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**A portfolio of work on musicians of relevance
to counselling psychology**

Carol Ann Chapman

**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Psychology**

**City University
Department of Psychology**

August 2006

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Acknowledgements

First, I would like to thank my supervisors. Dr Alison MacDonald was really enthusiastic and encouraging in offering support when this work was first conceived and during the interviewing stage. Her interest in this project helped get it off to a very good start. Huge gratitude goes to Professor David Hargreaves for his consistent and continuing feedback and support from the outset and for his humanity and professionalism at all stages. His painstaking reading of the first draft of this work was especially welcome. Additionally, Dr Jacqui Farrants gave helpful feedback on my case study and was on several occasions a generously supportive and sensitive port of call when things became difficult. Finally thanks to Dr Catherine Sykes for her valuable input during the late stages of this work.

Thanks to all the musicians who participated in my research study, for giving their time and allowing me privileged access to their work and lives. I hope this research will raise awareness of their needs among psychotherapists so that better provision for meeting them can be made. Special thanks to the musical colleagues who studied and gave feedback on my analysis: their time, input and contribution to quality control was much appreciated.

Finally love and thanks to Richard, an extraordinarily gifted musician, for encouraging me to undertake this work, for advising and supporting me through thick and thin, and for helping to make it happen.

Declaration

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Section A: Introduction to the Portfolio

1.1 Overview

All the work in this portfolio is concerned with the psychological issues and problems that affect the life and work of musicians, and its overall aim is to reach a wider and deeper understanding of what these are, so that better provision can be made by psychotherapists and counsellors for meeting them. The research study is a qualitative investigation into composers, a very neglected group, in order to discover what their concerns are, how they see themselves and their work, and how being a composer affects their personal and social life. The case study illustrates work with a creative musician and artist in a primary care setting, and shows how, using brief intermittent periods of therapy both immediate and longer-term problems can be addressed. Since many professional musicians do not earn enough to pay for private therapy, and work outside organisations, access to this kind of help is essential if their problems are to be addressed or prevented and their well-being and quality of life is to be improved. The literature review examines the most prevalent occupational stressor in the largest group of musicians, performers: performance anxiety. It reveals that its conceptualisation is still vague and how good research and clinical evidence is badly needed into the effectiveness of a range of treatments currently being offered for the condition. It is hoped that this work will increase awareness amongst clinicians of the needs of this large group of clients, so that both access to treatment and a better, evidence-based standard of treatment may be offered.

1.2 The Research

This project was chosen because a literature search revealed a scarcity of work on contemporary composers – who they are, what they do, how they see themselves and what stresses and psychological problems they face and how they deal with them. Previous work, largely anecdotal, or based on biographies, and limited to classical composers (a small minority today) appeared mainly in the context of studies of creativity. Starting from scratch, it made sense to conduct a broad-brush exploratory study into their world, free of presuppositions, so a qualitative methodology was adopted. The aims of the research were primarily to provide material of use to therapists. However, presentations of work in progress to counsellors at a music college, and to music educationalists, and conversations with music psychologists working with student and professional composers quickly revealed other interested professionals for whom this work is relevant. Likewise, the counselling literature offers no specific guidance to therapists working with creative artists such as composers, so another benefit of this study could be to contribute towards that guidance. BAPAM (the British Association for Performing Arts Medicine) has a practitioner register, which I am on. This is woefully short of applied psychologists, although performing artists are a large,

interesting and important group (amongst which musicians form the majority) in terms of their contribution to culture and to the economy. It would be nice to think that this work would encourage others to undertake research in this area, and to develop and disseminate therapeutic expertise. The findings of the study reveal a number of key concerns affecting composers, each of which should be researched further.

1.3 The Case Study

This case study aims to demonstrate how a psychologist with a strong interest in music, who is not however, herself (like most therapists) a musician or artist, can develop a constructive therapeutic relationship with an artistic/musical client in an NHS setting. In addition, the case was selected in response to my having often been asked, by those familiar with my interest in this area, for suggestions as to how to work with artists who presented to them. Very little has been written for therapists on this topic and what there is lacks a solid evidential base.

Hopefully this will encourage more UK client studies to be done and published in the literature (adding to the handful of US publications) and to the development of theory, once this group's presenting problems have been described and explored.

Work with Susan, the client chosen, illustrates what can be achieved in several episodes of intermittent brief therapy with a person whose difficulties are intrinsically linked to her identity as a creative person. Like many artists, with very limited financial means, and presenting with long-term ongoing as well as short term issues, Susan's case was especially relevant because her dilemmas responded very well to brief CBT. Much of the earlier literature on creative people draws loosely on psychodynamic perspectives but surprisingly few psychodynamic case studies have been published in the general therapeutic literature.

1.4 The Literature Review

The impetus for this came from the fact that Music Performance Anxiety is prevalent: it is the most common stressor for classical performers and among the top 4 for popular musicians, (prevalence studies showed between 25% and 70% in classical musicians) and a literature search revealed that a large and diverse range of treatments are being offered for it, for which the evidence often seemed patchy. At the same time, its conceptualisation (as a form of social anxiety) seemed rather confused. In the absence of a previous review of both conceptualisation and treatment it seemed important to provide clearer answers for clinicians, so that this problem can be better addressed and appropriate treatments can be made more widely available.

1.5 Personal Statement

I have had a wide-ranging career in psychology. As an undergraduate at Manchester in the 1960s I became fascinated by the ideas and work of Jean Piaget, translating one of

his research papers for my Head of Department, and followed this up at Bradford University as a Research Assistant working on two projects concerning the intellectual development of children, for Dr Verdi Lawson and Dr Norman Wetherick. My interests then moved on to the emerging cognitive approach to long term memory and my research at Sheffield University with Dr Neville Moray was in this area. These were intellectually driven passions but did not really connect with my personal history and personal passions. Foremost among these was always music.

My father played the piano by ear and adored listening to opera on the radio and we spent many Saturday afternoons at the cinema when I was little watching musicals. From the age of 7, I played piano and recorder and later learned the clarinet. I enjoyed both solo playing and being in the school orchestra and ensembles and I have always loved listening to a wide range of music. I went to my first live concert at age 11 and was moved to tears by Bach. Since my teenage years my social life and friends have been predominately in the performing and creative arts, and my husband is a musician. I have an active interest in many musical genres including jazz and improvised music, pop music and ethnic musical traditions. For me, playing was a source of pleasure and practising a way of acquiring a working discipline and consistency. I also experienced and witnessed in others the struggles difficulties and dilemmas that have to be confronted in the daily life of a musician. What I read, generally depicting all artists as high-minded tormented creative geniuses seemed to me to present a distorted picture. My clinical work also led me to reflect that putting creative artists on a pedestal, and making them inaccessible to others seemed to exacerbate their own felt sense of isolation and inaccessibility and make it harder for them to understand and solve their own problems.

I spent some years working as an academic psychologist focussing on the Psychology of Language and Cognition. While my interests were mainly outside academe, and within the arts field, I saw no way to link them up at that time. It was only after training as a counselling psychologist in the 1990s and discovering the hugely fascinating body of work in Music Psychology that had emerged in the previous couple of decades that I was finally able to join heart with head and not only work clinically with musicians but also combine my clinical and my research focus with my personal interests. This has offered me inspiration and the chance to make my own contribution to knowledge in this area.

Thus my personal and professional interests and curiosity have finally come together. I wanted to understand more thoroughly and be able to meet the counselling needs of musicians and other creative artists. Especially important to me is the broad theoretical base of counselling psychology and its focus on the therapeutic relationship since musicians come in all shapes and sizes. For instance, some are trained others self-taught, some famous, many nameless and not known as individuals, some playing a repertoire written by others, some only performing their own works. My clinical experiences in

primary care have shown me that many musicians bring their psychological problems to their GP (my case study describes one such client). Many of these clients have told me they felt poorly understood by their therapists and GPs. It is rare for counsellors in this sector (myself being one exception) to either be interested in or have any special idea of the needs of this group. My search in the literature also found little general self-help material for potential clients. Moreover conversations with counsellors, psychologists and other therapists in primary care and elsewhere who felt at a loss in dealing with the particular dilemmas faced by clients in music further emphasised the gap to be addressed.

Apart from BAPAM, the British Association for Performing Arts Medicine, which offers physical and psychological treatments (I am a registered practitioner with them), there is currently limited availability of specialist provision and lack of access for musicians working outside organisations. Recent research (see Chapter 1 of this work) has pointed to the prevalence of psychological problems amongst creative and performing musicians who often feel ill-prepared for the demands that they face and for the uncertain career that lies ahead.

Creative and performing artists make an important collective contribution to our cultural life that may or may not be of lasting value, but certainly offers personal enrichment in the giver and receiver in the present. Whatever facilitates their well-being and work will therefore ultimately be of benefit to us all.

Abstract

Being a composer: the inside view

While creative artists in general have received much research attention from psychologists, composers have been relatively neglected. This research aimed to help rectify this, and to identify key areas that could lead to the provision of better understanding and therapeutic support for this group. A literature search revealed a neglect of how composers see themselves, and a qualitative methodology was adopted to explore three broad research questions. These concerned first their sense of identity and motivation, second, the creative process and third, how being a composer affected personal and social life. A broad definition of composing was adopted to include creative improvisers. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 16 participants who were all working professionally as composers and the results were given an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. Participants worked in a wide range of musical styles and settings and encompassed variations in age, background, and levels and type of musical training. The analysis yielded rich insights into their lived experiences. Emergent themes focussed on how they saw themselves as similar to and different from other musicians, their motivation; how they engaged in creative work, their working methods, what facilitated and hindered them and their work-life balance. The findings revealed that contemporary composers do not fit the traditional romantic stereotype. Instead these composers each arrived at a sense of self and identity, and working goals and methods, which was richly contextualised and very personal, and their work frequently involved close collaboration with other musicians. The findings are discussed in relation to existing relevant research and explained in terms of theoretical work on self and identity, and the creative process. Finally the therapeutic implications for counselling psychologists were discussed, the project evaluated and suggestions for further research made.

SECTION B

Research:

Being a composer: the inside view

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 1

Introduction

1 Background to the research and relevance to counselling psychology

Ebbinghaus in the last decades of the nineteenth century reflected that psychology has had a long past and a short history. So has this project. I have had a passionate interest in the lives and work of musicians, and especially composers for as long as I can remember, but the impetus to conducting this research is more recent: as a counselling psychologist, I wish to find more appropriate and effective ways of helping them lead fulfilled lives and work better. Several factors have had an impact on this.

The first is finding myself working therapeutically with musicians and identifying gaps in research into their particular needs and problems. It was particularly surprising to note the absence of findings on the experiences of creative musicians. While there has been much recent interest and a steadily developing body of research into performers, (Parncutt & McPherson, 2002; Rink, 2002; Williamon, 2004) no substantial publication devoted to composers has yet been published. I have found no psychological studies of what it is like being a composer in today's world

Equally, while many biographies of celebrity musicians exist, these are usually of performers. Once more, composers are hardly represented at all. Moreover, of the vast majority of musicians who work professionally, but are not part of celebrity cultures, far less is known.

I have also, over many years, had personal experience of witnessing the psychological dilemmas, conflicts and problems faced by friends and acquaintances who are creative musicians, which they may or may not have presented for therapy. Some of these specific and recurring issues do not seem to have either been identified or addressed adequately in the therapeutic literature.

In addition, I am aware of the scarcity of useful research and practice-based findings that fellow therapists can apply to help them conceptualise and work with clients who are creative musicians. From time to time I have been consulted on these matters by colleagues aware of my interest and experiences in this area. It has been largely on the basis of my own general reading, clinical experiences and theoretically grounded intuitions that I have been able to respond. As a counselling psychologist I am fundamentally and enthusiastically committed to developing my practice on the basis of solid research findings and reliable clinically based evidence.

Each of these reasons has fuelled my determination to conduct research in order to explore and try to understand what it is like to be a creative musician today especially from the inside. Knowing how such musicians see themselves and their world would

seem to be an important basis on which to extend our psychological knowledge so as to be able to address the areas of deficiency discussed.

This study aims to be of relevance to counselling psychology in the following ways. First, it can help counselling psychologists identify issues of particular areas of importance concerning musicians who compose. It would thereby increase the potential relevance of counselling services provided to these musicians and hopefully therefore enable clients to access them better. Moreover by raising awareness of the needs of this particular client group it could raise the profile of counselling psychology by extending the range of work we are known to do. In addition the findings offer the opportunity of fruitful collaboration not only with other health professionals working with creative musicians but also music psychologists seeking to understand this group better and music educationalists involved in their training.

It can also raise awareness in professional organisations for musicians such as the Musicians' Union, the Musicians' Benevolent Fund and BAPAM (the British Association for Performing Arts Medicine) who organise free and low cost therapeutic help for musicians. Currently there appear to be relatively few individuals working outside academic music institutions, orchestras or choirs who offer counselling to musicians, compared to the general provision for people in other occupations for which there is an established knowledge base within occupational or other applied fields of psychology. It is not known how many psychologists there are (like myself), working in the NHS, who can offer specialised skills to this group. Certainly their voices are generally silent in the literature.

Few publications on therapeutic work with musicians appear in mainstream psychology and counselling journals and the main focus of published work has been performance anxiety, which affects between 25% and 70% of musicians (Steptoe, 2001; Wilson and Roland, 2002; Kenny, 2005). A review of this work can be found elsewhere in this portfolio. A survey of referrals to BAPAM (BAPAM, 2006) revealed that while musicians accounted for around 70% of the total, (of whom most worked in classical music) only 5% presented for psychological help. Of these, presenting issues concerned performance problems, career issues, and personal/general problems. Thus many musicians, including composers, were clearly not seeking help from BAPAM. Since accessibility is important, and my own experiences in primary care have revealed a demand for specialised help from musicians unable to pay for private counselling, perhaps some research attention will help to get the ball rolling and enable NHS provision to be improved.

Finally, it is hoped that in breaking new ground this research could hopefully lead to the development of therapeutic approaches, methods and techniques by counselling

psychologists that will enhance the quality of life for those clients and facilitate their creativity.

The rest of this introduction will review existing research into composers, much of it psychometric or anecdotal and largely carried out within the relatively narrow context of classically trained composers working within the western art music tradition. It will show that the range and diversity of creative work in music has not been adequately explored and will introduce and present a number of fundamental research questions to be answered, while suggesting ways in which these questions could be validly addressed.

2 Composers and other types of musician

Seashore (1967), discussing the traditional classification of musicians into composer, conductor, performer and teacher stated that each type had "its very distinctive battery of requirements of the musical organism." (p.25) Further it was argued that the "talent required for each of these four groups is radically different; the necessary education is different, the resultant personality is different." (p.25).

It is interesting to speculate whether musicians whose work encompasses more than one of these roles (and there are many) would then find themselves conflicted and if so, how they would deal with this. Studies of the incidence and experience of any such dilemmas are sadly lacking.

Recognition of the important role of historical, social and cultural processes in how we understand and talk about music, has challenged this traditional view. Cook (1998) for instance argues strongly that:

"...the nexus of interrelated assumptions built into the basic language we use of music...that the key personnel in musical cultures are the composers who generate what might be termed the core product; that performers are in essence no more than middlemen, and that listeners are consumers, playing an essentially passive role in the cultural process... in truth none of these things are natural, they are all human constructions, products of culture, and accordingly they vary from time to time and from place to place." (p.17)

Green (2002) discussing how popular musicians learn and talk, also reveals the irrelevance of the traditional categories. She depicts the activities involved in playing popular music as on a continuum going from copying and imitation through jamming and various types of improvisation to composing, which itself is undertaken on a continuum with both the individual and the musical group making a contribution.

Despite this, most existing research has been informed by the traditional categories, and has focussed mainly on performers. Within classical music, performers make up the largest group, and whereas many composers perform, the converse is far less common (although this not the case in popular music). Moreover, while the process of

composition can be solitary, much music making takes place in ensembles and groups and can be highly visible to the media (Sawyer, 2006). While there are many opportunities for performers to meet fellow performers, and their fans and audiences, there are far fewer for composers to meet each other or their audiences, with a few celebrity exceptions (Sloboda, 2005). It is not known what the psychological impact of these social differences are.

Storr (1997) pointed out that many creative people from the past did not marry and have children or have close personal ties. He saw being alone as providing suitable conditions for self-discovery and self-realisation through creative work, which was regarded as most important. It would be interesting to see whether this applies to the range of contemporary composers and how it affects their psychological well-being.

3 Composers of classical and popular music: how relevant is genre to understanding composers?

In the context of the range of music being composed today, the classical world occupies only a small if prominent place but nearly all the research attention has been on this group.

Toynbee (2000) has argued that the western classical tradition in music and popular music have different but powerfully influential archetypal myths. Popular music makers are seen as coming from the ordinary people but making extraordinary music. They remain close to popular values, whereas the classical music artist is supposed to be a special kind of being whose creativity and imagination rise above the banality of the everyday and who inhabits a rarefied and exclusive social milieu. Based often on autobiographical and biographical material mainly of the classical 'greats' like Bach, Beethoven and Mozart, there are many accounts of a stereotypical tortured genius struggling with his inspirational muse, which are illustrated later in this chapter.

According to the traditional distribution of creative roles, the composer is regarded as creatively superior. In pop it can vary a lot, but generally there is a tendency towards sharing creative functions. Green (2002) has illustrated how this works in her study of rock musicians. Classical music consists of a repertoire of works written by esteemed writers and interpreted by highly skilled performers and conductors, whereas pop has genres and stars but also one-offs and oddities. Pop musicians generally play their own works.

Classical music is thus a relatively unified and stable field whereas popular music field is more fragmented and volatile. Pop music also developed through the media, whereas live performance remains important for the dissemination of classical music, which may be performed but not recorded or critiqued in the media. Knowledge about these works is confined to a small group of concert-goers. This is rarely the case in popular fields. It

is interesting to see what effect choosing and working within these cultures has on the sense of self of composers: as yet no work has been done.

Toynbee (2000) argued that new works only emerge through the interaction of creative artists with co-workers and an audience, which therefore have social authorship (p.198-199), and creativity is a cultural process. Conventions become established as a result of such interactions and help organise both how artists work and how audiences react. He argues that art worlds rather than artists make art, a view similar to Czichsentmihalyi's (1996 and 1999) systemic approach to the process of creation. Sawyer (2006) has also argued that much musical creativity is collaborative. In the case of composers, collaborators might be soloists affecting how works are conceived and played, fellow members of a band, film directors, conductors. Toynbee argued that the myth of the lone creator has been sustained by the cult of celebrity and the promotion of a few big selling artists, and that listeners, sections of the media and some musicians want to cling to it. Empirical work on the working lives of contemporary composers would shed light on this.

4 What work do composers do today?

The popular music business is a multibillion pound global industry, and its financial turnover comes from sources including live and recorded performances and studio recordings and an increasingly varied number of other media outlets including film, television and the Web, and direct and indirect merchandising and spin-offs. According to Green (2002) citing figures from the British Phonographic Industry's Statistical Handbook, over 90% of global sales of music recordings consist of popular music, classical music making up 3 – 4 %, and jazz less than this.

Composers in popular fields such as rock, blues, country, jazz, dance, rap, and so on, are people writing material for their bands, people writing material for others to perform or record, people writing material which only they perform, such as singer-songwriters, as well as people creatively altering and arranging the works of others. In addition many people compose for stage, film, TV and other media, or write other 'incidental' music such as advertising jingles, or ambient music for certain environments such as restaurants or shops.

Finally there are those musical composers who use improvisation as a way of developing and expressing their creativity. This group includes jazz musicians who create solos over chord changes, free improvisers and others whose musical work contains freer aspects. Some contemporary avant-garde compositions by, for instance, Cage and Stockhausen might contain improvised spaces for performers to fill in as they wish. Green (2002) analyses improvisatory creativity into further types when discussing the creative musical contexts revealed in her study of rock musicians. These include jamming, where improvisation plays a part.

All of these different types of music making could be said to offer the opportunity for a composer to show musical creativity and as such should arguably be included in research on composers. So far this has not been the case. It is therefore not known to what extent these different working contexts affect the way composers see themselves and their work.

Working in music presents a number of unique aspects, compared with other occupations. There is the physical discipline and skill involved in mastering an instrument or voice training and all composers have to deal with this to some extent (Parncutt & McPherson, 2002; Sloboda, 2005). It often involves practising from a very early age many hours over many years. Sloboda et. al. (1996) estimated young classical musicians spent around 10,000 hours on practice up to the age of 21. Pop musicians like the Beatles (Weisberg, 1999) likewise can spend many hours over long periods developing ideas in recording studios. Second, there can be learning the language of musical forms including musical notation. Notation and sight-reading skills are required for classical musicians but are often absent in people working in popular fields (Deliege & Sloboda, 1999; Sloboda, 1999). However, pop and media composers often need IT skills, as will be seen. Third, there are the challenges of working creatively with other musicians in performance and recording, creating works and interpreting repertoire (Miell, MacDonald & Hargreaves, 2005; Sawyer, 2006). Fourth, for the professional musician, there is the question of planning, following and balancing a career path in creative music with other aspects of personal and social life. (Faulkner, 1983; Halstead, 1997; McCutchan, 1999; Whiteley, 2000). How contemporary composers make these decisions is largely unknown.

There is also increasingly involvement with technology in music – from amplification and effects systems, midi systems, notation and composition software and hardware, to digital and analogue recording technology. Many fields of professional creative music are highly competitive and insecure with no recognised training route or career path and the rewards of recognition, and financial and other benefits may only be available to a few (Faulkner, 1983; Green, 2002; Halstead, 1997; Owens, 1995; Raeburn, 1987). As well as having a low and unreliable income, and irregular work, this can lead to rivalries, jealousy and resentment: popular biographies attest to this. The life of an artist can be exacting, involving arduous and disruptive travel and touring schedules, unsocial hours, and sometimes poor pay and low status which can impact profoundly on personal social and family life (Raeburn, 1987a, 1987b, 1997; Wills, 2003). Careers in music also can often be short: unlike other professions except perhaps sports.

For composers, working can often be a solitary process (Storr, 1997), and keeping motivated may be a problem (we do not know, yet). In addition having to let go of works privately conceived and developed into the public domain where they are under scrutiny

may be a source of stress (Evans, 2003). Struggles with drugs and alcohol are well attested (Wills & Cooper, 1988; Raeburn, 1999, 2000). The way that these factors impact on the life and work of a range of present day composers has not received much attention from psychologists (Sloboda, 1985, 2005), nor has the way that these factors are experienced and responded to. Yet they can fundamentally affect a musician's motivation and sense of well-being, whether he or she experiences a positive sense of self and high self-esteem or not.

Steve Reich (in Duckworth, 1999) expressed it well.

"I care how people react to what I compose and certainly I'm pleased that so many people want to listen to my music. That said, the second thing is that when I'm composing alone in my studio, I write for myself. I don't believe you can write what you think people want to hear without becoming a hack. So I compose what *I* want to hear, and if I love it, maybe you will too." (p.317)

Within the media, music is generally described in terms of its genre or musical style, but how important is genre is to composers, and how does it inform their view of themselves and their work?

Hargreaves and North (1999) have shown that not only do different types of music appeal to different social groups or 'taste cultures' but music is used to develop different types of social identity (MacDonald, Hargreaves & Miell, 2002).

Genres, for example, blues, reggae, punk, are socially constructed systems of conventions and expectations within western music, and these circulate between the music industry, the musical work and its creator. Negus & Pickering (2004) discuss how the conventions enshrined within genres and codes affect the work and perceptions of musicians. Composers often describe themselves as blending influences from several genres in their work but it may not be clear how this blending shows itself both during the compositional process and in the musical work itself.

Toynbee (2000) sees genres as having a contradictory character, being a focus for affiliation and continuity but also subject to dispute and displacement, and this contradictory attitude is reflected within musicians, wishing to make music deep within a style and to create diversity too. He argues that while there are communities whose identity is expressed through particular styles, globalisation has led to ambiguity about who might appropriate particular genres. Genres are thus inherently unstable and musicians are often unsure of their boundaries and rules. Toynbee illustrates this by showing how different musicians (one being Charles Mingus) relate to genre. It is unclear therefore how genre considerations inform the compositional processes and working methods of musicians and affect their sense of identity. .

Finally, genres can articulate a shared belief system linking an artist to his audience, sometimes resting on exclusionary beliefs. An example of this occurred when Bob Dylan

began using electric guitars, was booed by his fans and portrayed as 'betraying' his folk genre and selling out to mass culture. This felt sense of community may help shape the activities of artists working within the genre.

Simon Frith argued (1996) that record companies use genres to integrate a view of the music they are promoting, what it sounds like, and who will buy it, and makes the case that in the contemporary context patterns of taste are diversified. Jazz fans may listen to rap, dance and folk etc., classical musicians may use folk or jazz idioms and so on. How far contemporary composers move between and mix genres is not known.

Studies of musical taste have shown how genre affiliation can signify a sense of identity and belonging (DeNora, 2000; Hargreaves, Miell & MacDonald, 2002). However although social identity and musical preference map onto each other, tastes change and develop and diversify and there is much movement between genres over time, some being initiated by composers. Thus genre community as a concept has limitations and the notion of genre too and it remains to be seen how important genre as a concept is to composers working today.

It is not known how far today's composers work with different genres, and, if they do, what it is like for them. Do identity conflicts arise, and if so, how are they managed? Pioneering studies on the identities of musicians who are creative, such as MacDonald and Wilson's (2005) work on Scottish jazz musicians, are beginning to address these questions. At present we do not know how relevant genre is: perhaps the present study will provide answers.

5 Composers' personalities

Psychometric studies of classical musicians (Kemp 1996) using the 16PF revealed widespread introversion and anxiety among composers. Many also showed pathemia, the tendency to operate through feelings and emotions, closely linked to sensitivity and imaginativeness. Kemp saw this group as a highly skilled elite, like brain surgeons or airline pilots. Their personality profiles deviated further from the general population than performers, and showed the following traits: for the males, independence, imagination, lack of discipline and higher intelligence and for the females independence and introversion.

Other studies using the EPI and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator which include Drevdahl & Cattell, 1958; Barron, 1963; Schleuter, 1972; Wilson, 1984; Wubbenhorst, 1994; Dyce & O'Connor, 1994, have generally supported these results: composers showing high levels of introversion, intuition and feeling compared with performers, and a clustering around the INFJ type on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.

It is interesting that professional musicians, according to Kemp, were stimulated by overcoming difficulties and they felt committed to goals and tasks. He also found evidence of a high degree of independence and self-sufficiency in the working patterns and personal life of many musicians. Their combination of introversion and independence resulted in energies being channelled inwards into work and reflection, sustained by high levels of sensitivity, feeling and imagination. Both Britten and Tippett revealed their independence in being openly gay, and as pacifists refusing to fight in WWII, in opposing prevailing social norms.

Storr (1976) on the basis of clinical observations referred to this general creative type as 'schizoid', and characterised it as mistrusting people and avoiding emotional involvement but finding solace in things like paintings books and music and a sense of autonomy and control through artistic work. According to this view, musicians face the paradox of having a need for personal control alongside feelings of inadequacy. See also Howe (1980).

Thus, work on the personality of classical composers suggests that they may use their work to validate their identity in various ways: this remains to be tested.

Most composers work in popular music and little research has been carried out on their personality. However Wills and Cooper (1988) in a pioneering study of 70 musicians, including composers, working in jazz, rock, pop and dance music, using the EPI, found this group scored high on neuroticism (which was interpreted as a result of their precarious life-styles), similar to classical musicians. Dyce & O'Connor (1994) used an inventory based on the Big 5 traits on rock players found high levels of extraversion as well as arrogance and dominance compare to student norms. They were also high on openness to experience. It would be interesting to extend this work to popular composers. In addition, how these personality traits are demonstrated, for instance, in the process of composition and composer lifestyle has not been studied.

Classical composer biographies attest to persistence in the face of difficulties, including hostility or indifference from parents (Tippett, Handel, Schuman), poor reviews, neglect, adverse circumstances or lack of success (Bach, Bruckner, Elgar, Janacek, Schoenberg). Gall (1978) introducing a volume of composer's letters saw this process of persistence as a salient trait of the great classical composers. However we know little about composers working outside the classical tradition, female as well as male, and the contemporary evidence needs strengthening with rich autobiographical and case study material.

6 Composers' identities and sense of self

All creative people work with the self and many, in the case of classically trained musicians, from early in training, link their concept of self-worth very closely to their perceived musical successes and failures (MacDonald, Hargreaves & Miell, 2002) so

that setbacks can damage their sense of self and conversely adulation and admiration can have the opposite effect (O'Neill, 2002). Clearly musicians' sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) and their beliefs about ability (Dweck, 1999) affect what they undertake, and help determine their sense of achievement and well-being. No research on composers' self-efficacy and self-management processes has yet been done.

Kemp (1996) notes that composers might be expected to invest more of themselves than other musicians in their work. To illustrate this, Aaron Copland (1952) when asked why it was important for him to compose, answered :

" I must create to know myself, and since self-knowledge is a never-ending search, each new work is only a part-answer to the question 'Who am I?'"
(pp. 40-41)

It is interesting to ask whether this quest for self-knowledge and self-actualisation applies to composers outside classical music and to see what other reasons or quests they might consider important. This is another area forming an impetus to the current research project.

Kemp's (1996) work illustrates how if musical goals are unrealised, severe personal crises could occur. Clearly also alienation, resentment and stress could occur when a musician feels devalued or exploited. One source of stress Wills and Cooper identified was having a low valuation or being devalued by other people. This might be, for instance, a club owner unwilling to offer decent pay, jazz musicians playing in situations beneath their capabilities leading to resentment and frustration or simply incomprehension, or being seen as "one step up the social ladder from rapists" (p. 46). Do composers have the same experiences, and if they do, how do they respond to them? Does their work have high status and do they feel valued and validated?

Additionally it is not clear whether there are differences in how musicians operating in the more experimental or avant-garde areas of music regard themselves compared to the more traditional types of composing. Nor is it clear how composers in particular styles compare themselves to those within and beyond their own musical area. Since these factors are clearly very important determinants of a sense of self, and a sense of achievement and well-being, it is vital to remedy this research gap.

Finally, there is the question of learning to achieve and manage self-expression creatively through the music and live up to internal standards and goals, as has been seen. High levels of work satisfaction – around 80 – 90% were reported in studies by James (1984) and Schultz (1981) of classical musician in general. What are composers' goals and how do they know when they have met them?

As has been seen, Hargreaves and North, 1999); MacDonald, Hargreaves & Miell, 2002, have shown that a key social function of music is to establish and develop an identity. Composers and performers can express their particular view of the world and themselves through both the music they listen to and that they make, in the contexts in which this occurs. As has been noted, professional musicians are often so enmeshed with their work that they see most aspects of their lives in relation to their musical roles. MacDonald, Hargreaves & Miell (2002) refer to these identities as Identities in Music (IIM).

Informed by a social constructionist perspective, suggesting evolving, localised and multiple identities and roles, research is emerging into the processes of self-construction and reconstruction that musicians engage in through social interaction and talk about music. For example, Davidson (2002) has shown how solo performers take on additional 'performer' identities and MacDonald and Wilson's (2005) study of professional jazz musicians demonstrates how talk accompanying music-making activities places a musician vis a vis his/her peers and allows him to negotiate interpersonal relationships and to establish and develop a social role or identity as a musician. Work on composer Identities in Music, along the lines suggested, remains to be done and the present study aims to be the first in this field.

7 Composers' psychological problems and stressors

There have been a number of approaches to the question of the incidence of severe psychological problems in musicians but many are methodologically weak and thus no firm conclusions can be drawn. For instance Post (1994) examined the biographies of famous creative figures, including some dead composers, to establish the incidence and degree of severity of symptoms of illnesses abnormalities and disorders. He found 31% of composers suffered serious mental ill-health. including Berg, Berlioz, Bruckner, Elgar, Falla, Gounod, Martinu, Moussorgsky, Puccini, Rachmanninov, Reger, Satie, Schumann (who was committed to an asylum and eventually died of starvation), There was a preponderance of anxiety related problems, although composers manifested the fewest depression related problems compared to other groups studied. Post claimed there was a causal link between creativity and psychopathology. Clearly the methodology used limits the validity of the findings but it is instructive that such a high incidence was found. What would be more interesting would be to know the effects of the problems on the life and work of the composers and how they responded to them but of this we can learn nothing from existing studies.

Storr (1976) and Kemp (1996) as previously noted, argued that in musicians symptoms like depression coexisted with greater ego-strength and abilities to deal with problems. Storr suggested communalities existed between creative processes and the modes of thinking of the mentally ill. This point has been elaborated by Nettle (2001) who has shown some ways in which schizotype thinking could facilitate creativity. One example

would be in the wider sampling of a range of presented stimuli when confronted with several signals, which could be useful in finding and evaluating appropriate solutions to musical and other problems.

More recently Storr (1992) has argued that creative musicians, unlike others suffering from disturbances who can feel overwhelmed and confused, are able to see the threat as a challenge and master it by creating order in their works. Rachmaninov suffered from depression and Storr observes that whereas when extremely severe it would prevent him from working, the threat of it could spur him on. Tchaikovsky who also suffered from depression wrote "Truly there would be reason to go mad if it were not for music," quoted in Storr, 1992 (p.104). It is important to find out whether living composers use their music to help them overcome and prevent mental distress.

Daniel Nettle (2001) argues that the traits underlying psychosis also underlie creative imagination, and sees them as having a common root. He called this root 'strong imagination'. He sees 'madness' as an extreme form of normal cognition which produces good and bad outcomes. The good outcome is unusual creativity and the bad one psychosis. He argues that current studies of the creative mind characterise it by qualities that are radically different from the psychotic: revealing strengths such as self-discipline, tenacity, organisation, calmness and strong self-image. In the absence of basic knowledge of the inner world of composers it is not clear how relevant these ideas are.

Studies by Ludwig (1995) also based on contemporary biographical material, showed that whereas the overall lifetime prevalence of psychiatric disorder was 59% it was 60 - 68% in music, the average increased risk for the creative arts being 73%, compared to 42% for other occupations. He also found also higher rates of depression (54% compared to 24%), mania (11% compared to 3%), severe anxiety (11% compared to 5%) and suicide (15% compared to 5%).

Both Post and Ludwig found higher levels of psychiatric symptoms and traits in people recognised for outstanding creative work. This is not to argue whether the less successful would reveal high or low levels. Nor is it to argue that such traits are in any way necessary. It remains open whether or not this association holds for the 'everyday' successful composer of whom there are many more than those who achieve outstanding eminence.

Wills and Cooper (1988) found popular musicians' stressors were similar to many orchestral musicians: the highest rated being 'feeling that you must reach or maintain the standards of musicianship that you set for yourself'. Thus self-efficacy emerges as an important factor. There have been no dedicated studies of the stressors that composers of popular music face.

Wills and Cooper looked at whether a whole range of occupational sources of stress affected their participants. Among stress outcomes, they looked at: physical and psychological health, alcoholism and drug abuse. These questions should be asked of composers as well.

8 The process of composing

Sloboda (1985) reviewing this field, lamented the scarcity of studies of the cognitive processes underlying composition and improvisation. His own work examined evidence from composer's sketches, and he compared Stravinsky and Beethoven in this respect. He looked in addition at what composers have written about their compositional processes. In this literature, there is a clear distinction between a stage where an idea of theme arises and the stage of more consciously and deliberately working on it. Whereas stage theories of the creative process often rely on Wallas's (1926) model, Sloboda characterises the process within Newell, Simon & Shaw's (1962) general theory of problem solving. Most composers insisted that the best way to learn is to study past masters.

Lucy Green's (2002) research on how popular musicians learn established, by contrast, that seeing, hearing, copying, imitating and studying other contemporaries is a key way these largely self-taught musicians learn, and both peers, fellow band members and more experienced and admired players and writers all become involved. Scarcely aware of conventional approaches to theory, practising and playing, their knowledge is often tacit and sporadic. Given these huge differences in learning process, it is interesting to compare the compositional approach and working methods of each.

Currently ideas about how composers approach their creative work comes mainly from biographical and autobiographical reflections such as the following.

“I do not mean to suggest that in putting his materials together the composer necessarily begins from scratch. On the contrary every well-trained composer has, as his stock in trade, certain normal structural molds on which to lean for the basic framework of his compositions.” Aaron Copland (1939, p.31)

At present it is largely speculative what these material are, what structural moulds are employed and how. Anecdotal evidence and hearsay exist but no psychological studies encompassing the range of present day music creating activities.

Reviewing the position 14 years later, Sloboda (1999) cited only one publication on the topic, an expert-novice comparison using a classroom exercise. He speculated that this neglect reflected the neglect of musical creativity in the classical tradition dominating musical education. Now that both composition and popular styles have been introduced into the National Curriculum for Music, one hopes this situation will be remedied

Sloboda (2005) argued that psychologists should be 'prepared to accept composers' preoccupations and priorities without ultimately rejecting them as 'unscientific' or 'too difficult' (p. 192). Clearly in order to deal with these concerns it is necessary firstly to identify them. This is the starting point for the current research.

Recent work on the experience of doing creative work (Czickszentmihalyi, 1996, 1999) and the 'flow' state characterising optimal engagement could fruitfully be applied to musical creativity. Equally, although many composers of the past talk about 'inspiration' it is not known how far this concept applies to contemporaries, and what it entails. Researching the experience of being a composer from the inside would shed light on this.

Research is lacking on how contemporary composers choose which musical areas to work on, which forms to work with, how they arrive at their working methods as well as how they experience and conceive of their own creative process and practices. This area has two distinct aspects: the creative process itself (which has received much attention from psychologists) and the characteristic methods of working of composers, the latter being most relevant here.

Clearly both purely idiographic studies of individuals and larger scale research picking up communalities in working approach and methods are needed. An example of the former is Collins' (2005) study of a media composer writing a computer game soundtrack. This individual began with a rough mental picture, articulated in terms of mood, together with some visual/textural ideas which acted as a loose framework. His process of composition is characterised as an "expressive, solution-generating activity meeting the constraints set by the composer himself" (p. 208) rather than a means-end problem solving activity which Sloboda (1985) and others had generally claimed. Many more such studies are needed. Without a developed conceptualisation of the creative working process it will not be possible for both composers themselves or for psychologists helping them, to understand what can hinder it, or to develop relevant means of facilitating it.

Ericsson et al. (1993) suggested that individual differences in musical ability are attributable to deliberate practice rather than innate talent. So that as people gain experience and skill they can write better and more original work. Creativity often expresses itself through the use of technique. This is confirmed by Simonton's (1991) historiometric study of 120 classical composers. He found that creative productivity or output was the single underlying factor accounting for assessments of eminence. He also found it was a good predictor of the aesthetic success of individual works (assessed by measures of popularity such as performances, recordings, sales of recordings etc). Thus only a small proportion of composers account for the bulk of the repertoire. The socio-

cultural context of popular music is of course quite different but no research evidence is available.

Among other aspects researched in this way by Simonton, is output at different ages, the relationship between quantity and quality of output. He found that stressors due to life changes such as marriage, parenthood and bereavement can increase the originality of compositions (according to his criteria based on frequency).

Kozbelt's (2005) work supports the expertise view. He found that composers become better judges of their own works and ideas, knowing which to work on, which to discard.

On the other hand Simonton (1997) had found an individual's ratio of good or useful ideas to the total of ideas generated remains constant with age, and argued it could not be increased by any means over the life span except by writing more (which he called the Equal odds rule).

It would be interesting to see how far these findings apply to contemporary composers as a whole.

9 Implications for research

This brief overview has shown up the following fundamental areas of neglect: a lack of studies on what it is like to be a composer working today – how they see themselves; which groups or categories of musicians they identify with and which they do not; how they approach their work, what are their working methods; what they see as the positive and negative aspects of being a composer, what are their main stressors and how they try to cope with them; and how does being a composer affect their personal and social life.

It seems important to let composers speak for themselves and since this is an unexplored area, a methodology is needed where key issues would be allowed to emerge, rather than being pre-determined in advance.

Research topic areas

The following three broad research topic areas emerged. The first concerns the composer's sense of self and identity as a musician together with the perceived benefits and disadvantages of working as they do; the second concerns how the process of composing is approached, and what their working methods are; and the third concerns the impact of their work on their personal and social life. The insider perspective can best be investigated using qualitative methods and no work of this type on composers exists. It also seemed important to reflect in the research the range of musical style, activities and settings that composers find themselves working in today.

SECTION B
Research:
Being a composer: the inside view

Chapter 2: Methodology

Chapter 2: Methodology

1 Introduction

A survey of the literature revealed that although there is a body of research on performers, composers are a surprisingly neglected group. In order to understand their concerns, and to be able to address them in counselling, it is first necessary to identify them.

This research addresses three topic areas in relation to composers that are intended to open up the unexplored area of what it is like to be a composer today. Especially lacking have been detailed studies from an insider perspective, in which composers speak about:

- their sense of self and identity as a musician, and what they see as the benefits and rewards as well as the disadvantages and drawbacks of their work
- how they approach the process of composing and their working methods
- how being a composer affects their personal and social life

This research can have the following benefits. There will be a fuller portrayal of what it is like being a composer, and how creating music affects the inner and outer life of the musician. It could help identify problems composers encounter that could benefit from counselling, and raise counselling psychologists' awareness of the needs of this particular client group. The findings could be relevant to other health professionals working with composers, music psychologists seeking to understand this group better and music educationalists involved in their professional training.

Additionally, it could help raise awareness of the needs of this group in professional organisations such as the Musicians' Union and BACS (the British Association of Composers and Songwriters) as well as BAPAM and the Musicians' Benevolent Fund, who organise medical and therapeutic help for musicians. This research will hopefully also lead to the development of therapeutic methods that could enhance the quality of life for those clients and thus facilitate their creativity, and thereby lead to better provision of and access to services

This chapter presents a rationale for the use of IPA as the chosen methodology, looks at its key elements and then gives an account of the methods and procedures used in the current study.

1. Rationale for Qualitative Methodology

While it is becoming clearer what the personal and professional stressors are that performers face and manage, research is scarce on the psychological concerns and issues experienced and dealt with by composers and the present study seeks to redress this situation. The literature in this area is not well enough developed to present a researcher

with a predefined set of questions. Therefore, it seemed appropriate to use a research methodology that would enable a more exploratory approach to be adopted.

Qualitative methodology, with its emphasis on individual and social meaning-making (McLeod, 1996) seemed the appropriate choice. Richardson (1996) suggested that qualitative methodology is especially useful when researching topics that are complex, ambiguous or not previously researched, making it very suitable for the current study.

Predicated on the belief that there is no unitary way of explaining reality or meaning, but that multiple meanings may co-exist, this methodology regards the researcher as participating in a process of data generation rather than as an impartial observer discovering 'facts'. Qualitative researchers can influence the object of enquiry as well as being affected by it and are therefore expected to engage reflexively with the research process. Reflexivity is built into the philosophy of counselling psychology (BPS, 2005), making the methodology especially congruent with the researcher's role as a practitioner.

Thus, for instance, conducting a survey, which might have produced preliminary ideas to follow up, seemed inappropriate as the researchers' own preconceptions can play too great a part in the selection of topics. It seemed important to allow the concerns of the participants to emerge.

2 Epistemological considerations

Madill, Jordan and Shirley (2000) argue that the researcher should make his epistemological position clear, make the research consistent with it and present findings in a way that allows them to be evaluated appropriately. However Bryman (1988) argues that there is no necessary or 1: 1 correspondence between epistemology and methods, and that the assumed association may be conventional. Generally though, quantitative methods are associated with a positivist epistemology and qualitative are linked with an interpretative, hermeneutic epistemology. The different qualitative approaches have different but overlapping epistemological underpinnings and theoretical and methodological emphases.

Mason (1996) makes the point that choice of methodology can reflect the researcher's biography, training and knowledge. She suggests making a list of possible methods and data source options and explaining why each is accepted or rejected. Aspects of this process are illustrated here. On a personal note, the researcher's quantitative research background made it daunting to choose among untried approaches. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis seemed intrinsically appealing because of its breadth, because its focus goes beyond language and because there is flexibility in conducting the analysis. Thus comparisons between methods which follow are made using IPA as the yardstick against which other approaches are considered.

IPA takes a sort of critical realist epistemological position (Flowers, 2005), which Madill et al. (2000) call 'contextualist'. It regards participants as owning their own experience, that is, realism in relation to that experience. Willig (2001) notes that IPA does not make any specific claims about the external world, such as whether accounts are true or false or whether they correspond to a 'reality'. An IPA analysis thus encompasses the real and the constructed.

An IPA analysis is contextualist in illustrating how the interpretation encompasses the purposes and significance that people attach to what they do (i.e. understanding persons-in-context), together with shared social and cultural systems of meaning, values, practices and perceptions. All knowledge is thus local, provisional and situation-dependent and there is a double hermeneutic in that the researcher is interpreting the sense-making of the participants. (Smith, 1996; Henwood, 1996).

Silverman (1997) argues against the "elevation of the experiential as the authentic" (p. 248). That is, language is not a mirror of experience. He also emphasises that the aim to capture authentic experience is flawed as what is authentic is culturally defined. Silverman (2000).

This is a point echoed by Madill, Jordan & Shirley (2000) and Willig (2001) who argue that contextualism is vulnerable to assuming an uncomplicated subjectivity through expecting both participants and researchers to be able to articulate their position. This criticism applies to all approaches using text as data.

2.1 What is IPA?

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis is a rigorous and systematic form of inductive qualitative analysis which aims to "capture and explore the meanings that participants assign to their experience." Reid, Flowers & Larkin (2005, p. 20). While not claiming that individual's experiences are transparent as reported, the analysis assumes meaningful interpretations can be made.

IPA analysis recognises that "access not direct or complete but dependent on and complicated by the researcher's own conceptions which are required in order to make sense of that other personal world through a process of interpretative activity" (Smith, 1996, p. 264). The researcher's perspective, interests and conceptions that are brought to the analysis should therefore also be spelled out. Thus an IPA analysis is subjective, while being transparently grounded in the data from which it is derived, and should be plausible to participants, others analysing the data and other readers

While grounded in an idiographic approach, an IPA analysis seeks to find a balance between what is distinct what is shared in the accounts of a group of participants. Smith (2004) argues strongly for the value of detailed nuanced analysis of small numbers of

cases, say up to a maximum of 6. However within the community of IPA researchers, opinion is divided. Reid et al. (2005) pointed out that on average the number of participants in IPA studies has been 15 (range 1 – 42). Provided enough rich detail can be presented to convey the nuances of individual cases as well as the breadth of individual differences, they argue that larger samples can be justified. (Larkin, 2005, personal communication), argued that the quality of the analysis not the size of the sample is what matters. Shaw (2004) has argued that it is legitimate when, as in the present case, the researcher aims to reveal a range of perspectives on a particular phenomenon, to sample these. For further discussion on this matter see Section 4.2, below.

An IPA analysis aims to present a coherent and integrated account of the experiences of participant with respect to the phenomena under investigation.

2.2 IPA and other qualitative methods: making a choice

There is common ground between IPA and types of grounded theory (GT) in terms of its inductive approach, and with forms of discourse analysis in having an interpretative focus on context and language. Arguments are presented for the greater relevance of IPA to the current study.

IPA and discursive approaches (Willig, 2001; Parker, 2005; Potter & Wetherell, 1994) are both committed to the importance of language but IPA is also concerned with cognitions, including social cognitions, and in exploring the gap between a situation, and the person's perception of it (Smith, 1996; 2004). IPA may also employ more directive or empathic questioning in interviews. Both these features of IPA make it more appropriate for the present study.

IPA and GT approaches (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Charmaz, 2001) differ in several ways. In GT all theory is data driven, and formulating theory is an aim of the approach, whereas in IPA some theoretical preconceptions may be brought to the data in a layered analysis. IPA studies often have a secondary critical focus on language, meaning and context and may draw on theoretical frameworks or concepts to develop interpretations of the experiential accounts. This stage is more interpretative and less emergent than that permitted in GT. Since theory formulation is not a major aim for the present study whereas interpretation of accounts drawing on any relevant theoretical concepts is, IPA seems more appropriate here.

GT has very detailed formulaic recipes for carrying it out unlike IPA. In IPA there is more than one way possible to follow the analysis process, though the general characteristics are the same. Further, layered analysis can focus on aspects such as macro-discourses shaping assumptions (Eatough, 2005) or can explicate rhetorical devices used by participants, or focus on assumptions drawn on in accounts. (Flowers et

al. 1997; Osborn & Smith, 1998). IPA also allows for a critical engagement with the text where the researcher asks questions or makes interpretations which participants would be unlikely or unable or unwilling to acknowledge themselves (Smith 2004). In an exploratory study such as the current one, this flexibility and openness recommends itself.

Finally, the IPA contextualist emphasis also recommends itself. Seeing knowledge as local and provisional creates a double hermeneutic (Smith, 1996; Henwood, 1996) where the researcher interprets the sense-making of the participants. Since the current study is the first in its area it seemed relevant to draw attention to contextual factors which might be important.

2.21 Phenomenology and IPA

Smith (2004), and Smith, Jarman & Osborn (1999) argue that IPA is phenomenological in its concern with participants' perceptions, beliefs and thoughts about the topic. A chain of connection is assumed between 'verbal report, cognition and physical state' (p. 219). Willig (2001) has, however, argued that IPA does not sufficiently distinguish between experience and cognition.

Pure phenomenological research (Kvale, 1996) describes lived experience but does not offer explanations. IPA accesses mediated rather than direct experiences, which have been filtered through particular contexts. Then the interpretative work undertaken by the researcher generates one of a possible number of readings, each of which offers an analysis of what it means for participants to have these experiences..

Participants' experiences are, in the course of the analysis, first captured and then interpreted in a way that answers a particular research question. Researcher reflexivity: becoming aware of the researcher's contribution to the way meaning is constructed, could be regarded as a form of phenomenological bracketing (or setting aside). The present study aims to characterise the way composers make sense of their musical work and how it affects their sense of themselves.

2.22 Symbolic Interactionism and IPA

Smith (1996) regards IPA as indebted to symbolic interactionism with its concern for how meanings are constructed by individuals. Symbolic interactionists argue that meanings occur and are made sense of in and as a result of social interactions, and they are modified through individuals' self-reflections. Messages are already interpreted by the cultural systems of communication and the prevailing systems of ideology and power and these meanings are symbolic, structured and contained within a semiological and a narrative code which ascribes their meaning. Thus a person is located within the world of experience through a body of organised and localised interactional practice such as doing a job, by gender, being entertained.

Norman Denzin (1995) describes it as the study of "the intersections of interaction, biography and social structure at particular historical moments" (p. 57). This approach has recently been extended into areas of study such as how interacting individuals connect their lived experiences to cultural representations.

It will be interesting to see how composers' meaning-making is influenced both by the situations within which they work and the cultural representations that affect them.

3 Research methods and procedure

The rationale for using semi-structured interviews and purposive sampling is presented, and details are presented of the methods of data collection used.

3.1 Semi-Structured Interviews and IPA

The rationale for the widespread use of this method, according to Smith (1995 and 2003), is because it allows the opportunity to establish rapport with the participant, and to open a dialogue. The course of the interview can then flexibly be adapted and questions, probes and their order modified according to what is disclosed. Thus the interview schedule acts as a guide, and the participant can dictate the precise route that the interview follows. This facilitates rapport and is likely to produce richer data. Thus an IPA interview schedule generally addresses a range of issues to be covered in the interview, put into an appropriate sequence, using neutral open questions and a 'funnelling' approach, starting at a general level and then probing for more specific issues (Smith & Osborn, 2003). This is consistent with the aims of the present study, to encourage participants to be open about what may be sensitive issues.

Silverman (1997) points out some shortcomings of such interviews. He maintains that in an open-ended interview, which is a symbolic interaction, the minimal presence of the interviewer itself sets up expectations and creates interpretive problems as to what is relevant for the interviewee. A non-directive approach could be constraining, not facilitative. Moreover, what is said may simply reflect cultural assumptions and scripts (the celebrity 'in-depth' interview being a clichéd example of this). Finally, contextual factors such as the relative status of the interviewer and interviewee, their gender, socio-economic status, age, the location and so on as well as issues of self-presentation etc. all play their part. For these reasons, it is especially important for participants to be fully informed as to the purpose and relevance of the interview and to know something about the interviewer and for the interviewer to actively and consistently reflect on this process. Further discussion of the ethical implications of this type of research follows later.

3.2 Piloting of the Interview Schedule

Questions were derived from the literature survey, from informal conversations with composer friends who were not included in the study, and were refined following piloting.

The schedule was piloted on two composers known to the researcher, who did not participate in the study, and adjustments were made to the schedule in order to clarify and refine it. It was generally agreed that the questions were clear and relevant, and that there was nothing that could cause offence. Both pilot interviews ran to over two hours, partly because participants were eager to give detail about their routes into composing, not directly relevant to the study.

For the Interview Schedule, see Appendix 1.

3.3 Research Interviews and Counselling Interviews

Qualitative research interviews, often on sensitive topics, can evoke powerful emotions, and comparisons between research and counselling interviews have been made. Coyle (1998) suggested that Rogers' (1951) attributes of empathy, genuineness and unconditional positive regard conveyed through counselling skills such as attentive listening, reflecting feelings and using open questions can encourage and enable participants to form a connection with the interviewer and feel confident enough to speak openly on sensitive, difficult and distressing issues. Researchers who are practising counsellors are likely to use these skills anyway, and are more likely to be aware of and work with transference and counter-transference reactions that may arise during interviews. Coyle points out that there may be a delicate balance between offering an interpretation to ensure understanding, and making an intervention. The researcher used sensitivity to process issues and reflexivity to maintain this balance. The reflective diary and process notes intrinsic to qualitative research methods play their part, as do ethical safeguards built into the research methods, to be discussed later.

A research interview aims to collect findings which will help the researcher make discoveries about the chosen topic, rather than provide a psychologically beneficial experience for the participant, even though such benefits and insights may emerge from the interview. Its therapeutic value would perhaps lie in its cathartic, clarifying and meaning making functions (Wosket, 1999; Etherington, 2004). These benefits can equally affect researchers. It is arguably the responsibility of the counsellor-researcher to try to maximise the chances of such benefits occurring. Several participants, in fact, said they perceived benefits of having had the research interview both at the time and subsequently.

Any research interview is subject to the usual processes of social influence, including identity construction within the interview, and reflecting on the topic in an interview

may change participants' views in some way. This is no more likely to occur in this type than in any other type of research interview.

A final difference between the research and the therapeutic interview lies in the limits on confidentiality. Since research is put into the public domain, anonymity has to be offered as far as possible, and it is important for participants to be satisfied on this and to have given full and informed consent. How this was managed is discussed in the next section.

4 Selection and Recruitment of Participants

IPA uses purposive sampling, using a relatively homogeneous group of participants. A purposive sample is a group of participants for whom the research question will be significant, choosing cases which illustrate something of interest, selecting cases where this is likely to occur. The average number of participants in Reid et al's (2005) IPA literature survey was 15. The current study has 16 participants.

Mason (1996) argues that it is important to choose a sample of particular processes, types, categories or examples which are relevant, or appear to be, within the wider universe. Whether the sample is typical is less important than whether the experiences of participants is typical of the broad class of population to which the research relates. Musicians have many ways of defining what a composer is, and the researcher was anxious not to take a stance on this but to be as inclusive as possible.

No presuppositions were made as to the relevance of genre to the research questions and composers of music across a wide range were included. It was also decided to include those whose musical creativity has an improvised aspect, and composers working in different musical contexts and settings. A straw poll of musician friends suggested others shared this inclusive view of composers.

It was also thought important that composers with a range of experience should be encompassed in the sample. Thus composers with a lifetime of work are included as well as those at the beginning of their career. Satisfying all these inclusion criteria resulted in a sample size of 16.

4.1 Reflections on inclusion criteria

The researchers' own background may have had an influence here. She herself had a good deal of musical training from childhood, and enjoyed listening to many types of music, including improvised, avant-garde and ethnic traditions. She had always had professional musicians as friends, was married to one, and was always keen to see musical genres with small followings being given access to cultural and financial opportunities. She was thus acquainted both with creative musicians whose work brought little public recognition and those who received huge amounts, relative to their

musical output and contribution. These factors may have predisposed her towards the inclusive sampling criteria adopted.

Both genders were included, 13 male and 3 female, perhaps reflecting the overwhelming dominance of men in the composing world.

A demographic questionnaire was given to all participants, see Appendix 2. Questions were included in order to collect information on participants' musical training, work, skills, interests and activities and any non-musical work and activities and to establish whether they had experience of therapy.

Four participants were acquainted with the researcher. They were not in regular contact with her and had no prior knowledge of the research project. Personal friends and people with whom she was in regular contact were excluded as this might compromise the research relationship. Snowballing made up the numbers. Most of the interviewees were based in London, which may be a limitation of the study.

4.2 Summary of demographic information

A full summary can be found in Appendix 3. Participants had a variety of musical skills besides composing: none were exclusively composers. All had performed, 75% had done some form of teaching and many were currently involved in those activities. Four people composed in one style, the rest in up to 9, more than half the group writing in four or more musical styles. While six of the group were entirely self-taught, eight had received degree level musical education. Fourteen of the group were in a current relationship and 11 of the group had children. Only two people had had therapy in connection with their work. A brief biographical sketch of each participant can be found in Appendix 4. Further details will emerge during the analysis.

5 Interview procedure

Participants were contacted by letter and the material sent to them included background information, a consent form and the demographic questionnaire. See Appendices 2, 5 and 6. Altogether 18 people were approached to participate and two refused, giving pressure of work as a reason. Both were composers for film and media, one of the most time pressured work settings.

The interview itself was conducted in participants' homes in order for them to feel more comfortable and to minimise inconvenience. Interviews often took place in the home studio if there was one, and participants were encouraged to ask questions about the study. Care was taken to ensure an uninterrupted session and that extraneous noise was minimal. Care was also taken to respect family commitments etc. Full debriefing was available after the interview. Many participants commented that it had been an

interesting and enjoyable experience and were very enthusiastic about the project. No-one said that they had felt upset by any aspect of it and no-one seemed to show distress during the interviews.

Material was recorded on minidisk and the majority of interviews were transcribed by the researcher. The remainder were transcribed by an experienced professional whose work was carefully checked by the researcher. Identifying features such as names have been removed. The average length of interviews was just over an hour. A research process diary was kept throughout and notes made following each interview.

5.1 Transcription

IPA transcribing conventions include marking significant pauses and false starts and note is made of laughs, sighs and other such paralinguistic features but as the emphasis is semantic, fine grained prosodic features are not included. Full interview transcripts are in a separate volume (attached).

6 Analytical method

IPA analysis involves doing detailed interpretative work case by case on individual transcripts. The first transcript is read and reread and annotations are made in the margin of interesting and significant points in relation to the research questions, which are connected and associated to generate thematic codes. The initial coding is phenomenological in attempting to capture the essence of what is in the text. The emerging themes are then listed chronologically and the next stage involves trying to make sense of emerging connections between themes. The analysis process moves from the particular to the general. At each stage however the connections are grounded in the source material. As the themes cluster the analysis moves from the descriptive to an interpretative level. The next stage is to produce an ordered table of themes. See Appendix 7 and Appendices 8 to 15 giving details for each sub-theme .

With smaller samples, say up to 10 cases where an overall mental picture of each case can be held and where the location of themes within them can be retained, it is suggested that each case is analysed individually in detail before the themes emerging are brought together. With larger samples, it is suggested that, although the primary concern is still with each individual's understanding, it is necessary to distinguish one or more themes, mutually relevant to all participants at an early stage, so these form the focus of a subsequent more detailed analysis, where personally distinct experiences can be considered. (Smith, Jarman & Osborn, 1999)

Therefore the first step is the same, but the initial coding is at a broader level. The process is repeated for all participants and a separate master list is generated for each one. The next stage is to identify and examine themes reflecting shared aspects of experience for all participants. Finally collections of these more interpretative themes are

made, and from this a narrative account is generated, structured by the shared themes, which are explained and illustrated. Each participant's experiences are related to these themes in a narrative account and the researcher's interpretations are clearly distinguishable within it.

Thus the analysis offers an interpretative account of what it means for these particular participants to have these concerns in this context, thus combining a phenomenal insider and interpretative outsider perspective.

7 Quality Criteria in IPA

Along with other qualitative methods there has been much debate on this topic, see for instance Henwood & Pidgeon, 1994; Henwood, 1996; Madill, Jordan & Shirley, 2000; Smith, 1996; and more recently general guidelines have been presented (Elliott et al., 1999; Yardley, 2000).

Flick (2004) distinguished five positions on how to resolve the matter.

1. The first option advocates using the same criteria as for quantitative research. This is widely rejected as the two approaches have different epistemological foundations: quantitative research aims to establish objective knowledge, whereas qualitative research emphasises the relativism of knowledge (Kvale, 1996; Smith, 1995)
2. A second option would be to reformulate the quantitative criteria, especially concepts of reliability and validity. From this approach a number of guidelines have emerged. (See Lincoln, 1995; Stiles, 1993; Tindall, 1994). For instance to address issues of generalizability, reliability or trustworthiness, it is becoming common practice to examine cases using more than one researcher. In the present study, a second person interested in this area, independently looked over a sample of coded transcripts in order to check the plausibility of the emergent themes and the extent to which they appeared to be grounded in the text. Further, with respect to validity the researcher has left an audit trail so that all the steps in the chain of evidence and reasoning are transparent and can be followed. This includes disclosure of the researcher's personal frame of reference. In order to provide a check on internal coherence (Smith, 1996, 2003) many verbatim quotes are included in the analysis so readers can judge whether the arguments presented are internally consistent and justified by the data.
3. Flick's third option is to design alternative more appropriate criteria, spelling out the detail as far as possible in how they would apply to each approach and to single cases or data sets. The difficulty with this is that authors have tended to approach this area from the standpoint of their particular methodological approach and Madill et al. (2000) have argued that since there is no unified paradigm in qualitative research the criteria

need to be tailored to fit the method, and to take into account the different epistemological and ontological frameworks.

Elliott, Fischer & Rennie (1999), from within the phenomenological tradition, (see Reid, Flowers & Larkin, 2005) argue that in qualitative research the goal of quality control shifts from the objective truth of statements to understanding by people and their criteria of good practice include: owning one's perspective, situating the sample, grounding in examples, providing credibility checks, coherence (the quality of the interpretation), being clear about the research tasks and when they are achieved, and enabling readers to be stimulated. These seven benchmark methodological criteria were consistent with those adopted for the current study.

There has been debate within IPA circles on the value of asking participants to check the plausibility of the interpretation of their material. Generally, in IPA studies, participants are not asked to comment. First, because the methodology is giving a reading, an interpretation of the text and not the definitive reading so it is less relevant whether or not it 'fits' for the participant, and that a consensus is achieved. Secondly, participants may not understand the interpretation or the basis on which it rests. Finally, they may be asked to comment long after they cease to be able to recall details of the interview and how they felt at the time. This is not to argue there is no value in asking for comments, but mainly to question it as a way of establishing validity. For these reasons, participants were not asked for comments on the IPA of their interview.

Flick's fourth option is to bypass the issue altogether, which leaves the problem unaddressed. Finally he suggests going beyond the idea of criteria as such and shifting the focus onto the research process as a whole. This raises the questions of who decides on standards for relevance and adequacy, and is this applicable to all approaches given their differences in epistemology and method.

Morrow (2005) examining the concept of credibility in qualitative research, regards attention to subjectivity and reflexivity as among the indispensable qualities of all research paradigms. She argues that subjectivity is inherent in the method (while of course all research is subject to researcher bias) and addresses ways of managing it, which she loosely describes as bracketing or self-monitoring. Efforts to self-monitor were made during the current research process.

Smith (2003) favours adopting Yardley's (2000) broad principles for assessing the quality of qualitative research, which can be met in various ways. The first, sensitivity to context, can be shown by awareness of related research literature, and by providing analysis thoroughly based on the data. The second is commitment (or engagement), rigour, transparency and coherence. Rigour is shown by thoroughness in terms of the appropriateness of the sample and the completeness of the analysis. Coherence and

transparency refer to the clarity with which the research process is described. Finally, impact and importance refer to the research's contribution to knowledge or practice. It is also hoped that these principles have been demonstrated in the current research.

8 Reflexivity

“Reflexivity requires an awareness of the researcher’s contribution to the construction of meanings throughout the research process, and an acknowledgement of the impossibility of remaining ‘outside of’ one’s subject matter while conducting research. Reflexivity then, urges us “to explore the ways in which a researcher’s involvement with a particular study influences, acts upon and informs such research.” (Nightingale and Cromby, 1999 (p. 228).

According to Morrow (2005) and Silverman (2000), making one's biases and implicit assumptions overt is now standard practice and there are particular strategies for doing it. Many factors, such as the researcher's emotional involvement with the topic, presuppositions from reading the literature and aspects of interaction with participants, can bias the process of interpretation.

To deal with biases coming from life experiences, or interactions a high degree of reflexivity is needed. Rennie (2004) defined this as "self-awareness and agency within that self-awareness" (p 183). Ways of enhancing reflexivity include: keeping a journal of the investigation (the current researcher did this), consulting with a research team or peers. In the present study, the researcher aimed to make her biases explicit and there was some consultation with the research supervisors and occasional discussions with peers. Giving presentations to music psychologists, music educationalists, counselling psychologists and therapists at a music college, at different stages of the research process and inviting comment were all helpful in drawing attention to similarities and differences in perspective relative to the researcher's own.

Another way of enhancing reflexivity relates to the stance the researcher takes with respect to the participant. In the current study it was assumed that the participant is the authority on his/her world, and this was also achieved by asking for clarification within interviews, probing into meanings, and taking the stance of naïve enquirer which relates to power issues in the relationship. This last point is particularly relevant when an interviewer could be seen as an 'insider', or when there is great familiarity with the area being looked at. In the current study participants were informed that the researcher was married to a musician who composes and told of her lifelong interest in this area, so this was especially pertinent. All these strategies, Morrow points out, help achieve the goal of 'fairness' or an equitable representation of the viewpoint of the participant avoiding any biases due to the researcher.

Wilkinson (1988) distinguishes between functional reflexivity, which refers to the researcher's interpretative representations of the material, and personal reflexivity or the ways in which doing and reflecting on the research impacts on the life experience. They are largely inseparable, and dialogical. The researcher's experiences with the material has strengthened her resolve and made her take steps to develop her personal specialist skills in working with musicians – an example of the two types of reflexivity interacting.

As far as functional reflexivity is concerned, it is necessary to say that the researcher's orientation as a white British female, middle-aged middle-class person engaged in counselling undoubtedly affected the positioning of participants towards her, and how this influenced the course of the research is taken up in later chapters.

8.1 A Note on Personal Bias and Reflexivity

The researcher's own presuppositions, from reading the literature, led to a debate with supervisors and a consultation with an external authority on the methodology about whether it could be justifiable to conduct the analysis by dividing the interviews into groups based on the musical genres or cultures that participants primarily identified with. Genre is a very important concept in music psychology and music studies (see Chapter 1). Genre informed the researcher's thinking when she was deciding who to include in the sample. She conceptualised four groups: one working within a largely classical/Western contemporary field; one media group working across all genres writing for stage, film, TV etc; one group working with popular styles such as rock and blues and finally a group whose musical creativity contained an improvised element, whether small or significant. She thought at one stage that by having groups of four it would be easier to retain the individuality of each case and make comparisons across groups possible. In fact the demographic questionnaire showed that adherence to a genre was not normally the rule, and that irrespective of the genre group she had mentally assigned them to, and irrespective of the musical training or education received (whether classical etc.), participants engaged in composition across many genres.

Within IPA, interviews are usually analysed as one group. Only if there is good reason for thinking that there is a basis for a different perspective on the research questions is it justifiable to divide participants into groups. A comparison layer of analysis between groups then has to be made involving extra work and another level of interpretation. There seemed to be no good reason for using genre to differentiate participants, nor gender which was also considered: the three female composers that were interviewed did not offer a justifiably different perspective from the males. After some soul-searching and further consultation with supervisors and Michael Larkin, (personal communication 2005) it was decided to analyse the interviews as one group. If genre had emerged as an important super-ordinate theme in the analysis, this would demonstrate its importance. In fact super-ordinate themes looked remarkably similar across participants.

9 Ethical considerations

This research was conducted following the ethical guidelines in the BPS Code of Conduct (2000) with special reference to the guidelines for conducting research with human subjects. A copy of the briefing information given to participants together with the consent form can be found at Appendices 5 and 6. Every effort was made to inform participants as fully as possible about the nature and purpose of the study, how it would be conducted and what would happen to the material, so as to enable them to give informed consent. Ethical approval for the study was not needed from the Ethical Committee at City University.

Etherington (2004, p. 210) in a welcome development, has spelled out the ethical principles relating to informed consent and the right to withdraw from research in terms of fidelity, autonomy, beneficence, non-malificence, justice and self-respect. The latter refers to the researcher's responsibility for her own well-being when involved reflexively in the research process.

In the current study, the research questions were discussed with non-participating musicians beforehand and it was agreed that there was nothing that could cause offence. Debriefing was available following the interview and participants reminded of their right to withdraw or to modify their contribution. In the event, no-one either withdrew or withheld any parts of their interview. Names of participants have been changed for reasons of confidentiality. No absolute guarantee of anonymity could be made but every effort was made to protect the identity of participants, for instance in the removal of names from transcripts and the selection of extracts for inclusion in the results and discussion, care was taken to avoid idiosyncratic or identifiable individual remarks or revelations which in the opinion of the researcher could compromise anonymity.

SECTION B
Research:
Being a composer: the inside view

Chapter 3
Theme 1: Identity

Chapter 3

Theme 1: Identity

Introduction

In this chapter the first of three main super-ordinate themes derived from the interpretative phenomenological analysis is presented, together with its four sub-themes. (See Appendix 7: List of themes). The four sub-themes in the 'identity' domain refer to different aspects of how participants define themselves as musicians.

These themes are like a natural history description in aiming to provide a rich portrayal of the breadth and complexity of the experience of being a composer. They are heuristic categories for organising the findings and it is not suggested that they represent totally discrete or independent entities. While each super-ordinate theme was characteristic of every person in the study, not every sub-theme was applicable. Each sub-theme will be considered and illustrated using verbatim quotations from interviews. In the quotations empty brackets indicate material has been omitted, and participants are referred to by pseudonyms throughout. The source of quotations is indicated by page and line reference numbers.

Following a description of the sub-themes the discussion section attempts to give a more interpretative account of the findings in the context of existing research literature and theory and then to look at the therapeutic implications that emerge. For reasons of coherence, in the discussion findings within sub-themes are grouped together. When giving a full descriptive account of the findings it made sense to analyse sub-themes further but at an interpretive level it did not.

Sub-theme 1: How I describe myself, locating myself

The first set of sub-themes is concerned with how participants classified and identified themselves in relation to other types of musician and also more specifically within the world of composers. Two important features of being a composer emerged: composing because of the kind of individual person participants saw themselves as being and at the same time seeing themselves as belonging to a community of similar musicians.

1.1.1 Musical roles

This category concerns how participants see themselves in relation to social and culturally defined musical roles, such as composer, performer, improviser and teacher. It illustrates answers to the question of how they would describe themselves as musicians.

For some participants the answer was straightforward, and the following extracts illustrate the variety of responses given.

Nigel (1.4) *I say I'm a composer of music for films and television.*

James (1.7) *Mainly a composer. I used to perform piano but don't really do so now. Bit of conducting now and then. Really I'm an educator and composer.*

Linda (1.3) *I am obviously a singer-songwriter in the traditional sense.*

Vince (1.17) *I would say I was a pianist, improviser stroke composer.*

Some people expressed reservations about actually using the word 'composer' to describe themselves because of its perceived social connotations. Colin, for instance, thought it could over-awe people or make him appear rather remote (especially since he had written symphonies).

Colin (1.38) *So I do not engage in these sorts of discussions in a sort of ordinary social basis at all, only if I am put on the spot and asked what I do.*

Dennis saw the word 'composer' as a rather pretentious term, only associated with highbrow music. As a media composer he preferred to describe himself as a craftsman, working to a high standard doing whatever was needed for the job in hand.

For Rose, aware of working in a male-dominated area calling herself a composer was an achievement only possible when her confidence grew.

Nigel and Robert both felt that to be described as a composer rather than a musician led to more attention being focussed on them which they found uncomfortable and avoided, even if was based on admiration.

Nigel (1.8) *Sometimes I actually avoid talking at all so they don't end up getting too focussed on it, but yes, there's usually quite a lot of interest.*

Others, like Robert, Robin and Rupert found pleasure in being held in high esteem.

Robert (1.23) *They usually react by saying "Wow, fantastic. I would love to be a musician" (...) but usually they are intrigued and interested in knowing how a musician lives or is or feels.*

Many described getting what they saw as stereotyped reactions from people they met, whether it was from acquaintances, neighbours, or people making comments after concerts or gigs.

Some such as David, Adam and Linda largely focussed on their own personal approach to writing music and avoided all generic labelling.

David (1.7) *I would focus on the fact that I do what I want musically rather than being involved in commercial music, for instance.*

Most participants made the point that their self-description would vary according to who asked them and the context. They generally felt more comfortable giving an account of their work to fellow musicians, whose understanding they could rely on.

Rose (17.30) *Well in our home in [name of place], our neighbours, none of them are musicians. I find it very difficult frankly.*

Ian (1.33) *It's simpler to tell them one thing, possibly the kind of thing that they want to hear, (...) Otherwise they might get a bit confused.(...) I shouldn't really have to tailor my reply to them but I have done that over the years.*

Thus these musicians display multiple identities in music. These identities not only reflect their personal experiences but also emerge within and are negotiated according to the socio-cultural context as well.

1.1.2. What type of composer

A few participants described their work in terms of genre, for instance:

Colin (1.14) *They say what kind of composer and so I say I compose classical music. That is a little bit of a simplification because I do all sorts, but that puts me in a kind of a bracket which shows I am a trained musician as opposed to a pop composer who is not trained.*

Most others found genre definitions inadequate or difficult, some because they saw their work as especially broad-based.

Alan (1.4) *I have a real interest in music as a whole, so I don't like to pigeonhole myself in one area because (...) I like basically crossing over from a lot of different styles.*

There were many comments that the variety was what was interesting and stimulating.

Susan (23.41) *The contrast. I just love it all. I like going from one thing to another.*

Dennis (1.4) *Sort of jack of all trades. I aspire to that, rather than it being a kind of second rate living.*

David (3.49) comparing himself to his peers, emphasised the breadth of his work.

Well a lot of the people I work with, I really think of them as jazz musicians, no doubt because they are improvising 80 per cent of the time. What they play is coming from them and it's not written down. Myself it's a different proportion because I spend a lot of time – well I get asked to write music for orchestral people and everything has to be written down, so I've kind of blurred the line a bit, myself.

Susan, working in some avant-garde areas and in free improvisation found humour worked as an explanation when describing her musical work

(1.5) Sometimes I say "Oh I do weird music," because everybody knows what that is. And to somebody that doesn't know what free improvised music is, "weird music" sort of makes them laugh, and it sort of gets you off the hook.

These individuals' self-identity is discussed in relation to contextual factors. Prominent among these is the social context and many participants contrasted how they see themselves and are seen by 'insiders' and by 'outsiders'. What counts as the in-group varies: sometimes it could be musicians working within another sub-genre such as improvisers who play over harmonic structures compared to those who play free. Or it could include those within a very broad area – such as people working in popular music compared to classical music. Within these groups defining features may include for instance shared stylistic conventions, or shared social or work patterns or perceived political or other beliefs, or attitudes. The outsider group could include for instance commissioners of works such as media producers, and also agents, managers and other figures in the business world of music as well as fans, aficionados or audiences.

1.1.3 Putting myself into the music

Participants saw composing music as a very personal thing. They generally drew attention to their individuality and how their chosen work as a composer had allowed them to develop and express this in various ways.

David (33.41) *I think I expect to be allowed to be myself and not necessarily because I'm a composer but I think that could be the reason.*

For Linda and many others self-presentation through the music was very important.

(1.10) *The music I write I think does come from experiences that I have. It is about the way I feel. It's just the kind of person that I am. I want to be slightly different.*

Ben (15.53) *I'm always trying to put into the music something that is coming out of me. Feelings or views. Otherwise I wouldn't. There's got to be that in it otherwise to me there's no point.*

Some participants chose to become composers in order to discover or develop themselves.

Robert (27. 54.) *That's why you have to discover your own self and discover your own ways (...) and that is perhaps where the inspiration comes from for composing.*

Alan (22.49) *I don't find work, music or any form of work musically related like this, creating, as feeling like work. I never get annoyed with it. (...) It's been self-discovery, constant self-discovery.*

Because being a composer was seen as much more than just a job, and so personal, many participants felt it left them exposed and vulnerable.

Alan (26.39) *And also the greatest things that you can write or play or whatever always come at the point when you can be naked, you can't do it with any masks on.*

Others welcomed this and put it to constructive use.

Colin (18.47) *Well actually I do see it as very important that, when people listen to my music they have absolutely no clue whatever that I was disabled at all and they would particularly think that I was very happy and had marvellous hands. So I actually go to the other side of the pendulum and I make sure (...) I am going to write to the edge of my ability here and the people who are going to play this are going to have to play it right at the edge as well.*

Several people referred to themselves as free spirits.

Colin (4.6.) *I felt like a free spirit (...) I've got these marvellous techniques which I can use to express whatever I wish.*

David saw composing as a way of controlling things, and coming from a jazz background, in particular controlling what musicians play. Likewise for Ian composing

was also a welcome release from other people's egos threatening to destroy the coherence of co-written music.

Others became over-involved in their music and felt that comments on the music reflected directly on themselves. Negative comments in particular affected them deeply and were taken as personal criticism.

James (14.39) *And I suppose it's also because there's a very personal nature to what you compose. You feel very tied to it. If somebody criticises that piece they are making a personal criticism of you.*

Nigel (23.19) *Because you put yourself on the block when you're a composer. It's your material and if you really have worked from the right place, then it really is your material and it can be knocked.*

Several participants, including a number working in the media field, were struggling to find themselves through their music. Dennis, for instance, sharply distinguished his commercial work which was straightforward, from his own compositions which involved huge problems with self-criticism

(12.35) *That critical inner voice is a big debilitating thing (...) for real creative original work. So, I'll sit down and write my own album now and think "Well, I've got to do something really special here so otherwise it's not worth the effort".*

He had been unable over many years to complete his own album but had never found finishing commercial assignments problematic.

1.1.4 Being part of a community of musicians

There were many comments on how valuable it was to feel understood by other musicians, and to share a common language. For several participants this community consisted of others who worked in similar fields of music. Nigel, in describing the experience of recording his work, referred to the scrutiny of fellow musicians as a "sibling sort of thing" (8.37). The experience of belonging to a musical community with a similar outlook and shared conventions made both the work and social interaction easier and was especially rewarding.

Dennis 13.4 *There's a wonderful brotherhood amongst musicians.*

Rupert (24.34) *Musicians are great people to socialise with. Because they've got the same outlook on life, the same relaxed attitude, they're not buttoned-up straight-laced people.*

Nigel summed up the importance of music and its centrality to life.

Nigel (20.50) *I think musicians are quite obsessed about their music, in a way. It is a language, it's a way of life.*

For the creative improvisers having and developing shared musical relationships within a well-defined group was fundamental to their identity in the music.

Vince (1.50) *I think that many of my relationships have stretched over years. I would say that quite a few of my ideas (...) have been formulated and formed by being with other people and by being influenced by other people, the way they think and breathe music.*

For David and Susan these relationships gave the music coherence and meaning.

The sense that there was a community of others who would understand and share a musical background, idiom, preference, working pattern and outlook was an important source of validation which served to confirm their identity as a member of this community.

Rose (17.10) *All musicians have a particular way of seeing the world I think. (...) I think it means that because music is usually so important to them, that they find it hard to commune with people for whom music is less important or not important at all.*

Most participants saw themselves as affiliated to more than one such grouping which might provide different kinds of support and solidarity. This is most likely because they worked in more than one musical setting or wrote music in several styles. All participants linked themselves with others whose work they admired or aspired towards. Some, such as Colin, Robin and Ben also included composers from the past, or recent past, working within a tradition that had served as role models and sources of inspiration for them.

Sub-theme 2 Why I do it

This group of sub-themes looks at the reasons people chose to become composers, and their motivation in doing so.

1. 2.1 What I want to do

All these composers had chosen their work primarily because they were drawn to it. It was seen as important, interesting, and above all satisfying in itself.

Susan (14.39) Yes. It's very fulfilling- both the playing and the composing and the improvising and composing.

Vince (16.7) I think the good thing about having been a musician is that at least I've done something I wanted to do. So therefore ultimately the reward is in the actions rather than the reward itself.

Considerations of reward, remuneration and other external motivators played a far less important role. All were led to becoming composers by having a powerful love of playing and writing music.

Rose (25.12) You have to have enough of a drive, that what you do (...) is important enough to you, it is like breathing. If you didn't do it you might just as well not be alive."

Linda (18.35) Music has always been the first thing in my life, it has always been the most important thing and nothing has come before it

For many musical talent and interest had emerged quite early in life.

Ben (15.4) It's been an ongoing interest for so long, as I say it just seems to dominate everything else that I'm interested in.

Whereas for some this had been encouraged or nurtured, others coming from backgrounds indifferent or hostile to music had had to find their route to it on their own. Several people were impelled to express and communicate the music that they heard in their inner consciousness, whereas for others the music only emerged when it was asked for or commissioned for money. Many had derived inspiration towards becoming composers from the example of other composers, living or dead, whose works had shown them the way.

Some composers, such as Ian, Ben and Adam, contrasted the personal rewards of being a composer with other jobs that they had done or others in their background or family had done such as cab driving, doing manual labour or working in a factory. Escaping from these jobs was rewarding in itself and all saw their work in music as offering fulfilment. Each of these musicians (and they were not the only ones) described their family

background as socially disadvantaged and for them music as well as being a lifelong passion, also offered a means of following their dream, becoming socially mobile and escaping their background.

1.2.2 Expression and communication

Participants seemed either to focus on the self-expressive aspects or the communicative aspects of their work and they placed widely different degrees of relative importance on these two aspects. For those who saw communication as all-important, it seemed self-evidently true. What was being communicated could vary. Sometimes it could be purely musical ideas.

David (17.13) I want to persuade people to give what can be quite detailed music a chance, and I've been amazed at how successful we've been at doing that.

Sometimes it could be simply music of beauty.

Alan (19.49) I tend to think more erm as though I am an artist and think of this great work, and creating something very beautiful, or creating something that could be dark, but there is a positive creation or sculpture, like a sound sculpture.

Others saw music as communicating ideas or values, and several participants referred to the potentially spiritual qualities that it could inspire or transmit. For these musicians, including Dennis and Alan, conveying spiritual values was something for them to aspire to, and they occasionally referred to having had their own spiritual inspiration behind particular works.

Dennis (14.9) I have a spiritual calling. I wouldn't die happy if I felt I didn't do my best to try and try and make use of those talents that were given me.

Amongst those who wrote songs or set poems there was also an awareness of how lyrics could communicate personal or political messages or ideas.

Linda (16.13) And I saw the news that he [Kurt Cobain] had died and all on my way home I was thinking about it. (...) I knew something good had been lost and I was in the bath and a song came (...) and eventually I got the guitar and wrote it and I don't know how. It was like a miracle."

While it was seen as important for their music to have an impact and to give pleasure, others of the group primarily saw writing it as a way of expressing themselves.

James (12.14) *I'm very aware that I am writing for me, but I'm hoping that there's enough of general humanity in me, warts and all, (...) that other people will latch into it and enjoy the music as well.*

Among the improvising composers reactions were mixed. While clearly self-expression through soloing was regarded as primary, communicating to the audience also mattered.

1.2.3 Wanting to get the music right

For many, creating music that was technically as well as aesthetically right was very important and various ways of judging this were used. Sometimes people evaluated their work by comparing it to the original conception or idea they had had for that particular piece, or compared it with previous works they had written that seemed relevant or similar, looking for signs of progress or development. Others looked at particular works in the context of their oeuvre as a whole. Rarely did they compare their work to that of others working in similar fields.

Robin (7.39) *You also want to have some quality in what you are doing as well, in the communication. (2.30) Everything you write should be good, and it should be the best you can produce.*

Robin referred to his works as his 'children' and like children saw himself as responsible for their faults as well as their virtues. (7.19)

You don't dislike a piece because it's um got some faults, you might like parts of it, just as you would a child. I find that very similar.

Colin was rare in the importance he attached to technical criteria.

(14.5) *I would say correcting every error is the most important thing. It's the message I got from my teacher.*

Mostly people took a wider perspective.

James (8.15) *I don't think I've written a really bad piece for some time because I've become much more aware about the creative things going on, behind writing a good piece and how I should go about writing to actually get the best thing that I can.*

Rose and a few others would rework pieces after many years in order to improve them.

(5.42) *I might come back to a piece after 20 years and rework it. And I'm finding that with my early stuff which is not that good, because technically I hadn't got the experience, so quite a lot of that I will go back and work with.*

For Vince and other improvisers what mattered were the times when things seemed to work very well.

(12.3) (...) *kind of specific moments of playing with people that really are quite magical, that do happen occasionally.*

Such moments could lead to a huge enhancement of well-being and satisfaction.

For most participants, reaching a standard of work which satisfied them was the primary objective. It was less important how others evaluated the work. Sometimes a work which was successful or received a measure of acclaim would still be seen as deficient if it did not live up to the composer's own standard.

Several people had internal standards which they regarded as perfectionist.

Linda (4.48) *I know it has gone well because of the response but it is never well enough for me.*

Colin and others deliberately set themselves challenges which stretched them to the edge of their ability, as has been seen. Robin and David referred to themselves as obsessed. Robin in fact suffered from OCD as a child, and these tendencies fed into his work.

(19.57) *The compulsion is there, in writing the music. (20.18) I've managed to channel all the obsessiveness into the creative work. It's still there but I've managed to cover it.*

Generally both perfectionism and obsessiveness were seen as positive qualities which enabled those with them to achieve more and to reach higher standards of work.

1.2.4 Being recognised, praised and rewarded

All participants appreciated and could be moved by receiving positive feedback, whether from a member of an audience, a fan who had their recordings, their peers, critics or people who commissioned work from them. Adam sums it up (10.16) *I enjoy it when they enjoy it. (...)* However a range of views were expressed on how important this feedback was and what it signified.

Several agreed with James.

(20.8) Well it's nice but any comments that people make about the work I usually take with a pinch of salt, be they good or bad. I don't rely on them. To only write when you've got a good reaction and to write for a good reaction from somebody else is not the way to go. You have to do it for yourself.

For those like Robin, Colin and David for whom communicating with listeners was important, and who wrote music that they wanted to have a broad appeal, this type of recognition mattered more.

Robin (7.36) It's just this endless feeling I want to communicate. You don't just want to please people.

David (20.24) Seeing a record in a shop that you've finished and you're happy with is a good feeling. What else? Having what I do appreciated I enjoy.

Many spoke of feeling moved emotionally themselves on witnessing others reacting positively to their music.

For those who combined performing with composing some, for instance Dennis and Ian, felt that face-to-face appreciation became less important over the course of their career

Dennis (26.44) When you go on stage and people want to come and get your autograph and want to talk to you afterwards, that in the early days was the thrill of it. But that dies off after a year or two.

Whereas others, including some of the improvisers continued to see this kind of reaction as a major reward.

The source of positive feedback and recognition mattered considerably, and being rewarded by one's peers or people seen as knowledgeable or well-informed about the music was seen as more valuable than praise from people whose judgement was seen as less reliable, or good (and this included ill-informed critics).

Rose and David amongst others pointed out that although bad reviews can have an effect and lead to reductions in the number of commissions and performances, it is necessary not to take them too personally because:

Rose (26.51) I have seen one or two critics change their opinion of me dramatically, over the same piece, so they'd write one thing one year and next time they hear it a year later it is a totally different review.

It was also acknowledged that work that was praised or successful need not necessarily be work that the composer saw as their best and that having talent was on its own no guarantee of finding recognition or success. The role of fashion, favouritism, political and other contextual factors that influence the process was acknowledged.

Artistic fulfilment was thus generally seen as more important than outward success. One of Linda's songs got to Number 1 in the pop singles charts but for her it mattered more to feel truly happy with the quality of her work. She observed that many people achieved success without having talent or producing work of merit in her world.

Linda (16.40) They were always saying to me "Oh aren't you really happy you are at Number One?" (16.37) I'm the sort of person that the work is the first thing anyway. (...) I was interested in just getting on with it.

Additionally a number of people working in musical worlds they saw as small scale such as contemporary classical music or some types of improvised music with very few aficionados considered the possibility of achieving recognition or reward beyond their immediate following as unlikely. They therefore on the whole settled for recognition on a small scale. In one or two cases, it was seen as particularly rewarding to have personal contact with these admirers.

Rose (24.36) Public recognition for a classical composer, I mean even the most famous ones are not known except within this small circle.

Colin and others emphasised the value of self-belief in helping him deal with the paradox of having recognition but very little general public exposure.

(18.17) You have to have belief. You know you've been given recognition at a national, international level, there must be something good, even though you're not getting any money to show for it.

Those working in the media largely accepted that their work was ephemeral and that they would rarely get attention (although one composer had received awards for his work) although financial remuneration was forthcoming and a major reward was being asked to do prestigious work again and again.

Rupert (20.53) When you write for the media, you don't really write it particularly in order to have your name up in lights. It's part of teamwork, basically, and I've always accepted [this].

People were divided as to whether they wanted their work to last beyond their lifetime, some seeing it as very important, others seeing it as not at all important or simply beyond their control.

Rose (12.53) I find the whole things to be such a hit and miss thing as to whether a body of work even stays around. I'd like it to stay around but that's not why I wrote it actually.

Many people had a totally pragmatic view of recognition and saw their work being recognised as having merit if they were asked to work again. Thus for many of the composers who worked to commission, this was their main reward, whether or not there was financial remuneration in it. They especially valued the enduring connections they made with commissioning performers, orchestras, producers, directors and others, such as festival directors.

James (7.55) It's also a certain amount of ego massage in that it's very nice having people wanting things from you that you can supply.

For Susan and others, this was the most important reason to compose.

(13.37) When I studied composition some of the people I studied were just writing their string quartets, you know, it doesn't matter if nobody ever plays them. I just thought I can't write like that. Int: So if it's not commissioned you are not going to write it?

S: Yeh I mean commissioned in the wide sense, I don't mean it has to be financially commissioned but in some way somebody wants it.

Robin amongst others reflected that it was hard for ordinary people who worked for money to appreciate what motivated him and other artists.

(33.36) And a lot of them, family members like that, can't see any point if it's not earning a lot of money.(...) So they want to know how much you've earned over a certain period, which is very weird to say to a composer.

Overall, despite often having financial pressures, this group of composers valued their work intrinsically enough to be prepared to cope with an irregular income as best they could.

Adam (23.8) As long as I can survive. As long as I can keep doing it.

Several composers commented that they had always acknowledged that financial rewards would not be forthcoming for their work, for example James.

(7.45) If I was expecting to earn a living on just composing in the contemporary classical field, I'd be bonkers by now. 'Cause you can't rely on it at all.

Only one person cited money as a reason for composing, and he worked in the media where the financial rewards can be good. Even so it was seen as being less important for him than being able to produce good quality work. Another composer was salaried for many years as a BBC employee and observed that many fellow composers had been very envious of his regular income, which was very rarely possible.

Sub-theme 3 The downside of doing it

This sub-theme covers what participants saw as the most significant disadvantages and drawbacks to being a composer. There is a mixture of factors here. In certain working situations composers felt they were treated with ignorance or disrespect or even discriminated against and this was deeply wounding. Sometimes they analysed the discrimination as a cultural stereotypical response rather than a reaction to them personally but this did not necessarily make it any more acceptable. For several participants working alone was very uncongenial and comparisons were made with more sociable types of work, whereas for others being collaborative was part of their working practice so the situation did not arise. For one or two people, prolonged exposure to poor treatment and lack of recognition led to a sense of alienation and marginalisation, together with some resentment. Participants generally tried to find ways of dealing with these drawbacks and ways of coping included confronting, distancing, avoiding or ignoring them. Acceptance and adjustment seemed to be the most successful way of overcoming these problems.

1.3.1 Not being treated well

Almost all participants perceived themselves to have suffered from a degree of this. It manifested itself widely and included being treated with a lack of respect, being unfairly criticised, being the object of jealousy and rivalry, falling out with people associated with work, being discriminated against and having their career otherwise blocked or partially impeded.

For Dennis, growing up in a working-class 'macho' culture in the North of England, prejudice against being seen as artistic and a man delayed his musical development.

(26.21) It wasn't done to be seen as arty, a nancy boy .(..) All the culture at the time round the pub was tough guy, rugby, beer, women, you know, (...) and you had to keep up your front. (...). And I met my friend [name](...) and he used to talk about art in the same way that another bloke would talk about a rugby

game. That was a great thing for me, never be covert about sensitive issues (...) if you were confident enough you could talk about these issues openly in a manly sort of way.

Gender stereotypes also played a part in the experiences of some of the women composers who described difficulties in working in a predominantly male-dominated field.

Rose (2.13) I am now able to appreciate when people are prejudiced and see it simply prejudice and ignore it. (...) I can go back for instance and read reviews of my early pieces where a man critic would say I was neurotic and see what that means now, whereas at the time I thought there was something wrong with my music. (13.23) I know that the way in which a woman's music is appraised is so different from the way in which a man's music is appraised. It starts off with the fact that you are a woman, even amongst close, people that you might know as colleagues. There is always that little difference. I may sound incredibly cynical. I probably am, but that allows me, I think, to work within my own little huddle if you like and that's what I do.

Linda (10.36) I think being a talented woman makes it hard. Because it's all right when you present yourself on a stereotypical level but if you try to exceed that, that's when the barriers come down. They try to put you back into your place, you know.

Several composers saw themselves as suffering from exclusion due to what they saw as institutional discrimination. Their works were not being performed as they were not members of what was described as a cosy club serving its own interests.

Colin (20.49) Elitism, conservatism, it's endemic in this country.

(21.32) A tension which is inevitably there on a daily basis for me (...) which is this sense of injustice at the highest level because you know you have been getting all these national awards, international awards and they can't play your music.

Robert (24.3) experienced being undervalued and disrespected by people who would ask him for instance to write a piece in return for a free meal and such like. Seeing this as ignorance, he initially felt very hurt and insulted but got used to it and learned to shrug it off.

David (8.42) reflected that sometimes jazz musicians in particular were prone to feeling grateful and privileged to be offered work that they really wanted and felt they deserved. They demanded and expected too little respect and reward in return, and this perpetuated

a cycle in which they were treated badly and continued to accept it. In his own work he strove to establish himself as having a greater value, someone who would not accept this lack of status. He went for better paid work, and work in more prestigious venues likely to attract a wider audience and so on.

For Nigel and others being shown a lack of respect for their professional status was especially hurtful

(22.13) I worked with this actor, a brilliant guy he was too, and a fantastic experience, but I was treated really like a minion and I was expected to turn up and just "Do this" and "Do that."

Participants working in an number of areas of music including jazz, improvised or contemporary classical worlds generally had to acknowledge that their music did not have wide appeal and many people would dislike their music. Occasionally they commented on extreme negative reactions to their work. For instance Adam describes an improvised concert

(10.31) At one time I always got heckled.(...) When I used to play with [name] he used to say; "Don't leave spaces, because somebody will shout bullshit."

More commonly people would simply walk out.

Vince (9.40) described his frustrations and sense of being marginalised through working in the area of improvised music which had a very small audience and too few opportunities to work.

Int: What's the most alienating aspect of it for you?

V: *(..) I suppose in a lot of ways not doing very much. (...). Because of the fact that somebody of my age, who has been playing music for as long as I have and somebody with the tech [sic].. the kind of ability that I've got now (...) Still not getting very much work, really, comparatively speaking.*

Robert (27.25, 23.34) who often performed his own compositions solo, felt distressed by experiencing what he saw as stereotyped reactions from members of audiences and fans. He was seen as a bohemian artist, and therefore labelled as unreliable, selfish and irresponsible. This was reinforced by comments made to him at gigs. He felt generally misunderstood, reduced to being seen as the character who appeared on stage. As a responsible family man with a life outside his work he felt diminished, and this annoyed and frustrated him. Robert dealt with the prolonged dismissive treatment he received by separating his performing self from his private self in a very conscious way and seeing

himself as a public 'brand' so that criticisms of the public performer were not taken personally.

Many people found ways of escaping from instances of poor treatment and playing was a very common way of finding solace.

Rose (18.49) *If I sit and play the piano everything disappears, the stresses and everything it completely blanks out. I am just in a world of this piece of music so that does help.*

1.3.2 Being solitary, in own inner world

Most participants acknowledged that solitude was needed for their creative work to occur. Rose (22.53) *I think being a composer is incredibly solitary.*

For a number this solitariness led to an experience of loneliness or isolation.

Vince (3.32) *Having relationships with people, I consider them to be absolutely vitally important to my sanity. (...) If I spend a lot of time up here in this studio (...) I would say that I get pretty depressed. Depression begins to sort of like bite in. (...) I'm missing the whole process of interacting with the outside world.*

Colin (14.51) *What makes it hard for me (...) the fact that one is working in isolation (...) and therefore you tend to be working on your own inner resources (...).*

Knowing that others in the past had been through what he had, helped Colin.

(29.22) *I realised through the struggles of these composers that you are not alone in these struggles.*

Ben who recently quit his job to become a full-time musician missed having work colleagues and found it hard spending a lot of time on his own.

(17.43) *Well it does drive me up the wall sometimes and when I go out sometimes I don't stop talking. (...) I have to ring people up on the phone, bother them. (...) That's just the nature of doing, learning instruments or anything like that. You've got to be the kind of person who can go into their own world, in their own little world and look inside all the time.*

Most people felt that if they managed to find practical or other ways of dealing with the loneliness solitude brought, then the benefits of being able to get the work done

outweighed the distress of the feelings. They saw the solitude as being a necessary drawback. Some participants reflected that at a time when family pressures were great, for instance when there were very young children, having an excuse to get away and be alone and do some work was a huge source of solace and reward and far from being lonely they relished the solitude. Others found solace, peace and satisfaction in having solitude to work.

Very few members of this group were isolated for all their musical activities as even if the compositional process took place in solitude often it would be followed by a performance or recording session where other people were involved.

Discussion

1.1 How I describe myself

Professional musicians' lives are intimately concerned with music and the concept of musical identity (MacDonald, Hargreaves & Miell, 2002) enables psychologists to understand this engagement "from the inside," and to explain how the process is managed. The concept of musical identities is informed by a social constructionist approach, which suggests that multiple identities are created in different localised contexts through interactions with other people, and that these identities develop and change. Language plays a key role in the construction of autobiographical narratives constructed on the basis of these interactions to make sense of them (Bruner 1990, Gergen 1994). Identities in Music (IIM) (MacDonald, Miell, & Wilson, 2005) or the identities that are socially defined within certain musical roles and categories, form reference points for professional musicians in defining and locating themselves. The present study reveals the social constructions of categories and roles that are relevant to composers, and how these influence their views of themselves.

In general these musicians confirm that they have a multifaceted sense of identity. Most see themselves as occupying several of the generic musical roles and most compose music in more than one style and this was seen as a strength or skill, and a source of self-esteem. In addition, many consciously describe themselves as negotiating ways of presenting their identity in various contexts, in order to make themselves understood or acceptable and thereby giving themselves a sense of belonging. Managing diverse identities within music was not seen generally as creating conflict as by and large the contexts in which each emerged was usually separate. Participants did not describe problems in switching from one musical context to another: in fact they generally welcomed it.

These findings confirm Cook's (1998) observation that the traditional generic roles, derived from 19th century European classical music, are a localised and constructed

product of culture and inappropriate for understanding the experience of contemporary musicians. It is also suggested that genres play a more fluid role in musical identities. It seemed to be widely accepted without question by this group that nowadays musicians have access to and can choose to work across musical sub-cultures and settings, whatever their original route or initial musical socialisation process or training. Thus, for instance, people with a classical music training worked in popular fields and those with very little formal training could compose for orchestra.

Cultural stereotyping combined with personal preference and individual differences in personality in jointly determining where individuals placed themselves with respect to musical roles and genres and how they labelled themselves.

The descriptive label 'composer' was problematised mainly where the cultural stereotypes it was perceived to evoke (for instance the rather remote highbrow, or the eccentric bohemian) appeared to generate information or connotations that were negative, misleading or unacceptable. However other prevailing stereotypes of creative artists were seen as positive, such as being labelled as a free-spirited artist, having a good imagination and being allowed to be somewhat unconventional, and were welcomed and accepted.

A secure sense of identity is regarded as intrinsic to psychological health and well-being. Two sorts of well-being have been posited (Kahneman, 1999) and both are relevant to this study: hedonic, to do with pleasure and happiness and eudaimonic, to do with self-realisation. As will be shown, many aspects of their work provide hedonic well-being and for all of them being a composer is seen as eudaimonic.

The concept of optimal identity is one way of understanding this identity security (Brewer & Roccas, 2001; Brewer, 2003). Optimal distinctiveness theory posits two independent and opposite motives: one for belonging and inclusion and another for differentiation which together regulate an individual's identity and attachment to social groups. Optimal identities satisfy both needs simultaneously. These participants can thus be seen as attempting to find the degree of distinctiveness that satisfies them and adds to their well-being within the musical settings and contexts in which they work. David, for instance, found that as a jazz musician and a composer of contemporary classical music he had complementary musical ways of creating a distinct yet secure identity. He, Adam and Linda all prioritised differentiation, whereas those who emphasised a particular genre identity prioritised belonging/inclusion. Participants were aware that their work, in allowing for a high degree of individual expression or distinctiveness, entailed high risks of being singled out for attention and criticism.

Thus a process of identity management appeared to be taking place against a background of musical sub-cultures holding diverse and sometimes contradictory conventions,

beliefs, values and attitudes. However these professional musicians presented themselves to other musicians in general as fellow members of an in-group sharing certain similarities of outlook, which were assumed, but not generally articulated or spelled out clearly.

Sawyer (2006) argues that most creativity in music in the late 20th century has been in popular music fields characterised not by solitary creators but by collaboration. Collaboration is intrinsic to creative improvising but also plays its part in the recording of notated music and the production of music for media. For it to occur, a shared understanding of the musical domain is necessary, and it is this that underlies the expressions of feeling understood and sharing a common language that participants find validating.

MacDonald and Wilson's (2005) focus group study of the musical identities of jazz musicians also found a strong in-group identification within the group, and some differences between sub-groups. In the current study creative improvisers saw themselves as belonging to different preferred sub-genres which generally did not collaborate. Despite this they saw themselves as having more in common with each other than with non-improvising musicians working in other fields. Within their sub-genres, establishing a balance between collective and individual creativity was very important. MacDonald and Wilson (2005) and Sawyer's (1992) findings that collective interaction was seen as more important than individual self-expression were confirmed. Brewer's optimal distinctiveness theory has a musical analogue here.

A range of popular stereotypes of musicians put forward by laymen including family, friends, neighbours, acquaintances, audiences, fans, critics and so on also impacted on how identity was presented. Robert, Colin, Linda and Susan adapted their presentations of themselves to members of these groups to take this into account.

The fact that identity conflicts were not generally reported despite the potential for them to occur, might be because participants were not willing to talk about them. The study was described as including composers working in a wide range of styles and settings, and that one of its aims was to encourage openness in talking about issues that could be sensitive. The researcher tried to present herself as musically open and knowledgeable and not therefore likely to be partisan or judgemental towards them. Unwillingness to reveal conflict seems unlikely because many other perhaps more personal conflicts were discussed and participants seemed able to be open about these. However it would be interesting to address more direct questions to this area in future work.

For all these professional musicians being a composer was a very salient part of their identity, it was far more than just an occupation. Thus it would be expected to relate closely to their level of self-esteem and perceived self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). High

self efficacy and a number of other aspects of self-regulation are known to correlate with greater well-being (Peterson, 1999). A number of context-sensitive general identity functions or goals have been posited, besides distinctiveness, belongingness and autonomy. Simon (2004) cites two others widely referred to in the literature: respect or esteem and understanding or meaning, both of which are clearly relevant to this group. Breakwell (1986) suggests four functions: self-esteem, distinctiveness, continuity and also self efficacy.

Ryan & Deci's (2003) self determination theory (SDT) is helpful in understanding this group. The theory looks at variations in the extent to which and the process whereby identities are assimilated to the self. They propose three basic identity functions: autonomy, relatedness and competence (which is to do with having optimal challenges, a concept similar to self-efficacy). Enhanced well-being and self-actualisation are associated with greater degrees of assimilation. They point out that some identities are adopted to avoid vulnerability (Linda perhaps) or regain power (Colin) and others may be imposed, such as existing genre stereotypes. Robert's compartmentalisation of his identities as a musician and a private person illustrate what Ryan & Deci call identification. He consciously adopts a performing identity which he keeps separate

Identities that arise from natural preferences and inclinations are most likely to be assimilated. David and Adam both saw rebellious qualities in their personalities that drew them to improvised music and for several others the inspiration and internal music had always been there.

SDT appears to imply that integration, harmony and consistency of identities is seen as a hallmark of maturity and mental well-being. This contrasts with the view that greater differentiation and flexibility is adaptive and beneficial. Simon (2004) has shown that the more complex and comprehensive the configuration of identities people have, the more pronounced their distinctiveness becomes. In tandem with this, the more opportunities or contexts there are for self-validation and satisfaction of needs and therefore, the greater a person's sense of independence and autonomy will be. This is perhaps borne out by those composers in the present study with the greatest breadth of approach.

Paradoxically, then, participation in a more complex web of social relationships and more social interdependence can lead to a greater experience of both uniqueness and individual independence.

SDT theory regards differentiation as a possible sign of fragmentation or incoherence. Some differentiation can undoubtedly lower the sense of well-being, particularly if some of the identities are seen as inauthentic, as in Robert's case. However a more

differentiated self can act as buffer against stress and many of the participants views attest to this.

Storr (1972) points to the dangers of putting too much of the self into creative work. He labels this process 'overdetermination', and argues it may lead to creative blocks.

Overdetermination is seen as compensatory process to overcome early negative experiences. Ian, his self-esteem, fragile because of feeling unloved in childhood, did experience writer's block due to self-doubt, eventually resolved by distancing and some re-evaluation. Overdetermination may also help to explain Dennis' struggles to create his 'own' music.

1.2 Why I do it

Sawyer (2006) claims that in individualist cultures like our own, there are five main functions of art: expression of the artist's inner experiences; communication of a unique vision or message; therapy or providing an outlet in art; entertainment for an audience; and enlightenment – educating or raising the spiritual awareness of an audience. All these aims are reflected in the reasons given for being a composer. However, for the present group, the overriding reason to do it is for the satisfaction it intrinsically provides both in the process of producing the music and in the contemplation of the music that results. Intrinsic motivation, arising from positive reaction to any qualities of the task itself, (rather than from sources external to the task) is itself conducive to creativity. Amabile's (1996) extensive studies suggest that intrinsic motivation is seen as a general and pervasive orientation towards work and activities, and as such has elements that are stable over months and years.

Anthony Storr (1972) draws attention to the quest for identity as an additional function of art. He sees some 'creatives' like the musicians in the present study as on a search for their own identity which is the motive force behind their creativity. For Robert, Alan and others their art is a way of discovering what they think and feel. Storr comments on the paradox that artists often have a strong ego yet no firm sense of identity. He sees them as divided selves having to live with inconsistency but having higher tolerance of it and the ability to put it to creative use.

To produce creative work also relies on thorough knowledge of the musical domain including training and preparation and a degree of hard work and effort. Participants emphasised the importance of trying to increase the standard or quality of the work judged by their personal criteria. Some saw their standards as unchanging and inflexible, while others were striving continually to improve. Dweck (2000) has shown how people who believe their personal qualities are fixed entities want to validate or demonstrate them through performance goals and called this belief an 'entity theory'. Others see them as malleable potentials ('incremental theory') and are thus more likely to work in ways

that will allow them to learn new tasks and master new skills. Everyone engages in both types of goal, but individuals characteristically prioritise one kind. Those in the current group who prioritised getting the music right all demonstrated incremental theories.

The internal standards by which the work and the self were judged had many sources. Some people's internal standards were affected by feedback from others, some relied entirely on the self. Higgins' (1987) self-discrepancy theory shows how the basis on which goals emerge affects self-belief. He distinguished two sorts of self-regulatory socialisation producing either an 'ideal self guide' (where hopes, wishes and aspirations drive the goals) and an 'ought self guide' (where duties obligations and responsibilities prevail). Thus learning goals will be met with excitement and challenge by the former and apprehension and fear by the latter. The discrepancy between the actual self-concept and the ideal/ought self affects self belief and appraisal of events as positive and negative. Thus Linda's perfectionism could be a result of her ought self-guide and leads her to doubt her abilities, whereas Colin's reaction to mistakes (due to his ideal self-guide) is to try harder to pay attention to detail.

While the primary rewards were intrinsic, other sources of validation and recognition also emerged. Most, of course, related directly to the achievement of goals set. Thus for those composing primarily to communicate, positive feedback from audiences and peers was rewarding. Amabile (1996) has shown that such synergistic extrinsic motivators or rewards that confirm a person's competence in their field can increase creativity. Likewise for those, like James and Dennis, with a strong internal ought self guide, while praise and other positive feedback could be gratifying, their own internal judgements had the most impact.

Contextualising comments from uninformed critics (in terms of the purpose and function of the comments) was generally used as a way of coping with adverse criticism, which enabled people to distance themselves from hurtful remarks and not to personalise them.

Several people, especially the improvisers, reported states of flow, or heightened awareness connected with creativity, which in themselves were fulfilling.

Overall a more complex picture emerges of what is rewarding. Rewards link with personal goals and motivation, circumstance, experiences and personality and other individual difference factors.

1.3 The downside of doing it

What emerges here is that cultural stereotypes and the different conventions within genre cultures play an important part in determining how people are treated. What is being described is very often not a personal response to an individual in a particular situation

but a discriminatory reaction to someone being treated as an exemplar of a type. This realisation can help people to deal with the situation.

So for instance composers in jazz/improvised settings reported being treated with lack of respect and low financial rewards. Audiences would be talking and not listening to their music. MacDonald and Wilson confirmed this in their 2005 study of jazz musicians in Scotland.

It has been found that women working in male dominated domains, like composing, experience lower self-efficacy (Maddux & Gosselin (2003) and may not perform to the best of their ability or be as successful. There are few positive role models, they receive less encouragement and may feel that expectations of them are further reduced because of discrimination. This is borne out by the experiences of Rose, Linda and Susan in the present study.

Halstead (1997) shows how prevalent gender discriminatory attitudes and beliefs about women classical composers have been and how they have affected their identities and self-esteem. She argues the "tradition has served to reinforce the cultural hegemony of the white middle-class male." (p.140) Women have either been ignored, only defined in terms of aspects of their 'femininity' or marginalised as a minority interest group producing generally inferior works. As a result they have felt devalued and humiliated. Since the 1980s a reassessment of their historical and contemporary contribution has been taking place. Debate about the portrayal of women composers is reflected in the diversity of views of the composers themselves, ranging from convinced feminists to convinced anti-feminists. The term 'woman composer' is seen to carry many negative connotations. The dilemma parallels the assimilationist versus separatist solutions to ethnicity discrimination.

Whiteley (2000) writing about women in popular music, highlights similar concerns: sexist attitudes and continuing male domination. She points out that women musicians seem to place more emphasis than men on expressing their individuality through their music but it is difficult for them to be accepted as themselves. Linda's experiences as a black singer songwriter bear this out.

The media composers in the group recognised the inevitability of being misunderstood by directors and others who were musically uniformed or misinformed. Many of their coping strategies to deal with this resemble the intra-psychic, interpersonal and inter-group strategies that Breakwell (1986) cites as responses to identity threats: these include reconstruing the threat by perhaps assimilating the experience, confronting the threatening person or seeking social support. In addition, general strategies of limited engagement or partial avoidance protected them from the effects of criticism and compartmentalisation worked best of all

As regards being solitary, Anthony Storr (1997) points out that intimate interpersonal relationships are often seen as the chief source of happiness yet the lives of many creative people (mainly from the past) seem to contradict this. Many did not rear families or have close personal ties. However in the present group all except one person had partners and many had children. Likewise many participants work collaboratively part of the time when performing or recording their works. Yet there could still be a sense of solitude when alone. Storr sees being alone as linked with self-discovery and self-realisation. This is confirmed by participants' comments. The capacity to be alone, he argues, depends on having secure attachment and the inability to tolerate solitude can be linked with problems in early childhood. This is certainly true of Vince. Overall, the group found pragmatic ways of balancing the advantages of getting the work done with the disadvantages of being temporarily cut off from personal ties. This contemporary group did not resemble the lonely creator described by Storr.

Therapeutically it could therefore be important to try to help clients to become aware of what could constitute for them a facilitative environment that encourages intrinsic motivation, and that provides opportunities for appropriate goal planning and setting, for the provisions of rewards and validation of each kind to occur, and for strengths to be acknowledged and supported. Other ways of fostering self-determination and self-awareness would also be relevant. A therapeutic approach informed by awareness and recognition of the key issues that have emerged from this study would be helpful.

SECTION B
Research:
Being a composer: the inside view

Chapter 4
Theme 2: The creative process

Chapter 4

Theme 2: The creative process

Introduction

The second of the three super-ordinate themes together with its sub-themes is presented here. (see Appendixes 11 to 14). This theme is concerned with the conditions which these composers find conducive and detrimental to their creativity. It looks at their working methods and how they see the process of getting started on a new work and seeing it through to completion, which may involve a performance or recording, and how they manage their interactions with other collaborators such as commissioners, performers, and directors.

The first set of sub-themes (See Appendix 11 : Theme 2 Sub-theme 1) is concerned with the creative process: what gets it going, what maintains it, how it feels from the inside. About half the group only write when commissioned by someone, the rest either relying exclusively on inspiration to start the process or having a mixture of situations getting them composing. These situations might include the need to write material for live touring or recording work with a band, doing an improvised concert, wanting to explore certain musical areas or perhaps deciding to enter a competition of some kind. Clearly inspiration also plays some part in the gestation of commissioned work.

Sub-theme 1 The working process

2. 1.1 Deciding what to do and when to do it

Those composers who wrote only to commission were most commonly invited to produce work by either performers or by media directors and producers. Those commissioned by performers took on both paid and unpaid commissions, depending on their circumstances. Being asked by performers for a number of works was a source of huge pride and they saw themselves as being chosen for their unique qualities as composers. In return they tried to showcase the performers' musical strengths and individuality.

Those commissioned by directors and producers included people writing for theatre, dance, television, radio and film. Commissions also came from people running festivals, other organisations including political ones, advertising agencies, music publishers, or poets wanting works to be set.

Several participants liked both to work to commission, and also when stimulated by their own inner music or musical ideas. Among the latter were some of the improvisers whose creative process normally took place in a performing situation. They might perhaps be said to be commissioned in the sense that frequently it was people familiar with their

work that invited them to play and offered them work. In addition, in setting up playing situations with different types of instrumentalists and with players coming from a number of different musical traditions or styles, it was possible for innovative improvising situations to be created.

Some found that they had endless ideas to get them going, others struggled to find any or to find acceptable ones of a suitable quality. Some people were accompanied by their own inner music much of the time.

Robin (27.14) Well I don't think that family and friends realise it's going on in your head all the time, and that you might be having a meal or talking to people and something's working itself out in your head, that you're planning to do. It's going on at the time you're actually talking or travelling.

Linda (5.11) I recognise that it's a skill that I have developed. (...) Some of it does happen like a kind of channel thing and I can recognise those moments. I know when to pick it up, you know. I know when to pick up a pen.

Several people, including Alan, described working with and without initial inspiration (3.20).

There isn't any particular way that I'd start, to be honest with you, but what I'd say is what makes it easier is being inspired, because if you are inspired, and you can hear something in your head, then it acts as a catalyst (...) and you could write something in 15 minutes which might take you 5 hours if you are not in the mood to write it.

Inspiration could come in many ways. For some people certain places, or feelings, or moods, or situations, objects or people could reliably trigger it, while for others it was unpredictable. These reliable triggers could often be quite banal or everyday circumstances: sometimes these were external - for instance being at a certain traffic lights on a regular car journey and sometimes they were internal - like being in a certain mood. Unpredictable triggers could include almost anything from artwork to landscapes to conversations, to physical activities. Sometimes the origin of inspiration was quite mysterious and difficult to pin down.

Rose (21.35) Everything that you feel is going to affect everything that you do, whether it's writing words or music or anything else.

For Rose, ideas for music came from a wide number of sources and many sources were hard to pin down.

When it struck then getting the music down was imperative, whether onto manuscript, a Dictaphone, a computer, tape or an instrument. Frequently what was inspiring was a specific musical idea of some kind, or a musical form that the composer wished to work with or had been thinking about. Several composers were stimulated by listening to others' music: it gave them ideas which they could develop. One or two people were concerned that they would inadvertently copy from others, especially when writing within well-defined musical styles.

A number of people described a situation where simply being asked to produce something would result in it emerging right away, often in quite a well-developed form.

Rupert (6.43) I'd go and talk to a producer in their office, and they'd talk about what they wanted from the music (...) And I always used to say that by the time I'd left their room and I was walking down the corridor I was already humming a tune. (...) It was really exciting to think that I was going to be present at the birth of a piece of music that nobody had ever heard before.

2. 1.2 Getting started

This sub-theme looks at how participants approach the earliest stages of creating a new work.

Being clear about the purpose of each work appeared important to participants.

James (2.39) With any new piece that I've got to write I've got to find out why I've got to write it. If I don't really know why I am doing it, then I won't write it very well.

Ben (6.16) I might tend to think first of all, what is the point of this song? What is the message of this song going to be?

Most people, like Rose (4.56) did not have a specific 'game plan' for composing.

Dennis (20.41) There's a kind of creativity that doesn't strike at the period when you sit at the piano and say "Well, I'm going to write". It has a rhythm of its own, it's like the flow of life and the universe and the stars, it's got its own flow and you've got to be there to find it when it comes really.

Robin had learned to use his inspiration when he needed it. (29.13)

I suppose some people would want to dash off and write something at the moment they're having it, whereas I've learned to just keep it in abeyance until I want to use it. Things work themselves out.

A number of people found inspiration and got ideas from a process of playful improvisation, usually on an instrument, often a favourite instrument, but sometimes using sampled sounds.

Nigel (2.3) I tend to write very fast. I view it rather like throwing paint at a wall, to see what it looks like. A lot of it's improvisation and I think the composition gets more into it when I have to start fitting into the film and making a structure. (2.13) Other projects I'm working on one at the moment, being completely experimental so I'm throwing everything out of the window and just seeing what ideas I can come up with.

For others this idea-generating improvisation is more focussed, if not less playful.

Colin (7.28) I think I've a pattern of thinking when I am improvising. (...) I think I set a priority, as I sit down there I say, I am going to work out, I am going to explore certain intervallic relationships. I actually say so. I am not trying to do something that is dreamy and romantic. (7.51) It would tend to start off melodically and would tend to be something that either I'd explore on the keyboard now or I'd remembered from a while ago...

Sometimes initial ideas have to be compromised.

Rupert (5.37) It always used to be difficult writing for the media because quite often a programme has got to go out on a certain day because it's in the schedules. (...) And it does mean that from time to time you can't be as, it's not so much thorough, that you can't be as comprehensive as you wanted to be in the way that you write. (...) If you can't handle those pressures you're in the wrong job.

On the other hand sometimes an uncompromising attitude works well.

Colin (16.39) The fact that I've lost, can't use my hands since 1985, it's only made me more annoyed rather than anything else. It just stirred me into action. I said, "Right. Just for that I shall write a piano concerto.

(16.48) *The fact that I can't be a concert pianist any more, just for that I shall write a very difficult concert piano work."*

Colin also aimed to write music full of joie de vivre which he saw as countering the image of a disabled person.

Everyone reacted strongly to having a deadline. This was generally seen as helping people to get down to work, to focus and concentrate better and to be productive. Many described working harder and harder the closer the deadline approached. Deadlines were often seen as incentives to get more work taken on and completed and there were only one or two instances described where a deadline was not met, usually in exceptional circumstances.

Several people emphasised how having a deadline helped them fight a tendency to procrastinate.

Robert (6.53) *I have to give myself a deadline because otherwise you know I keep saying to myself "Oh I have got to do this" and it never happens in a sense.*

Colin (9.55) *I think deadlines are OK if you have a short, small project to do, which is realisable and which is focussed and which is fine, but if you have got quite an expansive kind of project in which in a sense there is no particular limit and which you obviously want to give to yourself, you want to do a major work, then I think you should be given time. I would have thought with a concerto you normally would be given time to accomplish it.*

His comment highlights the difference between self-imposed deadlines and those dictated from outside.

A number of people, such as James (3.46), described spending proportionally more time on the beginning of a piece in getting the idea right, honing it down. If it was commissioned by a performer there might often be discussion about the piece and the composers would try to use certain qualities of their playing, while not compromising their own style.

Rose (6.37) *At the beginning of the piece I generally need more time to contemplate. (5.28) Sometimes I get ideas I can't work with, and so I have to throw them out, and sometimes it takes a long time to realise that the idea is not a good idea and I should start again.*

David describes the process of preparing to work as one of building up momentum, as the deadline approaches. Then like several others, he describes a process of finding the key which unlocks the whole piece.

(14.8) I think once you reach the stage when it's an unstoppable force then it's very enjoyable because it's (...) great to be creative (...). You suddenly see the light and how you're gonna make something happen that the day before you had no idea what it was going to be. But suddenly there's a kind of understanding of something musical that is quite hard to put into words (...) where you think 'Ah this is the key to the whole piece in a way.

Robin (1.28) It's like a dynamo going, I find. It starts very slowly then increases until it is going very fast then it winds down slowly again. Just like a dynamo.

For the improvising creators there were different views on setting up optimal playing situations. Some, like Vince, held the view that having long-term musical collaboration and the chance to develop a shared musical language enhanced creativity, while others, like Adam, believed that to keep the music fresh it was necessary to stop playing with the same people once this familiarity developed. Instead, they preferred to work in a number of ad hoc playing situations including some with people who had little experience of improvising. Susan spoke of the unspoken conventions that existed in even free improvising situations, such as avoiding playing tunes and how these could sometimes act as constraints on her playing. David spoke of the coherence and flow of ideas that is found in the best jazz.

2. 1.3 Keeping going

This theme looks at how participants, once a new work has been started, develop and extend their initial ideas.

As well as having enough good musical ideas, the necessity for hard work and effort and perseverance was widely acknowledged.

Rose (26.4) It's just very hard, it takes such a huge amount of effort and enthusiasm and all of those things and if you don't have enough of it you are not going to keep doing it for your whole life and to do it for your whole life is a major undertaking, I think.

Putting in the work was sometimes a matter of following one's inclination

Robin (1.34) *I do dream things and I've written things down after dreaming them at night sometimes. But it is a bit like a dream state, when you're composing.*

Like others who rely on inspiration Linda liked to work when she felt like it most.

Linda (5.25) *It's just I don't want to stop the flow if there is something flowing. I don't want interruption, that's all.*

Linda and others also felt that forcing the creative process did not work.

(5.41) *If I try and force myself to do something then sometimes you might find you might come up against a block because you are trying too hard, that if I leave a space it just actually just comes naturally, very naturally.*

Many participants saw the working process as combining conscious and unconscious aspects, which were regarded as equally valuable.

James (5.25) *You do need the intellectual side, the conscious intellect looking at it and thinking about it, but your unconscious is doing a lot as well, so you've got to give that space just to happen.*

Nigel (16.8) *There's a well of it that is just there and it runs through people and it runs through their unconscious (...) and if you don't interfere too much I think you get some very original and creative ideas. If you spend too much time fiddling and worrying and interfering with it it all sounds a bit premeditated and it loses its kind of spontaneity.(...) I think a lot of it's to do with writing very fast so I don't have time to think.*

Others adopted a very matter-of-fact approach, describing the process of working on their compositions in terms of getting on with it, putting in hard work persevering and so on and carrying on until the work was finished.

Colin (8.31) *When I'm actually writing a score it becomes clear to me what the process of development is, only on the paper. It's not in my head, it's on the paper. I see it actually coming out of the paper, almost coming up out of the paper. (...) So a lot happens on paper which, the actual development of these ideas comes through.*

Several people described a process where changing perspective helped them to evaluate ongoing work.

Alan (7.44) *You're able to appreciate the whole thing. Panoramic vision, so there is a constant play between the single moments and (...) then re-listening to the whole thing because you get a sense of perspective and structure and hierarchy. In the same way a painter would constantly stand way back from the painting to get a larger perspective.*

For improvisers it was extremely important to be able to concentrate fully, which Adam described in this way. (14.11) *It's a sort of highly conscious thing. Hyperconscious. But it's got to be reactive.* For him, feeling good physically and feeling he was playing well technically helped him to do this.

For Susan this reactivity or what Vince called 'hypersensitivity' had a conscious as well as an unconscious side

(22.40) *There's these two things that are going on. There's being involved and there's the observer. And the observer is aware of quite a lot of possibilities. It's a bit like playing chess really. It's like you might make the same move every time you start. You make the same move but the game is different,*

2.1.4 Knowing when to stop

This sub-theme covers how participants finish a new work and how and when they decide to stop working on it.

For some participants, especially those with more years of experience, this was unproblematic, in the sense that once they reached the end of the piece it was time to stop. For others there was a temptation to tinker.

Nigel (15.7) *I tend to think that things could always be better, but actually the time limit is there, and thank God for it, otherwise I would just keep going!*

Robert (6.41) *I think it is good to have deadlines to actually stop you going on and on and not getting anywhere at all.*

This was a view several people held.

James (14.17) *So I'm very aware that eventually, if I keep away at it, keep chipping away, it'll get there. (...) And there is a point where (...) just tinkering around the edges is a kind of diminishing returns. You can tinker with a piece and it'll improve for a bit, but then the more you tinker with it, the less it'll*

improve. If it's really not working, you've actually got to go back and rethink the whole thing from the beginning.

Linda (3.20) *I was writing and it just wouldn't stop. I didn't know where to stop it and you know I was told you need to condense it down and tell the story within that amount of time (...) and so I just started doing it.*

Dennis and others learned ways of accepting it was time to stop, (10.22)

I deal with it by something balancing within myself, something balances and you know it's right, and it's going to be right for ever.

Sub-theme 2 What enables me to do it

This sub-theme looks at the environmental conditions that were found conducive to working, the working patterns that are evolved and how these composers took control and responsibility for their work. Details of the analysis are in Appendices 11 – 14.

2.2.1 Congenial working conditions

There was considerable agreement among the group about what mattered. Freedom to work, having free time and a suitable working environment, away from distractions and interruptions like the telephone, doorbells, post and noise in particular were all very important.

While one or two people prided themselves on being adaptable and able to work in many different kinds of physical environment, for most it was important to have a congenial and stable physical working environment. What this consisted of varied enormously. Some people had a dedicated home studio, either in their house or flat or in a couple of cases in a hut at the end of the garden. Some studios were full of the latest electronic technology. Those composing for the media in particular needed to keep up to date with the latest technology for their work. In other studios there were instruments, recording equipment, or just a pen and manuscript paper. Several people especially valued having a favourite instrument, often a keyboard or guitar to work with, and having access to a palette of sampled and electronic sounds.

Some people worked in a living room or study or found another suitable corner, like at the kitchen table. Preferences for expressed for certain other environmental features that suited individuals, whether it was a library, contemporary or old buildings, having white walls, being surrounded by colour, having familiar objects around, having a certain view and so on. For some, whether they were in a rural or an urban environment mattered greatly. Often finding the optimal working conditions took years of experience and some

experimentation. Some people were still experimenting. All felt that having such conditions had a hugely beneficial effect on their creativity.

A number of people commented on how innovations in technology had made aspects of their work much easier and had saved them much time and money. For instance, instead of paying a copyist or writing out parts themselves, computer software would now do the job fast and accurately. People used a variety of computer software systems including Protools, Cubase, Logic, and Sibelius, which printed out parts and notated music and a range of recording software and technology. Several like Colin used this technology to self-publish and make their own CDs.

Colin (5.48) The thing that has actually revolutionised my whole way of working is to have access to electronic media.(6.2) The second thing is the computer technology which has enabled me to publish music for the first time.

For the improvising musicians, congenial conditions often meant having an appreciative audience present, as well as stimulating people to play with. Trying to be free of technical problems with equipment and having a good sound balance were also very important.

Vince (8.28) When you improvise you've got to be able to hear what everybody else is doing, and so if somebody is really loud and somebody is really quiet, it means that your own kind of picture of the music is very distorted, somehow and sort of unreal and it makes life difficult.

2.2.2 A working pattern

Given certain working conditions, this sub-theme looks at the patterns of work participants follow, if any.

Most participants saw the value of having an individual pattern of work. This pattern usually took a while to evolve.

Robert: (5.7) I do have a pattern, at least when I can, but I think you have to be incredibly disciplined as well. (...) It's a bit of a kind of paradox in a sense because even though you have, you want absolute freedom you have to have a routine (...) but it has to be your own routine on your own terms.

A few of the group dedicated themselves solely to composing, and the majority had a favourite time of day to work: for some it was during the night, for others, early in the morning. Usually this time was most congenial because it gave them peace and quiet. In particular there was an absence of distracting noise, people and activity.

Robert (11.33) *That's why I usually stay up until 4 in the morning or whatever because that is the only time when I am not bothered by noise, light, you know, dustbin guys outside or whatever, it's just nothing, it's just you and space.*

Robin (6.33) *I like getting up about 2 or 3 in the morning and working through to 6 then going back to bed and sleeping again.(..) I like the idea of working when other people are asleep.*

The pattern of work adopted was a very individual matter, as was the way people dealt with fatigue, distractions and creative impasses. Some people would work in small chunks of time while others continued until they achieved a desired end point. Some people would go for a walk or make calls to friends while working, others would cut themselves off and stay in their room. It was not possible to generalise except to note that each person saw the need to find a way that suited them in their particular circumstances.

People involved in teaching looked to the holidays for the time and the opportunity to compose. Trying to make time or find time was often difficult for those with young families fitting in their composing work with family activities such as picking up the kids from school. Three participants: Robert, James and David had young babies and many others had grown up families and had had to try and fit their work around them in the past. Others in the group with especially heavy schedules of teaching or playing had to try to use every little gap to do some composition. This could be difficult to manage and others had to rely on finding long uninterrupted periods to do useful work.

2.2.3 A sense of control

Most people emphasised the importance of getting or taking control of their work. There are two aspects to this: one is actively being responsible or in charge of the working process and the other is having a sense of being in control of the self and others and the working process. Undoubtedly the former would give rise to the latter but it was also common for the latter to be an end in itself. This sub-theme is concerned with participants' sense of control.

For Alan and others the first aspect involved being in overall charge, making all the decisions.

Alan (24.35).

Int: So you like to have overall control over the work that you do?

Yes, they have got to be my vision. Yes (...) I like the idea that everything would be set up (...) where people would be clear about not only what was expected of them but also what they would expect from each other so also roles would be much more clarified.

Rupert (10.36) *As far as the actual process, the more I worked the more I realised that I had to keep control of everything, not just the writing of it, but taking it along to the dub, making sure that at the film dub or the video dub it was at the right level.*

Alan and Rupert and others regarded themselves as perfectionists and this trait helped them to take control and to create better music.

For David, being in charge gave him a powerful sense of control (26.47)

I like rehearsing that band because I quite like being in charge of something that powerful musically and being able to play around with it and mould it. But also I quite like the diplomatic side of rehearsing as well.

For Colin being in charge and having control was very important and included not only the compositional process but also producing the music.

(20.4) *I make sure that I am in control. I have my own designs and my own production, best artists and the interpretation of the work is done the way I want it.*

Having a sense of control served many functions. It made it easier for people to manage their work.

Rupert (12.51) *Well there was a certain amount of discipline I had to keep with myself. (...) The good thing about the [name of organisation] was that there was this self-scheduling element which meant that if there was some sort of school thing or some family emergency that I had to deal with, (...) I could do it.*

A sense of control helped Dennis act in a more self-confident way. Dennis (24.23) *I try to control a situation by being as efficient as possible. I've always been too nice. (...) So you come across as ineffective.* He described being passed over for work because he was not seen as forceful enough, not having enough self-assurance.

For Ian, setting his own goals is an important aspect of feeling in control

(8.1) *Since I've been working on my own a lot, and been in control. I used to think I was employed, whereas now I feel self-employed. (The sense of control) is quite important now, but only because I've realised how much time I used to waste when I wasn't in control.*

Sub theme 3: Dealing with external pressures and distractions

In this sub-theme the everyday pressures and difficulties that these composers experienced in connection with doing their work are described. (See Appendix 13: Theme 2, Sub-theme 3). They include practical problems to do with faulty equipment and technology, handling particular working relationships and how they manage to deal with the irregularities in the flow of work and income.

2.3.1 Fluctuations in the flow of work

The most common pressure experienced was to do with not having enough or having too much work. Several of the group, who had other paid musical work which earned them their living, expressed the desire to be able to do more composing. However others freed from such pressures did not necessarily become more productive. Robin, for instance, had retired from his academic post. He found that, referring to his inspiration, (28.54) *The funny thing is it's least active when you've the most time and the most time to yourself.* Other people expressed the fear that this might happen to them if the time pressures were taken away. David (15.29) wondered whether if he had free time by the seaside just to work at a piece of music, he might find there was nothing to write about.

Several people spoke of how having different musical activities like playing and teaching and working in different musical settings fed positively into their composing.

James (17.22) *Just being a composer would be a very ivory-towered existence, where I think you could very easily stop kind of connecting with other people. (17.14) I sometimes feel wouldn't it be wonderful to just lock myself away and go and composer for days on end. (...) But on the other hand half of me also thinks that I wouldn't. I don't think it would work for me. I actually need all the other things that I do to feed into it*

A personal balance needs to be found somewhere between not having enough time and having too much, and between doing other things which could detract from the composing as well as those that feed into it.

Managing an irregular income ('feast or famine') had been a difficulty for many participants but was one which they expected, and they accepted it by and large. People found their own ways of dealing with it. One way was to do as much work as possible

and several people adopted this approach. Several participants had prospered from doing their music, often after years of hard work, and they generally considered themselves to be fortunate as they saw the achievement of success as a very uncertain thing.

David (21.3) *I think I've managed it myself by always being in work and always taking on as much as I could, to the very limit. Which isn't because I was worried about money. (...) If I'd been relaxed about everything I would have said "I want to do all of these things from an artistic point of view. However I've only got time to do two thirds of them, so I'll drop these." But on this occasion I said "Well I'll take them all on and I'll just work a bit harder."* (22.21) *Actually at the end of the period of time I was happy that I'd sorted out the financial thing and also I looked at all the music and thought: Great, I've got more than I thought I would be able to.*

Rupert (11.22) *My problem was I was always excited when a job came in and I rarely turned jobs down because I was busy. And quite often I used to take on too much. Perhaps. Although I never became ill or anything like that. I used to work quite hard but I used to find it exhilarating.*

Another way of dealing with an irregular income, which many of the younger participants adopted, was to try and build a portfolio career that included a number of activities that each generated sources of income. Alan, for instance wrote music for media, classical pieces and dance music. Susan wrote for media as well as doing avant-garde and improvised work.

Others, ie. the majority, accepted that they would not necessarily earn a living from their compositions. Robin (10.50) *I've got used to not having any [financial reward] really. It's lucky if it comes along.*

2.3.2 Problems with technology and equipment

Most participants had had some difficulties of this kind to report which had frustrated them in their work. For those working in media it appeared to be particularly frustrating, as they often worked to tight schedules. A common problem for them was getting the volume levels right during recordings, so that the music balanced properly. Another common problem they had was not being given a budget which was adequate for the job – for instance needing a full orchestra for a film score and only having a budget which covered a few players.

For other composers there were problems associated with not having the right equipment or not being able to afford good quality equipment and having to compromise on sound.

Sometimes it was a question of finding a way of producing a particular sound. Some of the group used samples, others created sounds themselves.

For the improvisers, problems with their instruments, especially pianos, with balance or equipment could be so distracting as to spoil a performing situation. Another major problem was taking equipment around, or on tour, and having to adapt to unfamiliar systems.

Everyone who used computers expressed frustration at having to deal with hardware and software problems often on a daily basis.

People found a number of ways of coping with these practical difficulties. The commonest was acceptance that glitches happen, together with action to get the problem dealt with. Some people reacted less constructively and remained deeply frustrated when these difficulties occurred. Sometimes there were no solutions possible and some participants found themselves unable to work or unable to play as a result.

Sub-theme 4 Working collaboratively with others

This theme looks at how these composers work on their music in conjunction with others, including performers who may have commissioned works or who are simply performing them, directors, producers and managers and agents who also play a part in the genesis of a new work. (The themes table is in Appendix 14)

2.4.1 Performers

Many of the group expressed huge admiration and respect for certain performers and felt privileged and happy to work with them. Often collaborators would become friends, and the closeness this brought was seen to have beneficial effects on the music. Nonetheless there were times when most of the group found themselves working with or being commissioned by someone they felt less affinity with or did not like at all. Different views were expressed about the importance of getting on well with musical collaborators. In general it was felt that it was possible to produce satisfactory music with people they did not get on well with but it was much easier to work with friends.

Linda (8.55) I'd have to get on with them as people as well because it is too intimate. When you are playing together you kind of have an invisible link and if there is bad energy between you, it won't necessarily affect the music but it will affect your performance or the way you're feeling.

Robert (17.11) And the reason I am with them is (...) these guys are not only totally reliable which is the first and most important thing, is they are good friends, nice people.

Susan (24.27) I think people work with people, people ask people to work with them because they feel comfortable with them. And I think that's an overriding reason people ask me to work with them.

Rose: (6.24) No I wrote the piece but it never proved to be a very good piece and I just did it. I doggedly did it, but I didn't have the inspiration to write it that I would have with a performer I wanted to give it to.

Among the problems people mentioned having with collaborators were: unreliability, and unavailability, problems in getting people of the right calibre or standard or with the right experience. As a result, many of these composers had decided to collect around them a group of musicians whose work and presence they valued and who gave something special back to their music. Others at earlier stages in their career were still struggling to find the right people with whom to develop lasting relationships.

There were also problems with rivalry, competitiveness, jealousy and egotism. Once or twice people found others ready to plagiarise their work or to try to impose their own stamp on it. Many saw their world as very competitive and some developed habits of secrecy about work in progress as a result.

The improvising musicians had mixed views on the need to get on well with collaborators and some felt that a certain friction could lend a dynamic to the music that could be very constructive.

2.4.2 Directors and producers

For people working in the media problems with directors and producers loomed large, to the extent that their relationship with them could hugely affect the outcome. Rupert always saw himself as part of a team (20.53)

When you write for media (...) it's part of teamwork, basically and I've always accepted this, that if you are writing music for a television programme, there's a director involved, a cameraman, a lighting man, sound mixer, actors perhaps.

While composing for the media is very much about providing music that complements the film, programme, play or whatever, many directors insisted on telling the composer what to do and their ideas could be musically unsuitable or unrealisable. Working with a musically informed or easy-going director or producer could make the composer's task very straightforward and pleasurable. However, many people described encounters with musically uninformed directors and producers. Rupert's experience is fairly typical (7.55)

A producer said "(...) Two people are going to be arguing about something. (...) Repartee is going to be flying to and fro so I want music with lots of sharps in it." So I swallowed my smirk and said I'll put lots of sharps in it. (...) I showed him the score with lots of sharps in it and he loved it, only because there were sharps in it I suspect. (...) That's where a lot of diplomacy comes in.

Occasionally the composer could find himself drawn into disagreements between third parties.

Rupert (7.16) again. Quite often you become ammunition in some sort of battle between the director and the film editor or the director and his producer and that's a really nasty feeling.

Another difficulty is having to balance what is wanted with what works musically

Nigel (4.39) I do try to find out what they want and work to their preference, but sometimes (...) I just feel that what they want is not going to work (...) musically. Nigel's solution was: (5.7) Oh I have to compromise, yes. They're paying me to produce what they want so I give them what they want and I try to do it as well as I possibly can.

Dealing with these pressures often involves trying not taking things to heart, and maintaining professional boundaries.

Susan (11.6) I'm quite good at handing people yards of music and saying "You can use as much or as little as you want" and they usually they end up doing something that I think "Couldn't you hear? The best bit was just after that bit." (...) I just kick myself. I just think that was silly of me to say it's fine. And so I just live with it because I'm the one that said it was fine.

Most were stoical and saw acceptance as the only solution.

Rupert (8.28) How do I live with it? Well as far as I'm concerned it's on to the next one, although it leaves a nasty taste in the mouth for a while. (9.50) Your music is not your little baby that must not be disturbed. The music is just a job and you've got to do it.

Others distanced themselves, for instance

Susan (16.45) *They were paying me to do a job (...) and if you sort of absent yourself from it in a way. You just sort of think Oh right, I thought this was a composing job but actually it's not, it's a pastiche job." (/...) You just distance yourself.*

Ian developed writer's block for several months due to a misunderstanding with the company that gave him a lot of work.

(21.37) *I was also then given work that I found difficult. But then I might not have found it difficult. It was to do music for comedy (...) Now I just think it's a laugh. At the time it seemed like the end of the world to me. That's it, it's all over, you know. But in fact the reason they were asking me is 'cause comedy is one of the most used products. All around the world people want comedic sounding media. So they were in fact doing me a favour and I thought this was them just getting rid of me.*

Instead of communicating with the company about the commission, he got upset, withdrew, lost his confidence and suffered writer's block. After a while he was able to re-evaluate the meaning of the experience and come to terms with it, and he became able to work once more.

2.4.3 Managers and Agents

A few members of the group had managers or agents or both. For some, like David, it took the pressure off organising and finding work and negotiating fees and offered a way of being able to concentrate on the artistic side of things. However there were stories of money earned not being paid over and work not being forthcoming, and other problems.

For some composers working in popular music genres, having a manager was seen as the only way to get prestigious gigs, good recording contracts and good distribution. However for some, it led to arguments, misunderstandings and a feeling of being exploited as a commodity.

Linda (14.38) *It wasn't that things were put upon me, it was just that I didn't understand the whole goddam thing. I was just out to make some music. I didn't know all that stuff went with it. (...) It was a bloody shock!(17.31) If you want to have success, then you have to go through that whole thing, but it's not necessarily wanting to be a part of that thing.*

Despite having considerable pop chart success Linda became disillusioned and decided to cut herself off from the mainstream and make her own way via a small independent

label, where she had more control She managed to recover her self-belief using self-help materials. (13.30)

Discussion

In this section, sub-themes are again grouped together as it make more sense in terms of communalities and divergencies within participants' accounts to give an interpretation at that level.

Introduction

Participants in this study of creative musicians, whatever the particular musical domains they occupy, see themselves as embedded in a socio-cultural nexus which affects their day to day working process in many direct and indirect ways.

Until the 1980s, psychologists studying creativity concentrated on individuals seen in isolation, usually exceptionally gifted, and working in the most prestigious art forms in the prevailing culture only. Amabile (1983, 1996) and Csikszentmihalyi (1996, 1999) introduced a broader, consensual, systemic definition of creativity, which informs this study. According to this approach, what is accepted, valued and disseminated is the result of agreement by experts or intermediaries, the field, who act as gatekeepers within a domain, which is thus situated socially, culturally and historically.

The field for these participants includes teachers, managers, directors, music publishing companies, the recording industry, critics and the music press, and peers such as conductors, fellow composers and performers. These may vary in expertise, status and power and especially when their power exceeds their expertise conflicts and difficulties can be created for the composer, several of which are reported here.

The domain includes the created musical works recognised as original or novel, and as having value, that have been accepted into the domain: for instance contemporary classical works that have been performed or commissioned, pop singles or albums that go into the pop charts, musicians who have an oeuvre of recorded or published works, and jazz musicians who perform regularly together. It also encompasses all the conventions members share, like notations, languages, symbols, rules, codes and etiquettes.

Thus creativity is a process which links individuals, domains and fields.

Not only is participants' identity defined relative to the domain and field, but the fate of creative work is determined likewise.

2.1 The working process

Csikszentmihalyi (1999) and others, including Runco (1994), find it useful to distinguish between creative achievements based on problem solving and those based on problem finding or definition. Characterisations of the stages of the creative process usually start with recognising or defining a problem (e.g. Wallas, 1926; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975) and for participants, the creative process often began with playful explorations within a particular musical area. Inspiration could help focus and direct these explorations, as could commissions. In fact the differences between having an entirely free choice of what music to compose and being asked, say, to write using a particular musical form for a particular instrument, or, say to produce a score for a film were matters of degree. Within each context opportunities for exploration often involving improvisation were identified and taken. Many composers in the group saw this as an important way of finding and developing useful ideas.

Amabile, Phillips & Collins (1994), in one of series of studies on artists linking motivation, reward and creativity, found that commissioned works could be judged as less creative than non-commissioned work largely due to degree of perceived constraint felt by the artist as to how the work was to be done. This helps explain perhaps the compromises that many media composers reported, such as Rupert and Nigel, which affected their degree of satisfaction with their work. Yet such challenge can itself act as an intrinsic motivator, especially in the media situation where getting work is highly competitive and for the few the rewards can be great. For others, being given a specific brief to follow could offer opportunities to develop their expertise. Win-lose competition on the other hand, along with expected negative evaluation of ideas by the field as well as financial and other constraints, can generally undermine creativity (Amabile, 1996). This again is borne out by the experiences of composers for media and classical composers like James, Colin and Alan who had entered competitions.

Inspiration has traditionally been seen as facilitating creativity and many creator biographies and autobiographies attest to this. Studies of the role of inspiration in composing by psychologists are rare. Sloboda (1985) discussing classical composers writing about their compositional process quotes instances of inspiration. He sees this as corresponding to the appearance of a skeletal idea or artist's sketch in consciousness which is then subject to more conscious and deliberate extension and transformation, using previously acquired skills and rules to build on. As has been confirmed by this study, Sloboda concluded that it was hard for composers to articulate where it came from and how they developed it. He linked inspiration with the occurrence of solution generating cognitive processes, whereby composers used heuristic strategies to produce possible ways of developing and completing the musical work.

This approach was developed by Boden (2004), who refers to inspiration as a popular 'theory', seeing it as intrinsically mysterious. She questioned the value of introspective reports and memories of creative episodes, since they are structured by preconceptions (including of course the individual's own theories about their creative process) and she has shown how normal memory processes and ordinary abilities can give a plausible account of inspiration and incubation. Often insight consists of many small steps, which often can be related back to the material being consciously worked on. This process is described in the present study.

Jonathan Harvey (1999), himself a composer, researched inspiration in music in classical composers since the eighteenth century. He offers a description which accords very well with the experiences of the present group. Inspiration is seen as unmistakable but hard to describe. It is used to suggest greatness, profundity, innovation (with connotations of divine inspiration resulting in the revelation of truths). It mysteriously arises and is associated with suddenness and unexpectedness. Some participants like Robin, Linda and Andrew show their inspiration great respect and deference while others like Nigel, Colin, Dennis and Rupert have a more matter of fact attitude, seeing it as a normal part of the creative process.

Harvey's findings therefore accord with the present study, in that participants experienced it in different ways, and had different models and accounts of it. He found it can have myriad sources, arising from a wide range of situations and experiences. He points out that many composers have found it hard to convert their initial vision into the finished work. Yet many also see that the technical work they put into the craft of composition can stimulate inspiration. Certainly the present study confirms that inspiration can play a part in all types of musical creativity, but also demonstrates the importance of conscious processes. A recent anthology of interview quotations from American contemporary composers (McCutchan, 1999) contains many illustrations of the conscious and unconscious aspects of the creative process.

Generic stage models of the creative process (e.g. Wallas, 1926; Sawyer, 2006), have conceptualised it as having four or five steps: the first, preparation deals with finding, recognising or refining the problem; the second often called incubation is where the creator immerses him or herself in the material which is internally elaborated and organised; the third, insight, is where subjectively the idea or 'eureka' moment of clarity occurs which enables the work to progress. The fourth stage is verification, divided into two sub-stages: the first where insight is evaluated and the second where the work is elaborated into its complete and final form. These stages clearly rely on the creator receiving feedback on how progress relates to goals, and establishing an optimal level of challenge.

As far as general stages in the creative process are concerned, the composers in this group sometimes report a prolonged preparation stage influenced by external deadlines and other pressures which can mean that the period following recognising the 'key' to the piece (stage 4), if not obvious from the outset, can consist of intense activity, often characterised by the 'flow' state.

Participants typically became aware of a slowing down within the process at certain stages. David and Rose for instance seemed to find incubation most problematic. Participants who, like Dennis, refer to a harsh 'inner critic' and those, like James, who have difficulty knowing when to stop are clearly having problems at the evaluative stage. All recognised the importance of letting their unconscious work and not forcing the process.

This belief perhaps has the effect of relieving pressure and increasing self-efficacy.

Stage models have been usually characterised as linear, but creative processes are often cyclical or recursive, and creators not only may work on several ideas at once but also put great effort into their work, based on the skills, knowledge and experience they have acquired. Stage theories thus oversimplify the complexity of the creative process.

Amabile (1986) found that intrinsic motivation was important at the first stage, problem identification, and the last one, finding solutions where novelty is important, whereas extrinsic motivation may help the creator focus better at other stages, especially validation.

Collins' (2005) fine-grained study of the creative process of a media composer writing a computer game sound-track produced a model of the stages of creation. He characterises it as starting with a roughly articulated mental picture together with some visual/textural ideas, which acted as a loose framework or super-ordinate constraint. Overall the compositional process is characterised as an "expressive, solution-generating activity meeting the constraints set by the composer himself" (p.208) and occurring in linear and recursive fashion rather than a means-end problem solving activity. There were some Gestalt-like moments of creative insight (restructuring) some overlapping with others. Collins thus draws on stage models, Gestalt and information-processing approaches. Specific solutions could be thought up, implemented or not used and restructuring of the problem could occur either involving a reformulation of the initial ideas or the overall goal itself. His model shows cyclical movement from macro to micro-levels. Many of the processes Collins cites are demonstrated in the present study, and it would be interesting to carry out further fine-grained idiographic analyses to test the model further.

Several participants comment on the experience of heightened awareness and concentration while working, described as 'flow' (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). The creative

improvisers, in particular, describe satisfying creative performances as those where they consciously direct their energies while being in a state of enhanced unconscious reactivity, balancing the process from moment to moment, whilst being aware and responsive to other performers and the conventions of the genre. Some report a state of well-being after this experience. The flow state has been linked to enhanced well-being, (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996) especially if it leads to new challenges as well.

Clearly working as a composer offers opportunities for the occurrence of states of pleasurable achievement, and enhanced well-being. A knowledge of what facilitates these states can help counselling psychologists help musicians achieve them productively and with satisfaction.

2.2 What enables me to do it

There has been very little research on the effects of conditions in the physical environment on creativity. Amabile (1996) summarising the results of several of her studies on organisations, found consistently that a co-operative working climate, recognition, sufficient time, a sense of challenge, and a sense of urgency facilitated creativity. The factors that hindered it included: lack of freedom and a sense of control, poor project management, inappropriate or unfair evaluation and feedback, insufficient resources, time pressure, overemphasis on status quo, and competitiveness at an inter personal or inter-group level. There is a great deal of consistency here with the current findings.

Csikszentmihalyi (1996) noted that most creative people feel that their environment affects them despite there being little evidence either that beautiful surroundings per se were facilitative or that less congenial surroundings had an adverse effect. What was important, as was borne out in the current study, was that the environment was personalised, made to feel comfortable and congenial whatever that might require. Thus environmental control can facilitate creative work.

Likewise Csikszentmihalyi (1996) found that having a personalised ordered schedule of work and activities enhances creativity. As in the present study, he found that people discover their own rhythms for working, eating, sleeping, and interacting with congenial people. This is seen as a process of adapting an individual's internal consciousness to what is outside and accommodating what is going on outside to his or her personal rhythm. All this results in enhanced feelings of being in tune and experiencing flow.

Csikszentmihalyi (1996) also looked at how surroundings can influence creativity in different ways, depending on the stage of the creative process. He found that in the early preparation stage, where the elements from which the problem will emerge are gathered, order and familiarity help, and an environment without distractions. At a later stage,

when incubating the problem, he found that sometimes a different environment could help. For instance distraction and novelty could help the unconscious to get to work. At the stages of evaluation, elaboration and completion familiarity once more helps. This appears to be consistent with participants' accounts.

Overall, current findings are consistent with existing research in showing the importance of a self-determined individual pattern of work, consistent with the individual's wider musical and personal goals. Counselling psychologists often work with goal-setting and planning (it is a basic tool in CBT) and can thus contribute to the self-efficacy of musicians in supporting their efforts to find suitable patterns of work.

2.3 Dealing with external pressures and distractions

Many of the pressures that emerged in the study were those, over which the individual had little control, like the flow of composing work and income. However those who were able to accommodate their working pattern in some way to help manage this, like Rose, Roger, Ian and David, were able to achieve more satisfaction and a greater sense of self-efficacy. Others, like James and Rupert, took pride in balancing their time between different musical activities and family life.

Practical problems with equipment and technology are often reported in popular literature and generated many frequent small frustrations for participants, the cumulative effect of which could be serious: not being able to work, or wasting a lot of time. What made them particularly irksome was the fact they were avoidable, even if they were not necessarily under the composer's personal control. So, for instance, having out of date technology (through lack of funds) was very frustrating. Not being given a decent instrument to play for Vince, an improvising pianist, was deeply detrimental to a creative performance, and being given an inadequate budget to realise a musical idea for Nigel and Rupert led to the necessity of a change of musical plan.

2.4 Working collaboratively with others

Those at an early stage in their careers, like Alan, Ben and Ian, were often struggling to find the right collaborators with which to develop trusting and constructive musical relationships. Those like Dennis, Rupert and Robin, towards the end of their careers, often looked back at losing collaborators or patrons who had died, moved away or moved on. The others had generally developed a circle of people who they felt comfortable working with, whether or not they had become personal friends. Those whose music had the most personal resonance, like Linda, Rafael, Rose or Robert were most keen to have a warm personal regard for musical collaborators. For the improvising creators views differed about making friends with collaborators although in all cases there needed to be a constructive musical relationship.

While it was generally taken for granted that the world of composing was very competitive, in the sense of opportunities and rewards not being readily available, the participants who spoke of encountering jealousy and rivalry tended to be those who spoke more openly about their own ambitions and who saw themselves as competing for resources and opportunities with others in the same field. For instance, Robin, who was working on cataloguing his oeuvre, so it would be available for future generations, was keenly aware of rivals for publishing and recording opportunities. Ian, who also spoke of this, had worked in the most competitive areas of the pop world, where the rewards of fame and money were huge for some; and Robert was building a public profile as a soloist, in a musical context where there were many well-established rivals working in what was a small field. Nigel realised that his award-winning television scores made him the object of jealousy, which put extra pressure on him to maintain and surpass his standard of work. It would have been interesting to find out through more detailed questioning and discussion more about how others saw the area of rivalry and jealousy.

Counselling psychologists are used to working with people whose occupations expose them to interpersonal jealousies and rivalries but perhaps are not familiar with this situation in the creative arts field. Increased awareness of this situation will enable them better to support clients in these areas.

Many participants relied on the emotional support of their partners to help them deal with their external pressures and distractions. They were often able to act as a buffer, and help these composers maintain their focus and motivation. Others relied on family, friends and neighbours for practical and emotional and sometimes financial assistance and support. In all instances, self-belief, together with powerful intrinsic motivation, helped keep them going.

Sawyer (2006) introduced the idea of 'group flow' to explain the creative process of a group of performers, which has the processes of improvisation, collaboration and emergence when things work best. The flow itself is an emergent property of whole collective unit. Group flow can help individuals to achieve their own individual flow state and propel it onwards. So, for instance, in a situation of creative improvising, an individual might not be giving an outstanding performance but could find themselves inspired to greater creativity by what others are doing, and together the ensemble may rise above what they are individually capable of achieving.

While individually creators may show emotional empathy and openness, being at the same time responsive to the group requires a sort of parallel processing, as described especially by Susan. Overall, the creative result depends on the interactional dynamics among members of the group during the performance.

While composers generally have to work with performers, composers for media have more complex organisational structures to deal with. In many media worlds, their work is open to scrutiny from directors and producers. Amabile (1996) found that in situations like the media where, first, work is externally evaluated and rewards are contingent on this, and where there is some surveillance over how tasks are carried out and there are also some restrictions in the choice of which task to engage on, then there can be detrimental effects on creativity. These factors all affect the degree of control a composer has over his or her work. Most participants see their media work as a compromise, where they try to produce an appropriate job within the particular constraints of the context. Media work is also highly competitive and time pressures are often intense, adding to the constraints on the work. Participants not only expressed frustrations at finding themselves working with people who were uninformed or misinformed about music, but also at getting involved in political battles where they could be used as ammunition. Generally they coped by taking a long view, distancing themselves and maintaining professional boundaries. As a group, their work inevitably brings situations where they have to justify and articulate what they are doing in order to keep getting work.

Green (2002) in her study of how popular musicians learn, shows how compositional skills often emerge from more fundamental skills of improvising and jamming. These skills come from individual and group efforts to imitate music from recordings, which provides the foundation for meaningful creative activity. As learning proceeds, greater conscious awareness develops, though the process of acquiring skills and knowledge can be largely informal. This accurately characterises the early development of Ian, Linda and Ben. Linda and Ian both worked in the highly commercial end of pop music, and also had to learn to negotiate the world of agents and managers who would take important decisions about their work. Linda's naivete led to frustration at not being able to make her own decisions about work, and to her ensuing choice to follow a path she chose for herself. Paradoxically, David, Colin and Nigel, for instance, took on management and agents in order better to control the organisation of their work so they could concentrate more on the artistic side.

Overall these findings sit comfortably within existing literature on the creative process. Despite the differences in their musical identities, working contexts, outlooks and preferences, these composers share fundamental similarities in the way they set about their work and how they manage the creative process. For each of them, mastery and self-development is very important, and just as their identities in music are profoundly affected by their inner goals so their development in music is affected by their beliefs about themselves and their self-management skills. Research findings like these, about this previously unknown group, can provide evidence for counselling psychologists on which to base and refine their therapeutic work.

SECTION B

Research:

Being a composer: the inside view

Chapter 5

Theme 3:

A composer's lifestyle

Chapter 5

Theme 3: A composer's lifestyle

Introduction

This theme looks at the impact of being a composer on other aspects of social life, including how participants balance the demands of creating and following a career with family demands, and how they see themselves fitting into their wider community. (See Appendix 15).

3.1 Achieving a work-life balance

This sub-theme is concerned with how participants blended their work with other aspects of life and demands on their time and energy. While living the life of an artist, often working from home, these musicians were of course subject to the daily pressures of family life. All but one lived with a partner, and since many had children, they had to find a way of pursuing their individual creative path in a way that balanced with the demands of family life.

Robin sums up how many participants saw themselves:

(6.21) I try to live normally. I try to. Yes. I'm not the sort of person to suddenly lose my temper and shout "Be quiet, I'm working" or something like that. I try to fit in with everything else.

In practice though, many reported finding even small amounts of noise and distraction extremely bothersome. All had to balance out in their own way wanting to get on with their work and trying to fit in with daily demands like getting the shopping, answering the door, dealing with the post, DIY work, and doing a share of the chores and childminding. Colin described changing priorities on getting married after years of living alone.

(10.33) Because I am married I have to be very careful and you know. go along with the flow, and if dinner's up I should be thankful I've got my dinner and (...) abandon my crotchets and whatever and go down and have it.

The pressures of having a young family reduced considerably people's ability to work.

James (16.12) Well I suppose where it fits into your life can be difficult, and doing other things, finding the time for it.

He and two other composers with young babies spoke of the difficulties of fitting in composing while coping with the additional pressures of looking after children.

David (24.24) spoke of being so immersed in his work that he had not spent time with his older children and of having realised that with a new baby this needed to change. (24.44.)

I suppose it's looking at what can make family life liveable for everybody rather than just how it's going to work for me.

Dennis looked back on times when family pressures had been hugely distracting (20.57)

He gave me a budget and a great creative time at a time when I had two young children in a smaller house screaming and crying and that was almost impossible. You know it was almost impossible,

Rupert spoke of conflicts between demands. (14.36)

Occasionally there might have been a bit of tension where I might have been torn two ways. I might have a really busy day at work but on the other hand there was a really busy day at school or some emergency cropped up.

Most participants had chosen partners who, if not themselves musicians or in the arts, certainly had a strong interest in it, and who thus could be expected to have a fuller understanding and tolerance of the life of a creative musician.

Colin, whose physical disabilities affected his work, accommodated his working pattern and work-life balance to maximise his productivity, working harder during the summer months when his health was at its best and his teaching commitments were less demanding. His priorities shifted over time. (22.19)

Through till about 1993, about 10 years, I was quite content to be on my own, work on my own, free from people. But I think from 1993 onwards, I thought this composition is not enough, music isn't enough, I need a companion, and I need an emotional life as well as an artistic one.

Having found a wife, his priorities changed. (23.53)

You have to put it in perspective, it is no longer the prime thing. (...). The prime thing is your relationship with the person who is

your companion and to be considerate to them.

Colin (24.31) found that he was more productive over the first 7 years of marriage than in the previous 20, attributing it to this contentment. He found it liberating emotionally and reflected that the freedom had itself become a prison to him.

James and others spoke of trying to balance out their time between family, other work, like teaching, home demands like DIY, and their composing. (17.56)

So often I look towards for instance the summer holidays as this kind of wonderful utopia. Oh, I'll have all this free time, weeks and weeks, with nothing else to do. And it very rarely works out like that. Because usually I'm incredibly busy doing all the things that I haven't done during term-time and actually it can feel more stressful than than term-time.

Sometimes the situation was exacerbated by the fact that most participants worked at home. Dennis found for instance that this led to him being seen as "fair game" (20.18) to be asked to get involved with things around the house. He described himself as being seen as a "spare part" to be made use of. This had led to big arguments with his then wife, since working to tight deadlines meant he could not be very accommodating.

Rupert on the other hand, working away from home, could have clear boundaries between work time and non-work time.

Several participants including Susan, David, Robert and Nigel found that having a partner who understood and tolerated the obsessive aspects of the creative life, and how the work in progress could become the all-important focus of attention, made things easier domestically. Often a partner provided the encouragement and validation that could be in short supply elsewhere.

Most of the group valued keeping physically fit, and some pursued regular outdoor activities such as cycling, walking, running, and also playing golf, football, canoeing and gliding. Working indoors often sitting for hours next to computer screens was seen as unhealthy, and outdoor physical activity could also feed into or inspire their music. Some sought renewal and inspiration through travel, nature, and wildlife as well. A few individuals practised relaxation, yoga, or Alexander technique.

Several of the group were teetotal, but most drank some alcohol. No-one in the group had had drug or alcohol dependency problems and several people were in fact very strict about not working with others who were seen as volatile or unreliable because of drink or drug problems. Many of the group had tried various drugs, often cannabis,

amphetamines or ecstasy and one or two people had been prescribed beta-blockers, valium or other medication to help largely with performance issues. This area of questioning perhaps could have been pursued further as the findings contradict previous studies on performers rather than composers, which have shown addictions to be fairly prevalent: (Cooper and Wills, 1988). The reasons for this discrepancy between the composer and performer groups are not known, however perhaps the absence of social and performance pressures on composers and the need for sustained concentration in their work may play a part.

3.2 Creating and following a career path

This sub-theme looks into broader aspects of participants' career trajectories, and their aspirations and ambitions. Participants had very different routes into composing, but nearly all showed an early interest in creating music, although this was not necessarily encouraged. Several, like Nigel and Ian, had performing careers, others were primarily teachers or academics and at different times composing had played a more or a less prominent part in their musical life. Sometimes this had depended on circumstances, sometimes it was down to choice. For instance Nigel always found performing, especially solo performing, made him very anxious and he moved across into composing as it had always been a pleasure. James, however, always had to struggle to fit his composing in around his teaching, both of which he loved. Ben never envisaged being able to survive financially as a musician, and so had a non-musical career until he decided to study composing at college. Linda, Colin and Robin always had inner music and it was inevitable for them to pursue a path as a composer.

Sustaining a career in musical worlds all of which were seen as very competitive could be a matter of scaling down ambitions. James (11.7)

I've not really wanted to be a pushy composer. I'm much happier being kind of small scale, writing for people I know, and hoping that word of mouth goes out and that leads to other people wanting commissions and things like that. (...) That feels like, in terms of a larger career, a much more stable sort of foundation to have, rather than being flavour of the month one month and then just not interesting the next. (...) I much prefer to have something that is smaller but more sustainable in what I'm trying to do."

Others, like Robin, were, in the later stages of their career, more interested in seeing their works as a whole (9.33) His career decisions were about creating a balanced oeuvre overall.

Yes. I'm more interested in how it all fits together, the complete work list really, than in just individual works. (...) it's nice to see different sets of pieces (...) like sonatas and string quartets and chamber works, and how they progress from one thing to another through the years, comparing them.

Most participants' plans for their future careers involved extending their work into new areas. This could mean working in different styles, extending into media work, or different areas within media (dramas as opposed to programmes on wildlife for Nigel, for instance), working on different musical forms, and so on. Some saw this in terms of self-development, others focussed on the musical challenges themselves, still others on the potential rewards and prestige involved.

Alan (12.48) So what I am doing is trying to steer through doing work for animation or adverts and stuff like that. I am obviously trying to build up a reputation where I can head towards that (...) but it would make use of my different backgrounds.

Many participants brought up the matter of aiming to have greater control over their musical career paths, often through self-publishing (like Colin), putting out their own recordings (like Adam), or getting more prestigious or advantageous recording deals and contracts (like Linda).

Linda (15.1) I am ambitious, because I still haven't given up, but I am not prepared to, not at the cost of my integrity. So therefore it's going to be a much longer road for me, but I prefer that, because if you get there and you have given up most of yourself, all you have got, it won't mean a thing. (..) I am just not prepared to do all that work and still feel empty. I want to feel full and enjoy it to the full.

David, for instance, saw himself as able to perform in larger and more prestigious mainstream venues (instead of the jazz pubs and clubs he started from), and attracting more mainstream press and media attention (from say the daily papers rather than the specialist music press). Adam wanted to continue to develop his improvising creativity, working with new people who did not normally work in that context.

Many participants remarked on the need for self-promotion and several, like Robin, noted that their formal musical education had neglected this important aspect, with the result that they felt ill-prepared for the commercial market place in which they found themselves. Some, like Dennis, felt their careers were held back by this. Several people

also commented on the need for a knowledge of musical copyright issues to prevent problems arising and to avoid being given unfavourable contractual terms.

Overall, participants' career decisions reflected their individual routes into composing, their perceived musical preferences and strengths, their personal goals and ambitions (often poorly articulated) and the extent to which they saw their goals as being under their own control or took control of them.

3.3 Fitting into the community

This sub-theme is concerned with the wider social repercussions of participants' work: on audiences, the critics, their local community and the general public.

As far as audiences are concerned, participants had very diverse views. Several, among them the improvisers had what Susan referred to (13.6) as a 'friends and family' kind of small but keen audience. Sometimes it was possible to get to know individual fans or aficionados personally or to create links with a fan base through a website or a network of pupils. Others like Rose and David, with larger followings, had a general idea of what kind of people followed their music from looking carefully at audiences.

Rose (11.32) The more you write music, the more you get it performed and the more you are there to hear it performed, you get a better sense of what your audience might be. But I don't think you write for a particular group.

Being asked to perform or conduct their music was also a way of discovering who was interested in or knowledgeable about it. Ian was also aware (from performing with very famous rock musicians) of sections of the public who followed the music because of the perceived prestige it gave them: his bands would be invited to exclusive private parties. Adam also recounted with surprise how his reputation as an individualist had led to him being invited to give a special private performance abroad at a birthday party for one of his keen fans.

Within their own local community, these composers, as has been seen, often occupied a visible position. This could make life uncomfortable, as has been seen in the case of Robert, who wanted to keep his private self separate from his public image. Mainly though, it gave participants some artistic licence which they employed to their advantage if they wished to behave unconventionally. Those participants living in villages often felt they were an approved local 'character'. Several were asked as composers to contribute towards village life and Colin, for instance, wrote pieces inspired by local landscape and character, to much local pride. Nigel and Colin and others enjoyed the chances community life gave to meet local non-musicians. Equally David, Vince and others found their local urban

communities equally welcoming. While not feeling understood, they felt nonetheless valued.

As far as the critics were concerned, many participants had at first become hurt or angry at what they perceived as unfair or uninformed criticism. Generally they were prepared to take notice of fair and informed comment, but overwhelmingly used their own inner judgement in evaluating their work. It was often difficult to stop taking things personally, however.

Participants with children differed widely in how they portrayed themselves to their children. Rupert's children (whose father's music for a famous TV series could be heard regularly) were proud and used it as kudos at school, whereas Dennis took care to downplay the fact he worked with very famous pop stars so that his children had as normal an upbringing as possible. Mostly, having a composer as a parent appeared to be a source of pride to the children and a source of pride together with embarrassment to the parent (mainly because of the unwelcome attention this could attract).

Most took the trouble to encourage and develop any musical talent their children showed, but did not seem to expect their children to like their own music, especially if they worked in relatively unpopular areas. Generally they made no efforts to direct their children's musical preferences deliberately, but obviously being brought up in a musical home must have had certain repercussions which are hard to identify in the present study.

Only Nigel had had therapy which directly related to work, and this process appeared to be helpful in enabling him to change the focus of his work to concentrate on an area that aroused less anxiety. Ian saw a therapist, who was perceived as very unhelpful, in connection with his writer's block. Two participants had had marital therapy. Their experiences were thus very mixed.

In general this theme depicts musicians who portray themselves as having to find their own way in a world where career paths on the whole do not exist. Their routes through this world were governed by personal preferences, their self-efficacy, the opportunities available in their domain and the competition in the field. Their families represent areas of stability and support throughout this process.

Discussion

Fitting the work into family life (the vast majority of participants worked mainly from home) was often a matter of give and take, and compromise sometimes led to a feeling

of artistic frustration. However, most participants chose partners who would understand and be more tolerant of a creative lifestyle and several lived with partners who were themselves either musicians or other types of artist.

Two of the women composers, Susan and Rose, had stopped composing when they looked after their children as babies. They were both also reliant on the assistance of family members in order that their other musical work, performing and teaching, could continue. Somehow, the demands of composition could not for them be combined with motherhood. They felt that the kind of focussed energy necessary was not available. They both commented on how men with young babies were often able to continue working and in fact the three male composers with young children – David, Robert and James, although sharing child care, were able to find time to work, albeit less time than they wanted. None of the male composers had had substantial career breaks for family reasons.

No-one in the group had confronted a stark choice between having some sort of family life or the life of an artist that was so common in previous times, as depicted by Storr (1988), although a couple chose not to have children in order better to concentrate on their work and Colin had spent much of his earlier composing life alone, but not especially through choice. Participants all had to face at one time or other a conflict in priorities between their family and work, but not usually one requiring more than a decision affecting the very short term. There was no evidence of especially problematic relationships with families in the group, and although participants like James and David and Rupert reported family demands that interrupted their work, they did not appear to avoid or escape such demands, or get very distressed by them, despite often having a simultaneous inner creative life that did not keep regular family hours and could not be turned on and off at will. Counselling Psychologists need thus to be aware of the range of individual ways such creative people balance creative and family demands.

Raeburn (1988), in a study of rock performers found that the main conflicts experienced between work and family life were to do with regular touring and anti-social hours, both largely irrelevant to these composers. Raeburn also found that popular musicians were especially vulnerable to stress as their group culture and image reinforced health risk-taking behaviour in an economic climate that was unstable and fashion-led. This does not appear true of these composers, although more work on composers remains to be done.

There have been several studies of creativity over the lifespan, although detailed work on living composers is scarce. Hayes' (1989) study of biographies of classical composers found evidence of a lengthy period of prior immersion in the field (up to 10 years) before the emergence of the first major innovative work. Following this he found a rapid increase in years 10 to 25 followed by stability to year 49 then a gradual decline. This

has been confirmed by other studies of eminent individuals (Amabile, 1996; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Gardner, 1993). Simonton (1999) concluded in addition that the quality of the work produced relates primarily to the quantity, such that the best work is most likely to be produced at times when the individual's output is greatest. Clearly with contemporary creators it is harder to determine the creative value of the work.

Participants did not speak about their rate of productivity but were also not questioned specifically in this area, which it would be important to remedy in future studies. However this study has shown that each person's own internal criteria of quality were important, obviously reflecting their immersion in the field. In all cases music had been informally or formally an absorbing key interest over many years.

The importance of a thorough grounding in the field has also been confirmed in studies of jazz legend Charlie Parker (Owens, 1995) and the Beatles (Weisberg, 1999). In the former case, immersion in the repertoire and the recordings of previous jazz innovators was accompanied by much hard work on playing technique. In the latter, early studio work and performances (estimated at up to 2000 hours between 1957 and 1962 not including rehearsals) gave Lennon and McCartney a thorough grounding which led to their repertoire including an ever growing proportion of their own material. Weisberg speculates that deep immersion not only leads to the development of a high level of expertise and skill but also makes extra capacity available for the production of novelty and for process heuristics to emerge.

Wallace and Gruber (1990) and Policastro and Gardner (1999) distinguished two processes at work during the lifelong development of creative work. One is the slow long-term evolution of ideas, at a macro level, which may be picked up, left and picked up again over decades. These include the broad goals that guide the choice of daily activities and larger scale projects – which they refer to as a network of enterprises, and the other is the micro-level sequence in which each idea develops into a final product, which was looked at in the previous chapter. Several participants, especially, Robin, Dennis and Rupert, had a broad strategic overarching view of their work as a whole, and others like Alan were developing it.

An additional influence on career productivity is the opportunity for positive experience and feedback, which can not only act as a motivator (Deci & Ryan, 1985) and confidence builder but also helps develop self-efficacy skills develop. The socio-cultural context determines how much and what kind of positive validation is available. One of the outstanding characteristics of a study of the careers of composers in the Hollywood film industry (Faulkner 1983) was the scarcity of such opportunities early in the career path. The composers for media in the current study confirmed this finding.

This study also confirmed the tension between the artistic and business aspects of the enterprise. Faulkner (1983) found that a constant feature over the course of a career was the indifference or ignorance of the client and his or her inability to separate the success or failure of the music from that of the project as a whole (which participants working in the media struggled with as well). Faulkner characterised this type of composing as one where creativity is highly constrained by budgets, accepted conventions, and the employer's ideas and preferences, so the product is always a compromise. This is a view that media composers in the group came to accept.

Media composers have few opportunities for apprenticeship, and little chance to experiment. The field is so competitive that there is little interaction between individuals working within it. This rings true of the present findings. Seen from outside as glamorous and highly paid work, it is also subject to many pressures and tensions. Debutantes need a belief they can make it in the industry to get started, and as a career develops the pressures change, largely in the direction of increased expectations of consistent high quality work. This was reflected in Dennis's anxieties about constantly having to prove himself. In addition his increased access to high status people presented to him the danger of narrowing his potential down and being typecast, so he valued being a jack of all trades above all. The pressures to continue to work at high volume were expressed by all participants working in media: Sylvia, Nigel, Dennis, Rupert, Alan and Ian.

Faulkner's work also highlighted the need for good interpersonal skills, which this group recognised keenly and the need not to be too deeply attached to work which also featured in the study. Faulkner saw this work as requiring an individual to balance within him or herself issues of dependence and independence, co-operation and resistance, through a recognition of the limitations of their own role. This struggle was reflected in the stressors and insecurities revealed among media composers in the present study. Faulkner summed it up (p. 21) "freelance specialists had to be part artists, part technicians, part diplomats and part dramatic actors or actresses in selling themselves to nervous and powerful film makers." Their projects are the (p. 22) "material means for making these social announcements about one's ability and identity." As a group, the dilemmas endemic to their work are of particular interest to counselling psychologists and it would be interesting to conduct further research into the stressors and coping mechanisms in this group.

The only large-scale study of general occupational stressors in musicians, by Wills & Cooper (1988), found that living up to one's own self-imposed internal standards of musicianship was the most important, which was confirmed as important in the present study. Other confirmatory aspects include: the importance of conflicts with music industry figures for those working in popular fields (Linda and Alan), and dedication to music in the face of poor treatment (David, Adam, Susan and Vince). Wills & Cooper

make the point that many of the stressors are seen as being inherent in the work, which was thus both a huge source of pleasure and of pressure, making it a ripe area for conflicts to emerge. Their sample and present participants continue to work in the domain because of the overriding satisfaction it provides.

Wills and Cooper found that humour was the most common coping method, used by 54% of their sample, followed by talking over problems. Participants used the latter predominantly (using friends and family as sounding boards) but several people referred to humour also as a tension releaser. Wills and Cooper found exercise was popular but not relaxation, meditation and yoga, and, as in the present study, drugs and alcohol were not widely used, although drinking and smoking were common. In the present study a wide range of coping strategies was adopted, including avoidance, acceptance, taking control, learning from mistakes, distancing, turning weaknesses into strengths, delegating tasks. Few participants sought professional help with their stressors – perhaps because it was not considered, perhaps because it was not seen to be available. It would be interesting to research this area further.

As far as the wider community is concerned, work on music audiences by Sawyer (2006) groups them according to their level of expertise, much as participants themselves do (see Chapter 3). Intermediaries, the smallest group, with the most knowledge, are those who play a critical role in evaluating the works. This group will include critics and the general and specialised music press. Participants had mixed view of critics but overwhelmingly took comments with a pinch of salt, especially if they were seen as representing particular interest groups or positions, preferring to trust their own judgement or that of trusted peers.

Connoisseurs, according to Sawyer, are people who have been socialised into the domain almost as much as the intermediaries. They are dedicated fans, knowledgeable and more actively opinionated and their opinions are often trusted by less experienced people. Jazz audiences are often full of such connoisseurs or aficionados, as are contemporary classical music audiences. Participants in these musical areas were aware of such fans. In unpopular genres, like free improvised music, Sawyer points out there are often informal associations of people who help promote the music. Several such people and associations were mentioned in interviews, for example connoisseurs who ran small record labels and offered recording opportunities, others who would record live performances for archival purposes, or offer performance opportunities, all current patrons of the arts by another name.

Amateurs, the third group, consisted of people whose exposure to the music was mainly at school, but this group also includes semi-professional composers, and others who might do it for relaxation or as a hobby. These did not really play a part in the study. Finally, with the least knowledge, is the general public, seen as having little power over

what gets recognised, distributed and valued. They can choose as consumers whether or not to go to events or buy recordings.

The wider community of musical worlds impinging on participants varied enormously. For Ian, Alan, Linda, Dennis, Rupert and others to a lesser extent, their music entered the musical mainstream, the domain of the general public, while for Adam, Vince and others their work was unknown except to a few connoisseurs. Acutely mindful of the importance of self-promotion, these composers were very aware, for example, of the availability of public subsidy in their field, and of the key networks surrounding them. They differed in the extent to which they felt comfortable promoting themselves, and to which they saw their efforts as productive or appropriate. Sometimes it was not clear what needed to be done or could be helpful in furthering a career. Wills and Cooper and several participants recommended there be better advice and provision in such matters made available through training organisations and musicians' organisations.

Creating a viable career solely as a composer is often seen as desirable but not practicable, except for people working across several areas of music, or doing media work, because there is very little clear advice, few available relevant role models and little guidance on marketing or promotion. In the case of people in pop fields, creating a viable career rather than having a brief period of success, depends on having a favourable management deal or a lot of self-determination. For those in less mainstream areas of music, it is often a matter of survival in a viable small scale world. The rewards, as have been seen, are mainly intrinsic.

Thus an overall picture emerges from this sub-theme of a group of highly motivated people with musical knowledge and skills in an environment for which training rarely prepares them, with no established routes to a successful career laid out, making their own decisions about their direction and route and what will count as moving successfully forward. Counselling Psychologists who count among their therapeutic skills helping clients solve problems, and make decisions, could put these skills to good use with such a client group.

A composer's lifestyle appears from these findings to be negotiated, and necessitates striking a personal balance between career demands and aspirations and the demands of family life at different life stages. Being an artist and a craftsman brings both freedoms and constraints, and certainly many choices and decisions. Being flexibly able to prioritise and make choices and decisions when necessary, seems a valuable skill for participants to have. Awareness of the extent to which making a career as a composer entails making good decisions, can enable counselling psychologists better to help musicians who have chosen this way of life.

SECTION B
Research:
Being a composer: the inside view

Chapter 6:
Overview and Conclusions

Chapter 6

Overview and Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

This chapter offers reflections on the broader significance and implications of the findings and identifies some implications for counselling psychology. The methodology of the study is evaluated, and suggestions made for further research.

6.2 Overview of main findings

The current study was probably the first qualitative study of living composers to include those working in a range of musical styles and genres. It explored three fundamental question areas, the first concerned their identity and sense of self, the second how they approached their creative work and their working methods, and the third how their work affected their personal and social life.

On self and identity, the study confirmed the erosion of boundaries between traditional musical roles (Cook 1998) and presented a view of professionals moving fluidly between musical genres and settings. The extent and nature of musical training for the group appeared not to predict career direction or choices and participants generally got work on the basis of merit rather than qualifications or background.

Participants seemed to embrace opportunities for diversifying their identities in music (MacDonald, Miell & Hargreaves, 2002) confirming Simon's (2004) view that having a complex configuration of identities (not including those outside music of course) appeared to offer more opportunities for self-validation and need satisfaction as well as a more pronounced sense of distinctiveness.

Perhaps the findings may be explained in terms of different musical identities addressing different identity needs. Ryan & Deci (1985) for instance, have suggested, from a Self-Determination Theory perspective, that the needs for competence, autonomy and relatedness are distinct in their effects. Participants freely chose their musical domains, because they were congenial musically and socially, and this sense of internal control (autonomy, in SDT terms) may itself be facilitative. It has moreover been seen that each musical sub-culture placed a somewhat different emphasis on each need area as well as having its own conventions, etiquette and musical values.

Participants thus appeared to be able to manage multiple identities in music without conflict, by keeping them separate. This does not imply that identity conflict would not be found in a different group of composers, or in circumstances where free choice was not exercised or where separation was not possible. This area itself could be the subject of interesting further study.

Participants chose their musical path on the basis of its intrinsic interest, which encouraged them to work hard at developing their expertise. Kemp's (1996) prediction that composers would put a lot of themselves into their work was confirmed for musicians working in all the genres included. Music was indeed central to their sense of self (Hargreaves & North, 1999). Living up their own goals and standards also emerged both as an important motivator and stressor (Wills & Cooper, 1988). Several participants had turned to music as a solace and a way of successfully dealing with and overcoming unhappiness or problems early in life, confirming Storr's (1972) view.

Investing much of the self in their work did lead some participants to experience what Storr (1972, 1991) calls 'over-determination', which by and large they coped with successfully by using distancing. This was most likely to emerge when works were put into the public domain, or criticised, and feelings of vulnerability and exposure resulted. However the romantic stereotype of the lone creator (Storr, 1972) was not borne out. Although some participants got lonely when working in solitude, they could often balance this with the more sociable aspects of their work, confirming Sawyer's (2006) view that much contemporary music-making, including composing, is collaborative.

The collaborative aspects of a composer's work have not previously been systematically studied outside the film industry (Faulkner, 1983) and participants working for the British media had similar experiences to those in the U.S.A. This study has also demonstrated, in line with observations by Sawyer (2006), that collaborating with others in working on pieces as well as getting them performed or recorded, is an important feature of the working process for composers, which can be richly rewarding as well as deeply frustrating. The study also confirmed Green's (2002) findings that musicians in popular genres mostly learn their craft and develop their skills informally by listening, copying and adapting and collaborating with others, often in a recording context.

Participants generally enjoyed their work and found it satisfying, despite its difficulties. Findings confirm those of Amabile (1996) and Csikszentmihalyi (1996) in showing the centrality of intrinsic motivation. Participants saw themselves as skilled and continuing to develop their expertise, using a mixture of hard work, inspiration and collaboration. Their personal goals varied, but they emerge as a relatively self-disciplined group whose working methods created a sense of stability.

As far as the creative process is concerned, the study confirmed previous work (Green, 2002, Simonton, 1999) that an extensive learning process, including immersion in the domain, occurs before significant works are produced. Included in this process is the evolution of an individualised working method, in an individually adapted working environment (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Amabile, 1996). Inspiration and playful improvisation played a part in the process at the idea development stage but disciplined hard work enabled it to be brought to fruition. Participants recognised the importance of

both conscious and unconscious processes in facilitating their work (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996).

An ongoing part of the normal working process for these composers was responding to constructive comments on work in progress that could lead to improvements, and to negative, frequently self-critical comments associated with increased stress. So, too, was the gradual development of a sense of mastery and control over their work. It appeared that with experience they felt they also became better judges of what they produced, confirming the views of Kozbelt (2005) and Ericsson et al. (1993). Self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) and having clear goals helped them cope with the vagaries of work flow and income.

The compositional process that participants described accords broadly with previous generic 'stage' models (Wallas, 1926; Sawyer, 2006) and also had a recursive or cyclical element. Whatever the musical context in which participants worked, their approach to the process of composing showed broad similarities.

Turning to the effect of being a composer on family life, several socio-cultural features emerged from the study. Most participants made adjustments to their working pattern to fit in with family demands, although nobody had to choose permanently between an artistic life and having a social or family life, as Storr (1988) found in eminent creators of the past, despite there being many short-term conflicts in priorities between family and work that had to be resolved. The group in general appeared to have reasonably satisfactory intimate relationships and often selected as partners and as friends people who would understand and be sympathetic to their artistic work, or who were themselves artists. Perhaps in the past not only did fewer people have opportunities to use their creative talents but there were fewer outlets as well. Leading a creative life is no longer only an option for a small educated elite: there is more room for 'everyday' creators to lead productive working lives, especially in music.

Finding and following a career path was very difficult for participants. Not only did they often feel ill-prepared by their socialisation experiences or training for having to promote themselves and market their work, but they also recognised that their worlds were all highly competitive and uncertain both in the short and long-term, and that there were few suitable role models. As a result most relied on other musical activities like teaching or performing to provide a stable source of income. Career decisions were made on the basis of individual musical history, preferences and strengths, and goals and ambitions were shaped by circumstance, opportunity and the degree to which participants felt they could exercise control. It appeared that career development was understood in terms of intrinsic musical goals as much as external factors like recognition, praise or reward.

The main occupational stressors reported confirmed those found by Wills & Cooper (1988): living up to their internal standards of work, conflicts with figures in the music industry and coping with poor treatment. Participants often acknowledged that these stressors became accepted as being inherent in the work. The most common coping method reported was talking through problems, although avoidance, taking control, humour, distancing, acceptance, adjustment, and turning weaknesses into strengths also occurred. Over time some participants were able to find effective coping methods while others who were not, reported experiencing higher levels of stress.

Most participants felt that they occupied a visible but accepted position in their local community, which could give them artistic licence to be unconventional if they wished. They generally had a reasonably clear picture of their audiences and fans. All had been negatively affected by uninformed or misleading criticism, despite ultimately relying on their own standards for evaluating their work, and had developed ways of coping with this, such as distancing themselves. Whatever the disadvantages of their chosen occupation, participants generally considered themselves fortunate to be able to do something they valued and loved.

6.3 Critical evaluation of the research

6.3.1. Strengths

This study has drawn attention to a neglected area, and made a case for studying it. Insights were generated from interviews with a group of composers covering a wide range of ages, genres, musical backgrounds and experience in their domain. The analysis maintained a balance between what was distinct to individuals and what was common to the group as a whole. It has shed some light on how these composers see themselves and how they work, and how they as a group compare with other musicians. The findings have challenged traditional stereotypes, based on male classical composers of the past, and opened the way for further study of the range of composers working today, eminent or not. The qualitative methodology has enabled participants to reveal, in their own words, rich details of their views and experiences. The robustness of the interpretation was underwritten by having a second person check the audit trail and the plausibility of the thematic analysis. The theme of identity was especially illuminating as it highlighted potential dilemmas and paradoxes that could be associated with problems for which counselling might be required. The research has thus provided a foundation for further work, yielding some ideas and hypotheses about for instance the management of identity, the creative process and the management of occupational stressors that could be further explored using quantitative or qualitative methodology.

6.3.2. Weaknesses

In common with other qualitative approaches, IPA has intrinsic limitations. While providing depth, breadth and generalizability are not offered. Not only is the analysis

context-specific, such that other interpretations of the same material are possible, but also limited by the sample used. The researcher herself underwent a series of stages during which the analysis and emergent themes evolved and changed and she was only too aware not only of how themes potentially could overlap but of how her preoccupations at the time could alter the relative prominence of findings within the data.

A different sample of composers might reveal different preoccupations and concerns. The sample covered a range of levels of experience, and their unique backgrounds will have specifically contributed to the findings. Only by in-depth study of a sample which is more homogeneous with respect to some of these variables would it be possible to draw any conclusions about their effects. Similarly the sample was recruited by a mixture of personal acquaintance and snowballing which may have introduced a systematic bias of some kind, which would be absent from one recruited say, through an advertisement.

Having a much smaller sample might have facilitated a more thoroughgoing idiographic analysis of individual cases, and might have allowed more extensive drawing on the large amount of data collected. Further in-depth idiographic qualitative work is suggested.

6.3.3. Reflections on doing the research

In addition, the preoccupations and conscious and unconscious biases of the researcher may have affected not only the way in which the questions were asked and which areas were followed up, but also which areas were not explored in detail. The researcher presented herself to participants as someone who, while not being a musician, was familiar with their world. This was intended to encourage a relaxed, co-operative stance for the interview and to put participants at their ease and it seemed to be successful in this. She also tried as a white female, middle-aged middle-class counselling psychologist (and therefore being presented as a relatively intelligent professional person) to keep concepts and language from counselling discourses out of the research interviews. This process was facilitated by having given presentations to music educators and counsellors at a Music College when the work was ongoing. This prepared her not only for presenting her work to other interested groups of non-psychologists, but also for the kinds of reactions they would show, which tested her presuppositions.

One tension in interviewing people she was acquainted with was in having to present herself either as a friend or as a researcher. Being a trained counsellor helped her keep a professional distance while still being warm and congruent. In addition there were certain musical areas and worlds with which she was more familiar and experienced than

others, so she may have been better able to follow up leads where this acquaintance was relevant.

As the research went on she also reflected on how her own background had influenced her choice of topic. Like the participants, music has always been an essential part of her life. At the stage of piloting she had to restrain her curiosity and enthusiasm which wanted to lead her down biographical and other side-alleys and it may have led her on at later points. She was surprised and pleased to find how interested the group were in the research and willing to collaborate.

Finally for her the overall research process has been rather a prolonged roller-coaster ride. The ups and downs of personal events affected the time, energy and focus there was available to pursue the work, at different stages, including illnesses, deaths and major upheavals. Changes of supervisor left her for periods feeling abandoned, discouraged, occasionally angry and experiencing self-doubt, while at others feeling optimistic, well-supported and hugely enthusiastic. She found it hard to initiate communication with her supervisors when things were not going well and she really needed help, preferring to soldier on until things changed. Perhaps like her creative participants she was trying to transform the experience into one from which she could learn.

6.4 Implications for Counselling Psychology

6.4.1 Implications for policy/provision

In 1988, Wills & Cooper suggested that in view of the high levels of stress experienced by musicians that stress management and career guidance be introduced into their training. Almost twenty years later, there is little evidence that these innovations have been introduced, with rare exceptions.

At present there are several books: Williamon, (2004), Evans (2003), Wilson (2002), Rink (2002) and Parncutt & McPherson (2002) addressed to the performing musician which offer suggestions based on research evidence for improving performance which include managing certain stressors, especially performance anxiety but none so far for composers, reflecting the scarcity of studies on this group.

Williamon and co-researchers at the Royal College of Music have developed a general lifestyle programme aimed at enhancing performance for their students based on their earlier research. This incorporates physical fitness, work on lifestyle factors like drug and alcohol use, bio-and neuro-feedback techniques and mental skills training. The latter, using techniques adapted from sports psychology programmes for elite athletes, includes relaxation techniques, imagery and visualisation work, mental rehearsal techniques and work on shifting and controlling attention, including elements of mindfulness.

Williamon (2004) found that when asked where they would go for help with physical or psychological problems, 78% of his students said to their teacher, 14% a friend and 8% a specialist clinic. No-one appeared to mention their GP, other NHS services or non-specialist services. This suggests that provision is not perceived to exist there as yet. This is borne out by the fact that BAPAM, the British Association for Performing Arts Medicine, the main organisation to whom the Musicians' Union and other bodies refer people, deals predominantly with physical problems. Thus there is a need for special provision for counselling help for musicians as a whole.

Raeburn (1999, 2000) a psychologist working with popular musicians in California, has shown that many of them have traits that increase their vulnerability to psychological problems, and she cites self-critical thinking and perfectionism (which were found in this study) known vulnerability factors for anxiety and depression problems. It is not known how prevalent depression and anxiety problems are in composers but the present study suggests that, as in the US, provision could be improved.

The extant literature does not include any clinical work or research studies with composers as yet. Fundamental work needs to be done so that provision for their needs can be better addressed.

6.4.2 Implications for practice

One of the consistent findings in creativity research, confirmed in the present study, is that creative people are often able to reflect on and analyse their weaknesses and failures in such a way as to learn from them and to reframe them as opportunities to learn. Policastro & Gardner (1999) refer to this as "converting differences into advantages" (p. 223). This is often accompanied by the belief that creative potential is malleable and can develop, rather than being fixed and unchanging (Dweck, 2000). People who cannot convert problems into opportunities not only suffer higher levels of stress but also are at greater risk of developing more serious problems later.

Many of the therapeutic approaches used by counselling psychologists aim to help clients become more flexible and confident and develop their potential. CBT, humanistic and psychodynamic approaches can all contribute in their different ways.

Person-centred therapy (Rogers, 1951) emphasises this tendency for personal growth and values individualism and autonomy. Creativity is for Rogers a sign of mental well-being. Sheldon et al. (2003) have applied Self Determination Theory clinically. They argue that it is consistent with a person-centred therapeutic approach. Assuming that well-being is achieved through the satisfaction of the needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness, the aim is to enhance the person's sense of optimally integrated self-

regulated functioning by "autonomy support". Having a secure internal locus of causality is seen as fundamental to this. This has three aspects: acknowledging the clients' perspective, providing choice where possible in the therapy and providing a meaningful rationale when choice cannot be provided. They argue that by supporting the need for autonomy, the need for relatedness and competence can also be addressed. The clinician is seen as connecting with and nurturing the client's growth-seeking self.

As described the approach does not seem inconsistent with a CBT perspective either, where a collaborative relationship with clear agreed goals and methods of guided discovery are used to modify maladaptive beliefs, which often include external attribution of control.

Recent developments in positive psychology (Snyder & Lopez, 2005), have shown how understanding and fostering the strengths that are protective against psychological problems, like self-efficacy and resilience, can not only help prevent problems occurring, and recovery from difficulties and problems, but can also enhance potential, happiness and well-being (Maddux, 2005).

Self-efficacy beliefs have emerged as an important ingredient in the sense of agency, influencing goal-setting, choices of goal-directed activities, effort expended and persistence (Bandura, 1986) as well as reactions to discrepancies between performance and goals. It also influences the effectiveness of problem-solving and decision-making (Bandura, 1997).

Maddux (2003) suggests that self-efficacy theory emphasises arranging experiences designed to increase self-efficacy for specific behaviour in particular challenging situations. This approach favours enhancing a sense of mastery and control, setting concrete and specific goals and identifying behaviour needed. Thus it is compatible with CBT where the therapeutic process is guided by clear goal-setting, targeting maladaptive behaviour, emotions and cognitions (Hollon & Beck, 1994).

Enhanced self-efficacy beliefs, together with the availability of appropriate challenges and suitable goals create the conditions for flow states to occur (Csikszentmihalyi, 2005) which in turn foster further growth, or the progressive identification and engagement in increasingly more complex challenges.

Thus research and clinical evidence is emerging which underwrites the efficacy and effectiveness of interventions within the major therapeutic models which are of particular relevance to participants in this study.

6.5 Suggestions for Further Research

A number of general and specific ideas flow from the current findings. In general terms, in order to increase confidence in the findings it would be helpful to carry out more qualitative work with composers and to triangulate using multiple methods, a survey being an especially appropriate method. Surveying composers using the themes and sub-themes that emerged as a foundation for the development of survey questions and attitude statements would be useful in testing the robustness of the findings. Additionally it would be interesting in its own right to establish and explore the larger-scale demographics of this group, about which not much is known within music psychology.

An alternative approach would be to use focus group discussions, groups consisting of composers selected on the basis of variables such as experience, musical domain, age, gender and so on. As well as generating shared social representations of salient issues, this would enable the findings to be associated in greater detail with these variables some of which may be especially important or may not have emerged in the current study. It would also enable similarities and differences, divergences and convergences to be identified.

Moreover it would be useful to collect quantitative data on the general psychological health and well-being of composers by using reliable psychometric measures such as GHQ, BDI and so on, and measures of stress and quality of life, so that findings could be compared to work already done with other types of musician. This work would be extended with the administering of personality tests so that comparison could be made with previous studies.

More specifically, emerging from the current findings, it would be interesting to test Simon's (2004) hypothesis about the relationship between multiple identities, need satisfaction and perceived distinctiveness directly by comparing composers with more diversified identity configurations with those having fewer, using measures of self-efficacy, quality of life and well-being.

It would also be interesting to pursue the question of diversity into non musical identities and to investigate the relationship between the two. Perhaps Brewer's (2003) theory of Optimal Distinctiveness (the idea of integration within diversity) would shed light on the processes of maintaining and integrating Identities in Music.

It would be interesting to survey counsellors and psychologists who work with musicians about the type of issues composers they have seen have presented, in order to have baseline information about incidence and further to build a profile of their stressors, problems and salient issues.

Finally, it would be fascinating to collect a series of case-studies of individual composers, richly to supplement the current findings and suggest further avenues to be explored.

6.6 Final Thoughts

This study has opened up a previously neglected area, and it is to be hoped that further work will now be forthcoming. It is also hoped that these findings will help raise awareness of the needs of this group among counselling psychologists and others, and lead to better provision for meeting them.

"To the extent that an artist survives, describes and then transforms psychological pain into an experience with universal meaning, his or her journey becomes one that others can thus better protected, take. Those less able to do so need to be able to ask for and receive help. Too often they remain isolated, and blame themselves. Don't accept it as part of creative life – it is the transformation that is creative." Jamison (1994, p. 120).

Ultimately helping musicians to live and work better helps all those who find inspiration, solace and joy in the music they give.

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Appendix 1 Interview Schedule

The first part covered the areas of identity and sense of self.

Key questions

1. How would you describe yourself as a musician?
What does being a musician mean to you?
2. What do you see as the benefits/of being such a musician?

Probes:

- (1) the areas of fame, recognition and status. fortune
- (2) follow up on status from whom – e.g. peers, society, which others?
- (3) fulfilment – what does it represent? goals and ambitions?
- (4) How do you know how well you are doing?
- (5) achievements – products, like recordings, performances, books

3. What do you see as the downside of being a musician?

probes:

- (1) difficulties with money,
- (2) problems with inspiration
- (3) the flow of work
- (4) getting on with the work

The second area covered the areas of doing the musical work

Key questions:

1. How do you work on your music?
2. What things make it easier for you to work on your music?

probes:

- (1) practicalities – where and when work best
- (2) relationship to technology and their instrument
- (3) collaborating with other musicians
- (4) collaborating with non-musicians eg commissioners, producers, directors
- (5) realising artistic creativity – what works
- (6) evolution of any methods or techniques that benefit the process of working
- (7) other emotional factors

3. What things make it harder for you to work on your music?

probes:

- (1) practicalities and pressures including deadlines
- (2) physical factors eg strain, injury,
- (3) emotional factors including stressors, dilemmas, conflicts
- (4) not being inspired, not getting g into it – process issues
- (5) social factors

4. How do you try to deal with your difficulties?

probe

- (1) specific techniques whether practical or emotional
- (2) effective and ineffective coping strategies eg denial, procrastination, avoidance, etc
- (3) help-seeking behaviour – where, when
- (4) use of medication, self-medication
- (5) attitudes to therapy and its relevance to their concerns

Interview Schedule (3)

The third area looks at the impact of the work on social and personal life

Key question:

How do you think being a composer has affected your personal and social life?

probes:

- (1) follow up questions on partners, family life, friendships inside and outside music
- (2) interests and activities outside music
- (3) how person compares themselves to others and which others
- (4) views on the critics, audiences, fans

Appendix 2: Demographic Questionnaire

No:

MUSICIANS' BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET

Gender male / female

Age: below 19 20 – 29 30 – 39 40 – 49
50 – 59 60 – 69 70- 79 80 +

Are you: single / cohabiting / married / remarried / separated / divorced / widowed ?

Number of children: none / 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 or more

How would you describe your ethnic background?

.....

What instrument/s do you play?

.....
.....

What are your musical skills? Please tick

Composer/song writer	Singer	Instrumental performer
Producer	Arranger	Session player
Conductor	Teacher/tutor	Music lecturer
Music researcher	Workshop leader	Music therapist
Other		

.....

What type(s) of music do you compose?

The following categories give a range of styles – please tick any that apply to your work and add others that are missing

classical	opera	avant-garde	jazz
blues	country	folk	pop
rock	reggae	dance	indie
latin	electronic	ethnic (state which region)	

Other styles:

.....
.....

What musical training/education have you had?

.....
.....
.....

What qualifications, if any, do you have in music?

.....
.....

How many days in an average week do you spend working on compositions in any way at all ?

.....

What other paid or unpaid MUSIC RELATED work do you do?

.....
.....

What other paid or unpaid NON-MUSIC RELATED work do you do?

.....
.....

Have you had any psychotherapy or counselling?

Yes / No

If so, was it concerned in any way with issues relating to your work as a composer?

Yes / No

Appendix 3 Summary of Demographic Information

Gender

13 male
3 female

Age

20 – 29, 1
30 – 39 3
40 – 49 4
50 – 59 4
60 – 69 3
70+ 1

Marital status

8 married
6 cohabiting
1 single
1 widowed

Number of children

no children – 5
one child - 4
two children – 5
three or more children - 2

Ethnic background

12 British white
1 Mixed race
1 African,
1 European
1 did not respond

Musical skills beside composition:

performing	16
singing	2
teaching, workshops	12
conducting	8
arranging	9
producing	9
session player	8
organising festivals	3
theatre or dance	2

music special needs advisor 1

Musical genres they use in composing

Number of genres mentioned:

1	4 people
2-3	3
4-6	3
7-9	4
over 9	2

Musical Training/Education

degree or postgraduate level	8
no formal training	6
music certificates, diplomas	2

Days in a week spent composing:

1- 3 days	4
4 -5 days	2
6 days	4
7 days	5
varies	1

Other current music-related work:

performing	7
teaching	7
consultancy	1
organising	1

Non-music related work

being a magistrate	1
being a Samaritan	1
painting and writing books	3
translating	1

Some Experiences of therapy: 6

Was the therapy related to work: No: 4 Yes: 2

Appendix 4: Biographical information on participants

Rose

For Rose music has always been a delightful part of life and she cannot conceive of life without it. She has written pieces from childhood onwards. Coming from a supportive and encouraging background and now married to a musician, she finds satisfaction in writing for particular performers and having works commissioned, played, and recorded. Squeezing in work on her compositions between her extensive teaching, research and performing commitments has become necessary and she is an experienced and capable multi-tasker. Over the years ideas and inspiration have always come and she has sometimes reworked and altered old pieces extensively, even after many years, as her work has evolved. Aware of how male-dominated her musical world is, and how men's and women's works can be appraised differently, she has only relatively recently had the confidence to declare herself a composer. Accepting that her type of contemporary music is a specialist interest, she appreciates it when audiences enjoy her works, but does not expect to become rich or famous doing it and is sanguine about her works surviving her. She regards all criticism as publicity and having had different critics respond to the same work with reactions ranging from very positive to very negative she takes little notice aesthetically of what is said. Self-belief is important to her and she is the main arbiter of her work. Her social life is mainly around people interested in music with whom she feels understood and comfortable, especially performers. When she is stressed she plays her piano, or writes.

Robin

Robin, now retired from his academic work, and finding more time to devote to his composing, has written a large oeuvre of works in a range of genres, popular and classical, and has enjoyed seeing them performed and recorded. He has enjoyed cherished associations with particular performers and had much early encouragement from teachers. His own inner music has accompanied his journey through life and is a prized and often secret source of joy. Communicating through works which are both enjoyable and well constructed is important to him, and he would like his art to survive once he is gone. As a child he suffered from obsessions and compulsions and having managed to control them, has channelled these tendencies productively into his work. He enjoys getting involved in the recording process, and likes a sense of control over how his works are played. He used to take a lot of notice of reviews, good and bad, and has learned to distance himself from them. Writing for him can be a bit like dreaming, but he works systematically at pieces, especially at night when it is quiet and there are no distractions. He sees his works as his children, who have a character and life of their own, and has never wanted any other kind of heirs. For Robin, music has been at the centre of life, although he has played an active part in the community and he enjoys the license to be eccentric that being identified as a composer can bring.

Colin

Colin greatly values his developed musical skills, which he has applied to his compositions, covering a wide range of styles. In recent years, since his marriage, his productivity has hugely increased and computer and recording technology have also helped the working process go faster and smoother. Combining composing with an advisory music teaching post, directing a choir and book editing, Colin relishes the variety and challenge and describes himself as a 'free spirit' on an artistic journey through life. His path has had its obstacles: such as having a painful disability affecting the mobility of his joints. This has resulted in his work being concentrated intensively in periods when his health is better, but poor health prevented him from earning a living at one time. He takes solace from the struggles that composers in the past have had and his self-belief has inspired him to write technically demanding works that communicate great *joie de vivre*. Colin's style, which has evolved over the years, has broad appeal, and he enjoys being inspired by the landscape near his village and uses his music to promote community issues such as nature conservation. He publishes all his works himself and is involved in self-promotion and marketing. He can be self-critical and perfectionist in his work, but likes to show fellow musicians work in progress and acts on what they say. Regarding the classical music establishment as very elitist spurs him on to greater efforts to make his work better and help it find a wider audience. His friends are both musicians and outside music, but they all enjoy listening, and his wife has become more and more interested in music, without being especially encouraged by him. He enjoys being seen as a character in his village and would equally like to be regarded as an entertainer as an intellectual/academic.

James

As a child James escaped into music and started composing when his mother's illnesses made life at home very difficult. His compositions are mainly in the classical and avant-garde areas. He sees himself as creating a sustainable career in what he regards as a small-scale cliquey area, where it is extremely hard to earn a living from composing, and where recognition does not always follow merit. Much of his writing is concentrated outside term-times, when his teaching permits. He writes to commission only, and enjoys writing for particular performers that he knows. He loves the work and the sense of satisfaction it can bring. For him the key to writing a good piece is understanding the point of it, and he sets great store on allowing his unconscious full sway so intellectual considerations do not hinder the creative process. He enjoys combining composing with other activities which he sees as feeding ideas into his work. He sees himself as continuing to develop his personal style and learning resilience and self-belief, so that he is not so strongly identified with his work and can learn to trust the process and his own abilities. At the time of the interview James was struggling with how to combine his composing, which needed peace and quiet, with having a young baby and other practical demands on his time.

Ian

An entirely self-taught musician, Ian began composing at an early age for the Boys' Brigade Marching Band. He spent many years as a performer/composer in pop music, playing lead guitar in some very successful bands and having the pop musician lifestyle. Discovering that he could write music in many styles liberated him to become self-employed rather than working with or for others. He loves the independence, control and freedom this brings and it has enabled him to follow his own path rather than one chosen for him by others, although he occasionally still co-writes pieces for performers. As a composer he has also learned to become less personal about his work and is now indifferent to comment about it. His rewards are doing a good job, being well paid for it and getting asked again. He thrives on variety and versatility now, whereas when he was solely a performer his musical interests were very much fashion-led. He has also enjoyed a stable income which has enabled him to bring up his children without financial worries. He enjoys both working at home and studio work, but finds it frustrating when recording his compositions is held up by the unavailability of particular musicians. Although his touring days are largely over, he still enjoys gigging with musicians who, like himself, have an impressive track record and play mainly for the fun of it. He got little benefit from therapy for his writer's block and self-help eventually enabled him to regain confidence in his ability to work after a miserable and unproductive year.

Nigel

Nigel's college compositions got a lot of attention but he initially pursued a career as a solo classical performer, which was always very stressful and uncertain and not well paid, before, with the help of therapy, deciding to change direction and become a professional composer. He discovered not only that it was far more enjoyable and better paid but it felt right and he could create a viable career, starting with work for nature films on TV and moving across into other areas including TV drama and film. As a result performing itself became simply a pleasure and he finds great fulfilment in being creative. He has developed a comfortable pattern of work and enjoys both working at home and successfully recording his work in the studio and he has a pool of players he uses whose work he respects. His media work brings him in contact with producers and directors who may be musically illiterate and he has to find ways of providing what is wanted in a way that works artistically and technically. He uses improvisation a lot to develop ideas but often has to compromise these to fit within budgets. He has won prizes for his work and yet been treated with disrespect, learning not to take comments on his work personally. He enjoys the company of other musicians, with whom he sees himself sharing a way of being and life. In his village he enjoys being treated as special and is proud of what he has achieved. Therapy has helped him manage the ups and downs of life and work and find his true direction.

Rupert

Looking back, Rupert attributes his career as a media composer to serendipity as well as ability. Unusual in being salaried over many years working for a long-running TV series he enjoyed a security and continuity that made him the envy of fellow-composers, although he served a long apprenticeship as a performer before finding that niche. Finding hard work exhilarating, he got excited when jobs came in and sometimes took on too much. However, although he had what he described as the best job in the world, work was only one part of his life and he kept it in proportion. Family and other interests always played their part. Accepting that media work is teamwork and that such music is often ephemeral, Rupert enjoys the musical challenges that that work brings, including fitting into tight schedules and having to make compromises in the music as a result of working under pressure. Having been treated as ammunition in political battles between producers and editors or directors he found ways of being diplomatic in the face of musical ignorance, and stopped himself dwelling on it. His work developed his qualities of self-discipline and organisation and he enjoys playing with creative ideas. Now combining performing with composing jobs Rupert always enjoys socialising with fellow musicians. Family life is very important to him and as well as his own grown up offspring he has a younger family of adopted children. He has many interests outside music and is thoroughly enjoying his semi-retirement.

Dennis

Dennis takes huge pride in being a jack of all trades and seeing himself as a highly skilled professional craftsman working in many musical styles. Coming from an environment where being artistic was seen as feminine, playing in a brass band was for him an acceptably manly route into music. He never planned to write music (he regards calling himself a composer as being a bit pretentious) but discovered he could do it when he was in the services. Looking back over a long career Dennis takes pride in the wide range of work he has done. Seeing music as a spiritual calling which made it important to make full use of his talents, Dennis recognises the importance of unconscious processes in the gestation of work and allows them through when developing new pieces. For instance inspiration can come at any time and has its own rhythm. Despite this, he has always also had a strong critical inner voice which he has tried to ignore over the years and which has always made it hard for him to write his own music, music which no one has asked him to provide. Yet being an all-rounder and not developing his 'own' style has given him great freedom of expression. Always having been self-employed has made it hard to guarantee a steady income and he always found it hard to promote himself, getting all his jobs on merit. Music is always a source of great joy for him, and he particularly values recognition by and socialising with fellow musicians. He prides himself also on having brought up children who have become well-adjusted and confident adults.

Linda

Music has always been the most important thing for Linda and she strives to make her art ('intelligent pop music') reflect her life: her songs often

drawing on her experiences and humanitarian beliefs. Communicating is important to her and she would like her work to be popular and perhaps to help people. She values the freedom and independence doing her own music has finally given her, but pop chart success as such never made her happy. She has been honing her self-taught playing and writing skills so she can better realise the inner music she hears and she loves singing and working with musicians she knows well. Always seen as a talented woman, after getting a major recording deal, she realised that people in the music industry treated her as a commodity and wanted to control her both her work and appearance. Not prepared to compromise her integrity she decided to follow her own independent path which is harder but more fulfilling. She has become a stronger person after losing and then regaining faith in herself through her own efforts and she does voluntary work to help those less fortunate than herself. She has always had a close relationship with her mother (her parents divorced when she was a toddler) and a core of friends who are very important to her while others who resented her success and were envious became less close. Her partner is a musician and composer. She has strong religious beliefs which sustain her and she loves hearing that her music has a healing force for others.

Robert

Robert performs his compositions which draw on a European ethnic tradition to which he brings a unique sensibility and approach. Brought up in Europe, and bilingual, he is equally at home in the UK. After working as a performer for some time, although enjoying travel, he tired of the constant touring, and with the arrival of two children now finds he likes taking them away with him if he is on the road. He feels he comes alive on stage and loves communicating with his audience, although his music always has to live up to his own aesthetic and technical standards first. He has found as a musician he has been stereotyped as being unreliable, bohemian and eccentric and has suffered from being given lack of respect and poor pay. On the other hand fans treat him offstage as if he is the same as when he performs, which disconcerts him as he tries to keep his professional and personal sides separate. He has learned how to promote his work and himself and enjoys the recognition he has gained. He draws on his life experiences in his work and enjoys meeting people from all walks of life. He has developed his own working routine but it hard to adhere to, although he finds deadlines help him focus. He enjoys challenging himself and wants to write larger scale works. His career was interrupted by an injury whose recurrence is a constant worry, but he wrote more because he was not able to play. Sometimes he has periods of self-doubt and questions what he is doing: at those times playing usually helps take the stress away. He listens carefully to all comments about his music and then forms his own judgement. Thus playing his own music and feeling he has done a good job is instantly gratifying for him.

Alan

Alan comes from a classical background but has a very broad interest in music as a whole and avoids being pigeonholed as he is experimenting with a lot of musical styles. He sees himself as an artist with a palette of

sounds creating work which is beautiful and can have a spiritual dimension, which really nourishes people. While his music exposes him and his vulnerabilities, doing it makes him stronger. He writes when commissioned and also when inspired to do so. Inspiration comes from many sources including photographic images from nature and when inspired he goes with the flow, preferring to compose on an instrument so he can experiment as he writes before moving to computer technology for notation. He has certain players he likes to work with and relies on having overall control over the working process. He would like to leave works behind and would prefer to write great music rather than enjoy success for work which is inferior. As a creative person he sees himself as taking risks and being vulnerable to insecurity but as a result is more open to development and personal and artistic growth. His father is a priest and he has needed time as an adult to re-evaluate the effects of his religious upbringing and to confirm his own beliefs.

Ben

Ben is at a relatively early stage in his composing career. Music always was a big interest of his, and when it started to dominate everything else, Ben decided to give up his job and devote himself to it and went to study it at college. Finding himself much happier and more satisfied he has however found a composer's life lonely and misses the companionship of work colleagues. However he has always enjoyed playing and wants to get his own band off the ground. Musicians share a lifestyle and Ben sees them as more tolerant and open-minded because of the collaborative nature of their work. He sees his music as a form of self-expression as well as communication and is developing his own individual voice, vocabulary and working pattern. Although self-questioning, he accepts that music is a very competitive world and is making progress as he gains experience, although he sometimes feels vulnerable as he has exposed his feelings in the music. His friends are all interested in music and he is looking forward to doing instrumental teaching in the future as well as continue with the community theatre work he has so enjoyed.

Vince

Much of Vince's work as a creative performer is in the improvised area but he has written pieces in classical, folk, electronic, jazz and other styles. He decided to go into music when very young, despite huge opposition from his father who made other plans for him. Over the years he has developed strong and satisfying musical relationships with other improvisers with whom he shares a syntax and vocabulary as well as deep familiarity with their strengths, weaknesses and predilections. This familiarity has allowed a high order of musical collaboration to develop which has produced some inspired improvisation. Doing the music has always been his main reward, as Vince has never had much financial stability from his musical activities. Living as a young adult in an artistic community, he was at home a lot and thus able to have a very active role in his children's upbringing which he enjoyed. Music has always been essential to Vince and he thinks it has helped keep him sane: his type of music requires great sensitivity and receptivity. Musically his ideas have become more cohesive with time if no longer full of youthful energy and

physicality. He looks for a balance between self-expression and clarity in his playing and to further develop the collaborative cohesion within his group of players. He has felt alienated and marginalised in recent years because of the lack of opportunities to play and the low status and level of remuneration for work in his domain. However there are a number of recordings of his work and he likes the idea of them documenting his approach.

Adam

Well into his 70s Adam still enjoys the explorative playing both solo and with others that has earned him a world-wide reputation in his area of improvised music. In the early days he used to be heckled and members of the audience would walk out during gigs but more recently his type of music has attracted a small but dedicated following. He finds playing endlessly renewing and like to approach each creative situation feeling physically relaxed and technically ready. He has worked many times with very accomplished players from many musical cultures previously unfamiliar with free improvisation and enjoys doing what he does in their context. What he does not like is playing with the same people over many weeks and months as the music starts to fall into patterns and ceases to be fresh and creative. Putting himself into a state of 'hyper-conscious reactivity' enables him to create good music which reflects both the logical and more Dadaistic sides to his nature. Disliking travel when much of his work is outside the UK has necessitated him developing a pattern whereby he can settle and relax before a gig. For many years Adam has had his own record label which chronicles much of the work he has done. Adam has uncompromisingly followed his own artistic path and though the rewards have not been financial, artistically they have been there in abundance.

Susan

Susan combines media work for radio and theatre with free improvised music and clearly loves doing all of it as well as teaching and examining. She is a multi-instrumentalist and includes some unusual instruments as well as electronics in her improvised work. She writes usually to commission. Working at home and having the freedom to control how and when she works is very important to her. Despite having few female role models she finds plenty of validation for her work in the satisfaction of doing it. She is equally happy producing yards of music for a drama as doing a solo improvisation and is versatile in her working methods. There is one side to her creative process which gets on with it, and another that stands back and observes and both play their part. She needs to know exactly what she is doing for her compositions, whereas for her improvisation she tries not to bring any preconceptions. She has learned to detach herself and remain impersonal when faced with difficult directors or producers and enjoys having her own dedicated space in which to work. When her son was young, as a working mother she relied on help with childcare from her family and this enabled her to take on less well paid jobs. She enjoys playing to an appreciative audience and is amused if her instrumental students come along to her improvised gigs.

She uses an enormously wide vocabulary of sound and clearly relishes being at the cutting edge.

David

For some years David led a number of jazz groups playing his music, in which solos were improvised over chord changes. More recently he has been branching out into a whole number of styles and writing some extended and large scale works for orchestra. For him, following his own musical choices has always been paramount and it has been hugely rewarding for him to write and record complex and exciting music which communicates to people. Deciding to have a manager to find and organise work for him and his ensembles has freed him up to concentrate on the artistic side and he has found he can work in more prestigious venues and build a higher profile as a result. Coming from a family dedicated to the work ethic has helped David be flexible and make full use of his time and he is a highly productive individual, despite having 3 children, one of whom is a toddler. He takes pride in being in control of his work and being a good diplomat and these skills have helped him manage a big band and run successful tours. Trying to create an international rather than a British profile, which is vital to ensure lasting success, has forced David to confront some of his 'jazzier' prejudices and assumptions. He has enjoyed communicating with his fans and audience and values his long-term collaborative relationships with other musicians. He enjoys taking artistic licence to be a bit wild or eccentric if he chooses and is very enthusiastic about what he does.

Appendix 5 Further information for interviewees

What led up to the research

Thank you for showing an interest in my work. I am a psychologist who has worked over many years as a lecturer and researcher and I have recently become a chartered Counselling Psychologist. I have had a lifelong passion for music both as a participant and a listener and I am now providing counselling to musicians, many seeking help with problems relating to their work.

The present project, for a D.Psych, gives me the opportunity to bring together these two areas of interest. I would like my findings to be helpful both in developing better counselling support services for musicians and in informing others who work with them. Equally, this work can generate ideas to help musicians prevent and manage their difficulties better on their own.

Aim and nature of the study

The main aim of the study is to identify and explore the particular psychological concerns and issues that classical and popular composers, songwriters and improvisers experience in connection with their work, and how they deal with them. I am also interested in looking at how these concerns affect other aspects of their lives. I am concentrating on people who create and write music as they have been a surprisingly neglected group.

Who is being interviewed?

I shall be conducting in-depth interviews with composers of various types of music, trained and self-taught, whether earning a living from music or earning little or nothing at all from it, whether their work has been published, performed and recorded or not. The group will include people with other musical and non-musical work beside writing music and cover a range of ages and experience.

Confidentiality and anonymity of participants

Interviews will be recorded on minidisks and transcribed in full. Transcripts and disks will be kept in a locked cabinet without any identifying details and only used by myself and my research supervisors: Dr Alison Macdonald at City University and Professor David Hargreaves at the University of Surrey Roehampton.

The thesis will be kept in the Library at City University. It will include anonymised direct quotes from interviews and every effort will be made to preserve confidentiality.

Background Questionnaire

I am distributing an anonymous questionnaire to all participants asking for general background information. This information will be collated and appear in summary form in the thesis. I would be grateful if you could complete and return this questionnaire to me either before or at the interview.

About the interview itself

The interview will take between one and one and a half hours. If I am visiting you at your home or office I would be grateful if you could arrange to see me in a quiet room and try to make sure we will not be disturbed or interrupted during the interview.

I shall be asking you about how you see yourself as a musician, about your working methods and what makes it easier and harder for you in your creative work and how you deal with difficulties that arise. I shall also ask you about how your work as a composer impacts on other aspects of your life – family life and personal relationships, social life and non-work activities. I would be most grateful to hear of any other suitable musicians who would be willing to take part in this research. If you think you know anyone suitable, please let me know how to contact them.

Carol Chapman

Appendix 6 Consent Form

I (please print name) have read the background information to the study and understand the purpose of the work and what is required of me. I have been able to discuss any questions I have about the study with Carol Chapman and these have been answered to my satisfaction.

I understand that every reasonable step will be taken to preserve anonymity and protect my identity in any written record or publication arising from this work.

I hereby consent to being interviewed and for the interview to be recorded and transcribed. I understand that my consent may be withdrawn at any time.

Signed

Date

Interviewer

Date

Appendix 7: Master table of themes

Theme 1 : Identity

Sub-theme 1 : How I describe myself, locating myself

- 1.1.1 Musical role/s
- 1.1.2 What type of composer
- 1.1.3 Putting myself into the music
- 1.1.4 Being part of a musical community

Sub-theme 2: Why I do it

- 1.2.1 What I want to do
- 1.2.2 Expression and communication
- 1.2.3 Wanting to get the music right
- 1.2.4 Being recognised, praised and rewarded

Sub-theme 3: The downside of doing it

- 1.3.1 Not being treated well
- 1.3.2 Being solitary, in own inner world

Theme 2: Getting the flow going: the creative process

Sub theme 1 Working process

- 2. 1.1 Deciding what to do and when to do it
- 2. 1.2 Getting started
- 2. 1.3 Keeping going
- 2. 1.4 Knowing when to stop

Sub theme 2 What enables me to do it

- 2. 2.1 Congenial working conditions
- 2. 2.2 A working pattern
- 2. 2.3 A sense of control

Sub theme 3 Dealing with external pressures and distractions

- 2. 3.1 Fluctuations in the flow of work
- 2. 3.2 Problems with technology and equipment

Sub-theme 4 Working collaboratively with others

- 2.4.1 Performers
- 2.4.2 Directors and producers
- 2.4.3 Managers and agents

Theme 3: A composer's lifestyle

- 3.1 **Sub-theme 1** Achieving a work-life balance
- 3.2 **Sub-theme 2** Creating and following a career path
- 3.3 **Sub-theme 3** Fitting into the community

Appendix 8:

Theme 1: Identity

Sub-theme 1.1 How I describe myself

Participant alias	Musical roles	What type of composer	Putting myself into the music	Being part of a musical community
Rose	1.3, 2.26, 17.30	1.34, 1.49	9.45	1.51, 13.23, 17.2, 17.10, 18.3
Robin	1.13		22.35	14.45
Colin	1.3, 1.38	1.14, 1.35, 3.18	4.6, 6.42, 18.47	7.8, 29.22
James	1.32	1.32, 1.51	14.39	
Ian	1.8, 1.32	1.33		9.40
Nigel	1.8	1.4	23.19	8.37, 20.50
Rupert	1.4	1.1	8.44	24.34
Dennis	1.4, 1.11, 1.24	1.4, 1.9, 9.39, 9.51, 16.16,	12.35, 14.42	8.14, 13.4, 27.15
Linda	1.3, 1.18	1.4	1.10, 1.31, 2.17	7.17, 7.29
Robert	1.15, 1.23, 1.44, 3.7	1.45	26.22, 27.54	2.36, 3.35, 17.11
Alan	1.4, 2.40,	1.4, 1.12, 1.20, 2.36	16.3, 18.23, 22.49, 26.39, 27.1	2.1, 16.36, 26.10, 26.20
Ben	1.3	1.4	15.53, 21.50, 22.6	1.29, 1.53, 9.57, 20.46
Vince	1.4, 1.15, 1.17	1.24	1.41, 8.5, 21.55	1.50, 3.32, 31.5
Adam	1.3, 1.36, 2.7	1.18, 3.49,	5.23, 15.28	5.55
Susan	1.3	1.5, 1.25, 23.41		
David	1.7, 1.29	1.39, 2.31, 2.54, 3.49	33.41	3.27, 3.36, 15.55, 26.40

**Appendix 9: Theme 1: Identity,
Sub-theme 1:2 Why I do it**

Participant alias	What I want to do	Expression And communication	Wanting to get the music right	Being recognised praised and rewarded
Rose	8.36, 9.33, 14.48, 25.12	5.54	5.42	12.53, 13.1, 24.36, 26.51,
Robin	1.26, 23.11 17.49	1.54, 2.23, 7.36, 12.47, 14.21	2.30, 7.19, 7.39, 19.57, 20.18	7.36, 11.37, 33.36,
Colin	22.17, 24.2	1.54; 5.10, 27.19;	6.35; 14.5	18.17
James	19.6	12.14, 24.21, 24.42	8.15, 13.30	7.45, 7.55, 19.26, 20.8,
Ian	14.28, 16.13		15.15, 15.41	14.34, 15.11, 26.34
Nigel	14.5, 17.37	17.20	1.44, 1.52. 4.39	18.10, 18.15, 18.22, 18.40, 23.39
Rupert	1.40, 1.47, 3.52, 11.45, 24.54	4.45, 5.6, 9.49, 10.1, 19.53	4.6, 4.11	20.53, 21.21, 22.21
Dennis	7.38, 15.34, 19.10, 28.15	1.49, 2.21, 14.9,	15.13, 15.54,	1.40, 7.38, 8.4, 8.56, 10.16, 15.1, 26.43
Linda	2.54, 6.5, 18.35, 26.53	3.20, 16.13	3.52, 4.48	15.8, 15.29, 15.31, 16.37, 16.40, 17.31
Robert	8.35, 8.47, 28.27	8.41, 20.43, 28.49	10.39, 19.29	1.23, 10.6, 10.31, 10.53, 20.1
Alan	22.49, 22.54	7.14, 11.16, 19.25, 19.49	7.38	9.47, 10.36
Ben	15.4, 15.22, 18.38	10.54, 11.47, 12.17	13.11	11.22, 13.46, 13.52
Vince	16.7, 16.13	2.4, 2.12, 4.1, 4.23, 9.21, 20.20, 32.24	11.41, 12.3, 30.31, 32.4,	8.51
Adam	7.51, 8.2, 14.51	4.23, 8.17, 29.8	4.33, 13.32	10.23, 23.8,
Susan	1.48, 14.39, 23.41	2.21, 7.49, 8.11, 25.11	2.37	13.37
David	1.7, 19.39	5.24, 17.6, 17.13	20.23	17.6, 17.13, 20.24, , 20.32

Appendix 10: Theme 1: Identity
Sub-theme 1:3 the downside of doing it

Participant alias	Not being treated well	Being solitary, in own inner world
Rose	2.13, 13.23, 18.49	22.53
Robin	36.10, 36.24	30.14, 31.22, 37.13
Colin	20.49, 21.32	2.56, 14.51, 15.1, 29.22
James	11.16, 18.36, 18.42	10.41, 17.14, 22.48, 23.49
Ian	13.5, 13.28, 18.30, 18.40, 19.6	9.23
Nigel	22.13	19.20, 19.29,
Rupert	8.28, 10.1	
Dennis	26.21, 26.25	
Linda	7.53, 10.36, 11.11, 11.29, 12.6	12.26, 13.28, 17.19
Robert	16.14, 16.27, 23.34, 24.3, 27.25	11.28, 11.32, 11.47
Alan	10.31, 23.42	5.16
Ben	12.41	17.43, 18.23
Vince	9.40	2.21, 3.32, 33.35, 33.50
Adam	10.31, 10.35, 10.43	15.4, 15.9
Susan	10.34, 10.47, 24.26	24.21
David	8.42, 9.15	

Appendix 11

Theme 2: Getting the flow going, the creative process Sub-theme 2:1 Working process

Participant alias	Deciding what to do and when to do it	Getting started	Keeping going	Knowing when to stop
Rose	4.37, 4.55, 21.35	4.56, 5.28, 6.37	3.17, 5.10 16.14, 26.4	5.28
Robin	27.14, 28.7	1.28, 27.27, 6.53, 29.13	1.34	2.47
Colin	8.13, 8.21	7.28, 9.10, 9.55, 16.39, 16.48	6.42, 8.31	5.48, 6.2, 9.45, 14.5
James	3.16	2.39, 3.46 8.25	2.43 5.13, 5.25	14.17
Ian	5.36, 5.43			
Nigel	6.45, 6.52	2.3, 2.13 7.20	16.8, 16.21, 55.52	15.7
Rupert	5.46, 6.43, 23.14	5.24, 5.37	5.53, 10.28	5.46
Dennis	4.47, 7.6	2.50, 4.3, 20.41	7.10, 10.43, 11.9,	10.17, 10.22
Linda	5.11, 6.15, 7.17	5.25, 25.22	3.26, 5.25, 541	3.20, 8.28
Robert	4.35, 11.44	6.53, 19.36	19.46, 19.53	6.36, 6.41, 7.11, 7.40, 8.28
Alan	3.10, 3.20, 3.45, 4,8 14.31, 14.37, 21.1, 21.17	4.17, 4.43	5.11, 5.16, 6.21, 7.4, 7.44,15.16	7.38, 8.11
Ben	3.10, 3.19, 5.32, 6.48	6.16, 19.22,	5.36, 5.47, 7.21, 7.47, 19.33	16.5, 16.31
Vince	4.39, 5.45	5.22, 14.34	14.21	8.28
Adam	2.7, 2.18, 21.12, 22.18,	1.18, 2.46, 3.15	3.29, 3.44, 14.11, 14.42	23.1
Susan	2.56, 3.38, 5.39, 13.44	2.44, 2.48, 4.7, 8.46, 9.8	5.56, 7.11, 22.40, 23.8	
David	12.17	13.24,13.4 5, 14.8,		

Appendix 12

Theme 2: Getting the flow going, the creative process Sub-theme 2:2: What enables me to do it

Participant alias	Congenial working conditions	A working pattern	A sense of control
Rose	5.55, 7.30	7.23	13.31
Robin	6.49	2.42, 6.33	8.43, 14.21, 14.50
Colin	5.48, 10.7, 19.16, 23.45	7.28, 9.6, 9.55, 10.51, 12.19	11.4, 11.20, 11.50, 15.25, 20.4
James	4.50, 5.2, 6.17	2.7, 4.41, 5.23, 6.34	3.31, 5.16, 6.53, 7.26
Ian	3.1, 3.49	3.29, 4.11	6.20, 8.1, 8.16, 8.21, 9.7
Nigel	7.31, 7.35	7.26, 7.44, 8.11, 11.27	
Rupert	12.43	9.1, 9.24, 12.51	10.36, 12.51
Dennis	7.10, 20.39	6.1, 6.44	6.38, 24.23,
Linda	8.55		24.53, 25.6
Robert	4.42, 5.53, 11.33, 11.56, 12.11	5.7, 5.19, 6.41, 11.33	6.7, 6.17, 12.51
Alan	1.21, 1.34, 13.17	5.18	15.25 24.35, 24.37, 24.48
Ben	3.19, 3.39, 5.24, 8.18	3.50, 4.16, 5.20	3.46
Vince	2.45, 8.28, 3.23	3.15, 6.25, 7.6, 25.10, 25.24	32.29
Adam	16.26, 16.35, 25.41		
Susan	3.49, 4.37, 18.38	8.38	5.21, 22.11
David	11.12, 11.32, 12.5, 13.2	11.48, 14.8, 15.19	16.1, 20.19, 26.48

Appendix 13

Theme 2: Getting the flow going, the creative process Sub-theme 2:3 Dealing with external pressures and distractions

Participant alias	Fluctuations in the flow of wok	Problems with technology and equipment
Rose	15.8	7.48
Robin	10.50, 28.54	4.18, 6.21
Colin	13.11	10.27, 14.38
James	17.14, 17.22	
Ian	7.1, 7.19, 7.51	
Nigel	13.42, 13.55	
Rupert	9.1, 9.16 11.22, 11.39	
Dennis	13.19, 13.40, 17.18	17.2
Linda	8.25, 17.14	7.1,
Robert	12.56, 13.1, 13.49	16.27, 16.47
Alan	13.2, 13.29, 13.49, 13.55, 14.2	
Ben	8.10	
Vince	9.42	8.16, 8.28, 27.28
Adam	22.46	7.12
Susan	14.25	12.20, 21.29
David	15.29, 20.53, 21.3, 22.21	10.18

Appendix 14

Theme 2: Getting the flow going, the creative process

Sub-theme 2:4 Working collaboratively with others

Participant alias	Performers	Directors and producers	Managers and agents
Rose	6.24		
Robin	14.48	15.45	
Colin	13.28, 23.47		
James	3.16, 3.33, 3.40, 11.40	13.19	
Ian	8.42, 10.44, 15.44,	20.5, 21.37, 21.53, 31.15	
Nigel	15.1, 15.14, 15.26	1.37, 2.31, 2.50, 3.4, 3.41, 4.39, 5.7	
Rupert	16.4, 16.12, 16.23	5.28, 7.16, 7.46, 7.56, 8.28, 20.53	
Dennis	8.25		
Linda	8.55, 9.21	14.20, 14.37	12.1, 13.30, 14.38, 17.31
Robert	17.11, 17.31		25.28, 25.40, 25.47, 26.10, 26.50
Alan	2.1, 2.10 26.10, 26.20	10.8, 10.16, 10.24,	
Ben	1.53, 21.28		
Vince	21.40, 27.45, 33.23, 33.41		
Adam	27.40, 27.53, 28.3, 28.53		
Susan	15.5, 15.15, 15.33, 24.27,	10.1, 10.47, 11.6, 16.25, 16.45	
David	26.40, 27.12		5.46, 6.12, 6.37

Appendix 15

Theme 3: A composer's lifestyle

Participant alias	Sub-theme 1: Achieving a work-life balance	Sub-theme 2: Creating and following a career path	Sub-theme 3: Fitting into the community
Rose	5.9, 8.14, 15.35	1.34, 1.49, 3.38, 15.53	2.47, 11.32, 17.50, 18.17
Robin	6.21, 24.23, 27.47	9.13, 9.33, 9.46, 13.34	27.14, 31.18, 31.46, 32.50, 34.10
Colin	10.32, 22.19, 23.53, 24.31	2.3, 27.11, 27.28	1.38, 2.38, 5.15, 25.49
James	16.12, 17.7, 17.47, 17.56	2.11, 2.24, 7.37, 11.7	12.16, 12.25, 20.38
Ian	25.12, 25.18, 26.25, 27.40, 28.3	13.5, 13.43, 26.44	11.35, 29.39, 29.45
Nigel	19.35	17.14, 17.20	19.44, 20.12, 20.19
Rupert	12.10, 13.16, 14.36, 15.29, 15.51	1.7, 1.25, 12.31,	14.11, 14.18, 20.9, 20.21
Dennis	5.20, 20.18, 20.57, 25.33	6.16, 9.29, 19.41,	25.14, 25.39, 25.47
Linda	15.16, 21.6, 21.31, 21.56,	15.1, 19.22, 23.14, 23.29	22.27
Robert	8.9, 14.8, 14.23, 15.22, 22.43	10.20, 13.37, 15.46, 22.9	2.31, 9.44, 13.45
Alan	15.36, 15.45, 16.26, 17.6	12.25, 12.41, 12.48, 12.50, 23.9, 23.15	9.4, 9.24,
Ben	17.31	8.34, 17.15	9.18, 20.56, 21.16
Vince	12.1, 17.52	9.46, 11.53, 12.2, 19.50, 22.41	10.9, 10.33, 12.50, 19.1
Adam	17.41, 18.16, 21.28, 23.48	25.54	9.3, 9.28, 10.16, 23.36
Susan	17.14, 17.32, 18.51	18.1, 18.6	13.6, 19.26, 19.52
David	12.40, 23.37, 23.52, 24.24, 24.44,	31.15, 31.39,	16.40, 18.20, 19.15, 25.5, 30.16, 32.51, 33.41

Transcription Conventions

In IPA, the level of transcription is generally semantic (Smith 2003). Therefore while false starts, significant pauses, laughs and other non-verbal features which contribute to meaning are included, prosodic details are not

Participants' names have been changed and other identifying names in the text have been removed and substituted thus e.g. (name of wife), (name of band), (name of city) for reasons of confidentiality.

- | | |
|---------|--|
| () | significant pauses or periods of silence, timed to the nearest second |
| [] | outstanding non-verbal features e.g. laughs, sighs
stressed or emphasised words are shown as underlined |
| becau- | hyphens indicate self-interrupted words |
| erm, um | fillers are included in the transcript |

SECTION C

Case Study

Case-Study: helping Susan keep her head above the parapet

1 Introduction and selection of case

This case was chosen for the following reasons. It illustrates a way of working which I have been developing in a primary care setting, using intermittent periods of brief therapy, which both addresses acute symptoms and helps with more long-standing issues. Additionally Susan's story exemplifies some concerns shared by creative people, and the study shows CBT can be used to address them.

1.1 Theoretical model

Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) developed by Beck (1964, 1976), Ellis (1962), is based on the view that individuals interpret and respond to objectively similar circumstances and events differently. A person's 'take' on a situation is influenced by his/her beliefs, which may be maladaptive and lead to psychological problems. Responses occur at four levels: physiological, cognitive, emotional and behavioural. So, for instance, an architect, an artist, a builder, a burglar, a homeless person and a house-buyer might 'see' the same house differently. In CBT, clients and therapists work together creating a therapeutic alliance, to develop a shared understanding of problems in terms of the relationship between the four levels. Focussing on current difficulties, personalised therapy goals and strategies are agreed, which are reviewed throughout therapy. Therapeutic interventions are inherently empowering in nature, such as exploring and re-evaluating the meaning attributed to events and situations, so clients learn how to tackle problems by harnessing their own resources. Change is encouraged by practising what has been learned between sessions ("homework"). CBT directly targets distressing symptoms so as to reduce distress, re-evaluate thinking and promote helpful behavioural responses, by offering problem-focussed skills-based treatment interventions.

1.2 Work setting

I have been seeing Susan (not her real name: details which could identify her have been changed to protect confidentiality) at a Primary Care practice in London. She was originally referred by her GP for checking behaviour. In accordance with my normal practice I contacted Susan by letter and she responded promptly, indicating either a high level of motivation or great need or both and a first session was arranged.

1.3 The first session: assessment and formulation

The aim of the assessment session, which included assessment for risk, was threefold: firstly, to begin developing a collaborative relationship with Susan while also, secondly, introducing her to the therapeutic model and, thirdly, to find out enough about her view of her problems to develop an initial conceptualisation and an agreed therapy plan.

CBT was chosen because: it is my preferred model; suitable for the brief remit at the surgery, a maximum of 12 sessions; it has proven efficacy for the presented OCD problems, within the available time (NICE 2005). Her suitability for a short-term CBT approach was also assessed using Safran & Segal's (1990) criteria. The assessment session was based on Kirk's (1989) guidelines for CBT assessments, incorporating ideas from Person's (1989) case formulation approach and the CBT case formulation model developed by Bruch (1998). It included appraisal of presenting problems, predisposing factors, modulating factors, precipitating factors and the protective factors (referred to by Dudley and Kuyken, 2006, as the 5 Ps).

As a counselling psychologist trained to use several therapeutic models, I recognise that evidence has been accumulating (Stiles et al., 2006; Roth & Fonagy, 2004, Lane & Corrie, 2006) in support of what is referred to as the 'equivalence paradox', which demonstrates that many therapeutic approaches seem to have equivalent positive outcomes despite radically different theories and techniques. These outcomes are usually

ascribed to common factors in the relationship such as empathy, collaboration and the strength of the alliance itself, factors which the philosophy of counselling psychology underwrites. I thus recognise that other models I use including: Personal Construct Psychology, Systemic approaches and Person-Centred therapy might all have helped Susan, while each would have focussed on different aspects. A PCP approach would, for instance, have concentrated on understanding and modifying the meaning structures and ways of construing that may have been underpinning Susan's problems. A systemic approach might have focussed more on exploring and addressing the social and cultural context in which her difficulties arose and a person-centred approach would involve establishing a safe, trusting and constructive therapeutic relationship within which Susan could develop her own preferred ways of alleviating her problems and her distress.

1.4 Biographical information, based on the client's view of the problem

Susan is a 42 year old woman with two older brothers, whose much loved mother died 24 years ago, and father about 8 years ago. Her father remarried and she had a difficult relationship with her step-mother. She lived alone for the last 12 years in a much loved flat. She was a painter, who also performed as a singer, classical and popular styles. She struggled to survive financially and was claiming benefits. Proud of her artistic talents, she loved both singing and doing her art, although she felt under pressure to make some career decisions. She was unsure about giving up renting the expensive art studio space where she worked, and whether to leave her musical group because of interpersonal difficulties. After a recent stressful interview at the Job Centre, she was considering looking for work in a bookshop or doing some teaching to create a regular income. These pressures and her distress had precipitated visiting her GP and her wish to have counselling.

She had some good friends, male and female; no current partner, but several previous serious relationships. She had had nearly four years of wholistic transpersonal private therapy following her father's death, focussing on early family life, which was very helpful. Unable to afford private therapy, she decided to try the NHS. She took no regular medication.

Her concerns were about financial survival and what her future held, and she regularly became uncomfortable, her heart beat fast and she had panicky thoughts about these things: "What am I going to do?" and vivid persistent intrusive images and thoughts of herself destitute and in prison.

Over the previous few weeks she had been checking repeatedly before leaving the house. She feared leaving the gas, taps or appliances on, and had repetitive intrusive thoughts that she would cause an accident or disaster like a flood or explosion, or be burgled because the door was not properly locked. The increased fears and checking were what brought her to her GP. Susan spoke articulately and clearly, and her eye contact and body language suggested a high level of engagement. She was volatile emotionally, becoming tearful when speaking of her family, and laughing loudly when recalling some amusing comments made about her. She expressed a strong desire to deal with the checking and make career decisions and having been introduced to the CBT model was keen to try the approach.

1.5 Initial Formulation and Therapy Plan

Susan's presenting symptoms were consistent with the DSM IV diagnostic criteria for OC Disorder (see Appendix 1). She was having recurrent distressing intrusive thoughts and images of catastrophes which she was trying to deal with by checking and this was interfering with her normal functioning. However there were also more long-standing issues and uncertainties concerning her career, which were making her doubt herself and worry about her future. Both problems were precipitated by a recent series of arguments with the musical group organiser, and by financial pressures. She depicted herself as facing a series of choices all of which involved having to give up something she valued which had been part of her life for a long time. With the onset of the OCD symptoms, she felt increasingly unable to cope.

Emotionally she was becoming more anxious and got easily upset, feeling panicky, sweaty, and breathless before leaving the house, although not at other times (ruling out co-morbid GAD). She was managing these physical anxiety symptoms using slow breathing techniques she had learned in meditation classes. She had vivid images of her house burning down or being flooded and thought disaster would strike and she would be responsible unless she made sure everything was safe before leaving. In the previous five weeks she felt obliged to recheck several times to feel reassured, and safe enough, and she avoided leaving the house wherever possible. There were no other compulsions. This relatively mild form of OCD responds well within 10 sessions to an exposure and response prevention CBT treatment model (Salkovskis & Kirk, 1997), especially if self-help material is included (NICE 2005), making it appropriate for Susan.

A long-term factor possibly exacerbating her problems was her poor relationship with her step-mother. Susan believed her step-mother had never loved her, which was why she was unwilling to offer her any emotional or financial support. Contact was frustrating and depressing for Susan, who resented the emotional and financial support her brothers received. She saw herself as the black sheep of the family and felt misunderstood and unappreciated. Her brothers led more conventional lives and her step-mother's values ("the wicked step-mother") were antithetical to her artistic way of life. Her father though, had encouraged her artistic interests when she was growing up.

Such negative early experiences can lead to the development of low self-esteem (Fennell, 1998) and family contacts led Susan to doubt herself, especially whether she was good enough to have durable success in her creative worlds. Without it, she would consider herself worthless as she would not be making good use of her talents. Fennell (2006) defines self-esteem as a person's sense of their own worth and Susan's core beliefs about herself hinged on her achievements as a creative artist. These beliefs were undermined by experiencing rejection and criticism (Fennell, 1998). She had a negative view of her prospects and options, despite past success and knowing her talents continued to develop. Although she had a fine voice and had performed solo often, she felt she was failing herself in not enjoying wider success. Having self-imposed high standards which are hard to live up to are common amongst artists and Wills & Cooper (1988) identified this as the major stressor in popular musicians. Moreover perfectionism is a trait commonly associated with problems like depression, anger and anxiety (Anthony & Swinson, 1998). These inflexible negative ways of seeing herself led her to wonder whether to abandon artistic pursuits altogether. Pressures to have a reliable income added to these doubts. Her low-self esteem thus appeared to be a general vulnerability factor affecting her anxiety levels as well as being an aspect of her OCD (Fennell, 2006).

Positive experiences can be important in helping disconfirm negative biases in thinking and perception (Fennell, 2006). Among Susan's were public recognition, having a small dedicated following, and enjoying the support and admiration of a circle of close friends who had often helped her out financially during the 'famine' cycles of her feast and famine career. In addition, working on her art and her music gave her a unique kind of satisfaction and sense of achievement, central to her sense of self, which nothing else provided. Amabile (1996) has shown that high levels of intrinsic motivation are common in creative people. Taking account of these positive factors could lead to a more balanced view of herself.

Czichsentmihalyi (1996) has shown that for optimal creative work and well-being to be promoted, a comfortable working environment and working method needs to be found and established. For Susan this presented problems, as her environments were threatened, both financially and because of interpersonal problems. Threats to her identity as an artist might result. However, exploring options using a problem-solving approach (Hawton & Kirk, 1989) could produce ways forward.

It was agreed that because of the limited time, to concentrate first on her OCD symptoms as they were her priority. The CBT treatment model (Salkovskis and Kirk, 1997, Morrison & Westbrook, 2003) based on exposure and response prevention (ERP) was introduced. CBT is the NICE treatment of choice for OCD and mild OCD according to

NICE guidelines (2005), responds well in up to 10 sessions, making it especially suitable. She carried out about eight checks before leaving the house, repeating these three or four times at most, delaying her for up to 10 minutes. There were no other OCD symptoms. Thus it would be possible to spend the remaining two sessions working on longer-term goal setting and planning, an essential part of CBT (Padesky, 1996), not only to help Susan clarify her intentions and allay some of her confusion and distress regarding the dilemmas she faced, but also to develop more effective goal-evaluation skills. She thought this was good use of our time together.

Susan herself decided to eat a more healthy diet. We agreed it would be beneficial for her symptoms of anxiety to resume meditation and relaxation, which she used to practice regularly. We discussed how she would find a structured therapeutic approach after years of transpersonal therapy and she regarded them as addressing quite separate issues. This belief enabled her make fewer comparisons, and paved the way for better engagement with the CBT process.

Susan expressed willingness to do homework and was given a booklet on OCD (Westbrook & Morrison, 2003) to support and reinforce the CBT approach (NICE 2005) The initial conceptualisation of Susan's OCD is in Table 1 (below).

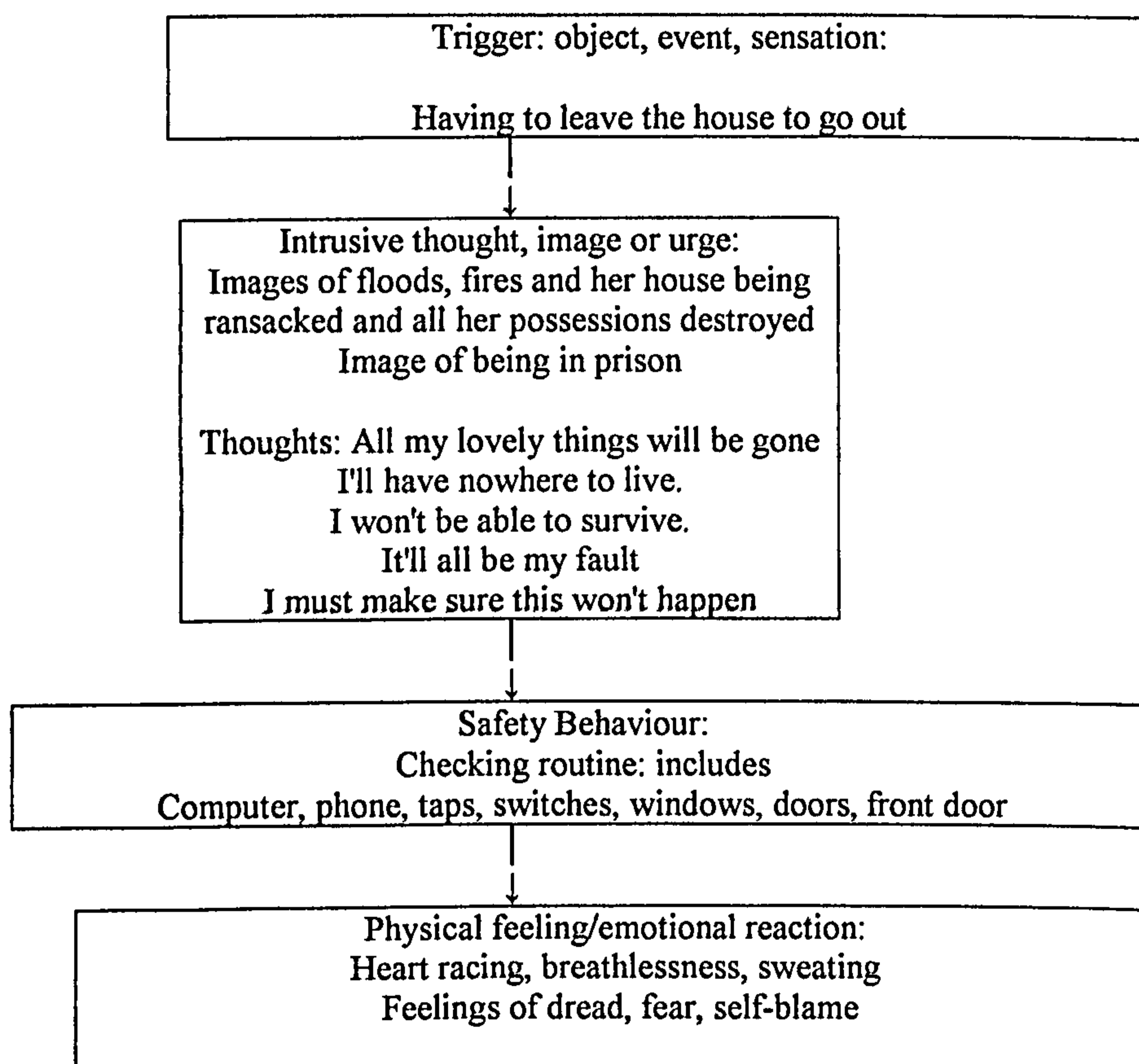


Table 1: Model of Susan's OCD

2 Development of the therapy

2.1 Behavioural interventions

We had agreed to work on behavioural anxiety management techniques to help rebuild her sense of self-efficacy prior to using the exposure and response prevention strategy. After years of yoga and meditation Susan was familiar with calming breathing techniques and with progressive relaxation. We also worked on a 'safe place' image (of a garden) she could use if desired. Thus prepared, she accepted readily that it was her worries about danger rather than the imminence of danger itself that fed the checking

compulsion. In sessions we used guided discovery to achieve a more realistic appraisal of the dangers she feared.

Among cognitions commonly found in OCD (Salkovskis & Kirk, 1997) which Susan was prone to, her heightened sense of responsibility and her intolerance of uncertainty were particularly targeted. She believed "I must make sure I do this properly " and "I can't go unless I'm absolutely sure. If I'm doubtful I have to check again. I know it's OK when it feels right". The former, as a trait, undoubtedly contributed to Susan's conscientiousness in doing her homework tasks, which included behavioural experiments ((Morrison & Westbrook, 2004) designed to show her how the OCD maintained her fears. She saw that her sense of responsibility helped her adhere to the treatment plan and thus had a positive side.

A key behavioural experiment targeted her maladaptive belief that she would be responsible for causing a disaster unless she did her repeated checking to ensure all was secure. Susan got a friend to take responsibility for any consequences that arose as a result of her not checking more than once, for a week. Pleased to find her anxiety level was lower than anticipated when she resisted the urge to check, she learned that responsibility indeed played a part in maintaining her problems. It was important not to let handing over responsibility become a safety behaviour, so she had to take responsibility back again.

2.2 Cognitive interventions

Susan's OCD was being maintained by several cognitions. Believing she could act to prevent disasters to her home "If I'm careful it'll be OK", and assuming that she was to blame if she did not act, seemed powerfully to convince her that if she did not leave her home quite secure, it would be destroyed or damaged and it would be her fault. She catastrophized that her prized possessions and most of her work would be destroyed taking with them all possibilities of future success and reward. She saw herself in debtors' prison, with nothing to show for her life. Socratic questioning (Padesky & Greenberger, 1995) was used to challenge Susan's global negative evaluations. Weighing evidence and pros and cons of her beliefs helped her understand how her cognitions contributed to her anxiety, and to clarify her beliefs about control.

Intolerance of uncertainty can be a key feature of cognitions in OCD (Salkovskis and Kirk, 1997) and it emerged as a general trait in Susan's cognitive style, increasing her anxiety levels and contributing to a number of her other problems, which were worked on later in the therapy. She believed had to be absolutely sure she had checked things properly, despite having a good memory. Susan learned that many people forget if they have checked everything before leaving, but generally assume they have, whereas she assumed the opposite. She came to realise memory is normally less than perfect and became more accepting of the likelihood she had checked things properly. Gradually and more consistently over the weeks the incidence of repeated checking reduced and Susan's sense of self-efficacy increased. She came in to sessions showing confidence and pride at her progress.

Susan also realised that her flat had gradually become objectively more secure as additional safety measures were installed: a deadlock on her front door, and window locks. In addition, there was a real sense of community in her block, and everyone looked out for everyone else. These factors helped convince her that realistically her home was quite secure and her fears about the front door lock being vulnerable were irrational.

2.3 Development of the relationship

Burns & Auerbach (1996) and others have shown that an unsatisfactory therapeutic relationship can lower clients' self-esteem and delay recovery, whereas collaboration empowers the client. Beck et al. (1993, p. 135) "The relationship requires therapist warmth, accurate empathy, and genuineness. Without these, the therapy becomes 'gimmick oriented'." For distressed clients like Susan this is especially important.

Susan responded very warmly and positively in sessions, and expressed eagerness to get her checking under control. She portrayed herself as someone who could apply herself to things, and this was borne out by her enthusiastic compliance with the homework tasks. In sessions she said she felt understood and frequently brought in small examples of her artwork to show me. My work with artists had shown me that their sense of self is closely bound up with their identity as a creative person (Ryan & Deci 2000, Macdonald, Miell & Hargreaves, 2002) so I took this as a sign of Susan's engagement with the therapy and I did not feel that the relationship was developing beyond professional boundaries. I was however aware of a nurturing tendency in myself towards Susan which I decided to monitor carefully by discussing regularly in supervision.

2.4 Outcome – OCD work

Gradually Susan acquired better control over her fears and her ritual using the ERP method (Salkovskis & Kirk, 1997), and this felt very empowering. By session 6 both the checking and the obsessional thoughts appeared well under control. She was also getting out more, which enhanced her well-being. Accordingly it was decided to start work on her career dilemmas over the remaining 6 sessions. A number of factors had emerged meanwhile which led to the need for a more developed re-conceptualisation of Susan's problems prior to the next stage of the therapy.

2.5 Reconceptualisation and further therapeutic plan

Susan realised that she, like other OCD sufferers (Westbrook, 2005), found ambiguous or uncertain situations very difficult. She depicted her life as presenting a series of dilemmas or uncertainties such as "Maybe I should give up art and just get a job?", and came to recognise that the OCD had appeared to offer her protection against one source of unpredictability. In addition, like many OCD sufferers (Salkovskis and Kirk, 1997) Susan had perfectionist standards for herself, and her desire for control, which could be applied constructively to her artistic work, was turned negatively onto life in general, which she saw as failing because she was unclear exactly what path to take. She believed that unless she knew where her long-term goals lay she was next to useless. The converse situation, where things were resolved by being taken out of her hands offered short term solutions but maintained her feeling of life as unpredictable. Such irrational beliefs and assumptions can be very resistant to change (Beck, 1995) She learned her OCD was intended to provide some control in a very uncertain world. The types of unhelpful cognitions that contributed to her OCD thus appeared prevalent in other areas of her life and could manifest themselves again.

For prevention of relapse of the OCD it was important (Salkovskis & Kirk, 1997), using discussion and behavioural experiments, to identify longer-term vulnerabilities and challenge any general assumptions about control and responsibility that could be problematic. Susan's efforts to control the safety of her home seemed at odds with her relative lack of effort to control her career, and seeing the options as fixed, often by external factors. A core belief about lack of controllability seemed to coexist with the desire to exercise control. (Wells & Matthews, 1994) thus maintaining her high anxiety levels. It appeared sensible to Susan and myself to look next for areas related to her career where she could make decisions giving her a sense of control. In a world that she assumed was uncertain, this would challenge her fundamental assumptions and enhance her self-efficacy and well-being (Bandura, 1997). Her core belief about the uncontrollability of events would be directly challenged and more reasonable alternative beliefs could be found (Padesky, 1995) to apply to all relevant situations making her less hopeless and helpless in the face of change.

Detailed examination of Susan's checking rituals revealed heightened vigilance for signs associated with negative events. This is commonly found in OCD (Salkovskis, 1989), along with a heightened attentional focus on internal thought processes (Wells & Matthews, 1994) both acting as maintaining factors. Thus she made greater attempts to exercise control in areas she believed she could exercise it, and this had precipitated the development of the OCD. For instance Susan came in very gloomy to Session 2 after seeing 3 crows from her window, believing this was a portent of something bad. Magical

beliefs are more common in OCD sufferers than non-anxious people (Einstein & Menzies, 2006) This belief led to intensified checking. Rather than directly disprove the belief, we challenged the evidence confirming it, looking for alternative explanations.

The disasters she feared generalised to include voice problems ruining a performance, and the arrival of bailiffs. Becoming aware of her vigilance for negative portents she was encouraged to make the most of positive events and opportunities that occurred, previously overlooked or minimised in her thinking. A list was made of her strengths, abilities and skills and we discussed how these could be applied to her present circumstances to build up her self-efficacy (Fennell, 1998). She acknowledged that her intelligence, determination, persistence and people skills could be put to use in tackling her current difficulties. She began to feel empowered, considering what more she could do to take control herself. A revised conceptualisation is in Table 2. The therapeutic plan was to work on developing a less maladaptive belief system, more differentiated and flexible to her needs.

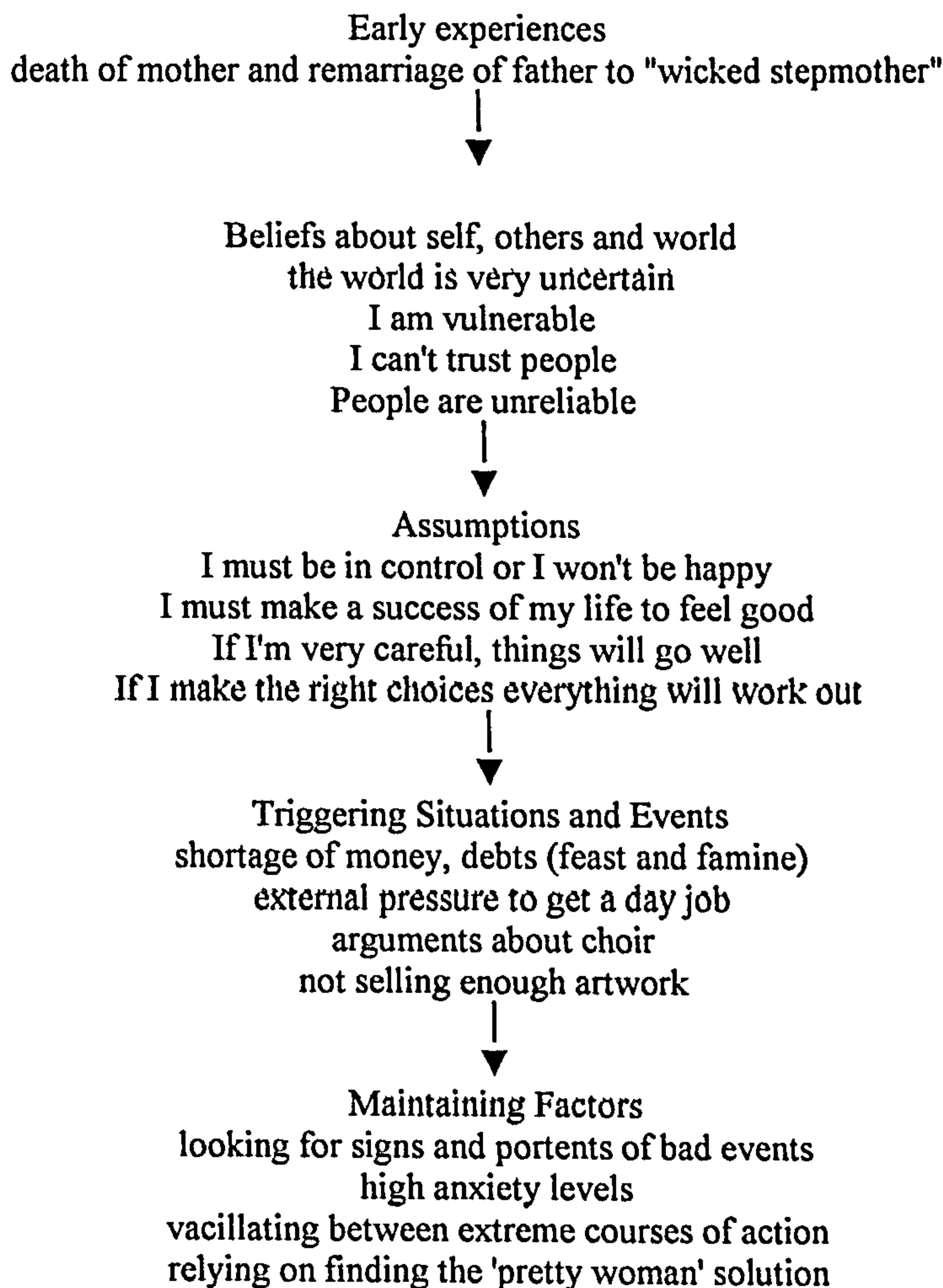


Table 2
Susan's Case Conceptualisation (2)

2.6 Content issues

Susan's day to day life consisted of doing artwork in her flat or at her studio, singing practice, rehearsals, concerts, planning a forthcoming exhibition of work. She had an active social life. Her friends fell into two groups: those linked with art and those linked with music. This did not appear to create identity conflict and she liked to keep the

worlds separate, revealing different facets of herself in each context. Susan the musician was a bit of a "diva", who came to life on stage and loved performing in public. Susan the artist was a more solitary creature inspired to work, who spent painstaking hours getting work completed to her high standards.

The belief that she had to choose between her art and music, despite having pursued both throughout her adult life, was precipitated by recent events. The recent musical disagreements were about her position as soloist which she felt was threatened. She began to see other options for continuing singing. Since without financial pressure, she would choose to continue with both art and music, she realised no decision was necessary, but she should pursue ways of settling her debts. Friends had willingly helped her financially before, but she was ashamed to ask. She recognised the extent to which her fears had influenced her thinking and had exacerbated her anxiety further.

2.7 Process issues

CBT problem solving approaches (Hawton & Kirk, 1989) are especially relevant in situations of conflict or major choice or threatened loss. Use was also made of decisional balance charts (Butler and Hope 1995), weighing the advantages and disadvantages of options. Discussion of Susan's musical disagreements focussed on the latter. Options included finding another group, making it up with the organiser, exploring and following up other musical avenues, and holding her ground. She decided to go for a reconciliation. She came powerfully to realise that her feelings had guided her thinking. Emotional reasoning is relatively characteristic of OCD (Wells & Matthews, 1994) as is thought-action fusion (Rachman, 1993) e.g. I feel hopeless about this situation therefore it must be hopeless, which characterised her thinking about her career.

Susan felt this emotional involvement occurred because singing was important to her. However precisely because it mattered, she wanted to consider it in a balanced way and avoid having her feelings lead her thoughts, setting up a vicious cycle. We described the process of distancing her own feelings so as to be able to take a more balanced view as "putting her head above the parapet" and although this had connotations of being a visible target it also meant being above the quagmire of emotions that lay beneath. Thus it felt "positive and clear-headed".

As far as finances were concerned, getting a loan from friends, giving up the studio, sharing the studio space and costs, making efforts to sell more paintings (whose market value far exceeded her debts) were considered, together with the other options of finding a job, such as teaching art and coming off benefits. Emotional reasoning, global black and white thinking as well as catastrophizing (Leahy & Holland, 2000) figured large in Susan's characteristic negative thinking. "I'll never be able to work anywhere else". It was important to differentiate shades of grey between the black and white. She began to identify her maladaptive thinking, was assiduous at keeping her thought diary and noticed that she tended to react strongly and quickly and unreflectively, learning to go back, reflect and consider ("head above the parapet"). She decided to give up the studio, to do all her artwork at home. She found the views from her flat inspiring and this would encourage her to be more productive.

Instead of believing her career choices were beyond her control, she had demonstrated that she could have a great deal of influence over the process. This challenged her core belief about the intrinsic uncontrollability of things.

These discoveries and changes led to a visibly enhanced sense of well-being. Susan would come into sessions smiling and proud, brandishing her diary. She would occasionally also bring in fondly self-deprecating cartoons of herself struggling with "her demons" as she called (and depicted) her unhelpful thinking habits. Humour is a coping resource much used by musicians (Wills & Cooper, 1988) and Susan's humour helped her make the changes she needed without self-reproach creeping in.

Susan also poked fun at her fantasies of being rescued by a wealthy benefactor, rather than by her own efforts. However, wealthy benefactors had previously bought her works and given financial support. The "Pretty Woman" fantasy as we called it, had previously discouraged her from taking a proactive approach to finding other solutions. Susan

continued looking for a "sugar daddy" while also pursuing proactive solutions and thus to see that she could make choices and exercise control over her future.

3 Ending and Follow-up

By the end of the therapy Susan was going to work from home, She also decided to follow up other musical opportunities, not to be exclusively reliant on one. She felt she understood herself better, and had increased self-efficacy. Susan agreed to a follow-up session in 3 months: these sessions are useful in reinforcing gains and preventing relapse (Curwen et al.,2000).

At follow-up, the OCD was under control, but she had been having sleepless nights while experiencing a self-critical inner voice questioning her creative abilities. Her work patterns became disturbed and she worried about a forthcoming solo concert, with challenging works. We agreed to have three sessions to work on this.

It reassured her to discover that having a critical inner voice was amongst the commonest stressors for musicians (Wills & Cooper, 1988). She began to acknowledge her standards might be unrealistically high and to recognise that her fears were irrational. She was thinking below the parapet again, induced by the pressure of her impending concert. She decided to contact a former accompanist for extra rehearsals of the most challenging musical parts.

Since the work described here, Susan has at intervals been re-referred, and has returned for more sets of sessions, concerning relationship issues with boyfriends and career problems. Each has built on the progress and insights made in previous periods of therapy, and with them the relationship has developed further enabling more central issues to be addressed. This way of working has helped Susan accept the brief therapy remit and has encouraged her to make more use of self-reliance and her support network of friends.

3.1 Making use of supervision

We developed a good collaborative relationship, and Susan accepted me as someone who understood her artistic dilemmas. However I found myself wishing to respond as a maternal nurturer to Susan's occasional expressions of hopelessness and frustration, despite being aware of the inadvisability and pitfalls of offering help or reassurance. Discussing transference and counter-transference cognitions (Wills & Sanders, 1997) and disentangling them from the actual relationship was very helpful in supervision, enabling me to work on her core beliefs and assumptions about personal control and responsibility. It is perhaps a tribute to the collaborative nature of our work that Susan did not bring her issues of control and uncertainty into the therapy process.

Her perfectionism and my own, however, were triggered, and we agreed to settle for therapeutic goals that were sustainable rather than say an unrealistic complete "cure" or such-like. Seeing Susan reinforced my strong views on the difficulties of leading a creative life today and the lack of subsidies for artists. In sessions I would try therefore to normalise her situation, In order to de-personalise it, and would unload my own views in supervision. This in turn triggered some issues of my own around control and I saw it as especially important not to have a relationship where I could be seen as controlling. For this reason it was important to be as explicit as possible about sharing control and responsibility in our work. Supervision helped me unload and work on these concerns.

3.2 Evaluation of the work

Susan said the CBT model of OCD was invaluable in clarifying her checking problem. She recognised the cognitive interventions and work on goals had increased her sense of self-efficacy and control and she felt she had some skills to call on when needed. The combination of challenge and psycho-education, reinforced by self-help material assisted with this. The "above the parapet" thinking represented seeing the big picture. Just as moving away from a large canvas makes it easier to appreciate the overall shape and organisation of a work, so a more distant perspective stopped her falling into her

negative thinking traps. The work on differentiation and flexibility in thinking had produced gains which needed reinforcing. Where intolerance of uncertainty was concerned, she could work on options and balance sheets but still desired a fantasy quick solution to her financial problems. So her thinking was more realistic and differentiated, her decision-making skills much improved but she still tended to dichotomise situations into stark polarities. The CBT approach offered a structure which organised and clarified her problems and suggested a path to follow which she wholeheartedly embraced.

A supplementary way of working, which I may use in future with her, is the schema-focussed approach (Young, Klosko & Weishaar, 2003). Susan appeared susceptible to certain maladaptive schemas, relating back to early experiences (Unrelenting Standards, Vulnerability to Harm, Emotional Deprivation, in particular). I did not pick up on this earlier as I felt sufficient progress could not be made within the brief therapy remit. However I think it would be helpful to get a longer term perspective, using Young et al's diagnostic questionnaires, and exploring her core beliefs and maladaptive schemas further. These may continue to be triggered by life-events, such as her recent relationship dilemmas, whereas if they are tackled she will be better able to manage them herself.

Quantitative measures were not used with Susan because early on she expressed a strong dislike of filling in forms. Rather than accept this I should have worked with it. and had baseline measures of her OCD symptomatology, depression and anxiety and some outcome measures as well, which would give helpful feedback to myself and my client. Moreover the fact that Susan was comfortable working orally with SUDS and other simple 0 – 10 rating procedures reinforces the point.

3.3 Reflections on practice, self and theory

Through doing extra training on working with artists through the British Association for Performing Arts Medicine, working in my private practice with creative people, and doing research on them(see thesis attached) as well as having many friends in the arts, I was aware how difficult it is to develop and sustain a viable career and of the humiliations of depending on benefits when you are pursuing a life dedicated to artistic work. Susan's anxieties were grounded in her objectively adverse circumstances. Without being able to change her situation my role was (Moorey, 1996) to use the model to find ways of helping Susan manage her situation so it did not lead to a maladaptively negative view of herself and her prospects.

As a white female middle-aged middle-class person with a younger client sharing those characteristics, I was aware of broader social and cultural pressures, constructions and expectations that shaped us both. CBT uses the relationship as a vehicle for facilitating the therapeutic work (Safran & Segal, 1990) and it was important that Susan saw me as a collaborator rather than an expert especially since she had issues to do with control and uncertainty. The similarities in background and values facilitated this process, together with my understanding of issues relevant to creative people. I was able to restrain and contain my impulses to nurture her while still remaining professional, engaged and warm, thus facilitating her taking responsibility to move her situation forward.

Susan's progress with the OCD was faster than expected and I was encouraged to address deeper issues. As long as she struggles to survive financially Susan will be under pressure to compromise her artistic ideals and uncomfortable future decisions may lie ahead. I hope to accompany her on her journey some of the way and make it a little easier for her.

This study illustrates work with a creative using intermittent brief therapy remit, which is widely accessible and free through the NHS. Very little therapeutic literature exists on how to work with artists except case-studies of long-term work, mainly within a psychodynamic tradition e.g. Storr (1997). Studies of creative artists using CBT in brief therapy are scarce. This study shows that issues salient to the life and work of creatives can thus be addressed. Drawing attention to the needs of this large client group (most of whom cannot afford private therapy) will hopefully lead to greater expertise in helping them, extend the work we counselling psychologists do, and maybe lead to the development of a stronger evidence-base.

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Section C: Case Study

Appendix 1

DSM-IV Criteria for obsessive-compulsive disorder

A. Either obsessions or compulsions

Obsessions as defined by (1), (2), (3), and (4):

1. Recurrent and persistent thoughts, impulses, or images, that are experienced, at some time during the disturbance, as intrusive and inappropriate, and cause marked anxiety or distress.
2. The thoughts, impulses, or images are not simply excessive worries about real-life problems.
3. The person attempts to ignore or suppress such thoughts, impulses, or images, or to neutralise them with some other thought or action.
4. The person recognises that the obsessional thoughts, impulses, or images are a product of his or her own mind (not imposed from without as in thought insertion).

Compulsions as defined by (1) and (2):

1. Repetitive behaviours (e.g. handwashing, ordering, checking) or mental acts (e.g. praying, counting, repeating words silently) that the person feels driven to perform in response to an obsession, or according to rules that must be applied rigidly.
2. The behaviours or mental acts are aimed at preventing or reducing mental distress or preventing some dreaded event or situation; however, these behaviours or mental acts either are not connected in a realistic way with what they are designed to neutralise or prevent or are clearly excessive.

B At some point during the course of the disorder, the person has recognised that the obsessions or compulsion are excessive or unreasonable.

C The obsessions or compulsions cause marked distress, are time-consuming (take more than 1 hour a day), or significantly interfere with the person's normal routine, occupational or academic functioning, or usual social activities or relationships.

D If another Axis I disorder is present, the content of the obsessions or compulsions is not restricted to it (e.g. guilty ruminations in the presence of a major depressive disorder).

E The disturbance is not due to the direct effects of a substance (e.g. a drug of abuse, a medication) or a general medical condition.

SECTION D

Literature Review

A critical review of research on the conceptualisation and treatment of music performance anxiety

1 Introduction

The aim of this review is to consider in what ways and to what extent the literature reviewed has contributed to an understanding of the nature, causes and treatment of music performance anxiety (MPA) and to make suggestions regarding what further needs to be researched. A discussion follows on the topic of how current knowledge can inform the scope, type and quality of provision offered by those in clinical/therapeutic practice. Implications are also discussed for generating better self-help initiatives for those troubled by MPA and suggestions made for ways of preventing MPA which may lead to an enhancement of musical performance .

1.1 Rationale

The writer's own research and clinical interests are focussed on the difficulties experienced by musicians in their work and how they can better manage them. Performers are by far the largest group within musicians, and including amateurs as well as professionals, the group reaches into all sectors of society from the very young to the very old. It encompasses a very wide range of musical instruments, musical genres/styles and traditions, talents and achievements and, above all, performance settings from the very intimate and informal to the global and impersonal.

Both performers and listeners remark on the extremely positive benefits of music making (De Nora, 2000; Hargreaves & North, 1997; Juslin & Persson, 2002; Williamon, 2004). Equally, musical performance can produce in players strong negative emotions, great distress and in extreme cases severe and enduring mental and physical effects, both in anticipating performing, while playing and afterwards (Valentine, 2002; Wilson, 2000, 2002). Famous sufferers from performance anxiety have included: Maria Callas, Barbra Streisand, Carly Simon, Cher, Enrico Caruso, Pablo Casals, Vladimir Horowitz, Ignacy Paderewski, Luciano Pavarotti and Sergei Rachmaninoff. The performing careers of Horowitz, Streisand and Simon were greatly disturbed and interrupted, for years at a time, as a result of it .

Much has been written about it musicians' diaries, autobiographies and biographies, but it is only in the last thirty or so years that it has received significant attention from the psychotherapeutic world. Anxiety about performing in front of others was recognised as an Axis 1 psychiatric disorder in DSM-III in 1980. (see Appendix for DSM IV Criteria for Social Anxiety disorder).

Research by music psychologists (Juslin & Sloboda, 2001; MacDonald, Hargreaves & Miell, 2002; Miell, MacDonald & Hargreaves, 2005; Williamon, 2004) has generated

findings which are influencing the training and professional lives of musicians. An important focus of interest has been how musicians deal with stressors that arise in the course of their work, amongst which performance anxiety is common, as will be demonstrated later. A demand from musicians themselves for information on understanding and managing MPA comes from those seeking therapy, those trying to help themselves cope with it, as well as those primarily interested in preventing it and enhancing their work as performers.

Research papers are appearing regularly on both the conceptualisation and the treatment of MPA, a mixture of work written for musicians by fellow musicians/music psychologists (Lehrer, 1987; Valentine, 2002, Wilson & Roland, 2002), and work written by clinicians and addressed to fellow clinicians (Brodksy, 1996; Kenny, 2005; Roland, 1994; Salmon, 1990; Sataloff, Rosen & Levy, 1999, Raeburn, 2000, Tubiano & Amadio, 2000). However no general review including both the conceptualisation and treatment of MPA has been found, and the present work was prepared to provide such a review.

1.2 Outline

This review will begin with a survey of sources used. It will then consider the definition of MPA, its prevalence and symptomatology, with a view to understanding the conditions under which it occurs. This is followed by a consideration of available treatments. Throughout, gaps and shortcomings in knowledge and research evidence will be highlighted, and conclusions drawn about the most efficacious and effective treatments available, along with suggestions for directions in future research and practice. The implications for counselling psychologists will be addressed.

1.3 Review of sources

In preparing this review it was decided to concentrate the search on sources likely to contain material of clinical relevance, which included computerised online bibliographic searches using PsyInfo, Medline, and Science Abstracts. The keywords: music performance anxiety, and performance anxiety were searched. In addition the research literature was checked through for additional references including journal articles, books and chapters of books, conference proceedings and unpublished dissertations.

2 Music Performance Anxiety and Social Anxiety

This section will begin with definitions of MPA. It will then focus on presenting and evaluating evidence concerning the conceptualisation of MPA. This will be followed by a critical summary of what has been found.

2.1 Definition/ Diagnosis

Marks and Gelder (1966) first introduced the term social phobia and in DSM-III in 1980 it was initially defined as "a persistent irrational fear of and compelling desire to avoid, a situation in which the individual is exposed to possible scrutiny by others and fears that he or she may act in a way that will be humiliating or embarrassing." In addition, the individual experienced significant distress because of the social phobia and recognition that this fear was excessive or unreasonable and this fear was not the result of another mental disorder." (APA 1980, p.228).

DSM-IV introduced the term Social Anxiety disorder in recognition of the pervasiveness of the symptoms, to include both broadly based, generalised, interpersonal anxiety and specific impairments experienced, with subtypes. The full DSM-IV criteria (APA, 1996), which includes children, is given in Appendix 1.

Social anxiety has been viewed as a specific phobia of humiliation, embarrassment or scrutiny by others, and includes fears of speaking and performing in public in any way, as well as fears of using public toilets, and eating and writing in public. MPA is thus bracketed with a number of other specific performance situations including those affecting actors, dancers, sports people, and those giving speeches and public presentations, often (but not always) professional people required to perform regularly.

Salmon (1990) defined MPA as "an experience of persisting, distressful apprehension about and/or actual impairment of performance skills in a public context, to a degree unwarranted given the individual's musical aptitude, training and level of preparation" (p.3) and Wilson (2000) defined MPA as "an exaggerated, sometimes incapacitating, fear of performing in public" (p. 123). Both these definitions emphasise the disruptive quality of the anxiety on performance and its occurrence in a public situation yet neither points to the content of the fear. Beck, Emery & Greenberg (1996) discussing what they called 'evaluation anxieties' which includes social phobia, defined the central fear as being observed and negatively evaluated, having weaknesses exposed and being judged adversely. This definition encompasses both performance and social anxieties without differentiating between them.

Beck et al. (1985, 1996) pointed out that in performance anxieties, there is underestimation of perceived coping resources and of what others can do to help. The amount of experienced anxiety, they argued, depends on the balance of perceived risk, together with the costs of impairments in performance balanced against perceived coping resources such as the amount of preparation, previous experience and so on and what can be done to 'rescue' mistakes and problems. This view contextualises MPA alongside other occupational stressors. In an occupational setting, however, success as a performer can lead to raised expectations of the standards to be met, thus maintaining the fears. Paradoxically also, self-protective behaviours aimed at preventing or reducing anxiety

(safety behaviours) impair performance further (Clark & Wells, 1995; Chambless & Hope, 1996), and anxiety itself distracts attention from the task of performing. Thus, both anticipatory fear and expectations of the consequences may be borne out.

Heimberg & Becker (2002) reviewing studies comparing sub-categories of Social Anxiety conclude that it is not yet known whether these represent genuinely different categories or differences in severity as several studies including Brown et. al., 1995; and Heimberg et al., 1993, found higher levels of anxiety among clients with generalised compared to specific social phobia. They point out that most studies were based on clinical populations rather than looking at differences in the community, and findings may not therefore generalise.

In a recent paper, Osborne & Franklin (2002) propose a model of MPA based on Rapee & Heimberg's (1997) CBT conceptual model of Social Phobia. They argue that MPA shares some of the same cognitive distortions as Social Phobia but that other factors define it. The perceived likelihood of negative evaluation is, they claim, essentially based on the discrepancy between the person's judgement of their ability competently to perform the task and their appraisal of how the audience will judge their competence, based on its presumed standards. Their approach thus extends Beck et al's (1985, 1996) model by including an internalised 'other' perspective, characteristic of social anxiety as a whole, by reframing perceived coping skills as self-efficacy judgements, and by building in low self-esteem, as uncertainty of approval is a characteristic of performance situations. However, this model remains to be properly tested.

2.1 Factors associated with MPA

Individuals report experiencing MPA to different degrees and the same person may experience it in varying degrees on different occasions. Wilson (2002) argues that three sets of variables affect it: the performer's trait anxiety (Cox & Kennardy, 1993); the degree of mastery achieved on the task – and whether it is simple or complex, well-prepared or not; and the situational stress (Abel & Larkin, 1990; Brotons, 1994): whether it is a solo or group performance, highly competitive or a low pressure social environment and so on. Predictions from the model include: that highly anxious people perform best when the work is easy and the situation relaxed, and low-anxious people when they have an optimal degree of challenge.

Extensive work testing this model remains to be done. However, several studies (Kemp, 1981, Steptoe, 1989; Lehrer et. al. 1990; Clark & Agras, 1991, Cox & Kenardy, 1993) have demonstrated higher than average levels of trait anxiety in musicians than in the general population, and Wesner, Noyes & Davis (1990) found higher levels of state anxiety in female than male orchestral players a finding which was not confirmed by Van Kemenade et. al (1995). Detailed work on how this links with MPA is needed.

Steptoe and Fidler (1987), using the State scale from Spielberger et al's (1983) State-Trait Anxiety Inventory, found highest scores for students and lowest for world class professional classical players. No longitudinal studies have been carried out to establish whether this is because the more anxious groups do not choose to become performers, the more anxious players fail to get or take work, or that MPA declines with experience or age.

There is also little work on the relationship between MPA, experience and success, which can add to as well as lift burdens of expectation. These are important unanswered questions and apply of course equally to players of popular as well as classical music styles, who are in the great majority and on whom hardly any work has been done. Brodsky (1996) criticised work on MPA for using 'convenience samples' of music conservatory students or elite soloists and therefore not producing findings based on the majority of musicians. Moreover because sub-pathological levels of MPA have often been screened out in research studies, often using self-reported measures of severity, Brodsky argued that the reliability of the findings and the robustness and occupational relevance of the findings for musicians with less severe MPA is limited. Standardised measures of impairment, and of performance quality remain to be developed.

Some confirmation for the role of situation has emerged (Abel & Larkin, 1990; Cox & Kenardy, 1993; Brotons, 1994, LeBlanc et al., 1997). Steptoe (2001), however, points out that MPA can occur in intimate situations, like a lesson, as well as public ones, being related to the evaluative nature of the situation rather than the presence of an audience as such. And the effect of each of the three factors: person, task and situation, depends on the others. (Cox & Kenardy, 1993; Hamann & Sobaje, 1983).

2.3 Conceptualising MPA within the counselling literature

The terminology around MPA can itself be somewhat problematic. Many writers (Arcier, 2000; Salmon, 1990; Steptoe & Fidler, 1987; Triplett, 1983; Wilson, 2002); refer to it as stage fright and use the terms interchangeably, others view stage fright as an extreme form of MPA (Clark & Agras, 1991; Lockwood, 1989, Steptoe, 1989), while Plaut, (1990), a Freudian psychiatrist, distinguishes between performance anxiety experienced by creative artists/performers (whose sense of worth or ego investment is attached to their talents) and stage fright which non-artists undergo, arguing that unconscious guilt can underlie MPA. Nagel (2004), a psycho-analyst, advocates conceptualisation and treatment which goes beyond symptomatic relief and addresses the dynamics of the artist's formative years that underlie the MPA symptoms. Such psychodynamic perspectives are rare in this area (Babakian, 1985) and it would be interesting to see more case studies of MPA in the literature.

Thus, there is some vagueness over the conceptual formulation of MPA and this is reflected in the way counselling texts on anxiety deal with it. In addition, studies on the

co-morbidity of MPA and other types of anxiety, social anxiety and phobias are needed to determine the extent to which they are related.

There is little mention of performance anxiety as such in texts on anxiety, such as Clark and Fairbairn, 1997; Wells, 1997, and chapters on social phobia such as Chambless & Hope (1996), deal almost exclusively with non-performance types. Consequently, studies of the efficacy and effectiveness of treatment interventions are often also based on a narrow group of types within the diagnostic category, which needs to be remedied. At present clinicians meeting clients with MPA in non-specialised settings will not find very much to help them in such general therapy texts. It is time MPA and other performance anxieties became incorporated into general texts on anxiety and models such as Osborne and Franklin's further developed and tested.

2.4 The Performance Anxiety Literature

Performance anxiety can be an occupational stressor for any type of performer. A keyword search (see Table A below) for 'performance anxiety' revealed that around 60% of psychological research has concentrated on the Music and Sports fields. Whether this is due to prevalence or other factors is unclear and is outside the scope of this paper. However both sport and music are important to the economy, thus there may be greater funding for research into them.

	music	sport	other
Psych Info	29%	36%	35%
Science/Med line	41%	20 %	39%

Table 1:
Citations for Performance Anxiety according to domain

Sports people and musicians are, however, similar in several ways. Smith (1986) noted that both require the extensive cultivation and development of complex psychomotor skills. Successful careers usually involve giving optimal performances under conditions of high arousal when the outcome is critical, performance is being evaluated and the competition is fierce (Tubiano & Amadio, 2000). The consequences of success may be lucrative contracts, but poor performance or injury can lead to devastating consequences and losing work and reputation. Therefore research on sports performance anxiety may be relevant to musicians and, as will be shown (Connolly & Williamon, 2004), mental skills training treatments developed in the sports field are being applied to musicians.

Salmon (1990) argues that the potential impact of all the contextual factors that heighten vulnerability to MPA whether cognitive, psychodynamic, skills-based, genetic or biological should be included in its conceptualisation. Brodsky (1996) argues further that there may even be several sub-types of performance anxiety, depending not only on severity but on whether it appears to be a chronic or acute state, and argues that a generic

classification like 'performers' stress syndrome' may be more useful. In particular this might allow clinicians to determine whether the type and degree of arousal reported requires treatment or not.

He advocates a continuum of stressors associated with a performing career, encompassing both very broad and very narrow contexts: some going well beyond experiences on stage.

1	2	3	4
Career Stress	tension in performance	MPA	Stage Fright

Table 2: Continuum of psychologically related problems of professional musicians (Brotsky, 1996)

Evans (2003) also favours a broad approach. Based on his clinical observations, he links MPA on the one hand to broader anxieties about professional identity, and to a range of performing experiences from the worst panic to the best state of 'flow', advocating a therapeutic approach suited to the specific individual case and circumstances.

MPA often develops long before a performance: it is not characterised by sudden fear. Finally, for the sufferer, its impact on performance quality and the ability to play or sing well is what makes it different from other types of situational fear. This has important implications for treatment evaluation studies, which as shall be seen, have sometimes used performance quality and sometimes perceived anxiety as the main chosen outcome measure. Generally phobias are contingent on external triggers rather than the person's own behaviour.

All these differences and problems in conceptualisation make it possible that treatments suited to phobic or free-floating anxiety may not be appropriate or effective with MPA (Fogle, 1982).

Fogle pointed out that MPA tends to de-automatize what is often a highly skilled performance, and, as greater self-consciousness comes in, 'trying too hard' can lead to greater focus on technically difficult passages, likely lapses, and efforts to avoid errors as well as greater monitoring of anxiety levels. These safety behaviours effectively maintain the high anxiety levels. Fogle's therapeutic approach favoured motivational interventions and attention training, using imagery rehearsal with coping statements, redirection of attention to the requirements of the task, non-judgemental awareness of performance, selection of a suitable goal to provide the motivation for each performance, and behavioural experiments aimed at reducing the perceived impact of mistakes. Many

of his suggestions have been incorporated into a package of measures adopted within a CBT treatment approach, which will be examined later.

More recently Brodsky (1996) argued that a clear picture of the cause, progression & prognosis of MPA has not emerged. This was still the case almost 10 years later, according to Kenny (2005). Brodsky pointed out that research studies on MPA have generally followed certain methodological formats: first, questionnaire surveys; second, in vivo lab and judged performance situations; and third, intervention trials. Surveys (Wesner, Noyes & Davis, 1990; Wolfe, 1989; Steptoe, 1989) have been aimed at illustrating MPA's effects, processes and treatments, looking at prevalence, assessment, and coping. Judged performance situations (Abel & Larkin, 1990; Cox & Kenardy, 1993; Brotons, 1994) have looked at components of anxiety, at cognitions, and their effect on performance, and evaluated differences between performance situations. Intervention trials (Kendrick, Craig & Lawson, 1982; Nagle Himle & Papsdorf, 1989; Sweeney & Horan, 1982) have evaluated the efficacy of a clinical approach or intervention (predominantly cognitive and behavioural) with differences in length of exposure (from 3 weeks to 6 or more), pattern of interventions, therapy modality and follow up interval. Many studies but not all, use the same researcher as therapist across modalities. Finally some treatments have been manualised, others not, also making it hard to compare them reliably.

Brodsky (1996) argued that higher research standards are needed..

"there is every possibility that diversity of conceptual theories concerning stress and anxiety, inferior sampling procedures, inept screening criteria and use of assessment measures that are unreliable and invalid have led performing arts medicine practitioners and researchers down the wrong avenues. As a result, our understanding and ability to treat performance-related problems of musicians have been left behind the other advancing aspects of the young profession." (p. 96).

In summary, the conceptualisation, and terminology of MPA is as yet lacking clarity and much work remains to be done to integrate it into the research literature on anxiety problems.

2.5 Prevalence of MPA

Studies of MPA in professional orchestral musicians (Fishbein & Middlestadt, 1988; James, 1998; Lockwood, 1989; Marchant-Haycox & Wilson, 1992; Steptoe & Fidler, 1987; van Kemenade, van Son & van Heesch, 1995; Wesner, Noyes & Davis, 1990) have demonstrated widespread prevalence: between 19% and 70% reporting anxiety levels which significantly impair performance.

Studies of prevalence among popular musicians are rare. Wills & Cooper (1988) however, found MPA was perceived as the greatest stressor, but it related specifically to

achieving self-set standards of musicianship, rather than to being evaluated by others. About 15% of their respondents experienced regular anxiety when performing, leading Wills and Cooper to regard MPA as less of a problem in popular than classical musicians.

Among the few more recent studies of popular musicians (Raeburn, 1987a, 1987b, 1999, 2000; Wills, 2003) MPA was among the top five stressors but extremely stressful episodes often concerned interpersonal problems.

The unique joys and satisfactions that good performances bring are what motivate most musicians, even those who suffer from MPA (Kemp, 1996; Amabile, 1996) and levels of intrinsic motivation are high in performing artists. Kivimaki & Jokinen (1994) compared job satisfaction levels in orchestral musicians with industrial and clerical workers. The musicians' levels were highest, mainly because of the variety of work and the chance to exercise their skills.

2.6 Symptoms of MPA

Symptoms occur at four levels, and the following are commonly reported:

Physiological symptoms: dizziness, nausea, lower muscle control, dry mouth, sweating, shortness of breath, incontinence; together with physiological signs of arousal common to other types of anxiety and narrowed focus of attention

Behavioural: trembling, tremor, difficulty in maintaining posture, failures of technique, fidgeting, stiffness

Emotional: feelings of anxiety, tension, apprehension, dread or panic

Cognitive: loss of concentration, heightened distractability, memory loss, maladaptive negative cognitions, misreading of musical scores

2.7 Arousal and MPA

Studies of the physiological arousal associated with performing (Abel and Larkin, 1990; Craske & Craig, 1984) have failed to find evidence that excessive arousal always correlates with MPA. It has been suggested (Steptoe, 2001) that it is a necessary condition but that cognitions, and perceptions about arousal in relation to performing are equally important (Mor et al 1995).

Musicians are often quoted as believing that arousal is motivating and facilitative and some claim to need anxiety to perform optimally (Abel & Larkin, 1990). However the same levels of arousal interpreted as energising by some may be seen as disastrous by others.

Wilson (2001) argues for the Hardy & Parfitt (1991) 'catastrophe' model of the relationship between arousal and performance in MPA. Instead of the Yerkes-Dodson U shaped function, they argue there is a sudden, dramatic deterioration in performance when levels are sufficient for anxiety to occur. This applies particularly where cognitive

anxiety as well as bodily arousal levels are high. This view has not been tested in musicians yet, but is worth considering, especially as the role of negative cognitions and ruminations in maintaining and exacerbating anxiety levels is well attested (Wells, 1997, Clark, 1997).

For many musicians (Arcier, 2000, quoted 83% in his study) the physical signs of MPA peak just before performance starts and disappear once playing begins, whereas the cognitive signs often start well in advance of the performance, perhaps several days and can persist afterwards.

2.8 Cognitions and MPA

MPA disrupts task-oriented cognitions. Negative cognitions in MPA sufferers are similar to those found generally with anxiety. For instance, the thought that one mistake will ruin the performance and lead to loss of control, collapse and being sick or faint (Wolfe, 1989). Steptoe & Fidler (1987) found strong associations between catastrophising and MPA. Lehrer et al. (1990) factor analysed music performance cognitions, finding various factors, a main one being concern about others' reactions, worry about anxiety and fear of distraction. This is characteristic of socially anxious cognitions. Mor et al. (1995) found concern about others' reactions to be linked with high internal standards, and high perfectionism scale (self-oriented) scores were positively correlated with debilitating PA. More anxious players also experienced less personal control in their lives. Kivimaki & Jokinen (1994) found that catastrophising thoughts during performance was a predictor of lower performance standards and distracted players attention onto trying to keep calm. Thus there is growing evidence for the role of cognitions in establishing and maintaining MPA. Liston et al., (2003) confirmed that the main predictors of MPA in students were a tendency to catastrophise and low sense of personal efficacy.

2.9 The experience of MPA

In a rare qualitative study, Kirchner (2003) found negative emotions (feelings of disorientation, inadequacy, failure despair) and cognitions (self-doubt, self-criticism, catastrophising) dominated the experience of MPA in solo piano players. Yet the negative aspects of performing are closely linked to the positive and the interaction between cognitive, emotional, behavioural and physiological processes are central to an understanding of MPA (Steptoe, 2001, Wilson, 2002, Williamon, 2004).

2.10 A famous case of MPA

Barbra Streisand, according to a biography by Andersen (2006) stopped performing publicly for several years because of severe performance anxiety. Anecdotal evidence in her case confirms both the role of perfectionism and the role of negative cognitions. Streisand suffered from panic symptoms, disturbed sleep, pounding heart, nausea, vomiting and shaking before performances over many years, which led to her avoiding

giving full length concerts, and to focussing only on singing in front of small intimate audiences. Known for having very harsh internal standards for herself and others, she suffered much self-doubt alongside huge ambition. The presence of stalkers, death threats and being mobbed by fans added real fears to her anxieties about forgetting words, and her voice failing or trembling. At one period, she took marijuana onstage and openly smoked it to reduce her anxiety, after telling her audience about her stage fright. She is on record (Streisand, 1972) talking about this during a live recording, where she says that she conquers her fear by talking about it (including probably to her long-term analyst), and getting it out in the open. Now in her 60s, her anxieties appear to have abated.

The consequences of MPA led her to, for instance, miss cues. Schultz (1981) was one of the first to document the precision required to respond to musical cues over prolonged periods and manage the technical and artistic aspects while communicating as part of a group and to the audience. It is this which is disrupted by MPA.

2.11 Generalisability of MPA studies

The vast majority of studies of musicians with PA, as has been noted, are either based on music students training to be performers at Colleges or orchestral musicians. Moreover numbers of studies and numbers of participants within these studies are low (Brodsky 1996, Kenny, 2005). This has neglected the enormous numbers of professional working performers in classical and other fields, including popular genres, to which hardly any research has addressed. It also reflects the differential access to professional attention among the different groups. However, as popular music performers courses proliferate, this situation is beginning to change. It is encouraging that perhaps as psychology has increasingly become part of the training of musicians that there are more diverse studies emerging: in terms of methodology (the beginnings of qualitative work on MPA as has been seen) and increasing rigour.

3 Treatment of MPA

Treatment for MPA has often taken the form of a package of measures which may encompass physical therapy and medication as well as a range of psychotherapeutic treatments including behavioural and cognitive work. In this way it differs from other forms of social anxiety to take account of the unique problems performing musicians face. The contents of the package are evolving and the following sections will evaluate what has been found.

3.1 Self-management of MPA

Both before and since the development of professional treatments for MPA musicians have been using various methods to deal with it themselves. Steptoe in 1989 listed the following techniques used by professional musicians to self-treat MPA. 38% used

breathing, 28% a form of distraction, 23% muscle relaxation, 22% alcohol, 12% sedatives.

Lehrer et al. (1990) found the more anxious musicians engaged in more coping efforts. Common methods they found included deep breathing and muscle relaxation, also meditation, reading and distraction. Breathing and relaxation techniques are familiar as they are often built into musical training.

However it is difficult to establish relationships between coping skills and MPA in the absence of studies, especially those surveying musicians in the community who suffer from MPA but do not present for treatment.

Wolfe (1989) found that 84% of her sample of professional and amateur musicians used at least one coping method each. Two thirds used emotion-focussed coping and one third problem-focussed. People using the former reported feelings of greater confidence and focus, whereas the latter had fewer disruptive thoughts during performance suggesting each addresses different aspects of MPA. Again it not clear what determines the coping strategy that is adopted.

Butler (1994) in a study of stressors on conservatoire students found one of the main differences between successful and unsuccessful students was the former's ability to transform potentially stressful performance situations into a challenge rather than a threat. As a result, they suffered less MPA. They were more pro-active when stressed and more likely, than those less able to cope, to ask for help. The factors that are responsible for these differences are not clear.

Brodsky & Sloboda (1997) listed all the following methods of dealing with MPA: Alexander and Feldenkreis techniques, aerobic exercise, anxiety management training, attention focussing, autogenic training, systematic desensitisation, development of interests and hobbies outside music, exposure to performance situations, mental rehearsal, muscle tension and finger temperature feedback, nutrition therapy, positive self-statements, prayer, relaxation training, self-hypnosis, stress inoculation therapy, systematic rehearsal and yoga. Clearly these are a mixture of physical and psychological techniques, some aimed at changing the environment or the person and others at regulating emotions or other responses to stress.

Wills and Cooper (1988) found valium and cannabis as well as alcohol were regularly used by popular musicians to deal with performance stresses.

Despite the prevalence of MPA and the range of treatments currently available for it, Williamon (2004) found that 78% students at the RAM would turn to their teachers and 14% their fellow students for advice on dealing with performance problems before consulting specialist services like BAPAM (the British Association for Performing Arts

Medicine), their GP or a therapist. Referrals to BAPAM clinics deal primarily with physical problems. Thus many MPA sufferers appear not to be getting access to the help they need.

3.2 Approaches to Treatment

The following sections will consider the two main types of treatment offered by professional for MPA: pharmacological treatments, and psychotherapeutic treatments. While there have been one or two isolated and unreplicated studies using other approaches such as Alexander Technique (Valentine et al., 1995), and Hypnosis (Stanton, 1994) attention will be confined to the approaches where the most rigorous work has been carried out and which are most relevant to the work of counselling psychologists.

3.3 Pharmacological Treatments

Lehrer (1987) and Nube (1991) reviewed the use of beta-blockers, the most popularly prescribed drug for MPA. Lockwood (1989) found 27% of a survey of over 2000 orchestral musicians used it, 19% daily, to reduce the peripheral signs of anxiety and improve aspects of playing dependent on fine motor control. Their impact on concentration and anxiety is as yet unclear as are the side-effects of long-term use. Most appropriate for MPA characterised by physical signs, it is less helpful dealing with psychological symptoms (Lehrer 1987). Of the 9 studies reviewed by Nube, many were based on small samples, with unknown severity of MPA, used different drugs and had differential outcome measures, making general conclusions difficult.

The benzodiazepines such as valium and librium, are less widely prescribed because they can affect the quality of motor performance as well as having other possible side effects like dizziness and weakness.

3.4 Psychotherapeutic approaches

Amongst these, very few approaches other than cognitive and behavioural or CBT have been systematically reported or evaluated. This raises the question of the relevance of psychodynamic, humanistic or other approaches, which it is not appropriate to go into here. However, with increasing emphasis on cost-effectiveness and clinical audit especially within NHS settings it is easy to predict that there will be more outcome studies of CBT approaches simply because it is possible to agree on suitable standardisation and control procedures for interventions and their evaluation and brief therapeutic protocols are being developed.

Many existing programs incorporate a package combining measures. Relaxation work, imaginal exposure, role play and other rehearsal techniques are widely used. Since performing is unavoidable for these musicians, graded exposure and the chance to

practise anxiety management skills are usually built in, as are opportunities for in vivo experimentation. These programs will be also considered here.

3.41 Behavioural approaches

Kendrick, M. J., Craig, K. D., Lawson, D. M., & Davidson, P. O. (1982) compared CBT with behavioural rehearsal with a waiting list control in treating 53 pianists in groups 3 times weekly and found rehearsal superior on measures of performance quality and experience of anxiety but CBT superior on reducing the visual signs of anxiety, concluding that behavioural rehearsal may be effective for some outcomes. Sweeney & Horan (1982) found cue controlled relaxation as effective as CBT in producing improvements in MPA and performance quality. However a study by Reitman (1997) using small samples found two systematic desensitisation procedures produced no differences in outcome measures to a waiting list control.

Thus behavioural treatments show some effect but there is little robust consistent evidence for particular interventions.

3.42 Cognitive approaches

Sweeney & Horan (1982) found cognitive restructuring techniques alone improved MPA, performance quality and reduced heart rate compared to controls.

3.43 Cognitive-behavioural approaches

Clark & Agras (1991) found CBT superior to drug therapy with buspirone in treating MPA and studies by Harris (1987), Roland (1994) and Kendrick et al (1982) all demonstrated effective treatments using CBT techniques on students with severe MPA. Kendrick et al also found that CBT was superior to behavioural rehearsal in improving personal efficacy and signs of visual anxiety. Harris and Roland found also that CBT reduced measured State Anxiety, using the Spielberg State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (Spielberg 1983). However all used small samples and findings need replicating with experienced players.

3.44 Combined approaches

Nagle, Himle and Papsdorf (1989) compared a 6 week programme of group therapy for musicians with high MPA with 3 treatment components: progressive relaxation, cognitive therapy (based on a REBT model) and temperature biofeedback training, to controls, finding significant differences on pre and post measures which included the STAI (Spielberg 1983). Group sizes were however small: 12 and 8. This result was confirmed by Niemann, Pratt & Maughan (1993).

Brodsky & Sloboda (1997) compared 3 treatments, but their study had no control group, and no clear measures of MPA, so no firm conclusions can be drawn.

Thus little evidence as yet suggests that combined approaches are superior to single treatments but more robust studies are needed.

While this selection of studies indicates the variety of work being undertaken, it also indicates the methodological weaknesses in the work. An important one is the use of self-report measures which may not be reliable or accurate and may reflect different coping strategies. Secondly, all the participants are classically trained musicians, often pianists, and findings are rarely replicated, and may not therefore be generalisable to other groups of musicians differing in age, instrument, experience, style of music, training background and type of performer (solo, small group, orchestral/big band working in a studio/concert hall, and so on) as well as the different demand characteristics of each situation. While communalities in the experience of MPA are shown, what is lacking are studies reflecting the differences in performance situations for players having those experiences. No-one has looked, for instance, at performance anxieties suffered by pop musicians playing to global audiences simultaneously live and broadcast whose performances contain elements going well beyond playing their instrument or singing, how this affects them and how they can be helped..

A package of treatments (Clark & Agras 1991; Nagle, Himle & Papsdorf, 1989) combining different techniques, can show benefits. Both packages helped reduce anxiety, and increase confidence. It is as yet unclear precisely what exactly is producing the effects (what is the role of treatment length, the role of non-specific effects) and what are the optimal balances between treatments. Studies have used small sample sizes.

Kenny (2005) concluded from her review of MPA treatments that the literature was "fragmented, inconsistent and methodologically weak." (p.206). She included only studies with appropriate control groups, and also one or two pre-post designs. Owing to the scarcity of robust studies comparing treatment modalities and combined treatments, the lack of consistency both in assessing and measuring MPA, the lack of follow-up studies, the limitations of sample sizes and sampling procedures, the lack of agreement on the definition of MPA and the wide range of outcome measures used, she found that no firm conclusions about the effectiveness of treatments could be reached. This position remains true today. There is urgent need for sound research.

4 Implications for practice and provision

Brodsky (1996) drew attention to the paradox that whereas intervention studies at that time using CBT strategies, both alone and compared with or combined with other treatments could be effective (and as has been pointed out subsequently, that evidence is not very robust), musicians much preferred to cope using methods for which there was far less evidence such as taking prescribed or self-administered medication or alcohol, and seeking social support rather than professional counselling.

Whether this is because they see counselling as less effective than drugs (Fishbein et al., 1988), whether they are not aware of the availability of the treatment, (Sternbach, 1993) whether they (Salmon & Meyer, 1998) expect to be understood and not judged by therapists, is unclear. Brodsky (1996) suggests repackaging CBT therapy with musicians in mind, perhaps supplementing treatments with music. Brodsky & Sloboda (1997) argued for music-enhanced therapeutic environments, although evidence for its efficacy is lacking.

4.1 Prevention of MPA and performance enhancement

Most of the work cited in this part of the review concerns musicians for whom PA is a reality. Recently, a group of music psychologists, sports psychologists and music educators at the Royal College of Music: see Williamon (2004), are developing a training programme aimed at enhancing their students' performances, based on solid research evidence. This has implications for preventing MPA and for managing it at an early stage.

There are three components to the programme: a lifestyle thread which includes work on exercise and diet; neuro-feedback including work on self-regulation of alpha, theta and beta rhythms; and mental skills training, which includes stress reduction and relaxation techniques, mental imagery work to enhance practice and facilitate artistic expressivity, work on concentration skills, on mental and physical preparation for performances and a goal-setting, time-management programme.

It will be interesting to follow the development of the programme and see its effects on students, with a view to making it more widely available.

4.2 Self-Help Materials

There is a very large group (size unknown) of musicians suffering from MPA who do not seek professional help. For them it is important to have suitable self-help material. There are a number of sources available, including websites, material supplied by professional organisations (musical, therapeutic and otherwise), books, and books by psychologists are addressed to all types of performer (Evans, 2003; Wilson, 2002). A recent article on "Stage-fright" by a psychologist appeared in the Musicians' Union newsletter: Evans, (2001).

Several self-help books for musicians by clinicians are available. Most use a CBT approach. Salmon & Meyer (1992) base their work on Meichenbaum's Stress Inoculation approach; Farnbach & Farnbach (2001) use Ellis's REBT. See also Roland (1997). These books attempt to show how the clinical findings and techniques can be applied to the daily working lives of musicians.

5 Overview and Conclusions

This review has examined work on the conceptualisation and treatment of music performance anxiety. It has necessitated a comparison of work on the effectiveness and availability and accessibility of treatment options for music performance anxiety.

Comparisons have also been made between performing musicians and other groups of professional performers so that their distinguishing characteristics can be seen and the implications of these differences for therapy elaborated

Common and distinguishing factors which may impact on the incidence and severity of music performance anxiety have been analysed and the role of MPA in the context of other stressors in the work and lives of musicians have been considered.

There is evidence to support the widespread use of CBT as the prevalent psychotherapeutic treatment option for reducing MPA. However there has been little evidence on the use of other approaches and existing studies have been limited both in number and type and scope. There have been few replications and studies have often been based on small numbers drawn from a small subsection of the population of performing musicians who suffer from MPA. In addition treatments have varied greatly: in administration, duration, intensity and whether individual or group, as well as in the timing and nature of follow-ups and pre and post measures of change.

Some standardised scales of MPA for musicians have been used and others developed but findings often rest on the use of unvalidated self-report instruments. More work is also needed on the effectiveness of single approaches and on comparisons of approaches for specific sub-groups. This can only take place when more is known about the incidence of MPA in these groups, with detailed case studies on which to draw.

There is also a need for research into the differences between MPA experienced at different time points relative to performance, which has implications for treatment. At present there are disparities in access to treatment for different types of performer. Classically trained students and professionals (on whom most of the research is based) are offered access by their training organisations and employers. Its availability to the vast majority of musicians is limited and provision within the NHS and private practice is unknown at present. Given the apparent prevalence of the condition, more detailed data would provide evidence for better provision and access.

Clinicians, including counselling psychologists, seeing clients with MPA could be better informed in a number of ways. Knowledge of the condition could be extended, ways of managing could be improved and provision could be targeted more appropriately. It is hoped that drawing attention to these deficiencies will help lead to their being remedied.

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Section D: Literature Review

Appendix 1

DSM-IV criteria for Social Phobia (Social Anxiety Disorder; 300.23)

- A. A marked and persistent fear of one or more social or performance situations in which the person is exposed to unfamiliar people or to possible scrutiny by others. The individual fears that he or she will act in a way (or show anxiety symptoms) that will be humiliating or embarrassing. Note: In children, there must be evidence of the capacity for age-appropriate social relationships with familiar people and the anxiety must occur in peer settings, not just in interaction with adults.
- B. Exposure to the feared social situation almost invariably provokes anxiety, which may take the form of a situationally bound or situationally predisposed Panic Attack. Note: in children, the anxiety may be expressed by crying, tantrums, freezing or shrinking from social situations with unfamiliar people.
- C. The person recognises that the fear is excessive or unreasonable. Note: in children, this feature may be absent.
- D. The feared social or performance situations are avoided or else are endured with intense anxiety or distress.
- E. The avoidance, anxious anticipation or distress in the feared social or performance situation(s) interferes significantly with the person's normal routine, occupational (academic) functioning, or social activities or relationships, or there is marked distress about having the phobia.
- F. In individuals under 18 years of age, the duration is at least 6 months.
- G. The fear or avoidance is not due to the direct physiological effects of a substance (e.g. a drug of abuse, a medication) or a general medical condition and is not better accounted for by another mental disorder (e.g., Panic Disorder, With or Without Agoraphobia, Separation Anxiety Disorder, Body Dysmorphic Disorder, a Pervasive Developmental Disorder, or Schizoid Personality Disorder).
- H. If a general medical condition or another mental disorder is present, the fear in Criterion A is unrelated to it, e.g., the fear is not of Stuttering, trembling in Parkinson's disease, or exhibiting abnormal eating behaviour in Anorexia Nervosa or Bulimia Nervosa.

Specify if:

Generalised: if the fears include most social situations (also consider the additional diagnosis of Avoidant Personality Disorder).

From the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (4th ed., pp.416-417) by the American Psychiatric Association, 1994, Washington,DC: