of the opening passage, which is the most consistently leap-heavy of the piece, is indeed meant as a sort of wink at the characteristic gestures of the Mozart Concerto – hence, in part, the '*quasi "musikantisch"*' indication at the opening, which is meant to suggest an attitude of a sort of 'traditional musicianship' despite everything else there that may suggest otherwise. So when that attitude comes back here and there, as it does, there is certainly an element (at least in my own mind) of thinking of it as 'Mozartian' material.²⁵³

Johnson went on to explain that Mozart had also played a part in a more concealed manner; some of the pitch structures of the piece were derived from transformations of the opening phrase of the Mozart Clarinet Quintet:

There are also even more occult things that nobody is meant to ever notice – the canonic strands [that underpin Part I], for instance, have their initial pitches based on a set of versions of the opening four notes of the Quintet (E-C#-B-A), transposed and also microtonally compressed and expanded. This is obviously the sort of thing that has no musical meaning whatsoever, but as it's a fairly arbitrary decision to have to make, I figured, why not make it that way?²⁵⁴

In contrast to Johnson, Rosman was less convinced that the leaps could be interpreted as necessarily indicative of Mozart.

²⁵³ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 20 May 2015.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

[...] There's nothing that strikes me as specifically Mozartian, though. Wide leaps are certainly a feature of Mozart's clarinet (and piano, and vocal...) writing but they're also a feature of clarinet writing before and after him, what with our wide pitch range and sonically disparate registers. And what Evan's pitches get up to in private is their own business, really - I've noticed a fair bit of triadic material and octave leaps but again Mozart had no monopoly on those.²⁵⁵

Rosman's final sentence is again suggestive of a slightly hands-off attitude regarding what he appeared to view as Johnson's role in the collaboration – the 'behind-the-scenes' dimension of the compositional process did not appear to concern him.

However, as he rightly points out, any influence of Mozart has been employed in a private manner. Johnson has used certain 'cultural signifiers' and transformed them within a rhetoric in a way that avoids pastiche. Thus the historical lineage of using this particular instrument is addressed implicitly – it is one channel of many through which performance possibilities are explored, rather than a source of 'concrete' sonic material. Moreover, Johnson's and Rosman's comments acknowledge the significant amount of 'private' creative work that Johnson undertook outside of the immediate collaboration. This is a point to which I will return in the conclusion.

The text layer

Johnson drew on a number of intertextual references that have a more discernable role in *'indolentiae ars'* than that of Mozart. At face value, Johnson's inclusion of text and his particular choice of text appear to be a compositional decision made independently of the collaboration. These elements cannot be traced back to the workshops in a discernable way, and were not discussed in any email correspondence prior to April 2015, when Johnson informed Rosman that the piece would include a text layer, and

²⁵⁵ Email correspondence from CR to EJ and EP, 22 May 2015.

towards establishing that mess as an actual material state with some structural valence.

That's the idea in theory; for obvious reasons I'm curious as to how this will actually work in practice.²⁵⁶

Johnson described the use of text material as a 'setting of sorts'²⁵⁷ of the final two paragraphs of Robert Grosseteste's *On Light (De Luce)* (Grosseteste 1942), a thirteenth-century text on cosmology. The material that Johnson employed comprises the bold sections of text from the extract below:

Ex his patet, quod denarius sit numerus universitatis perfectus, quia omne totum et perfectum aliquid habet in se sicut formam et unitatem, et aliquid sicut materiam et binarium, et aliquid sicut compositionem et ternarium, et aliquid sicut compositum et quaternarium. Nec contingit ultra haec quattuor quintum addere. Quapropter omne totum et perfectum est decem.

*His autem manifestum est, quod solae quinque proportionales repertae in his quattuor numeris unum, duo, tria, quattuor aptantur compositioni et concordiae stabilienti omne compositum. **Quapropter istae solae quinque proportionales concordantes sunt in muscis modulationibus, gesticulationibus et rhythmicis temporibus. Explicit tractatus de luce Lincolniensis.*** (Johnson 2015: v)²⁵⁸

Johnson's choice of text invokes a number of wider influences. He explained his decision to employ this material as follows:

[The setting] is itself a wink and a nod to Hollis Frampton's 'Zorns Lemma,' both of which, like the idea of Burton's 'indolentiae ars'²⁵⁹ itself, have to do with the compulsive filling of time and space. Which is one thing this piece is about, formally speaking: a sort of constant stumbling forward under a gradually evident compulsion, governed by

²⁵⁶ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 8 April 2015.

²⁵⁷ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 7 April 2015.

²⁵⁸ The following extract is the English translation of the Latin text: 'From these considerations it is clear that ten is the perfect number in the universe, because every perfect whole has something in it corresponding to form and unity, and something corresponding to matter and duality, something corresponding to composition and trinity, and something corresponding to the composite and quaternity. Nor is it possible to add a fifth to these four. For this reason every perfect whole is ten.'

On this account it is manifest that only five proportions found in these four numbers, one, two, three, four, are suited to composition and to the harmony that gives stability to every composite. For this reason these five proportions are the only ones that produce harmony in musical melodies, in bodily movements, and in rhythmic measures. This is the end of the treatise on light of the Bishop of Lincoln.' (Grosseteste 1942: 17).

²⁵⁹ The title of the piece is a line from Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, first published in 1621. 'Indolentiae ars' translates as 'An art in controlling grief' (Burton [1621] 2012: 180).

multiple simultaneous considerations of musical time (as evidenced embryonically on p. 1 by the coexistence of the metered stuff and the clock-time stuff, although it's not always that straightforwardly separated). [...] The text is meant to be entirely unintelligible, whether because it's fragmented into phonemes or because it is mumbled into the instrument [...] or both.²⁶⁰

Zorns Lemma (1970) is an experimental film by the avant-garde filmmaker Hollis Frampton, named after 'Zorn's lemma' (also known as the Kuratowski–Zorn Lemma), a proposition of set theory devised by the mathematician Max Zorn in 1935. The final episode of the film presents a woman, man and dog walking through a snowy scene as several narrators recite single words from the Grosseteste text. Johnson commented that the film is one of his favourite artworks, and is also a work that his wife, a scholar of film and media, has explored in her own work.

As well as referencing a rich variety of personal and extra-musical sources in connection to '*indolentiae ars*', Johnson's decision to employ a vocal part was also motivated by a desire to engage with Rosman's vocal skills and his performative identity. It is evident from Johnson's commentary that accompanied the score fragment he sent to Rosman that he was more concerned with the performative dimensions of the text layer than necessarily generating a particular sonic outcome beyond, in his words, 'a bit of an inscrutable mess'. Rather, the text-based material serves as another parameter that the performer must attend to alongside other events in the score. Rosman has used his voice in a number of projects during his career,²⁶¹ including Johnson's *a general interrupter to ongoing activity* (2011) for solo voice. Johnson commented that he intended to integrate the piece with Rosman's performance skills as much as possible:

²⁶⁰ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 7 April 2015.

²⁶¹ Among other vocal works that Rosman has performed, Richard Barrett's *Interference* for contrabass clarinet (1996-2000), which was dedicated to and first performed by Rosman, includes singing and spoken text. He also gave the premiere of Aaron Cassidy's work for solo voice, *I, purples, spat blood, laugh of beautiful lips* (2003-2006).

One [reason for including text] is that Carl is Carl, and as this piece is intended to be as Carl-ish as possible, there were always going to be some vocal elements. (If nobody else is going to play it, at least in this version, why not?)²⁶²

Johnson's comment articulates a sentiment similar to that of his dedication, the way in which this aspect of the work is contingent on his close relationship to Rosman.

Another motivating factor for the inclusion of text was Johnson's feeling that qualities of the piece, and its projected duration (between approximately eighteen and twenty minutes) were suggestive of theatricality.

The extensive silences, the weird long interpolated static events, the constant frittering away of momentum, all meant that this could not be a 'normal' twenty-minute narrative arc, but would come across as something else: as a dramatized scena of *attempts* at continuation and continual abandonments. [...] So I decided (at a fairly late stage of planning, actually) to acknowledge and work with this sense of staginess.²⁶³

Johnson's aesthetic decision was again also influenced by his relationship to Rosman and his knowledge of Rosman's performance expertise, as stated in the dedication.

Having witnessed Rosman perform the vocal part of Maxwell Davies's monodrama *Eight Songs for a Mad King* (1969) in March 2014, Johnson was affected by the manner in which Rosman approached the drawn-out silences of the piece. He stated that seeing Rosman's performance

convinced me that *dramatically* compelling treatment of extended silence, long forms, and so forth was another of his many strengths to be exploited. Hence the text, the mumbling – another overlaid arena of attempted communication.²⁶⁴

The treatment of the Grosseteste text in this way, where syllables are largely incomprehensible, bears some resemblance to *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, but it is an approach that Johnson has taken before in a piece for French horn, *vray dieu d'amours / vray dieu d'amours* (2014). In this case then, one of Johnson's

²⁶² Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 20 May 2015.

²⁶³ Ibid.; original emphasis.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.; original emphasis.

compositional preoccupations was revisited in light of the particular performance skills that Rosman brought to the project. Employing Rosman's voice in this way also had wider aesthetic implications for the piece by imbuing it with a dramatic quality.

Exploring the inclusion of text-based material sheds light on the multiplicity of interactions at stake throughout the compositional process. Although not every decision that Johnson made relied on his knowledge of Rosman's performance background and expertise, it is clear that he sought to engage with Rosman's distinctive vocal ability. In this way, Rosman has contributed intensely to this aspect of the work, but not in a collaborative sense. Indeed, the intertextual references of *'indolentiae ars'* are certainly not derived directly from face-to-face work between performer and composer. This stage of the creative process was more about Johnson seizing upon the material and social factors of their relationship and animating them within the work.

This discussion has considered the various elements of the historical and cultural ecology that permeated the collaboration and influenced its course. The basset clarinet offers access to practices of the past through its physical and historical affordances, recognised by Rosman in his comment that the music of Mozart 'just fits it'.²⁶⁵ However, the instrument does not simply embody historical references (and in any case, Johnson certainly was not interested in appropriating them in an obvious manner); it functions within the collaboration as a catalyst for discussions of technique and sonorities that are reanimated within an aesthetic that was distinctly shaped by their mutual interests. Thus, their creative interaction did not always result in a direct material outcome in the score, as was suggested in the discussion of Mozart. And as has been demonstrated, Johnson drew on a number of wider sources

²⁶⁵ Workshop, 4 April 2014.

that, although apparently employed independently from Rosman (such as the use of the Grosseteste text layer), in fact clearly engage with the musicians' shared musical history. In employing the performer's voice, for instance, Johnson explicitly grounds the piece in Rosman's performance idiom. Thus the text element works on a number of levels, invoking a wider system of connections drawn from the musicians' social and cultural backgrounds which play a role in their creative work.

7.5. Modes of interaction in the development of a new instrumental rhetoric

By contrast to the previous discussion, this section explores the development of musical materials through the more obviously social dimensions of Rosman's and Johnson's working relationship – for example, their shared fascination with particular techniques, their intimacies and private jokes – and how these interactions shaped the direction of the collaboration, in both the workshop setting and in the virtual space of their email correspondence. Three examples of the development of new techniques are analysed to illustrate different but complementary ways of working, in order to consider how the 'developmental trajectories' (Hutchins 1995: 263) of their working relationship were forged. By tracing the development of techniques, it is possible to assess how the musicians' positions changed over the course of the workshops, and the musical possibilities afforded by the combination of performer, composer, and instrument.

Despite Johnson's enthusiasm for collaborating closely with Rosman, his compositional process has not commonly involved working in an integrated manner with performers at an early stage to such a degree. Indeed, during the interview after his first workshop with Rosman, he reflected on how this project would require a rather different manner of working to his usual approach.

I usually start so abstractly. I start every piece with these really elaborate forests of proportional structures and durations. [...] And then I sort of work my way in and out, thinking really abstractly right away. So to get your hands dirty and think about sound first is something I'm really not used to doing, but it's fun.²⁶⁶

For Rosman's part, as well as working with a wide range of composers as a member of musikFabrik, he has engaged closely with a number of other composers on solo projects, including Georges Aperghis, Richard Barrett, Liza Lim, and Rebecca Saunders. During the second workshop, Rosman expressed a desire for a degree of interchange within the collaboration, asking Johnson directly whether there might be the opportunity to, in his words,

play a bit of tennis there with pitch areas [...] So there might be a situation where you've got some pitch and it's kind of, 'OK, I'm thinking of this and this kind of thing will happen to it, and will this work?' Will that kind of interchange be possible?²⁶⁷

Rosman then went on to describe two significantly different working methods – one more interactive and the other more directive (Windsor and Hayden 2007) – suggesting that he would prefer the former.

I've had various working processes with solo pieces, some of which have been 'Here are some pitches I would like in multiphonics. What have you got?' or 'Here is this multiphonic. Do you have others in that family?' and then it kind of goes backwards and forwards like that for a while. And then sometimes we'd have a meeting. 'Oh, this works, this works, this works' and then a few months later the piece arrives. It's kind of 'Ohhh...' Both obviously have their advantages. One of them perhaps has more potential disadvantages. Especially when you're dealing with an instrument that isn't so explored.²⁶⁸

In the second scenario that Rosman depicts, there is a sense of disappointment in the outcome of the working process, and of not being valued within the collaboration. His statement also articulates a wider point on questions of authority and ownership that

²⁶⁶ Interview, 6 April 2014.

²⁶⁷ Workshop, 3 August 2014.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

underpin joint work.²⁶⁹ His perspective favours a more reciprocal way of working in which the composer and performer work together with agreed objectives, so that the musical outcome successfully makes use of the performer's contribution. Johnson responded that the particular context of their collaboration required a level of interaction that differed from his usual way of working, but that he viewed this as a positive aspect of the project.

One of the things I was trying to get at [...] is just to make sure that the whole thing is worthwhile. I'm certainly going to try (because of the specific situation) not to do what probably would be my ordinary instinct which would be to do model two whereby I disappear for six months and then 'Here's your piece!' But that would seem to be a waste of an opportunity. I don't quite know how it's going to wind up going. I'm still not entirely sure what I'm going to do. I'm basing most of my questions on most of the things I'm interested in and all the things I've done in the past of course [...]. But there's also this niggling voice saying 'Maybe it's time to do something a little bit different!' Focus on a different sort of rhetoric or a different sense of priorities of material. But I don't know. We'll see!²⁷⁰

At the outset then, both musicians appeared conscious of the possibilities that working together with an unfamiliar instrument presented them, and enthusiastic to embrace the opportunities of this specific situation.

The development of multiphonics

A striking compositional feature of *'indolentiae ars'* is Johnson's use of multiphonics, which breaks new ground in two ways. First, as Rosman observed, 'this might well be the first time multiphonics have been specifically written for this instrument, or perhaps even at all for a historical clarinet',²⁷¹ and second, this is the first time that

²⁶⁹ See also performer perspectives on creative ownership in Clarke, Doffman, and Lim (2013: 660).

²⁷⁰ Workshop, 3 August 2014.

²⁷¹ Email correspondence from CR to EJ and EP, 22 May 2015.

Johnson has employed multiphonics in any significant way in any of his music.²⁷² He explained,

I don't tend to use multiphonics that way because my approach isn't at all about 'Here, listen to this sound, let's linger with it and admire it...' but rather there are always so many things going on, constantly compromising each other, that the sort of 'framing' you often need to get a multiphonic doesn't work with what I'm trying to do.²⁷³

The composition contains multiphonics in various incarnations: dyads and triads resulting from cross-fingerings. The musicians' process of exploring dyads is an example of how a performance technique was forged through 'collaborative emergence' (Barrett et al. 2014; Sawyer 2003b) over the timeline of the workshops.

At a later stage of the project, Johnson asserted that a motivating factor for employing multiphonics in a significant manner in this piece was his desire to take advantage as much as possible of the material properties of the basset clarinet, and Rosman's relationship to them. During the first workshop, however, although Rosman stated that microtones and multiphonics were the sounds that he was most excited about, multiphonics were not a significant topic of discussion, with Johnson responding 'I'm not really a multiphonic person.'²⁷⁴ At one point during the workshop Rosman began to explain how the instrument's minimal keywork requires cross-fingerings to be employed, making the instrument more amenable to producing overtones and undertones, and consequently multiphonics. He demonstrated to Johnson the fingering configurations used to bring out the upper harmonics of a multiphonic and offered to investigate them further, but Johnson appeared

²⁷² Johnson's baritone sax piece, *Largo Calligrafico / "Patientiam"* (2012) contains a single fleeting multiphonic dyad.

²⁷³ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 20 May 2015.

²⁷⁴ Workshop, 6 April 2014.

uninterested, stating ‘In general I’m more interested in colour, microtonal fingerings and things that can be trilled.’²⁷⁵

In the second workshop, however, a discussion of the microtonal possibilities caused by the instrument’s mechanism led onto a more extended and participatory exchange, with Rosman exploring multiphonics in the clarino register in greater depth. This is illustrated in **Video example 7.3**. At the beginning, it was unclear which direction the interaction will take: the discussion of microtonal flexibility could have been pursued further, but it is Johnson’s response to Rosman’s demonstration (‘It sounds like that’s multiphonic territory’) that directs it towards multiphonics. The relationship between verbal elaboration and practical exploration in this episode is balanced, with Johnson taking an active role in evaluating Rosman’s playing. He seemed intrigued by the multiphonics, and particularly interested in undertones caused by a change of attack. The interaction during this episode has much more of a sense of mutual discovery, with Rosman also uncovering techniques that he had not encountered before (‘That’s a new one!’), and diagnosing ways of executing the sounds (‘That’s a kind of no-tongue attack’). The mutual enjoyment of the musicians is apparent, with both of them apparently interested in the execution of the sounds, rather than the sounds themselves. Their conversation is also indicative of their familiarity with one another, with phrases such as Johnson’s ‘As you know...’ and Rosman’s statement ‘Except of course that these are not your kind of intervals.’ By the end of this exchange Johnson is clearly more interested in multiphonic possibilities, particularly in terms of their potential to create volatility. In a later email he explained to me the way in which he had integrated the technique within his personal compositional aesthetic:

²⁷⁵ Workshop, 6 April 2014.

I resolved not to [...] ‘frame’ these multiphonics as objects to admire – so that they sometimes occur in the midst of other things so that they may not sound properly, or not sound as written, and so forth – and even when there is more space around them temporally speaking they are often forced to coexist with trills, vocal actions, etc., that destabilize them in other ways. So I’ve tried to draw them into the flexible, multilayered material rhetoric that I tend to use, at the risk of compromising their *sonic* integrity (which, you rightly imply, is not the most important thing to me). Several multiphonics are labeled ‘risk not sounding’, ‘not quite enough time’, etc. [...] Also – and here’s where my approach to the topic is more or less the same as everyone else’s, I think – I tend to think of multiphonics as vectors of energy, as expressions of surplus, of forcing things out the ‘cracks’ of the instrument – so sometimes they are meant to have more ‘energy’ to them (in terms of harmonic content, dynamic range, etc.) than others. That also influenced what went where.²⁷⁶

The idea of multiphonics as symptomatic of excess energy, rather than solely a timbral effect, made them a valuable element to draw into Johnson’s existing compositional rhetoric. The instrument offered a particular kind of unstable state that Johnson was curious about, and Rosman was able to manipulate the ‘cracks’ and ‘edges’ of the sound in such a way that Johnson found convincing. One of the dyads demonstrated by Rosman during this session – a lowered G \sharp 4 / raised B \flat 4 dyad – subsequently took on a significant role in the architecture of the piece. Figure 7.7 below shows the dyad in a fingering chart devised by Rosman.

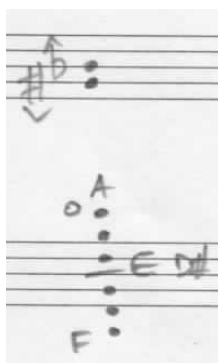


Figure 7.7. Lowered G \sharp 4 / raised B \flat 4 dyad (from fingering chart dated April 2014).

²⁷⁶ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 20 May 2015; original emphasis.

In February 2015 Johnson emailed Rosman to obtain a more detailed sense of the extent to which the multiphonic was easily accessible from other pitches, and its potential interactions within the wider context of the piece.

Remember that repeated multiphonic I sent you the photo of? The lowered-G#/raised-B \flat one, at the end of the second system of the sheet labeled 'random historical instrument multiphonics', dated 26/4/14.

It has since taken over a fairly non-trivial passage at various timescales as a bit of a refrain marking a background structure that I don't need to get into, but it's going to be used probably about fifteen times over the course of a couple of minutes (w/ lots of other stuff).

So: before I commit to that, would it be possible to hear it? And also, for one particular instance: is it smoothly reachable from either of those pitches alone, or from another pitch for that matter? (either as a normal legato or a more elaborate, gradual 'phasing-in', I don't really have a preference, since the transition in question would only last about a second anyway)²⁷⁷

Rosman responded by sending through the full fingering chart (Fig. 7.12 – discussed in more detail on page 239) and a recording of each multiphonic with a verbal commentary on how each sound is best reached, whether from the upper or the lower note of the dyad (**Audio example 7.1**). Once Johnson had established that the sound was relatively responsive and could be securely executed (without requiring a gradual fading-in) he used it frequently in the piece. It first appears in bar 24 (Figure 7.8).

²⁷⁷ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 15 February 2015.

Figure 7.8. First appearance of lowered G \sharp 4 / raised B \flat 4 dyad (bar 24) (Johnson 2015: 4).

This multiphonic was also chosen for its harmonic function, since it fitted within one of the work’s primary pitch structures. It became, in Johnson’s words ‘a main “signal” of the piece’,²⁷⁸ occurring throughout ‘in a generally canonic/self-referential way’.²⁷⁹ In this instance, a clear transition can be observed from the hesitant beginnings evidenced in the first workshop – where Johnson’s prior conceptions appeared to distance him from investigating multiphonics in a significant manner – towards a point nearly a year later where the technique became a compositionally important element of the piece.

‘I almost feel like writing “I woz ere”...’

The processes by which the musicians pursued the multiphonic techniques perhaps illustrate Ingold’s concept of ‘wayfaring’ (2011: 162) most explicitly, evidencing a gradual development of shared understanding as they worked together to co-produce new performance practices. By contrast to the previous example, however, the

²⁷⁸ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 20 May 2015.

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

following example shows how, at a more advanced stage of the collaboration, Johnson and Rosman were working in a much less exploratory and more direct manner. In April 2015 Johnson emailed Rosman with a score fragment, on which he had marked up two places where he intended to include a multiphonic on A \sharp 4 (see Figure 7.9).

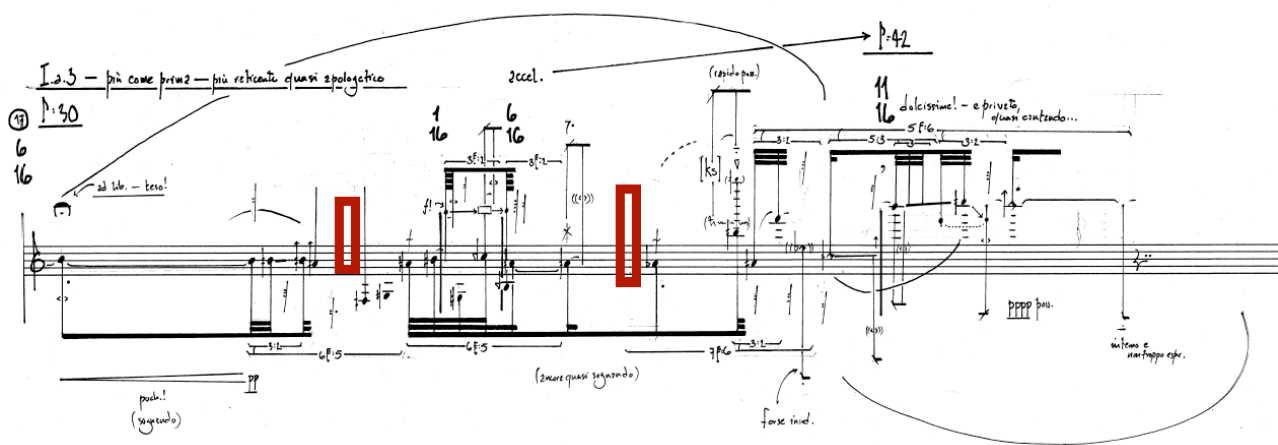


Figure 7.9. Score fragment with multiphonic ‘voids’ (bars 17 and 18) (11 April 2015).

Below is an extract of Johnson’s email:

I’ve attached the current state of the passage for which I’m looking for multiphonic(s), with the holes for which they are destined outlined in an eye-catching red.

The first would ideally be coincident with the end of a small lip-gliss down from the preceding A \sharp 4, and the second at the end of a tie from the preceding A \sharp 4.

I don’t remember what I told you before about the criteria but in an ideal world they would be more or less as follows:

- (1) not TOO nice – some crunch/energy is good – but not hugely honky either
- (2) as secure/immediate an onset as possible

(3) dynamic *p-ppp* or so, although if they have to punch out a bit they can (and a slight *cresc.* into them isn't impossible either)

(4) ideally they wouldn't be the same; not sure at the mo which one I'd want to be crunchier but my instinct at the moment is the first, if it matters. If there's only one that works, and it works both places, repeating is not the end of the world either.

If I can't have it all, let me know and I'll prioritize as needed. If it can't be done at all, I'll just have to think of something else.²⁸⁰

Johnson's very specific request suggests that by this stage he had gained a greater degree of familiarity with the technical possibilities of the basset, and had a much more developed sense of his compositional intent. Rosman replied promptly, sending Johnson four possibilities, with an accompanying fingering chart (Fig. 7.10) and recording ([Audio example 7.2](#)).



Figure 7.10. Rosman's fingering chart for multiphonics on A4 (12 April 2015).

The subsequent email exchange proceeded as follows:

EJ These are actually perfect, many thanks! The middle two I think will inhabit those red rectangles in some order or other... speaking of which, are the middle two straightforwardly trillable

²⁸⁰ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 11 April 2015.

Johnson's approach to multiphonics, in this case a specific compositional decision was made on a micro-level from a limited number of options. There is a sense of mutual satisfaction in the tone of their correspondence, and Rosman's final comment articulates a feeling of ownership over this specific material. Clearly, the medium of their communication – email – necessitates a more economical way of working than having the time to explore possibilities in the workshop environment. But there is also a sense that the balance of the collaboration has changed, with Johnson apparently fitting within the more 'conventional' role of the composer, and Rosman providing him with material and insights into the execution of certain techniques. It is also important to note that this particular episode is a consequence of the earlier workshop phase, acknowledged in Rosman's admiring comment, 'You learn fast'.²⁸⁵ Arguably, it is unlikely that the musicians would have progressed to such an efficient manner of working had they not had the opportunity to investigate the instrumental possibilities so intensely in their previous meetings.

Representing gesture: the embouchure glissando

As has been suggested already, a significant aspect of creating a new instrumental language was the musicians' use of fingering charts to map out the sonic possibilities of various fingering configurations. These charts served as tools in the collaborative process; a material means through which composer and performer could interact. Figure 7.12 is an extract from one of the fingering charts that Rosman produced following their first workshop.

²⁸⁵ Email correspondence from CR to EJ and EP, 11 April 2015, 17:47.



Figure 7.12. Extract from one of Rosman’s multiphonic fingering charts (April 2014).

Here Rosman has recorded several possible multiphonic sounds and their corresponding fingering pattern.²⁸⁶ Underneath the notation of each sonic outcome he has provided a visual representation of the open and closed holes on the body of the instrument, with the letters indicating which keys should be depressed. This chart is a mapping of Rosman’s technical relationship with the instrument at the initial stages of developing a performance practice. He used it to record the physical properties of each technique, for example, by noting an unstable interplay between two pitches, or to indicate that shading the first left hand finger bends the pitch of the G_b4. This is just one of several charts that Rosman produced, and is the outcome of many hours of careful experimentation, showing the extraordinary detail of his workings. The chart

²⁸⁶ Rosman’s first sketch corresponds to a five-key historical clarinet, with the subsequent diagrams relating to the nine-key basset clarinet.

is indicative of the intimate relationship performers have with their instruments – an example of Hutchins’s ‘representational media’ (1995: 96) discussed above. If these representations are understood as ‘more than inputs and stimuli to the internal mind’, but rather ‘intrinsic components, without which the tasks either cease to exist or completely change in nature’ (Zhang and Patel 2006: 335) the role of this material within the project becomes all the more significant. Thus Rosman’s fingering charts do more than supply Johnson with static information about the execution of pitches; they share with him a sense of Rosman’s embodied perception of the instrument. But how did they function within the creative process?

To conclude this section I will pursue the role of external representations further by focussing on one small excerpt from the piece, where Rosman and Johnson worked together to devise a means of graphically depicting an embouchure *glissando* executed simultaneously with changing fingering configurations. Johnson initiated discussion of the technique in an email in April 2015. Their subsequent exchange is transcribed in full below. Despite its length, I have included it in its entirety so as to give a sense of the level of detail that is explored in their correspondence.

EJ [...] In an ideal world I’d like to be able to have an emb. gliss up from G₄ to A₄ flat. Possible? In particular, I want to be able to change fingerings while that basic emb. gliss is going on; I’ve attached the specifics. [Fig. 7.13] A bit concerned as this is if I’m not mistaken right around the break, but I can’t decide whether that actually matters or not. I don’t at all mind the miniscule ‘breaking’ of the gesture due to effects of a register change.
 (top line is sequence of fingered pitches; bottom line is the basic gliss that makes the fingerings at the beginning and end sound different.)²⁸⁷

²⁸⁷ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 6 April 2015, 12:52.



Figure 7.13. Johnson’s initial proposed notation for embouchure manipulation with simultaneous instrumental action (6 April 2015).

CR [...] It’s not really right around the break although it could perhaps be organised to be. The F#4 can *just* be fingered above the break, as the twelfth of the knee note. Normally those notes would be fingered in the throat register. Embouchure glisses upwards are a bit tricky in general. If I had to do that as an embouchure gliss then all else being equal I would normally finger the first note lipped down and then gradually bring it up. The tone would then be a bit denatured at the start and gradually become more normal (although A \flat 4 is a fairly stuff note anyway – there’s no special key for that note, one uses the register key and adds whatever fingers are necessary/convenient) – perhaps that’s the opposite of what you’re after?²⁸⁸

EJ [...] [A]ctually the idea of lipping down and retreating to normal sounds fine, especially if you don’t mind the timbral instructions (i.e. the full/empty circle/diamond notehead thing) going the other way. In very general terms one of the things that’s going on in this whole first part is a barrage of gradual injection of moments of greater physical energy projected onto the *grazioso*/‘*musikantisch*’ basic material, on both local and larger scales – where ‘physical energy’ can mean timbral things, register, multiphonics, vocal events (which take over eventually, twice), overlong silences (which is where it starts, w/ the passage you have from the opening). This little gesture is one of those. I’m interested in the possibility on this micro-miniature scale of a little drama between embouchure and timbre, anyway. Even if the whole thing is over in under two seconds, as it will be. [...] PS. I also haven’t the foggiest idea how to notate that *glissando* thing. I thought for sure Ferneyhough had an elegant solution in one of the flute pieces somewhere but I couldn’t find it. Bright ideas welcome.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁸ Email correspondence from CR to EJ and EP, 6 April 2015, 13:19; original emphasis.

²⁸⁹ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 6 April 2015, 14:01.

CR There's a fair bit of interplay between fingering, embouchure and pitch in *Unity Capsule*²⁹⁰ as I remember it.²⁹¹

EJ Yes there is but, unless I've missed something, nothing that quite helps this specific situation. I've not seen those scores of Richard's (*k-g* at all, *interference*²⁹² in many years...)²⁹³

[...] One more for this round: separate mini-staves for embouchure pressure (you have *my pouert*,²⁹⁴ right? What I have in mind is basically the same). I will probably send you some samples of where I intend to stick those in, to see that they make some degree of sense and to find out what happens.²⁹⁵

CR [...] The three-line stave as in *my pouert* does indeed make sense (although I wouldn't normally make an association between higher pressure and greater insertion of the mouthpiece). I suppose we might be about to risk a collision here between embouchure pressure as it affects tone and embouchure pressure as it affects pitch, which are not quite the same thing.

This [Fig 7.14] is from *interference* - I suppose I was thinking of it in terms also of my own added mini-stave. (...which doesn't add any information - it's just a transcription of the fingerings.)

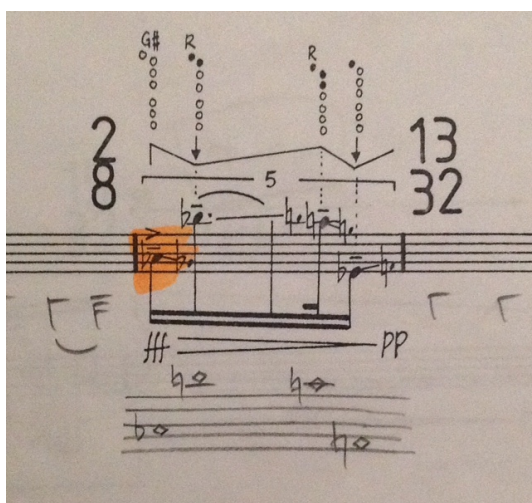


Figure 7.14. Richard Barrett: *interference* (bar 87, with Rosman's annotations).

This [Fig. 7.15] from *k-g*, although he doesn't specify the destination pitches here.

²⁹⁰ Here Rosman is referring to Brian Ferneyhough's *Unity Capsule* for solo flute (1975-6).

²⁹¹ Email correspondence from CR to EJ and EP, 6 April 2015, 16:59.

²⁹² Here Johnson is referring to Richard Barrett's *interference* for solo performer (contrabass clarinet, voice, pedal bass drum) (1996-2000); and *knospend-gespaltener* for solo C clarinet (1992-93).

²⁹³ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 6 April 2015, 22:05.

²⁹⁴ Johnson's *my pouert and goyng ouer* for baritone, bass clarinet, trumpet and trombone (2014).

²⁹⁵ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 6 April 2015, 22:18.

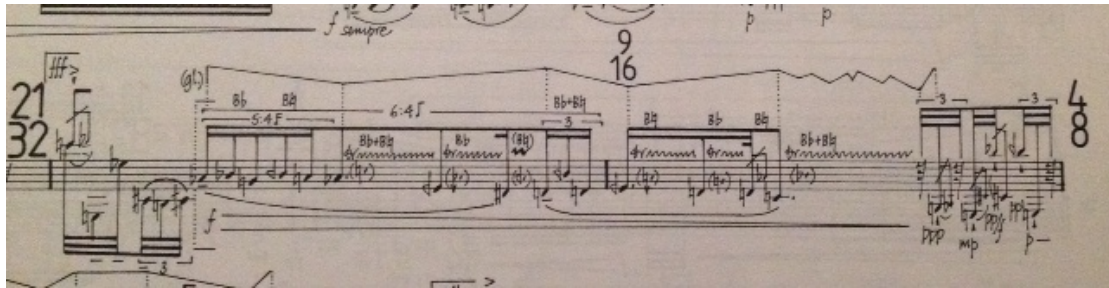


Figure 7.15. Richard Barrett: *knospend-gespaltener* (bars 138-9).

And this [Fig. 7.16] is what I was thinking of from *Unity Capsule* although the version of it in my memory was much more useful than the one in the score.

(*) Voice-part: upward gliss., against descending fingering. All vocal actions executed with mouth covered and breath-hold.

I. 4. v. ben marcato! Finger gliss. N.v. dolce!

(**) During the course of the perc. sounds turn embouchure gradually inwards. Reverse procedure after having played the low-octave notes. Not all notes will sound as written.

Tongue-ram.

A Tempo: agitato ma leg

Figure 7.16. Brian Ferneyhough: *Unity Capsule* (bar 42).

I think what you're after is something like the following [Fig. 7.17] (without the biro smudges).²⁹⁶

²⁹⁶ Email correspondence from CR to EJ and EP, 7 April 2015, 21:10.

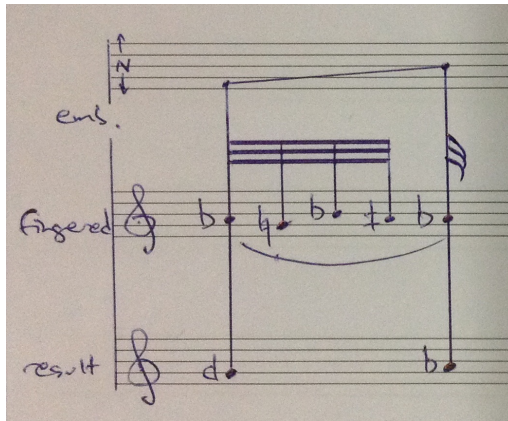


Figure 7.17. Rosman’s initial proposed notation for embouchure manipulation with simultaneous instrumental action (7 April 2015).

EJ Yes, I think this is more or less what will end up happening (although I was imagining a ‘reference’ pitch only when the embouchure was ‘distorted’, but whatever). I suppose now I have to decide whether I want the interstitial pitches to be relative to the starting or ending point...

Last thing re. the embouchure, just confirming something I’ve done in the past out of sort of wilful ignorance of whether it really made any sense or not: the idea of that staff has always been, of course, that it was relative to the actions on the ‘main’ staff, on which I have always felt free to jump around registrally and so on and within registers etc., in happy ignorance of what the embouchure was ‘actually’ doing, such that the real resultant tightness of embouchure would be a good deal more jagged, and the supplementary staff a more or less theoretical tracer of *difference* from the always-in-flux ‘reference’.

I have always assumed that made sense at least enough to be worth doing, at least on a modern instrument. But I do want to run by you that it still makes sense – not only with the increased work to which the embouchure is put on the old basset, but also with the added complication of the different timbral states (including transitions between them).

Not that I mind overloading parameters, of course, quite the contrary, but if the effect is negligible in certain circumstances (i.e. in an all-diamond-notehead environment or one that is already transitioning from normal to diamond, which I assume generally speaking involves some degree of embouchure loosening regardless of the technical environment) that would be useful to have to think about.

Does that make sense? It’s not entirely clear yet where this stuff will be used – I have some sketched-in bits but I’m not sure I’m convinced by them – so maybe I’ll just send you

some examples. (They may include bits of what I've already sent).²⁹⁷

CR I can't quite make complete sense of this but I think the answer is yes. Assuming at least that the question was whether it makes sense to superimpose an embouchure layer on material that in any case requires some changes in embouchure to operate.

It's certainly worth remembering anyway that lipping down and loose embouchure are not necessarily the same thing. It's kind of a handy fiction, perhaps. I don't know if you know Mr Barrett's *CHARON*,²⁹⁸ where he asks for the 'embouchure' layer to be as far as possible associated only with timbre, with the pitch drop thus intended to be minimised...and that is something again which doesn't necessarily have to be associated with breathiness.

There's a lot going on in there.²⁹⁹

EJ I think my question may be whether independent embouchure control is a worthwhile endeavor with so many embouchure-related moving parts already, in terms of pitch, register and timbre, especially given the more dramatic demands on it made by the old instrument. I suspect the answer is yes but I think this is likely best answered just by foisting some things on you to try.³⁰⁰

EJ The passage in question [Fig. 7.18] – it's less 100% clear than your example of course but I'll explain it somewhere and I had other constraints to deal with..³⁰¹

²⁹⁷ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 7 April 2015, 21:48; original emphasis.

²⁹⁸ Richard Barrett's *CHARON* for solo bass clarinet (1994/1995).

²⁹⁹ Email correspondence from CR to EJ and EP, 7 April 2015, 22:11.

³⁰⁰ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 7 April 2015, 22:25.

³⁰¹ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 9 April 2015, 20:33.

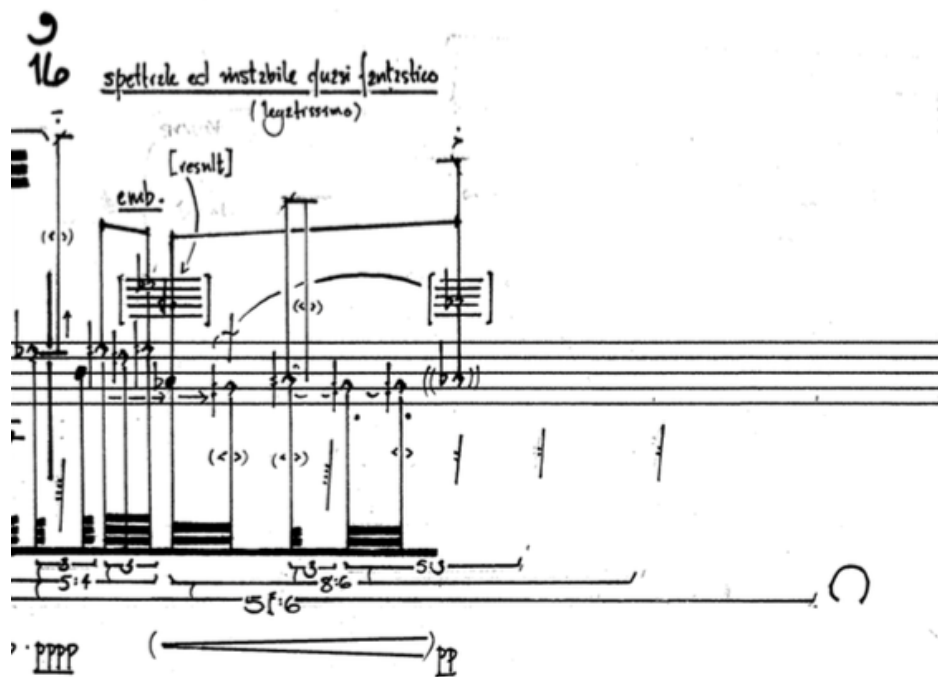


Figure 7.18. Johnson’s final notation for embouchure manipulation with simultaneous instrumental action (9 April 2015).

CR Damn that looks good.³⁰²

EJ Glad you think so. And I hope in context the referent of ‘it’ can be broadened!³⁰³

The notation employed in Figure 7.18 was not subject to any amendments, and appears in bar 14 of the final score, with the following corresponding performance direction:

[S]pecific resulting pitches are indicated and the instrumental action is confined to a single narrow register: there, embouchure is given as a ‘glissando line’ above the staff, with starting and ending resulting pitches indicated. (Johnson 2015: iv)

³⁰² Email correspondence from CR to EJ and EP, 9 April 2015, 20:36.

³⁰³ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 9 April 2015, 20:42.

The above exchange has an ‘efficiency’ similar to the previous example, in that Johnson invited Rosman’s input on a specific area of the piece. Taking place over the course of just three days, it is striking in its level of detail. In this example, however, Rosman’s contribution is twofold: he shares with Johnson his expertise on how the action might be executed, but he also suggests how it might be visualised in the score. This was the only instance of Rosman proposing a means of notation during the collaboration, and also the only occasion where specific examples from other composers were discussed. Johnson’s choice of notation is considerably more complex than his initial sketch, employing Rosman’s suggested depiction of the embouchure adjustment but somewhat less prescriptively in that a separate miniature staff with lines above the main staff is not provided.³⁰⁴ Moreover, the notation prioritises the instrumental action over the sounding result, which is notated above the staff. It also draws on Rosman’s annotated example from *interference* (Fig. 7.14), where he has transcribed Barrett’s fingerings as pitches. Approaching this exchange within a framework of distributed cognition, these fragments of notation might be understood as ‘crystallization[s] of practice in a physical artifact’ (Hutchins 1995: 107) that enable the musicians to explore practices that resist qualification. Indeed, Rosman’s comment towards the end of their correspondence that ‘There’s a lot going on in there’ seems to acknowledge the complex phenomena that underpin this technique, both in Barrett’s *CHARON*, to which he refers, and in the present piece. Rosman’s positive response to Johnson’s score fragment – ‘Damn that looks good’ – feels almost carnal in savouring the notation, and Johnson’s reply expresses a similar sense of satisfaction.

³⁰⁴ Johnson employs a three-line staff to indicate a change in embouchure pressure elsewhere in the piece, for example bars 39–42. However, in this instance, the embouchure adjustment is not executed independently from the instrumental action as it is in bar 14.

7.6. The role of ‘accidents’

By contrast to the examples discussed so far, some of the techniques that are employed in *‘indolentiae ars’* were discovered almost by accident, rather than being the outcome of a traceable process of development. The term ‘(controlled) accident’ is employed by Fitch and Heyde (2007a) to denote the unexpected discoveries that arose during their workshops, although the strategies that led to their discovery were intentional.

Fortuitous as these discoveries were, the conditions out of which they arose – both the immediate technical conditions and the rationale underlying them, the ‘how’ and the ‘why’ – had been carefully thought through (hence ‘controlled accidents’). (Fitch and Heyde 2007a: 92)

This process is similar to the working method employed by Rosman and Johnson: during their workshops they worked through a list of techniques relatively systematically, paying close attention to sounds and the actions that gave rise to them. The intention to celebrate the unstable and chaotic qualities of performance is also evident in Lim’s *Invisibility* (2009) for solo cello. Lim (2013) describes employing a ‘guiro’ bow (where the bow hair is wrapped around the body of the bow to create an irregular surface) in order to produce ‘accelerations, glitches and slippages as the undulating surface of alternating hair and wood passes over a string’ (Lim 2013).³⁰⁵ The practices described by both Fitch and Heyde, and Lim, focus on the ‘instrumentality’ of performance: foregrounding the materiality of a specific instrument in the hands of the performer. In the present case study, however, rather than preparing the instrument to encourage unexpected performance outcomes, the liminal sounds were an outcome of three circumstances of the collaboration: the particularly unstable ergonomic affordances of the basset clarinet; Rosman’s

³⁰⁵ As discussed in chapter three, the significance of achieving a sense of liveness or unattainable quality in performance is discussed in Clarke et al. (2005: 45-6) and Bayley (2011: 399), but with regard to the rehearsal stage, rather than in the development of compositional material.

relatively raw relationship to the instrument during the earlier stages of the project; and Johnson's compositional concern to experiment with the physicality of sound production. Thus, this third section concentrates on two 'accidental' playing techniques and their incorporation into the sound world of *'indolentiae ars'*. The first – slap-tongue overtone effect – foregrounds the fragile relationship between the performer's embouchure, breath, and instrument; and the second – 'thwocking' – highlights the tactility of the fingers on the instrument's open holes.

Slap-tongue overtones

The first example of an unexpected sound cropping up during Rosman and Johnson's instrumental explorations is a particular type of slap-tongue effect that results in an overtone pitch simultaneously sounding, produced by an unstable relationship between the performer's breath pressure, embouchure, and mouthpiece. This category of articulation was discovered during the third workshop, and although they had investigated slap-tongue sounds previously, this was the first time that the technique resulted in this particular sonic outcome (**Audio example 7.3**).

In this episode Johnson noticed the unintentional undertones and overtones that occurred at the outset of slap-tongued notes in the clarino register, and questioned Rosman in order to get a sense of the pitches of the sounds and the nature of their production. Rosman confirmed that the sounds were not intentional, but that they could be manipulated ('It comes out more if I make it happen. It obviously doesn't have to happen.') This was followed by dialogue interspersed with playing where both Rosman and Johnson attempted to make sense of the sounds and ascertain the principles that underlie their production (for example, whether there was a consistent interval between the fundamental pitch and the partial, or whether certain partials

could be isolated). The episode concluded with Rosman summarising his diagnosis of the sound and Johnson remarking on its appeal for him.

The technique first occurs in bar 19 on a B \sharp 5 (Fig. 7.19; highlighted with a red arrow), indicated by an empty triangle above the note, and is used in a number of places later on in the piece (including bars 60 and 94).

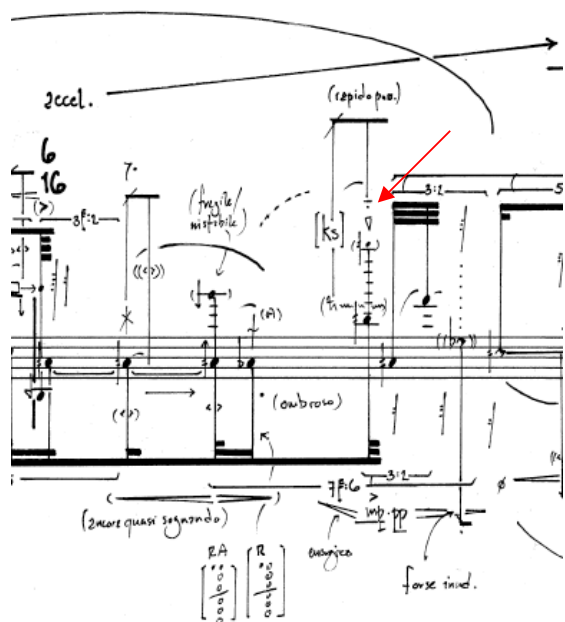


Figure 7.19. Instance of slap-tongue overtone effect (bar 19) (Johnson 2015: 3).

In the performance notes Johnson provides the following direction regarding the production of the slap-tongue effect:

As an articulation affixed to a main note: tongue slap. In one particular register (just above the staff), a secondary pitch is sometimes given that may emerge naturally as an overtone; its production should be encouraged. (Johnson 2015: iii)

This is an instance of an ambiguous and almost ‘unskilled’ aspect of performance practice becoming a gestural feature of the musical world of *‘indolentiae ars’*. The material in the score can be traced directly to a particular moment of interaction

between the basset clarinet, its reed, the pressure of Rosman's embouchure, and his breath control, during the workshop episode captured in Audio example 7.3. The next example is similar in terms of its transitory nature, but has more significant implications for the wider social and cultural forces at play in the collaboration.

Open hole 'pops' and 'thwocking'

Video example 7.4 illustrates how, during the first workshop, discussion of the F5 and B₅ fork fingerings and their prominence in the second movement of the Mozart Quintet led to an exploration of 'popping' sounds – the liminal noises caused by the transition between alternating fingers covering and uncovering the open holes, nicknamed 'thwocking' by Johnson. These sounds immediately caught Johnson's attention: he commented on their appeal for him, and began to question Rosman about their execution. During an interview after the meeting, Johnson expressed his enthusiasm for this unexpected sound:

[T]he sound of the fingers opening and closing – those little pops that you get – that's the sort of thing that never would have occurred to me sitting at home that that would happen. [...] [T]his is completely new thing for me; it's something I'm really excited about.³⁰⁶

It is significant to note that, as Rosman remarked in the video, the transitional 'hiccups' that piqued Johnson's curiosity tend to be avoided in classical clarinet performance practice.³⁰⁷ In the third workshop (**Audio example 7.4**) these sounds were pursued further, with Rosman exploring the sonic outcome of executing tremolos of increasingly wide intervals, which required more fingers to move simultaneously. Johnson expressed a preference for tremolos in the basset register that

³⁰⁶ Interview, 6 April, 2014.

³⁰⁷ This approach is evident in the playing styles of basset clarinetists such as Lorenzo Coppola (2008), Eric Hoeprich ([1988] 2013), and Antony Pay ([1986] 2014), for example, but there are exceptions, such as Hans Deinzer (1985) in which more extraneous finger noise can be heard.

leap up to C4. Towards the end of this exchange he noted that those using combinations of the right-hand fingers generated the strongest sound. The tone of this discussion is playful, with Rosman asking twice ‘Do you like octaves?’ – a joke that reflects his familiarity with Johnson’s compositional aesthetic. The exchange concludes with the pair laughing over Johnson’s use of the term ‘thwocking’, with Rosman joking, ‘I expect to see that in the performance notes’ and Johnson playfully elaborating the term into an Italian expressive direction (‘Thwockando! Quasi thwockando, ma espressivo!’).

Looking beyond the light-hearted situation, however, this joke is indicative of the wider aesthetic and cultural forces that permeate their collaboration. By invoking a conventional musical term humorously, Johnson (who himself uses Italian performance directions extensively in his work) is on one level perhaps making light of their situation by referring to his own compositional rhetoric in a somewhat self-mocking manner; more broadly, however, the joke positions their interaction within a specific cultural and historical ecology (broadly speaking, contemporary Western art music). Drawing on Dueck’s (2013a and 2013b) work on musical ‘intimacies’ and ‘imaginaries’ (or ‘publics’) Clarke, Doffman, and Timmers (forthcoming) have characterised the dialectic between the immediate and present interactions between musicians and the wider ecology that they evoke as ‘Inside/outside the room’, whereby ‘dialogue that references materials, persons and practices outside the room, as well as the immediate references to these things in the room, brings out the mesh-like qualities of creativity as distributed over time, materials (notations, images, instruments), and people’ (forthcoming: 31). Johnson knows that Rosman will appreciate his ‘thwockando’ joke because they share the same frames of reference; his remark thus simultaneously intersects their intimate relationship and the ‘broader

imagined sphere' (Dueck 2013a: 100) of contemporary Western art music which they inhabit.

Johnson's performance notes in the score reflect his enthusiasm for the sound, instructing the performer that trills and tremolos should be executed

[...] with fingering 'noise' (in particular, perceptible timbral disruption from the opening and closing of the open holes) encouraged (i.e. the secondary pitch should *not* necessarily be one as close as possible to the main pitch in terms of fingering action. (Johnson 2015: iii; original emphasis)

In both of the episodes an unforeseen quality of Rosman's slightly insecure technical relationship to the instrument was appealing to Johnson, and was consequently employed in a significant manner in the eventual piece. The playing techniques celebrate the material qualities of the instrument and the physical energies employed in their production. Paradoxically, it is possible that if Rosman had possessed a more 'developed' technique at this stage, these transitional sounds might have been completely eradicated from his playing, and would never have appeared in the piece. However, it is also important to acknowledge Johnson's role in these events. It is his curiosity in performative ambiguity that focussed his attention on these particular sounds, leading him to encourage Rosman to pursue them further during the workshops. Their exchange in Audio example 7.4 was guided by their mutual close attention to Rosman's embodied relationship to the instrument and the variations in the resultant sounds. In this way, the practices that occurred apparently spontaneously were actually a function of the close relationship between performer, composer, and instrument.

7.7. Conclusions

If the previous chapter investigated the singular relationship between performer and instrument and its consequences within a collaborative project, this chapter has pursued these issues to a more extreme degree. Johnson's effusive dedication is certainly justified in acknowledging the crucial role that Rosman played in '*indolentiae ars*', to the extent that it is difficult to imagine the piece being performed by another player. The case study renders visible the co-constitutive and relational nature of that collaborative work. In the workshop settings the musicians actively explored the possibilities afforded by the basset clarinet, guided by attentive engagement with Rosman's bodily capacities and their changing relationship to the instrument. Johnson's compositional rhetoric was realised in collaboration with Rosman, through processes of gradual development and experimentation (as in the case of the multiphonics); and through 'accidents', where a transitional aspect of Rosman's technique was encountered, embellished, and then incorporated into a performance practice – the slap-tongue and 'thwocking' techniques.

This points towards a highly interdependent ecosystem, or as Hutchins summarises succinctly, 'Everything is connected to everything else' (2010: 705). Indeed, even the striking developments of the compositional process that seemed to appear from nowhere can be traced back in some way to the cultural, material, and temporal conditions of the project, such as the embeddedness of the 'thwocking' technique in the basset clarinet's cross-fingerings. A framework of distributed cognition therefore has much to offer in facilitating an understanding of the relationships between individuals, objects, and the decision-making of a creative collaboration. Yet, in its inclusiveness, does this approach risk reducing every dimension of the project to a process of interaction, without distinguishing between

them? In over-emphasising the significance of all processes, could this framework in fact devalue some of them? In fact, Hutchins nuances the above statement by asserting that ‘not all connectivity is equally dense’ (2010: 706). In this way, perhaps the more transitory events of the collaboration, such as those described in the third section, could be viewed as having shorter antecedents within the ecosystem than the more extended developmental processes explored in the second section.

It is also important to acknowledge that Rosman’s role in realising ‘*indolentiae ars*’ is just beginning – the process of preparing the piece for its first performance will inevitably raise other possibilities and problems that have not been explored here. Beyond the immediate challenge of internalising this long and complex work for performance – particularly given that Johnson has specified that it should be played from memory, if possible,³⁰⁸ – Rosman’s preparation of the fragile ‘accidental’ playing techniques so that they can be produced in a controlled manner in performance whilst retaining their liminal quality warrants further investigation.³⁰⁹ Another aspect to consider will be the dramatic character of the piece in performance, particularly in the light of Johnson’s instructions that the vocal materials ‘should *not* be “dramatized.” Their inherent potential for theatricality must not be emphasized or even acknowledged; they should be performed in a smoothly nonchalant, matter-of-fact way’ (Johnson 2015: ii; original emphasis). A more practical consideration will be the performance event itself. The piece’s generally consistently soft dynamic level,

³⁰⁸ From the performance notes: ‘“*indolentiae ars*”, a medium to be kept should not be performed from a paper score. The act both physical and audible of turning a page would risk the destruction of the very fragile long-range rhetoric of the work and of its flirtations with theatricality and pretended improvisatoriness.

In theory, the piece ought to be performed from memory; in practice, a PDF loaded onto a tablet with a pedal operated turning mechanism will suffice.’ (Johnson 2015: ii; original emphasis).

³⁰⁹ Heyde raises a similar point on the performativity of ‘accidental’ techniques (Fitch and Heyde 2007a: 90).

and Johnson's opposition to the performer 'projecting' the sound in performance,³¹⁰ may raise issues about how the piece is staged in front of an audience. In summary then, there is still much to investigate as the creative process continues.

This last point raises a broader issue: the importance of focussing on relationships and processes over products or outcomes. A central tenet of this thesis has been to challenge the binary of notated permanence versus performed transience, and to propose a more nuanced view that acknowledges the many layers and possibilities of music-making. Indeed, a number of elements have played an integral role in the collaborative process, but did not result in material outcomes in the score. This is particularly evident in the discussion of the influence of Mozart on the compositional process. As Rosman and Johnson have suggested, it would be counterproductive and facile to attempt to identify objective 'Mozartian' influences in the score, and in any case, any such references are employed in an opaque or concealed manner. However, Mozart played a significant role during the workshops, as an aesthetic discourse that facilitated exploration of performance practices, and in terms of Rosman's embodied relationship to the instrument. Ingold's (2011) weaving metaphor (discussed in chapters two and three) is useful here, emphasising the way in which a form emerges from the intricate entwining of threads to create a finished and completed object. Following Ingold's argument, the 'textility' of creative practice attends to the *materials* that contribute to an object, and the 'tactile and sensuous knowledge of lines and surfaces' (2011: 211) that comes with engaging with such materials. This more reciprocal view of the relationship between process and outcome

³¹⁰ Johnson instructs that 'The space of "*indolentiae ars*", a *medium to be kept* is the air directly in front of the performer's body; it is *not* a space shared with the audience. The performer should avoid 'projecting' the sound outwards, whether instrumental or vocal, with the notable exception of the irregular series of seven loud events in the final minutes; and everything, even these loud events, should be as if mumbled, privately, with less concern for clarity and communication than with the development and negotiation of a full language within these boundaries. Whatever reaches the audience should be as if overheard.' (Johnson 2015: ii; original emphasis).

can be applied to appreciate the inescapably incompleteness of musical ‘objects’. In this sense then, as the concluding case study of the thesis, this chapter can be understood as most acutely embodying a number of the arguments of the research as a whole.

A crucial factor in this collaboration is the musicians’ personal relationship, and the way it intersects with their shared professional spheres and frames of reference. The assumptions that underpin their conversations, practices and the aesthetic discourses that motivate them are informed by and respond to the institutional and professional traditions which they inhabit, but they are also facilitated by an existing level of trust and mutual respect that had been established over a number of years before the outset of this project. In fact, as Johnson expressed during interview, the very motivation behind the commission lay in their mutual interests and aesthetic concerns. What are the implications of this familiarity for the dynamics of the collaboration? It at least partially eliminates the anxieties of working with a collaborator with whom one has limited prior relationship. For instance, the need to demonstrate one’s competence and craft (Clarke, Doffman, and Timmers, forthcoming: 27-9) in order to reach a level of shared understanding was less of a concern in this scenario. Their trust was conducive to risk-taking, which was particularly beneficial in light of the unfamiliar instrumental and technical territory in which they were working.

If this observation sounds overly positive and confirming, a final point inflects the idea of ownership and the potential ‘illusions’ of collaborative equality: although this commission certainly blurs the boundaries of creative ownership, with Rosman and Johnson’s workshops and correspondence playing a crucial phase in the genesis of the piece, it would be wrong to overemphasise the collaborative nature of the

project. Not all of the developments in the piece can be ascribed to the shared input of both performer and composer. Johnson clearly undertook a significant amount of ‘private’ work independently of his interactions with Rosman, the nature of which has not been explored in great detail here. Moreover, as was evidenced in the ‘I almost feel like writing “I woz ere”...’ discussion, sometimes Rosman’s role was to provide Johnson with material without having any input into how it might be employed – as Johnson put it, he was literally ‘filling a pair of holes’. This is not to deny the evidently distributed and interactive nature of their work; and any case, in no way did Rosman appear disenfranchised by this manner of working (indeed, his ‘I woz ere’ comment appears to express quite the opposite). But it is important to recognise the more directive ‘filling holes’ approach as a valid manifestation of creative activity. As this case study has demonstrated, a wide variety of working practices are manifest within shared work, some more obviously ‘collaborative’ than others – a subject to which I return in the next, concluding chapter.

Chapter 8

Conclusions

This thesis has examined the ways in which the creative process is negotiated, rehearsed, and performed in the world of contemporary clarinetists. Each case study has addressed the distributed nature of creativity from a different angle: the historical depth of a relationship between performer and composer sustained over a lifetime; the momentary gestures and tacit decisions made between performers in the shaping of an interpretation; the retuning of skilled practice in response to a less familiar performance environment; and the sociability of developing a new instrumental rhetoric. Moreover, the case studies have documented various creative outputs: a recording, three new commissions, and two performances. In the process of summarising my findings and drawing conclusions, I will explore potential contradictions and problems that arise from my analysis, and thus point to some of the questions that might inform further research.

As chapter two illustrated, while over the past thirty years understandings of creativity have rapidly expanded and diversified beyond the notion of individualised talent or genius and towards a shared and collaborative process, a number of stubborn assumptions persist that privilege qualities such as the ephemeral, the moment-to-moment, and the novel over the repetitive, the long-lasting, and the everyday. Chapter three addressed this core issue that runs throughout the thesis by interrogating the term ‘creativity’ in musical performance, and suggesting that performative creativity has been too readily connected to non-conformity to the detriment of the more practical notion of ‘craft’. Drawing on statements from performers and my own account of performance, the discussion recognised and proposed a response to the covertly binary representations of the creative process in musical performance. While

acknowledging the potential pitfalls of an over-reliance on craft – largely due to its potentially romantic and ahistorical perspective – in proposing a re-examination of creativity in performance through a framework of craft, I hope to have prompted a reconsideration of the dimensions of performance that might otherwise be overlooked. A wider conclusion of the chapter was to propose a reappraisal of notation’s function within the creative process in order to move beyond an understanding that associates the performance of notated music with constraint and reproduction.

But how does this point relate to the ‘real-world’ circumstances of music-making that are presented in the remainder of the thesis? Having concluded chapter three with the recognition of the need to historicise my argument, the opening case study of the thesis, chapter four, demonstrates this point most acutely. Pay’s recording of Goehr’s *Paraphrase* presented a collaborative encounter that is bound up with collectively shaped histories rather than face-to-face work. My discussion delineates the complex network of relationships behind the work and examines the performer’s relationship to the score, and the ways in which the final recording was shaped by the histories of the performer and composer. Pay’s approach to performance evidenced a number of attributes of performance outlined in chapter three, most obviously the problem-solving/-finding dichotomy, an intimate and integrated relationship with his materials and tools, and a strong ethical conviction that prioritised self-discipline in his practice. Two broader points to arise from this case study concern the problematization of collaboration, and the fluidity of creative authority within the composer-performer relationship, to which I will return later.

In contrast to the sustained and deep-rooted engagement between performer, composer, and work, that is documented in chapter four, chapter five traces the trajectory of a piece of music over a much shorter lifespan, and shifts the focus from

an individual performer's ostensibly solitary interactions with a score to the co-present interplay of instrumentalists and composer in rehearsing a piece for its first performance. By documenting the rehearsal process of Simpson and Ólafsson working with Finnis to prepare *Four Duets* for its premiere, the case study raises a number of questions about where the opportunities for creative involvement of the performers might lie in ostensibly 'straightforward' music. Craft-based processes of rehearsal practice such as repetition and detailed notational engagement similar to those in chapter four were evident, yet perhaps the most significant conclusion of the case study lies in its 'everyday' character. The creative process is reflected in the performers' considerations of subtle musical details and incremental changes rather than in presenting a surprising or novel interpretation.

In each of the first two case studies, the clarinet inflected but did not break the ecology of performance in which it was encountered. Chapters six and seven shift the direction of the thesis in two ways: first, in documenting the role of the performer in shaping the musical material during the compositional phase of creating a work; and second, by shedding light on the clarinet as a powerful 'participant' in the creative process. If the explorations of craft practice in chapters four and five risk seeming overly positive and conclusive, chapters six and seven address the consequences of disrupting the 'intimate coupling between movement and perception that governs the work of the [practitioner]' (Ingold 2011: 590). Chapter six shows Downer adapting her performance practice to the less familiar interface of the modern basset clarinet in her collaboration with Planas on *To My Father*, focussing on her interactions with her instrument at the micro-level, and posing questions about the nature of embodied knowledge and skilled practice.

The issues raised by chapter six are taken up and developed further in chapter seven's examination of the collaboration between Rosman and Johnson on '*indolentiae ars*', *a medium to be kept*, the first contemporary commission for a historical basset clarinet. Tracing the historical, cultural, and social conditions of the project – such as the performance practices connected to the instrument and Rosman's embodied relationship to it, and the performer and composer's particular rapport – the discussion focuses on the ways in which knowledge was shared and developed into a new instrumental language. In contrast to the previous case study, which documented the performer's *responses* to her modified embodied relationship, here Rosman and Johnson were working with the *intention* of exploring and unsettling the relationship between performer and instrument.

By concluding the empirical part of the thesis with this case study, whose first performance is yet to take place, the perspective of my discussion looks simultaneously to the future and to the past. While Rosman and Johnson were pushing the boundaries of performance practice, their discussions and interactions were deeply historically embedded. This points to a broader contribution of the thesis: in addressing four apparently disparate and distinct instances of clarinet performances, the case studies trace the instrument's historical trajectory over the past fifty years, taking account of significant developments in its lineage. Chapter four addresses a stage in the instrument's life when, in Goehr's words, performers and composers were experimenting with 'New forms of ornamentation',³¹¹ and incorporating sonorities and techniques into a new instrumental practice, in a manner that could be likened to Rosman and Johnson's activities in chapter seven. The basset clarinet in chapter six signifies a stage in the clarinet's history that pushed new boundaries in terms of

³¹¹ Interview, 12 November 2012.

instrumental technology and repertoire, and also played a part in the Historically Informed Performance movement, leading to the development of historical reproductions of instruments such as Rosman's boxwood basset clarinet featured in chapter seven. Moreover, there are important 'participants' that weave in and out of the narratives in each case study: Hacker, for instance, plays both a direct role in the history of *Paraphrase* and an indirect role in Pay's motivation for making a new recording of the work. His presence is also felt in chapter six through his contribution to the development of the modern basset clarinet in the 1960s and 70s in partnership with instrument makers such as Edward Planas. Pay, too, is an important figure in all of this: chapter four establishes his place in the history of *Paraphrase*, but he is also present in each of the subsequent case studies: as a teacher of Mark Simpson, as a fellow collaborator with Edward Planas and other instrument makers in developing period clarinets, and in Rosman and Johnson's discussions as a specialist performer of historical clarinets. In light of these associations and interconnections, the four case studies can be understood as illustrating particular threads of the narrative of clarinet performance in the second half of the twentieth century.

Overall, the most significant contribution that this thesis makes is the way in which it draws out the tacit assumptions of freedom and constraint in the performance of notated music. The thesis unpicks the binary of the perceived creative affordances of improvisation and notated performance, providing evidence of the mutual relationship between these two activities. The findings also shed light on the complex relationship between the performer and the score, emphasising the score's importance in performance without reducing the performer's role to one of subservience. Indeed, several of the case studies demonstrate how very careful attention to a score can be a powerful way to prompt or release a free and 'creative' performance.

As well as developing a more holistic understanding of musical creativity, the thesis also makes a contribution to knowledge and understanding of performance practices in contemporary music, an area of research that has been sidelined in the field of performance studies until relatively recently (as discussed in chapter two, the first study of a contemporary commission was published just a decade ago). Yet, the variety of musical materials encountered by the performers across the four case studies poses a question about the nature of ‘contemporary’ concert music – a very broad and generic term. The thesis has drawn on the experience of professional musicians at various stages of their careers who work across diverse performance contexts, evidencing the fact that contemporary concert performance encompasses a wide variety of practices. At the outset of this research project I anticipated that the material I would encounter would all be of a particular character: complex, full of extended techniques and performative extremes (much like the notation employed by Johnson in chapter seven). In making this assumption, I fell into the trap that was discussed in chapter three: of looking at outcomes rather than processes. From talking to my participants, however, I was made aware that in reality musicians experience opportunities for creativity across all manner of performative contexts, from a sixty-show run of *Chicago* to performing Beethoven string quartets. Thus, while greater scholarly attention to the performance of contemporary music is certainly a significant development, it is important not to over-emphasise the creative opportunities it might offer to performers. There is a danger of ‘othering’ contemporary music as more exotic (and thus more conducive to creativity) than ‘standard’ concert repertoire, in a similar manner to the ideologies of innovation ascribed to improvisation that this thesis has challenged. Rather than getting tied up in questions of the music’s greater

or lesser complexity, more useful questions might ask how and why different kinds of music evoke different kinds of creative interaction and negotiation from performers.

What's more, while on the one hand the scores used in my case studies evidence a variety of sub-practices within 'contemporary' music, on the other hand they are relatively conventional in terms of the notation that they employ, and can be located in largely the same musical tradition (Johnson's scores are certainly complex, but his notation is not abstract or distorted to the point of ambiguity). Taking a wider view, the fifty-year history since Goehr composed *Paraphrase* encompasses American experimentalism, European aleatoric musics, various improvising groups, Stockhausen's group of musicians, minimalism, developments with electronics – among many other practices both inside and outside of Western art music. This is not to diminish the value of the material that my case studies draw on, but simply to recognise that 'contemporary' music is something of a catch-all term that can be applied to all manner of practices, and that there is a whole range of other musics that have not been explored here, and which would no doubt offer significantly different perspectives – as well as some of the same.

I turn now from one debated term – contemporary music – to another: collaboration. Is collaboration necessarily a 'good thing'? A wider point to arise from this thesis concerns the potential ways in which collaboration might be problematized, and the potential fetishizing of collaboration. Collaboration seems to have become ubiquitous to the point that it is rare to read a biography of a performer or ensemble that does not declare their commitment to 'working in close collaboration with composers'. On one level this should be viewed in a positive light: given the increased recognition that creativity is not an individualised trait or talent, increased attention to the role of collaboration in music-making appears to be a long overdue

and positive development. Yet while intimate and direct composer-performer collaborations do occur, and indeed are a rich area of research, the majority of relationships in music-making are more convoluted and indistinct. Viewing the four case studies of this thesis as a whole, I return to one of my central research questions: to what extent did the presence of, and/or collaboration with, a composer affect the creative process? In the case of Goehr and Pay's relationship in chapter four, arguably not at all: although Goehr was unreservedly positive about Pay's recording, and commented to me that he was 'Fascinated to read what goes into his performance'³¹² it would be difficult to argue that Pay exerted an influence on him in a truly collaborative sense. Is there a risk, then, of collaborative projects being perceived as somehow more 'authentic' than those where no collaboration has taken place? If a performer plays a piece with no face-to-face interaction whatsoever with the composer – as was the case in Pay's experience with *Paraphrase* – does this in some way restrict the performer's creative opportunities? Equally, if a composer writes a work without any dialogue with a performer, is the music less creatively meaningful? The other case studies in the thesis rely on varying degrees of interaction between performer and composer, with the score of chapter seven depending entirely on the interactions between Rosman and Johnson to the point of symbiosis. Yet, even in this scenario, the musicians demonstrated various working processes, with some exchanges functioning more directly and 'efficiently', while others were more expansive and emergent in character, in addition to the significant amount of 'private' work that Johnson undertook in creating the material. These apparent paradoxes suggest that the concept of collaboration could benefit from being broadened to allow for the sometimes more distributed character of creative work. It is important to

³¹² Email correspondence from AG to EP, 20 September 2015.

acknowledge the limits of the term in capturing the variety of interplay and exchange that can occur.

While arguing for broader and more differentiated understandings of creativity and collaboration, my research has led me to question how much there is to be gained from attempting to reformulate the composer-performer relationship. On the whole, the roles of performer and composer within my case studies remain clearly demarcated, and the musicians assumed this to be an unremarkable and unproblematic aspect of their musical practice. Some performers (for example, Downer) were content to assign complete creative control to the composer, and composers such as Goehr appeared to express a reluctance to assert authority over the performances of their music. Moreover, some were resistant to the idea that their role had any kind of creative authority at all: Simpson's responsibility, as he saw it, was to 'realise what the composer wanted'.³¹³ These perspectives have led me to conclude that critically examining the concepts of collaboration and creativity can lead to a more nuanced understanding of the nature of performance and composition, without the need to radically reconsider the roles of performer and composer.

Moving on to my role as a researcher, in bringing my experience as a clarinettist to this project, I adopt a position similar to that expressed by Bayley (2011: 388): my training as a clarinettist gives me the perspective of an insider, yet I write as an outsider. My initial intention was to maintain my role as researcher, observing and documenting the practice of my participants without participating myself. However, as discussed in the introduction, this role inevitably shifted during the process. My experience reflects Cook's assertion that 'Stable distinctions of insider and outsider, Self and Other, emic and etic are no longer embedded in either

³¹³ Interview, 16 January 2013.

musicological or ethnomusicological practice' (2008: 63). In assisting Pay with making his recording, I felt a degree of conflict in wanting to remain at a distance as a researcher whilst simultaneously undertaking the role of 'sound engineer'. This was apparent during the session, when Pay remarked: 'There's a certain degree of reassurance that you have to provide me! [Laughs] It's part of the job to sound both confident and dismissive!'³¹⁴ Although my position was never completely transformed into that of a participant, this shaped my perspective on the process and perhaps gave me a greater sense of empathy with my participants. One vivid recollection from my research is sitting in a dressing room backstage at the Royal Festival Hall with Simpson and Ólafsson, and (as the on-stage page turner) sharing their sense of pre-concert excitement and anticipation. There was considerable enthusiasm among the musicians I encountered regarding my academic involvement in their work, to the extent that I was often invited to attend additional rehearsals,³¹⁵ and welcomed to participate in social events. These activities not only gave me a richer insight into the practices of my participants, but also underlined the inherently everyday nature of music-making, which is one of the core issues at the heart of my thesis. This point is summed up by the following statement from Sheppard Skærved in a talk he gave on collaboration:

Most of the situations historically and today, where art gets made, are not grand dramatic ones. They involve kitchen tables; they involve food; they involve having to stop in order to go and pick up the children from school; they involve the family coming in and stopping you working; they involve this very, very constant hurly-burly of actual life. In many cases you can actually see that – and I love this idea – the fact that music is surely at its greatest, a quotidian activity. (Sheppard Skærved 2012)

³¹⁴ Recording session, 15 January 2013.

³¹⁵ The Kreutzer String Quartet invited me to observe a workshop where they rehearsed a new commission by Jeremy Dale Roberts; and as mentioned in chapter seven, while undertaking fieldwork in Cologne with Rosman and Johnson, I was warmly encouraged to attend a musikFabrik rehearsal.

Inevitably, questions and directions for further research have emerged over the course of the investigation that have not been possible to address within the scope of this thesis. Most immediately, I will continue to document Rosman and Johnson's collaborative work on *'indolentiae ars'*, a medium to be kept over the coming months, the premiere of which is scheduled to take place in spring 2016. Since the case studies presented here are one-off performance projects, it would be fruitful to track musicians over a more sustained time period, and as they work across different repertoire and performance contexts, in a similar manner to Bayley's work, for example. In the case of performers at earlier stages of their careers, questions relating to how their approach to performance develops over time and in what ways their perspectives change could also provide starting points for further research. Finally, one particular dimension of Rosman and Johnson's approach to developing new instrumental techniques piqued my curiosity: the instances of 'accidents', where liminal 'techniques' were sought out and developed into a performance practice, blurring the lines between skilled practice, 'control', and creativity. As Rosman prepares to memorise the work for its premiere, how might these boundaries shift?

In closing, I return to my discussion of craft. Aspects of the case studies appear to sit uneasily with Sennett's definition of craft as 'the skill of making things well' (2008: 8). In chapter seven, for example, one of Johnson's compositional motivations was to celebrate the volatility of the instrument and in some ways to disrupt the performer's sense of skill. This is apparent in his description of multiphonics as 'vectors of energy',³¹⁶ used in such a way that they may not sound as written, or in some cases not even sound at all. His intention, he asserted, was to destabilise. How can a craft-based model account for the approach employed by

³¹⁶ Email correspondence from EJ to CR and EP, 20 May 2015.

Johnson and Rosman, who were concerned with pursuing the fragile and the volatile? On the face of it, the case study might appear to be in direct opposition to the interaction discussed in chapter five, with Simpson and Ólafsson honing their performance approach to achieve an apparently objective outcome – rhythmic synchrony; or Pay’s exacting relationship with the score in chapter four. By contrast, in chapter seven we find Rosman and Johnson deliberately working at the threshold of skilled instrumental practice, experimenting with uncertainty and the more permeable borders between practitioner, instrument, and skill.

One way of reconciling this apparent contradiction is to reiterate the need to focus on the *processes* rather than the outcomes at play within the case studies, and this is perhaps where Sennett’s rather static understanding of craft demonstrates its limitations. Drawing attention to the fluid, processual, and emergent qualities of musical performance requires foregrounding the role of improvisation: the constant attention and response entailed by performative engagements with the surrounding environment. Indeed, skilled practice, Ingold and Hallam argue, is grounded in the ‘myriad tactile improvisations by which [...] living organisms co-opt whatever possibilities their environments may afford to make their ways in the tangle of the world.’ (2007: 5). Improvisation can be identified in the practices undertaken by the musicians in all of the case studies: in the incremental changes Pay made to his rhythmic shapings; in the rapid exchange of strategies between Simpson and Ólafsson; in Downer’s reformulations of her fingering configurations; and finally, in Rosman and Johnson’s somewhat more probing and reflexive investigations. Whether a practice is ‘centripetal’, as in the case of Simpson and Ólafsson’s rehearsal episode, or ‘centrifugal’, as demonstrated in the practices of Rosman and Johnson’s workshop, the distinction lies in their *aims* rather than the means through which these aims were

realised (Ingold and Hallam 2007: 13). It is only retrospectively that the outcomes of their activities can be evaluated as preserving or disrupting conventions.

Another way to understand the problem is to view the collaborative activities of Rosman and Johnson as foregrounding Sennett's notion of creative resistance (2008: 214-38) – the idea that craft involves not merely encountering resistance and ambiguity but intentionally seeking it out (in a similar manner to the problem-solving/-finding dichotomy discussed in previous chapters). In making this assertion, Sennett proposes a distinction between boundaries and borders. By contrast to inert and absolute boundaries such as walls, a border operates like the porous membrane of a cell, at once permeable and resistant, allowing for active interchange and ambiguity. This manner of negotiating borders and edges can be identified in Downer's response to the basset clarinet's modified keywork; and in Rosman and Johnson's workshop interactions, where imprecision and instability were pursued almost to the point of breakdown. Sennett's argument again brings the discussion back to improvisation, since anticipating and dealing with ambiguity requires improvisation (: 235), or, (also discussed in chapter three) as Goehr (2014) has characterised the phenomenon of grappling with unexpected resistances in performance, *improvisation impromptu*. Improvisation clearly pervades the practices of performance, emphasising both process and intersubjectivity as crucial components in the development of skilled practice.

In different ways then, the case studies elucidate the dynamic and distributed nature of skilled practice and the processes of enskilment, the coordination of perception and action in pursuit of refinement, and the deliberate exploration of the borders of skill to investigate new techniques. But a striking feature of the case studies is the significance that must be attributed to improvisation: the improvised

practices that enabled the performers to approach problems of rhythmic synchrony or gestural dexterity; and the improvisatory manner in which the collaborators negotiated their instruments during workshops. Is it perverse to conclude this thesis with a return to improvisation, the very practice from which I sought to distance myself in my discussions of creativity? To focus on improvisation is not to reduce *every* moment of performance to a process of improvisation, without distinguishing between them. It is, rather, to make a wider point about the relationship between improvisation and musical performance, which need not necessarily stand in opposition to the text. In this sense, musical performance resonates with many other craft activities, helping to shed light on the non-representational dimensions of skilled practice. As practitioners work together their interactions are enmeshed, both with the ‘concrete’ material tools of their environment, and with the implicit but no less significant aspects of their craft – the embodied and tacit processes of performance.

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——, [1791] 2013: Concerto in A major for Clarinet and Orchestra KV. 622, Urtext of the New Mozart Edition, Franz Giegling, ed. (Kassel; New York, NY: Bärenreiter).

Planas, Nick, 2014: *To My Father* for basset clarinet and piano (self-published score).

Appendix I

List of interview participants

Location and date	Participant
Winchester, 23 February 2012	Peter Cornish
London, 2 April 2012	Andrew Sparling
Oxford, 10 April 2012	Antony Pay
London, 9 May 2012	Ian Mitchell
Email, 20-22 September 2012	Suzanne Stephens
London, 9 October 2012	Peter Sheppard Skærved
London, 10 October 2012	Andrew Sparling
London, 1 November 2012	Neil Heyde
London, 2 November 2012	Mark Simpson
London, 7 November 2012	Morgan Goff
London, 21 November 2012	Kate Romano
London, 29 October 2012	Mihailo Trandafilovski
Bath, 22 March 2013	Roger Heaton
London, 9 April 2013	David Campbell
London, 22 May 2013	Linda Merrick
Birmingham, 25 May 2013	Heather Roche
London, 4 June 2013	Lucy Downer
Huddersfield, 9 November 2013	Carl Rosman
London, 21 February 2014	Max Welford

Appendix II

Case study participant biographies

Chapter 4: Recording *Paraphrase*: a ‘social occasion’?

Alexander Goehr was born in Berlin in 1932, son of the conductor Walter Goehr, and was brought to England in 1933. He studied with Richard Hall at the Royal Manchester College of Music (where together with Harrison Birtwistle, Peter Maxwell Davies and John Ogdon he formed the New Music Manchester Group) and with Olivier Messiaen and Yvonne Loriod in Paris. In the early sixties he worked for the BBC and formed the Music Theatre Ensemble. From the late 1960s onwards he taught at the New England Conservatory Boston, Yale, Leeds, and in 1975 was appointed to the chair of the University of Cambridge, where he remains Emeritus Professor. He has twice been Composer-in-residence at Tanglewood, is an honorary member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a former Churchill Fellow, and the 1997 BBC Reith Lecturer. His archive is curated by the Berlin *Akademie der Künste*.

Antony Pay was born in London, studied at the Royal Academy of Music and read Mathematics at Cambridge University. He has been principal clarinettist of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the London Sinfonietta (of which he was a founder member) and the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, and a member of several chamber ensembles including the Nash Ensemble, the Tuckwell Wind Quintet, the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields Chamber Ensemble, and Hausmusik. He has recorded the Spohr and Mozart concertos for Decca, the Weber and Crusell concertos for Virgin Classics, and the Berio Concertino for RCA. He has also conducted the Academy of St Martin in the Fields in Germany, Austria, and Holland, the London Sinfonietta throughout Europe, and orchestras in Scandinavia, Italy, and the United

States. He currently plays with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and the Academy of Ancient Music.

Chapter 5: Rethinking creativity within notational ‘constraints’: *Four Duets*

Edmund Finnis’s music is performed internationally. He has enjoyed particularly close associations with the London Sinfonietta – who have performed seven of his works, including three that they commissioned (*Veneer*, *Unfolds*, and *Seeing is Flux*) – and the London Contemporary Orchestra, with whom he is currently Composer-in-Association. Forthcoming projects include new pieces for Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, and a violin concerto for Benjamin Beilman and the London Contemporary Orchestra. Finnis received a Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award for Artists in 2012. He holds a doctorate from the Guildhall School of Music.

Icelandic pianist **Víkingur Ólafsson** has won all the major prizes in his native country, including four Musician of the Year prizes at the Icelandic Music Awards as well as The Icelandic Optimism Prize. Ólafsson enjoys an International career and has performed over twenty piano concertos (including four world premieres) and collaborated with such conductors as Vladimir Ashkenazy (with whom Ólafsson inaugurated Reykjavík’s Harpa Concert House), Rafael Payare, Antonello Manacorda, Rumon Gamba, and Pietari Inkinen; and orchestras including Danish National Symphony, Ulster Orchestra, Kammerakademie Potsdam, Turku Philharmonic, Norwegian Radio Orchestra, and Iceland Symphony Orchestra. A graduate from the Juilliard School, Ólafsson has recorded for his own label Dirrindí as well as Deutsche Grammophon. He is the artistic director of Reykjavík Midsummer Music (Iceland) and Vinterfest (Sweden).

In 2006, aged seventeen, **Mark Simpson** became the first ever winner of both the BBC Young Musician and BBC Proms/Guardian Young Composer of the Year Competitions. He went on to read Music at St. Catherine's College, Oxford, graduating with first class honours, before undertaking postgraduate studies in composition with Julian Anderson at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He has studied clarinet with Nicholas Cox and Mark Van der Wiel, and in 2012 he was selected for representation by YCAT and joined the BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist Scheme. He went on to embark on a full publishing relationship with Boosey & Hawkes, and in 2014 won a Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship Award. He was also the recipient of the 2010 Royal Philharmonic Society Composition Award. Simpson has performed and recorded Magnus Lindberg's Clarinet Concerto with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and John Adams's *Gnarly Buttons* with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. He has also appeared as concerto soloist with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Royal Northern Sinfonia, BBC Philharmonic, City of London Sinfonia, BBC Concert Orchestra, and Northern Chamber Orchestra, among others, with conductors including Vasily Petrenko, Gianandrea Noseda, Baldur Brönnimann, and Yan Pascal Tortelier.

Chapter 6: A close engagement: performer, composer, and instrument interplay
in *To My Father*

Margaret Archibald is a recitalist, chamber musician, orchestral player, teacher, coach, and lecturer. She acquired a string of diplomas at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, at Homerton College Cambridge, and at the Royal Academy of Music, and has travelled widely in Japan, the USA, and Europe performing on modern and historical clarinets. She was Sub-Principal Clarinet of the London Mozart

Players 1984-2012 and for twenty-one years the LMP's Education and Community Manager. She has performed with many of the major period instrument orchestras including the Academy of Ancient Music, the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, the English Concert, the Gabrieli Consort, the Hanover Band, the London Classical Players, and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. She has made a specialism of the basset horn, performing on both her modern French instrument and her copy of a Viennese instrument of 1800. In 2010 she founded the charity Everyone Matters that now takes a wide range of projects into schools, special schools, nursing homes, day centres and the wider community.

Since graduating in 2008 as a prize-winner from the Royal Academy of Music, **Lucy Downer** has been working as a freelance clarinettist in London, also doubling on saxophone and flute. Her work is varied, ranging from a trial with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, to playing in a stage band in a West End show, to performing chamber music at Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club and the 100 Club, to playing for workshops on rap music with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, to giving a masterclass on solo wind music at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. She has a particular interest in the bass clarinet, and enjoys collaborating with composers on new works with the aim of expanding the solo repertoire. As a student, in 2005 Downer was the only UK performer in the Henri Selmer World Bass Clarinet Competition in Holland, where she reached the quarter-finals. She has played with orchestras including the RTE Concert Orchestra and Glyndebourne Festival Opera, and been part of training schemes run by the London Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra and London Sinfonietta. Downer works regularly as a soloist, having performed concertos with orchestras including the New English Orchestra, All

Souls Orchestra, Hayes Symphony Orchestra, Oxford Sinfonia, Banbury Symphony Orchestra, and the Royal Academy of Music Symphony Orchestra.

Nick Planas is a composer of orchestral and chamber music in a number of styles and genres, including music for the stage, and educational music. He has composed many chamber works, three operas, four musicals, several orchestral tone poems, a piano concerto, two symphonies, and the music to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the signing of the Banbury Charter (a commission from the Town Mayor of Banbury). Current projects include a Sonata for Tenor Saxophone, a 15 minute operetta *The Two Statues* and another opera *Pool of Blood*, in collaboration with composer and writer Nia Williams. Planas previously composed two works for Downer: a solo bass clarinet piece, *Spanish Rhapsody* (2009) and an operatic monologue, *Marionette* (2012) with a prominent clarinet part.

Irish pianist **Clíodna Shanahan** attended the Yehudi Menuhin School in Surrey from 1997-2002. She performed her first concerto at age eleven; subsequent concerto performances have included performances with the Vietnamese NSO and the Guildford SO. She has performed in venues such as the Wigmore Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Royal Festival Hall, and Purcell Room. Competition successes include multiple first prizes at Siemens Feis Ceoil, Dublin, Fitzwilton Trust, Jellinek and Arts Council of Ireland Awards, and the Belfast Classical Music Bursary. In July 2006, she was the recipient of the Sarah Mundlak Memorial Award for piano, awarded to the pianist who achieves the highest final recital mark at the Royal College of Music. Shanahan regularly performs chamber music and has recently embarked on a piano duo partnership which has become an integral part of her performing schedule. She has performed on television and radio and is featured on a Young Pianist Foundation CD recorded live at The Hague.

Chapter 7: Repurposing the past? The historical basset clarinet in creative collaboration: ‘*indolentiae ars*’, a medium to be kept

Evan Johnson (b. 1980) is an American composer whose works are programmed and commissioned by prominent soloists and ensembles throughout the USA, Europe, and beyond, with recent festival commissions from Darmstadt, Huddersfield, TRANSIT, and Witten, and additional recent and upcoming performances at Acht Brücken (Cologne), Bludenz, Dark Music Days (Reykjavik), Klangwerkstatt Berlin, Tectonics Reykjavik, Ultima (Oslo), on the Monday Evening Concerts series in Los Angeles and the MATA INTERVAL series in Brooklyn, and at the Wigmore Hall in London. Recordings are available or forthcoming on Wergo, Label musikFabrik, Metier, Carrier Records, Another Timbre, and other labels. As a writer he has written liner notes for discs on the Mode, NEOS, and Metier labels and contributed to *Tempo*, *Contemporary Music Review*, and *Music Theory Spectrum*. More information is available at <http://www.evanjohnson.info>.

Carl Rosman was born in England and studied clarinet in Australia, with Phillip Miechel in Melbourne and with Peter Jenkin in Sydney. He graduated with a Masters degree from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music in 2001. He performs as a soloist across a wide range of repertoire from the Romantic period to the present day, specialising in the most demanding works of the contemporary solo repertoire. Rosman’s first performances in Europe took place at the 1994 Darmstädter Ferienkurse, where he was awarded a Kranichsteiner Musikpreis. He was an artist in residence at the 1995 Akiyoshidai Festival, and has since performed as a soloist throughout Europe and Australia as well as in the USA, Japan, and South Korea. In 2002 he was an artist in residence at Schloss Solitude (Stuttgart). Rosman now lives

in Cologne as a member of Ensemble Musikfabrik. He is also a member of ELISION. Solo works composed for him include Chris Dench's *ruins within*, Richard Barrett's *interference* (for contrabass clarinetist vocalising over a five-octave range), Rebecca Saunders' *caerulean*, and Georges Aperghis' *Damespiel*. Recent performances as vocal soloist include Xenakis' *Oresteia* at the 2011 Wiener Festwochen and Peter Maxwell Davies' *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, as well as premiering and recording Evan Johnson's *a general interrupter to ongoing activity*.

Appendix III

Case study audio-visual data

Chapter 4: Recording *Paraphrase*: a ‘social occasion’?

Location and date	Event	Participant	Data
Oxford, 10 April 2012	Semi-structured interview	Antony Pay	Audio only
Cambridge, 12 November 2012	Semi-structured interview	Alexander Goehr	Audio only
Oxford, 10 January 2013	Semi-structured interview	Antony Pay	Audio only
Oxford, 15 January 2013	Recording session	Antony Pay	Audio-visual
Oxford, 12 February 2013	Semi-structured interview	Antony Pay	Audio only
Charlbury, Oxfordshire, 21 February 2013	Editing session	Antony Pay, Nick Parker	Audio only
Swaffham Prior, Cambridgeshire, 4 April 2013	Discussion	Antony Pay, Alexander Goehr	Audio only
Oxford, 13 April 2015	Semi-structured interview	Antony Pay	Audio only

Chapter 5: Rethinking creativity within notational ‘constraints’: *Four Duets*

Location and date	Event	Participant	Data
London, 2 November 2012	Semi-structured interview	Mark Simpson	Audio only
London, 5 December 2012	First rehearsal	Mark Simpson, Vikingur Ólafsson	Audio- visual
London, 6 December 2012	Second rehearsal	Mark Simpson, Vikingur Ólafsson, Edmund Finnis	Audio- visual
Royal Festival Hall, London, 8 December 2012	Third rehearsal	Mark Simpson, Vikingur Ólafsson, Edmund Finnis	Audio- visual
Royal Festival Hall, London, 8 December 2012	Performance	Mark Simpson, Vikingur Ólafsson	Audio- visual
London, 16 January 2013	Semi-structured interview and RVP session	Mark Simpson	Audio only
London, 10 April 2013	Semi-structured interview	Edmund Finnis	Audio only
Skype, 4 February 2014	Semi-structured interview	Vikingur Ólafsson	Audio only

**Chapter 6: A close engagement: performer, composer, and instrument interplay
in *To My Father***

Location and date	Event	Participant	Format
London, 4 June 2013	Semi-structured interview	Lucy Downer	Audio only
Banbury, Oxfordshire, 25 July 2013	Semi-structured interview	Nick Planas	Audio only
Banbury, Oxfordshire, 29 October 2013	Workshop	Lucy Downer, Nick Planas	Audio-visual
London, 3 February 2014	Premiere of first three movements	Margaret Archibald, John Flinders	Audio only
London, 26 February 2014	First rehearsal	Lucy Downer, Clíodna Shanahan	Audio-visual
London, 6 March 2014	Second rehearsal	Lucy Downer, Clíodna Shanahan	Audio-visual
London, 7 March 2014	Third rehearsal	Lucy Downer, Clíodna Shanahan	Audio-visual
London, 8 March 2014	Performance	Lucy Downer, Clíodna Shanahan	Audio only
London 20 March 2014	Semi-structured interview	Lucy Downer	Audio only
Banbury, Oxfordshire, 26 March 2014	Semi-structured interview	Nick Planas	Audio only
Bromley, 14 April 2014	Semi-structured interview	Margaret Archibald, Nick Planas	Audio only
Cambridge, 15 April 2014	Semi-structured interview	Daniel Bangham	Audio only

Chapter 7: Repurposing the past? The historical basset clarinet in creative

collaboration: *'indolentiae ars', a medium to be kept*

Location and date	Event	Participant	Data
Huddersfield, 9 November 2013	Semi-structured interview	Carl Rosman	Audio only
Cologne, 4 April 2014	First workshop	Carl Rosman, Evan Johnson	Audio-visual
Cologne, 6 April 2014	Semi-structured interview	Evan Johnson	Audio only
Darmstadt, 3 August 2014	Second workshop	Carl Rosman, Evan Johnson	Audio-visual
Cologne, 1 December 2014	Third workshop	Carl Rosman, Evan Johnson	Audio only