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Investigating the phenomenon of dance and music performance through the experience of the performer

Gemma Harman

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Declaration

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Abstract

This thesis examines the phenomenon of performance in dance and music as experienced by the performer. Previous research studies have generally been directed towards examining specific facets of dance and music performance, with a lack of understanding concerning the performer's experiences of them. Although these studies have often focused on gaining insight into what constitutes a performance, their attention to isolated aspects of performance has precluded understanding of how these elements form the experience of the performer in a holistic sense. Inspired by a personal quest for insight into the subjective awareness of what underlies dance and music performance, the following thesis aims to better understand the phenomenon of performance from the perspective of the performing dancer and musician. In strengthening the originality of this research, the qualitative and quantitative research paradigms provided a framework that allowed in-depth exploration of the phenomenon under investigation. Two qualitative research studies, together with a questionnaire, were carried out to investigate the thoughts and perceptions of the performer in relation to what it means to be a performer and more generally on the phenomenon of performance. This thesis also includes two separate chapters on the concepts of performance enhancement and reflective practice with a view to establishing whether they might usefully be applied within the artistic disciplines of dance and music. Findings from the two research studies and questionnaire revealed that performers place high importance on the concept of the 'self', which they experience and perceive differently as an 'individual', a 'person' and a 'performer'. Performers were also shown to view themselves as embodied entities, evincing a strong sense of individuality and a subjective awareness of *being* a performer, alongside conveying technical and expressive abilities. Findings illustrate the subjective nature of *how* participants experience and understand performance and performing, revealing the potential for application to other artistic disciplines. It is hoped that, through offering performers the opportunity to speak openly about what is of importance to them, researchers and educators might productively address the components that exist within the experience of the performer, in order to better and more widely understand the performer and the phenomenon of performance.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Overview and Rationale

Framed by an interest in the subjective awareness of what underlies dance and music performance, this thesis examined the phenomenon of performance in dance and music as experienced by the performer. The body of literature on performance demonstrates that emphasis has been given to understanding the phenomenon in a variety of research fields and disciplines. Within these, the centrality of the individual performer and the unique abilities and characteristics that they can bring are key to thinking about a performance. In light of this, the significance of a performer's own experiences of dance and music performance suggests that their professional identities and activities are linked inextricably to their performances. By this, it is implied that it is difficult for a performer to separate who they are from what it is that they do. In music, examples of research concerned with the experience of the performer have focused on the centrality of the performer's own experience to the creation of performance (Holmes & Holmes, 2013); the role and significance of the body in performance (Davidson, 2002; 2005) and the performer's ability to impress his or her individuality on the performance (Ritterman, 2002). In dance, research examples have similarly focused on gathering the subjective narratives of dancers' experiences as a means of investigating perspectives on the 'body' (Reeve, 2011); exploring choreographic practices (Bacon & Midegelow, 2011) and the dancer's creative role in performance (Newman, 2004).

While the dance and music research outlined above demonstrates an interest in the subjective world of the performer within the qualitative research domain, studies are generally directed towards examining one particular aspect of dance and music performance, and a lack of understanding concerning how the performer experiences them. These studies are also primarily in relation to: a performer's reflections on the processes and outcomes in performance; the significance of the performer in their creation and execution of performance; or through investigating performers' thoughts about a specific facet of performance in an attempt to gain a measurable outcome. This inevitably leads to questions concerning what constitutes a performer's experience and whether taking account of the experience of the performer might move forward current research within the domains of dance and music.

Most research that places emphasis on gaining insight into 'the performer' or about 'a

performance' is also concerned with looking objectively from the outside in rather than from the performer's viewpoint. As a result, studies commonly inform us of the *what* of performance in relation to specific theoretical constructs and theoretical strategies without consideration of the *how* and *why* from the performers themselves. Despite there being a shared consensus that performance is considered to be the height of a performer's achievement, little research exists whereby performers talk openly and freely about aspects of performance that are of importance to them. Inspired by the resulting paucity outlined above, the researcher considered it prudent to gain an insight into that aspect of the performer's experience. The research contained within this thesis is dedicated to performers' accounts of their own experiences of performance in relation to what it means to be a performer and more widely on the phenomenon of performance. The literature review chapter in this thesis (Chapter 2) explores existing research in the field of performance and further rationalises the need for the inclusion of the performer's perspective.

While the researcher acknowledged that a subjective approach to performance would arguably be similar across all art forms, the decision was made to focus specifically on dance and music for the following reasons. Firstly, most research has been carried out in the fields of dance and music, which provided the researcher with a useful position from which to commence the present research. Secondly, given the general lack of understanding of performance from the perspective of the performer, the researcher wanted to gain subjective accounts of performers' experiences in relation to their specific disciplines (music or dance) rather than seek to identify commonalities and differences between the two artistic disciplines. Lastly, given that the present research is situated in the fields of Dance Medicine and Science and Performance Science (and drawing on research from the disciplines of dance, music, sport and philosophy) the researcher considered whether a focus on dance and music might usefully signify the use of a cross-discipline perspective when investigating the world of the performing dancer and musician.

1.2 Rationale for Methodology

The research in this thesis employed a qualitative and quantitative methodology. Situated primarily in the qualitative (interpretivist), this research employed an inductive research approach. The chosen methodological approach was deemed an

effective way to gain insight into the performer's experience as it "aims to understand and communicate its subjects' experiences, interpretations and meaning" (Mason, 2006 p. 22). The qualitative research paradigm was central to the way in which data was obtained as it provided a setting that allowed for in-depth exploration through a series of semi-structured and unstructured interviews and a questionnaire. A combination of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies and techniques were used throughout the present research. The use of such is supported by Richards (2010) who states that it is common for a qualitative research design to employ a range of 'views' with the aim of bringing together varied perspectives on a particular phenomenon. The methodology chapter of this thesis (Chapter 3) presents an overview of the methodology undertaken.

Professional dancers and musicians were recruited to participate in the present research as it is perceived that professional performers have superior experience of performing compared to that of lower level performers (i.e. at student or recreational level). The decision taken by the researcher to include only professional performers is also of relevance as there is a prevalence of research conducted with student participants, something which Skull (2011) notes as a possible limitation. The rationale to include professional performers in the present research will be presented in further detail in the methodology chapter of this thesis (Chapter 3).

1.3 Research Aims and Objectives

To inform the wider debate about dancers' and musicians' performance, the research within this thesis set out to contribute to knowledge concerning the phenomenon of performance in dance and music as experienced by the performer, with the following aims:

1. To gain a broader understanding of the nature of dance and music performance through the experience of the performer;

2. To employ a varied range of research methodologies as a means of acquiring a multidimensional insight into the experience of the performer;

3. To reveal the potential value of encouraging performers to articulate their performing practice, by widening our understanding of the performer's experience and of dance and music performance more generally;

4. To highlight the need for dance and music performance research to be driven towards performers having the opportunity to reflect on how they experience performing; what performing means to them and their roles as performers.

Three studies were carried out to address the above research aims, consisting of two qualitative studies and a questionnaire. The qualitative studies were undertaken to gather information concerning performers' experiences as performers, as well as their thoughts and perceptions on the phenomenon of performance. The questionnaire was undertaken as a way of strengthening the findings from the two qualitative studies.

1.4 Overview of Thesis Chapters

This thesis is structured into an introduction, a literature review, a methodology, three chapters reporting on three studies, a chapter on the concept of performance enhancement, a chapter on reflective practice, a general discussion and conclusion. The following chapters will present the research carried out in order to meet the research aims detailed above.

As a means of providing a framework for the three studies (Chapters 4 to 6), the literature review (Chapter 2) illustrates some of the main channels of thought through which the concept of performance is understood within the varying bodies of (existing?) research. The literature review also includes an outline of the researcher's stance on current performance research in dance and music. In further rationalising the need for the inclusion of the performer's perspective in performance research, the role and significance of the individual performer is also discussed.

The methodology that informs the present research and provides context for the three studies (Chapters 4 to 6) is presented in Chapter 3. Chapter 3 also includes details concerning data collection methods, ethical considerations and an overview of

analysis, alongside a discussion of issues concerning the validity and reliability of data and the role of the qualitative researcher.

The first two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) were designed to investigate professional dancers' and musicians' experiences of performing and their thoughts on the phenomenon of performance from their subjective viewpoints. Insight was gained through the production of a narrative account, specifically through the questioning of participants, which enabled the researcher to focus on the voices of performers as they spoke of what was of importance to them. In the first study (Chapter 4) semi-structured interviews were conducted with six professional dancers and four professional musicians. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and content analysed thematically using the techniques of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

The second study (Chapter 3) followed on from the initial investigation of the first study in an attempt to open further debate concerning how performers feel about performing and what it means to them. In this study, unstructured interviews were conducted with three professional dancers and three professional musicians. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and content analysed thematically using the procedure of Summative Content Analysis.

The third study (Chapter 6) was designed to measure the extent to which a larger sample of professional performers agreed or disagreed with the emerging themes from the two qualitative studies. Through the employment of a questionnaire, quantitative data was collected from 47 professional dancers and 41 professional musicians; this was in an attempt to gain a better sense of the reliability of findings from the first two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5). Findings from the questionnaire, alongside discussion points concerning the credibility of employing a questionnaire when seeking a first-person perspective, are also discussed and presented in this chapter. A discussion of findings will be examined with reference to existing literature in each of the three studies (Chapters 4 to 6) in addition to the general discussion chapter presented in Chapter 9 of this thesis.

Chapters 7 and 8 offer a review of literature on the concepts of performance enhancement and reflective practice respectively. Chapter 7 reflects upon the thoughts

and views of professional performers on the topic of performance enhancement, presenting a framework for deliberation about the concept, and making progress in capturing professional performers' perceptions of the term. Chapter 8 offers a review of literature on the concept of reflective practice, with a view to establishing how it might usefully be applied within the artistic disciplines of dance and music.

The discussion chapter offers an overview of the three studies and the review of literature on the concepts of performance enhancement and reflective practice. Findings are examined to determine how the research questions set out in the literature review chapter have been addressed. Methodologies employed in each of the three studies are evaluated and the process of reflexivity undertaken by the researcher is outlined. Finally, general conclusions will be drawn across the research as a whole, and suggestions and recommendations for future research are made.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to the Literature Review

The quest for insight into a subjective understanding of what underlies dance and music performance continues to preoccupy educators, researchers and performers alike. However, research from the perspective of the individual performer is scarce. As a means of addressing the relative infancy of such research, this literature review will include research in the arts, particularly focusing on dance and music, followed by research from the disciplines of sport and philosophy. In addition, this chapter will refer to literature from the research fields of Dance Medicine and Science and Performance Science.

The overview of literature presented in this chapter serves to illustrate some of the main tendencies through which the concept of performance is understood within the varying bodies of research. The literature review is consequently quite diverse in subject matter, as research studies were not excluded on the basis of specificity or lack of parity with other studies but included in order to provide a general picture of the area under investigation. Research studies to which reference is made should not be understood as an effort to generalise findings, but as a basis for furthering insight into performance. The review of literature aims to provide context for the individual research studies and questionnaire that make up this thesis. Literature concerning the chapters on performance enhancement and reflective practice will be presented in Chapters 8 and 9 of this thesis).

This literature review chapter examines definitions and descriptions of the phenomenon of performance as found in the literature in section 2.2 and explores the significance of the individual performer in sub-section 2.2.1. A review of the expressive and physical aspects of performance common to dance and music are presented in section 2.3 and a discussion concerning embodiment in relation to dance and music performance in section 2.4. Following this, the chapter examines the concepts of objectivity and subjectivity in performance and evaluation of performance in section 2.5 and an overview of dance and music performance research is reviewed in section 2.6. Lastly, examples of qualitative research studies concerned with a first-person experience in dance and music are reviewed in section 2.7. For each section,

the literature is employed either as a means of critically discussing the breadth of research related to each topic and/or to support the topic under discussion. The research questions identified for further investigation throughout the thesis will be presented in section 2.8 of this chapter.

2.2 The Phenomenon of Performance

To fully appreciate and understand the role and significance of the individual performer, it is first necessary to establish a workable definition of what constitutes a performance. The concept of performance carries different meanings and connotations in a variety of research fields and disciplines. The term 'performance' has become popular in a wide range of activities in the arts, literature and social sciences (Carlson, 1996). As its popularity and usage have grown, so has the body of writing that attempts to analyse and understand this human activity (Schechner, 1985). In particular, the fields of anthropology and ethnography have brought insight into how performance operates in the activities of individuals, societies and cultures (Carlson, 1996).

The various research fields, disciplines and theories through which performance is understood enable us to question facets of performance and how performance functions in the activities of individuals, societies, and cultures. From the review of literature, it is apparent that performance is approached in different ways, according to the discipline and social factors. The question 'what is performance?' is also problematic due to it being culturally variable and subject to interpretation. Any consideration given to 'what a performance is' must be underpinned by recognition that its meaning is intertwined with what it is aesthetically, emotionally, intellectually, spiritually and politically. Whether onstage, in social situations or in everyday life, the act of performing can occur in widely divergent circumstances.

Writing on performance, Schechner (2013) contests that something 'is' a performance when historical and social context, convention and tradition say so. In respect of this, a performance cannot be determined without referring to specific circumstances. With this in mind, it could be that a performance can be considered to be reiterative of conventions that reflect a context and an established way of doing things. Reason

(2006) shares this view, believing that the meaning of performance exists both within the thing itself (performance) and an attempt to define what *it* is. While performances are unique expressions that are created and viewed in a historical continuum, definitions of performance are difficult to reach as they are generally considered in relation to acknowledging points of reference in our understanding of what performance is.

Throughout history, although some activities were referred to as performance, performing artists often rejected the term as it was too closely associated with traditional theatre. In Carlson's (1996) exploration of what constitutes a performance, he considers the more general use of the term 'performance' and the terms 'performing' and 'performance', noting that little if any common semantic ground exists between them. He further notes that the term 'performance' is now used to address a broad spectrum of activities, such as performing arts, sport, popular entertainment and those activities undertaken as part of everyday life. This is echoed in the definition by Bial (2003) who describes performance as "a concept and a way of understanding all types of phenomenon" (p. 57) and Goffman (1959), who defines performance as "the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants" (p. 15). Referring to the ambiguous nature of the word 'performance', Kivy (2002) defines a performance to be "either referring to an *act* or to the *product:* that is to say, the act of playing a piece, or the sounds that that act produces" (p. 205). Whilst these definitions are not entirely divergent, the term 'performance' provokes a diverse range of ideas, the most common being communication.

There is a shared awareness that to 'perform' is to communicate, and, in the majority of instances, performing is for someone else as well as for performers themselves. As stated by Butterworth (2012), "the area of activity we call performance, usually includes the act of showing, demonstrating or performing in front of an audience or peers" (p. 107). Davidson (2002) also states that performance is an opportunity for performers to share with others who and what they are, precisely at that given moment. Schechner (2002) further suggests that when considering performance, constants of the particular activity can be defined. These can be in relation to a number of individual, social and cultural preferences and traditions, as well as specific qualities

and particular artistic and aesthetic constraints. For instance, the employment of skill is considered a constant factor as it implies a degree of accomplishment (Fraleigh, 1991). In respect of this, it can be assumed that there are constant points of reference in our understanding of performance.

One research field through which performance is understood is that of performance studies. With diverse methodologies and practices, this interdisciplinary field has roots in theatre and anthropology. It is inextricably linked with the concept of performativity and takes performance as an organising concept for the study of wide ranging behaviour (Bial, 2003; Schechner, 2013). While it can be assumed that a performance explores the showing of something being performed, 'performativity' is a term ascribed to something through which performance becomes a reality. The terms 'performance' and 'the performative' have become concepts in a number of academic disciplines and the latter has brought scholars from a range of disciplines to seek ontological insights from the performing arts (Nelson, 2013).

Under new paradigms of research, performance has increasingly emerged in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries as a significant platform for study. Nelson (2013) notes that the concept of performance has contributed to a new conceptual mode of knowing and that the research field of Practice as Research (PaR) is an example of research that challenges assumptions about both research and knowledge. Unlike more traditional disciplines and fields of research, PaR involves research in which practice is a key method of inquiry (David, 1996; Nelson, 2013). A practice (i.e. performance) within the field of PaR might include a performance in any field, for instance, a musical composition, a choreography, a theatre-piece, an installation or exhibition. Nelson (2013) notes that the value of experiential 'knowing through doing' acknowledges how artists are creative in research.

Together with our shared understanding that performing is to perform for others, Schechner (2013) suggests that performance can also be understood in relation to 'being' (the existence itself), 'doing' (the activity of all that exists) and 'showing doing'. He suggests that these categories of performance underline and display the activity in question. This sentiment is shared by Carlson (1996) who suggests that "performance implies not just doing or re-doing, but a self-consciousness about doing

and re-doing on the part of both the performers and spectators" (p. 195). Alongside exploring *how* an observer might experience performance, research has also investigated *how* successful performers are able to connect with others, namely other performers and the audience (Lamont, 2012). Similarly, the findings of Geeves, McIlwain and Sutton (2016) highlight the importance performers place on performing for an audience. In their investigation of professional musicians' experiences of music performance, all musicians found their experience to be in relation to creating a connection with an audience. While some musicians experienced their sense of connection to be revealing of a successful performance, others equated a successful performance with a more removed connection. All musicians believed that a connection with an audience could be readily experienced during performance and that an awareness of the audience was at the core of successful performance.

The fact that performances are perceived by an observer brings into question the role of perception in viewing a performance. Best (2006) states that *how* we experience a performance as an observer, is a matter of the kinaesthetic sensations of the performer, communicated by causing empathetic feeling in the spectator. However, in direct contradiction to this, Noë (2004) argues that as a spectator, we experience an internal biological process, suggesting that experience is not something that happens to us or, as Best (2006) posits, is 'caused', but rather it is something we do, which he refers to as an enactive approach. Noë suggests this approach offers an explanation of why perceptual experience is the way it is, namely offering an explanation of perceptual consciousness not as a neural function caused by a reaction in the brain, but in terms of patterns and structures of skilful activity. The notion of an enactive approach is similarly expressed by Nelson (2013) in his discussion of embodied knowledge. Here he explores the interrelation between physical and conceptual approaches, inferring that 'embodied knowledge' can be understood as 'enactive perception'.

In the majority of endeavours, performances are one-time events made up of a series of physical, verbal, or virtual actions that are not executed for the first time (Schechner, 2013). The actions that unfold during a performance are referred to in the literature as 'parts' or 'routines' (Couldry, 2012) and 'restored behaviours' or 'twice-behaved' behaviors that people train for and rehearse (Schechner, 2002). The notion of restored behaviours is a concept attributed to a quality of performance and the

distance between the 'self' and behaviour (i.e. between the performer and the role they assume). The research of Schechner (2002) is consequently useful in opening dialogue to examine the connection between performance and representation. Bial (2003) similarly refers to 'artistic actions' in his consideration of performance, where he notes that "the term 'performance' most commonly refers to a tangible, bounded event that involves the presentation of rehearsed artistic actions" (p. 57). In light of the outlined researcher, it is apparent there is a shared agreement amongst researchers that all performance is based upon some pre-existing model, script, or pattern of action (Carlson, 1996).

From the review of literature, it is apparent that there are a number of different concepts evoked in our understanding of performance. One of the concepts most frequently evoked in descriptions of performance, in whatever form or genre, is that of transience. Reason (2006) describes this as something passing in time, suggesting that the existence of transience is temporary and momentary with no physical durability or permanence. Alongside this concept of transience, Reason further suggests that a prominent and recurring definition of performance is that it is fundamentally ephemeral. This is a term commonly used to describe how performance passes as an audience watches, suggesting that it is short-lived and 'in the moment'. It is further evident from the literature reviewed that frequent attempts have been made to describe and define what performance *is* as a phenomenon. For example, alongside the concept of transience, research seeking to describe and define dance performance has also explored the discourses of disappearance (Phelan, 1993).

Dance and music are dynamic forms of artistic expression that have accompanied humankind since ancient times. Among performers, educators and researchers, there is a shared awareness that both dance and music performances are largely dictated by artistic and aesthetic principles. Given the artistic nature of both dance and music, it is of no great surprise that the literature commonly refers to the 'artistic' and 'aesthetic' components of performance. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that the discipline of aesthetics can inform our knowledge of dance and music performance. Central to aesthetic theory are the notions of aesthetic experience, aesthetic qualities and aesthetic judgement (Carroll, 2000; Zangwill, 2010). For the purpose of this

thesis, it is important to contextualise these terms, which are related but somewhat distinct.

An aesthetic experience is a particular type of sensory stimulus which produces a psychological state (Carroll, 2000). The neural mechanisms that correlate with these internal processes associated to aesthetic experience have been a recent focus of several studies and have created a new field of 'neuroaesthetics' (Cela-Conde, Marty, Maestu, Ortiz, Munar & Fernandez, 2004; Kawabata & Zeki, 2004). In terms of aesthetic judgements, these have been expressed by Zangwill (2010) to be subjectively experienced as normative, whereby aesthetic qualities are ascribed to the object of evaluation rather than to the perceiver. Zangwill's suggestion that it is possible to analyse aesthetic judgement in the quantitative domain may be one indicator as to why research has attempted to quantify components of dance and music performance.

In addition to the descriptions of performance outlined earlier in this chapter, the phenomenon is frequently referred to as an 'aesthetic activity' or an activity that is 'aesthetically pleasing'. Artistic and aesthetic endeavours are based on aesthetic experience being induced by observing others' actions. Differing perspectives on aesthetics have led researchers to focus on different components of aesthetics. For instance, objectivist theories view aesthetic properties (i.e. beauty) as attributes of stimuli perceived by others, and subjectivist theories place emphasis on individual preference and familiarity. Individual differences in aesthetic judgement may arise either from differences in prior experience, or a preference expressed for one performance over another. This may exist where the aesthetic value may or may not enhance the performance of what is being observed. Although there is an awareness that the aesthetic of an activity is the experience evoked in others, Platchias (2003) suggests that there are many instances where a performance is given without the intention to provide aesthetic pleasure (e.g. in the instance of a conceptual performance).

From the literature, artistic qualities are understood to be an intrinsic aspect of the appreciation and evaluation of movement. Martin (1983) notes that artistic qualities are a medium for the transference of an aesthetic and emotional concept from the consciousness of one individual to that of another. The question of what makes a

performance 'artistic', however, continues to fascinate researchers, practitioners and educators. It is commonly thought amongst these individuals that performance has two major components, namely technical and expressive, which sees the performer call upon a variety of skills in the creation and execution of an artistic performance. An awareness of the artistic and aesthetic components is also important for how performers are viewed, as suggested by Davidson (2002) who states that the expressive skills of a performer are highly decisive in separating 'average' from excellent performers. Literature further reveals the exploration of expression to be fundamental to all performances and, as such, this topic has created an abundance of research. For instance, in the context of dance, Wigman (1983) describes the expressive nature of dance in terms of how it can portray the inner emotions and experiences of the dancer. In the context of music, the notion of expression is one of the most intensively studied aspects of music performance (Clarke, 1995; Gabrielsson, 1999). Huang and Krumhansl (2011) refer to expression in music performance as the varying actions (i.e. tempo, accents and dynamics) that has two main functions, namely to convey structure and emotion. Literature also reveals there to be evidence that musicians perceive musical communication of emotion as a key element of performing (Davidson & Coimbra, 2003).

In contextualising the importance of the individual performer's experience, it is also of relevance to comment on what performers do. Alongside artistic and expressive aspects, dance and music are inherently physical activities, demanding a combination of physical, mental and technical skill. Technique, artistry and skill inform the ways in which performers craft their interpretations. Involving the expression and communication of artistic intention through movements of the body, movement is an integral part of both dance and music and has been the subject of investigation and debate within a variety of research fields and disciplines. The research of Butterworth (2012) and Clarke (2002) express the importance of physical and expressive capacities in communicating artistic intention. The significance placed upon a performer's physical and expressive capacities in conveying their artistic 'voice' would therefore suggest that the expressive ability of a performer employs both physical and psychological capacities that are executed following the performer's or composer's/choreographer's intentions. Gallese (2001) discusses intention in relation to agency (the agent being the individual) and posits that to understand the intended

goal of an observed action a link must be made between the agent and the observer. Fraleigh (1991) contradicts this view and suggests that intention is non-functional, unintentional and serves purely for aesthetic purpose. In his reference to musical intention, Kivy (2002) expresses another viewpoint and suggests that it would be useful to think of intention as 'wishes' or 'suggestions' as they capture the degree of influence such instructions are meant to have on the part of the performer. Whether thought of as intention or wishes, it would be constructive if future research studies placed emphasis on gaining insight into *how* the physical and expressive capacities of a performer relate to the artistic aim of the performer in a performance.

In the specific example of music, the playing of a musical instrument and the creation of sound is a physical activity involving a series of complex actions, repetitive motions and dynamic movements (Dawson, 2008; Meinke, 1994). In addition to a balanced combination of mental, expressive and physical excellence, the playing of a musical instrument includes a high level of complex motor tasks, sensory motor control, dexterity and precision (Dawson, 2008; Dommerholt, 2000; Schlinger, 2006). Dance is similarly a physical activity that requires a combination of physical skill, athleticism, artistry, and emotive expression in the dancer. A complex sensory-motor activity, dance requires the integration of spatial pattern and whole-body coordination (Sofianidis, Hatzitaki, & McKinley, 2012). Dancers are also frequently referred to as 'aesthetic athletes' or "instruments of artistic expression" (Ambegaonkar, 2005 p. 114; Angioi, Metsios, Twitchett, Koutedakis, & Wyon, 2009). Further, dancers are reliant on highly refined motor skills and precision timing (Koutedakis & Jamurtas, 2004). For example, Brodie and Lobel (2004) and Green (2002) note that dancers use the body as a vehicle of expression, through which they communicate and express themselves. While the similarities between dance and sport are evident, the integration of artistic and athletic components of dance are what distinguish it from other sports and artistic disciplines (Brown, Wells, Schade, Smith, & Fehling, 2007).

In considering the performer, it is evident that performers use a high level of skill to train and perform at the highest possible level (Sandgren, 2002). In the majority of endeavours, "to perform is to do something up to a standard – to succeed, to excel" (Schechner, 2013 p. 28). It could subsequently be deduced that at professional level, dancers and musicians are expected to be experts in both the aesthetic and the technical

aspects of their art form. The notion of being 'professional' or 'expert' is of interest and further highlights our lack of understanding of the semantics of how these terms are interpreted and contextualised within artistic research. The review of literature has further revealed that the definition of performance is arguably variable and context dependent, suggesting that performance may not be conceptualised without reference to the nature of the task and its criteria for success. The literature subsequently demonstrates that the meaning of performance is something assumed rather than entirely understood, suggesting an open concept unamenable to an absolute definition. While it is injudicious to assume that a single definition of performance should exist, such uncertainty does accommodate the potential for variety and change in our insight and understanding of the phenomenon. Taken together, the literature implies that our questions must now go beyond those seeking to define performance and seek a first-person perspective from performers themselves.

2.2.1 The Individual Performer

As a means of contextualising the significance of the performer, it is important to explore how the roles and statuses of performers have changed in the disciplines of dance and music. While it is evident from the literature that such shifts in artistic practices are to do with changes in social and cultural values, in dance and music, key factors included the notion of the work-concept and subsequent changes to the status of the composer and choreographer. As a result, both factors had an impact on how the individual performer was perceived and how the work was performed.

Within dance, much of the avant-garde tradition placed little emphasis on the individual performer, and artists were often regarded as one element in a larger picture (Carlson, 1996). The most prominent change concerning the role of the work was in relation to choreographic practices. As part of the postmodern movement and alongside the experimental work of choreographers of the 1960s Judson Dance Theatre era, a collective of dancers, composers, and visual artists performed at the Judson Memorial Church between 1962 and 1964. Within this time, choreographers were seen to challenge many of the earlier conventions within modern dance and proposed new methods of constructing choreography. For instance, choreographers began to use chance structures to make choreographic choices, resulting in them

subverting their positions as author of the works. As a result, the dancing body was seen to be set free from representation of a work and was able to move beyond perceptions of dance being purely concerned with expression and technique. Instead, the dancing body was presented as something that could sense and respond in performance (Albright, 1997) and dancers became "the presentation of objects themselves" (Banes, 1987 p. 49). This saw the dancer break away further from being associated with a particular dance style, technique or choreographic movement. This shift from being identified with a particular work resulted in the dancer themselves becoming independent and significant in the creation of a work.

The rise of the work-concept, development in the statuses of composers and the hierarchical position of performers influenced the way classical music was performed and perceived. The rise of the work-concept in the nineteenth century transformed music from a background activity (often to convey moral or religious meaning) to an activity in its own right (Cook, 1998). The rise of aesthetics and fine arts by the end of the eighteenth century saw music place emphasis on producing an end result that might be comparable with other fine arts (Kivy, 2002). While musical works held a prominent position during the nineteenth century, musicians themselves were not always at the centre of this attention. As the work was becoming a focus in its own right, this saw the elevation of the composer diminish the status of the performer in relation to their contribution to the work (Lawson, 2002; Small, 1998). The activity of performance subsequently became secondary to the musical work (Goehr, 1992) with ramifications on how musicians were perceived.

The performer began to have a distinct and visible role in performance as part of the emergence of the concert tradition in western classical music. Musical meaning underwent a shift and, whereas music had previously been a means of conveying particular activities, it became concerning with its ability to express emotion. The role of the composer also changed as they were viewed as a source of their own authority (Cook, 1998). In his writing on musical performance, Kivy (2002) notes that advocates of historical performance are concerned with the performer's role in executing the composer's work. He explores this as part of what he refers to as the 'contract' between performers and composers in any periods of western classical music. In relation to the changes in perceptions of classical music, he notes that as

part of a historically authentic performance movement, the contract with the performer has changed. Kivy believes this shift to be from the tradition whereby the focus was on the manner in which the notes were played (according to the historical period in which the piece was composed) to where expectation is placed on the performer becoming part of the work itself. Throughout the history of the performing arts, composers, choreographers and spectators have reacted to the influential role of the performer as the executor and interpreter of their work. In his writing on performance art, Carlson (1996) argues that practitioners base their work on the bodies of artists in relation to their own specific experiences, made performative by their consciousness of actions and the subsequent display of them for an audience. The wider notion of how the body or the self is articulated through performance remains the centre of such performative displays and further highlights the significance concerning the role of the performer in performance.

In the majority of contexts, performance is thought to be the height of a performer's achievement. While the performer is at the heart of any performance, the viewpoint of the performer has been little investigated. The infancy of such research is highlighted in the field of music by researchers who suggest that literature on performance has neglected the concerns of performers (Cotterill, 2015; Rink, 2002; Small, 1998). In dance, Bacon and Midgelow (2011) similarly believe that the experience of the dancer is a vital component of the overall experience of dance. They also suggest that the value of subjectivity and experience as part of knowledge has tended to be overlooked in the field of dance and that a first-person perspective is a much-needed step in maintaining and connecting to a wider body of ideas, experiences and theories. This is further supported by Pelias (2005) who believes that subjective experiences "can be a place where tensions are felt and uncovered, a place of discovery" (p. 420). Viewpoints such as these indicate that much more could be learned from greater consideration of the performer's thoughts and feelings than has hitherto been the case.

Evincing a combination of abilities and characteristics that are unique to the individual, Holmes and Holmes (2013) note that "any performance requires a blend of characteristics, motivations and abilities that are unique to the individual" (p. 10). Subsequently, there is an acknowledgement that artists are fundamental to

performance and are involved in the communicative process at all times (Dunn, 1998). The importance of the performer's own experience to the creation of dance and music performance is further reiterated by Hays (2002) who states that a performer's professional identity and activities are linked inextricably to their performances. Davidson (2002) similarly shares this belief, indicating that a focus on the body as a source of communication suggests that "musical expression is intertwined with who and what we are" (p. 146). It could reasonably be argued that the performer's choices, intentions and experiences are both implicated in and contribute to the moment of performance.

In the field of music, the literature demonstrates an examination of the centrality of: the performer's own experience to the creation of music performance (Holmes & Holmes, 2013); the role and significance of the body in music performance (Sloboda, 2000); the role of the individual in ensemble performance (Goodman, 2002); and the performer's ability to impress his or her individuality on the performance (Ritterman, 2002). The musician's intrinsic role in the subjective world of emotion and the positive emotional experience that a performance can bring (Persson, 2001) has also been a topic of interest in the research field. Persson further states that emotions, feelings and affects are key issues to musicians in communicating and understanding music. As suggested, the role of the individual musician being intrinsically tied to the subjective world of emotion could be one reason why the positive emotional experience of a performance has perhaps been explored. In an attempt to gain insight into what approaches were used in preparing to perform in specific domains, Cotterill (2015) interviewed participants, including musicians, on their preparation strategies and the functions these strategies fulfilled. This research study is of relevance as it acknowledges the continued infancy of research that seeks to explore performance from the perspective of the performer. It is also useful as an example of cross-discipline research, as participants were from a variety of disciplines. Recent writings within the field of music education have also demonstrated a need to adopt the perspective of the learner's experience in the hope that a broader view of musical knowledge and learning will develop (Karlsen, 2011; Westerland, 2002).

In the field of dance, an example of research placing emphasis on the performer's own experience is Reeve (2011), who investigates perspectives on approaches to the body

through a phenomenological approach. This approach is employed as a means of considering subjective experiences, interested in the experience of 'knowing' and self-reflexivity. Reeve notes that each person's experience of the 'self' is unique and culturally specific. Highlighting the importance placed on assessing 'experience' through the means of subjective narratives, Reeve's (2011) research stresses that greater emphasis should be placed on the articulation of an individual's subjective experiences in relation to its context and social and cultural environments. In relation to the notion of 'self', Horton-Fraleigh (1995) states that the whole self is shaped in the experience of the dance and as such, in the experience of the dancer. Other examples of dance research focusing on the performers' own experience includes the study of Bacon and Midgelow (2011) who explored choreographic practices; the dancer's creative role in the performance (Newman, 2004) and the attitudes of ballet dancers in relation to how they prepare for a role and their creation and interpretation of these roles. In the dance literature, there tends to be a focus on the self-reflection of the performer, a move that sees dancers sharing their views and experiences (Carter, 1998). Carter further adds that such reflection has enabled assumptions to be clarified and allowed researchers in dance to have identified, explored and critiqued the epistemological frameworks with which they are investigating. While there is evidence of dancers being encouraged to self-reflect upon their artistic practice, Newman (2004) notes that dancers are still reluctant to be self-reflective in speech, where she implores: "dancers to be more verbally articulate in order to play a full and active role in the creative process and in their profession at large" (p. 53).

Within the context of PaR, it has become popular to explore the performer's sense of subjectivity with reference to their collaborative practices as a performer/choreographer. For example, in Colin's (2015) study exploring the shifting sense of identity experienced in collaborative choreographic practices, he suggests that collaboration in dance research can reveal a process that focuses on the experiences of a plurality of selves. This research highlights the importance of locating collaboration at the level of the perception of the performers themselves and further reveals the importance of performers being given the opportunity to share their first-hand experiences as a means of furthering an artistic capacity.

In contributing to our awareness of the individual performer, it is also of relevance to explore the role of the body in dance and music performance. The dance and music literature reveal an exploration of the performer's 'body' and the body as an 'instrument'. Howard and Strauss (2003) note that "performing artists by their very nature must start with the body as their instrument and then work inward to work outward" (p. 21). The body as an object or instrument is a common metaphor when using the human body to communicate artistic practice. Metaphors are used to define the body's role and, due to their conceptual nature, suggest a person's point of view, what their ideas are, and how they engage in the world (Whittier, 2008). The cultivation of the artist's personal 'instrument' is one hallmark of performing arts training, which, as Batson (1996) and Horton-Fraleigh (1995) suggest, can see the performer use the human body as an instrument of expression and communication. The metaphor of the body being an 'instrument' arguably encourages an emphasis on the objectified body that conveys technical and expressive abilities (Dawson, 2008; Enghauser, 2003; Fortin, 1993).

In dance, and in contrast to the majority of other artistic endeavours, the body can be limited solely to the medium of the entire body (Howard & Strauss, 2003). Descriptions included in the literature refer to the dancing body as a 'vehicle' or a 'mechanism' (Hawkins, 1991). The use of such terms could be a reason why the research field to date has been preoccupied with ideals of objectifying measurable characteristics of the individual dancer and musician. In spite of ideals based on inner expression, performers can often appear to view themselves as separate from their bodies. The writing of Nadel and Strauss (2003) further share this sentiment and highlight that a clearer sense of what constitutes performance is needed from the performers themselves. For instance, he posits that "there is little means of distance or objectivity – the dancer *is* the dance, from the inside out" (p. 185). They further argues that a clearer sense of what dance is can only come through knowing the vocabulary needed to discuss a performance and the connection between that vocabulary and the actual physical feeling experienced in dancing.

The musician's body plays a key role in the production and reception of music performance. The body is an instrument of the performer's art form and enables the physical creation and representation of the score to be seen (Frith, 1996). Performers

are therefore able to create musical meaning by using their bodies alongside their instruments in order to communicate what resides in the score. The bodily movements of a performer have also been investigated in relation to expressing musical intention. For instance, the study of Dahl and Friberg (2007) asked musicians to rate the emotional content of musical excerpts for the emotions of fear, anger, happiness, and sadness. Using visual presentations only, findings revealed that movement alone can convey insight about a performer's emotional intent. These findings are similar to those of Gillespie (1997) who compared expert ratings of audio and audiovisual presentations of students' violin and viola vibratos. Findings revealed that when given visual information adjudicators based their ratings more on seeing the correct motion of producing a vibrato than on hearing it. A second example of music research exploring the bodily movement of a performer is that of Davidson (2002) who studied a performer's presentation skills in relation to how performers present both the music and the performer's body. This research also explored how the expressive intentions of the performer are communicated in musical performance through the bodily movements of the performer. Often in sole contact with an external or internal 'instrument' (Llobet & Odam, 2007), the 'instrument' can become an extension of the body (Ostwald, 1994; Schlinger, 2006).

Research seeking to study the emotional content of music and the relationship between the performer and spectator may be one reason why music research has explored the constructs of performance from a first-person perspective. In relation to music and emotion, research has been centred on: the communication of emotion to the listener (for example, Dittrich, Troscianko, Lead, & Morgan, 1996; Juslin & Madison, 1999; Walk & Homan, 1984); movement and expressive gesture (Davidson, 2002); musicians' physical experiences of music-making (Holmes, 2012); and the notion of embodied performance (Leppert, 1993). While the present research is not concerned with the physical impact of dance and/or music activity (in relation to physiological and neuroscientific change), it is nevertheless important to acknowledge research that has considered the physical impact on the performer. For example, research undertaken in the field of music has examined the physiological impact of music performance in relation to motion and motor learning theory with regards to understanding the process for skill acquisition, and movement analysis (Schmidt & Wrisberg, 2008).

Studies have informed us of the reasons why individuals choose to embrace a musical career and what motivates musicians to pursue their careers (Clark, Williamon and Lisboa, 2007; Persson 1993; 2001). From a review of literature, it is evident there has been a large body of research investigating the emotional experience of music, with studies exploring the importance of being able to control and induce a pleasant emotional experience in oneself by means of playing (Persson, 1996) as well as the role of positive emotions in dominating the strong experiences of both listening and performing (Whaley, Sloboda, & Gabrielsson, 2009). We therefore have a shared awareness that performing music can provide a very positive emotional experience for performers and spectators alike, although there is less research about emotions experienced by the performer. Persson (2001) further informs us that emotion, feelings, and affects are paramount issues to musicians in both communicating and understanding music. Gregory and Varney (1996) go one step further to suggest that without the potential to evoke some type of emotional response, music, as a phenomenon, would probably lose its appeal. While it is evident that studies have explored how music and musicians communicate emotions to listeners, the question of the performer's emotional significance to performance is elusive.

2.3 The Expressive and Physical Aspects of Performance

Dance and music are socio-artistic activities that have been practised throughout the history of modern man and in all societies. The attainment of aesthetic ideals is encompassed by an expectation of individuals to convey their artistic expression in front of a live audience, who is as much a part of the experience (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1991). The idea that both technical expertise and expressive abilities are fundamental to dance and music is further supported in the literature where it is suggested that technical expertise and expressive ability are needed to achieve elite performance levels (Haroutounian 2000; Noice & Noice, 2002; Sloboda, 1985). The research of Koutedakis (2009) further demonstrates the importance of the individual dancer, noting that "the effectiveness of dance performance, in virtually all genres of the art form, owes a great deal to the expressive quality of the individual dancer" (p. 99).

In the context of dance, Fraleigh (1991) considers two perspectives of the shared expressive human body can be shown in performance. The first she refers to as 'body object', referring to a conscious decision taken towards the body as an objective of reflection and attention. The second she refers to as 'body subject', referring to the body lived holistically as the self. In her discussion of the expressive body, she argues that a person can never fully view the self objectively due to the nature of living present in the moment. In relation to technical and expressive abilities, previous research has concluded that dancers can apply strategies from their learned technical skills by creating variations in suspension and falling, gesture and phrasing (Camurri, Mazzarino, Ricchetti, Timmers & Volpe, 2004; Schnitt & Schnitt, 1987).

In music, Sloboda (2000) notes that expression cannot be communicated without an amount of technical expertise because expressive interpretation relies on the musician's ability to manipulate aspects such as pitch, timbre and rhythm. Clarke (1995) similarly notes that expressive features are those which are the result of deliberate interpretative choices. This is in line with a shared awareness of the role the expressive ability of the dancer or musician plays in executing the choreographer's/composer's intention. However, given the previous reference to whether intention is intentional or unintentional, it might be naïve to assume the traditional view that performance is solely concerned with communicating a choreographer's or composer's intentions as recent perspectives give the performer (the musicians and/or dancers) a more central role in performance (Davidson, 2002; Gallese, 2001).

Butterworth (2012) and Clarke (2002) further stress the importance of physical and expressive capacities, suggesting that both dance and music (respectively) use the movements of the body to communicate artistic intention. Best (2006) similarly reminds us that expressive movement is unitary and encompasses two aspects (the physical movement and emotional expression), and that both are required when attempting to understand and appreciate the meaning and intention of dance performance. In a musical context, the performance is an embodied activity, which sees the physical qualities of the musician shape performance and consequently the meanings derived from it (Leppert, 1993). Clarke (2002) shares this opinion, suggesting that a performer aims for transparency between conception and action in a

performance in order to ensure a performer's expression and understanding of the music are evident. The idea of 'artistic expression' is also one of interest in the dance and music literature, where it is commonly thought that expression, or 'feel' is fundamental to performances of every kind. It is further suggested in the literature that the nature of 'artistic expression' is assumed to be an 'outer' manifestation of 'inner' experience (Butterworth, 2012; Clarke, 2002). The research of Hamilton and Hamilton (1991) further supports the theory that dancers and musicians must endure the technical demands of the art forms, while simultaneously conveying artistic expression to an audience. It could subsequently be thought that the aim of dance and music is primarily the attainment of aesthetic excellence, achieved by its artistic and expressive aspects. While an assumption is frequently made of artistic endeavours as devices for emotional expression, Kivy (2002) reminds us that music is expressive of emotion rather than it itself being expressive. Taken together, it is generally felt that technical expertise without expressive ability is insufficient to reach elite performance levels (Haroutounian, 2000; Noice & Noice, 2002; Sloboda, 2000). It can be inferred that to be able to perform consistently at the highest levels, performers must have mastered their technique to the point where they are free to give voice to their interpretative ideas.

It is clear from the studies reviewed that research to date frequently considers a number of characteristics of dance and music performance, suggesting that performance is dependent upon a set of variables. For example, the literature informs us that dancers and musicians are typically selected for vocational training according to artistically pleasing qualities, manifested in part, by certain physical and psychological characteristics (Arjmand, 2009; Dawson, 2008; Koutedakis & Sharp, 1999; Meinke, 1994; Schippers, 2007). It is also suggested in the literature that such physical and psychological characteristics of the individual dancer or musician are advantageous for successful performance and becoming an accomplished artist. Although it is apparent that performers possess a range of favourable characteristics and abilities, unique to each individual performer, there cannot be an assumption that characteristics and abilities are the same for all performers regardless of outward manifestations, which appear to align with one another.

It is evident from the research examples outlined in the previous paragraph that aside

from identifying characteristics of performance, very few studies have sought to identify characteristics of the individual performer. Our knowledge of performance attributes can be subsequently confounding due to the varying means by which attributes are defined and physical and psychological characteristics understood. One reason for this could be that researchers fail to acknowledge the interrelationships between physical and psychological characteristics. A second reason could be a lack of clarity in *how* information concerning attributes and characteristics is obtained. Studies that explore characteristics of dance performance have divided aspects of performance into two distinct categories: components of physical fitness (i.e. muscular power and flexibility (Angioi et al., 2009b; Rimmer & Plowman, 1994)) and technical demands (i.e. precision of movement and alignment (Parrott, 1993).

Another example of research that explores characteristics of dance performance is Critien and Ollis' (2006) study, which investigated the development of talent in professional dancers. This study aimed to identify and examine the methods that professional dancers use to engage in their work as artists. Findings from their study identified clarity, sharpness and focus as characteristics of dance performance. In music, studies that have explored characteristics of music performance appear to use less distinct terminology, referring to features (i.e. an aspect of a performance) rather than characteristics. For example, Cerqueira, Zorzal and Augusto de Avila (2011) propose a model for music performance in which they suggest that music performance is based on three aspects: namely motion, memory and consciousness. When referring to the way in which a piece of music is executed, Cerqueira et al. define 'performance features' as encompassing a stable identity (referring to physical appearance, expression and reputation) and ability (technical and interpretative skills of the performer). However, when commenting specifically on the characteristics of music performance, Cerqueira et al. use the term 'performance states' to describe characteristics of interpretation, concentration, mood, motivation, stage presence and audience contact. The use of features, characteristics and dimensions in the research outlined assist in contributing to understanding what constitutes a performance in the context of music and dance. However, to inform such understanding, further investigation concerning the role of physical and expressive aspects of performance from the perspective of the performer is warranted.

A further commonality of interest between the dance and music literature is the differentiation made between characteristics relating to the *performance* and those relating to the *performer*. For example, in Weiss, Shah, and Burchette's (2008) study profiling the demographic and training characteristics of professional modern dancers, three characteristics associated with the individual dancer were identified. These were the number of years dancing, Body Mass Index (BMI) and hours dancing per week. In music, Barton, Killian, Bushee, Callen, Cupp and Ochs' (2008) study exploring occupational performance issues and predictors of dysfunction in college instrumentalists identified the posture, practice habits and repetitive movements as characteristics of musicians. Interestingly, Williamon, Wasley, Burt-Perkins, Ginsborg and Hildebrandt's (2009) study which aimed to assess music students' performance-related health and well-being, did not differentiate between characteristics relating to the *performance* and those relating to the *performer*. Instead, the authors grouped the characteristics of anxiety, perfectionism, fitness, physical strength, flexibility and health-promoting behaviour as being related to health, well-being and performance.

These examples highlight the possibility that such characteristics are aspects of performance used to enhance physical accomplishment and that an individual's performance can be enhanced through the improvement of such characteristics. For example, Liederbach (1997a) suggests that the characteristic of expressivity is reliant on highly refined motor skills, detailed co-ordination and precision timing. It is therefore evident from the reviewed research that dance and music describe characteristics of performance interchangeably using terms such as components, demands, characteristics, features, attributes and states. The findings from Liederbach (1997a) are of interest as they highlight the extent to which such characteristics are directly related to performance. However, whether they have the potential to contribute to the development of a performing artist is, as yet, unclear. It could also be argued that intervention-based research has a tendency to focus on the measurement of direct impact on the characteristic in question, without necessarily evaluating the impact on the overall performance through potential improvement in one characteristic.

The emphasis given to identifying characteristics of performance in the above examples suggests that performers execute their performance through such means. The authors of these studies also advocate that consideration of performance should incorporate physical and psychological factors alongside artistic and expressive aspects. It is therefore hoped that an increased awareness of these may in turn generate questions about the artistic and expressive aspects of the individual performer. While it appears that our understanding of characteristics differs conceptually - possibly due to the differences between the two art forms and how we perceive and consider them in relation to performance - it nevertheless reveals a misunderstanding in the way in which characteristics are expressed and understood.

2.4 Embodiment in Dance and Music Performance

While the term 'embodiment' is commonly used to describe artistic activity, it is important to understand it specifically in the context of dance and music performance. The notion of embodiment is often included in the fields of anthropology, neurosciences, psychology, phenomenology and movement and somatics, and it is widely and variably used in the fields of dance and music when considering performance. The expansion of interest into embodiment in recent years demonstrates a philosophical shift that emerged in the latter half of the twentieth century (Csordas 1994; Sheets-Johnstone, 2009). This increased interest suggests an acknowledgement by researchers of the significance of embodiment in relation to a sense of self and understanding of lived experience. The value placed on performance as an embodied activity further highlights the significance of the performer.

The term 'embodied' refers to a quality of relating to one's body, which provides an individual with an ability to sense and become more aware. In the performing arts, the performer is often referred to as 'embodied performer' or 'thinking performer' in relation to qualities of presence and performance. The notion of 'embodying' is considered to be a key concern for performers because for something to be embodied it must be related to something the mind has also understood through some form of bodily experience (Martin, 1983). The role of the performer in the embodiment of their artistic practice is also key, as the quality of performance comes from the embodied behaviour on the part of the performer (Schechner, 2002). Focusing on

bodily experience as an embodied process of internal awareness (Green, 2002; Hanna, 1986; 1998), a number of bodywork therapies and somatic practices have been incorporated into music and dance practice over the past decade. The application of somatic principles to dance, and more recently music, emphasises the role embodiment can have in a performer's training. Viewing the body as an embodied process of internal awareness and communication, these principles are used to deepen an individual's experience and understanding of their body (Green, 2002). Research continues to highlight the validity of the subjective sensory perceptions of the individual (Fortin, 1993).

The embodied nature of dance views the body as a living entity rather than an object or instrument (Simpson, 1996; Whittier, 2008) and as such, lends itself to dancers possessing an acute sensibility of their 'bodies' and arguably, a heightened bodily awareness. Embodiment and a dancer's sense of presence have long been discussed by dance theorists Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (1979a; 1979b) and Sondra Fraleigh (1991). The instrument of dance being the human body further lends itself to an embodiment of the art form (Nadel, 2003). Indicating an expression of the whole self within performance, Horton-Fraleigh (1995) proposes that "body, movement, self and agency are ultimately not separable entities" (p. 13). Here, she is suggesting that when a dancer expresses the whole self they are able to experience the moment of dance with all elements being as one single entity. Taken together, Horton-Fraleigh views embodiment as a means of understanding how dancers embody their lived experiences. In relation to embodied experience, Csordas (1994) argues that "embodied experience is the starting point for analyzing [sic] human participation in a cultural world" (p. 135). Sanders (2006) similarly notes that the body should be viewed and considered as a 'whole' (mind and body) rather than simply a moving body. While the viewpoints of Horton-Fraleigh and Sanders contribute to notions of the whole-self, it raises a question as to the credibility of considering the performer as a 'whole' if subjective viewpoints from the performers themselves are rarely considered in research studies.

The embodied experience of a performance is very much dependent on the performer's expressive use of their body. In his discussion of the musician's body, Frith (1996) believes the body is an expressive site where musical meaning is created and an ability

to transform the representation of the score is evident. Here, he is suggesting that performers communicate their representations of the 'work' through both the body and their instruments. The role of the body and the bodily movements of a performer in relation to their interpretation and technical features have subsequently been explored within music research, revealing the close relationship between the instrument and movement of the musician (Dahl & Friberg, 2007; Davidson, 2002). Small (1998) similarly places emphasis on this close relationship, noting that it is vital in transforming music into an embodied experience for an audience. The embodied nature between the music and movement can see the body as expressive where musical meaning is created and is then interpreted by observers (Frith, 1996). Although a close relationship between the instrument and the musician is apparent, the musician's limited contact with their 'instrument' may result in the performer perceiving their embodiment as being introspective. It could therefore be suggested that performers are concerned not just with the body, but also with the bodily self. Smith (2002) states that "one is not simply aware of one's body *as* one's body, but one is aware of one's body as oneself" (p. 1).

Embodiment can also be considered in relation to the authenticity of a performance. The ideas of authenticity and embodiment are arguably linked in that authenticity is required of the performer in order to create meaningful connections with the audience. Frith (1996) notes that the embodied experience of the performer is different from that of the listener. Nevertheless, an acknowledgement concerning the notion of authenticity and embodiment are useful in implying that the performer is fully embodied in their performance when there is a presence and realness of intention behind their execution. Through commitment to being connected in the present moment, the movement and its intention becomes embodied by the performer's whole self. It could therefore be posited that embodiment relies on the audience and how they perceive what is being performed.

2.5 Objectivity and Subjectivity in Performance and Evaluation of Performance

In addition to concern about how performance is viewed in terms of disciplines, concepts and vocabulary, it is necessary also to consider how performance is perceived in relation to the notions of subjectivity and objectivity. Within the fields of Dance

Medicine and Science and Performance Science, the knowledge acquired in an attempt to further our understanding of the individual dancer or musician has been (primarily) achieved through quantifying aspects of performance. For example, studies have been directed towards measuring the physical demands of music performance and their subsequent effect on: performance quality (Drinkwater & Klopper, 2010); aesthetic quality of performance (Twitchett, Angioi, Koutedakis & Wyon, 2011); aesthetic parameters of dance performance (Angioi, Metsios, Twitchett, Koutedakis & Wyon, 2012); performance competence (Angioi et al., 2009); and the relationship between characteristics of movement and emotion/expression (Sawada, Suda, & Ishii, 2003). These studies make a significant contribution to our understanding as they demonstrate the importance currently placed on gauging competency and "creating criteria, against which achievement can be measured" (Oliver, 2000 p. 219). These studies further demonstrate that performance is dependent on a number of variables. Although such research has been valuable in furthering the research field overall, the transferability of such findings is limited due to their objective focus on the performer.

In other pursuits (such as sport) competitive success (i.e. winning) is generally measurable directly and objectively. However, disciplines such as dance and music require a human expert, whose perceptual-cognitive and evaluative skills provide, in effect, a subjective means for assessing performance. While it is assumed that a human expert can assist in guiding the assessment of a performance, Hamalainen (2002) suggests that there can be no absolute truth as each evaluator sees work individually using their personal conception as the basis of evaluation. In this sense, the role of the spectator and the relationship between performance and audience in an artistic setting takes on a vital role, unlike that of sport (Conroy, 2001). Performance can only be measured as poor or excellent in a relative sense, (i.e. to the context as well as the onlooker's experience and background (Smith-Autard, 2002)).

Akin to the literature focusing on the quantitative correlates of dance and music performance, emphasis is placed on the measurement of performance. A number of research studies have investigated performance proficiency and performance as a means of quantifying appropriate criteria for levels of expertise, technical ability and overall proficiency (Bushey, 1966; Chatfield, 1991/1992; Koutedakis, Hukam, Metsios, Nevill, Giakas & Jamurtas, 2007; Krasnow, Chatfield, Barr, Jensen &

Duefek, 1997; Koutedakis, 2009; Radell, Adame & Cole, 2003; Raymond, Sajid, Parkinson & Gruzelier, 2005). These performance ratings validate the importance of developing objective methodologies for acquiring knowledge about performance and for the analysis of performance proficiency. They have subsequently enabled the fields of research to obtain more objective information and to differentiate accomplished dancers from less successful dancers. While quantifying aspects of performance has furthered our knowledge of one particular aspect of performance, there is a lack of discussion in studies focusing on gauging the subjective aspects of performance as experienced by the performer (and arguably also the spectator). In respect of this, it could be assumed that traditional tests aimed at providing an insight into performance in this way are arguably unsatisfying, as their premise is to focus on solely objective measures, despite the emphasis placed on the individual performer in the execution of performance and the subjective aspects of performance as experienced by the individual performer and/or spectator.

In considering the reasons why such emphasis is placed on gaining objective measures, it is important to explore the philosophical concept of objectivity. In his writing on the notions of objectivity, Gaukroger (2012) writes that a common understanding of objectivity is a "judgement that is free of prejudice and bias" (p. 4). In respect of this, it is inferred that to be 'objective' is to capture the nature of the object studied without judgement of a conscious entity or subject. Gaukroger goes on to state that objectivity is something "that requires us to stand back from our perceptions, our beliefs and opinions, to reflect on them, and subject them to a particular kind of scrutiny and judgement" (p. 103). In relation to the performer, objective thought is arguably unavoidable, as a performance becomes an object of quantifiable skills when learning the material for a performance.

In the context of research and the researcher, the notion of objectivity described by above is one deemed to be free of prejudice. The second understanding of objectivity concerns 'judgement'. In Gaukroger's thinking, he suggests that a judgement that is 'objective' is one which is free of all assumptions and values. This particular notion of objectivity is describing an approach that is free of any assumptions. In the wider research field, the idea that it is possible to remove all prejudices from our conclusions is of particular interest, because it is often stressed to be unattainable and is commonly

noted as a 'limitation'. It is suggested that researchers should embrace the idea of a 'prejudice-free judgement' rather than one that aims to remove bias.

It would appear that the values that have come to be associated with objectivity (i.e. lack of bias) have been seen to guide scientific inquiry and, further, assumed to underpin the notion of equality. Within a scientific context, objectivity is commonly thought of as "the degree of accuracy in scoring a test" (Safrit, 1986 p. 138) in relation to intra-tester and inter-tester reliability. In relation to the performing arts field, Chatfield (1991/1992) states that objectivity is an important point if some notion of the aesthetic goal of dance is kept in front of scientific investigations. The importance placed on objectivity in direct contrast to subjectivity in the literature could be a reason why there commonly appears to be a need for researchers to employ one stance or the other. A second reason could be that qualitative research methods are regarded as less reliable in terms of measuring aspects of performance. Lastly, it could be due to a common assumption that the employment of objective measures naturally equates to the collection of 'objective' data.

Previous research in dance suggests that measures of criteria, commonly employed, have included particular aspects of artistry, technical accuracy, expression and interpretation (Bushey, 1966; Koutedakis et al., 2007; Krasnow, Chatfield, Barr, Jensen and Dufek, 1997; Radell et al., 2003; Raymond et al., 2005). For example, Koutedakis et al.'s (2007) study shared the view concerning the measures of criteria in that elite dancers must be experts in both the aesthetic and technical sides of the art form. Other examples of research include that of Chatfield (2009) and Krasnow and Chatfield (2009), which aimed at creating qualitative measures of dance performance. In their study, Krasnow and Chatfield (2009) created the Performance Competence Evaluation Measure (PCEM), a measurement tool used to evaluate qualitative aspects of dance performance. The Laban and Bartenieff Movement Analysis Models were employed as a basis for assessment specification and the evaluation of aspects of dance performance. In their (2009) study, repeated score evaluation of video recorded dance performances was carried out by a panel of judges across four categories (full body involvement in movement; body integration and connectedness in movement; articulation of joints and body segments and movement skills in dance).

Another example of previous research is the dance proficiency test validated by Chatfield (2009), which was derived from the existing Graphic Record of Achievement Form (GRAF). The test involves repeated score evaluation of video recorded dance performances by a panel of judges, using verbally defined rubrics across skill items including 'technique', 'space', 'time and energy', 'phrasing' and 'presence'. Both of these studies suggest a theoretical potential for the successful objectification of expert knowledge through frameworks of well-defined evaluation schemata for a wide range of qualitative aspects of dance performance. Examples including this type of qualitative assessment are also seen to be broadly compatible with recent dance science research, aimed at creating valid and reliable qualitative measures of dance performance (Chatfield, 2009; Krasnow et al., 1997; Krasnow & Chatfield, 2009). Nevertheless, it is evident that there is a considerable difference between the number of tools available for evaluating quantitative aspects of dance performance and the number of tools for qualitative measures.

Contributing to the wider knowledge and debate about dance and music performance, research in recent years have employed qualitative research methods as a means of gaining a subjective insight into that of the individual dancer and musician. While this shift in approach has signified a change in researchers moving towards a subjective insight into the performer, it is largely gained by investigating one particular aspect of *performance* or through exploring the significance and role of the *performer* in *performance*. Further, while such research has enabled the research field access to qualitative measures of dance performance, such measures have (arguably) been designed to develop and test schemata in isolation from the individual performer (for example, the research of Angioi et al., 2009).

In dance, the development of objective systems to measure performance proficiency has been recommended in cases where the relationship between a component (i.e. physical fitness levels) and dance performance is investigated (Angioi et al., 2009b; Angioi, Metsios, Twitchett, Koutedakis and Wyon, 2012; Koutedakis, 2009; Welsh, 2003). One reason for this could be to demonstrate our awareness that technical mastery of skills is essential to achieving the required aesthetic competence during dance performance. While these studies offer new insights into examining the analysis of dance performance, they tell us very little about performance from the perspective

of the performer. These studies assume that the findings of such studies inform us about the artistic or aesthetic components of performance, which is not always the case. For example, Angioi et al.'s (2012) study examining the effects of supplementary training on fitness and aesthetic competence parameters in contemporary dance, commented on 'aesthetic' elements in their findings. However, it was in fact the overall fitness components (lower body muscular power, upper body muscular endurance, and aerobic fitness) of the individual dancer that determined the final outcome. Similarly, Angioi et al.'s (2009) study examining the association between selected fitness parameters and aesthetic competence in contemporary dancers proposed that, "we might understand which physical fitness components most affect the aesthetic competence of contemporary dancers" (p. 121). It is significant to note that this study was important, as while many studies to date have examined dancers' levels of selected fitness components, there is very little, if any published literature on the associations between these fitness parameters and aesthetic competence. However, similar to Angioi et al. (2012) study, while referring to 'aesthetic competence' in its findings, the overall physical fitness components determined the final outcome and it is therefore unclear how directly components of physical fitness will affect the aesthetical components of contemporary dance.

While the research outlined above has enabled access to qualitative measures of dance performance, Krasnow and Chatfield (2009) inform us that researchers who have attempted to measure the quality of dance performance have felt such measurement approaches to be inadequate. In their research, they state: "measures of physical or motor components of dance activity have provided few positive predictors of qualitative excellence" (p. 101). Given that performance is ultimately reliant on qualitative expert knowledge for validation of an accomplished performance, it is of interest that research continues to focus on the quantitative correlations of performance through such means. We also know from the literature that expert schemata for dance and music performance are typically expressed in the form of scoring rubrics for qualitative assessment. However, very few studies have developed and tested qualitative schemata for validation of an accomplished performance, and those that have, primarily exist in the field of dance (Angioi et al., 2009; Chatfield, 2009; Chatfield & Byrnes, 1990; Krasnow & Chatfield, 2009). Unlike physical fitness and its well-defined components (Heyward, 2002), the description and quantification

of artistic performance is (arguably) less clear because the effectiveness of performance primarily relies on aesthetic components.

Research seeking to gain insight into performance could therefore be problematic for a number of reasons. Firstly, it could be due to the challenge of attempting to quantify variables (i.e. quality of performance), which are perceived as largely subjective and therefore regarded as unreliable indicators in measuring properties of performance (Ashworth, 2008). Secondly, as noted by Welsh (2003), performers have a variety of abilities that are uncommon in a non-dance population, implying that measuring a performer's capacities is a challenge as it is impossible to find a tool that could appropriately measure such a vast range of abilities. Lastly, given the shared consensus that to 'perform' is to communicate, investigating the qualitative element of artistic disciplines raises concern that performers may be evaluated by researchers or individuals who experience a personal bias.

Upon reviewing previous research studies, it is clear that there are developing trends in the methodologies used to measure dance, with respect to the choice of variables to assess. The emphasis placed on acquiring knowledge of dance performance by quantifying particular aspects of performance may be a subsequent reason why there is a prevalence of studies measuring physical and psychological attributes of performers when investigating performance. This may in part explain why there are more studies measuring performance in the field of dance than in music. The review of literature therefore suggests that the notion of varying methods of assessment warrants further discussion in relation to what such methods tell us about the individual performer and performance, more generally. It can be inferred from the literature that before components of performance can be quantified as a basis for improving our understanding of performance and the individual performer, a first-person insight must be established. The review of literature also suggests that if studies are consistently using the same measures to assess its performance, such research may therefore be biasing our understanding (Welsh, 2003). With this in mind, the idea of varying methods of assessment requires future discussion, as do notions surrounding how performance is perceived in relation to subjectivity and objectivity. It may also be valid, in future research, to include the thoughts of the performer when questioning the (possible) analysis of performance.

2.6 Dance and Music Performance Research

Previous research in dance and music suggests that there are developing trends with respect to gathering data about the individual dancer or musician. It is apparent from the research studies reviewed that the collection of such data has contributed to our informed awareness of certain characteristics, trends and capabilities possibly related to dance and music training and performance. A large body of research, primarily in the research fields of Dance Medicine and Science and Performance Science has further demonstrated that performance is dependent on a number of variables, such as the acquisition of performance skills; characteristics directly related to dance training and performance and measures by which to assess performance. Research within the domains of dance and Dance Medicine and Science has contributed to our understanding of the performer's body and has seen long-held training methods and techniques questioned (Newman, 1991; Plastino, 1995) in the pursuit of a better objectified awareness of the human body and dancers' physiological and psychological capabilities (Krasnow & Chatfield, 1996; Ostwald, Barry, Barron, & Wilson, 1994; Simpson, 1996). Research that has made reference to previous experimental and non-experimental studies examining variables of music performance and elements of musicians' performance, has noted that while such research has contributed to our understanding of performance, it has failed to explore musicians' experience of musical performance (Gabrielsson, 2002; Geeves et al., 2016). In short, while progress has been made in relation to what constitutes a performance, findings cannot explain how these elements constitute musicians' experience of performance as the performers' thoughts have not been sought.

In recent years, the potential usefulness of practices normally employed in the fields of dance and Dance Medicine and Science to other performance settings, such as music, has also been apparent. For example, it is acknowledged that investigating the psychological and physical aspects of music performance might contribute to an interdisciplinary approach relevant to gaining an insight into the individual musician and music-making activities (Cardinal & Hilsendager, 1995; 1997; Harman, 1998; Llobet & Odam, 2007). Further, a number of studies have looked at a variety of ways of enhancing music training and performance, for instance by investigating the musculoskeletal   and   non-musculoskeletal   problems   experienced   by   young

instrumentalists and vocalists studying at conservatories (Kreutz, Ginsborg & Williamon, 2008). Frequencies of these problems were assessed in relation to different groups of instrumentalists, perceived practice, performance quality and health-promoting behaviour. While the above study highlighted that fewer musculoskeletal and non-musculoskeletal symptoms reliably predict better quality, it is difficult to truly know to what extent the findings could have a direct impact on students' performance. These research examples further highlight the need for a first-person insight when seeking to understand performance.

Another example of a study warranting clarity with regards to the impact the findings have on student performance is Williamon, Wasley, Burt-Perkins, Ginsborg and Hildebrandt, (2009) who profiled music students' physical and mental fitness for performance. A suggested outcome was for the findings of physical and mental profiling exercises to be employed as the basis for refining current training approaches and "tailoring and implementing novel performance enhancement initiatives" (p. 86). While this study makes progress exploring the physical and mental components of musical performance, further research as to what such initiatives might be and how they might be applied is needed.

Alongside the collection of data about the individual performing artist, research in dance and music performance has also been undertaken in relation to a certain function. In music, examples of these are studies by Devroop and Chesky (2002), Shan and Visentin (2003) and Iltis and Givens (2005) who looked at mouthpiece forces in trumpet playing, examined the arm kinematics of violin performance and who investigated the actual mechanics of performance via electromyography to assess muscle activation in the embouchure of brass players. Further examples of studies investigating music performance include the development of procedures and technology. For instance, Tro (2007) studied the use of algorithms for computer-generated performance in an attempt to investigate how performers manipulate musical parameters. Other examples of research include the acquisition of performance skills (through investigating training and practice), the use of mental rehearsal and quantity and quality of practice (Williamon & Valentine, 2000); as well as performance processes and the neuroscientific study of musical learning and performance (Patel, 2008). Research investigating music performance has further

highlighted the need for performers to have an awareness of their own performance in relation to the physical and psychological stresses of public performance (Clarke, 2002).

While the outlined examples of research contribute to furthering our knowledge of dance and music performance, their focus on student performers is potentially limiting as to how much this reveals about a professional performance context. McPherson and McCormick (2006) and Ritchie and Williamon (2011) argue that the transferability of findings is also limited as a result of this. This possible limitation is further reiterated by Skull (2011) who notes that the majority of research conducted in the area of music performance has utilised student participants, highlighting the need for future research to include professional performers. The transferability of such findings to an artistic context is potentially limited due to their objective focus on the performer. It is thought that this could be due to the majority of studies involving measurable variables as a means of demonstrating quantifiable results to say something about a given population.

Research in dance has similarly relied on gathering data about the individual performer as a means of better understanding performance. For example, studies have investigated possible characteristics directly related to dance performance and physical fitness and performance (for example, Angioi et al., 2009 and Twitchett et al., 2011). Twitchett et al. examined the effect of a tailored fitness training programme on the incidence of injury and the aesthetic quality of performance of classical ballet dancers. Brown et al. (2007) compared the effects of plyometric training (exercises that are designed to enhance neuromuscular performance) and traditional weight training on aesthetic jumping ability, lower body strength and power in collegiate dancers. The results from this study showed that such training can be useful in improving variables applicable to dance. An important aspect of this study is that a subjective dance evaluation was developed as a means of examining the effect of the training programs on aesthetic jumping ability. While it can be posited from the study's findings that measuring the aesthetic components of performance is important for interpreting success, it is still unclear to what extent this is the case. It is also of interest to note that the authors similarly allude to this point, noting that it is difficult to quantify improvement in dance given its aesthetic nature.

Though the studies establish measured variables by which performance can be assessed - such as the link between physical fitness and performance, inferring that supplementary fitness can have a positive effect on aspects of aesthetic dance performance (Twitchett et al., 2011) - they tell us very little about performance (in the case of these examples, aesthetics) from the subjective understanding of the performer. Furthermore, these suggest a commonality across dance research, in that they tend to consist of measurable variables as a means of demonstrating quantifiable results of findings that rely heavily on 'performance' being the outcome of studies that look objectively at the performer. While the above examples contribute to our understanding of dance and music-making performance activities, they primarily consist of measurable variables devoid of subjective insight from the performer.

2.7 Qualitative Research: Dance and Music

While it is evident from the discussion of the above research that there is a focus on the quantitative correlates of performance, there is also a shared awareness that performance is reliant on qualitative expert knowledge for validation of an accomplished performance. For example, expert schemata (describing a pattern of thought or behaviour that aims to categorise information) are often employed and typically expressed in the form of scoring rubrics, criteria used to define consistent criteria for grading purposes. Researchers who have developed and tested such schemata as a means of creating measures for validation of a performance have done so primarily in the field of dance (Angioi et al., 2009; Chatfield, 2009; Chatfield & Byrnes, 1990; Krasnow & Chatfield, 2009). This type of assessment is broadly compatible with recent changes in the field of Dance Medicine and Science, which have seen researchers creating quantitative measures of dance performance. A consequence of such research is that studies have developed and tested these schemata in isolation from an individual performer's focus solely on external, expert perception. Issues concerning validity and reliability in qualitative research will be introduced and addressed in the methodology chapter of this thesis (Chapter 3).

Hanstein (1999) believes that the qualitative nature of dance as an art form predisposes the field to qualitative modes of inquiry. While it is similarly advocated by Eisner (1998) that artistic qualitative research focuses on individual experiences, their meanings, and what others make of them, it is apparent from the literature that the

majority of qualitative research has been undertaken through a phenomenological approach. The infancy of qualitative dance research is further highlighted by Carter (1998) who notes that "the difficulty was in finding writing by dancers at all, especially on their experiences of performance" (p. 53).

In the context of phenomenological research, Carter (1998) discusses the relevance of a phenomenological approach to dance (with reference to existential phenomenology). Phenomenology is concerned with seeking individual experience and "attempts to view any experience from the inside rather than at a distance" (Fraleigh, 1991, p. XIV). Focusing on the experience itself as it is lived, phenomenology brings the nature of that experience to light through pre-reflective acts (Sheets-Johnston, 1979b). Fraleigh (1991) believes that a phenomenological approach is of relevance to dance as it seeks to define or describe a phenomenon (i.e. performance) and is not devoid of the past or present. Phenomenology is dependent on immediate experience in the hope of arriving at both meaning and perspectives on the phenomena of experience, which can be communicated. Conroy (2001) study is another example of research that employed a phenomenological approach as a means of identifying criteria used by performers to evaluate their performance and generate perceptions of failure or success. In future research, it would be of interest to explore the notion of perceived success in relation to a phenomenological evaluation of success.

The performer's perspective has also been investigated using phenomenological perspectives. For example, in music, phenomenology has been increasingly used as a research approach in studies designed to investigate the experience of music performance (Clark, Williamon & Lisboa, 2007). Further examples of music research exploring phenomena from the perspective of the musician include Guptill's (2011) study, which employed a hermeneutic phenomenological methodology to understand the lived experience of professional instrumental musicians with playing-related injuries. The findings from this study revealed that participants contextualise their experiences of injury in relation to how they had been affected as musicians, workers and teachers. While musicians' injuries from the perspective of musicians themselves have been studied, Guptill's (2011) study was the first of its kind to describe what the experience of playing-related injuries is like for professional musicians.

It is only relatively recently that there has been an increasing focus on the phenomenon of performance from the performer's perspective. Qualitative research methods have frequently been employed as a means of investigating the individual performer and the processes of dance and music performance. For example, in the context of dance, Walker, Nordin-Bates and Redding (2010) used semi-structured interviews to explore ballet dancers' experiences of performance anxiety in relation to symptom type, intensity, directional interpretation, experience level and self-confidence. Overall findings revealed that perceptions of control underlined all aspects of the study and that anxiety management strategies should be employed to focus on improving dancers' sense of control.

Recent qualitative studies in music have been directed towards examining and describing particular aspects of music such as musicians' health (Schoeb & Zosso, 2012) and performance preparation among musicians (Creswell, 2009; Cotterill, 2015; Skull, 2011; Talbot-Honeck & Orlick, 1998). As noted by Creswell, these methods produce in depth knowledge reflective of the individual's experience. Klockare, Gustafsson and Nordin-Bates (2011) employed semi-structured interviews to examine how professional dance teachers work with psychological skills in dance classes. While these recent studies are useful in examining particular aspects of dance and music performance, they are limited in that they investigate performance in relation to a specific construct. In recent years, studies have also begun to employ qualitative research methods as a means of investigating the individual musician's experience. In relation to the researcher gaining a subjective insight into the performer, Cergueria et al. (2011) note that empirical and subjective insights will always play an important role due to the artistic nature of music. These examples of research are important as they signify a shift in researchers moving towards the employment of qualitative methods as a means of understanding performance.

Holmes and Holmes (2013) further substantiate the argument that the subjective world of the musical performer is suited to qualitative enquiry and more generally, for using qualitative (phenomenological) research methods in music performance. Specifically, they advocate that differing perspectives could be drawn together if qualitative and phenomenological methods are more widely employed as a way of investigating the experience of performance. This is highlighted in their study which demonstrates the

fundamental role of the experience of the performer to the creation of any music performance and the lack of attention it has received to date. As suggested by Holmes and Holmes (2013), phenomenology is made reference to in its philosophical sense, namely that "its epistemological function could be to cast more light on the relationship of the performer and the performance" (p. 9). An argument for different, 'more softer' methodologies is made by Nelson (2013), who suggests that such methodologies should hold equal importance within fields of academia. In relation to the field of PaR, which he suggests offers interesting thinking concerning conceptual frameworks and related pedagogy, he suggests that researchers in artistic domains should depart from thinking of the positivist paradigm as the only valid research paradigm.

A second example of a research study that has been meaningful in their investigation of the individual performer's experience is Clark et al. (2007) who employed semi-structured interviews with student and professional musicians as a means of exploring their perceptions and experiences in performance. Specifically, this study investigated the activities musicians engage in when preparing for performance, their thoughts and perceptions during performance, and the impact their evaluation of those thoughts and perceptions has on their subsequent musical activities. Findings elicited three general themes of motivation, preparation activities, and experiences during actual performances. This observation is corroborated by Holmes and Holmes (2013), who recognise that any qualitative study of elite music performance will always see recurring themes of motivation, emotion and expression. The emphasis placed on gaining insight *during* performance is also advocated by Sheets-Johnstone (2009) who notes that, where possible, interviewees should be guided towards remembering their experience in the moment of performance.

A study by Clark, Lisboa and Williamon (2014) in which musicians' thoughts and perceptions during performances (and the perceived impact of these on their subsequent musical activities) were, investigated similarly contributes to our understanding surrounding musicians' experiences while performing. Participants were interviewed concerning factors perceived to contribute to the quality of performances, experiences prior to and during performances, and their responses to performances. Findings revealed successful performances to be associated with feelings of sufficient preparation and positive mind-sets, whereas less successful

performances were linked with inadequate preparation, negative mental outlooks, frustration and a lack of enjoyment during the performance.

In these examples of research, it should be noted that insight into the performer's thoughts, perceptions and experiences of performing were in relation to specific constructs or to two specific performance experiences. For example, Clark et al. (2007) explored: performers' thoughts and perceptions during performance in relation to certain areas, which were the types of preparation and pre-performance routines that musicians engage in: musicians' thoughts and perceptions of both themselves and their environment while performing; the musical, psychological, and non-musical skills deemed essential for success and the types of demands and stressors that musicians face, and how they manage them.

It could be argued that a greater insight into musicians' thoughts, perceptions and experiences during performance might have be gained if the musicians had been given the opportunity to speak of what was of importance to them, rather than on these specific areas. While it is evident from the above examples that the discipline of phenomenology has enabled the research field to gain a more in-depth awareness of aspects of performance, a difference exists between research studies that employ a phenomenological approach as a research tool and those whose research derives from a phenomenological tradition. For instance, when employed as a research tool, a phenomenological approach is used as a method for eliciting understanding, whereas when it is used as an approach, it provides a useful philosophical framework with which to consider experience and meaning.

2.8 Research Questions

In order to inform the wider debate about dancers' and musicians' performance, further investigation concerning the experience of the performer is needed. The consideration of literature in this chapter has revealed that there remains a paucity of research concerned with seeking the subjective thoughts and perceptions of the performer in relation to what it means to be a performer and on the phenomenon of performance more generally. In light of these limitations to existing knowledge, the following research questions were identified for further investigation throughout this

thesis. The research questions will be revisited and discussed in depth in the discussion chapter (Chapter 9):

1. What constitutes the performer's experience of performing?

2. How is the essence of the performer's experience shaped by their subjective understanding of how they experience performing and what performing means to them?

3. To what extent might attention dedicated to the viewpoint of the individual performer contribute to a wider understanding of what constitutes the performer's experience?

4. How might bringing the viewpoint of the performer to the fore contribute more generally to a wider understanding about the multi-faceted components of dance and music performance?

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1   Introduction

This chapter constitutes a presentation of the methodology used in the present research to provide context for the two qualitative studies and questionnaire.   Details concerning ontological and epistemological concerns, data collection methods, ethical considerations and participants, as well as an overview of analyses, will be presented. Measures of establishing trustworthiness and issues concerning validity and reliability of data in qualitative research will also be discussed.   In addition, the role of the researcher in the two qualitative studies and questionnaire will be presented.   Further details of what took place in each of these studies, including the methods of data collection and specific methods of analysis will be included in each of the relevant chapters of this thesis (Chapters 4-6).

3.2 Methodological Approach

In order to address the research questions outlined in the previous chapter, the present research uses a qualitative and quantitative methodology.   A review of current research in dance and music, and a lack of existing research seeking a first-person perspective concerning the experience of the performer, further supported the selection of a qualitative methodology. The aim of the interpretivist paradigm is to interpret the meanings in human behaviour and to understand subjective experiences, which are time and context bound (Neuman, 2000). The interpretivist paradigm, often referred to in the literature as an interpretive research approach, "loosely captures a number of positions: subjectivism, phenomenology, symbolic interactionism, hermeneutics, and so on" (Hudson & Ozanne, 1998 p. 509). Details of the specific methodological approaches used in the two qualitative studies and questionnaire are incorporated into each relevant chapter.

3.3 Ontological and Epistemological Concerns

The ontological and epistemological position of the interpretivist paradigm is that it is believed that reality is multiple and relative. Hudson and Ozanne (1998) suggest that the position is 'multiple' because of the different individual and group perspectives involved, and 'holistic' because the interpretivist approach views the individual and

group realities from a holistic view point, it is more effective if viewed in its entirety rather than in isolation. In short, "interpretivists believe that no amount of inquiry will converge on one single reality because multiple realities exist and are changing" (Hudson & Ozanne, 1998 p. 509). The epistemological position of the interpretivist paradigm is seen to identify meanings and other subjective experiences that are time and context bound, referred to in the literature as 'thick description' (Hudson & Ozanne, 1998). Qualitative researchers are therefore interested in the nature of reality and 'truth' in the world (ontology) and how knowledge about the world can be generated and interpreted (epistemology) (Marecek, 2011). In the context of the present research, the researcher acknowledges that reality is shared and generated through interpretation rather than a single reality.

While the present research is not embedded within a philosophical tradition, the methodology was underpinned by an acknowledgement of Hermeneutic Interpretive Phenomenology. Hermeneutics is the study of interpretation (McNamara, 1999), and is phenomenological in its approach as it considers personal, experiential and global aspects of interpretation. Phenomenological hermeneutics is a qualitative research methodology concerned with understanding the process of interpretation and it provides an opportunity to reflect forwards and backwards. It therefore provides a useful philosophical framework with which to consider human experience (Crist & Tanner, 2003; Hay, 2011). Hermeneutic Interpretive Phenomenology is also an important element in Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). IPA is grounded in an inductive approach, phenomenological in its essence; it focuses on how the participant, in context, constructs meaning and makes sense of a given phenomenon (Smith & Osborn, 2003). In the literature, 'essence' is described as being the basis or primary element in the being of a 'thing', without which it could not be what it is. In the context of dance, Fraleigh (1991) refers to 'essence' as "something is discerned which characterises or typifies the dance, so that it is recognised as itself and not some other dance" (p. 137). Here, she is suggesting that 'dance' becomes more than just motion and that the movement reveals the intent of its entity. In the present thesis, the term 'essence' is employed to depict the researcher going beyond simply engaging in data collection methods and, instead, seeking to understand the heart of performers' thoughts and perceptions on performance.

Acknowledgement from the researcher was given in respect of phenomenology being a philosophical tradition that accesses understanding through 'narratives' in an attempt to reveal meaning and places emphasis on the subjective experience of the phenomenon under investigation (Guptill, 2011). The ontological stance adopted by the researcher was that of "self as instrument" (Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Garner & McCormack Steinmetz, 1991 p. 86). As with other researchers in dance (Chappell, 2006; Fortin, 2005), the researcher was aware of her subjective experience, in this case as an educator with a performing background in dance and music. While the character of the researcher's own experience predisposed her engagement with the topic, this was viewed as being valuable in both the fieldwork and throughout interpretative analysis. The idea of the researcher being key to the research environment is linked to that of an interpretivist approach, where it is believed that the best approach to understanding is through the use of the human researcher.

The choice of methodology was central to the way in which knowledge was obtained and phenomena investigated. The importance placed on the choice of methodology is advocated by Mason (1996) and Seale (1999), who note that it should reflect the overall research strategy and decisions taken depend upon the best way in which to answer the research question. Krauss (2005) similarly notes that the choice of methodology should be determined through a critical understanding of the most successful way to answering the research question. The employment of a naturalistic position therefore provided a framework for generating a series of directions for each of the three studies. As stated by Mason (2006), a 'qualitatively derived' research approach offers the potential for generating "new ways of understanding the complexities and contexts of social experience, and for enhancing our capacities for social explanation and generalization" (p. 10).

An interpretive qualitative methodology and inductive research approach are deemed appropriate when investigating a (predominantly subjective) phenomenon where little empirical research exists (Patton, 2002), as they aim to capture the subtleties and complexities of individual human behaviour (Robson, 1993). These approaches were also considered appropriate due to the likelihood that there would be a multi-view response (Ely el al. 1991) (i.e. that participant experiences and understanding of performance would differ). Placing importance on studying the whole, subjective

experience, these approaches allow an examination of the in which individuals perceive, create and interpret their world. This is because they look for synthesis rather than reductive explanations (Côté, Salmela, Baria and Russell, 1993; Hudson and Ozanne, 1998). For example, it is referred to by Tesch (1990) that the approaches see "the researcher overlay a structure of her or his own making on the data" (p. 128). These approaches further enabled the researcher to draw together and interpret findings with respect to meaning provided by the participants themselves. Specifically, the employment of an inductive research approach was in order to allow the important elements and patterns to emerge organically, without predetermining what those elements or patterns might be (Ely et al., 1991; Patton, 2002). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) further advocate the use of an inductive research approach so that interview questions can be framed as widely as possible, focusing on the voices and feelings of respondents.

For the two qualitative studies, access to participants' experiences and understanding of performance was obtained through the production of a narrative account. Namely through questioning, participants offered to the researcher an account of their experiences and understanding of performance. Silverman (2006) suggests that treating interview data as narrative accounts will avoid the temptation to treat respondents' explanations in terms of their one-to-one relationship with a pre-existing social world, as either true or false. Narrative accounts of participants were used as a resource to understand their experiences both as a 'performer' and of performing, more generally. It is also suggested in the literature that it is advantageous to collect qualitative data in close proximity to the specific situation such as via direct observation or interview, with the influence of the context being taken into account and not being discarded (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This was reflected in the present research by interviews being employed for both studies and reference made to performing and performance throughout interviewing.

When interviewing, the researcher included the word 'understanding' in her questioning as it was hoped that this would assist in capturing potentially elusive aspects of participants' interpretations and in making sense of the participants' narrative accounts. The notion of understanding is one of importance within the chosen research paradigm, as interpretivist researchers view this as a process rather

than an end product (Hudson & Ozanne, 1998). Access to participant experience and understanding was gained through a two-stage interpretative process, namely participants making sense of their worlds and the researcher, in turn, making sense of this process (Smith & Osborn, 2003). This was in relation to them as performers, the performing environment, and their experiences of performing and the phenomenon of performance more generally.

The present research also employed a questionnaire to measure the extent to which a larger sample of professional performers agreed or disagreed with the emerging themes from the first two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5). Questionnaire items were generated from the qualitative analyses of interview data to ensure that the questions asked were of relevance. The decision was taken to use predetermined categories as a means of representing the emerging themes from the first two qualitative studies (presented in Chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis).

3.4 Data Collection Methods

For the two qualitative studies, the researcher undertook interviews with professional dancers and musicians to gather information concerning performers' experiences as performers, as well as their thoughts and perceptions on the phenomenon of performance. For both studies, insight was gained through the production of a narrative account, specifically through the questioning of participants, which in turn presented the researcher with an account of their experience of performing and understanding of performance more widely.

The chosen method of data collection for the first study (presented in Chapter 4 of this thesis) was semi- structured interviews based on an interview guide. As guided by the literature and outlined in Chapter 2 of this thesis, semi-structured interviews have been previously employed in dance and music research where the aim is to explore an individual's experience. For example, Walker and Nordin-Bates (2010) used semi-structured interviews to explore ballet dancers' experiences of performance anxiety, and Clark et al. (2007) used semi-structured interviews to explore musicians' perceptions and experiences in performance. In both examples, semi-structured interviews have been used as a means of gaining insight into performers' experiences

and perceptions. In light of this, the chosen method of data collection was considered appropriate for the first qualitative study (Chapter 4).

In the second study (presented in Chapter 5 of this thesis) unstructured interviews were conducted with professional performers, supported by a topic guide. In respect of the first study (Chapter 4), the researcher reflected on whether the semi-structured interview guide had been too constraining, given that it contained pre-determined questions. As highlighted in Chapter 2 of this thesis, most research concerned with the experience of the performer in dance and music has been in relation to a set of predetermined constructs rather than what is of importance to them. With this in mind and guided by the literature, the researcher felt that a more unstructured means of interviewing would enable performers to speak conversationally and of their own volition. In an 'unstructured' or 'less-structured' interview, the interaction between interviewer and respondent allows the interviewer to explore in greater depth respondents' meanings and beliefs (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). Seeking to encourage performers to speak freely with little prompting or questioning, the researcher felt this might enable them to offer a richer insight into how they perceive themselves as performers. With this in mind, the researcher focused on language as a vehicle for exploring the experience of participants. The use of recorded data was essential for both qualitative studies, as this enabled repeated and detailed examination of the interaction between the respondent and researcher (Silverman, 2006). Details concerning both materials (semi-structured interview guide and topic guide) will be discussed in the relevant chapters for each of the studies (Chapters 4 and 5). Within the questioning for both qualitative studies, an open question was first asked about participants' performing background as a way of giving the respondents a chance to speak as freely and openly as possible (Klockare et al., 2011). Starks and Brown-Trinidad (2007) suggest that in this context, words are not assumed to speak for themselves; meaning is created through the interaction between the researcher and the researched (Guba, 1990; Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The third study (presented in Chapter 6 of this thesis) used a quantitative method of data collection in the form of a questionnaire. This was employed to measure the extent to which a larger sample of professional performers agreed or disagreed with the emerging themes from the two qualitative studies (presented in Chapters 4 and 5).

A descriptive, cross-sectional research approach sectional research approach was appropriate as it aims to observe and gather information on certain phenomena, at a single point in time (Kelly, Clark, Brown and Sitzia, 2003). Therefore, a questionnaire was employed as it can provide a 'snapshot' of how things occur at a specific time (Denscombe, 2010). The researcher acknowledged the appropriateness of a questionnaire as the aim of the research is to describe the patterns of people's responses to preconceived questions and as a means of learning about the distribution of characteristics, thoughts and attitudes of a phenomenon (Kelly et al., 2003; Silverman, 2006). This method of data collection was employed in an attempt to offer a different perspective on performers understanding of performance and to contribute a multidimensional awareness of the performer's experience. Details concerning the design and use of the questionnaire will be discussed in Chapter 6 of this thesis.

For all studies, a demographic information sheet was used to collect routine data, giving the researcher access to 'facts' independent of the research-setting (Silverman, 2006). All participants were asked to detail their age, sex and, if a musician, whether they were a vocalist (stating voice type) or instrumentalist (stating instrument played) and if a dancer, the genre of dance they primarily perform. They were also asked how long they had participated in dance or music, the age at which they first performed professionally, and how frequently they perform.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

All research reported in this thesis was undertaken in accordance with the Trinity Laban Research policies on research and the British Psychological Society's (BPS) Code of Human Ethics Principles and Guidelines (2011). All research was granted ethical approval from the Trinity Laban Research Ethics Committee (see Appendices H - J). All participants were informed about the purpose of the research and how this would be conducted. Assurances were communicated by the researcher (either in person or by email prior to the data collection process) with respect to confidentiality, anonymity and access to the material collected. Assurances to anonymity and participant identification was followed throughout the research and the collection of all data.

For all research, written consent was obtained by participants and information sheets were disseminated to participants prior to data collection as a means of enabling them to familiarise themselves with the procedure and the aims of the particular study (see Appendix A). Information disseminated included: the overall purpose and content of the relevant study; the steps undertaken to ensure anonymity; security of data obtained; and reassurance that participation in the study was voluntary and they (participants) could withdraw at any point during the research process. The researcher's contact details and contact details of the research supervisors were also included, in the event that the participants had any concerns about the manner in which the research had been conducted.

For the two qualitative studies, as outlined in the BPS Code of Human Ethics Principles and Guidelines, appropriate debriefing was undertaken for participants and informal peer debriefing was used to discuss themes and ideas emerging from the data. Following completion of the interview, each participant was debriefed and reminded of their right to withdraw or make alterations to any parts of the interview. Post analysis, participants were shown sub-themes that emerged from analysis of their dataset and were given the opportunity to raise any concerns if they did not feel the sub-themes reflected the meaning of what they had said. None of the participants chose to take up these options. All performers expressed an interest in being provided with a summary of the research findings and it was agreed that this would be sent to them via email upon completion of the research.

All interviews were recorded using a digital audio recorder (Zoom Q3). In addition, non - linguistic information gained from the interviewee was also noted, such as information expressed in gestures and facial expressions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Non-verbal communication such as impression of mood, behaviour and the use of silence was also noted (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Patton, 2002). While some realist approaches view silences as a problem when producing data (Collins, 1998), silences in this case were incorporated in the collection of data rather than suggesting that key questions have been omitted.

For all studies, data was kept in a secure place and electronic data was stored on a password-protected computer under a password-protected login and external hard

drive, to which only the researcher had access. The questionnaire was conducted online using the environment provided by Surveymonkey (www.surveymonkey.com). Each participant received, by email, the same Surveymonkey link which contained the same version of the questionnaire. In a covering email, participants were provided with instructions on how to undertake the questionnaire and an expectation from the researcher that it would be completed in the same order and following the same questions (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). Individual ethical considerations for each of the studies (see Chapters 4 to 6) will be discussed in the relevant chapter of this thesis.

3.6 Participants

It was decided that the most insightful data was likely to emerge from professional dancers and musicians as it is perceived that professional performers have greater experience of performing compared to that of lower level performers. This rationale is also similar to one used by Holmes (2005) who explored the memorisation processes of two solo musicians. Studies similarly highlight the influential role that elite and professional individuals have when undertaking research as research participants. In the context of sport, Marshall and Rossman (1995) posit that elite individuals are considered to be influential, prominent and well-informed people in an organisation or community. Selected for interview on the basis of their expertise in areas relevant to the research, Marshall and Rossman (1995) state, "that an elite interview is a specialised case of interviewing, focusing on a particular type of interviewee" (p. 83). Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) propose that interviewing elite participants is different from non-professionals, as the positions they hold results in a familiarity with what is being studied. For example, Conroy (2001) interviewed elite athletes and performing artists to reveal the nature of the cognitive-motivational-relational appraisals associated with fears of failure and success.

Professional musicians and dancers were recruited for the three studies so as to draw upon a breadth of performance-related experiences and understanding. Participants recruited were professional performers, over the age of eighteen, who were currently employed with a professional dance company or professional orchestra/ ensemble. These population parameters were selected in order to provide access to individuals who had particular expertise in the phenomenon being studied (Reid, Flowers &

Larkin, 2005). Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) further argue that the participants selected for a study dealing with a first-person experience should "represent a perspective as opposed to a population" (p. 50). The researcher interpreted this to mean that the chosen population needed to be representative of the subjective experiences of the participants as opposed to the population as a whole.

In the context of the present research, performers were asked to self-identify as a professional dancer or musician. This is similar to the rationale provided by Guptill (2011), where participants were allowed to self-identify as a professional dancer or musician. The term 'professional' was employed instead of 'elite' as it better suited the artistic field and nature of the research under investigation. A professional performer was defined as an individual who makes a full time living as a performing musician or dancer, that is, those for whom performance was their main occupation at the time of the study. Despite the selection criterion, however, for some participants recruited in the first study (Chapter 4), their primary source of income included other employment such as teaching.

The challenge of defining participants as 'professional' according to the numbers of hours spent performing per week (which can vary greatly) has been noted by Guptill (2011). Acknowledging this variability, a further criterion for defining 'professional' was that the public are willing to pay for their performance. This is similar to the definition given by Kenny, Fortune and Ackerman (2009) in their study of the psychological well-being of professional orchestral musicians and Geeves et al. (2016) in their investigation of professional musicians' experience of music performance.

For all studies in the present research, recruited participants had at least 25 years of performing experience and around 30 years of professional performing experience. Further participant demographic information will be presented in each of the three studies (Chapters 4 to 6).

3.7 Piloting

Piloting is an important stage in the research process and is intended to assess the adequacy of the research design and the instruments used for data collection (Sapsford

& Jupp, 1996). For piloting to work effectively, the pilot sample must be representative of the variety of individuals that the main study is intended to cover. Kelly et al. (2003) further advise that piloting is a research tool and, as such, the data collection method has to be representative of the larger population in order to obtain a composite profile of that population, and it should be tested on a pilot sample of members of the target population. As suggested by Silverman (2013), piloting allows the researcher to test whether different formats of questions produce different answers.

The aim of the piloting undertaken for the two qualitative studies was to elicit the appropriate use of language, in terms of the phrasing and formulation of questions and as a means of facilitating a progression that is comfortable and works for both the interviewee and the interviewer (Barbour, 2008). The piloting of the draft questionnaire on samples representative of the target population was essential to gauge both the time it takes to complete and to investigate whether the questions are properly understood by the respondent (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). While pilot investigations do not attempt to represent questionnaires in the statistical sense, they can be beneficial in terms of developing its overall design with reference to the order, language and phrasing of questions.

The concept of 'sampling' is also intrinsic to research of this kind (Bowling, 2002). It was decided that non-random sampling would be constructed so that a sample of professional performers and their responses would be covered. Non-random sampling sampling deliberately targets individuals within a population (Kelly et al., 2003) and is commonly employed when undertaking interviews and/or collecting data that is typically used for exploratory work. Alongside non-random sampling, the technique of purposive sampling was used for both qualitative studies and the questionnaire. Purposive sampling is useful when looking for individuals who have the most information on the subject under investigation, and for whom the research question will be meaningful (Patton, 2002; Smith & Osborn, 2003; Starks & Brown-Trinidad, 2007). As such, purposive sampling procedures were used to recruit participants who have experienced the phenomenon under investigation (Patton, 2002). This is also the same rationale used by Klockare et al. (2011) in their study investigating how professional dance teachers implement psychological skills training in dance practice.

The stages of piloting undertaken for each of the two qualitative studies and questionnaire will be presented in each of the relevant chapters of this thesis (see Chapters 4 to 6).

3.8 Overview of Analyses

The data analysis began once all the interviews were completed, and transcripts were first analysed at the semantic level. All interview recordings were initially transcribed verbatim and thereafter manually content analysed by the researcher. The analysis followed the set of principles outlined by Morse and Richards (2002), namely transcribing, developing a data coding system, and then linking codes or units of data to form categories and themes. Coding subsequently acted as a means of sign-posting the researcher towards interesting data rather than representing only a final interpretation and/or meaning (Seale, 1999). The researcher made all judgements about coding, categorising, decontextualising, and recontextualising of data (Starks & Brown-Trinidad, 2007). The level of transcription for both studies was undertaken at the semantic level, where all spoken words, hesitations, pauses, and laughs were included.

For the first study (see Chapter 4), transcripts were content analysed thematically using the techniques of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Patton, 2002; Smith & Osborn, 2003). This method of analysis was considered appropriate as the aim of IPA is not to test a pre-determined hypothesis, but to explore a topic of interest and to reveal something about a particular group, rather than to make general claims. This method of analysis is also appropriate given that the method of data collection for the first study was semi-structured interviews, favoured by IPA as the main method for generating data (Shaw, 2001). IPA is an approach employed to gain an understanding of a phenomenon from the participant's perspective (Nicholls, Holt & Polman, 2005) and therefore focuses on a person's experience as opposed to examining the actual cause of the phenomenon itself (Shaw, 2001; Smith & Osborn, 2003). Originally developed as an approach to conducting qualitative research in the field of health psychology, IPA has also been widely employed in a range of other research disciplines (Brocki & Wearden, 2006). The approach is phenomenological in

that it involves detailed examination of the participants' subjective accounts (rather than objective accounts) and experiences (Brocki & Wearden, 2006).

For the second study (see Chapter 5), transcripts were analysed using the method of summative content analysis. Content analysis more widely defines a range of analytic approaches (one of which is summative content analysis) (Rosengren, 1981), which represent facts of the phenomenon under study (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; Krippendorff, 1980). As a method of analysis, content analysis aims to condense and describe the phenomena under investigation. This allowed the researcher to focus on the characteristics of language, and to place emphasis on either the content or contextual meaning of data collected (Tesch, 1990). A summative approach to content analysis involves the counting and comparisons of content followed by subsequent interpretation. It enables the researcher to approach the text in relation to particular content (i.e. words) as a way of interpreting and representing contextual meaning (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Weber, 1990). Informed by the research of Hsieh and Shannon (2005), summative content analysis was undertaken as it provided insight into how words are used, and is also an unobtrusive way to study the area of interest (Babbie, 1992).

Initial analysis for both qualitative studies involved thorough reading of each interview transcript, during which analytic notes were made in the left-hand margin (memos). This formed the first step in defining a coding and categorising system, which would help organise, shape and eventually reduce data (Ely et al., 1991). The next stage of analysis saw the researcher return to the 'memos' and reduce the data by coding, that is, bringing together and distributing data as a way of generating new ideas for a deeper level of inquiry (Richards, 2010; Seale, 1999). The researcher then manually content analysed the interview transcripts by division into meaning units, as a way of representing a single idea and compressing text into briefer statements (Côté et al., 1993).

The next level of analysis began once all the interview data had been divided into meaning units and a list of emerging categories and themes had been written down. Aiming to develop categories that captured the experience under investigation, the emergent themes were created in a process that moved between induction and

deduction as the themes evolved (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Moving between the interview notes and key words for categories provided a breakthrough in defining and reducing the categories and in allowing the main themes to emerge. This final stage of analysis involved arranging the statements thematically from the subject's viewpoint (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). As a result of moving between the emerging ideas and themes, it was possible to establish a hierarchy of themes (lower- and higher-order themes), which were placed in order of importance to the researcher (Patton, 2002). Here, the researcher looked beyond what has been said, to discover meaning not immediately apparent in the text (Brocki & Wearden, 2006). Hierarchical trees, gradually moving from the specific meaning units up to greater levels of abstraction were then constructed from units of similar meaning (Patton, 2002). This is an important stage in the analysis of data, as theorising can often result in the analysis being assigned to descriptive labels, resulting in researchers relying on their own data to develop theory rather than locate their findings within the wider context of existing research (Moore, Burland and Davidson, 2003). For both studies, it was decided that data saturation was reached at the point at which the data was exhausted, and the text units fitted adequately into the hierarchical trees, (Côté et al., 1993). The words of the respondents (shown in quotes) were coded to reveal the order in which they were interviewed and whether they were from a dancer or musician. Quotations from the interviews are included in each of the studies to illustrate the categories and to allow the reader his or her own judgement on the researcher's classification (Sparkes, 1998). As previously mentioned, the aim of the research in this thesis was to gain insight and understanding and not specifically, to identify (potential) commonalities and differences between dance and music, or to quantify the performer's experience and understanding in any way. With this in mind, all stages of data analysis were undertaken together for dance and music and the higher-order themes presented collectively.

For the third study, upon completion of the data collection for the questionnaire, a data file was created and all relevant quantitative data was inputted. Data was exported into the Statistical Package for Social Science SPSS 22 (IBM Corp©: Armonk, NY). Overall means and standard deviations (SDs) were calculated from the raw data. After data input was complete, the SPSS file was crosschecked with all submitted paper work. The data was screened for errors by checking the minimum and maximum

values of each question and by checking the number of valid or missing cases. Details of the analysis undertaken will be discussed in Chapter 6 of this thesis.

3.9 Measures of Establishing Trustworthiness

The measures of establishing trustworthiness discussed in this section will be in relation to the two qualitative studies (see Chapters 4 and 5). This is of relevance as the concern for trustworthiness is part of every qualitative research activity (Patton, 2002). In order to ensure rigour in qualitative research, all research undertaken must respond to principles that stand as criteria against which the trustworthiness of the research can be evaluated (Marshall & Rossman, 2005). Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to such principles as questions to which all research must respond. They say these establish the "truth value" (p. 20) of the study, in terms of its applicability, consistency and neutrality.

In qualitative research, the term 'trustworthiness' is used in place of the concepts of validity, and reliability, terms commonly associated with systematic research in the positivist paradigm (Kvale & Brinkmann, 1996; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These two central concepts are deemed quality criteria when looking to enhance the credibility of data (Silverman, 2006). Reliability, relating to the dependability or consistency of research findings is often treated in relation to the issue of whether a finding is reproducible by other researchers (Kvale & Brinkmann, 1996). Commonly viewed as a positivist notion of reliability (Marshall & Rossman, 1995), it is in opposition to a post-positivist view, which suggests replication is itself problematic given that the world is always changing.

Questioning the nature of interview research raises pertinent questions as to whether knowledge produced through interviews can really be objective. As suggested by Mason (1996), there is considered to be a distinction between 'collecting' and 'generating' qualitative data, namely that the generation of data takes into account the active role played by the interviewer in producing data through interaction with respondents. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) similarly note that interviewer reliability can be difficult to attain as the same written words in a transcript can convey two quite different meanings, depending on how the researcher chooses to interpret the data.

This suggests that ascertaining validity of the interview transcripts is more intricate than assuming their reliability, as neither transcription is more objective than the other. While it would appear desirable to attempt to increase the reliability of the interview findings, Kvale (1996) warn that a strong emphasis on reliability might prove counter-productive on creative innovations and variability. It is evident from the literature that when dealing with text, issues of reliability only arise through the categories used to analyse each text. This is another reason why it is important that interviews are undertaken in a standardised manner so that any researcher would categorise them in the same way (Silverman, 2006).

While the two qualitative studies employed measures of trustworthiness to help account for and gather an 'authentic' understanding of participants' experience, Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) argue that no one can ever be certain of achieving this. For these two interview studies, the researcher treated the answers as describing facts or internal experience (Silverman, 2013). The narrative accounts shared by participants were not regarded as more authentic, but rather highlighted the multiple ways in which the events and experiences could be organised, viewed and interpreted (Atkinson & Delamont, 2006).

Validity refers to the credibility of our interpretation (Silverman, 2013) and broadly speaking, it relates to the strength and correctness of a statement and "has, in the social sciences pertained to whether a method investigates what it purports to investigate" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009 p. 24; Pervin, 1984). To satisfy the criterion of validity, the researcher recorded all interviews and undertook careful transcription of the data. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) suggest that issues of reliability and validity go beyond technical or conceptual concerns and raise epistemological questions about the objectivity of knowledge. The use of recorded data further assisted in minimising the influence of personal preconceptions or analytical biases (Silverman, 2006). While some qualitative researchers continue to dismiss questions of reliability and validity as stemming from domineering positivist concepts (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009), Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that validity and reliability are inappropriate constructs for naturalistic or qualitative inquiry, positing that the alternative constructs of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability more accurately reflect the assumptions of the qualitative paradigm (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). Lincoln

and Guba also discuss the truth value of their findings, introducing concepts such as trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, and confirmability to qualitative research.

To establish whether the findings of the first two studies could be considered to be valid, several techniques were used deliberately to ensure the trustworthiness and convergence of data (Conroy, 2001; Guba, 1981; Patton, 2002; Robson¸1993). Firstly, in an attempt to minimise influence of personal preconceptions or analytical biases, the researcher conducted, transcribed and analysed all interviews, ensuring parity across all stages of analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Silverman, 2006). Secondly, the data analysis was undertaken in stages, using what has been referred to as the 'constant comparative method' (Silverman, 2003). This method was used as a means of interrogating theoretical frameworks and answer general questions arising from the data rather than simply using theories to describe processes observed in the data (Barbour, 2008; Silverman, 2003). The employment of such systematic attention also contributed to removing possible doubts about the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations of the data and can therefore strengthen the rigour of the work (Silverman, 2003). Lastly, throughout the analysis, the researcher acknowledged that there would always be aspects of the data that, will not be analysed, meaning that the same material could be used, and further insights and interpretations generated (Smith, 2009). Throughout the stages of analysis, the researcher undertook measures to certify the internal validity of enquiry by ensuring findings were derived from the data transparently (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011).

With regard to the validity of the interviewing process, the researcher followed a realist position, namely that phenomena such as; beliefs, opinions and facts exist independent of the interviewee. With a dance and music background, the researcher already had an understanding and personal experience of dance and music concepts, enabling her to use appropriate prompts and probes used during questioning. Important in developing the researcher's status and rapport with interviewees Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) explain that "an interviewer demonstrating that he or she has a sound knowledge of the interview topic will gain respect and be able to achieve an extent of symmetry in the interview relationship" (p. 146). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that a researcher should gain some understanding, even empathy, for the research participants by entering their worlds. As a way of ensuring the validity, the

researcher attempted to state the parameters of the research setting, population, and theatrical framework by acknowledging that the qualitative approach used, and questions asked were embedded in the researcher's own disciplinary assumptions (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). Patterns and themes were therefore identified as an active process on the part of the researcher. As suggested by Sapsford and Jupp (1996), variation in the social interaction between interviewer and respondent can introduce an unknown source of systematic bias, whereby distortions of the respondent's opinions or beliefs tend to occur in one direction, which in turn, may affect the responses collected by the interviewer. However, as suggested by Starks and Brown-Trinidad (2007), qualitative analysis is inherently subjective because the researcher is the instrument for analysis. Throughout the research, the researcher was clear about the context to which generalisation (if any) could be made, ensuring the validity of enquiry (concerning external validity) was considered (Cohen et al., 2011).

The four component parts of trustworthiness in qualitative research - credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Ely et al., 1991; Lincoln & Guba 1985) - were rigorously adhered throughout the research process. The goal of credibility is to ensure that the subject was accurately identified and described in the inquiry undertaken. The second construct proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) is that of transferability, in demonstrating the applicability of one set of findings to another context. However, as posited by Marshall and Rossman (1995), the transferability to other settings might prove problematic. To achieve such transferability, the researcher referred back to the studies' theoretical framework to show how data collection and analysis will be guided by such concepts and methods. The component of transferability was addressed through a reflexive account of the research undertaken by the researcher. This was achieved by a continuous evaluation of participants' subjective responses, inter-subjective dynamics and the research process itself. The construct of dependability refers to the researcher's attempt to account for changing conditions in the phenomenon chosen for the study (i.e. performance) and changes in the design of the research as created by a refined understanding of the research setting (Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

The final construct proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) is that of confirmability, which in capturing the traditional concept of objectivity, stresses the need to ask

whether the study's findings could be confirmed by another. For the first two qualitative studies of the present research, several techniques were selected and contextually grounded to establish and further enhance the trustworthiness and convergence of data (Conroy et al., 2001; Guba, 1981; Patton, 2002; Robson, 1993). Firstly, as posited by Patton (2002) and Sparkes (1998), the methodology for both studies provided thick description of both the procedures and results. Secondly, as advocated by Silverman (2006), the 'constant comparative method' was used when undertaking the analysis of transcribed interview data. Member - checking procedures (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002), often referred to as 'respondent validation' (Richards, 2010; Silverman, 2013) were also employed.

Member-checking procedures were a way of ensuring the credibility of data and were used to check the methods and transcripts of interviews, and further the credibility of the material itself (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002). This involved all participants receiving a transcribed copy of their interview, where they were asked to verify accuracy of the interview transcript, allowing them to change any sentences that were not consistent with their intended meaning and to report anything that they felt needed amending in any way. Two participants (both musicians) returned their transcript with slight amendments and their comments were integrated into the data set for reduction and analysis. The semi-structured interview guide was also developed and tested through an initial pilot with dancers and musicians as another measure of trustworthiness.

As a means of enhancing the study's credibility, peer debriefing was employed, whereby transcripts and meaning units were exchanged and scrutinised with a colleague who had a background in music and dance. This method of trustworthiness subjected the categorisation process to further scrutiny and ensured that every idea relating to performance had been extracted into a meaning unit and appropriately named. During this stage of analysis, there was discussion about the possible development of one category into further sub-categories, which the researcher then undertook.

3.10 Role of the Researcher

Fundamental to the qualitative research paradigm is the commitment of the researcher to see through the eyes of the participants (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). Given the close involvement of both the personal and social response between the interviewer and respondent it was therefore necessary to establish and define the relationship between researcher and the research environment, both prior to and throughout interviewing (Bryman, 1984; Finlay, 2002b; Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). The role of the interviewer was to facilitate and guide rather than dictate what will happen during the encounter - a heuristic role, as the qualitative research process allowed the researcher to discover something about the phenomenon for herself. The researcher's personal experience of dance and music enabled her to use appropriate prompts and probes during questioning. The researcher further viewed her knowledge of the interview topic to be conducive to achieving an interview relationship and entry into the participants' worlds (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The research relationship between the researcher and those under investigation is something Hudson and Ozanne (1998) believe to be key to an interpretivist research approach and they advocate such involvement in creating the research process.

Finlay (2002a) postulates that the researcher is a central figure who influences and actively constructs the collection, selection and interpretation of data. Similarly, Seale (1998) posits that there are two different traditions on viewing interview data: one examining it as interview-data-as-topic and one as interview-data-as-resource. In the case of the first two studies, the researcher used the latter (interview-data-as-resource) as both studies seek to give voice to individuals' specific experiences and perspectives, through recording their authentic voices. Throughout the interviewing process, the researcher was mindful of both the generation and traditions on viewing data. The researcher was also aware of being non-directive and non-judgmental (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996), specifically when dealing with queries or questions raised by the respondent when administering the interview guide. In respect of this, the researcher deliberately avoided controlling the research conditions and acknowledged her role in influencing and actively constructing the collection, selection and interpretation of data.

In the questionnaire, the role of the researcher was to conduct the research by administration of the questionnaire. For the two studies and questionnaire, the degree

of sampling error, namely the probability that any one sample is not completely representative of the population from which it has been drawn (Arber, 2001), was considered. The researcher acknowledged that while sampling error cannot be completely eliminated, the choice of sampling would influence the extent of the error. The researcher also acknowledged that response rates are a potential source of bias and, in the case of the questionnaire, results with a large non-response rate could be misleading and only representative of those who replied.

This chapter has provided an overview of the methodology used in the present research, together with details concerning measures of establishing trustworthiness, issues concerning validity and reliability of data and the role of the researcher. The following three chapters will report on the findings from this PhD research.

Chapter 4

**A Qualitative Investigation of Professional Dancers' and Musicians'
Understanding and Experience of Performance: Study 1**

4.1 Introduction and Rationale

The discussion in Chapter 2 of this thesis revealed perspectives on the phenomenon of performance, from a variety of research fields and disciplines. It also demonstrated in the literature that the role of the performer in performance is perceived to be paramount. While the review of literature gave further support to the role and significance of the individual performer, it also showed that most knowledge acquired to date has been derived from examining a particular factor or predetermined construct, with a lack of understanding concerning how the performer experiences them. In light of this, the researcher argues that a focus on solely objective measures is unsatisfactory given the emphasis placed on the individual performer in the execution of performance and the subjective aspects of performance as experienced by the performer and/or spectator.

However, the need to investigate the perspective of the individual performer has been acknowledged within the research fields of dance and music (Hays, 2002; Rink, 2002; Small, 1998). For instance, as outlined in the literature review chapter of this thesis (Chapter 2), studies have begun to employ qualitative methodologies as a means of investigating some performer-centric aspects of dance and music performance (for example, the research of Kenny, Cormack, Martin, 2009; Schoeb & Zosso, 2012; Skull, 2011). While such research has been illustrative in sharing the view of the individual performer, it is suggested that "an adequate account of dance experience requires more than a specification of cause; it requires a description of the content (i.e. what is felt/thought)" (Warburton, 2011 p. 68). Taken together, the discussion outlined above and in Chapter 2 suggests that it is instructive to include the performer's subjective thoughts and feelings, rather than concentrating on a particular factor or predetermined construct. Therefore, the aim of the study reported in the present chapter was to investigate professional dancers' and musicians' experiences of performing and their thoughts on the phenomenon of performance from their subjective viewpoint.

4.2 Methodology

The present study employed a qualitative research methodology to gather information concerning performers' experiences and understanding of performance. As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 of this thesis, little research exists whereby performers have spoken openly and freely about aspects of performance that are of importance to them. The use of a qualitative methodology based on semi-structured interviews and open-ended questions was considered the most appropriate method of exploring first-hand experiences and permitted the researcher to focus on the voices of performers. Open-ended questions were chosen as a means of allowing interviewees to express their thoughts and feelings, and to elaborate on ideas, without imposing restrictions on responses, beliefs or opinions (Barbour, 2008; Bresler, 1995; Silverman, 2006; Thomas & Nelson, 2005). Semi-structured interviews were also considered to be appropriate for this study as they are favoured as the main method for generating data when using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (Shaw, 2001; Smith & Osborn, 2003).

The researcher based the semi-structured interviews on an interview guide in order to gain initial insight into what it means to be a professional performer and on the phenomenon of performance itself. Open-ended questions were chosen as a means of allowing interviewees to express their thoughts and feelings. Previous dance and music research has similarly employed semi-structured interviews as a valid means of exploration and understanding from participants' perspectives. For example, Klockare et al. (2011) employed semi-structured interviews to examine how dance teachers use psychological skills with their students, and Schoeb and Zosso (2012) used them to identify professional musicians' representation of health and illness and its perceived impact on musical performance.

4.3 Participants

Professional dancers (*n*=6) and musicians (*n*=4) were recruited through personal contacts and emails addresses from Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance (TL). Of the recruited participants, five females and five males, ranging from 37 to 65 years of age participated in the present study. The recruited participants had an

average of 28 years of performing experience. A sample of no more than six participants was recruited for each discipline, recommended in the literature to yield a reasonable amount of data (Smith & Osborn, 2003). The researcher was not concerned with the unequal number of dancers and musicians interviewed as the aim was not to compare the disciplines of music and dance.

Participants who were musicians were two singers, a pianist, a viola da gamba player, a double bassist and a clarinettist. Participants who were dancers represented a range of genres, including classical and contemporary technique, improvisation and choreographic practice. Of the professional dancers and musicians recruited, four performed professionally 'occasionally' (every 1 - 2 months) and six undertook performing professionally 'sometimes' (every 3 - 6 months). Given the setting from which participants were recruited, in addition to earning a living from performing professionally, participants were also professorial and/or academic teaching staff at either the Dance or Music Faculties at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance.

4.4 Materials: Interview Guide

The semi-structured interviews guide (see Appendix C) was created in accordance with existing literature and previous research (Clark et al., 2014; Critien & Ollis, 2006; Ely et al., 1991). Along with predetermined questions, prompts and probes, the use of an interview guide ensured that the procedure of asking questions was standardised, allowing responses to be comparable across the sample (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). A similar format and interview guide was employed by Clark et al. (2007) when exploring musicians' perceptions and experiences in performance. In the present study, the researcher was keen to ensure that the questions were based on stimuli that were of most relevance to the participants. This is suggested to be a practical way of limiting the extent to which categories are imposed on respondents (Silverman, 2013).

Participants were asked to talk about their experiences of performing and their thoughts on the phenomenon from the perspective of being a performer. Topics included:

1. introductory questions and performance background (for example, can you describe your background as a dancer/musician?). This helped to establish a good level of rapport between the researcher and respondents (Smith & Osborn, 2003);

2. their understanding, thoughts and perceptions of performance (for example, can you tell me, as a performer, what you understand by the term 'performance'?);

3. artistic qualities (for example, as a performer and from your experience, what springs to mind if I use the term 'artistic qualities'?);

4. viewing/measuring performance (for example, when you perform, how do you perceive someone watching you?).

Throughout the interview process, participants were encouraged to ask questions where they felt necessary and to express their thoughts on performing and performance in their own words.

The same open-ended questions were asked of all participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Patton, 2002) and, when appropriate, questions were followed by probes specific to the information shared by the participant. The use of probes and prompts served a number of purposes in allowing the collection of subsidiary information and minimising the opportunity for the interview to move towards an agenda of interest determined by the participant rather than the researcher (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). This proved beneficial in eliciting information concerning their understanding of what performance means to them and illuminated whether their thoughts differed when commenting on performance from this other perspective.

4.4.1 Piloting

The interview guide was piloted in order to develop the appropriate use of language (in terms of the phrasing and formulation of questions) and as a means of facilitating a progression that was comfortable and worked for both the interviewee and the interviewer (Barbour, 2008; Patton, 2002). The piloting of questions further established the suitability and focus of the interview guide and the interviewer's familiarity with both it and the procedures involved in interviewing (Nordin & Cumming, 2005; 2006). Two pilot interviews were conducted with two professional

dancers and two professional musicians. In light of the piloting of the interview guide, some probe questions and prompts were added, and some questions re-worded for clarity (see Appendix D).

4.5 Procedure

The data was collected via individual semi-structured interviews with each participant. Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant research ethics board (see Appendix H). Written informed consent was obtained from all participants and an information sheet (see Appendix A) was disseminated prior to interviews. A demographic information sheet (see Appendix B) was employed to collect routine data on interviewees' demographic characteristics (such as personal details, performing experience, predominant profession and years performing).

All interviews were conducted by the researcher in a comfortable and informal environment. Each interview lasted between 39 and 75 minutes. After each interview, the interviewer noted anything of interest or potential significance, including important themes that may have emerged and her impressions and reflections of the interview.

4.6 Data Analyses

Interviews were transcribed verbatim and content analysed thematically using the techniques of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Patton, 2002; Smith & Osborn, 2003). IPA is an appropriate method of analysis as its aim is to explore the processes through which participants make sense of their own experiences, focusing on the exploration of experiences, understandings, perceptions and views (Reid et al., 2005). In addition, the literature suggests that the employment of semi-structured interviews and open-ended questions form the ideal method for IPA (Smith & Osborn, 2003), both of which are employed in the present study. With its aim to understand 'what it is like', from the point of view of the participant, IPA has also previously been used as a tool to investigate the phenomenon of performance from the dancer's and/or musician's perspective (Clark et al., 2014; Klockare et al., 2011).

4.6.1 Trustworthiness of Data

To ensure credibility and validation of procedures, as well as the trustworthiness and convergence of data, several techniques were deliberately undertaken during the analysis of data (Conroy et al., 2001; Guba, 1981; Patton, 2002; Robson, 1993). These included peer debriefing, member-checking procedures, and the use of the 'constant comparative method' when undertaking data analysis (Barbour, 2008; Silverman, 2003). In addition, the final interview question was used to ascertain that none of the participants felt they were influenced or led by the interviewer in any way (Nordin & Cumming, 2005; 2006).

4.7 Findings

Through the narratives of participants, findings revealed the three higher-order themes of *Process, Performer and Context*. These themes emerged during the analyses to create the overall hierarchy of *Experience and Understanding of Performance*. It should be noted that the aim of the present study was to gain insight and understanding and not, specifically, to identify (potential) commonalities and differences between dance and music, or to quantify the performers' experience and understanding in any way. With this in mind, while the early stages of data analysis were undertaken separately for dance and music, the emerging higher-order and lower-order themes are presented collectively. An overview of themes is presented in order of importance in Figure 4.1.
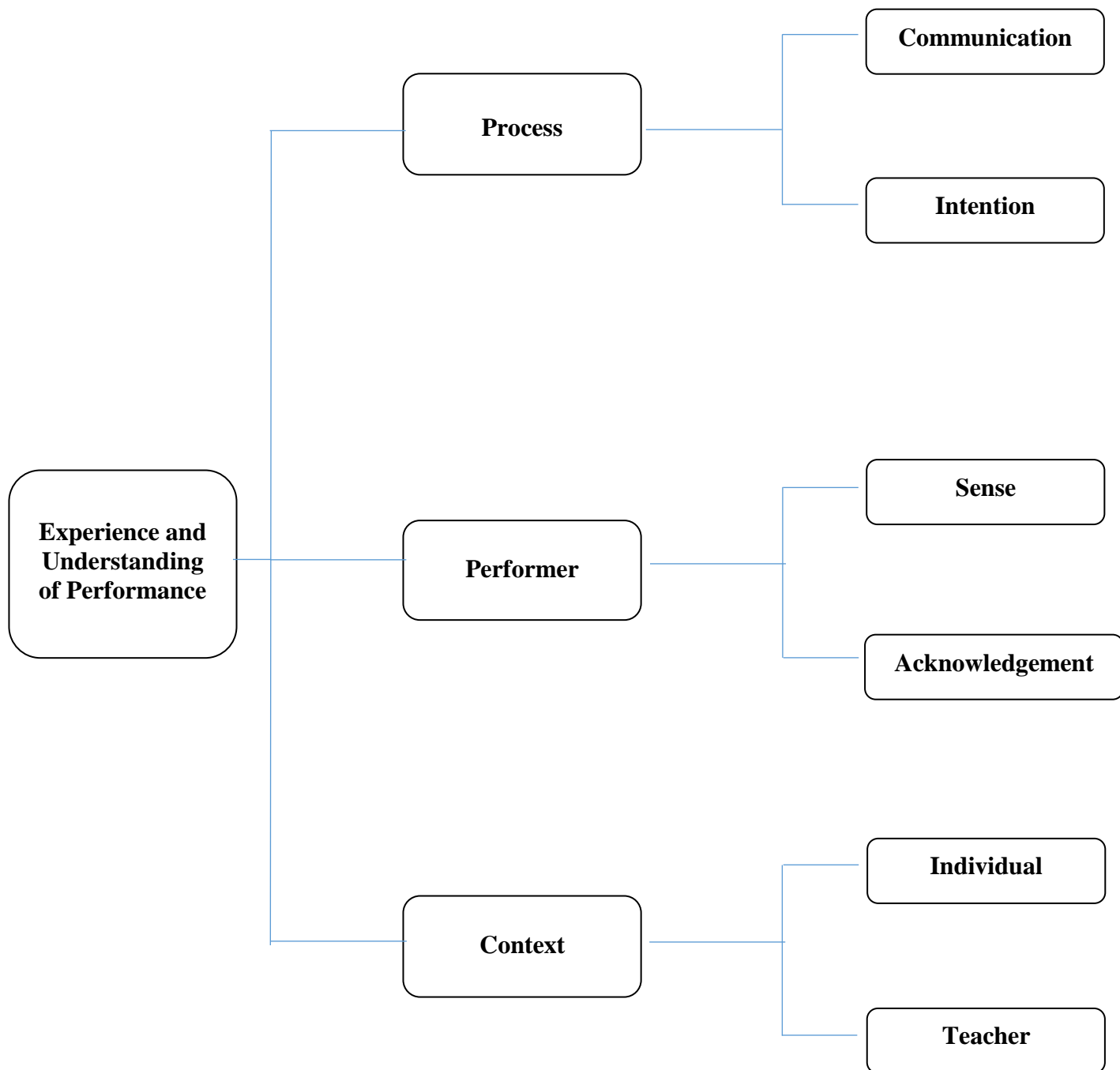
Chapter 4: Figure 4.1: A hierarchical model of higher and lower order themes presented in order of importance.

Process

The theme of *Process* and following sub-themes of *Communication and Intention* emerged as a result of participants being asked to talk about their experiences of performing. While the nature of the phenomenon is commonly highlighted in the literature as being outcome and "extremely product orientated" (Botti, 2000, p. 933), some researchers believe it to be a process that continually evolves. For instance, when considering performance, Bial (2003) believes that a basic tenet of performance is that it is not a static finished product but is a process that is continually changing. Participants collectively voiced a view that performance is a process during which the performer is paramount. One participant captured the spirit of the responses by saying: *"performance is much more process driven than people realise, performance is about the process of arriving as opposed to preparing and then presenting what you've been working on"* (Musician 7). A similar response was given from another participant who commented that, for her, performance *"essentially involves a particular kind of organisation, and one is to be very clear about the process they are engaged in as a performer and a person"* (Dancer 3).

The debate concerning whether a performance is a process, or a result of that process forms a larger critique within the field of performance studies. In the context of the present study, these responses are of interest as they reveal performers' thoughts and views rather than what is often assumed within the literature. In particular, the responses of most participants suggested that performance is mainly for the performer rather than the commonly accepted view that a performance is for someone else. This is illustrated by one participant who said: *"the most fulfilling type of performing is when I inhabit something, rather than I do something for someone else, ultimately performing is about me, isn't it?"* (Dancer 1). The emphasis placed on the performer was similarly voiced by a second participant who said: *"as a performer, you have got to have that sense of myself being the creator of sound…this is visible when you see someone performing on stage and they feel at one with what they have created"* (Musician 7).

The sub-theme of *Communication* was readily shared by participants when asked to express their thoughts on how they might describe the phenomenon of performance in

their own words. As studied by Bailey and Davidson (2005), as well as and Hargreaves, MacDonlad and Miell (2005), the concept of communication was clearly influential in shaping the participants' thoughts on performance. This is illustrated by Musician 5: *"whether you communicate yourself, the music or a combination of the two, communication in the widest sense is what it's all about"*. Musician 4 similarly commented that performing is: *"communicating outwards, communicating what my feelings about the music are rather than reflecting inwards what I feel about it, which is what happens when I practice"*. The emphasis participants collectively placed on the concept of communication is found in the literature, where there is a shared awareness that to 'perform' is to communicate. It was further apparent that participants were most at ease when discussing what it means to perform in relation to a familiar concept, for example, the concept of communication. This is illustrated by one participant who said: *"when I think of performance it helps me to think of communication, as performance is firstly the ability to communicate what you feel about the work to your audience, so some sense of embracing an audience"* (Dancer 2). This view was corroborated by Musician 2 who said that: *"communication is the knowledge of everything that is happening, artistically and musically, so that one is always finding the best current way of communicating something"*.

The sub-theme of *Intention* emerged when participants were asked to share their thoughts on how they view themselves within a performance. Interestingly, all participants voiced a similar view, namely that they are a performer, whose aim is to share the intention of the composer or choreographer. This is illustrated by one participant who noted: *"when I am working with the music; I try to identify what lies behind the composer's intentions"* (Musician 4). Another added:

> I am aware of the effect of what I do, whether it's a silence or extreme dynamics or a way of playing something, there are aspects of performance that well that help one put across what I think are the composer's intentions" (Musician 5)

Of particular interest was one suggestion that performing is much more than sharing the intention of a composer or choreographer; rather, it is the essence of the performance itself: *"it's about giving the music some life, so it is believable that at that moment they have come into being"* (Musician 2). This is similar to the view of

Fraleigh (1991) who, in the context of dance, suggests that the 'essence' of a performance is where it reveals the intent of its entity. Another participant further expressed the notion that the performer has a part to play in what is being communicated to the audience. For example, one participant shared: *"it is about choice and intention in how the movement is created and understood"* (Dancer 10). A second participant similarly voiced this view, adding:

> As a performer, you hope as an artist that you have an individual voice so it's this combination when you're working with a piece of music, looking at what the composer intended, but then being able to take that music and make it your own (Musician 4)

Performer

The theme of *Performer* and subsequent sub-themes of *Sense and Acknowledgement* represent the participants' narratives on the constructs of performance. Previous research investigating the perspective of the individual performer has revealed the significance of the performer in relation to their sense of professional identity and activities being linked inextricably to their performance (Hays 2002). Interview responses supported the view of Hays, who suggests that a performer has a sense of their identity being linked to their performance, as well as the view of Ritterman (2002) who notes that part of the performer's ability is to impress his or her individuality on the performance. One participant expressed their sense of identity in this way:

> For me, being a performer is about being present in [my] body, being happy in the sense of being engaged in [my] body and revealing who I am as a performer. If [I am] not and it's superficial then that's what [you] see when you're watching, you see the outside rather than the inside (Dancer 2)

The narratives of participants subsequently provided a deeper insight into how they viewed themselves as performers, emphasising the need for greater consideration of the performer's thoughts and feelings. A number of responses further revealed that participants viewed their roles as performers to be concerned with the construction of their performances. This is illustrated by one participant who noted that: *"performance is very much about engagement with the creative process and not being*

divorced from that understanding, that creative understanding of how things are made and constructed as a performer" (Dancer 3). Another participant elaborated on this further, suggesting that performing is a conscious activity on the part of the performer, expressed in this way: *"part of my metier, my craft, I suppose, is to understand what effect something I do on stage has to the audience. So, in that sense, I need to understand performance from the effect it is having"* (Musician 2)

The sub-themes of *Sense* and *Acknowledgement* were used interchangeably by participants when talking about their experiences of performing and understanding of performance, more generally, for example: *"performing is that acknowledgement that you're a performer and a sense of acknowledgement that everything is different and the sort of acknowledgement that it won't and shouldn't ever be the same again"* (Musician 7). We know from the literature that presenting a performance is "a rare opportunity for performers to share with others who and what they are precisely at that moment" (Davidson, 2002 p. 150). This participant response supports our awareness that performance is fundamentally ephemeral, short-lived and 'in the moment' (Cannon, 2013; Reason, 2006).

It could also be concluded from participants responses that 'Sense' was viewed as being a contributing factor to a successful performance. When asked to talk specifically about their performing experiences, participants commonly referred to having a 'sense' as a performer. This is illustrated by one participant who said that: *"as a performer, you can sense when something doesn't work and sense how it should be"* (Dancer 10). Another participant similarly added: *"being a performer is where my sense comes in. I consider how [I] can deepen my sense of awareness of everything that might be at my disposal for further development of the piece"* (Musician 7).

When asked to comment specifically on their thoughts and understanding about performance, participants commonly referred to performing being about having an 'acknowledgement' as a performer. As one participant explained: "*personally, I am more interested in the whole concept of myself in existence, performance can be anything, and it's just a matter of framing it within my individual intention or acknowledgement of the moment"* (Musician 7). The notion that performing is about an acknowledgement by the performer continued to unfold as participants spoke about

the need for ownership in their performance. This is illustrated by the following comment: *"It's about acknowledging who you are; you have to have ownership when you're performing so you can perform it"* (Dancer 10). Another participant further suggested that such acknowledgement evolves from a performer's understanding of what is being performed:

> For a performer, how do you find yourself in someone else's eyes? How do you interpret someone else's ideas or movement? For me, you need to have clarity of where the intention is, you have to acknowledge your opinion and know how you're involved in it, what your role [is] in the piece (Dancer 10)

Context

The theme of *Context* and subsequent sub-themes of *Individual and Teacher* emerged from the way in which the participants contextualised their thoughts on performance. The sub-theme of *Individual* emerged from responses relating to the attributes participants perceived themselves to have as performers. Interestingly, only one participant made reference to the artistic, technical and expressive attributes commonly referred to in the literature, adding: *"to me, your performance was in whether you could deliver a technical, artistic, personal performance"* (Dancer 1). However, participants revealed an awareness of embodying individual attributes that shape them as performers. This is illustrated by one participant who noted: *"it depends on what context you see it in. For me, it is about the ability I have as a person to create the time and space to bring your attention towards something that is interesting to see"* (Dancer 3).

All participants similarly commented on individual attributes in relation to their persona, with one participant noting: *"I suppose the most successful performers have charisma"* (Musician 9), and another commenting on *"infinite capacity for hard work"* (Musician 1) and another, *"a degree of focus and concentration"* (Musician 8). In sharing her thoughts on the attributes, she has as a performer, one participant expressed: *"for me, you need to have a very clear sense of self, in a way, and be humble, actually, to listen and stop"* (Dancer 7). A second participant similarly noted:

> Performing is being in their body, being happy in the sense of being engaged in their body. There is something about individuality; there is something about personality that brings something else. What makes a performer stand out, its individuality, its personality, its sensitivity (Dancer 6)

Offering an explanation as to why she felt her attributes were part of her as an individual, this participant noted: "*I think as a performer, there is always something individual you can put in… it is having that little time to have my own personal creative freedom and input somehow*" (Dancer 10). Another participant added that for her: "*performance is about sharing what I have found and in sharing this it is about being able to show a little bit of who I am. Otherwise, it's just far too objective and what is the point in that?*" (Musician 8). Similarly, a further participant commented on performing being about the individual person and who you are as a person, adding: "*I think technically you are a technician; I think it's you as a person, actually*" (Dancer 1). The performers' responses also demonstrate the notion that performance is an embodied activity, which sees the physical qualities of the musician shape performance and consequently the meanings derived from it (Leppert, 1993). Of particular interest was one participant who questioned whether her attributes were specific to the individual or performer and whether they are situation specific. This suggests that the notion of 'context' can be considered in relation to a performer's own intrinsic experience and understanding of performance. She expressed this in the following way:

> Me as an individual makes it something about the quality of me as a 'performer.' Maybe it's not situation specific, I don't know, as if the qualities of a 'performance' aren't there and the performance went terribly wrong (laugh), I would still have my qualities as a performer, I guess (Dancer 10)

Given that nearly all participants also undertook teaching alongside performing professionally, it was of no great surprise that participants contextualised 'performing' and their thoughts about performance in relation to their roles as teaching practitioners. This is illustrated by one participant who expressed: "*my understanding of performance is hard to differentiate as a performer or as a teacher*" (Dancer 10). From their responses, it appeared that the participants' understanding of performance changed when speaking about performance from the viewpoint of a teacher. For instance, when considering her understanding of performance, one participant suggested that while it is valuable that educators pass on their performing experiences

to those they teach, the notion of "*you teach what you know*" (possibly) suggests that the voice of the student performer is not always heard:

> As a teacher in the studio you try and kind of provoke the situation and try and pass something onto your students, although you're creating an artificial situation as if they are performing for real. I think it's just a different role as I guess when you teach, you teach what you know (Dancer 10)

It was relevant to the aims of the research to note to what extent participants differentiated between being an 'individual' and being 'a performer'. For instance, one participant perceived being a 'performer' as the same as being an 'individual': *"I am an improviser, my improvisation is the source of my vocation, it's the way I see the work, it doesn't just belong in a studio or music room, it very much goes beyond - the way I approach everything"* (Musician 7). Another participant shared a similar view, namely that performance: *"is about knowing yourself and that's the same whether I am in a studio or teaching or performing, it's the same person and it has to be for me"* (Dancer 6). However, four participants perceived that to be a 'performer' and to be an 'individual' were two different roles. This is illustrated by one participant who noted:

> Well, actually to be a musician is to be a musician and that's not the same as being a performer, so it is about being at rest with that, that's the inside bit performance I think (Musician 2)

This differentiation between being an 'individual' and being 'a performer' is of relevance as these responses further illustrate the subjective nature of how participants experience and understand performance.

4.8 Discussion and Implications

Unlike previous studies that have elicited the performer's thoughts and feelings about performance in relation to a particular factor or pre-determined construct (i.e. successful performing experiences), the present study allowed participants to talk openly about performance from their subjective viewpoints, and in relation to what is of important to them. Despite the literature revealing that performance is extrinsically driven for an audience, performers revealed that they view themselves as embodied entities, evincing a strong sense of individuality. This sense of 'individual' was apparent through the higher-order themes of *Process, Performer and Context* and

supports the (anecdotal) awareness we have of the performer being at the heart of any performance. These findings are important in illustrating the subjective nature of *how* participants experience and understand performance; they support the notion that performers evince a combination of abilities and characteristics that are unique to the individual (Holmes & Holmes, 2013) and that part of the performer's ability is to allow his or her individual voice to speak through the performance (Ritterman, 2002). In light of this, the role of the individual as a *performer* and in *performance,* and the relationship between them warrants further investigation.

Participant responses also reveal that performers consider the entirety of a performance, suggesting that performers should be considered as a 'whole' rather than by individualised attributes commonly referred to in the literature. From the narratives of participants, it could, therefore, be deduced that artistic endeavours are invisible from the individual as a human being and as a performer. This notion not only illustrates the importance of the 'individual' but also the subjective nature of *how* participants contextualise their experience of performance and subsequent understanding of the phenomenon. Although it was anticipated that there would be noticeable differences in the responses of dancers and musicians, the commonality of the 'individual' being central to performance emerged through the narratives of all participants and was a finding of particular interest and significance.

We know from the literature that technical expertise and expressive abilities are fundamental to dance and music and that performance is dictated by its technical and expressive principles (Haroutounian 2000; Noice & Noice, 2002; Sloboda, 1985). Participant responses revealed an interesting dimension in relation to this notion - suggesting that dancers and musicians encourage a subjective understanding of *being* a performer, alongside conveying technical and expressive abilities. Despite ideals based on outer manifestations of expressive qualities, we can deduce from the participants' responses that performers view themselves as embodied entities, with a strong sense of individuality. With this in mind, the extent to which we fully understand the role of the 'self', the creative role of the performer and the relationship between the 'self' and the individual performer's identity, requires further exploration.

The literature further informs us that performers are typically selected for vocational training according to artistically pleasing qualities, manifested in part by certain physical and psychological characteristics (Arjmand, 2009; Dawson, 2008; Koutedakis & Sharp, 1999; Meinke, 1994; Schippers, 2007). Emphasis given to identifying such characteristics of performance suggests that performers execute their performance through such means, signifying that an individual's personal attributes are critical elements for achieving accomplished performance. However, the extent to which these physical and psychological characteristics are directly related to performance, and the degree to which they have the potential to contribute to the development of a performing artist, is as yet unclear.

Although there is a wealth of literature in the domains of sport and artistic practice that identifies unique attributes in relation to the individual, what constitutes a successful and accomplished performance is uncertain. In the literature, attributes are commonly identified as those that are measurable rather than subjective attributes of the individual. In contrast, findings from the present study suggest that there is a misunderstanding between characteristics relating to the *performance* and those relating to the *performer*. This is further emphasised in the dance and music literature, where differentiation is made between characteristics relating to the *performance* and those relating to the *performer*. In short, our knowledge of performance attributes is unclear due to the means by which attributes are defined and physical and psychological characteristics understood.

Throughout interviewing, it was of interest to observe the non-verbal behaviour of the interviewees, particularly how they relaxed and seemed more at ease when considering what performance meant to them objectively (i.e. thoughts about performance). In contrast, when asked to verbalise *how* performing made them feel, participants displayed a difficulty in expressing themselves, and tended to fold their arms and interject their responses with long pauses. One interpretation for this could be the unfamiliar nature of being asked to comment on their performing experiences in this way. The second could be that participants felt at ease talking about performance but didn't see it wholly necessary. This is suggested by one participant (Musician 8) who voiced that they weren't interested in understanding what performance is.

4.9 Conclusion

The present study illustrates professional dancers' and musicians' experiences of performing and their thoughts on the phenomenon of performance from their subjective viewpoint. While the study reveals *how* a sample of professional dancers and musicians experience and understand performance, it was not without limitations. Although the use of qualitative methods has proved fruitful in seeking a first-person perspective, achieving this retrospectively can be a limitation in the extent to which participant responses accurately represent their personal performance experiences (Clark et al., 2014). Sapsford and Jupp (1996) share this view, arguing that the premise of retrospective questioning is knowing whether participants' memories are accurate enough and as a result, it may not prove practical to measures people's understanding by such means. While it is often assumed that self-reporting naturally equates to data not being a true representation of the phenomenon under investigation, Holmes and Holmes (2013) have suggested that this is more about a particular conception of 'truth' rather than an issue with data representation. Further methodological considerations will be discussed in the general discussion chapter of this thesis (Chapter 9).

The qualitative research approach, combined with IPA has provided rich data from professional performers concerning a range of experiences and understanding. In contributing to the wider body of research on dance and music performance, future research should be undertaken with professional performers across a wider sample of dance genres and instruments and at different stages of their careers. As a way of further examining the phenomenon of performance in dance and music as experienced by the performer, future research could usefully employ methods of analysis that seek to elicit meaning rather than sole interpretation when seeking to gain a first-person insight.

The present study has revealed a number of other directions for future research, which could have promising pedagogical implications. Given that emphasis is largely placed on training students to excel in a performance context, student performers should be asked to consider and reflect on what performance means to them. One way of achieving this could be by asking students to undertake a phenomenological account

of a recent performance. We are often reminded that in order to achieve excellence, a performer must learn how to be an artist. With this in mind, student performers should be given the opportunity to consider their roles as 'performers' both from the viewpoint of the 'performer' and as an 'individual.' Findings from the present study further suggest that it is valuable for educators to gain an informed awareness and understanding of performance from the subjective viewpoint of the individual performer. It is, therefore, hoped that as more research is carried out, the benefit of including a first-person perspective will become more widely understood and the individual performer viewed as a separate entity from the performance context. This could empower performers to benefit from articulating their own practice from a first-person perspective.

The narratives of participants in the present study provide invaluable insight into the shared view that performance is a process, intertwined with the individual as a human being, alongside that of being a performer. In establishing the subjective nature of *how* participants contextualise their experiences of performance and subsequent understanding of the phenomenon, the findings presented in this chapter make a strong argument for further exploration of the first-person perspective. The next chapter will present findings from the second qualitative study that aimed to investigate professional performers' experiences and understanding of performance in relation to themselves as performers.

Chapter 5

A Qualitative Investigation of Professional Dancers' and Musicians' Understanding and Experience of Performance: Study 2

5.1 Introduction and Rationale

From findings in the first qualitative study (see Chapter 4 of this thesis), we have gained insights into professional dancers' and musicians' experiences of performing and their thoughts on the phenomenon of performance from their own subjective viewpoint. As the findings reported in this initial investigation revealed, performers evinced a strong sense of individuality. This sense of 'individual' was central in the narratives of participants and was evident throughout the three higher-order themes of *Process, Performer and Context.* While the first study revealed findings of interest concerning *how* performers contextualise their experience of performing and their thoughts on performance, the researcher felt that the study was missing a sense of *how* performers contextualise their experience and understanding in relation to who they are as performers. Therefore, the aim of the study reported in the present chapter was to investigate professional performers' experiences and understanding of performance in relation to themselves as performers. This study builds upon findings from the first study, and also aims to offer a deeper insight into participants' experiences in relation to who they are as performers.

The researcher took the decision to conduct a second study in the same topic for a number of reasons. As outlined in the literature review (see Chapter 2 of this thesis) and the first qualitative study (Chapter 4), if the research field is to gain knowledge about performance as experienced by the performer, performers must be given the opportunity to talk openly and freely about performance in relation to what is of importance to them. In respect of this, the first study conducted semi-structured and open-ended questions with professional performers. However, the method employed had been somewhat prescriptive and it was decided that a second study with a more unstructured and flexible method of data collection would be conducive to gathering further rich data from the individual performer. A second reason for undertaking a second study on the same broad topic was a recommendation arising from the first study, suggesting that future research should be undertaken with performers at different stages of their careers. In an attempt to get closer to who they are as performers and *how* performers contextualise their experience of performing and understanding of performance, the researcher wished to recruit professional dancers and musicians who performed more regularly. Participants recruited for the first study

were teachers as well as performers and as a result had indicated that they only performed 'occasionally' (every 1 - 2 months) or 'sometimes' (every 3 – 6 months). The researcher was therefore interested in whether recruiting professional performers who performed more regularly might make a difference in how they share, reflect on and articulate their experiences and understanding.

5.2 Methodology

The present study employed a qualitative methodology to gather information on performance from the perspective of the performer. In an attempt to open further debate on how performers feel about performing and what it means to them, unstructured interviews were conducted with professional dancers and musicians. Similar to that of the first study (Chapter 4), these approaches were chosen because of the complexity of the topic under investigation and the likelihood that participants' experience and understanding of performance would differ. Data collection through unstructured interviews was considered the most appropriate method as it provided detailed accounts from performers and enabled the researcher to describe how phenomena is experienced. In addition, this method allowed the interview to take the form of a conversational type of interaction between interviewer and respondent, allowing the interviewer to explore in greater depth respondents' meanings and beliefs (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). As suggested by Holmes and Holmes (2013), a conversational-style interview "gives both structure and flexibility and allows a depth of response that can reflect the multi-layered thought processes that necessarily precede action" (p. 14). The researcher had thought that a more unstructured means of interviewing would enable performers to speak conversationally and of their own fruition.

While the employment of more structured questions was successful in eliciting participants' experiences and understanding of performance in the first qualitative study (Chapter 4), the researcher at times experienced the interview guide as restrictive with regards to exploring participant responses. Inductive and interpretive research approaches further permitted the researcher to focus on the voices and feelings of the respondents.

5.3 Participants

Professional dancers (n=3) and musicians (n=3) were recruited through personal contact and email addresses, as well as 'a call for participants' that was disseminated to a number of professional organisations. These included residential staff (who are also professional musicians) at the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain (NYO), the London Symphony Orchestra (LSO) and the London Philharmonic Orchestra (LPO). One Dance UK, Independent Dance (ID) and Siobhan Davies Studios all disseminated the 'call for participants' to their professional membership email groups.

Of the recruited participants, three were female, and five were male, ranging from 25 to 50 years of age. The recruited participants had an average of 25 years of performing experience. As for the first study (Chapter 4), a sample of no more than six participants was recruited for each discipline (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Participants who were musicians were a clarinettist, a cellist and a double-bassist. Participants who were dancers represented a range of genres, including classical ballet, contemporary technique and improvisation and choreographic practice. Of the professional performers recruited, all performed 'frequently' (at least every month).

5.4 Materials: Topic Guide

Unstructured interviews were conducted with professional performers using a topic guide that was devised to cover a list of topics the interviewer wished to discuss (see Appendix D). Similar to that of an interview guide, the use of a topic guide ensured that the procedure of asking questions was standardised, allowing responses to be comparable across the sample (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). The guide consisted of open-ended questions that were created from the lower-and-higher order themes from the first study (Chapter 4). These themes were used as a basis for possible areas of discussion in the topic guide, alongside the first study's wider findings concerning the role of the 'individual' in performance.

The flexibility of the topic guide allowed questioning to flow from respondents' replies rather than being prescribed and imposed by the interviewer's predetermined

list of questions, as was the case in the first study (Chapter 4). It is further suggested in the literature that less-structured methods allow a reflective account of the research (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996), something which the researcher hoped would lead to a richer insight into how performers contextualise their experience in relation to who they are as performers.

Participants were asked to share their experiences of performing and their thoughts on the phenomenon from the perspective of being a performer. Areas of discussion included:

1. introductory questions and performance background (for example, can you describe your background as a dancer/musician?);
2. their understanding and thoughts on the different elements/features of music and dance performance;
3. their thoughts and perceptions concerning the relationship between the performer and the self;
4. their understanding, thoughts and perceptions of performance (for example, can you tell me, as a performer, what you understand by the term 'performance'?).

Throughout the interview process participants were also encouraged to elaborate on anything in relation to their own performing experience and/or what had been discussed during their interview.

5.4.1 Piloting

Possible topics and areas of exploration was circulated to the researcher's supervisors and to two professional dancers and two professional musicians for review. The topic guide was piloted in order to develop the appropriate use of language in terms of the phrasing of topics and the use of prompts and probes (Barbour, 2008; Patton, 2002). This process was useful in that it led the researcher to separate the topics and areas of exploration into subjective and objective viewpoints and note that, during interviews, participants should be aware of whether they are talking about their own or another's performance (see Appendix D).

5.5 Procedure

Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant research ethics board (see Appendix I). Written informed consent was obtained from all participants and an information sheet was disseminated prior to interviews commencing (see Appendix A). A demographic information sheet (see Appendix B) was employed to collect routine data on interviewees' demographic characteristics. All interviews were conducted by the researcher in a comfortable and informal environment. Each interview lasted between 44 and 70 minutes.

5.6 Data Analyses

Interviews were transcribed verbatim and content analysed thematically using the procedure of Summative Content Analysis. This was deemed an appropriate method of analysis as its aim is to establish categories and explore usage of words as a way of interpreting contextual meaning (Babbie, 1992; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The process of analysis therefore involved establishing categories and then counting the number of instances when those categories were used (Silverman, 2013).

5.6.1 Trustworthiness of Data

Several techniques were deliberately undertaken during the analysis of data to ensure credibility and validation of procedures, and the trustworthiness and convergence of data. These included peer debriefing and member-checking procedures, as well as the use of the 'constant comparative method' when undertaking data analysis (Barbour, 2008; Silverman, 2003). The final interview question was used to ascertain that none of the respondents felt they had been influenced or led by the interviewer in any way (Nordin & Cumming, 2005; 2006).

5.7 Findings

As presented in Chapter 4 of this thesis, findings from the first qualitative study revealed three higher-order themes of *Process, Performer and Context*. A sense of

'individual' was apparent within these three central themes and findings supported a shared consensus that the performer as an individual is at the heart of any performance. The notion of being an 'individual' was further conceptualised by participants in relation to being a 'performer' and their roles in the execution of a 'performance'. Through the narratives of participants, it can be argued that a clearer distinction between attributes of the performer and those of the performance are necessary when seeking to understand the constructs of performance.

In a similar way to that of the process of data analysis in the first study, three higher-order themes emerged during the analyses of the present study to create the overall theme of *Experience and Understanding of Performance*. These were *Fulfilment, Feelings about the self* and *Engagement*. A hierarchical model of higher-order and lower-order themes is presented in order of importance in Figure 5.1. The higher-order themes that emerged from the first qualitative study (Chapter 4) revealed that performers situate their experience and understanding of performance in the three mains areas of *Process, Performer and Context,* and that lower -order themes were concerned with their perception of each of these themes. For instance, the higher-order theme of *Context* emerged through their narratives on what performance means to them and the lower-order themes of *Individual* and *Teacher* revealed their personal experiences as a performer. However, in the present study, the model of higher-and lower-order themes presented below reveals that all themes that emerged from analysis are concerned with how performers contextualise their experience of performing and their thoughts on performance in relation to who they are as performers. The following section details the findings from the analysis and, where relevant, offers interpretation to facilitate understanding and context.
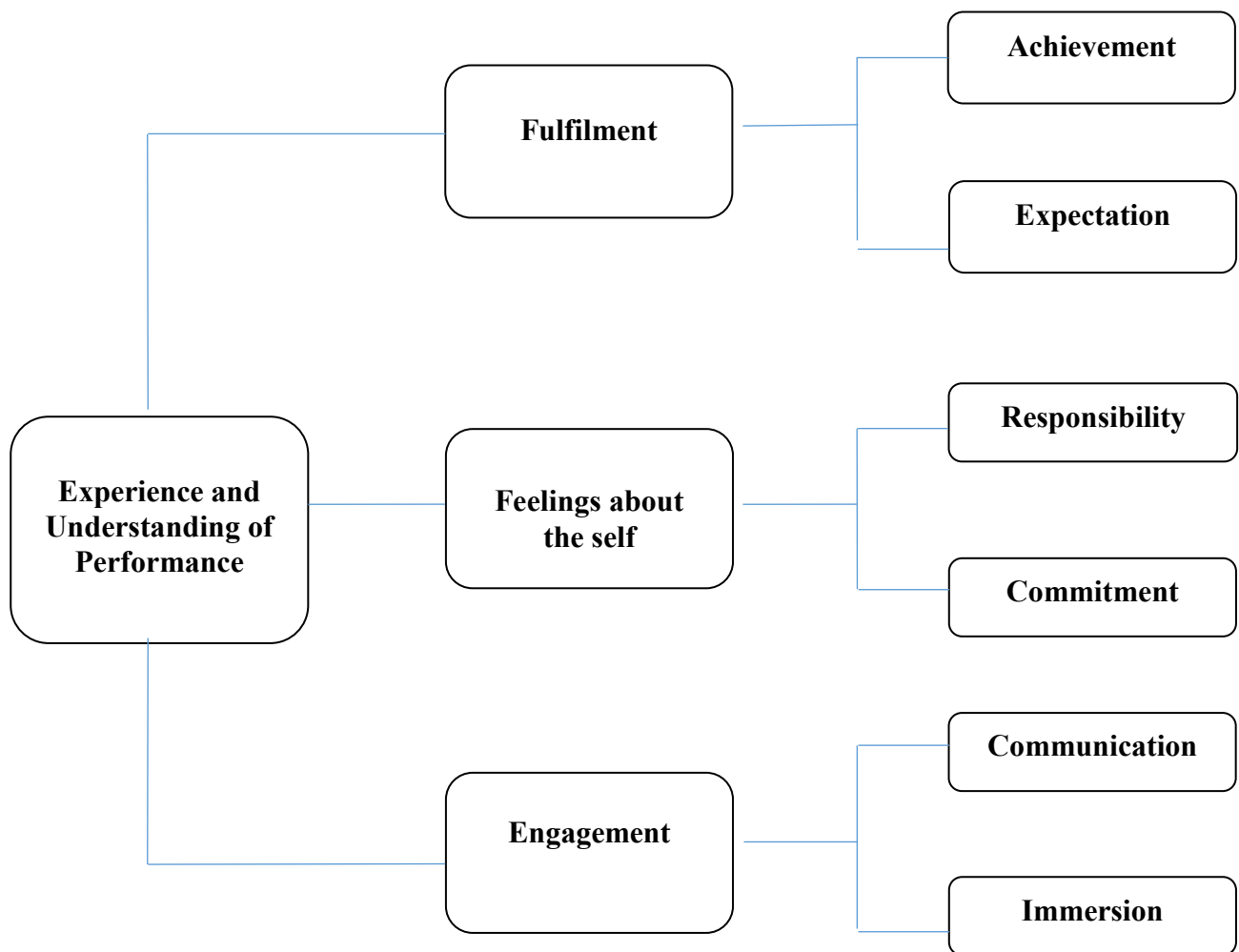
Chapter 5: Figure 5.1: A hierarchical model of higher and lower order themes presented in order of importance.

Fulfilment

The first theme of *Fulfilment* and following sub-themes of *Achievement and Expectation* arose through participants sharing their ideas on what they perceive their roles to be as performers. The idea that professional performers aspire for excellence as a way of developing personal fulfilment through performing is evidenced by Holmes (2012) and Williamon and Thompson (2004), both of whom found that in a musical context, a high level of skill is linked to a fulfilling performance. In the present study, participants collectively voiced a similar view, namely that they aspire to achieve as performers. One participant who noted: *"I feel that my investment in the work is about satisfying a person's vision and if that vision is very clear to me then I am more involved in that performance"* (Dancer 2). This was similarly expressed by another participant who said: *"I see my job as being about accomplishment and making the best of whatever it is, so I can be completely absorbed in it"* (Musician 5). The sense that performing is about seeking fulfilment was also evidenced by one participant who gave the following strong response: *"in that moment of performing I am servant to that thing, which means doing it to the best, best, best of my ability"* (Musician 3). It was of interest that all participants considered being successful as a personal achievement, in regard to which they used the word 'best' to capture their point of view.

The sub-themes of *Achievement* and *Expectation* were readily shared by participants when describing how they perceive their roles as performers and in a performance. It was clear from their narratives that the notion of expectation was considered not just in relation to their role in the making and execution of a performance but also in fulfilling the expectation of others, whether it be peers, an audience or the composer's/choreographer's vision. It was evident that participants perceived a sense of achievement and expectation to be self-fulfilling. As previously discussed, it is acknowledged both in the literature and anecdotally among performers, researchers and educators that performance is the height of a dancer's or musician's achievement. We also know from the research of Lamont (2012) that successful performers derive considerable pleasure from their ability to meet technical challenges, enabling them to connect with other performers and the audience.

Feelings about the self

The second theme of *Feelings about the self* and following sub-themes of *Responsibility and Commitment* emerged when respondents were asked to elaborate on their roles as performers in relation to how they portray themselves in a performance. Dance and music are art forms that both rely, to a large extent, on external judgements, with a performer's technique, artistry and physique being subject to scrutiny. The participants' responses provided insight into how they feel about performing, suggesting that performers undertake an ongoing process of scrutiny and examination of themselves. This was clarified by one participant who illustrated positively a sense as to how he felt: *"I have considered the concept of being an artist and I do feel myself to be an artist that encompasses my life, everything I do and sees playing into everything I want to do as an artist"* (Musician 3). A second participant shared with the researcher that examining how he feels as a performer had encouraged him to *"sometimes discover things in performance that I didn't know were there for me and sometimes I feel very clear about what it is of me out there when I perform"* (Dancer 2). The above responses are similar to those in the qualitative research study of Talbot-Honeck and Orlick (1998) whose participants revealed that a strong sense of self is needed in order to continue with their musical profession.

Alongside the physical, technical and artistic demands of performance, participants revealed a willingness to be committed to and take responsibility for their performances. For instance, when sharing their feelings about performing, they spoke with clarity about the responsibility they feel a performer should take for their own performance. This was illustrated by one participant who said:

> It's more than just technique as it's about knowing yourself. I think unless, for me, it feels like what I am doing is about me then I am not thinking of performing. I have to let myself be present as the person that is presenting it rather than the 'it' that is the piece itself" (Dancer 2)

A second participant similarly implied that for her, performing is an occupation: *"my job at that moment is to consume my ego and do the best I possibly can with the skills I have in that moment. In that physical moment, I am absolutely committed to doing*

the best I can" (Musician 3). We know from the literature that performers are characterised by high levels of commitment to the pursuit of excellence, and among a number of things, to individual performances (Talbot-Honeck & Orlick, 1998; Holmes, 2017). Through their responses, participants revealed that being committed plays a part in shaping their understanding of performance more generally. For example, one participant said that: *"performing is being able to be completely committed to either a task, a piece or a timeframe"* (Dancer 4). Another participant articulated that being committed is more than producing an excellent performance, it is about bringing something of herself to a performance: *"I have a sense of, in that moment of performance, it's a 100 percent commitment. I need to be completely absorbed in it. I see I am a servant to that thing, it's a 100 percent commitment"* (Musician 3).

While we have an understanding from the literature that successful performers will derive considerable pleasure from their ability to meet technical challenges, it was of interest that two participants displayed feelings of despondency rather than pleasure when sharing their views on performing. This was illuminated by one who openly shared: *"it's not about how good you are or technique or being virtuosic or being brilliant, it's just about making noise on an instrument. I do sit there and think why would anyone want to sit and listen to this"* (Musician 1). These examples highlight that while performers believe a strong sense of self to be important, they did not always display confidence in their own ability. These findings are in line with the research of Talbot-Honeck and Orlick (1998) who investigated a model of excellence as a framework for studying professional classical musicians.

Engagement

The final theme of *Engagement* and following sub-themes of *Communication and Immersion* emerged through participants describing their contribution to a performance and the role they play as performers. Respondents collectively voiced the view that being engaged in what they do is fundamental to them being a performer. One respondent encapsulated this view in the following way: *"as long as I am responding and contributing as a performer (and not as me) and I am engaged with fulfilling the job that is expected of me to the ultimate then that should come across to*

the audience" (Musician 6). A second participant shared: *"when thinking about being a performer, I think people refer to 'presence' and by this they mean being present in the thing I am doing, being engaged in the thing I am actually doing"* (Dancer 4). As outlined in the literature review chapter, embodiment and a sense of presence have long been discussed by researchers. The above responses share the sentiment of Horton-Fraleigh (1995) who speaks of a "bodily lived presence" (p. 69) as an indication of an expression of the self towards others. The responses are also of interest as they reveal a consideration of the performer being fully embodied in their performance and an understanding, on the part of the performer, that presence is required as a means of communication through which to express the qualities of the performance and the performer.

The sub-theme of *Communication* emerged though all participants placing emphasis on the role of communication in performance. As discussed in the findings of the first qualitative study (Chapter 4) and in the literature review chapter, there is a shared consensus that to perform is to communicate, and in most instances (and by definition) performing is for someone else. It was evident from participants' responses that performers share this sentiment, voicing specifically that performing is about performing for someone else: *"communicating with the audience is very important to me, it also suits me because I am not [a] very confident person and the idea that I am a part of a group with a chance that someone is watching is wonderful"* (Musician 6). The idea that whether you are a solo or ensemble performer might change the way you perceive *how* you communicate was also illustrated by another participant who said: *"I think a greater community is created when you work with others, I would always prefer to perform with others than in a solo piece"* (Dancer 5).

Participants also spoke of the role of communication in relation to their descriptions of what attributes they have as performers: *"the key is communication. Even when there is a day perhaps when my fingers don't work, it will make absolutely no difference as I am still communicating"* (Musician 3). A second participant felt it important to share their thoughts concerning communication and why it is important to them as a performer: *"I am going to go back to the communication thing for me, that's the place I feel most me in performing let's say. There is a level of assurance and security in that because I trust I can communicate on what I have been working*

on" (Dancer 2). The importance placed on communication is in line with the research of Williamon and Thompson (2004) who states that communicating effectively with an audience will contribute to deriving personal fulfilment. Although the thoughts of respondents are in line with thinking found in the body of literature on performance, it is still of interest that performers place such emphasis on the importance of communication in performance, and further, that they view it as a construct that assists their personal fulfilment.

The sub-theme of *Immersion* emerged through participants being asked to share their views on what it means to be engaged and present as a performer. In an attempt to capture the spirit of what they were trying to describe, participants spoke of 'being in the moment', a phrase frequently employed among performers, and one of them commented:

> I feel I am a servant to something bigger than me. When I am performing, I am so completely consumed in the thing that I am doing. I am not thinking about the effects, but I am very, very much aware of this incredible thing that we are so privileged to have" (Musician 3)

Another participant expressed a similar view of 'being in the moment' as a performer: *"I think a lot of the best things I have done have been when I haven't been thinking about it, it's like you're in a bubble, it's comfortable and where you need to be, it's in the moment"* (Dancer 3). These experiences described by participants, where they have complete investment in the activity, implies that they were experiencing a state of 'flow'.

It is understood that an individual can experience 'flow' when engaged at full capacity in an interesting activity for its own sake and no other external purpose (Cox, 2007; Deci, 1975; Marr, 2000). It is believed that 'flow' allows freedom from worries about failure (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). The pleasurable aspects of experiencing moments of 'flow' within dance, may be a factor that contributes to performers continuing to pursue their careers even when the impact of this appears detrimental (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Research into 'flow' has also provided an insight into experiences during which individuals are fully involved in the present moment (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2001). Through the narratives of participants

concerning the concept of 'flow' and wanting to give their best, it is evident that 'flow' can only occur when there is an appropriate balance between skill and challenge. It can be presumed from participant responses that it is this balance that enables an individual to be 'in the moment' and experience a state of 'flow'. The notion that a performer's lack of engagement will be detrimental to a performance was expressed by one participant as: *"I want to see something of that person that makes me consider them as people rather than just these moving bodies that deliver amazing material"* (Dancer 2). The responses of the participants also support the research of Forgeard, Jayawickreme, Kern and Seligman (2011) who note that engagement refers to a state in which individuals report being absorbed in what they do. Geeves et al. (2016) similarly found that 'flow' was linked to professional musicians' descriptions of their experiences of connection, suggesting that these experiences, for the professional musician, may be similar to the notion of 'flow' in which an individual is immersed.

5.8 Discussion and Implications

The present study was undertaken in order to address the lack of focus on the performer's perspective found in existing research. As for the first qualitative study (see Chapter 4 of this), participants were allowed to talk openly about performance from their subjective viewpoints in relation to being a 'performer' and on the concept of 'performance', more generally. In spite of performance being extrinsically driven for an audience, findings from the study in this chapter revealed that performers exposed a strong sense of individuality. This supports the consideration given to the performer being a critical element to a performance. Findings from the first study (Chapter 4) revealed that the relationship between the individual as 'a performer' and 'in performance' warrants further clarity and insight. The narratives from this second study similarly illustrate this relationship between the 'performer' and 'performance' expressed by one participant in this way: *"I think you would like to think that being a performer and person are separate things, but I am not sure you can necessarily box things off"* (Musician 1). This was also voiced by another participant who added: *"oh, there is such a blend between the performer and the individual and sometimes it feels as though it goes one way and sometimes more the other"* (Dancer 4).

Similar to that of the first study, a sense of 'individual' was apparent in the current

study through the higher-order themes of *Fulfilment, Feelings about the self* and *Engagement.* Of interest was a commonality across participant responses in which they contextualised their experiences of performance and subsequent understanding of the phenomenon in relation to being a 'person'. This is illustrated by one participant who said: *"do you know what, the whole thing is so linked up with me that I can't differentiate…actually I don't differentiate between the two as I feel that, in the moment, I am being the most of whatever that is"* (Musician 3). This was similarly voiced by a second participant who suggested that being a person was key to being a performer: *"I think I do feel myself as an artist that encompasses my life, everything I do, I see it play into everything I want to do as an artist. Overall I want to be the same person"* (Dancer 5). While it was anticipated that there would be noticeable differences in the responses of dancers and musicians, the commonality of the 'person' being central to performance was an interesting finding in relation to the semantics in *how* participants interpret their understanding. Taken together, it is apparent from the narratives of all participants that *being* a performer impacted greatly upon the performers' sense of self.

As discussed in the literature review chapter of this thesis (Chapter 2), two concepts most frequently evoked in descriptions of performance, in whatever form or genre, is that of transience and performance being ephemeral. When asked to share what performance means to them, the narratives of participants similarly described these concepts by referring to being 'in the moment' or in a 'transience state' when performing. The respondents also acknowledge that "*performance is about having an audience to share it with*" (Dancer 5) and the importance placed on this by the performer:

> The occasion creates something so much less about, 'this is what I am doing', it's more about what I am doing and that you're watching me, so it is something that is happening for the both of us which you can never get in the studio (Dancer 2).

The perception of performance being a 'sharing' is also frequently referred to in the literature, where performance is noted to be an opportunity for performers to share with others who and what they are precisely at that given moment (Davidson, 2002).

As portrayed in the literature review chapter of this thesis (Chapter 2), the meaning of performance is something assumed rather than entirely understood, suggesting an open concept resistant to an absolute definition. Whilst some researchers (for example, Reason, 2006) believe that the meaning of performance exists both within the thing itself (performance) and attempts to define what *it* is, such uncertainty accommodates the potential for variety and change in our collective understanding. In relation to their thoughts concerning performance and what it means to be a performer, the responses from participants reveal a view that before searching for meaning, an individual must first seek to define it for themselves. This particular response further highlights the significance of the performer in performance:

> Meaning is about how much one defines oneself as an artist. Performers need to first put themselves out there to try and understand what it means to them. They need to contextualise it within a sense of artistry and to a degree, interrogation of their process and of what they produce (Dancer 2).

Specifically, in the field of music, the notion of searching for meaning and something beyond oneself has two clear parallels in performing: first, as a passage of self-discovery in terms of identity formation, and second, as a shared experience with co-performers and/or an audience (Lamont, 2012). The narratives of participants in Guptill's (2011) study reflected on their views concerning the role music played in their lives and, specifically, what life would be like without music. Findings from the present study similarly highlight that a clear sense of an individual's identity is key to a musician and that music is a central element in their lives:

> It's my life and all that I do, and it would be a wrench if I didn't do it. I am extremely lucky to be in that position and it defines me, it's all that I do. If it wasn't there, then what would I do? That would be a massive thing for me (Musician 6).

Findings from the first study (Chapter 4) suggest that a clearer distinction between attributes of the performer and those of the performance are necessary when seeking to understand the constructs of performance. Of particular interest was one participant who questioned whether her attributes were situation specific, suggesting that the notion of 'context' can be considered in relation to a performer's own intrinsic experience and understanding. A similar question was posited in the present study,

where one participant suggested that the attributes he perceives to have as a performer are the same as those of the orchestra: *"it is really the person who fits with the characteristic of the orchestra"* (Musician 6). When asked to elaborate on this further, he added: *"it's interesting really because the attributes I see in myself are the attributes of the orchestra as well. I feel that fits the sense of myself as well within the orchestra"* (Musician 6). As has already been discussed earlier in Chapter 2, key to thinking about a performance is the centrality of the individual performer and the unique abilities and characteristics that they can bring. The response from Musician 6 is of particular interest as it suggests he perceives his individual attributes to be influenced by his role as an orchestral musician.

We also know (anecdotally and from the literature) that the acquisition of performance skills (i.e. physical, expressive and technical) is not an end in itself, as in addition to these, performers need to develop other individual attributes that shape them as performers. This awareness was supported in the first study's findings, which revealed performers to have an awareness of embodying individual attributes that mould them as performers rather than by individualised attributes commonly referred to in the literature. In light of the above response from Musician 6, it would be of further interest to know whether this is a view shared by all orchestra musicians and whether it might also apply to a soloist. In terms of physical and technical preparations relating to playing an instrument, there are specific skills required of orchestral musicians that are less relevant to soloists. For instance, the ability to musically and socially fit within an orchestra and being able to adapt to the presence of others (Ascenso, Williamon & Perkins 2016; Dobson & Gaunt, 2015; Hager & Johnsson, 2009).

In the present study, the idea of context was also considered in relation to whether participants were solo performers or members of an ensemble. This was illustrated in the response of one participant who commented: *"certainly, if I was a soloist, I would be more aware of being a performer"* (Musician 1). A second participant corroborated a potential contextual divergence by saying: *"funnily enough, I feel at my most complete and my most relaxed when playing and being part of the orchestra"* (Musician 2). These responses are of interest as they suggest their experiences of performing and awareness of their roles as performers, depend on the role they assume (i.e. as a soloist or member of an ensemble). In addition to the recommendation that

further clarity is warranted between characteristics relating to the 'performance' and those relating to the 'performer', findings from the present study suggest that transparency is also required in relation to performers' experience and understanding being context-specific.

Similar to narratives of the first qualitative study (Chapter 4), the narratives of participants in the present study demonstrate that a qualitatively driven research approach is meaningful in generating a deeper phenomenologically based understanding of the individual performer. In the first study, participants experienced difficulties in expressing their thoughts and tended to fold their arms and interject their responses with long pauses and periods of silence. However, in the present study, participants appeared at ease throughout interviewing. In particular, they were able to provide clear and well-considered answers when asked to consider what performance means to them objectively (i.e. thoughts and feelings about performance) and to verbalise *how* performing made them feel. One reason for this could be the fact that performers recruited for this study performed more regularly and subsequently found it easier to articulate their experiences and understanding. The clarity with which answers were shared is highlighted in the response of one participant who said: *"in a way I want to say that performance is an event that is happening where there is some kind of conscious relationship to it that everybody brings to some degree or other"* (Dancer 1).

The ease and confidence of participants throughout interviewing is in contrast to the view commonly found in the literature, which suggests that participants can experience difficulties in articulating their thoughts and understanding due to the unfamiliarity of being interviewed in this way. The sense of ease and clarity that was evident throughout interviewing could be ascribed to the chosen method of interviewing (i.e. unstructured interviews and topic guide), and the researcher's questioning technique, which aimed to encourage a reflective account of what it means to be a performer and on the phenomenon of performance. It was also of interest in the present study to observe that the music participants (unprompted) appeared to speak most freely when contextualising their thinking in relation to specific examples of performance. This is in line with the research of Clark et al. (2011) who gained understanding of musicians' experiences while performing in relation to successful

and unsuccessful performances. Overall, all participants indicated that they had enjoyed being interviewed and their responses suggested that research of this nature is worthwhile: *"this is one of the reasons I said yes to this research as I wanted to consider performing and reflect upon what it means to me"* (Dancer 4). Another participant emphasised this point: *"I have nothing to add, just that what you're doing is so important"* (Musician 3).

5.9 Conclusion

The aim of the present study was to build upon findings from the first qualitative study (Chapter 4) in an attempt to gain insight into the experience of the performer and their thoughts and perceptions on the phenomenon of performance. This investigation has revealed a number of findings that give greater insight into performers' experiences in relation to themselves as performers through the three higher-order themes of *Fulfilment, Feelings about the self* and *Engagement* that emerged to create the overall theme of *Experience and Understanding of Performance*. Although the use of qualitative methods has proven fruitful, the nature of responses being inherently subjective has revealed potential limitations concerning the meaning and interpretation of findings. Further methodological considerations will be discussed in the general discussion chapter of this thesis (Chapter 9).

Similar to that of the first qualitative study, the present study has also revealed a number of promising pedagogical implications and directions for future research. In the first study, it was noted that student performers should be encouraged to consider and reflect on what performance means to them. The researcher had suggested one way of achieving this could be by asking students to undertake a phenomenological account of a recent performance and/or performing experience. In light of the responses from participants in the present study, a more effective way of reflecting on what performance means to them could be achieved through performers being encouraged to view their roles as performers from the viewpoint of an 'individual' and a 'person'. This might help them to further contextualise their experiences of performing and understanding of performance in relation to themselves. Encouraging performers to view themselves as having a participatory role rather than placing too much emphasis on their central role in performance might also prove beneficial.

Given that music and dance training involve an eclectic mixture of technique and performance, alongside learning about analytical and historical factors to help place creative work in context, it could be productive if opportunities to reflect on and question performer roles were integrated within a student's training. Participants' responses further support the researcher's view that it is beneficial for performers to have opportunities (and possibly structures) through which they can articulate their own practice from a first-person perspective. For example, as Musician 4 commented: *"with music it's an abstraction of all the art forms, it's an abstraction and something you cannot objectify"*. The value of open dialogue was also voiced by Dancer 4 who added: "*I had a really long collaboration where there was lots of dialogue between what it means to be a performer and the clarity of this. What I found in that working relationship is that we could actually speak about these roles, to learn and to question*". As similarly concluded in the first study (Chapter 4), it is evident that replication of this present study with other instrument groups and dance genres and at different stages of their careers, would be a valuable addition to the literature.

Similar to those of the first study, participant responses suggest that challenges of concept may exist solely within the research field rather than among the performers themselves. The narratives of participants provide further invaluable insight into the shared view that performance is intertwined with the 'person' as a human being alongside that of being a performer. Contributing to our knowledge of performance from the perspective of the individual performer, the present study makes some way in establishing the subjective nature of *how* participants contextualise their experience of performance and their subsequent understanding of the phenomenon.

In order to gain a better sense as to the reliability of findings from the first two studies (Chapters 4 and 5), the following chapter will explore findings from a questionnaire that set out to measure the extent to which a larger sample of professional performers agreed or disagreed with the emerging themes from the two qualitative studies.

Chapter 6: Questionnaire: Study 3

6.1 Introduction and Rationale

From findings in the first and second qualitative studies (see Chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis) we have gained some insights into professional dancers' and musicians' experiences of performance and their thoughts on the phenomenon of performance from their own subjective viewpoints. The discussion outlined in Chapter 2, alongside the findings from the two qualitative studies, suggest that it is instructive to include performers' subjective thoughts and feelings, rather than concentrating on a particular factor or predetermined construct. While the findings of these studies show that a qualitatively driven approach has been meaningful in generating a deeper subjective understanding concerning the experience of the performer, it is noted in the literature that it is through statistical analysis of quantitative (numerical) data that researchers can say more about how results reflect a wider population (Kelly et al., 2003). Orlick and Partington (1988) similarly chose a qualitative-quantitative approach to their research investigating the level of mental readiness and mental control experienced by Canadian athletes at the 1984 Olympic Games. This large-scale study included two stages: first, interviewing a wide range of participants to understand what behaviours were used and second, a questionnaire to see how their initial findings were reflected in a wider population.

The aim of the present study was to investigate the extent to which a larger sample of professional performers agreed or disagreed with the emerging themes from the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5). It is important to note, however, that the aim of the study was not to create a statistically sound instrument but to test and possibly strengthen the findings from the first two studies. The aim was also not to seek commonalities and differences between the two artistic disciplines but to reflect a wider group of professional performers and further contribute to our understanding of the unique facets of the performers' experience. In addition to presenting findings from the questionnaire, this chapter will explore discussion points concerning the credibility of employing a questionnaire when seeking a first-person perspective.

6.2 Methods

Quantitative data was collected through the employment of a questionnaire completed

by professional dancers and musicians. It was hoped that undertaking the studies in this order (the two qualitative studies and the present quantitative study), would complement and extend what was learnt from the semi-structured and unstructured interviews. Previous research has used questionnaires as a valid means of measuring the characteristics and attitudes of performers in a dance and music context. For example, questionnaires have been employed in dance to assess the frequency with which dancers' image (Nordin & Cumming, 2008); as a means of capturing the perspectives of dancers and physical therapists in the implementation of rehabilitation strategies (Sabo, 2013); and for self-reporting freelance modern dancers' demographics and training characteristics (Weiss et al., 2008). In music, Williamon et al. (2009) profiled music students' physical and mental fitness for performance by using standardised measures to assess students' performance-related health and well-being, and Kreutz et al. (2008) reported health problems of music performance students, focusing on musculoskeletal and nonmusculoskeletal problems in relation to the students' instrumental specialty and their health-promoting behaviours. While these examples illustrate the use of questionnaires to investigate characteristics and attitudes of performers, to the knowledge of the author, there remains an infancy of questionnaires that have been used to discover performers' subjective views on performing and on performance.

6.2.1 Participants

Professional dancers (*n*=47) and musicians (*n*=41) were recruited through e-lists, websites, personal contacts and social media to participate in the study. Of the 88 participants who returned their completed questionnaire, *n*=65 were female and *n*=23 were male, and ranged from 18 to 65 years of age (*M*=36.2 and *SD*=12.3). The recruited participants had a mean of 15.25 (*SD*=11.3) years of performing experience. Of the professional dancers and musicians recruited, 61 performed 'occasionally' (every 1-2 months) and 27 performed 'sometimes' (every 3-6 months).

Participants who were musicians were singers, double bassists, violinists, pianists, cellists, clarinettists and trumpeters. Participants who were dancers represented a range of genres, including classical and contemporary technique, jazz and somatic-

based practices. Not all dancers indicated the type of dance in which they primarily participate on their questionnaire. All participants gave individual informed consent.

6.2.2 Materials: Questionnaire (Appendix E)

A quantitative method was used because it permitted the researcher to generate valuable information concerning a larger sample of professional performers' thoughts on the phenomenon of performance. More specifically, a questionnaire was employed in order to describe the patterns of people's responses to preconceived questions and to provide direct access to individual's thoughts and attitudes towards a phenomenon (Kelly et al., 2003; Robson, 2002; Silverman, 2013). The use of a questionnaire was also deemed appropriate as it allowed a larger quantity of data to be collected from participants.

The questionnaire was created in accordance with the pre-existing themes from the first two qualitative studies (see Chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis). Given that the questionnaire was conducted after completing the two qualitative studies, the researcher was able to frame the questions concerning performers' experience and understanding of performance, more precisely. To maximise participant responses, questions were based around several main areas that included descriptions of performance, their perception concerning their role as a performer and their wider understanding of performance. These areas and questions were informed by the literature and upon predetermined categories and participant vocabularies gained from the two qualitative studies. The decision was taken to use predetermined categories as a means of representing the emerging themes and to ensure the questions were of relevance to respondents.

The questionnaire was separated into two sections: Section 1 'Understanding of Performance' and Section 2 'You as a Performer'. Each section of the questionnaire comprised statements that had emerged from the findings of the two qualitative studies. Statements within the sections were concerned with descriptions of performance (for example, 'Performance is an achievement of excellence', and descriptions of their roles as performers (for example, 'as a performer, I am central to

the performance'). Demographic information was also collected. This included participants' age, sex and (if a musician) whether they were a vocalist (stating voice type) or instrumentalist (stating the instrument played) or (if a dancer) the genre of dance in which they primarily perform.

Responses were categorised by employing a mixture of comprised fixed questions (yes/no) and a seven-point Likert scale. The Likert scale was used as the methodological measure for the questionnaire as it allowed participants to respond to a set of statements by indicating the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements in each of the sections. This is a commonly used method, whereby responses are coded to several mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories, such as strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). A seven-point Likert scale was used in the present study to the scale of (1) strongly disagree (2) disagree (3) slightly disagree (4) Neither agree or disagree (5) slightly agree (6) agree (7) strongly agree. Previous music and dance research has commonly employed Likert scales (Brown et al., 2007; Weiss et al., 2008; Williamon et al., 2009). In particular, Brown et al. (2007) used a Likert scale to examine staff evaluations concerning the effects of training programs on aesthetic jumping ability. A neutral category of 'neither agree or disagree' was also included in the Likert scale in the present study. The coding categories were chosen at the researcher's discretion and levels of rater agreement were not determined. Fixed-choice questions (such as 'yes' or 'no') were used because they lend themselves to simple tabulation, unlike that of open-ended questions, which produce answers that need to be subsequently coded.

6.2.3 Procedure

The data was collected using an environment provided by Surveymonkey (www.surveymonkey.com). Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant research ethics board (see Appendix I). Each respondent received, by email, the same Surveymonkey link which contained the same version of the questionnaire. In a covering email, participants were provided with instructions on how to undertake the questionnaire, including an expectation from the researcher that it would be completed in the same order and following the same questions.

Participants were asked to read the questions provided and to answer either by circling or ticking one box (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). These questions were in relation to their understanding of performance and their perception of themselves as performers. Participants answered all items using a seven-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was piloted with six professional dancers and five professional musicians in order to establish its usefulness, suitability of the questions and to minimise bias prior to circulation (Kelly et al., 2003; Marshall & Rossman, 1995). As a result of piloting, the layout and ordering of questions in the questionnaire was revised so Section 1 'Understanding of Performance' came before Section 2 'You as a Performer'.

Once completed, questionnaires were returned automatically to the researcher using the Surveymonkey link and without participant identification, ensuring anonymity of the participants. Access to the administration of the Surveymonkey link was stored under a password-protected login, to which only the researcher had access.

6.3 Data Analyses

A variety of statistical tests were carried out for the responses of the questionnaire. Descriptive statistics for participants' responses are reported for both sections of the questionnaire (Section 1 'Understanding of Performance' and Section 2 'You as a Performer'). The mean responses to each statement were compared with the Likert scale of: (1) strongly disagree (2) disagree (3) slightly disagree (4) Neither agree or disagree (5) slightly agree (6) agree (7) strongly agree.

Following guidelines by Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) and Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black (1998), a Principal Components Analysis (PCA) was also performed. A PCA was chosen rather than a factor analysis, to allow selection of the items that most contributed to variance between participants, while eliminating items that did not differentiate them. A combination of criteria, including the inspection of eigenvalues above 1.0, the screen plot, loadings above .30, and the theoretical meaningfulness of the components, were used to establish those questions with a meaningful structure.

The final statistical test undertaken was a Maximum Likelihood Factor Analysis (MLFA) with an oblimin rotation to explore the existence of a higher-order, domain-

general factor. The objective of a factor analysis is to determine the number of common factors influencing a set of measures, as well as the strength of the relationship between each factor and each observed measure. This was performed to test whether all items in the questionnaire were testing the same thing, by loading the items onto one factor (i.e. 'performance'). In testing whether all items in the questionnaire were testing the same thing, during the analysis the items were loaded onto one factor. A correlation matrix was produced to look for associations between variables.

6.4 Results

Mean response data ± standard deviation (*SD*) for participants' level of agreement with the questionnaire statements are shown in Table 6.1. Mean data for Section 1 show that participants were in agreement with three statements concerning their understanding of performance. These were: 'Performance is about communication' (*M*=6.26 and *SD*=1.09); 'Performance is an emotional activity' (*M*=6.02 and *SD*=1.09); and 'Performance is about being "in the moment"' (*M*= 5.95 and *SD*=1.42). Only one statement was answered as 'neither agree or disagree' and this was: 'Performance is something "passing in time"' (*M*=4.23 and *SD*=2.02). The findings for Section 2 of the questionnaire show that participants only slightly agreed with the statements concerning them as performers. The only statement that was answered by participants to be in agreement with was: 'As a performer, it is important to have an understanding of what performance means to me' (*M*=6.01 and *SD*=1.466). This opinion was echoed in both of the qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) whereby participants placed emphasis on the importance of considering what performance is, and what it means to them.

Importantly, the data demonstrates that participants did not disagree with any of the statements for either section of the questionnaire (for example, the means were not lower than 4). This is a key finding in relation to the aim of the questionnaire, which sought to investigate the extent to which a larger sample of professional performers agreed or disagreed with the emerging themes from the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5). The descriptive analysis of data therefore confirm that a larger sample of professional performers are in agreement with the majority of the statements

(based on themes from the two qualitative studies) concerning an 'understanding of performance' and in relation to 'you as a performer'.

Chapter 6: Table 6.1: Descriptive statistics mean (±SD) response for participants' responses to each statement of Section 1 and Section 2 of the online questionnaire (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree).

Questionnaire Items: Section 1 'Understanding of Performance'	Mean (±SD)
Performance is an achievement of excellence	5.15 (±1.46)
Performance is a process	5.26 (±1.587)
Performance is an outcome	5.22 (±1.579)
Performance is about communication	6.26 (±1.099)
Performance is a physical activity	5.58 (±1.371)
Performance is an emotional activity	6.02 (±1.093)
Performance is something 'passing in time'	4.23 (±2.021)
Performance is an opportunity to share with others	5.84 (±1.231)
Performance is a performer's achievement	4.97 (±1.550)
Performance is an opportunity to express emotion	5.27 (±1.631)
Performance consists of technical principles	5.06 (±1.316)
Performance consists of expressive principles	5.49 (±1.422)
Performance is expression of a composer's or choreographer's intention	5.60

	(±1.291)
Performance is self-satisfaction	4.97
	(±1.636)
Performance is being 'in the moment'	5.95
	(±1.422)
Performance is with reference to a particular standard or form	4.69
	(±1.564)
Questionnaire Items: Section 2 'You as a Performer'	**Mean**
	(±SD)
As a performer, I am central to the performance	4.65
	(±1.345)
As a performer, my professional identity is linked to how I perform	5.33
	(±1.422)
As a performer, my understanding of performance has changed since I first started performing professionally	5.51 (±1.218)
As a performer, it is important to have an understanding of what performance means to me	6.01 (±1.466)

While the descriptive statistics reported indicate that a larger sample of participants agreed with the emerging themes from the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5). Through a PCA further analysis revealed whether the questions asked were useful in analysing the themes presented from the two qualitative studies.

The PCA analysis revealed that fifteen of the twenty questions displayed a meaningful structure. Very few correlations greater than 0.3 were observed, indicating low levels of association in the data and a possible indication of singularity (Field, 2013). No correlation coefficients were above 0.9, indicating that multicollinearity was not of concern in the data. Analysis revealed five questions that did not display a meaningful underlying structure. The correlations between factors following PCA analysis can be seen in Appendix F.

The MLFA analysis revealed that 'performance' loaded onto four factors, rather than one single factor (see Table 6.2). This finding demonstrates that respondents perceive

performance to be made up of four different aspects, further supporting the multi-faceted components of performance. The weighted component loadings of each performance domain following analysis can be found in Appendix G.

Chapter 6: Table 6.2: Component loadings of performance domains following Maximum Likelihood Factor Analysis (MLFA) with oblimin rotation.

Factor 1	- An opportunity to share with others - A performer's achievement - Self-satisfaction - Being in the moment
Factor 2	- Emotional activity - Opportunity to express emotions - Expressive principles - Expression of intention
Factor 3	- An outcome - Physical activity
Factor 4	- Communication - Understanding has changed - Identity

6.5 Discussion and Implications

The aim of the present study was to investigate the extent to which a larger sample of professional performers agreed or disagreed with the emerging themes from the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5). Quantitative data was collected through the employment of a questionnaire with professional dancers and musicians. The questionnaire was created in accordance with the pre-existing themes from the first two qualitative studies and was made up of statements concerned with descriptions of performance and how they perceive themselves as performers. A variety of statistical tests were carried out for the response of the questionnaire. First, descriptive statistics compared the means of each statement with the Likert scale provided, which revealed an indication as whether participants agreed or disagreed with the statements provided in the questionnaire. A PCA was then performed to ascertain whether the questions asked in the questionnaire were analysing the themes presented from the two qualitative studies. Lastly, a MLFA was undertaken to test whether all items in the questionnaire were testing the same thing by loading the items onto one factor (i.e. 'performance').

6.5.1 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics showed that a larger sample of participants agreed with the emerging themes from the two qualitative studies (see Table 6.1). Section 1 of the questionnaire was concerned with participants' understanding of performance. They were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with statements concerning their understanding of performance. The results revealed that participants were in agreement with the statement: 'Performance is about communication'. We know both anecdotally and from the literature, that the concept of communication is common amongst performers when considering performance and that the concept of communication can very much shape our thoughts on performance (Bailey & Davidson, 2005; Hargreaves et al., 2005). It is also noted in the literature by Williamon and Thompson (2004) that communicating effectively with an audience will contribute to a feeling of personal fulfilment from the performer. The importance placed on the notion of communication in performance was also apparent from participant responses in the first study (Chapter 4) where the sub- theme of Communication emerged as a result of participants being asked to talk about their experience of performing.

The results from Section 1 of the questionnaire also revealed that participants were in agreement with the statement: 'Performance is an emotional activity. We are reminded in the literature that the emotional aspects of performing are prevalent in relation to emotional expression (Best, 2006), the communication of emotion (Dittrich et al., 1996; Juslin & Madison, 1999; Walk & Homan, 1984) and the positive emotional experience that a performance can bring (Persson, 2001). The notion that an artistic endeavour can be a positive emotional experience for performers is also shared by Butterworth (2012) who believes dance to be communicated at its best when it evokes an aesthetic or emotional response. The findings for Section 1 of the questionnaire also revealed that participants were in agreement with the statement: 'Performance is about "being in the moment"'. Similar to that of the first two studies (Chapters 4 and 5), this finding further supports the literature by indicating that performance is fundamentally ephemeral, short-lived and 'in the moment' (Cannon, 2013; Reason, 2006).

Section 2 of the questionnaire was concerned with participants' thoughts on themselves as performers. Here, participants were asked to indicate to what extent they agreed or disagreed with statements concerning performers' perceptions of themselves. Results showed that performers slightly agreed with the statements concerning with themselves as performers. Specifically, for this section, results revealed that the only statement that was answered by all participants to be in agreement was: 'As a performer, it is important to have an understanding of what performance means to me'. This is of interest as it further reiterates the importance performers place on communicating what is of importance to them. Informed by the literature, we know that meaning is closely linked to an individual's purpose and that, particularly in the context of music, musical activity has been linked to a strong sense of meaning and purpose (Ascenso, Williamon, & Perkins, 2017). In spite of performance being extrinsically driven (i.e. for an audience) performers' agreeing that understanding performance is important to them suggests that performers display a strong sense of individuality. This is important in relation to what we know concerning the significant role the performer plays in performance and was similarly revealed through the narratives of participants in the first two studies (Chapters 4 and 5).

Importantly, from the present study data demonstrate that participants did not disagree with any of the statements for either section of the questionnaire (for example, the means was not lower than 4). This is a key finding in relation to the aim of the questionnaire, which sought to investigate the extent to which a larger sample of professional performers agreed or disagreed with the emerging themes from the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5).

6.5.2 Principal Components Analysis (PCA)

The PCA undertaken for the participant responses showed that fifteen of the twenty questions had a meaningful underlying structure. Given that the statements in the questionnaire were made up of descriptions and vocabularies from the literature and the first two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5), it is of interest that these questions were revealed to have a meaningful structure, further strengthening the findings from the first two qualitative studies.

Of particular interest were findings in relation to the questions concerning: 'As a performer, my professional identity is linked to how I perform' and 'As a performer, my understanding of performance has changed since I first started performing professionally'. The premise of the centrality of the individual performer very much informed the present research and we know from the literature that research has revealed the significance of the performer in relation to their sense of professional identity and activities being linked inextricably to their performance (Hays 2002). Interview responses from the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) highlight that a clear sense of an individual's identity is key to the performing dancer and musician. A second question of interest that revealed a meaningful structure ('As a performer, my understanding of performance has changed since I first started performing professionally') is also of interest as it further highlights the need for performance research to be undertaken with professional performers and reveals scope for future longitudinal research to be undertaken with different groups of performers.

Analysis also revealed five questions that did not display a meaningful underlying structure. From section 1 'Understanding of Performance' the statements were: 'Performance is an achievement of excellence', 'Performance is something "passing in time" and 'Performance is with reference to a particular standard or form'. Questions from section 2 were: 'You as a Performer' were the statements: 'As a performer, I am central to the performance' and 'As a performer, it is important to have an understanding of what performance means to me'.

Although these findings did not display a meaningful structure, they are still useful in contributing to our understanding concerning the performer's experience and in critiquing the literature and findings from the two qualitative studies. For example, the idea of performance being concerned with achievement was apparent in the second qualitative study (Chapter 5) and emerged through participants' narratives when describing what they perceive their roles as performers to be. It is also widely acknowledged in the literature and anecdotally among performers, researchers and educators that performance is the height of a dancer's or musician's achievement (for example, the research of Lamont, 2012). The notion that performance is 'something passing in time' was expressed by participants in the first qualitative study (Chapter 4) when asked to share what performance means to them. Participants described their

thoughts by referring to being 'in the moment' or in a 'transience state' when performing. The concept that performance is with reference to a particular standard or form was also evidenced throughout the narratives of participants in the two qualitative studies and is supported in the literature, where in the majority of endeavours, "to perform is to do something up to a standard – to succeed, to excel" (Schechner, 2013 p. 28). Throughout the two qualitative studies, participants would frequently make reference to performance being about excelling in relation to a particular standard. The two statements: 'As a performer, I am central to the performance' and 'As a performer, it is important to have an understanding of what performance means to me' are reflective of the narratives of participants in both of the qualitative studies where performers considered their roles to be central to performance and that it was important to have an understanding of what performance means to them.

A possible reason for the questions not revealing a meaningful structure could have been in its design and specifically the wording of questions, rather than a lack of agreement and value placed on these areas (as indicated both in the literature and from the findings of the first two studies). Those questions that revealed a meaningful structure (as indicated in section 6.5.2 of this chapter) were concerned with participants responding to clear descriptions of performance and clearly worded statements. Those questions that did not reveal a meaningful structure were more loosely worded and may have needed interpretation on the part of the respondent.

The PCA and identification of questions that have a meaningful structure have further strengthened the findings from the first two qualitative studies. Findings from the PCA might also be useful when undertaking future research concerned with performers thoughts and perceptions on performance. The questions that revealed a meaningful structure suggest that when developing future measures on this topic, it is essential to ask performers to consider *what* it is about the viewpoint of the individual that they are keen to discover.

6.5.3 Maximum Likelihood Factor Analysis (MLFA)

This statistical test revealed that 'performance' loaded onto four factors, rather than one single factor (see Table 6.2). This finding that 'performance' loaded onto four factors, rather than one single factor is of particular interest as it suggests that performance is not just one thing but that it is made up of four different aspects, further underlining the multi-faceted components of performance. The use of MLFA is also useful in illustrating the hierarchical nature of a topic under investigation. The items within Factor 1 are concerned with performance being: an opportunity to share with others; a performer's achievement; self-satisfaction and being 'in the moment'. These findings are also of interest as the themes from the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) were placed in order of importance by the researcher, whereas the MLFA revealed a measurable hierarchy.

The identified four factors are also of interest when looking at the higher order and lower order themes from the first two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) as they suggest some similarities between them. For instance, the items within Factor 1 (an opportunity to share with others; a performer's achievement; self-satisfaction; being in the moment) could be interpreted to be similar to the theme of *'Fulfilment'* (and sub-themes of *Achievement and Expectation*) in the second study. Comparisons could also be made between the items within Factor 2 (emotional activity; opportunity to express emotions; expressive principles; expression of intention) and the themes of *Process* (and sub-themes of *Communication and Intention*) and *Performer* (and sub-themes of *Sense and Acknowledgement*) in the first study. The findings from this statistical test further strengthens the findings from the first two qualitative studies and support the rationale for using a quantitative method in the present study.

6.5.4 Using a Questionnaire When Seeking a First-Person Insight

As outlined in section 6.1 of this chapter, previous dance and music research has used questionnaires as a valid means of measuring the characteristics and attitudes of performers in a dance and music context. However, few questionnaires have asked performers about performing and on performance from their subjective viewpoints. Upon considering why very few questionnaires are employed to elicit subjective insight on a phenomenon such as performance, it is relevant to also address questions concerning the authenticity of participant responses, the reliability of questionnaire

data and whether data collected is representative of the phenomenon under investigation.

Concerning the authenticity of participant responses, it could be argued that the questionnaire used in the present study was not the most accurate reflection of participants' thoughts and perceptions concerning performance. One reason for this could be that participants were guided to provide answers (based on findings from the first two qualitative studies) even if the given choices did not resonate strongly with them. As the findings from the first two studies were based on findings from the first two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5). As a result, a second factor could be that the findings from the first two studies were based on subjective thoughts and perceptions from a different group of professional dancers and musicians, perhaps it made it difficult for a different group of performers to agree or disagree with the statements provided. This may be demonstrated by the fact that not all statements came out revealing a meaningful structure in the analysis. Foddy (1993) supports this view and argues that questions and responses presented to participants in a questionnaire may encourage respondents to provide answers that they would not have normally thought of or chosen on their own. Future research could usefully employ the questionnaire with a larger sample size of participants and with other instrument groups and dance genres. This could (potentially) help to develop a more standardised method of data collection and would help to confirm the validity of findings and increase generalisability.

The present questionnaire could also be amended to consider the various contexts and settings in which a performer might perform. The importance of context was also evidenced in the first and second qualitative studies. For instance, in the first study, the theme of *Context* emerged from participants' responses concerning how they contextualise their understanding and experiences of performance as an *Individual* and *Teacher*. In the second study, the idea of context was evident in relation to whether participants were solo performers or members of an ensemble.

A second reason for participants' responses not being the most accurate reflection of their thoughts and perceptions concerning performance could be attributed to the questionnaire design in terms of its measurement and analysis. As previously noted

in this chapter, the aim of the present study was not to create a statistically sound instrument but to strengthen the findings from the two qualitative studies and to further contribute to our understanding concerning the unique facets of the performer's experience. The findings may have been more revealing if the development of the questionnaire had used a number of phases to ensure the items represented the various aspects of performance rather than just those identified in the qualitative studies.

Another discussion point of interest is concerning the reliability of data. While it is acknowledged that questionnaires can be useful tools in understanding significant differences across a group, it can be difficult to gain valid and reliable information when attempting to measure more abstract characteristics such as opinions, beliefs and perceptions of respondents (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). It is also necessary to recognise the individual and their thoughts, opinions and experiences, as advocated by McGill, Houston and Lee (2014) advocate. While there may be a degree of subjectivity in the way that the researcher handles any qualitative data in general, questionnaires do not necessarily allow for much subjective interpretation. In respect of this, perhaps the wider debate is not concerning whether a questionnaire can be used to elicit subjective insight on phenomena but rather, how it can be used to offer a different perspective and contribute to wider understanding.

The final discussion point is in relation to the representation of data. Without any presentation of the existing knowledge about the topic of an investigation or phenomenon being studied, Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) acknowledge that it is difficult for both the researcher and reader to ascertain whether knowledge obtained is new and whether accurate representation is therefore evident. Similar to all methods of data collection, the accuracy of questionnaire data must be taken into consideration, as participants might have given false information, misunderstood a question, or forgotten the information asked for. A second concern in relation to the representation of data is the categories upon which a questionnaire is based. For instance, a questionnaire is trying to fit participant responses into set categories even though they may not always be applicable to the individual under investigation.

6.6 Conclusion

In line with the stated aims, the present study strengthens the findings from the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) in furthering our understanding of the unique facets of the performer's experience. By undertaking the three studies in this order (the two qualitative studies and the present quantitative study), and through the statistical analysis of quantitative data that reflect a wider group of professional performers, the researcher has extended what was learnt from the semi-structured and unstructured interviews. The use of a questionnaire has therefore contributed to a body of knowledge concerning performance from the viewpoint of the performer.

The following chapter will further rationalise the significance of including the viewpoint of the performer in research by reflecting upon the thoughts and views of professional performers on the concept of performance enhancement within an artistic context.

Chapter 7

Performance Enhancement – A Performer's Perspective

7.1 Introduction

This chapter offers a review of literature on the concept of performance enhancement, reflecting upon the thoughts and views of professional performers on the topic. The narratives were collected as part of the first study (see Chapter 4 of this thesis), where respondents were asked a set of questions concerning how they perceive themselves as performers, what it means to be a performer and their understanding of performance, more generally. In relation to their thoughts on the phenomenon of performance, one question specifically asked for their views on the term performance enhancement. This question was not included in the thematic analysis of the first qualitative study (Chapter 4) as this study was concerned with performers' understanding of the phenomenon of performance only. In the present chapter, the narratives of respondents are not presented in a hierarchical model of higher-and lower-order themes (as they were in the first two qualitative research studies in Chapters 4 and 5) but rather used to highlight respondents' thoughts and views on the topic. Similar to the exploration of performance in the literature review chapter of this thesis (Chapter 2), the present chapter serves to illustrate some of the main tendencies in how the concept of performance enhancement is understood within the varying bodies of research.

In recent years, within the fields of Dance Medicine and Science and Performance Science, there has been a growing desire, among educators and researchers, to enhance performance. In light of this, the term 'performance enhancement' is frequently used within an artistic setting through the teaching of specifically devised safe dance principles and performance enhancement modules as part of a students' training. While educators and researchers advocate the need to enhance the learning, performance and artistry of the performer, the term is used without consideration of its meaning and significance in an artistic context, and rarely from the artist's point of view. In order to inform the wider debate about performance enhancement in an artistic context, investigation concerning the viewpoint of the performer is needed. It is hoped the present chapter makes some initial steps towards offering a framework for thought from the performers themselves.

Despite anecdotal evidence that suggests the term 'performance enhancement' is used in a similar way to that of sport, the term lacks consistency and warrants further clarity in an artistic setting. The decision was taken by the researcher to ask a question intended to ascertain performers' thoughts and views on performance enhancement for the following reasons. As discussed previously in this thesis, despite increasing acceptance that the performer is undoubtedly central to the performance (Hays, 2002; Rink, 2002; Small, 1998) very little research exists from the perspective of the individual. With a first-hand insight of the frequent employment of the term within the fields of Dance Medicine and Science and Performance Science, the researcher was aware of little, if any research existing on this topic from the perspective of the performer in an artistic context. In the light of the significance of the performer's own experience of dance and music performance (previously discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis), there is the possibility that the performer's experience of performance enhancement might contribute to what the term means in an artistic context. This notion is similarly shared by Williamon and Thompson (2004) who suggests that reflective practice has potential in furthering understanding in the area of performance enhancement.

The present body of literature indicates that the field of sport and exercise offers definitions of performance enhancement in relation to understanding physical and psychological accomplishment, and the improvement of a measurable outcome as a means of identifying a training effect. An awareness of how the term 'performance enhancement' operates in the activities of athletes is well understood in the field of sport and exercise and is commonly employed to describe the process of attaining 'optimal performance' (Wilmore, Costill & Kenney, 2008). The understanding of performance enhancement in relation to physical parameters, and physiological and psychological change, is one reason why the term is deemed appropriate in a sporting context. From a review of dance and music literature, it is evident that the majority of knowledge concerning the concept of performance enhancement in a dance and music setting has been gathered through observational studies that aim to measure the enhancement of a performer or the performance. In relation to the differing contexts in which the concept of performance enhancement is employed, it seems timely to seek further clarification as to how this might be construed in practice.

In spite of the common usage of the term performance enhancement, questions concerning how a performer's performance might be enhanced and the role of the individual performer in the enhancement of their artistic practice remain unanswered. As discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis, a commonality across research is an emphasis placed on 'performance' as the outcome of research studies rather than the focus of the research. Given how the term 'performance enhancement' is employed and understood within the domain of sport, it could be suggested that this is similarly the case for the concept of performance enhancement. A second contributing factor could be that the concept of performance enhancement is typically perceived as something that is intuitively recognised but not easily defined. These reasons may go some way towards explaining why little research has addressed the notion of performance enhancement from the perspective of the performer.

While attempts have been made to describe and define the phenomenon of performance enhancement within the performing arts field, the term lacks consistency and such insights are confusing due to the varying means by which it is defined and understood. In light of the above pointers, further consideration of its meaning and significance in an artistic context and how this term might be construed in practice is warranted. A review of literature on the concept of performance enhancement, reflecting upon the thoughts and views of professional performers, is deemed worthy in the present chapter.

7.2 Literature Review

Performance enhancement has been described by Wilmore et al. (2008) to mean the achievement of optimal performance, which "requires maximal physical and psychological tolerance for the stress of the activity" (p. 309). Other terms employed to describe performance enhancement include 'peak experience', understood to be a state of superior functioning and behaviour that exceeds one's predictable level of functioning, for example, gaining a personal best. In an athletic context, the term 'peak performance' is also used to describe the concept. This is deemed to be a state of superior functioning that can characterise optimal sports performances (Jackson & Roberts, 1992) and is focused on athlete function during the highest level of performance (Harrison, 2011). Traditionally characterised as operating along a

continuum, with dysfunctional performance positioned at one extreme and optimal performance positioned at the other (Kirk, 2001), it is further suggested in the literature that a performance may not be conceptualised without reference to the nature of the task and its criteria for success. In an artistic context, peak performance cannot be objectively measured by a perfect score; and subsequent emphasis must be placed on the aesthetic and technical requirements of the art form.

In a psychological context, a construct employed to describe 'peak performance' is that of Hanin's (1986) 'individualized zone of optimal functioning' (IZOF), whereby an individual achieves the optimal level of pre-performance anxiety that results in a peak performance. Research studies have also investigated 'peak performance' from a psychological perspective by exploring the mental aspects of performance enhancement. For example, studies have investigated the process, principles and techniques required to enhance a performance and the practical application of such principles associated with peak performance (Hays, 2002, Jackson & Roberts, 1992). Peak performance is seen to occur among dancers who undertake intense training with the aim of achieving 'peak performance' in front of an audience. As noted by Anderson, Hanrahan and Mallet (2014), the term 'peak performance' describes the upper limits of performance, where athletes are able to perform at their optimum levels of functioning and produce excellent performance outcomes (Harrison, 2011). The acquisition of expertise is subsequently a related concept that can help us to understand performance enhancement and as such, will be discussed later in this chapter.

Within the context of performance enhancement, sporting and artistic endeavours share many similarities, including individuals striving to succeed in their selected discipline, their physical, psychological and social properties, and the employment of medical support to enhance their performance. For example, Brinson and Dick (1996) believe there to be no disparity between the fields of sport and dance when it comes to enhancing performance, stating that "dancers are artists who are athletes and top athletes are now able to call upon a range of scientific and medical support to enhance their performance" (p. 2). Other researchers similarly share this view, advocating that scientific inquiry has the potential to optimise the dancer's potential as an elite performer by addressing issues specific to dance (Ambegaonkar, 2005; Ambegaonkar,

Caswell & Mason, 2009; Krasnow & Chatfield, 1996; Myers, 1998; Ostwald et al., 1994; Simpson, 1996).

While it is apparent from the literature reviewed that there are shared characteristics and similarities between sporting and artistic endeavours (Hays, 2002), there are also important differences. These include the physical and biomechanical characteristics of an individual and the differing ways in which disciplines are measured as a means of demonstrating success (i.e. subjective versus objective measures) to name but a few. In respect of this, it should be questioned whether the term 'performance enhancement' captures the multi-faceted nature of dance and music, and the various factors (internal and external) that lead to the enhancement of an individual's performance.

Cotterill (2015) interviewed participants from sporting, musical, performing arts and medical domains in an attempt to gain insight into the approaches employed in preparing to perform in these specific domains, and whether there are similarities in the techniques and strategies adopted. Results from this study reveal that there are similarities in both behavioural and mental strategies adopted across professions. Alongside considering the usefulness as to whether these approaches can be successfully transferred across performance domains, Cotterill acknowledges that the perspective of the performer remains under-researched. Findings from this study suggest that by exploring and contrasting the experiences of performers across different domains, research has the potential to offer a different perspective on performance enhancement. From a review of the literature, it is apparent that the disciplines of sports psychology and physiology can inform our understanding of performance enhancement in an artistic setting.

7.2.1 Training and its Impact on Performance

In both sporting and artistic endeavours, there appears to be an accepted ideal that lengthy training and an examination of practice will enhance an individual's performance. In addition, in the context of sport, intervention in practice is the basis of performance enhancement. While it can be inferred from the literature that extended training and an examination of practice will allow an individual's

performance to be 'enhanced' (Ericsson, 1996; Gallwey, 1997; Orlick, 2007), there is an assumption that 'improvement' and 'enhancement' are semantically construed to mean the same thing, which may not be the case. A second correlate that is well established in the literature and has been frequently explored as a means of understanding performance excellence and the acquisition of expertise, is the theory of deliberate practice, in which performance improvements are said to be directly ascribed to the amount of practice undertaken, as well as other personal factors, such as motivation and the importance of a support network (Ericsson, 1996; Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch- Römer, 1993).

Questions have been raised by researchers, however, about whether practice quantity alone can guarantee success. For example, Ericsson (1996) has cited deliberate practice as both a necessary component and a mediating factor in the acquisition of expertise in any given field. This research has been challenged by Detterman and Ruthsatz (1999) who proposed that the process of becoming an expert is best understood through a combination of factors, namely the effects of both environmental factors and talent on expert performance. For example, Ruthsatz, Detterman, Grisom, and Cirullo's (2008) study investigating the effects of these in both high school and conservatory-level musicians found a multi-factor view to be the best explanation for the acquisition of musical expertise. The research of Williamon and Valentine (2000) similarly questions Ericsson (1996) on deliberate practice, inferring that the definition of deliberate practice as proposed by Ericsson fails to consider the possible differences in practice content and quality.

Research investigating the phenomenon of performance within the fields of Dance Medicine and Science and Performance Science has been mainly directed towards measuring the physical demands of performance and their subsequent effects on: performance quality (Drinkwater & Klopper, 2010); aesthetic parameters of dance performance (Angioi et al., 2012; Twitchett et al., 2011); aesthetic competence (Angioi, et al., 2009) and the relationship between characteristics of movement and emotion/expression (Sawada et al., (2003). Studies within these fields have further investigated performance proficiency (Koutedakis, 2009) and performance ratings as a means of quantifying appropriate criteria for levels of expertise, technical ability and overall proficiency (Bushey, 1966; Chatfield, 1991/1992; Koutedakis et al., 2007; Raymond et al., 2005). Commonly in dance, studies have paid optimal attention and

care to the need to maintain and further improve basic technical skills in relation to their execution (such as a demi-plié) and the risk of overuse injuries (Lewton-Brain, 2009). It is evident that research studies have provided us with an informed understanding of certain characteristics, trends and capabilities directly related to training and performance.

In a sporting context, Bompa and Haff (2009) propose that "the ultimate goal of an athlete's training plan is to optimise performance in specific competitions throughout the training year" (p. 87). As such, it is assumed that the optimisation of performance can be achieved through optimising training programmes and the development of systematic training plans (Bompa & Haff, 2009; Wilmore, Costill and Kenney, 2008). In the field of dance, a number of interventional studies have investigated a variety of ways of enhancing dance training and the subsequent improvement it might have on physical performance. For instance, Koutedakis et al. (2007) investigated the effects of three months of aerobic and strength training on selected performance and fitness-related parameters in modern dance students. Findings from this study revealed that the aerobic and strength programme had a positive effect on selected dance performance and fitness-related parameters. Interestingly, the findings also revealed that the dance context alone does not provide enough opportunity for physical fitness enhancements.

Another research example in dance is that of Angioi et al. (2012), who investigated the effects of supplementary training on fitness and aesthetic competence by examining the effects of a six-week supplementary circuit training and whole-body vibration training on fitness-related parameters and Aesthetic Competence (AC) in contemporary dancers. Fitness-related parameters were assessed through anthropometry and body composition, lower body muscular power, upper body muscular endurance, aerobic fitness and an AC test comprised of 90 seconds of a choreographed contemporary dance routine. Findings revealed that a circuit and training programme demonstrated significant increases in selected fitness components and in aesthetic competence in professional and student dancers. It has also been advocated by fellow researchers (for example, Klockare et al., 2011) that optimised training is required in order for both dancers and athletes to perform well. These examples highlight the possibility that such trainable characteristics are associated

with elite performance and are aspects of performance used to enhance physical accomplishment.

In the field of music, research has similarly investigated ways of enhancing music training and its (possible) subsequent enhancement of an individual's performance. More recent approaches have included methods such as mental skills training designed to equip students with further tools to enhance performance (for example, Clark & Williamon, 2011; Williamon, 2004) and the employment of practice strategies as a means of enhancing performance (for example, Stewart & Williamon, 2008; Williamon & Valentine, 2000; Williamon, 2004). Another example of a study warranting clarity with regard to the impact their findings have on student performance is Williamon et al. (2009), who profiled music students' physical and mental fitness for performance. A suggested outcome of this study was for the findings of physical and mental profiling exercises to be employed as the basis for refining current training approaches and "tailoring and implementing novel performance enhancement initiatives" (p. 86). While this research makes progress in exploring the notion of performance enhancement specifically within a musical context, the suggestion that such knowledge can be implemented as a means of enhancing the performance of performers is assumed rather than entirely understood. Further, this study lacks clarity as to the precise details of what 'peak performance workshops' and 'performance enhancement initiatives' will entail and moreover, acknowledgement of the interaction between person and environment, which we know to be of significance.

Similar to the research undertaken in dance, although these studies in music performance research are illustrative in enabling us to gain an informed understanding of certain characteristics, trends and capabilities directly related to training and performance, they primarily consist of measurable variables devoid of the context in which they occur and in their relationship to the experience of the individual performer. With this in mind, questions concerning: how such findings directly inform us about the artistic or aesthetic components of performance; how scientific inquiry can facilitate an accomplished performance; the meaning of 'optimisation' within an artistic context and how optimisation can be achieved through systematic training plans requires further exploration.

7.2.2 Physical and Psychological Determinants

The scientific study of elite athletic performance has revealed the existence of multiple determinants of performance and the role that physical, psychological and anthropometric factors play in influencing the sporting success of an athlete (Abbott & Collins, 2004). Alongside these multiple determinants, research informs us that optimal performance is determined by a complex interaction between personal characteristics (such as physical and psychological), task characteristics (adequate preparation and achievement of task mastery required to perform a task at optimal level) and the performance setting (Oliveira & Goodman, 2004). Cotterill (2015) importantly notes that the use of pre-performance routines to enhance performance is not just confined to sport research; and that other domains, such as the performing arts have also reported positive effects after adopting this approach. Therefore, it could be inferred that the interaction of such determinants are aspects of performance used to develop physical accomplishment and that an individual's performance can be enhanced through the improvement of such means. While such determinants are commonly the basis for many performance enhancement interventions in a sport setting, it could be suggested that personal determinants need to be considered when undertaking a performance enhancement intervention in an artistic setting. Moreover, proposed interventions must be in keeping with the specific artistic challenges within the performing art domain. Although the techniques professional athletes use to sustain performance excellence have been extensively explored in athletic performance (Ericsson, 1996; Gallwey, 1997; Orlick, 2007), little attention has been given to investigating similar aspects in the life of the performing artist (Skull, 2011).

From a psychological perspective, the processes, principle and techniques required to enhance performance, and the practical application of such principles associated with attaining peak performance, have been investigated (Hays, 2002; Jackson & Roberts, 1992). For instance, in the domain of 'DanceSport' (previously referred to as Competitive Ballroom Dancing), sport psychologists commonly provide psychological skills and performance enhancement training at both recreational and competitive levels (Tremayne & Ballinger, 2008). Cognitive interventions that aim to reduce anxiety and enhance performance in athletes are similarly reported in the sport psychology literature. For example, Hoffman and Hanrahan (2012) examined the

effects of a short-term mental skills intervention on reducing music performance anxiety and enhancing performance. From the review of literature, it can be seen that psychologists have applied a range of skills used in other sports to the competitive dance environment.

Specifically, the term 'peak performance' has also been associated with the concept of 'flow' (even though it is not necessary to have a peak or optimal performance in order to experience 'flow'). Posited to be an optimal psychological state in which there is a balance between the individual's skills and the challenge level of the activity, flow allows freedom from worries about failure (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Similarly referred to as 'optimal performance' or being 'in the zone' (Young & Pain, 1999), as previously mentioned in the literature review chapters of this thesis, it is understood that an individual can experience 'flow' when engaged at full capacity in an interesting activity for its own sake and no other external purpose (Cox, 2007; Deci, 1975; Marr, 2000). 'Flow' research has subsequently provided an insight into experiences during which individuals are fully involved in the present moment (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2001).

The idea that 'flow' is a subjective experience of engaging in full capacity - a "way of expressing a sense of seemingly effortless and intrinsically joyful movement" (Cox, 2007, p. 224) - is similarly shared by Privette (1981) who describes 'peak performance' as behaviours in any activity that transcend what normally could be expected in the given situation. In terms of the individual performer experiencing peak performance, Privette (1981) further states that peak performers are characterised by a high level of clear focus (clarity and sharpness), spontaneity, expression of self and a fascination with the task at hand. Taken together, Privette (1981; 1991) describes peak performance as an occurrence of superior functioning resulting in optimal performance outcomes that exceed prior standards of performance. Rather than focusing on the person, abstracted from context, 'flow' research emphasises the dynamic system composed of person and environment, as well as the phenomenology of person-environment interactions. This is important within a performing arts context and could be one reason why a 'flow-like state' has been shown to predict long-term motivation and achievement in performing (O'Neill, 1999; Oreck, Baum & McCartney, 2000). The notion of such interaction is also of particular interest in an

artistic context as the majority of research to date implies that the 'enhancement' of a performance occurs extrinsically to the performer.

It is evident from the literature that the role of technical ability as a reliable predictor of performance excellence remains questionable (Chatfield, 2009; Curl, 1976; Schupp, 2010). The challenge by Detterman and Ruthsatz (1999) that becoming an expert is best understood through a combination of factors, raises an interesting point concerning the individual and the environment. For example, in an artistic endeavour, emphasis is very much placed on the performer, the performance and the performing environment. Although similar emphasis exists in the context of athletic performance, importance is largely placed on the performance itself, the athletic setting and the individual athlete and/or team being successful (i.e. winning). This point is of particular interest in dance, where some choreographers are choosing to work with 'non-dancers', suggesting that a successful performance may not solely rely on skilled technical performance but on the choreography and other external factors (for example, lighting, staging and music).

Lazarus (1976) created a multimodal approach to enhancing the performance of college athletes. Involving the examination of the seven modalities developed by Lazarus - behaviour, affect, sensations, imagery, cognitions, interpersonal relations and biological functioning (diet and drugs) - this multimodal approach seeks to employ intervention strategies (such as imagery and self-talk) that can be employed to enhance performance deficits and facilitate skill enhancements (Davies & West, 1991). Lazarus' (1976) study highlights a shift of focus from the individual reacting with external factors of the environment to the internal factors of the individual themselves. In contrast to the focus of this research, Hefferon and Ollis (2006) investigated the existence and the extent of the experience of 'flow' in nine professional dancers. In addition to reporting the nature of the 'flow' experience among professional dancers, the study's findings propose possible environmental conditions that can enhance or inhibit the occurrence of 'flow', namely music and choreography, costumes and make-up, stage setting, and relationship with others. In revealing that these factors influenced the dancer's performance ability and 'flow' experience, these findings further support the importance of external factors in assisting optimal experience from a 'flow' perspective (Hefferon & Ollis, 2006). Interestingly, these studies bring to

question whether our understanding of performance enhancement is dependent on the enhancement of measurable attribute(s) or a combination of internal and external factors, with indirect and direct effect.

7.3 Performer Awareness of and Attitudes towards Performance Enhancement

The following section details the narratives of professional performers in support of highlighting their thoughts and views on the topic of performance enhancement. The narratives revealed that the majority of participants consider performance enhancement to be an external entity and something that seeks to address external factors or to fix 'problems' that they might encounter in their training and/or while performing. While the nature of performance enhancement is commonly highlighted in the literature as being concerned with the enhancement of an individual's performance, participants collectively share the view that performance enhancement is something external and unnecessary. This view is captured by one participant, who suggests that the notion of performance enhancement is superficial in its construct, adding: *"I don't know, clothes?! It may seem a bit frivolous (laugh) but I think enhancement is something a bit extraneous really"* (Musician 8). This comment is of interest as it suggests that the fixing of 'problems' is not in relation to their technical ability but rather 'problems' encountered in a performing context.

The majority of respondents who are professional musicians perceive the concept of performance enhancement to be concerned with external factors or 'problems'. Interestingly, the professional dancers share a more rounded view in their understanding, suggesting that, for them performance enhancement is concerned with the piece or the 'work', more generally. This is illustrated by one respondent who shares: *"for me, it is about refining the work, whether that is technically or artistically"* (Dancer 1). A similar response is provided by another second respondent who adds:

> It is anything that allows those skills to develop, I mean, it can be physical, mental or psychological… it doesn't make you a better performer, but it gives you more access to be a better performer and could be anything that informs the body as a story teller (Dancer 6)

This response suggests that while strategies are designed to help performers reach their full potential (for instance, in the use of psychological skills training), that such strategies cannot substitute for the skills an individual might have. The differing responses between dancers and musicians possibly suggest that there is something specific concerning the performing context of musicians (perhaps in relation to what they do as a performer) that brings a different perspective to that of the dancers.

When asked to elaborate upon their thinking that 'enhancement' is concerned with the improvement of a performance, participants contextualise their understanding in relation to their own artistic practice and *being* a performer. For example, one respondent stated: *"it's about enhancing your own practice and what you do as a performer"* (Musician 7). This response echoes the research of Hays (2002) who states that a performer has a sense of professional identity being linked inextricably to their performance and that part of the performer's ability is to impress his or her individuality on the performance (Ritterman, 2002). This notion is further articulated by one respondent who notes: *"I suppose performance enhancement, for me, would be knowing how I should be in myself at all times"* (Musician 8). The emphasis placed on *being* a performer is similarly voiced by a second respondent who emphatically stated:

> For me, it isn't about enhancement itself, but about self-development, it is about finding something, and finding what's there rather than making it better and I think the word 'enhancement' suggests you are trying to bolt something on rather than allow something out (Musician 2*)*

It was also of interest for the researcher to observe the non-verbal behaviour of the respondents while they were sharing their ideas on performance enhancement, such as information expressed in gestures, facial expressions and the use of silence (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Respondents appeared to speak openly when considering themselves as a performer in relation to performance enhancement, suggesting that they contextualise their thoughts within the idea of the concept itself. However, when asked to verbalise their thoughts on the phenomenon, they tended to fold their arms and interject their responses with long pauses and periods of silence. This is evident from the response of one participant, who was clearly annoyed and frustrated at being asked to consider their understanding of this concept: *"enhancement sounds a bit too*

easy or cheap, it doesn't sound like 12 years' or 20 years' hard craft, it seems like here is a magical technique" (Musician 2).

One interpretation for a display of such frustration could be the nature of being asked to comment on an unfamiliar term such as performance enhancement. A second interpretation could be that dancers are (possibly) more aware of the term as it has more of a presence within the research field of Dance Medicine and Science and in the pedagogy of Dance Medicine and Science, more generally. Nevertheless, there was a clear consensus from all respondents that the term is one they wouldn't choose to employ as a performer. One participant captured the thoughts of others by noting: *"it's a term that you just wouldn't use in the profession (laugh) it really is an academic term"* (Dancer 1). This response is of interest as it implies that performers perceive a lack of insight into performance enhancement being something that researchers and (some) educators are concerned with rather than it being a focus for the performing artists themselves. Similar to observational studies found within the literature, this response suggests that the construct of enhancement is 'done' to the performer as a means of optimising performance from an 'outcome' perspective.

It was also evident from initial responses during interviews that the participants experienced difficulty when asked to share their thoughts and understanding of performance enhancement being concerned with external factors. This is demonstrated by one participant who added: *"you can't enhance a performance really; people try to do it by adding bright lights or film, which are distractions from what the original performance concept was, something like that is a physical enhancement"* (Musician 5). A second participant similarly shared:

> Maybe it's about having a nice venue with a nice quiet atmosphere or having a good enough light that you can see the music etc. but they are physical things. These things affect my performance, but whether that is performance enhancement, I don't know (Musician 3)

As previously referred to in the present chapter, we know from the research findings of Hefferon and Ollis (2006) that environmental conditions (such as lighting and music) can enhance or inhibit the occurrence of 'flow'. The above response further supports these findings, suggesting that characteristics of the environment are of

importance. Moreover, it is a reminder that when considering performance enhancement, it is important that we address artistic choices alongside the more commonly understood physical and psychological correlates.

Of particular interest within the narratives of participants is their understanding of performance enhancement in relation to the 'improvement' of aspects of a performance rather than the 'enhancement' of a performance as a whole. This is illustrated by one participant who added:

> Yeah, I mean, enhancement is a funny word, enhancement implies that it needs to be something else, something big like a whole performance, improvement would be better as it's what we are all continually trying to do' (Musician 5)

A second participant elaborated on this further with adding: "*while I can sort of see the value in it, I would use a different term, like 'improvement' or 'performance strategies', for when I am thinking about my own performance*" (Musician 4). Through the narratives of participants, it can be deduced that 'enhancement' is understood when objectively considering a performance from an external perspective, but that 'improvement' is employed when considering the enhancement of an individual's performance from an internal perspective. Moreover, it could be presumed from the above responses that 'enhancement' is something in addition to 'improvement', whereas improvement is something that participants already perceive that they do. This is how semantics affect interpretation of terminology, which needs to be considered when a first-person perspective is sought.

7.4 Discussion

The aim of the present chapter was to reflect on the narratives of ten professional performers concerning their thoughts and views on the concept of performance enhancement. The narratives of performers revealed mixed views in relation to their understanding of performance enhancement. These views can be separated into two groups, namely those who do not use the term and associate it to external factors (such as clothing and stage lighting) rather than the performance itself, and those who perceive it to be a set of strategies that can be applied to help enhance a performance (such as warming-up or mental preparation). Interestingly, there wasn't an obvious

music/dance divide in the views and attitudes concerning performance enhancement. As demonstrated in the earlier part of this chapter, research to date is preoccupied with aspects of the *performance* that can be enhanced, often devoid of input from the individual performer. Further accentuating the importance of a first-person perspective when seeking to better understand phenomena, the narratives of participants imply that for them, performance enhancement is about human excellence, achieved through the attributes they have as individuals rather than sole changes in the preparation and/or enhancement of training.

The narratives of participants illustrate that further clarity is needed concerning the aim of performance enhancement (whether it is to enhance aspects of 'the performance' or attributes of 'the performer'), and what is the role of the individual performer in the enhancement of their artistic practice is needed. The narratives of participants further reveal that while the term 'performance enhancement' is used in a similar way to that of sport, that the term lacks consistency and warrants further clarity in an artistic setting. Further research is needed concerning whether the term performance enhancement truly encapsulates the multidimensional nature of an artistic context and the various factors that may lead to the enhancement of an individual's performance is needed. This was demonstrated by participants collectively observing that the word 'improvement' rather than 'enhancement' should be employed. Questions concerning whether performance enhancement is about facilitating the improvement of technical skills or the on-going self-development of the performer is equally open for further investigation.

Parallels can also be drawn between the review of literature in the current chapter and the review of literature given on the phenomenon of performance in the literature review (Chapter 2). In both instances, the literature demonstrates that the meaning of performance enhancement and the phenomenon of performance is assumed rather than entirely understood, suggesting that they are open, which mitigates against an absolute definition. While in one sense such uncertainty and lack of clarity accommodates the potential for variety and change in our insight and understanding, this chapter has further highlighted the need for research to gain subjective insight from the performing dancer and musician.

The present chapter has also revealed a number of promising pedagogical implications. For instance, given the emphasis placed on delivering principles of performance enhancement as part of a students' training (i.e. through the teaching of specifically devised safe dance principles and performance enhancement modules), it is essential that educators have an informed awareness of what the term means to them and its potential application in an artistic setting. This would aid educators to consider whether they deliver the specific conceptual principles of performance enhancement to their student body, or the skills for students to apply and then enhance their own artistic practice (or perhaps both).

Secondly, when using the term 'performance enhancement' in teaching, educators could be encouraged to consider whether their understanding of the term is the same when applied to the 'performer' or a 'performance'. Such consideration will hopefully facilitate an informed approach as to *what* is to be enhanced and *how* this might be achieved. This would also aid future research, as researchers would be encouraged to consider the environment in which enhancement takes place and further, the distinction between that of the performer and the performance itself.

The value of underpinning pedagogical and research practice with subjective insight from the performer might usefully contribute to performance enhancement being viewed as constituting individual yet interactional factors, which can enhance a performance as a whole. However, it is important to acknowledge that in creating a shared view of performance enhancement, it must first be recognised that the performer's understanding of performance enhancement is likely to hold different connotations from those of the receiver. While research settings often distinguish between training and performance, it still very much assumes the performer to behave in the same in both settings. The term 'performance enhancement' and its associated principles are readily employed within the fields of Dance Medicine and Science and Performance Science. With an expectation that this will continue, the narratives of participants reveal educators and researchers need to place greater emphasis on considering what part the performer plays in the enhancement of their training and performance, the context in which the enhancement takes place, and who the enhancement is for. In moving this research forward, it would be of interest to further consider whether the term appropriately captures the multidimensional nature of an

artistic context and the various factors which may lead to the enhancement of an individual's performance.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter offers a review of literature on the concept of performance enhancement, reflecting upon the thoughts and views of professional performers on the topic. Through the narratives of participants, findings revealed that performers perceive the term 'performance enhancement' as being something achieved through the performer themselves. The present chapter serves to illustrate some of the main tendencies in how the concept of performance enhancement is understood within the varying bodies of research. The review of literature has demonstrated that understanding of performance enhancement is confusing due to the varying means by which it is defined and understood. While the literature reviewed shows the potential artistic significance of seeking to enhance performance, questions concerning *how* performance might be enhanced and further, the role of the individual performer in the enhancement of their artistic practice, need to be addressed. Put simply, before the components of performance are quantified as a basis for enhancement, a first-person perspective should be encouraged. The need for an informed awareness and understanding of this concept from the subjective viewpoint of the individual performer is illustrated through the narratives of participants, who collectively voice that enhancement is achieved through the intention of the individual performer.

This chapter goes some way towards offering a framework for deliberation about the concept of performance enhancement and makes some progress in capturing professional performers' perceptions of the term. It is hoped that the benefit of including a first-person perspective will become more widely understood and that the role of the individual performer in the enhancement of their own artistic practice will be duly considered. The following chapter will offer a review of literature on the concept of reflective practice with a view to establishing how it might usefully be applied within the artistic disciplines of dance and music.

Chapter 8: Reflective Practice: A conceptual study

8.1 Introduction and Rationale

The previous chapter (Chapter 7) offered a review of literature on the concept of performance enhancement, reflecting upon the thoughts and views of professional performers on the topic. The chapter proposed that while educators and researchers advocate the need to enhance the learning, performance and artistry of the performer, the term is used without consideration of its meaning and significance in an artistic context. In sum, the chapter made some initial steps towards offering a framework for deliberation concerning the wider debate about performance enhancement in an artistic setting. The starting point for the present chapter was a similar observation among performers, educators and researchers, that reflective practice is a universal practice that all performers undertake at all levels (student, pre-professional and professional), although this is not always the case. The body of literature on reflective practice reveals its use through various fields of professional practice and education, of which artistic practice is one.

Reflective practice is regarded a key element of artistic practice, and educators and researchers commonly advocate the need for performers to include it as part of their metier. Frequently used in educational settings, students are encouraged to identify and reflect on an aspect of their training and/or performance that worked well or may require further improvement. This thinking predominantly comes from practitioners/educators who value the use of reflective practice but perhaps struggle to engage their students in doing so. Findings from the three studies within this thesis (Chapters 4 to 6) reveal the importance performers' place on reflection and the notion of being reflective as a performer. For instance, findings from the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) suggest that performers should be encouraged to consider and reflect on what performance means to them, as well as their roles as 'performers' from the viewpoints of the 'performer', an 'individual' and a 'person'. It was proposed by the researcher that such encouragement might help performers to contextualise their experiences of performing and understanding of performance in relation to themselves. Findings from the third study (Chapter 6) similarly highlight the importance placed upon maintaining a reflective approach. This was demonstrated by the only statement in the questionnaire that was answered by all participants in agreement, namely that: 'as a performer, it is important to have an understanding of

what performance means to me'. While we have a shared awareness concerning the value of reflective practice in an artistic context, this is primarily without consideration as to *how* reflective practice might be embodied as part of a performer's practice and performance.

The suggestion that reflective practice might be usefully embodied by the performer is alluded to in the literature review chapter of this thesis (Chapter 2). The expansion of interest into embodiment in dance and music reveals an acknowledgement, by researchers, of the significance of embodiment in relation to a sense of self and understanding of lived experience. For something to be embodied, it must be related to something that the mind has also understood through some form of bodily experience (Martin, 1983). The value placed on performance as an embodied activity suggests that the notion of 'embodying' is also a key concern for performers. What has unfolded from the three studies (Chapters 4 to 6) is that professional performers view themselves as embodied entities, evincing a strong sense of individuality. This sense of 'individual' was central in the narratives of participants throughout the two qualitative studies and was evident in the three higher-order themes of *Process, Performer and Context* in the first study. Put simply, the embodied experience of a performance is very much dependent on the performer's ability to self-reference it in relation to themselves. This sentiment is supported by the literature where Csordas (1994) argues that "embodied experience is the starting point for analyzing [sic] human participation in a cultural world" (p. 135). The researcher proposes that professional performers might usefully employ reflective practice as a vehicle through which to embody their practice and performance.

A second rationale for the present chapter stemmed from a review of literature (previously outlined in Chapter 2) that revealed a move towards an interest in the subjective awareness of performers within the qualitative research domain. Studies in dance and music that have been directed towards the self-reflection of the performer, have seen performers encouraged to share their subjective views and experiences (for example, Carter, 1998; Guptill, 2011). Other examples have focused on a performer's self-reflection on the processes and outcomes in performance or have connected the performer's insight to a specific performance. The above examples further rationalise the need for the inclusion of the performer's perspective by informing us of the *what*

of their reflections in relation to their thoughts and views on performances. However, studies fail to consider the *how* and *why* in relation to how the process of reflective practice was undertaken and what significance it had in contributing to their artistic practice, more widely. One reason for this could be that such reflections are impossible to deconstruct and, as a result, more structured processes of reflection are more commonly encouraged.

The importance of asking performers to reflect is noted by Carter (1998) who suggests that a self-reflective process is enabled through localising knowledge within the individual's first-person perspective. Findings from the three studies (Chapters 4 to 6) support this view and reveal that the essence of the performer's experience is dependent on their ability to reflect the way in which they experience performance subjectively. The present research has demonstrated that by providing performers with the opportunity to talk freely and openly of what is of importance to them, rich insight into their worlds as performers can be gained. Participant responses further demonstrate the benefit of performers having the opportunity (and possibly structures) through which they can articulate their own practice. For example, in the second study (Chapter 5), Musician 4 commented: *"with music, it's an abstraction of all the art forms, it's an abstraction and something you cannot objectify".*

As previously noted, the literature reveals a prevalence of dance and music performance research conducted with student participants (Skull, 2011). A strength of this thesis is that research was undertaken with professional performers, and as a result, findings can be usefully related to a professional context. Bassot (2013) states that the word 'professional' infers (among other things) a body of knowledge in relation to a particular profession, and with an aim to improve individual practice, reflecting and engaging in continuing professional development. Although the importance of undertaking research with professional performers is readily advocated by the researcher, on reflection, the recommendations for application made in the first two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) are primarily in relation to student performers. The value of open dialogue in allowing the professional performer to reflect was evident in the two qualitative studies. For example, this was illustrated by one participant who shared:

> I had a really long collaboration where there was lots of dialogue between what it means to be a performer and the clarity of this. What I found in that working relationship is that we could actually speak about these roles, to learn and to question (Dancer 4).

In proposing that professional performers might usefully employ reflective practice to embody their practice and performance, the present chapter focuses primarily on reflective practice in relation to the professional dancer and musician.

Inspired by the reasons outlined above, the aim of this chapter is to offer a review of literature on the concept of reflective practice with a view to establishing how it might usefully be embodied by performers. To this end, research from the domains of education, sociology and artistic practice will be drawn upon. In the first section, key definitions and models of reflection commonly used in professional practice will be reviewed. Alongside a review of relevant literature, this chapter draws upon theories and ideas on the concept of reflective practice, as well as a range of theoretical and pedagogical models within the domains of education and the arts. In the second section, the actual practice of the concept will be reviewed alongside the discussion of pedagogical and applied recommendations for reflective structures that could be used by performers, educators and researchers alike. Ways through which theories of reflective practice and practical applications might contribute to a performer's ongoing learning and development will also be explored. Throughout the present chapter, findings from the three studies (Chapters 4 to 6) will be used to serve as examples of reflective practice in an artistic context. Lastly, building upon similar recommendations made in the first two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5), suggestions are made for how those in educational and professional performing settings might nurture effective reflective practice.

To understand whether reflective practice might be embodied by the performer, the researcher asked the following questions:

1. What constitutes reflective practice?

2. What is the relevance of reflective practice to dancers and musicians?

3. What is the role of reflective practice in the context of dance and music performance?

8.2 Literature Review

Firstly, it is of relevance to consider a workable definition of the term 'reflective practice' and to review the literature on the topic. The literature reveals there are multiple definitions and conceptual frameworks that have been suggested for 'reflection', 'reflective practice', and 'reflective professional' (Kinsella, 2009; Loughran, 2000; Procee, 2006). Reflective practice is used throughout various fields of professional practice and education, and that include being widely adopted by nursing, health and social care professions (Kinsella, 2009). The importance of reflective practice is frequently noted in the literature and, in some professions, a reflective capacity is regarded as an essential characteristic and a defining feature of competence (Loughran 2000; Tembrioti & Tsangaridou 2014). However, while this is regarded to be the case, Loughran suggests there is a tendency to adopt reflective practice falsely as a means of rationalising existing practice.

The principles of reflective practice are appropriate for individuals in a range of sectors: health, social work, business, education and community sectors, to name but a few. Most definitions have their roots in concepts originated by Dewey (1933), Van Manen (1977) and Schön (1983; 1987). The term, first coined by philosopher Schön, has gathered the attention of practitioners of professional education and practice (Kinsella, 2009). Schön (1983; 1987) describes reflective practice as a critical assessment of behaviour and a process in which thought, and action are integrally linked. In short, the conceptualisation of reflection starts with an experience and moves on to how we learn from actually doing it (i.e. in practice).

The ideas of the philosopher Dewey very much informed the work of Schön and provided a basis for the concept of reflective practice to emerge. Dewey (1933) explained reflection as being concerned with the active and careful consideration of knowledge to a directly experienced situation. He believed that reflection was an important aim of education and that reflective thinking had the potential to move individuals away from routine thinking and to consider the actions of things often taken for granted. The philosophical principles of Dewey made a distinction between two forms of teaching action, namely the 'routine' and the 'reflective'. The routine is very much directed by tradition and authority and is impulsive on the part of the

reflector, and the reflective, is concerned with more persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge (Dewey, 1933).

Ghaye and Ghaye (1998) define reflective practice as "a process that involves a reflective turn. This means returning to look again at our taken-for-granted values, professional understandings and practices" (p. 16). In general, reflective practice is understood as the process of learning through and from experience in order to gain new insights of self-and/or practice (Bassot 2013; Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985; Jarvis, 1994; Mezirow, 1981). As noted by Finlay (2008), reflective practice "involves the individual practitioner being self-aware and critically evaluating their own responses to practice situations" (p. 1). These definitions suggest that reflective practice allows the individual to be placed at the fore in their wider practice and can assist in helping them to think about their experiences in different ways. They further highlight how bringing the viewpoint of the performer to the fore might contribute more generally to a wider understanding about components of dance and music performance.

It is evident from the literature reviewed that reflective practice carries multiple meanings that range from the idea of professionals engaging in solitary introspection to that of engaging in critical dialogue with others (Finlay, 2008). As described by Finlay "some may embrace it occasionally in formal, explicit ways or use it more fluidly in ongoing, tacit ways" (p. 2). The literature also suggests that some practitioners may refer to reflective practice as embracing a thinking approach to experience and some perceive it to be indulgent and too much time spent considering your own thoughts. Whatever the context, it would appear from the literature that the onus stays on the individual practitioner to reflect upon and evaluate their own practice. This gives further significance to the present thesis, concerned with seeking a first-person perspective from the performers themselves.

Despite the popularity and widespread adoption of reflective practice, Kinsella (2009) highlights a problem frequently raised in the literature, concerning the lack of conceptual clarity surrounding the term 'reflective practice', and the notion of reflection itself (Procee, 2006). Kinsella's (2009) paper addresses this by analysing the epistemology of reflective practice through philosophical influences within the

theory. While this paper contributes to our understanding of the philosophical underpinnings and epistemological assumptions of Schön's theory and application of reflective practice, it is in relation to nursing, health and social care professions. It therefore lacks meaning and clarity in the application and transferability of such principles to other contexts, such as the performing arts. Fook et al. (2006) and Ghaye and Ghaye (1998) share this sentiment, noting that what is understood by 'reflective practice' in different contexts varies considerably. Finlay (2008) goes one step further and argues that in addition to this variation, contradictory understandings of reflective practice can even be found within the same discipline. From a review of literature, it would seem that the term 'reflective practice' is in danger of becoming a 'one size fits all' term (Bleakley, 1999) and that while it includes a variety of approaches, these are unaddressed both conceptually and practically. There is also a lack of clarity concerning whether reflective practices should be concerned with reflecting on negative or positive experiences. While Ghaye (2011) stresses that positive experiences should be focused on in order to avoid what he calls 'deficit-based actions', Bassot (2013) states that the key is to maintain a balance between the two approaches, as both will provide opportunities for growth and development.

The discussion thus far has revealed reflective practice as a desirable facet of professional practice. This is echoed by Finlay (2008) who notes that the "foundational dimension of professional action and life-long learning is often taken as self-evident" (p. 10). However, some researchers stress the cultural and personal risks involved with reflective practice and advocate that not everyone will feel empowered (Brookfield, 1994; Finlay, 2008). Finlay outlines some of the problems concerned with applying reflective practice in relation to ethical, professional, pedagogic and conceptual areas. Ethical concerns are highlighted as relating to confidentiality, informed consent, rights to privacy and professional relationships. Given the emphasis placed on individuals to reflect on how they feel through models of reflection, it is important to consider how willing and comfortable an individual is to reflect, particularly in settings where an external party might read the reflections (i.e. peers, teachers, professionals).

Professional and conceptual concerns are presented by Finlay (2008) in consideration of the emotional impact that reflection can have on the individual. While the positive

impact of reflective practice is frequently noted in the literature, it is suggested that striving for self-improvement might have a negative impact on the individual and feelings of self-disapproval and self-rejection may emerge (Quinn, 2000). In light of this, in a professional performing setting, it might prove useful to consider whether reflective practice might potentially devalue performing experiences rather than promoting them. With this in mind, the potential risks involved in individuals being asked to engage in reflection should be reflect duly considered (Finlay, 2008).

Another concern presented by Finlay is in relation to the compulsory element in reflective practice. As has already been discussed in the present chapter, a recent trend in Higher Education has seen the inclusion of reflection and reflective practice models in both teaching and assessment, which can see "reflections end up being superficial, strategic and guarded" (Finlay, 2008 p. 14). Similar to the previous point concerning the potential emotional impact of engaging in reflective practice, pressuring individuals to reflect might also discourage them from honest reflections. The final area of concern in relation to pedagogic areas will be discussed later in this chapter.

While reflection is encouraged in professional education and training contexts, confusion among practitioners and educators in relation to their applied interpretations has been widely remarked upon in the literature (see Mackintosh, 1998; McLaughlin, 1999; Newman, 1999). These authors suggest that "reflective practice is in a danger of becoming an empty, meaningless phrase that at once means everything and nothing" (Kinsella, 2009 p.3). In an educational setting, there is an apparent need for teachers and educators to stimulate their students' ability to reflect on their learning and to enhance their critical thinking (Tembrioti & Tsangaridou, 2014). However, as a result, the term remains elusive and in addition, "the literature scarcely provides direction on how to determine, facilitate and evaluate reflection in practice" (Tembrioti & Tsangaridou, 2014 p. 9). These authors also suggest that interpretations of reflective practice are applied in a myriad of ways in both educational and practice environments. This is also true for artistic settings, where researchers, educators and practitioners frame reflective practice and its applications in distinct ways.

Dance educators' perceptions of reflective practices were reported in a number of projects, where findings suggested that dance educators considered reflective practice

to be an important and valued component of dance in Higher Education. Leijen, Lam, and Simons (2008) conducted a study to explore the pedagogical practices of reflection. The perceptions of dance teachers, who taught practical courses in dance academies in the Netherlands, were examined and findings revealed that they believed students' reflective thinking could be classified through the creation of a descriptive model of reflective practice. This model includes five different classifications of judgements, to use by educators to support their students' reflections. A second study by Leijen, Lam, Wildschut, and Simons (2009) further explored the perceptions of dance teachers, this time concerning the difficulties students may encounter while carrying out reflection activities in practical dance classes. Similar to the first example, findings from this study proposed practical measures (i.e. video recording to help students reflect on their practice) in enhancing students' reflection. Whilst these studies are beneficial in revealing the perspectives of teachers using reflective practices in a dance training environment, they tell us very little about the wider role of reflective practice in a dance context. These examples of research are also interested in the perspectives of teachers and educators and as a result, further insight from students undertaking the reflective practice is warranted.

A similar uncertainty is evident in the discourse surrounding reflective practice in learning and teaching. Over the last decade, a focus has been driven towards reflection and reflective practice in an attempt to create pedagogical and assessment strategies that link theory and practice (Kinsella, 2009; Loughran, 2000; Procee, 2006). Zeichner (1994) raises this issue within the teaching profession, noting that a range of beliefs about teaching and learning have become incorporated into the discourse about reflective practice. In Tembrioti and Tsangaridou's (2014) review of reflective practice in dance, they provide an overview of different perspectives regarding theory and research on the concept. They similarly argue that despite its wide acceptance, the notion of reflective practice remains elusive, has different meanings and is used in a myriad of ways in educational and professional settings. Despite this lack of common understanding, reflection and reflective practice have been used extensively in education and in recent years, curricula have included such models in an effort to develop more successful programs (Tembrioti & Tsangaridou, 2014). The literature subsequently reveals that frameworks have been developed to describe and explore teachers' reflections in different contexts, and models have been developed to

encourage student learning (some of which will be explored in the present chapter). Tembrioti and Tsangaridou further advocate that one way of helping learners to reflect is for practitioners to become aware of reflective teaching and how the principles of reflection might be usefully applied to their own teaching practices and their wider understanding of reflective practice.

As previously alluded to in this chapter, research studies in dance and music have been directed towards an interest in the subjective awareness of performers within the qualitative research domain. While this has seen a move in performers being encouraged to share their subjective views and experiences of phenomena, Carter (1998) suggests that performers (in the example of this research 'dancers') are reluctant to share their views and experiences and as a result, are unwilling to be self-reflective. A finding of interest from the first two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) was that all performers were, in fact, willing and able to reflect on their views and experiences on performance (to different degrees). Throughout the narratives of both studies, there was a sense from all performers that they had found being interviewed a positive experience. The argument provided by Carter (1998), alongside the degree to which performers were willing to reflect in the present study, brings to question whether performers have differing capabilities in their ability to self- reflect.

Schön (1983) believes that as a professional becomes more expert in their practice, they develop the skills of being able to monitor and adapt their practice more instinctively. In contrast, he suggests that novice practitioners are drawn towards following procedures that they are inclined to apply automatically. Findings from the second qualitative study (Chapter 5) illustrated this point, revealing that performers who perform more regularly found it easier to articulate their experiences and understanding as they were able to verbalise how performing made them feel. It would appear that performers are more productively engaged in reflection at the higher levels of expertise, which suggests that there is a relationship between extent of the ability to reflect and the expertise of the performer. This is an area that the researcher aims to investigate further following completion of this present research.

As outlined in the previous literature review (Chapter 2), every performance requires a series of physical and expressive capacities before it can be performed. Holmes and

Holmes (2013) state that the individual performer has a combination of abilities and characteristics that are unique to the individual. In addition to the technical, expressive and artistic skills that performers learn, the researcher proposes that the performer could develop other attributes that might contribute to their success as a performer, one of which could be an ability to embody their reflection. The view that professionals should be more reflective is also frequently noted in the literature. For example, Reid and Bassot (2011) note that "many practitioners wish to strive for excellence, and reflective practice offers one key means by which this can be achieved" (p. 107).

In the context of dance, Pakes (2003) further posits that the aptitude of a performance is in the practical and reflective understanding and reasoning that are part of dancing. It is also suggested by Doughty et al. (2008) that it is essential for students to develop concepts of dance in relation to their skills - reflective practice being an example of this. In music, Williamon (2004) suggests that for accomplished performance, those performers who achieve greater control of their mental and physical states can surpass expectations of their potential as artists. In respect of this, it could be argued that an ability to reflect might usefully be employed by a performer in order to achieve an accomplished performance, and in gaining a deeper understanding of themselves both as a person and an artist. Doughty and Stevens (2002) also share this sentiment and argue that reflective thought and judgement are central to the artistic process. In their study, which investigated the development of talent in professional dancers, Critien and Ollis (2006) suggest that self-awareness and reflection are fundamental to the ability to recognise an opportunity to transfer skills from one environment to another. In the specific context of performance enhancement (explored in the previous chapter) it is also suggested that reflective practice has the potential to further our understanding of the concept in an artistic setting (Williamon 2004). This further highlights the different domains and concepts in which reflective practice could be applied.

Bacon and Midgelow (2014) further advocate a need for the performer to become more aware of the internal and subjective processes needed to achieve the objective of a performance and to become more in touch with the process that allows a performer to become a performer. The notion of self-awareness, in relation to reflective practice,

is similarly advocated by Bassot (2013) who suggests that to examine your practice in a thorough and thoughtful way, a high level of self-awareness is essential, achieved in part through self-evaluation. Findings from the present research have shown that performers undertake a continuous process of self-awareness, which proved beneficial in locating their experiences and understanding in a first-person perspective. Findings from the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) also revealed that emphasis was placed on being 'self-aware'. Reflective practice could therefore be a useful tool in helping performers to become more self-aware as the properties of reflection see "reflective practitioners think about their experiences in practice and view them as opportunities to learn" (Kinsella, 2001 p. 197). From the body of literature, it can be assumed that reflection is a fundamental tool "which enables educators to further enhance their expertise and teaching abilities" (Tembrioti & Tsangaridou, 2014 p.7). This suggestion is in line with the applied and future research recommendations made in the first and second qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) where the researcher suggests that performers and training students should be given the opportunity to reflect in relation to who they are as individuals.

It is also implied in the above review of literature that reflective practice is concerned with reflecting on what has been learnt from an experience. In an attempt to further explore the role of reflective practice in a dance and music context, it is important to consider it in relation to approaches to learning. Learning is a metacognitive process, which looks to make new knowledge, skills and conceptual frameworks available (Pollard, 2005). Learning takes place in a specific context and is arguably paradoxical; it can sometimes appear to be straightforward (given that we continually 'learn' in our everyday life) however, when we encounter difficulties with learning, it can heighten our awareness of how we learn. Furthermore, learning is a social process, which gives recognition to the importance of social interaction and support, and which views the 'learner' as a social constructor of knowledge (Pollard, 2005). Osterman and Kottkamp (2004) advocate that "reflective practice facilitates learning by fostering a critical assessment of practice" (p.32). Bassot (2013) further notes that how an individual engages with reflective practice is dependent upon their preference of learning style as some lend themselves to individuals who are more aware to reflect. In light of this, it is useful to explore theoretical models of experiential learning and how they might usefully facilitate a performer's process of reflective practice.

8.2.1 Theoretical Models of Experiential Learning

Many writers on the subject of reflective practice use cycles or models to describe how individuals learn from experience and how such learning can be reflected upon. A number of models of reflection have been advanced in different fields of professional practice and education, some of which will be included here. Finlay (2008) suggests that while models vary in their levels of explanation, prescription and reflexivity, they share a focus on reflection being essentially retrospective. It is suggested by Bassot (2013) that such models can enable us to better understand the process of reflective practice as "reflection refers to thinking processes that we engage in as learners and professionals" (p. 66). Theoretical models of experiential learning could therefore prove useful in a performer reflecting following a performing experience.

The first model is Driscoll's (2007) 'What?' Model, which can be used to help form a plan of action when learning from an experience. This model consists of three steps: What? So What? Now What? and can be seen in Figure 8.1. It is suggested in the literature that to practice reflectively, you need to be prepared to question why it happened and to consider it from your own and other perspectives. While this model enables the individual to describe what has happened, it fails to encourage the individual to undertake any form of reflection in relation to their role in the experience. The importance of considering their role in experience was evident from the present research, where performers were concerned with their role as performer in their wider understanding of performance. This is an important point to think about when considering its use with performers, especially given the findings from the present research in relation to professional performers focusing on their role in their experiences.

| Step 1: What? | > | This encourages the individual to write a description of an event that has happened in their professional practice. For example, what was my reaction to the recent performance and what was my role in this performance? |

| Step 2: So What? | > | This involves undertaking an analysis of the event by reflecting on selected aspects of it. For example, how do I feel about that phrase/sequence I have been practicing for the performance? |

| Step 3: Now What? | > | This asks the individual to devise a number of proposed actions following the experience and in light of what has been learned. For example, what points of improvement can I take away from the performance? |

Chapter 8: Figure 8.1: Driscoll's (2007) 'What?' Model

A second model of experiential learning that might prove useful in reflective practice is Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle. Unlike the first model that provides a single snapshot of reflection, this model can be used for 'in the moment' reflections, either directly before, during or after a performance and over a period of time (Bassot 2013). Studies in dance and music have previously asked performers to reflect directly before, during or after a performance (for example, the research of Clark et al., 2014). The inclusion of this model within dance and music research might be of interest, especially to researchers who aim to capture different reflections.

Kolb's cycle also provides insights into how we learn from experience by reviewing a concrete experience through reflective observation. Reflective observation is then

followed by abstract conceptualisation where new thoughts and ideas emerge about the experience, which are then tried out in the active experimentation stage (Bassot, 2013). The four stages found within the cycle allow an individual to not only reflect on an experience but to make active changes ready for the next experience. This cycle can be seen in Figure 8.2.

Active Experimentation

Concrete Experience

Abstract Conceptualisation

Reflective Observation
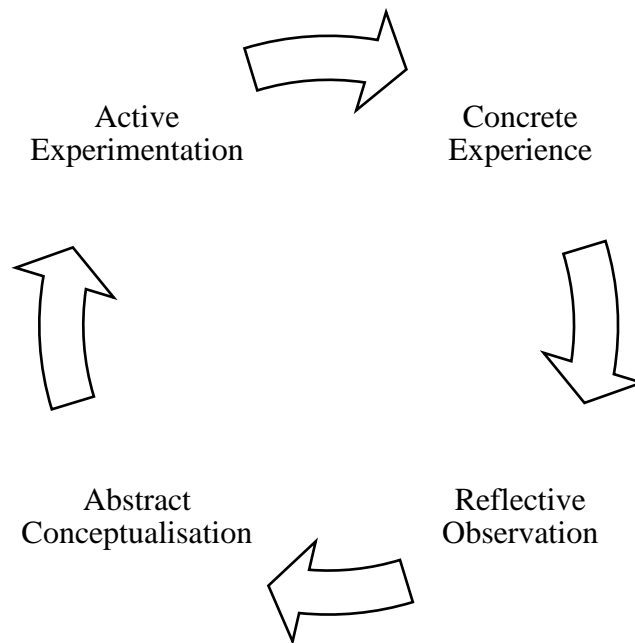
Chapter 8: Figure 8.2: Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle.

This above cycle would be valuable for performers as it does not separate cognition (mental process of acquiring new information) from emotional responses. It also promotes discussion of the underlying factors that shape individual views, values and beliefs (Bassot 2013). The use of this cycle would be of relevance for performers, as we know from participant responses in the present research that they want to be perceived as a 'whole' rather than by the individual attributes they might possess (as commonly referred to in the literature). The experiential learning aspect of the cycle would subsequently allow the performer to make sense of all learning (informal and formal) and to perhaps reflect on their practice in its entirety, rather than focusing specifically on one aspect, as is the case in Driscoll's model. Lastly, employing Kolb's cycle over a period of time would be useful for performers to reflect on both the

process and execution of a performance. This is echoed in the findings from the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5), where narratives reveal that performers place importance on both the process and execution of a performance. The narratives of participants in the first study (Chapter 4) also provided insight into the shared view that performance is a process, intertwined with the individual as a human being, alongside that of being a performer.

In critique of Kolb's Learning Cycle, Jarvis (1994) suggests that as individuals we do not always learn from experience, something he coins as 'non-learning'. In his writing on reflection, he argues that 'non-learning' can happen because we can 'presume' we know what to do because we have done it before. The notion of presumption is one of interest in an artistic setting and might be a reason why researchers, educators and performers often presume reflective practice is actively undertaken by performers. Jarvis further argues that we fail to always learn from an experience due to 'non-consideration', namely a lack of response to a learning opportunity, because we consider it not to be necessary, and 'rejection', where we make a conscious rejection of aspects of the experience we could have learned from. This thinking is in contrast to the previous two cycles that suggest we learn in every situation.

As previously mentioned, the term 'reflective practice' was first coined by Schön (1983) and his work has been central in the way reflective practice has been applied to both professional training and education (Finlay, 2008). Concerned with facilitating the development of reflective practitioners, Schön created two concepts of reflection: 'reflection-on-action' and 'reflection-in-action'. Reflection-on-action involves a process of looking back on experience, and it attempts to describe and analyse what has happened with a view to improving future practice. The capacity to reflect-on-action sees the individual engage in a process of continuous learning, considered to be a defining characteristic of professional practice (Bassot, 2013). This type of reflection sees practitioners mentally construct reflection to analyse action and events (i.e. after the event).

Reflection-in-action is defined by Schön to be the capacity to examine experience and the process of interpreting and analysing problems during action (i.e. during the event). This type of reflection encourages the individual to consider their own and

other perspectives, alongside identifying areas for development. As stated by Schön (1987), "reflection-in-action is where we may reflect in the midst of action without interrupting it" (p .26). However, it is important to note that in each of these examples, reflection occurs both in and on actions that occur in practice. Both types of reflection could therefore be useful for performers as they aim to connect an individual to their feelings rather than just following a set of procedures. Schön's two concepts of reflective practice can be found in Figure 8.3.

Reflection in action	Reflection on action
•Experiencing •Thinking on your feet about what you're doing •Thinking on your feet about what to do next •Acting straight away	•Thinking about something that has happened •Thinking what you would do differently next time •Taking your time

Chapter 8: Figure 8.3: Schön's (1983) two concepts of reflective practice: reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action.

The above model allows the individual to reflect and consider experience throughout everyday life, rather than focusing on a particular event (although it can also be used for this). In reflection-on-action, Bassot (2013) and Osteman and Kottkamp (2004) suggest that it is conducive to examine a particular experience, which they refer to as a 'critical incident analysis'. This is where a particular problem or challenge can be interpreted in a particular context rather than as a routine occurrence. In the context of reflective practice in teaching, Pollard (2005) similarly suggests that critical reflection of our own practice should become an integral part of the way by which we build professional expertise. Reflection-on-action would be a useful type of reflection for performers to undertake as it is suggested in the literature that it is personal to an individual. Bassot (2013) also advocates the use of 'reflection-on-action' because it can prevent reflective practice from becoming too routine. This might be of relevance to performers (both student and professional) given the amount they perform, and the expectation often placed upon them to reflect.

Schön's work has, however, drawn criticism from researchers who raise questions concerning the adoption of his work and the way in which it has been applied (Finlay 2008). For example, Eraut (2004) and Boud and Walker (1998) question its clarity, suggesting that it does not have a coherent view and ignores the critical feature of the context of reflection. Such critique is potentially why conceptual confusion has been raised, and continues to exist, surrounding reflective practice. This point also draws comparison to the ideas posited by Kinsella (2009) who suggests that one reason why the theory is open to a wide range of interpretations is related to the broad nature of epistemological assumptions that underlie it. This further highlights the scope for a more critical and reflective exploration of reflective practice.

Thus far, the present chapter has examined a range of theoretical approaches and practical issues in relation to reflective practice. A cycle of interest is Bassot's (2012) Integrated Reflective Cycle (this can be seen in Figure 8.4). The reason for the inclusion of this cycle is that it draws upon principles from the previously discussed cycles and is useful to compare and contrast different theories. Bassot (2013) advocates a questioning approach to reflective practice, suggesting that critical incident analysis is an excellent way of exploring what was done and why. This critical approach may be helpful for performers as it could allow them to take a questioning approach to their professional practice and apply their reflections to their practice. The questions posed by Bassot around the outside of the cycle are also useful in prompting further thinking and contextualisation of experience.

What happened?
(Describe the experience)
What were the contributory
factors?

The
Experience

What would I do next
time in a similar
situation?
How could I do better
next time?
What will I now
consider for next time?
What other strategies
could I adopt to move
forward?

Preparation

Reflection
in Action

Reflection on
action

What was I trying to
achieve?
Why did I do what I did?
What assumptions did I
make?
What were the
consequences?
How did I feel?
How did the client feel
and how could I tell?

Theory

How has this contributed to my
professional knowledge?
What have I learned that I can
apply to similar situations?

Chapter 8: Figure 8.4: Bassot's (2012) Integrated Reflective Cycle.

The final cycle to review in consideration of its possible use with performers is Gibb's (1998) Reflective Cycle (this can be seen in Figure 8.5). This is a practical model for reflective practice whereby participants are encouraged to make constructive reflections. Different from the other cycles outlined in the present chapter, Gibb's urges the individual to engage in analysis in order to make sense of what happened. The process of acknowledging and externalising feelings might prove useful in reflective practice being embodied by the performer. The cycle has been adopted as a way to facilitate reflections and proposes that theory and practice can enrich one another. While similarities can be found with Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle, namely that they both suggest learning from experience in a particular order, the present cycle is more detailed and takes feelings into consideration. Findings from the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) demonstrate that performers were able to reflect on their experiences and understanding in relation to how performing made them feel. The inclusion of feelings is positive in reflective practice as it encourages the reflector to be critically reflective (Bassot, 2013). This is also important as we all have emotional responses to situations and reflecting on how we feel about an experience might usefully contribute to paying attention to how we feel in the present moment. The notion of critical reflection is one of interest in relation to level of expertise, as alluded to in the present chapter. Loughran (2000) suggests that learners need to be developmentally ready to engage in critical reflection and that some may not be able to do so. While Gibb's (1998) model has proven to be useful in facilitating constructive reflections, Finlay (2008) argues that a broader and more critical reflexive approach is needed.

Action plan
If it arose
again what
would you
do?

Description
What
happened?

Conclusion
What else
could you
have done?

Feelings
What were
you thinking
and feeling?

Analysis
What sense
can you
make of the
situation

Evaluation
What was
good and bad
about the
experience?
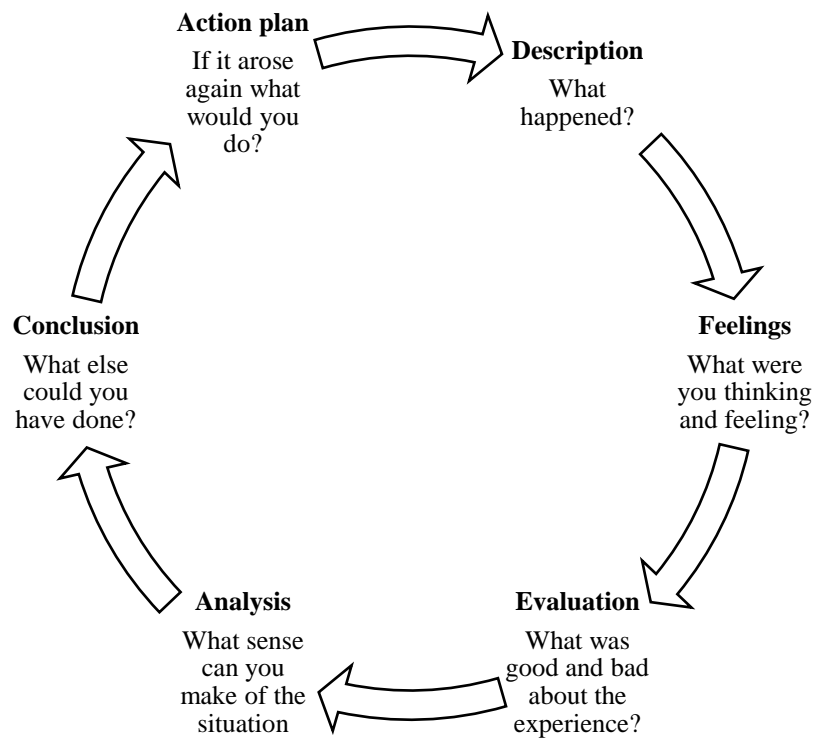
Chapter 8: Figure 8.5: Gibb's (1998) Reflective Cycle.

8.3 Pedagogical and Applied Recommendations for Reflection

Throughout this chapter a range of theoretical approaches and practical issues in relation to reflective practice have been explored. From a review of literature, it is suggested that performers should be encouraged to learn from their performing experiences by evaluating them in relation to themselves. This was recognised in the findings of the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) where narratives revealed that being able to reflect, enabled the performer to contextualise more richly their experiences of performing and their understanding of performance in relation to themselves and the wider performing context.

In an attempt to encourage performers to use reflection as a means through which to embody their practice, it would seem useful to equip performers (at any level) with the skills to become a reflective learner. This could be achieved by establishing objectives of what the performer is wanting to reflect on and encouraging this to be in relation to what is of relevance and interest to them. As previously suggested earlier in the chapter, the level of expertise must also be taken into consideration, as this may

impact the extent to which a performer can reflect. In light of this, educators and researchers should be deterred from thinking that reflective practice is undertaken in the same way across different levels of expertise. Loughran (2000) shares this view and suggests that those who are novice to reflective practice should be encouraged to engage with it through their own analysis and experience rather than being told what to do. This is further echoed by Boud and Walker (1998) who argue that reflective practice and reflection can too quickly become a routinized and mechanical process. Finlay (2008) suggests that different models are needed for different levels of expertise and "models need to be applied selectively, purposefully, flexibly and judiciously" (p.10). Models which recognise different levels of reflection might therefore be useful when applied to different levels of expertise and needs. For example, an individual could be encouraged to use more descriptive models (i.e. Driscoll's model) and then progress to models which require more critical reflection and acknowledgment of individual feelings.

As previously mentioned in this chapter, there are pedagogic concerns in relation to developmental readiness for undertaking reflective practice and the apprehension that forcing students to reflect may prove counterproductive. In an education setting, Finlay (2008) suggests that a focus on developing skills in relation to critical analysis and reflexivity might usefully encourage students to engage with the principles of reflective practice and to think intuitively and creatively. In a professional performing setting, developing skills in self-awareness, critical thinking and reflexivity might prove useful as a means for performers to embody reflective practice in relation to their own artistic practice and development. From the review of literature and examples of theoretical models included in the present chapter, it is evident there is no 'one size fits all' model and that it is the individual who needs to decide how they are going to reflect and what they are going to reflect on. This view is shared by Bassot (2013) who suggests that we need to be mindful that any kind of reflection involves an element of choice, on the part of the individual.

Another consideration in relation to the individual performer and reflective practice is the identification of individual learning styles. In Honey and Mumford's (2000) documentation of learning styles, they suggest that there are four distinct styles (activists, reflectors, theorists and pragmatists). This information might prove useful

for educators as asking students to consider and reflect upon their learning styles might be a helpful starting point. With an awareness of their preferred learning style, an individual could skip certain parts of reflective practice and/or focus on different points in the reflective cycles. A process of reflective practice that is designed to be multidimensional might also be beneficial given the multidimensional viewpoints of the performer that were revealed in the findings of the present research.

Bacon and Midgelow (2014) note that another potential difficulty with reflective practice is how to get performers to articulate and document their reflections. It is suggested in the literature that less-structured methods allow a reflective account of the performer's true thoughts and feelings, and this was certainly the case in the findings from the second study (Chapter 5). In capturing reflective accounts, Bassot (2013) advocates the use of writing reflectively and notes that this can lead to a significantly deeper level of reflection than thinking alone. Bolton (2010) and Brockbank and McGill (2006) also discuss the benefits of keeping a reflective journal (often a requirement within Higher Education training) and its potential to open up a continuous relationship with the self as a true reflection of how the writer felt at the time. The above researchers also suggest that including a focus on an issue or concern in relation to their individual practice might help encourage a clarity of reflection and in turn, a deeper reflective approach. Findings from Leijen et al. (2009) study investigating the perceptions of dance teachers suggested the use of strategies, such as peer-feedback activities, individual and feedback and viewing video recordings of students' practices, as a means of facilitating reflective practice.

In light of the responses from participants in the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5), findings reveal a more effective way of reflecting could be achieved through encouraging performers to view themselves as having a participatory role rather than placing too much emphasis on their central role in performance. It might also be useful if performers were to view their roles as performers from the viewpoint of being a 'individual' and a 'person'. This might help them to further contextualise their experiences of performing and understanding of performance in relation to themselves. This is in line with the view of Finlay (2008) who suggests the extent to which practitioners should focus on themselves as individuals rather than the larger social context could usefully be considered. A further way of motivating performers

to engage in a process of reflective practice could be through collaboration with others. This idea is informed by the response of one Dancer in the second study (Chapter 5) who illustrated a positive experience when being asked to reflect on what it meant to be a performer during the rehearsal process for a professional piece.

An important consideration should also be given to when reflective practice takes place. Finlay (2008) suggests that while it is evident from the literature that some practitioners reveal a capacity to reflect on the intuitive knowing, others disagree with this premise and believe that pre-reflexive thought can never be understood in its instant manifestation. Sheets-Johnstone (1979) writing on the value of pre-reflective thought in phenomenological investigations, notes that lived experience comes from being engaged with the moment of experience. She believes that pre-reflection happens before interference of objective thought and that objectivity brings in reflection and analysis of the experience. Horton-Fraleigh (1995) similarly believes that if preconceptions are allowed to enter the mind before or during a performance, the ability for an individual to gain a felt experience of the activity or 'moment' could be compromised. This brings to question whether a subjective and personal view of experience before reflection is more highly valued than objective thoughts. It also questions whether the moment of experience can ever really be rediscovered, and if it is recalled by the individual, will it be a true description of that moment, or a reflective impression of the experience? Where possible, a performer should perhaps be guided towards remembering their experience in the moment of performance, rather than their reflected experience of the performance. In light of this, a greater awareness of the complexity involved in reflective practice and in accepting all reflective accounts to be true is needed.

Pedagogical implications as a means of encouraging performers to articulate their own practice are suggested in the practical recommendations of both qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5). As suggested, alongside learning about analytical and historical factors to help place creative work in context, it could be productive if opportunities to reflect on and question performer roles were integrated within a student's training. The challenge for those responsible for planning and implementing curricula is to find ways by which to encourage students to articulate their own practice and for them to be given time and space to understand how reflective practice can be embodied in

relation to their own practice. As previously highlighted in this chapter, it is evident that both learners and educators require support to help them manage challenges that might arise through reflective practice. Finlay (2008) further stresses that the role of the institution or professional setting in advocating the value attached to reflective practice is also crucial.

8.4 Discussion

This chapter has offered a review of literature on the concept of reflective practice with a view to establishing how it might be usefully embodied by the performer. To understand whether it might be embodied by the performer, the researcher asked the following questions: What constitutes reflective practice? What is the relevance of reflective practice to dancers and musicians? What is the role of reflective practice in the context of dance and music performance? To address these questions, the discussions in this chapter were informed by theories and ideas on the concept of reflective practices as found in the literature, drawing upon research from the domains of education, sociology and artistic practice. Key definitions and models of reflection commonly used in professional practice were reviewed and pedagogical and applied recommendations for reflective structures are made. This chapter has also suggested ways by which performers and educators might carry out reflective practice and how such practical applications might contribute to a performer's ongoing learning and development.

Reference to the findings from the three studies (Chapters 4 to 6) in this thesis have usefully served as examples of the role and significance of reflective practice in an artistic context. Findings from the studies revealed that performers place emphasis on being able to reflect in relation to themselves, further highlighting the benefit of performers having the opportunity (and possibly structures) through which they can articulate their own practice from a first-person perspective. Whilst the models outlined in this chapter propose useful structures to facilitate reflective practice, they reveal that practice for reflection can vary in terms of how often, how much, and why reflection gets done. It is also questionable to what extent these models might enable a performer to embody their reflection in relation to their artistic practice.

From the review of literature, it is apparent that reflective practice can be conceptualised and investigated in several ways and that different researchers, educators and practitioners frame reflective practice and its application in distinct ways, emphasising one dimension over the other. Examples from the literature also reveal that studies concerned with an individual's reflective practice fail to consider the *how* and *why* in relation to how the process of reflective practice was undertaken and what significance it had in contributing to their artistic practice, more widely. As discussed in this chapter, one reason for this could be that such reflections are impossible to deconstruct and as a result, more structured processes of reflection are more commonly encouraged. With a view to establishing how reflective practice might usefully be embodied by the performer, it could be concluded from discussions in this chapter that reflective practice is less about being reflective and more about engaging in an active process of learning from experience. Put simply, reflective practice should be about creating a habit, structure, or routine around examining experience.

The present research has also demonstrated that providing performers with the opportunity to talk freely and openly of what is of importance to them can result in gaining rich insight into their worlds as performers from their perspectives. Participant responses further demonstrate the benefit of performers having the opportunity (and possibly structures) through which they can articulate their own practice. The present chapter has suggested that an ability to reflect is impacted by an individual's ability to embody their performance. The significance of embodiment in relation to a sense of self and understanding of lived experience is of interest in the context of reflective practice as it suggests that for something to be embodied, the mind and body must be understood through an experience. Performers should therefore be encouraged to self-reference their experience and understanding of what they chose to reflect on in relation to themselves and where possible, to use models that encourage a combination of theory and practice. Through heightening levels of critical evaluation and self-awareness, it is hoped that having an awareness of the theoretical models and recommendations (presented in this chapter) will help a performer to reflect at a deeper level and as a result, highlight things that might not be obvious on first consideration. It is also hoped that a wider appreciation of reflective

practice will enable performers to examine skills and attitudes in relation to who they are as both performers and individuals.

The starting point for the present chapter was an observation amongst performers, educators and researchers, that reflective practice is a universal practice that all performers undertake at all levels (student, pre-professional and professional), although this is not always the case. As suggested by Kinsella (2009), research offers great opportunities for investigating and justifying claims about reflection. Future research would benefit from investigations that examine the philosophical underpinnings of reflective practice in relation to how theory and practice might contribute to a performer's embodiment of their artistic practice. For instance, research could be undertaken with performers to investigate their experiences of reflective practice and their perspectives as to what extent reflective practice might contribute to their artistic practice and professional artistry.

The majority of studies to-date have centred on describing the general characteristics and principles of reflective practice. To gain further insight into the role of reflective practice in artistic settings, future studies that focus on the acquisition and use of reflection in an artistic setting, and from the performer's perspective, could be considered. The role of reflective practice focusing on the experience of the researcher could also be an interesting avenue of future research and might contribute to the wider application of the practice. It is also evident from the literature that research investigating reflective practice uses small samples and case study approaches. The use of qualitative and phenomenological approaches would be beneficial in investigating reflective practice from the performer's perspective.

Future research that aims to replicate findings with larger samples of participants and in different settings, may usefully contribute to comparisons being made across different contexts and with different populations (i.e. student, pre-professional and professional performers). This would be of relevance given that reflective practice is very much context specific and different contexts require different types of reflection. Longitudinal investigations of reflective practice in relation to how students and/or professional performers reflect over long period of times would also be useful in contributing to our understanding concerning how reflective practice might be used in

the development of skills and practices. Lastly, future research could be undertaken with both students and professional performers as a means of achieving a clearer distinction between reflection in pedagogy and reflection in professional practice. It is apparent that as a research field, we need to extend inquiry on reflective practice in furthering understanding of aspects of reflection for dance and music professionals and in generating knowledge that addresses the individual reflective needs and capabilities. This will hopefully be beneficial for students, performers and researchers alike.

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter has offered a review of literature on the concept of reflective practice with a view to establishing how it might usefully be embodied by performers. In conclusion, reflection and reflective practice is considered by many to be an essential quality for professional practice.

The notion that students should be reflective practitioners has become a goal in many Higher Education programs where a wealth of literature exists. The present chapter suggests that a goal of reflective practice in education should be to increase students' understanding in relation to themselves and the wider context of their artistic practice. The body of literature on reflective practice also reveals its use through various fields of professional practice and education, of which artistic practice is one. Reflective practice is regarded a key element of artistic practice and educators and researchers commonly advocate the need for performers to include it as part of their metier. It has similarly been suggested that in addition to the technical, expressive and artistic skills that performers learn, the performer could develop other attributes that might contribute to their success as a performer, one of which could be an ability to embody their reflection. The present chapter has suggested that ability to reflect might usefully be employed by a performer in order to achieve an accomplished performance, and in gaining a deeper understanding of themselves both as a person and an artist. Through equipping performers with the skills to become reflective learners and in encouraging them to reflect on what is of significance and interest to them, reflective practice has the potential to be an influential tool to examine and transform the artistic practice and development of professional dancers and musicians.

In sum, performers should therefore be encouraged to use reflective practice as a vehicle for embodying their artistic practice and performance.

The following chapter is the final chapter in this thesis and offers an overview of the three studies (Chapters 4 to 6) and the review of literature on the concepts of performance enhancement and reflective practice. Methodologies employed in each of the three studies are evaluated and general conclusions drawn across the research as a whole.

Chapter 9: General Discussion

9.1 Introduction

This chapter serves to further review and discuss the three studies of the present research (Chapters 4 to 6). The findings from each investigation will be summarised without reference to existing literature, and this will provide an overview by which more detailed discussion can be framed. The findings will be examined to determine how the research questions (set out in the literature review chapter) have been addressed, and key findings of interest will be presented. General conclusions will be drawn across the work and suggestions and recommendations for future research will be made. Methodologies employed in each of the three studies will be evaluated and the process of reflexivity undertaken by the researcher will be reviewed. Finally, this chapter will identify the significance and contribution of the present research as a whole.

In order to inform the wider debate about dancers' and musicians' performance, the research within this thesis set out to contribute to a body of knowledge concerning the phenomenon of performance in dance and music as experienced by the performer, with the following aims:

1. To gain a broader understanding of the nature of dance and music performance through the experience of the performer;

2. To employ a varied range of research methodologies as a means of acquiring a multidimensional insight into the experience of the performer;

3. To reveal the potential value of encouraging performers to articulate their performing practice, by widening our understanding of the performer's experience and of dance and music performance more generally;

4. To highlight the need for dance and music performance research to be driven towards performers having the opportunity to self-reflect on how they experience performing; what performing means to them and their roles as performers;

5. To enable a broader understanding of the nature of dance and music performance through the experience of the performer.

9.2 Summary of Findings

The research presented in this thesis was designed to examine the phenomenon of performance in dance and music as experienced by the performer. The intention was to gain insight into professional dancers' and musicians' experiences of performing in order to develop an understanding of their thoughts on the phenomenon of performance from their subjective viewpoints. As has already been established in the literature review chapter of this thesis (Chapter 2), there is a notable scarcity of performance research that allows performers to voice their thoughts on performance in relation to what is of importance to them - despite anecdotal and qualitative findings that give support to the role and significance of the individual performer within the qualitative research domain. Unlike previous studies that have elicited the performer's thoughts and feelings about performance in relation to a particular factor or predetermined construct (e.g. successful performing experiences), the present research was carried out in order to investigate the thoughts and perceptions of professional performers in relation to what it means to be a performer and on the phenomenon of performance, more generally.

The first study (Chapter 4) employed a qualitative research methodology to gather information concerning participants' experiences as performers and their thoughts and perceptions on the phenomenon of performance. Semi-structured interviews based on an interview guide were used in order to gain an initial insight into what it means to be a professional performer and on the phenomenon of performance itself. As a result, the narratives of participants, findings revealed the three higher-order themes of *Process, Performer and Context.* The findings illustrated the subjective nature of *how* participants contextualise their experience of performance and subsequent understanding of the phenomenon. As the findings further displayed, performers evinced a strong sense of individuality, viewing themselves as embodied entities. This sense of 'individual' was evident throughout the three higher-order themes of *Process, Performer and Context* that emerged. Participants also demonstrated their subjective understanding of *being* a performer, alongside conveying technical and expressive

abilities that are unique to them as individuals. The emphasis performers placed on the 'individual' suggests that when considering performance, they reflect on the entirety of a performance rather than on individualised attributes commonly referred to in the literature.

The second qualitative study (Chapter 5) built upon the findings from the first study and aimed to offer a deeper insight into performers' experiences of performing in relation to who they are as performers. This study similarly employed an interpretive qualitative research methodology to gather information on performance from the perspective of the performer. Unstructured interviews were conducted using a topic guide. Participants were asked to share their experiences of performing and their thoughts on the phenomenon from the perspective of being a performer. Through the narratives of participants emerged the three higher-order themes of *Fulfilment, Feelings about the self* and *Engagement*. While the sense of 'individual' was evident throughout these themes, findings also revealed that performers placed emphasis on performance being concerned with the 'person' as a human being alongside that of being a performer. In relation to their thoughts on performance and what it means to be a performer, findings suggest a shared view that it is the role of the individual to define what performance means in the context of their experiences and subjective understanding. Similar to findings of the first study, the second study further illustrates the subjective nature of *how* participants contextualise their experience of performance and subsequent understanding of the phenomenon.

The third study (Chapter 6) collected quantitative data through the employment of a questionnaire completed by professional dancers and musicians. As discussed above, findings from the first and second qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) revealed some insights into professional dancers' and musicians' experiences of performance. In order to gain a better sense of the reliability of these findings, the third study aimed to investigate the extent to which a larger sample of professional performers agreed or disagreed with the emerging themes from the first two studies. Results from the quantitative analysis of the questionnaire confirmed most of the inferences drawn from qualitative analysis of the interview transcripts. Participants were in agreement with most of the statements from the first two studies and that they were in disagreement with none. Statistical analysis also demonstrated that fifteen of the twenty questions

asked had a meaningful underlying structure and that 'performance' was construed to be made up of four different aspects rather than a single entity. Therefore, in general, the findings from the third study strengthened the findings from the two qualitative studies and contributed to our understanding of the unique facets of the performer's experience.

9.3 Findings in Relation to the Research Questions

The literature review chapter (Chapter 2) outlined the four research questions that this thesis aimed to address. The following section looks at each of these in turn and discusses the ways that findings have answered each question and have advanced knowledge in this area. Due to the shared subject matter there will, inevitably, be some overlap between the questions.

What constitutes the performer's experience of performing?

We know from the literature that key to thinking about a performance is the centrality of the individual performer and the unique abilities and characteristics that they can bring. In light of this, it is suggested that performers' professional identities and activities are linked inextricably to their performances. Findings from the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) confirm this view (for example, see the findings of the central theme of *Performer* in Chapter 4). However, a finding of interest was that the performer's experience was dependent upon their ability to contextualise it with reference to themselves. Findings from the first two studies further revealed that performers contextualise their experiences in relation to their perceived identities as a human being, rather than their attributes as performers. This facet is further supported in the literature, where it is suggested that performance is "built on the profound self-fulfilment of the artists who attempt to express their emotions from the depths of their being" (Botti, 2000, p. 933).

While performance-related elements of experience (such as their personality, sense of identity and beliefs) shaped their experience of performing, findings from the present research demonstrate the rich complexities involved in the way performers understand and experience performing. The notion of a subjective understanding of *being* a

performer further suggests that performers should be encouraged to share this aspect of the actuality of *being* a performer.

The importance of enabling participants to contextualise narratives is noted in the research of Karlsen (2011), who suggests that musical experiences and knowledge are acquired within a context, and with specific social and cultural realities. In relation to personal narratives, Carless and Douglas (2012) further note that by raising awareness of the presence and possibility of alternatives to performance discourse, individuals could be helped to strengthen their own stories in ways that stay close to personal embodied experience. This is similar to the research of McAdams (1993) who notes that personal stories are important because identity and sense of self are created and sustained through narrative means. More specifically, as Spence (1982) describes, telling stories of our experiences over time allows the development of a 'narrative thread', which constitutes the core of identity and sense of self (both of which were evidenced through the narratives of performers). The present research arguably facilitated such exploration of personal embodied experience by asking performers about performing in relation to what was of importance and value to them.

In relation to the first research question of what constitutes the performer's experience of performing, findings reveal that the performer's experience is dependent upon their ability to understand the way in which they experience performance subjectively. In sum, the performer's experience comprises of their ability to self-reference this experience in relation to themselves as performers.

How is the essence of the performer's experience shaped by their subjective understanding of how they experience performing and what performing means to them?

The first research question, concerning what constitutes the performer's experience of performing revealed that it is dependent upon their ability to understand the way in which they experience performance subjectively. Findings from the present research suggest that this subjective understanding is facilitated by the performer's perception of the 'self' in relation to how they experience performing and what performing means to them. Narratives of participants showed that performers place high importance on

the concept of the 'self', which they experience and understand differently as an 'individual', a 'person' and a 'performer'. The participants' responses also illustrated the subjective nature of *how* they experience and understand performance. For example, participants embedded their perception of the self in relation to who they are, rather than what it is they do. This finding supports the research of Mischel and Morf (2003) who note that performers reveal different levels of self, that is, individual, relational and collective. Mischel and Morf further portray the self as a motivated, dynamic, action system as it continuously accommodates and assimilates information from the social world, within which it is contextualised, and generates behaviour. In discussing the transferability of knowledge, Critien and Ollis (2006) suggest that self-awareness and reflection are fundamental to the ability to recognise an opportunity to transfer skills from one environment to another. In light of the above examples, the idea that self-awareness and conscious self-thinking allows a person to reflect upon and evaluate their responses has been described as unique and central to the self.

As asserted by Butler (1993), identity, as an internal and incomplete facet of the self, is the precursor to and instigator of performative acts. Here, Butler is suggesting that identity cannot be the result of performing and that instead, it is the influencer of performative and performing decisions. With this in mind, it could be said that when performing there is a realisation (on the part of the performer) of the potential to portray something other. This could be one reason why high importance was placed on the concept of the 'self', which they experience and understand differently. While Lacan's theory of 'mirror image' suggests that identity is only realised upon understanding of the 'self' as 'other', Schechner (2013) argues that 'performance of the self' is a vital part of constructing the self. Findings from the present research suggest that the unfolding of a self-reflective process is enabled through the performer's ability to localise knowledge within the individual's identity. This observation is in line with the research of Carter (1998) and Roche's (2011) discussion about the postmodern view of identity and self. It could therefore be argued that when seeking a first-person insight, emphasis should be placed on understanding of the self in relation to the performer and their perceived identity.

In relation to the second research question, findings reveal that the essence of the performer's experience is shaped by their identity and in how they experience and

understand the 'self' in relation to how they experience performing and what performing means to them. Therefore, notions of self-awareness and self-thinking might usefully facilitate the performer's subjective understanding of this phenomenon.

To what extent might attention dedicated to the viewpoint of the individual performer contribute to a wider understanding of what constitutes the performer's experience?

A strength of the present research in gaining insight through the production of a narrative account, has enabled the researcher to focus on the voices of performers as they spoke of what was of importance to them. The qualitative research approach combined with the different data collection methods and methods of analyses has provided rich data from professional performers concerning a range of experiences and understanding. The attention dedicated to the viewpoint of the individual performer has subsequently contributed to understanding of what constitutes the performer's experience. For instance, participant responses reveal that performers consider their experience in relation to the entirety of a performance, suggesting they want to be perceived as a 'whole' rather than by individualised attributes commonly referred to in the literature. In her discussion of dance being a journey of discovery, Bales (2008) suggests that the performer's experience is regarded over the interaction with (or presentation for) an audience and that such experience is concerned with the dancer drawing upon their inherent abilities in creating what she expresses as the 'dancer-self'. Through the narratives of participants, it could be proposed that the performer's experience is concerned with a personal embodied experience that is valued over the attributes they possess as a performer.

What has unfolded from all three studies (Chapters 4 to 6) is that professional performers view themselves as embodied entities, evincing a strong sense of individuality. An understanding of the role of the performer as an individual who 'performs' also emerged collectively from all participants. Although it was anticipated that the present research would highlight noticeable differences in the responses of dancers and musicians, the commonality of the 'individual' and the 'person' was an interesting finding in relation to the semantics in what constitutes the performer's experience. The idea that it is the 'individual' who is central to

performance and not the 'performer', as ordinarily conceived in the literature, is a finding of particular interest and significance. In sum, it could be construed that the role of the 'individual' is key in performance and that the notion of *being* a performer in relation to who they are impacts greatly upon the performers' sense of self. This is of interest as it could explain why performances that draw on the 'self' are often the most effective, irrespective of general competence.

Findings in relation to the third research question reveal that attention dedicated to the viewpoint of the performer can contribute to a wider understanding of what constitutes a performer's experience in relation to the semantics in *how* participants interpret their understanding. A strong sense of individuality emerged collectively from all participants and emphasis was placed on the notion that it is the 'individual' who is central to performance. These findings are of interest in contributing to a wider understanding of the performer's experience and illustrating the role *being* a performer plays in their lives.

How might bringing the viewpoint of the performer to the fore contribute more generally to a wider understanding about the multi-faceted components of dance and music performance?

The findings from the present research have contributed to our understanding of the individual's experience of performing and in doing so, have contributed to a wider understanding about the multi-faceted components of dance and music performance. An example of this are the participants' shared views on performance also reflected their understanding of the role performance plays in their lives and their relationship to the piece of music or dance, referred to by the participants as 'the work', implying that participants experience performing as something bigger than simply 'a performance'. One reason for performers identifying a strong link between themselves and 'the work' could be that they perceive themselves to have an integral role in the devising and rehearsal stages of a performance. Throughout the three studies (Chapters 4 to 6), the researcher has perceived the concept of the 'work' to be in relation to a permanent physical object (i.e. a score or a choreographic piece) as opposed to considering the 'work' against which we measure authenticity in performance (being an abstract concept) (Rubidge, 1996). The view of participants as

having an integral role in 'the work' being performed is in line with the writing of Whitehouse (1999) who suggests that truthfulness in performance is a vital element in all profound performances as being "in and out of the self at the moment that it is done" (p. 23). Revealing that performers vary greatly in terms of what matters to them in performance, this finding is an example of how bringing the viewpoint of the performer to the fore can usefully contribute to a wider understanding of dance and music performance. A focus on the viewpoint of the performer has also contributed to our understanding about the components of dance and music performance in relation to the meaning of performance. As previously discussed in the literature review (Chapter 2), the literature demonstrates that the meaning of performance is something assumed rather than entirely understood, suggesting an open concept unamenable to an absolute definition.

The notion of searching for meaning and something beyond oneself has two clear parallels in performing: first, as a passage of self-discovery in terms of identity formation and, second, as a shared experience with co-performers and/or an audience (Lamont, 2012; Walker, Nordin-Bates, & Redding, 2010). The findings from the present research suggest that such ambiguity in our understanding of performance may exist among researchers but not the performers themselves. In the first study (Chapter 4), participants spoke about performance as a process - something that contributes to, or is part of, the final performance. This is similar to the findings of Critien and Ollis (2006) who revealed that dancers were engaged in their work, on a number of levels, in the different phases of the process involved in performing. Whereas, in the second study (Chapter 5), participants evinced a more conceptual view point in considering what performance personally meant to them. Again, in dance, the interrogation of the dance-making process by dancers themselves is further advocated by Roche (2011), who suggests it to be an important and innovative research perspective. The notion of performers being concerned with the construction of their performance was shown in the second research study (Chapter 5) where participants revealed that performing is very much about engagement with the creative process and the understanding and awareness that this brings. The literature implies that our questions must now go beyond those seeking to define performance and seek a first-person perspective from performers themselves, which the present research has done.

We also know from the literature that meaning is closely linked to purpose and stands as a highly subjective element. Another example of research that has shown musical activity to be linked to a strong sense of meaning and purpose is that of Ascenso et al. (2017), which aimed to understand how professional musicians experience well-being in the light of positive psychology. In this study, the findings revealed that the definition of 'self' emerged from all participants as 'a sustainer of well-being'. It was revealed that a clear sense of one's identity (among other factors) was strongly regarded as being fundamental to a musician and that making music was a central element in their lives. This point is made in further examples of research whereby elite musicians reveal a sense of purpose that makes the person and their music inseparable (Hargreaves, MacDonald & Miell, 2005).

The findings from the present research illustrate that the methods employed did produce knowledge reflective of the individual's experience. Through the employment of such methods, the researcher was able to gain a multidimensional insight into the experience of the performer. This is evidenced through the emerging higher-and lower-order themes in the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) and the statistical analysis in the third study, which revealed 'performance' to be concerned with four different aspects, rather than it just being one entity (Chapter 6).

When asked to comment specifically on what performance means to them, all participants in the first two research studies (Chapters 4 and 5) voiced their opinion that performing was about searching for '*it*'. These findings support the writing of Reason (2006) who believes that the meaning of performance exists both within the thing itself (performance) and attempts to define what *it* is. In relation to the final research question, the findings across the three studies are particularly illuminating in revealing the multi-faceted components of performance and the unique facets of the performer's experience. Findings in relation to the fourth research question, signifies how bringing the viewpoint of the performer to the fore can contribute to a wider understanding concerning the meaning of performance and the multi-faceted components of dance and music performance.

9.4 Findings of Interest

Findings from the qualitative studies further revealed that the age of participants and level of expertise impacted on their experience and understanding of performance. This was evidenced particularly in the second study (Chapter 5) as a greater sense of clarity and thoughtfulness came from the responses of the more experienced participants, suggesting that their thinking had become refined over a period of time. In relation to the interpretation and transferability of findings, the age of participants and length of professional performing experience was considered to be an important factor. These findings are similar to those of Clark et al. (2007), who investigated the types of self-beliefs that musicians experience before, during and after musical performances. Their findings showed that the more experienced musicians discussed behaviours that were clearly planned and thought out, and they possessed a better understanding of why they engaged in such activities. It is also worth noting that participants of the second study may have been able to locate their experiences more easily in the present research because they performed professionally more regularly than those participants recruited in the first study (Chapter 4).

The idea that performers develop self-awareness of what works best for them over time, and from past experiences, matches existing research in sport (Hanton & Jones, 1999) and parallels research in music by Hallam (2001). Hallam found, that there were clear differences between the learning strategies used by amateur musicians and those used by professional musicians. However, the study did not make a comparison between professional musicians of different levels of experience, suggesting that this is an area still to be developed. Work by Hallam (2001) in music and Hanton and Jones (1999) in sport, both suggest that experience can have an impact on performers' actions and understanding of different phenomena, showing the importance of considering levels of experience. The suggestion that the nature of musicians' behaviours changes depending on the point they are at in their careers is also an interesting one to explore in both music and dance. From the findings of the present research, it appears that informed awareness of the age and level of expertise of participants is an important factor to consider when investigating performance.

In addition to the three studies carried out in the present research (Chapters 4 to 6), this thesis included two separate chapters on the concepts of performance enhancement and reflective practice. These were included with a view to establishing whether these concepts might usefully be applied within the artistic disciplines of dance and music. The starting point for both chapters came from an observation that while educators and researchers advocate the use of performance enhancement and reflective practice in an artistic setting, these terms are used without consideration of their meaning and significance in an artistic context, and rarely from the artist's point of view. In these chapters, relevant literature and ideas on both concepts were explored from a variety of domains, and the actual practices of the concepts were reviewed alongside the discussion of pedagogical and applied recommendations that could be used by performers, educators and researchers alike.

The chapter on performance enhancement (Chapter 7) offered a review of literature on this concept, alongside the thoughts and views of professional performers on the topic. Through the narratives of participants from the first two qualitative studies, responses revealed that performers perceive the term 'performance enhancement' as being something achieved through the performer themselves. The chapter on reflective practice (Chapter 8) offered a review of literature on this concept with a view to establishing how it might usefully be embodied by performers. The chapter proposed that the ability to reflect might usefully be employed by a performer in order to achieve an accomplished performance, and in gaining a deeper understanding of themselves both as a person and an artist. It is also suggested that performers should therefore be encouraged to use reflective practice as a vehicle for embodying their artistic practice and performance.

Similar to the key findings drawn from the three studies, the review of literature on both performance enhancement and reflective practice demonstrate that understanding is confusing due to the varying means by which the concepts are defined and understood. While the literature reviewed reveals the potential artistic significance of their use within artistic domains, questions need to be explored concerning *how* they might usefully be employed to develop the artistic practice of the individual dancer and musician to increase students' understanding in relation to themselves and the wider context of their artistic practice. The findings from the three studies (Chapters

4 to 6) make some initial steps towards offering a framework for thought from the performers. The need for an informed awareness and understanding from the subjective viewpoint of the individual performer in performance research is highlighted through the narratives of participants and the points illustrated in the two separate chapters on performance enhancement and reflective practice.

9.5 Limitations of the Research

While findings from the present research illustrate professional dancers' and musicians' experiences of performing and their thoughts on the phenomenon of performance from their subjective viewpoint, it is not without limitations. These limitations have been presented in each of the chapters reporting on the three studies (Chapters 4 to 6) and are discussed further in the present chapter through an evaluation of methodologies (section 9.7.1) and the process of reflexivity undertaken by the researcher (sections 9.8 and 9.8.1).

The nature of participant responses being inherently subjective has revealed potential limitations concerning the meaning and interpretations of findings. In relation to the first two interview studies (Chapters 4 and 5), the retrospective nature of interviewing and asking performers to recall an experience is considered to be a limitation. As previously discussed in the earlier chapters of this thesis, the premise of retrospective questioning is knowing whether participants' memories are accurate enough and as a result, it may not prove practical to measures people's understanding by such means.

A similar concern regarding the authenticity of participant responses is also evident in the third questionnaire study (Chapter 6), where it could be considered a limitation. For example, it could be argued that the questionnaire was not the most accurate reflection of participants' thoughts and perceptions concerning performance. As previously discussed, this limitation could be attributed to participants being asked to provide answers based on the subjective thoughts of a different group of professional dancers and musicians from the first two studies (Chapters 4 and 5). Another limitation is the sample size of participants recruited to answer the questionnaire and the questionnaire design in terms of its measurement

and analysis. As a result of these factors, the researcher faced difficulty seeking to gain valid and reliable information when attempting to draw conclusions about a wider population of professional performers and when attempting to measure more abstract characteristics such as opinions, beliefs and perceptions of a respondent. More generally, in relation to the three studies (Chapters 4 to 6), as a result of the limitations summarised above, it is difficult for both the researcher and reader to ascertain whether knowledge obtained is new and whether accurate representation is therefore evident.

9.6 Suggestions for Future Research

Throughout the present thesis, recommendations for future research have been made concerning professional performers, student performers and educators. The aim of this section is to summarise these suggestions and present arguments explaining why these and other ideas should be explored. A recommendation made for future research in the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) is that professional performers should be encouraged to articulate their own practice from a first-person perspective and to consider their roles as performers. As previously alluded to, it was evident from the studies that performers placed emphasis on performance being concerned with a sense of 'individual' and the 'person'. With this in mind, alongside considering their roles as 'performers' from these viewpoints, findings suggest it would be conducive for performers to be encouraged to view themselves as having a participatory role rather than placing too much emphasis on their central role in performance. In the context of the present research, the narratives of participants revealed that they considered the viewpoint of an 'individual' when speaking in the third person (i.e. how they perceive themselves) and from the viewpoint of a 'person' when speaking directly about themselves (i.e. how they think and feel). It is hoped that as further research is carried out, the benefit of including a first-person perspective will become more widely understood and the individual performer viewed as a separate entity from the performance context. This could empower performers to benefit from articulating their own practice from a first-person perspective. Participants in the second study (Chapter 5) were evidently inspired by having the opportunity to reflect and question what performing means to them. From the review of literature on the topic of reflective practice (presented in the previous chapter), it was similarly suggested that

performers should be encouraged to learn from their performing experiences by evaluating them in relation to themselves. Future research would benefit from investigations that examine *how* reflective practice might contribute to a performer's embodiment of their artistic practice.

The same recommendation for future research could similarly be made to students training in the disciplines of dance and music. As previously highlighted in this thesis, we know anecdotally that during training context, emphasis is largely placed on the need for students to excel in performance, with educators often reminding their students that in order to achieve excellence, they must learn how to be an artist. In respect of this, it can be suggested that being a performer goes beyond technical ability and that there is a need for students to learn the craft of performing. One participant captured this view by sharing in the second qualitative study (Chapter 5): *"it's crucial to get performers to think outside one particular box – that box is technique"* (Musician 3). This response implies that encouraging performers to consider their roles beyond that of their technical ability might usefully contribute in developing the individual artistic voice.

In light of the above, students could be given opportunities within their training to self-reflect and question their roles as performers and what performing means to them. As suggested in the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5), one possible way of achieving this could be to encourage students to consider their roles as 'performers' from both the viewpoints of an 'individual' and a 'person'. A second way could be to ask students to undertake a phenomenological account of a recent performance as a means of questioning what they do in performance. This may then facilitate students to consider in greater depth their roles as performers, how they perceive their role in a performance (including the process of making and rehearsing work) and their relationships to their peers and to the 'work'. As noted by Bassot (2013) a reflective journal and/or account might also enhance a student's personal and professional development. In turn, this may help students to contextualise their experiences of performance in terms of who they are as individuals and as performers.

It is equally of value for educators and researchers to gain an informed awareness and understanding of performance from the subjective viewpoint of the performer.

Warburton (2011) stresses the need for further understanding of the use of key concepts in dance, contending that there needs to be a shift from perceiving the moving body as a vehicle of expression, to understanding dance as a domain of knowledge with key concepts and cultural practices. This would suggest that self-reflection should be facilitated through encouraging performers to share their subjective views and experiences, including collaborative exploration across disciplines. By offering performers the opportunity to speak openly of what is of importance to them, researchers and educators might productively address the components that exist within the experience of the performer in order to better understand the performer and the phenomenon of performance.

Findings from the current research also suggest that the replication of the three studies across a wider sample of dance genres and instruments, and with performers who are at different stages of their careers, would be advantageous. Future research could also expand upon the present research by undertaking separate analyses as a means of questioning whether commonalities and differences exist among dancers' and musicians' experiences of performing. Comparing and contrasting the experiences of professional performers across instrument groups, dance genres and artistic domains (such as acting, improvisation or live art) would be valuable as a means of understanding the transferable possibilities. Such research might also reveal findings of interest concerning the performer's experience in relation to what it is they do (i.e. instrument played/dance genre performed) and whether, as a result, they understand their experience of performing differently. An increased spectrum of performer experience would also usefully contribute to our understanding in relation to what it means to be a performer and on the phenomenon of performance, more widely. The way that performer experience and understanding of performance appears to evolve depending on where they are in their careers would also be of interest in educational contexts. This sense of evolution could influence the ability to sustain career longevity – the latter phenomenon having only really been researched through more tangible aspects of performance such as physical and psychological health, and environmental issues (for example, the research of Steptoe 2001; Vaag, Giaever & Bierkeset 2014).

Another area of interest for future investigation could be around performers feeling as though they have to 'fit into' to an orchestra or dance ensemble in order to get a job

and/or maintain employment. This particular facet of ensemble performance could be investigated using existing orchestral members and long-terms members of a dance company/ensemble as participants. Similarly, the experiences of performers holding different positions of status in an orchestra (i.e. experience of a pit player with that of a stage player, or hierarchies within sections) and roles within a dance work (i.e. experience of a performer with that of a choreographer) could also produce findings of interest. Such research could be illuminating in contributing to our understanding of the processes of performing professionally and performers' experiences of being part of an establishment. Examining whether the experience of the performer is the same for a freelance and a contracted performer might also prove revealing, particularly in respect of the impact of these different professional contexts on their sense of individuality and 'self'.

It is interesting that participants in the present research questioned to what extent their attributes as performers are specific to them, or to their peers, or are in specific relation to where and what was being performed. Carlson (1996) talks about the dynamic of self-representation as being the close relationship between the 'self' of the performance and the 'self' being presented. Findings from the present research suggest that the extent to which we fully understand the role of the 'self', the creative role of the performer and the relationship between the 'self' and the individual performer's identity, requires further exploration.

As outlined in the literature review (Chapter 2), while research to date has contributed to our knowledge of dance and music performance from a number of different perspectives, a focus on student performers limits understanding of similar issues within professional performance. McPherson and McCormick (2006) and Ritchie and Williamon (2011) acknowledge that the transferability of findings is indeed limited as a result of this and that there is a need for future research to include professional performers (Skull, 2011). The importance of undertaking performance research with professional performers was evidenced by one participant who suggested that student performers are unable to articulate their thoughts on performance due to their limited performing experience: *"to have an abstract idea of what performance is as a student, you see, I mean you can't understand or analyse that"* (Musician 3). Providing students with an opportunity within their training to self-reflect and question what

performance means to them will hopefully assist in their articulation of their artistic practice throughout their performing careers.

An interesting future research recommendation from the present research is in relation to extending understanding of the performer across artistic research and the applicability of findings to other performance contexts. By indicating connections between the fields of dance and music, this research further reiterates the need for research to be driven towards exploring the multidimensional viewpoints of the performer. The benefit of undertaking research that place emphasis on the individual performer and involves cross-artistic disciplines signifies that in-depth investigation within different domains may establish the applicability of existing findings across cross-discipline research.

The findings from all three studies (Chapters 4 to 6) showed the value of open dialogue and the usefulness of employing qualitative methods to elicit subjective insight. In addition, findings from the qualitative studies highlight the importance of dialogue among peers, and the direct impact this might have on what performers perceive their roles to be in the creation and execution of a piece. This was shown by a participant in the second study (Chapter 5), who suggested that the opportunity to have a dialogue during collaborative work can allow the performers to learn and question their own roles as performers. This further highlights the need for professional performers to be encouraged to articulate their own practice from a first-person perspective and to consider their role as a performer. This idea is further informed by the research of Reeve (2011), who notes that the way in which we experience ourselves can shape our relationships to one another and also to ourselves.

9.7 Methodological Recommendations

Throughout the present research, a number of methodological recommendations for future research have been made. The qualitative research approach, combined with the different data collection methods and methods of analysis has provided rich data from professional performers concerning a range of experiences and understanding. Future research interested in seeking a first-person perspective could, alongside the use of qualitative data collection methods, employ methods of analysis that seek to

elicit meaning as well as interpretation on the part of the researcher. This could be achieved through employing Deviant Case Analysis, whereby all rather than selected data is analysed, or Discourse Analysis, which is concerned with understanding what people are expressing through language in a specific social setting (Potter, 1997). When seeking insight into a particular phenomenon, researchers could follow a similar structure to the present research, namely qualitative and quantitative studies to extend what can be learnt from the same topic area. A detailed evaluation of methodologies will be presented in the following section of this chapter. The process of reflexivity in relation to methodological decisions throughout the research will be provided in section 9.8, as will the role of the researcher.

9.7.1 Evaluation of Methodologies

The methodology chapter of this thesis (Chapter 3) presented an overview of the methodology employed. An evaluation of methodologies was presented in each of the research studies (Chapters 4 to 6), and Chapter 6 reported on the credibility of using a questionnaire as a method of data collection when seeking a first-person perspective. Three studies were carried out to address the aims of the research (outlined in section 9.1) consisting of two qualitative studies and a questionnaire. The two qualitative studies were undertaken to gather information concerning performers' experiences as performers, and their thoughts and perceptions on the phenomenon of performance. The quantitative study was undertaken to investigate the extent to which a larger sample of professional performers agreed or disagreed with the findings from the two qualitative studies.

The qualitative research paradigm was central to the way in which knowledge was obtained, and it provided a setting that allowed for exploration through a series of semi-structured and unstructured interviews. Although the present research was primarily framed within the qualitative research paradigm, a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques and research approaches was used. This provided a framework that allowed for in-depth exploration of the phenomenon under investigation, together with an examination of the research questions from a number of different perspectives. The use of qualitative methods (semi-structured and unstructured interviews) importantly enabled the performers to share their experiences

and thoughts of performance in relation to what is of importance to them. This was significant due to a scarcity of research using a similar approach. Findings demonstrate the usefulness of performance research being driven towards performers having the opportunity to self-reflect on how they experience performing, what performing means to them and their roles as performers. The use of quantitative methods (a questionnaire) was valuable in accessing a larger sample of professional performers, and in allowing the researcher to extend what was learnt from the semi-structured and unstructured interviews.

As has already been established throughout this thesis, much research has attempted to quantify components of dance and music performance. Within the fields of Dance Medicine and Science and Performance Science, previous research studies have generally been directed towards examining specific facets of dance and music performance, with a lack of focus on understanding the performer's experiences of them. I, the researcher, proposed in the literature review (Chapter 2) that a focus on solely objective measures is unsatisfactory given the emphasis placed on the individual performer in the execution of performance and the subjective aspects of performance as experienced by the performer. Although the research contained within this thesis has shown a qualitative approach to be fruitful in eliciting the subjective viewpoint of the performer, I acknowledge the appropriateness of using a quantitative approach to further contribute to understanding concerning the unique facets of the performer's experience. With this in mind, the stance of 'methodological plurality' has been maintained throughout the present research, where I have remained open to all methodological approaches and methods, without assuming that any one is more important or more valuable than the others (Chaffin & Crawford, 2007).

9.8 The Process of Reflexivity

Notions of reflexivity concerning the choice of methods and interpretation of findings have been present throughout the research process. As stated by Chaffin and Crawford (2007), reflexivity can be achieved by the continuous evaluation of participants' subjective responses, inter-subjective dynamics and the research process itself. Reflexivity is an important criterion used to assess rigour in qualitative research

(Finlay 2002a; 2000b; Richards, 2010). This process provided me with an opportunity to analyse the data reflexively by questioning assumptions about the collected data.

The first reflection I have is regarding anticipating analysis. Throughout the stages of analysis for both qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5), I attempted to be mindful of interrogating the data thoroughly and draw on the whole data set rather than identifying those sections that support my research ideas. Given the amount of data collected and the different performance backgrounds that participants had, I felt at times that being engaged in the data meant I was simultaneously engaged in anticipating analysis, rather than assuming neutrality. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) note that the temptation to solely analyse aspects of data that challenge either the preconceptions of the researcher and/or appear interesting in relation to their research question is common in analysis. While measures can be used to address neutrality of the researcher in research, I share the view of Bresler (1995) who poses that neutrality is impossible given that, as a researcher, you are part of the reality being studied.

On reflection of the methodologies employed in the present research, it is also pertinent to reflect upon the methodological considerations taken in relation to the collection and analysis of data. Throughout data collection for the first two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5), I was mindful of both the interviewer's and the interviewees' contribution to conversation and ensured any inconsistencies in participants responses were addressed. This was achieved by paying careful attention to what was being said and the context within which the narrative accounts were based on. This helped to produce a clear and coherent account of the research undertaken and avoided the tendency to 'tidy up' features of the conversation. During the analysis of interview data, I was also concerned with fitting real-life description into artificial classifications. In the first two qualitative studies, the split in instruments and dance genres played/performed by the participants resulted in categories not always being mutually exclusive. As a result, there was some overlap, and several meaning units placed in several categories as they often described a combination of information (Hanrahan & Vergeer, 2000). This is supported by Bresler (1995) who suggests that because experience is holistic, specific themes are often unanticipated and an overlap of categories can occur. As has been the case in previous research, this was not viewed as a limitation but the result of trying to fit real-life description into artificial

classifications (Nordin & Cumming, 2005). In the context of the present research, I viewed the emerging themes from the qualitative studies to be unexpected rather than a conscious decision to choose artificial classifications.

Throughout the different stages of analysis, I have also found myself reflecting on the truthfulness of findings. Gaukroger (2012) states that the role of objectivity is to provide an accurate representation of the world, and as such, data raises questions of judgement rather than those of truth. Here, he is suggesting that if the role of objectivity is thought of as providing accurate representation, then we cannot make sense of objectivity without bringing in the truth. Informed by the writing of Gaukroger (2012), I believe that 'truthfulness' is apparent when searching for both objective and subjective viewpoints. Put simply, instead of choosing a research approach that is perceived 'objective' or 'subjective', as researchers, we should consider the truthfulness of what we are seeking to discover.

During the stages of analysis, I frequently reminded myself that it is naïve to think a 'true' response is given to any question. This view was informed by the work of Alvesson and Karreman (2000) who posit that investigating 'talk' can be difficult because of interviewees' differing skills and creativity in producing accounts. In research concerned with a first-person perspective, it is often noted in the limitations of the study that further testing and verification of findings is needed because responses are inherently subjective (for example, in the research of Clark et al., 2014). I disagree with this premise and believe that the trustworthiness and rigour of data (whether in a quantitative or qualitative paradigm) is more about whether the methods of research chosen are robust in embodying a variety of assumptions concerning the nature of knowledge and the nature of the phenomena being investigated.

As outlined in the methodology chapter (Chapter 3) and in the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5), measures were employed to ensure the trustworthiness and convergence of data (Conroy et al., 2001; Guba, 1981; Patton, 2002; Robson¸1993). Post analysis, participants were shown themes that emerged from analysis of their dataset and were given the opportunity to raise any further concerns. In addition, the data collection methods used in all three studies (Chapters 4 to 6) were piloted with participants to ensure the appropriateness and rigour of these methods. The

ontological and epistemological positions of the interpretivist paradigm (in which the present research was framed) also meant that the methods of data collection were viewed in their entirety rather than in isolation. This was also important in ensuring the methods of research chosen were appropriate for the nature of the phenomena being investigated.

The use of a varied range of research methodologies, data collection methods and methods of analysis has also been important when considering the meaningfulness of responses. Leech and Goodwin (2004) state that many researchers believe there is one way to analyse qualitative data, namely through the method of constant comparative or constant comparison analysis. They also suggest that a 'one size fits all' approach may lead to an assumption that all results are meaningful and may produce interpretations that are not consistent with the underlying data (see also Guba, 1981; Maxwell, 1992; 2005). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) state that data, which often centres on people's experiences, allow researchers to study phenomena and strive to make sense of, or interpret, them with respect to the meanings people bring to them. In relation to the meaningfulness of data in the present research, it could be assumed that participant choices about *what* they shared with me (their choice of words, emphasis and order) are meaningful as they are unique to that individual. Talking about phenomena requires a translation from non-verbal experience to verbal expression, a translation that some performers may not be proficient in making. This could be because they do not have the vocabulary or the practice in such analysis to do so, as such, the words they chose express what they know and how they feel.

While I acknowledge that my interpretation of what the interviewees said could be problematic (as I interpreted their words to be a representation of what they have understood), their words are a wholly sufficient data source inasmuch as they are creating meaning by expressing what is of importance to them. In both of the qualitative studies, performers portrayed their personal understanding of what performance means to them through their choice of words. For instance, they would frequently open a sentence with *'I think'* or *'my thoughts are'*. In the second study (Chapter 5) performers illustrated how performing made them feel by often saying *'I feel'* or '*I sense'*. Their choice of words further demonstrate that the research had been successful in eliciting the subjective viewpoint of the performer.

To assist with interpreting meaning from participant interviews, findings were supported by the participants' words using a mixture of interpretation and illustration, "presenting in miniature the essence of what the researcher has seen and heard over time" (Ely et al., 1991, p. 154). This is valuable in the analysis of findings as at no point can the researcher's interpretation go beyond what has actually been said by the participants (Shaw, 2001). In the questionnaire study (Chapter 6), the statistical Principal Components Analysis was used to ascertain the meaningfulness of questions and whether the questions asked were measuring the themes from the first two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5).

9.8.1 Reflexivity of the Researcher

Throughout the course of the present research, I engaged in a continuous process of reflection concerning my roles as researcher and my own assumptions and motives for undertaking the research (Chaffin & Crawford, 2007). This was important as the present research is driven by a personal quest for insight into the subjective awareness of what underlies dance and music performance. I used this process as a way of reflecting on how my position and interests situated themselves within the research and how my impressions and feelings formed part of the interpretation and (co-) construction of knowledge (Finlay, 2002a; Flick, 1998). Smith et al. (2009) advocate that the researcher must conduct an in-depth personal reflection in order to address how previous experiences or knowledge may impact upon the perceived degree of self with the participants experiences.

The first reflection I have is regarding my role as a novice qualitative researcher and in particular, the impact this may have had on the data collection and analysis of data for the first study (Chapter 4). Influenced by the texts of Ely et al. (1991); Finlay, (2002b); Patton (2002) and Robson (1993), I attempted to approach the research as a continuing reflective process, where I was committed throughout. As explained by Patton (2002), qualitative research requires the commitment of the researcher to "capture participants in their own terms" (p. 21). While it is hoped this was achieved, due to limited experience in conducting interviews and undertaking qualitative data analysis, this may not always have been the case. I acknowledge that in the first

qualitative study (Chapter 4) I may have demonstrated poor interviewing technique. For example, at times I found it difficult in waiting an appropriate length of time before utilising prompts and probes and in tolerating silence. As a result, I may have misinterpreted the interviewee's comments and not always given them the chance to fully elaborate on the points made. As explained by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), the quality of the data produced in a qualitative interview depends on the quality of the interviewer's skills. Marshall and Rossman (1995) similarly suggest that "successful qualitative studies depend primarily on the interpersonal skills of the researcher" (p. 64) in building a paramount relationship between interviewer and interviewee. While I think I employed a style of interested listening, I may have, at times, done this to reward or help out the participant rather than evaluating the response as a means of evolving and developing the interview. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) state this is a common finding when undertaking qualitative research and, as we are reminded by Patton (2002), "skilful interviewing [is] more than just asking questions" (p. 4).

As advised by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), interviewing professional participants is different to interviewing non-professionals due to the 'status' of the individual being interviewed. They suggest that professional participants are often familiar with being asked about their opinions and thoughts, and therefore promote the viewpoints they want to communicate by means of the interview. This was evident in the response of one participant in the first qualitative study (Chapter 4) who commented that she had been asked before to talk about her role as a 'performer' as part of a group of interviews undertaken for a recent dance project. I can conclude on the first reflection by advocating that both my experience as a qualitative researcher and my interviewing technique greatly improved in the second qualitative study (Chapter 5). The sense of ease and clarity that participants experienced through interviewing (as demonstrated through their narratives) could have been ascribed to my approach, which aimed to encourage a reflective account of what it means to be a performer and on the phenomenon of performance.

The second reflection I have is with regards to the veracity of the interviewees' answers, as it is perhaps difficult to know whether participants are telling the truth. As alluded to in the discussion of the first qualitative study (Chapter 4), retrospective questioning can be a limitation in the extent to which participant responses accurately

represent their personal performance experiences (Clark et al., 2014) and whether participants' memories are accurate enough (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). In the earlier part of this chapter, I reflected upon the interpretation and analysis of data with regards to the truthfulness of findings. The literature also suggests there is further concern as to what extent respondents' answers really relate to what they do outside of the interview (Hammersely & Atkinson, 1995). Kirk and Miller (1986) reflect upon this issue, noting that, as a researcher, you must overcome the temptation to jump to conclusions because your analysis looks as though it is leading to an interesting outcome. In the instances of the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5), a frequency count of the number of times participants mentioned each theme was not assumed as I was mindful this might be mistaken for importance (Krane, Anderson, & Strean, 1997; Nordin & Cumming, 2006). As previously stated, the aim of the research in this thesis was to gain insight and understanding; not specifically to identify (potential) commonalities and differences between dance and music, or to quantify the performer's experience and understanding in any way. All stages of data analysis were therefore undertaken together for dance and music, and the higher-order and lower-order themes were presented collectively.

Chaffin and Crawford (2007) similarly note that self-reporting in the form of interviews and reflections is not adequate as participants do not always give satisfying or consistent answers. The question of 'authenticity' when analysing the real meaning of an interview is a pertinent question in qualitative research (Kvale & Brinkmann, 1996). I often found myself questioning the reliability of interviews with regards to how accurately they reflect the performers' experiences and whether too much emphasis was placed on assuming that their 'experiences' as a performer was an indication of their understanding of performance. This raises an interesting consideration as to whether interview responses are to be treated as giving direct access to 'experience' or as actively constructed 'narratives' that demand analysis (Holstein & Gubrium, 2011; Riesmann 2011; Silverman, 2013).

The final reflection I have is concerning the methodological choices taken in relation to the methods of data collection for the three studies (Chapters 4 to 6). The decisions taken were based on my understanding of the research context and a belief that the

chosen methodologies were best suited to the area under investigation. I used the process of reflexivity to examine the methods employed throughout the research process and as a means of understanding, interpreting and evaluating data analysis. This is evidenced in the methodology chapter where a rationale for methods of data collection and methods of analyses are presented and in each of the studies (Chapters 4 to 6), further rationales, alongside the strengths and limitations of each methodological decision, are presented. An evaluation of methodologies is also provided in section 9.7 of this chapter.

Without any presentation of the existing knowledge about the topic of an investigation or phenomenon being studied, Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) acknowledge that it is difficult for both the researcher and reader to ascertain whether knowledge obtained is new and whether accurate representation is therefore evident. In relation to the concern of accurate representation, Silverman (2013) similarly questions the potential issues of anecdotalism in the analysis of qualitative data, noting that researchers can convince themselves and others that their findings are genuinely based on an investigation and critique of their data in its entirety and not a few chosen examples. I was particularly mindful of this when undertaking data analysis for the two qualitative studies (Chapters 4 and 5) and where possible, disregarded initial assumptions about the data in an attempt to achieve objectivity (Silverman, 2013).

9.9 Contribution to Knowledge

The research in this thesis has contributed to knowledge of performance from the perspective of the individual performer. The findings of the research reported in this thesis have led to a greater understanding of what constitutes the performer's experience of performing. The present research makes some way in establishing the subjective nature of *how* participants contextualise their experience of performing and their subsequent understanding of the phenomenon. In addition to the recommendations for future research (outlined in section 9.6 of this chapter) it is pertinent to discuss the contribution this body of research has made.

This thesis was framed by an interest into the subjective awareness of what underlies dance and music performance. Despite there being a shared consensus that

performance is considered to be the height of a performer's achievement, I had identified that little research existed whereby performers can talk openly and freely about aspects of performance that are of importance to them. I therefore considered it prudent to undertake a body of research that was concerned primarily with the performer's perspective.

The body of literature on performance revealed that emphasis is given to understanding the phenomenon in a variety of research fields and disciplines, and that key to thinking about a performance is the centrality of the individual performer and the unique abilities and characteristics that they can bring. However, studies are generally directed towards examining one particular aspect of dance and music performance with a lack of understanding concerning how the performer experiences them. A result of this is that studies commonly inform us of the *what* of performance in relation to specific theoretical constructs and strategies without consideration of the *how* and *why,* from the performers themselves. The research contained within this thesis was therefore dedicated to performers' accounts of their own experiences of performance in relation to what it means to be a performer and on the phenomenon of performance, more widely.

This thesis has contributed to our knowledge of dance and music performance and the experience of the performer, in a number of ways. It has firstly revealed the value of encouraging performers to articulate their performing practice and the importance of collecting a first-person perspective in the domains of dance and music. Through the thoughts and perceptions of professional performers, this research has revealed *how* participants contextualise their experience of performing and their subsequent understanding of the phenomenon. Evident from the present research has also made a significant contribution towards consideration of the performing dancer and musician in relation to who they are as an individual. The narratives of participants subsequently provide a deeper insight into *how* they view themselves, emphasising the need for greater consideration of the performer's thoughts and feelings. These findings are also of interest and significance in contributing to the understanding of other artistic contexts whereby the performer is perceived to be central. The potential for application to a variety of artistic disciplines is apparent. The present research has shown that providing performers the opportunity to talk freely and openly of what is

of importance to them can result in giving us rich insight into their experiences, which other disciplines could duly benefit from.

Asking participants to comment both on their experience of performing and on the phenomenon of performance has proved successful in revealing a first-person insight and in contributing to current research within the domains of dance and music. This research has succeeded in highlighting the importance of the performer's perspective, suggesting that much more could be learned from greater consideration of the performer's thoughts and feelings than has hitherto been the case. The research in this thesis has further contributed to our knowledge of performance by inviting an openness of inquiry concerning the validation of subjective experiences. In demonstrating a case for employing a 'qualitatively driven' approach as a valid way of generating a deeper understanding of performance, this research contributes to methodological thinking about the qualitative and quantitative research paradigms and their place within artistic fields of research.

I believe findings from the present research might also contribute to areas of artistic practice and pedagogy, with applied implications for performers, educators and researchers alike. A number of recruited participants have already requested to meet with me to discuss the findings and in particular, to find out more about possible pedagogical implications. As a result, professional performers who took part in the studies are encouraging their peers and those they collaborate with to reflect upon their roles as performers and what performance means to them as part of their artistic practice. In particular, one professional dance ensemble is encouraging their performers to keep a journal diary and/or account concerning their thoughts on performing and performance more generally.

Lastly, it is hoped that researchers will see the value of the present research and continue to undertake research from the viewpoint of the performer. In turn, the benefit of including a first-person perspective will (hopefully) become more widely understood and the individual performer viewed as a separate entity from the performance context. In relation to the research methodologies, it is hoped that the research field will consider undertaking research using a range of methodologies (as

demonstrated in the present research) as a means of gaining a multidimensional perspective on the experience of the performer. Findings from this research also offer useful insights in the planning and design stages of future studies in the context dance, music, Dance Medicine and Science and Performance Science research. It is further hoped that the present research will contribute to the credibility of the (often dismissed) qualitative paradigm when seeking insight and understanding from the performer. Situated in the research fields of Dance Medicine and Science and Performance Science, and drawing on research from the disciplines of dance, music, sport and philosophy, the present research signifies the use of a cross-discipline perspective when investigating the world of the performing dancer and musician.

9.10 Conclusion

This thesis examined the phenomenon of performance in dance and music as experienced by the performer. The aim of the research within this thesis was to better understand the phenomenon of performance from the perspective of the performing dancer and musician. Three studies were conducted to address this aim through investigating the thoughts and perceptions of the performer in relation to what it means to be a performer and on the phenomenon of performance, more widely. In strengthening the originality of this research, the qualitative and quantitative research paradigms provided a framework that allowed for in-depth exploration of the phenomenon under investigation and gained a multidimensional insight into the experience of the performer. In addition, this thesis included two separate chapters on the concepts of performance enhancement and reflective practice, which established how they might usefully be applied within the artistic disciplines of dance and music. These chapters explore both concepts in relation to relevant literature from a variety of domains and suggest pedagogical and applied recommendations that could be used by performers, educators and researchers.

Findings revealed that performers place high importance on the concept of the 'self', which they experience and perceive differently as an 'individual', a 'person' and a 'performer'. Performers were also shown to view themselves as embodied entities, evincing a strong sense of individuality and a subjective awareness of *being* a performer, alongside conveying technical and expressive abilities. This research

offers new insights into *how* professional dancers and musicians experience performing and reveals the potential for application to a variety of artistic disciplines. As such, the research within this thesis addresses a gap in the research literature and represents a considerable step forward in understanding the phenomenon of performance in dance and music as experienced by the performer.

As a body of research, this thesis has contributed to our knowledge of performance from the perspective of the individual performer. In establishing the subjective nature of *how* participants contextualise their experience of performance and their subsequent understanding of the phenomenon, this thesis has shown the usefulness of gaining subjective accounts from performers. It has further revealed how a carefully considered approach into the experience of the performer could enable researchers, educators and performers to better acknowledge the role of the 'individual' alongside that of the 'performer'. It could be argued that to move performance research forward, we must continue to take account of the performers' experience of performance and encourage the performer's voice to be heard.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Consent Form for Chapters four and five

Participant Consent Form

Project: The aim of this research is to gain an insight into and understanding of elite musicians' and dancers' experience of performance. By understanding performance from the perspective of the musician and/or dancer it is hoped that this research will bring the performer's experiences and perceptions of their own performance to the forefront.

Principal Researcher: Gemma Feeley

Please read the following statements and sign if you agree with them.

By signing this consent form I confirm that:

1. I am willing to take part in this study and to participate in a one-to-one interview;

2. I have read the participant information sheet and understood the nature of the study;

3. I understand that participant anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained at all times and information collected will be seen only by the Primary Researcher;

4. I understand that data will be gathered and analysed specifically for the purposes of this research;

5. I am aware that my participation is on a voluntary basis and I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason;

6. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions.

I consent to participate in this study.

Participant's Name: ………………...

Signature: ……………………………

Date: ………………………………….

I acknowledge that I have explained to the named individual the nature and have answered any questions that have been raised:

Principal Researcher: …………………

Signature: ………………………………
Date: ………………………………….

Appendix A: Information Sheet for Chapters four and five

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Outline of Project

Those working in the field of Performing Arts Medicine and Science advocate that scientific inquiry can enhance musicians' and dancers' performance. Research that has attempted to investigate this has done so by measuring artistic components of performance, such as aesthetic quality and performance competence. However, questions regarding the objectivity in measuring performance and how scientific inquiry is advantageous in facilitating successful performance remain unanswered. The aim of this research is to gain an insight into and understanding of elite musicians' and dancers' performance. By understanding performance from the perspective of the musician and/or dancer it is hoped that this research will bring the performer's experiences and perceptions of their own performance to the forefront. Elite musicians and dancers will be recruited as it is perceived elite performers have superior experience of performing compared to that of lower level performers.

Primary Researcher

Gemma Feeley

Procedures

Each participant will be asked to complete an informed consent form. Participants will be asked to participate in a one-to-one interview, where they will be asked to talk about their perspectives and experiences as a performer, and on performance in general. Each interview, undertaken by the Primary Researcher, will take approximately 45 minutes to complete and will take place in a space with which the participant is familiar. To ensure accurate capture of data, interviews will be recorded using a digital audio recorder (ZOOM Q3).

Formality

Ethical approval for this study has been granted by the Trinity Laban Research Ethics Committee. Participant anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained at all times and information collected will be seen only by the Primary Researcher. Participation is voluntary, and you will be given the opportunity to withdraw at any stage or avoid answering questions if you so wish. Unless permission is given for it to be otherwise, stored data will not refer to names or contact details and will therefore be untraceable. All data will be stored confidentially and destroyed once data has been analysed. All data will be gathered and analysed specifically for the purposes of this research.

Enquiries

If you need additional information in relation to the research project, please do not hesitate to contact the Primary Researcher.

Primary Researcher Contact Information

Gemma Harman: ███████████████████, Tel ███████████

Name of Supervisor(s)

Dr Emma Redding and Dr Patricia Holmes

Appendix B: Demographic Information Sheet for Chapters four and five

Demographic Information

The purpose of this document is to collect demographic information on those participants being interviewed. The information you provide will be treated confidence and seen only by the Primary Researcher.

1. Information about you

Age: ……….

Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Instrumentalist: ☐ Yes ☐ No   If yes, what instrument do you play?
………………

Vocalist: ☐ Yes ☐ No   If   yes,   what   voice   type?
……………………..

2: You and Dance/Music

How long have you participated in dance or music? ………….years

Performance experience:

How old were you when you performed for the first time? ………………..years

How old were you when you started performing professionally? ………………..years

How often do you usually undertake performing professionally?

☐ Often (every 1-2 months)   ☐ Sometimes (every 3-6 months)

☐ Not very often (once or twice per year)   ☐ I no longer perform professionally

Other:

Are you currently involved in an endeavour relating to performance? (ie, choreographer, director) If yes, please elaborate:

Are you currently involved in teaching at Trinity Laban?   ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what do you teach?

Thank-you for your time

Appendix C: Interview Guide for Chapter four

Introductory questions

- Introduction and formalities of conducting the interview
Welcome, introduce your-self, formalities of interview process, and assurances of anonymity, can withdraw at any-time; consent form, demographic information sheet;

- Aim: to gain an insight into professional musicians' and dancers' experiences and understanding of performance;

- I am interested in your perspectives, experiences and understanding as a 'performer' and on 'performance' in general.

- Firstly, I would like to know more about your performing experience.
Probe: what do you do? Length of your dance/music participation
Prompt: Is there any other information about your experience, which you might like to add?

I am now going to move on to talk more specifically about performance

Performance

- As a performer and from your experience, what do you understand by the term 'performance'?
Prompt: what does the term 'performance' make you think / how might you define it

- Can you tell me, as a performer, whether you think it is important to understand performance?
Probe: what do you think it is? Ask for an example
Prompt: concept / contextual & relative understanding / possibly repeat the question / has their understanding of performance changed

- As a performer and from your experience, what do you understand by the term 'performance enhancement'?
Probe: what comes to mind / does it mean anything to you / ask for an example
Check: summarize their thoughts

I am now going to move on to talk more specifically about artistic qualities

Artistic Qualities

- As a performer and from your experience, what springs to mind if I use the term 'artistic qualities'?
Prompt: what comes to mind / make you think / how might you define? / think of a professional performer they admire
Probe: 'Artistic' (aesthetics, creative) 'Qualities' (attribute / characteristic / feature)
Check: summarize their thoughts

- Can you describe any artistic qualities, which you think an elite performer has or should have?
Probe: ask for an example / clarification / further details / order of importance
Prompt: think of a performer you admire and the qualities they have / offer some examples, i.e., musicality / when you see a successful performance, what are the qualities of the performer?

- What do you think is the significance of the qualities you mention for performance?
Probe: ask for an example / clarification / further details / list order of significance
Prompt: offer some examples, i.e., musicality, how significant is this quality for performance

- Can you describe what artistic qualities you feel you have as a performer?

- Can you describe what artistic qualities you feel might contribute to an effective/affective performance?
Prompt: order of importance

- Can you tell me whether you think it is possible to measure such qualities and if so, how? *Prompt: how might such qualities be enhanced? (ie, assessment criteria/audience/critics)*

Viewing/Measuring Performance

- When you perform, how do you perceive someone watching you?
  Prompts: non-judgemental audience situations / communication / difference between judgment & enjoyment/ emotion: positive /negative

- What are your thoughts on the judging of performance?
  Prompt: marking criteria / audience / peers / critics

- Can you tell me about your thoughts about other people judging you when you perform?
  Probe: what are your feelings about this / ask for example / clarification
  Check: summarize their thoughts
  Prompt: Audiences' perception and expertise / does it make a difference when you perform.

- Can you tell me, as a performer, what you try to convey to an audience?
  Prompt: example of a performance they have done

Other
- Is there anything else you would like to add in relation to your own performing experience?
  Prompt: ask for an example

- Do you feel that I have led or influenced your answers in any way?

Thank him/her for their time.

Appendix D: Topic Interview Guide for Chapter five

Introductory questions

- Introduction and formalities of conducting the interview:
Welcome, introduce your-self, formalities of interview process, and assurances of anonymity, can withdraw at any-time; consent form, demographic information sheet;

- Aim: to gain an insight into professional musicians' and dancers' experiences and understanding of performance;

- I am interested in your perspectives, experiences and understanding as a 'performer' and on 'performance' in general.

- Firstly, I would like to know more about your performing experience.

This interview is going to be undertaken in three parts 1) exploring the more objective elements of performance, 2) then moving onto ask about your subjective and personal experience and understanding of performance. Throughout the interview there is no structure and I want you to talk in anyway about being a 'performer' and about performance.

I am going to first ask about the more objective elements of performance, from the view of you as a 'performer' and your understanding and experience of performing.

1. Elements of music and dance Performance

Individual attributes: expression; emotion;
technical and physical skills
deliberate practice/training (experience of it)
visual
identity
context
intangible/'something else'

2. Expression of self-relationship between the performer and the self

Performance states: emotions, interpretation, concentration, motivation, mood, stage presence, audience contact.

Expressive parameters: timing, loudness, pitch and timbre, articulation, expression of self.

Performer identity: appearance, expression, reputation, role.

Motion: physiological aspects of performance (motor learning and skill acquisition).

Contextual features: aspects of performance, listening/viewing performance, location, environment, type of performance/performance event.

Emotional effect: objective features of the situation, subjective perceptions of the listener/viewer; positive emotional experience, satisfaction, memory, consciousness (intuition, analytical thinking).

Needs: motor skills; positive feedback, support, encouragement of others, exhibitionism and voyeuristic impulses, emulate/possess certain attractive attributes.

I am now going to ask about your subjective and personal experience and understanding of performance.

3. Subjective Experience and Understanding performance (as a 'performer' and viewing 'performance')

Emotion: meaning, feelings, affects, mood, recalling a memory of emotion and/or trigger of an emotional response, experienced by the listener/viewer, positive emotional experience, empathy, feelings.

Processes: skills acquisition, practice, non-musical skills, mental processes, visualization.

Individual: Subjective and objective understanding of performance, thoughts, perception, importance, engagement, interpretation, identity, self-awareness, expressiveness,

Meaning: where it lies in performance in the 'work' (ie, music/choreography) experience, learning and conceptualization of constructing meaning. What is the creative role of the performer?

4. Other

Is there anything else you would like to add in relation to your own performing experience?

Is there anything else you would like to add in relation to what we have spoken about today?

Do you feel that I have led or influenced your answers in any way?

Appendix E: Questionnaire Template for Chapter six

The aim of this questionnaire is to understand more about performance from the perspective of the performer. Your answers will be kept anonymous and confidential at all times, and only the Primary Researcher will see or have access to your completed questionnaire. The questionnaire should take 5-10 minutes to complete.

1. Information about you:

1.1 Age: ……years

1.2 Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female   ☐ I would prefer not to answer

1.3 What is your predominant profession?

Dancer ☐   Instrumentalist ☐   Vocalist ☐   Musical Theatre ☐

If a dancer, please state what type(s)/genre(s) of dance do you mostly participate in:

If an instrumentalist, please state what instrument you mostly play:

If a vocalist, please state what voice type you are:

1.4 Please detail any other activities you participate or skills you have that inform your profession as a dancer or musician:

2. Performing experience:

Performance is…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Achievement of excellence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Process	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Outcome	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Communication	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Physical Activity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Emotional Activity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Something 'passing in time'	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
An opportunity to share with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A performer's achievement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
An opportunity to express emotion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Consists of Technical Principles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Consists of Expressive Principles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Expression of a composer's or choreographer's intention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Self-satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Being 'In the moment'	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
With reference to a particular standard or form	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Other (please add)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2.1 How long have you participated professionally in your predominant profession of dance or music? …………. years

2.2 How often do you **usually** perform?

☐ Often (every 1-2 months)   ☐ Sometimes (every 3-6 months)

☐ Not very often (once or twice per year or less)

3. Understanding of 'Performance':

3.1 Please indicate how much you agree with each of the following descriptions of performance:

4. You as a performer:

4.1 Please indicate how best you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
As a performer, I am central to the performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
As a performer, my professional identity is linked to how I perform	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My understanding of performance has changed since I first started performing professionally	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
As a performer, it is important to understand what performance means to me							

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire!

Appendix F: Correlation tables for Chapter 6.

Correlations between factors following Principal Components Analysis (PCA)

	Factor						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Performance is: Achievement of excellence	.013	.088	.080	.144	.224	-.170	.357
Performance is: A Process	.154	.023	.966	-.042	-.015	-.005	.000
Performance is: An Outcome	.268	.297	.454	.025	-.006	.170	.003
Performance is: Communication	.425	.046	.045	.082	-.074	.326	-.025
Performance is: Physical Activity	.833	.553	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Performance is: Emotional Activity	.674	.161	.094	.386	.048	.073	-.277
Performance is: Something 'passing in time'	.266	-.135	.321	.014	.225	.230	-.158
Performance is: An opportunity to share with others	.833	-.553	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Performance is: A performer's achievement	.429	-.199	.006	.258	.575	-.165	.106
Performance is: An opportunity to express emotion	.486	-.322	-.002	.576	.118	-.039	.015
Performance Consists of technical principles	.417	.144	.158	.650	-.149	-.286	.231
Performance consists of expressive principles	.430	-.039	.042	.758	-.197	.061	-.195

Performance is: Expression of a composer's or choreographer's intention	.353	.094	-.097	.460	-.039	.091	.287
Performance is: Self-satisfaction	.204	.116	.109	.324	.521	-.040	.089
Performance is: Being 'in the moment'	.261	.069	.172	.239	.553	.168	-.288
Performance is with reference to a particular standard or form	.361	.073	.258	.112	.164	-.010	.333
As a performer, I am central to the performance	.034	.099	.018	.277	.103	.242	-.002
As a performer, my professional identity is linked to how I perform	.247	-.100	-.010	.244	.020	.587	.281
My understanding of performance has changed since I first started performing professionally	.402	.022	-.037	.142	.002	.531	.248
As a performer, it is important to understand what performance means to me	.185	-.099	.128	-.010	-.165	.356	.220

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.

a. Attempted to extract 7 factors. More than 25 iterations required. (Convergence=.158). Extraction was terminated.

Appendix G: Component loadings of performance domains for Chapter six

Weighted Component loadings of performance domains following Maximum Likelihood Factor Analysis (MLFA) with oblimin rotation.

	Factor			
	1	2	3	4
Performance is: A Process	.079	.110	.315	.016
Performance is: An Outcome	.178	.149	.497	.216
Performance is: Communication	.115	.301	.365	.541
Performance is: Physical Activity	.348	.446	.786	.393
Performance is: Emotional Activity	.414	.738	.611	.395
Performance is: An opportunity to share with others	.517	.517	.221	.459
Performance is: A performer's achievement	.989	.373	.120	.168
Performance is: An opportunity to express emotion	.563	.788	.048	.404
Performance Consists of technical principles	.384	.701	.302	.206
Performance consists of expressive principles	.336	.832	.248	.358
Performance is: Expression of a composer's or choreographer's intention	.309	.526	.167	.441
Performance is: Self-satisfaction	.472	.311	.176	.132
Performance is: Being 'in the moment'	.469	.285	.325	.170
My understanding of performance has changed since I first started performing professionally	.191	.273	.245	.717
As a performer, my professional identity is linked to how I perform	.174	.278	.011	.640

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

Appendix H: Ethics Application Form: Study 1 (Chapter 4)

Application to the Trinity Laban Ethics Committee for Ethical Approval of

Research Involving Human Participants

Applicant Name and any qualifications relevant to the Study:
Gemma Feeley (MSc Dance Science)

Name(s) of Additional Researchers (include names of institutions, if not Trinity Laban):
N/A

For Students Only		
Name of Supervisor: Dr. Emma Redding Dr. Patricia Holmes	Study Programme: RDP (MPhil - Year 1)	Date: 03.09 2012

Proposed Study Title (up to 20 words): Interview study of elite dancers and musicians

Study details		
Starting date: November 2012	Estimated duration: Over 4 weeks (depending on participant availability)	Source of funding (if applicable): N/A
Has a similar study protocol already been approved by the Ethics Committee?	No (*if yes, please outline briefly*)	

Ethics Approval: To be completed by Ethics Committee		
Name of Chair: Dr J Clark	Signature: A Kerkhoff for J Clark:	Date:
Conditions/Comments:		

1. Background / Introduction to Study (300-500 words)

Please outline your project here. Include background literature, your study rationale/purpose, aims, objectives, hypotheses and research questions as appropriate. Include references as appropriate.

A relatively new field, performing arts medicine and science address the medical needs incurred by dancers, instrumental musicians and vocalists. Evolving from its origins in dance and performing arts medicine and science, the field of dance science has similarly contributed to our understanding of the performer's body (Krasnow & Chatfield, 1996; Ostwald *et al.,* 1994). In recent years there has been a growing interest in the application of such enquiry within the larger performing arts field. As suggested by Harman (1998) and Llobet and Odam (2007), practices and methods from other disciplines, such as performing arts medicine and science and dance science, can contribute to an interdisciplinary approach that is relevant to musicians. As a field of research, performing arts medicine and science advocates having an interest in enhancing dancers' and musicians' performance, suggesting that scientific inquiry, (referring to scientific methods and disciplines) can enhance the performance, performance qualities and qualitative and quantitative potential of dancers and musicians. Given that dance and music performance research is generally led towards objectivity of being observed and measured, it is no surprise that research has attempted to measure components of performance, such as expressive quality and aesthetic competence. Whilst the scientific study of elite athletic performance has shown evidence of enhanced performance, namely because of its quantifiable components that are similar in both training and performance contexts, an understanding of performance from the perspective of the performer (namely the dancer and/or musician) remains in its infancy. There has been a recent shift in an attempt to understand performance from the performer's perspective (Krasnow & Chatfield 1996; Holmes, & Holmes, awaiting revisions), however further research is warranted.

Before components of performance are quantified as a basis for predicting whether performance can be enhanced, a better understanding of performance, considered to be the height of musical and dance achievement, must be sought from the performers themselves. Through the use of qualitative methods, the proposed study therefore aims to gain an insight into and understanding of elite dancer's and musician's performance by understanding performance from their perspectives and bringing their experiences and perspectives to the forefront.

2. Participants

Please include information about your participants here, including how they will be recruited, inclusion/exclusion criteria, age, and intended number.

Participants will be recruited from Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, in South East London. Recruitment will occur in person, through email correspondence via 'all staff' email addresses and advertisements placed on the Trinity Laban Virtual Learning portal (Moodle). It is envisaged that 3-5 elite dancers and 3-5 musicians will be recruited to participate in the study. Elite dancers and musicians will be recruited to participate as research suggests elite performers have superior experience of performing compared to that of lower level performers.

3. Methodology

Please outline your chosen methodology here. Include information about your general study design, protocols, equipment, food, drink or drugs to be administered, questionnaires/interview guides, location of research, and similar. Include references as appropriate.

Due to the subjective nature of the phenomenon under investigation, qualitative research methods will be employed as an effective way of exploring elite musicians and dancers understanding of their performance. Allowing an understanding of the phenomenon in its natural setting, without experimental control (Patton, 2002), similar methodology has previously been employed in dance and music research where the research aims were to capture the involvement in a life situation (Daykin, 2005; Zaza & Muszynski, 1998).

The proposed study will be conducted using an interpretive qualitative methodology and an inductive research approach. An interpretive qualitative methodology is deemed appropriate when exploring a phenomenon where little empirical research exists (Patton, 2002). An inductive research approach will be adopted as a means of allowing the important elements and patterns to emerge organically, without pre-determining what they might be (Ely *et al.,* 1991; Patton, 2002). Participants will be interviewed using a semi-structured interview guide (Ely *et al*., 1991), developed and piloted before testing commences. Questions for the pilot study interviews will centre on performance enhancement, artistic qualities and qualities of a performer/needed for performance and around reflecting on their own performance. The use of an interview guide will ensure that, along with pre-determined questions, prompts and probes, the same open-ended questions are asked from all participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Patton, 2002). It will also allow respondents to talk about their ideas rather than the researcher's interests and enable the interviewer to establish a rapport with respondents (Smith, 2008; Barbour, 2008). Establishing the suitability of the interview guide will allow for minor changes to be made to the wording of some questions and improve the interviewer's familiarity with the interview guide. The use of open-ended questions will allow the respondents to express their feelings and to expand on ideas without imposing restrictions on their responses. Each interview, undertaken by the primary researcher, will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete in total and will take place in a space that the participants are familiar with. To ensure accurate capture of data, interviews will be conducted using a digital audio recorder (ZOOM Q3). This will allow the interviewer to concentrate on the interview without the need for extensive note taking. The role of the primary researcher will be heuristic, using the qualitative research process to discover something about the phenomenon of dancers' and musicians' performance.

4. Ethical considerations

Please outline any ethical considerations of your study here. Include information about degree and likelihood of risk, harm or discomfort, health and safety concerns, and similar. Clearly state the steps taken to address any ethical considerations.

Once recruited, information regarding the purpose and content of the study will be disseminated to participants via an information sheet (see Appendix 1) and further clarification, if needed, will be given in person. Informed consent will be obtained prior to testing (see Appendix 2) and recruited participants will be informed they can choose not to answer questions if they do not wish to. Participants will be reminded that participation is voluntary and reassured they can withdraw at any point during without providing a reason. Steps will be taken to ensure anonymity, confidentially and security of data obtained by ensuring that data is not identifiable, and a number of steps will be taken, and several methods used to help establish trustworthiness and convergence of data (Guba, 1981; Robson, 1993). Steps will include, firstly ensuring the final interview question will ascertain that none of the participants felt they were influenced or led by the interviewer in any way (previously employed by Nordin and Cumming, (2006). Secondly, member checking procedures (Miles & Huberman, 1994) will be employed by sending the

relevant text excerpts to participants in order to confirm accurate representation. At this stage, participants will be encouraged to change any words or sentences that were not congruent with their intended meaning. The final method will see transcripts and meaning units exchanged and scrutinised with another individual to ensure that every idea relating to performance has been extracted into a meaning unit and appropriately named.

5. References (brief)

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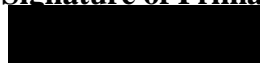
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Signature of Primary Researcher: **Date: 7 May 2012**

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For Students Only:
Signature of Supervisor/Programme Leader: **Date:**

APPENDIX 1: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Outline of Project

As a field of research, performing arts medicine and science advocates having an interest in enhancing dancers' and musicians' performance, suggesting that scientific inquiry (referring to scientific methods and disciplines) can enhance the performance, performance qualities and qualitative & quantitative potential of dancers and musicians. Given that dance and music performance research is generally driven by objectivity of being observed and measured, it is no surprise that studies have attempted to measure components of performance, such as expressive quality and aesthetic competence. Whilst the scientific study of elite athletic performance has shown evidence of enhanced performance, namely because of its quantifiable components that are similar in both training and performance contexts, an understanding of performance from the perspective of the performer (namely the dancer and/or musician) remains in its infancy. There has been a recent shift in an attempt to understand performance from the performer's perspective (Krasnow & Chatfield 1996; Holmes & Holmes, awaiting revisions), however further research is warranted.

Before components of performance are quantified as a basis for predicting whether performance can be enhanced, a better understanding of performance, considered to be the height of musical and dance achievement, must be sought from the performers themselves. Through the use of qualitative methods, the proposed study therefore aims to gain an insight into and understanding of elite dancers' and musicians' performance by understanding performance from their perspectives and bringing their experiences and perspectives to the forefront.

Researcher: Gemma Feeley

Procedures: Each participant will be asked to complete an informed consent. Participants will be asked to participate in one-to-one interviews in which participants will be asked to talk about their perspective, experience and thoughts on their performance. Each interview, undertaken by the primary researcher, will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete in total and will take place in a space that the participants are familiar with. To ensure accurate capture of data, interviews will be conducted using a digital audio recorder (ZOOM Q3).

Formality: Ethical approval for this study has been given by the Trinity Laban Research Ethics Committee. Participant anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained throughout the project and information collected will only be seen by the primary researcher, Gemma Feeley. Participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any stage, or avoid answering questions if you so wish. Unless permission is given for it to be otherwise, stored data will not refer to names or contact details and will therefore be untraceable. All data will be stored confidentially and destroyed once data has been analysed and once ended all data will be gathered and analysed specifically for the purposes of this research.

Enquiries: If you need additional information in relation to the research project please do not hesitate to contact me at the following:

Primary Researcher Contact Information
Gemma Feeley: ███████████████████ ██████████

If there is an aspect of the study, which concerns you, please direct your concern to Jonathan Clark, Head of Research, Tel +██ ████ ████ ████ ████████████████████████

APPENDIX 2: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM SHEET

This information will be treated, as confidential and only those involved in the project activity will have access to it. If any data will be published it will not be identifiable as yours.

Name (please print):

Title of research: Interview study of elite dancers and musicians

Please sign only when you have read the following statements carefully.

By signing this form, I confirm that;

• I am willing to take part in this research and the procedure it includes.

• The test(s), procedures and research have been fully explained to me. I am clear about the purpose and potential benefits of the research.

• I have/will inform the person conducting the test(s)/research about any medical condition I am currently suffering from or have suffered from which may affect or be affected by the test.

• I am aware there may be possible risks involved in the test(s)/research and these risks have been explained to me. I understand that every effort will be made to minimise these risks based on information that I have provided, and observations carried out by the tester throughout the test(s)

• I am free to withdraw from the test at any time without the necessarily giving a reason.

• I have a responsibility to fulfill my commitment to the project; if for serious reason I am unable to continue my involvement, I will discuss the consequences of this decision with the researcher and/or supervisor of the project.

Your participation in this investigation and all data collected from the above testing procedures will remain strictly confidential. Only the researcher, the project supervisor and advisor involved in the study will have access to your information and the information will not be accessible to any other member of staff. In compliance with the Data Protection Act (1988) and the Freedom of Information (2000), you will be able to access all information collected upon the completion of the study.

I have read the Information Sheet and Consent Form and I fully understand the research procedures. I consent to participate in these tests.

Participant Name (please print:)……………………………. Date…………….

Researcher Name (please print:)……………………………. Date…………….

Appendix I: Ethics Application Form: Study 2 (Chapter 5)

Application to the Trinity Laban Ethics Committee for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Human Participants

Applicant Name and any qualifications relevant to the Study:
Gemma Feeley (MSc Dance Science)

Name(s) of Additional Researchers (include names of institutions, if not Trinity Laban):

For Students Only		
Name of Supervisor: Dr. Emma Redding Dr. Patricia Holmes	Study Programme: RDP (MPhil - Year 2)	

Proposed Study Title (up to 20 words):
A Qualitative Study of Elite Dancers' and Musicians' Understanding of Performance (Part 2)

Study details		
Starting date: June/July	**Estimated duration:** Over 4 weeks (depending on participant availability)	**Source of funding** (if applicable): N/A
Has a similar study protocol already been approved by the Ethics Committee?	Yes (*if yes, please outline briefly*) A Qualitative Study of Elite Dancers' and Musicians' Understanding of Performance (Part 1). Study was approved by the Ethics Committee and undertaken in November 2012.	

Ethics Approval: To be completed by Ethics Committee		
Name of Chair: Dr. J Clark	Signature: A Kerkhoff for J Clark: EC1213-01 Date: 01.05.13	Date: 01.05.13
Conditions/Comments:		

6. Background / Introduction to Study (300-500 words)

Please outline your project here. Include background literature, your study rationale/purpose, aims, objectives, hypotheses and research questions as appropriate. Include references as appropriate.

A relatively new field, performing arts medicine and science address the medical needs incurred by dancers, instrumental musicians and vocalists. Evolving from its origins in dance and performing arts medicine and science, the field of dance science has similarly contributed to our understanding of the performer's body (Krasnow & Chatfield, 1996; Ostwald *et al.,* 1994). In recent years there has been a growing interest in the application of such enquiry within the larger performing arts field. As a field of research, performing arts medicine and science advocates having an interest in enhancing dancers' and musicians' performance, suggesting that scientific inquiry, (referring to scientific methods and disciplines) can enhance the performance, performance qualities and qualitative & quantitative potential of dancers and musicians. Given that dance and music performance research is generally led towards objectivity of being observed and measured, it is no surprise that research has attempted to measure components of performance, such as expressive quality and aesthetic competence. Whilst the scientific study of elite athletic performance has shown evidence of enhanced performance, namely because of its quantifiable components that are similar in both training and performance contexts, an understanding of performance from the perspective of the performer (namely the dancer and/or musician) remains in its infancy. Before components of performance are quantified as a basis for predicting whether performance can be enhanced, a better understanding of performance, considered to be the height of musical and dance achievement, must be sought from the performers themselves. Whilst there has been a recent shift in an attempt to understand performance from the performer's perspective (Krasnow & Chatfield 1996; Holmes, & Holmes, 2013) further research is warranted.

The first study of my doctoral research is comprised of two parts. The first part entitled; 'A Qualitative Study of Elite Dancers' and Musicians' was undertaken in November 2012 and looked to gain an insight into and understanding of elite musicians' and dancers' performance.
Employing a qualitative research design, a semi-structured interview approach was adopted to allow for an in-depth exploration concerning participants experience and understanding of performance. Through the use of qualitative methods, the proposed second part of the study similarly looks to gain an insight into and understanding of elite dancer's and musician's performance by understanding performance from their perspectives and bringing their experiences and perspectives to the fore.

7. Participants

Please include information about your participants here, including how they will be recruited, inclusion/exclusion criteria, age, and intended number.

Participants will be recruited from professional dance companies and orchestras /orchestral ensembles. For elite musicians, recruitment will occur via a 'call for participants' disseminated by the Head of Support at the National Youth Orchestra to all residential staff (who are professional musicians). For elite dancers, recruitment will occur via a 'call for participants' by the Manager of the National Institute of Dance Medicine and Science to the 'Dance UK' professional membership email groups. It is envisaged that 3-5 elite dancers and 3-5 musicians will be recruited to participate in the study. Elite dancers and musicians will be recruited to participate, as research suggests elite performers have superior experience of performing compared to that of lower level performers.

8. Methodology

Please outline your chosen methodology here. Include information about your general study design, protocols, equipment, food, drink or drugs to be administered, questionnaires/interview guides, location of research, and similar. Include references as appropriate.

Due to the subjective nature of the phenomenon under investigation, qualitative research method(s) will be employed as an effective way of exploring elite musicians and dancers understanding of performance. Allowing an understanding of the phenomenon in its natural setting, without experimental control (Patton, 2002), similar methodology has previously been employed in dance and music research where the research aims were to capture the involvement in a life situation (Daykin, 2005; Zaza & Muszynski, 1998).

The proposed study will be conducted using an interpretive qualitative methodology and an inductive research approach. An interpretive qualitative methodology is deemed appropriate when exploring a phenomenon where little empirical research exists (Patton, 2002). An inductive research approach will be adopted as a means of allowing the important elements and patterns to emerge organically, without pre-determining what they might be (Ely *et al.,* 1991; Patton, 2002).

Participants will be interviewed using a 'naturalistic' data collection method. Commonly referred to as the 'un-structured interview', it is seen as a naturalistic conversation that is recorded in full for later analysis (Wilson in Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). Taking the form of an everyday conversation rather than a set of ordered questions, it appears more naturalistic because the questions asked and the order in which they are asked flow from the respondents' replies rather than being entirely imposed by the interviewer's predetermined list of questions. Furthermore, the structure employs a list of topics to cover, rather than a set of ordered questions. It is envisaged that topics will centre on participants' understanding and experience of performance; perception and understanding of artistic qualities and on the phenomenon of performance itself.

Each interview, undertaken by the primary researcher, will last approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete in total and will take place in a space that the participants are familiar with. To ensure accurate capture of data, interviews will be conducted using a digital audio recorder (ZOOM Q3). This will allow the interviewer to concentrate on the interview without the need for extensive note taking. Discourse Analysis (DA) will be used as a method of analysis. An approach used to analyse a semiotic event such as written or spoken word, discourse analysis proceeds on the basis of the researcher's interaction with the text (Willig in Smith, 2009).

The role of the primary researcher will be heuristic, using the qualitative research process to discover something about the phenomenon of elite dancers' and musicians' performance.

9. Ethical considerations

Please outline any ethical considerations of your study here. Include information about degree and likelihood of risk, harm or discomfort, health and safety concerns, and similar. Clearly state the steps taken to address any ethical considerations.

Once recruited, information regarding the purpose and content of the study will be disseminated to participants via an information sheet (see Appendix 1) and further clarification, if needed, will be given in person. Informed consent will be obtained prior to testing (see Appendix 2) and recruited participants will be informed that participation is voluntary, and they will be given the

opportunity to withdraw at any stage or avoid answering questions if they so wish. Steps will be taken to ensure anonymity, confidentially and security of data obtained, by ensuring that data is not identifiable. A number of steps will be taken, and several methods used to help establish trustworthiness and convergence of data (Guba, 1981; Robson, 1993). Steps will include, firstly ensuring the final interview question will ascertain that none of the participants felt they were influenced or led by the interviewer in any way (previously employed by Nordin and Cumming, (2006). Secondly, member checking procedures (Miles & Huberman, 1994) will be employed by sending the relevant text excerpts to participants in order to confirm accurate representation. At this stage, participants will be encouraged to change any words or sentences that were not congruent with their intended meaning. The final method will see transcripts and meaning units exchanged and scrutinised with another individual to ensure that every idea relating to performance has been extracted into a meaning unit and appropriately named.

10. References (brief)

Daykin, N. (2005). Disruption, dissonance and embodiment: Creativity, health and risk in music narratives. *Health: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the Social Study of, Health, Illness, Medicine, 9,* 67-87.

Ely, M., Anzul, M., Friedman, T., Garner, D., McCormack Steinmetz, A. (1991). *Doing Qualitative Research: Circles within Circles*. London: Routledge.

Guba, E.G. (1981). Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. *Educational Communication and Technology Journal, 29,* 75-81.

Holmes, P. & Holmes, C. (2013). The Performer's Experience: a case for using qualitative methods in music performance research. *Musicae Scientiae, 17, 72-85.*

Krasnow, D.H., & Chatfield, S, J. (1996). Dance Science and the Dance Technique Class. *Impulse, 4,*162-172.

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Nordin, S.M., Cumming, J. (2005). Professional Dancers Describe Their Imagery: Where, When, What, Why and How. *The Sport Psychologist, 19,* 395-416.

Nordin, S.M., Cumming, J. (2006). The Development of Imagery in Dance. Part 1L Qualitative Findings from Professional Dancers. *Journal of Dance Medicine & Science, 10*, 21-27.

Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. (3rd ed). Sage: Beverley Hills.

Robson, C. (1993). Real World Research. A Resource for Social Scientists and Practitioner Researchers. Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers.

Sapsford, R. & Jupp, v. (1996). *Data Collection and Analysis*. Sage: London

Smith, J.A. (2008/9). *Qualitative Psychology: a Practical Guide to Research Methods*. London: Sage.

Zaza, C., Charles, C., Muszynski, A. (1998). The meaning of playing related musculoskeletal disorders to classical musicians. *Social Science in Medicine, 47,* 2013-2023.

Signature of Primary Researcher: **Date: 25/05/2013**

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For Students Only:

Signature of Supervisor/Programme Leader: **Date:**

APPENDIX 1: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Outline of Project

Those working in the field of Performing Arts Medicine and Science advocate that scientific inquiry can enhance musicians' and dancers' performance. Research that has attempted to investigate this has done so by measuring artistic components of performance, such as aesthetic quality and performance competence. However, questions regarding the objectivity in measuring performance and how scientific inquiry is advantageous in facilitating successful performance remain unanswered. The first study of my doctoral research is comprised of two parts. The first part entitled; 'A Qualitative Study of Elite Dancers' and Musicians' was undertaken in November 2012 and looked to gain an insight into and understanding of elite musicians' and dancers' performance. The proposed second part of the study similarly looks to gain an insight into and understanding of elite dancer's and musician's performance by understanding performance from their perspectives and bringing their experiences and perspectives to the fore.

Primary Researcher: Gemma Feeley

Procedures

Each participant will be asked to complete an informed consent form. Participants will be asked to participate in a one-to-one interview, where they will be asked to talk about their perspectives and experiences as a performer, and on performance in general. Each interview, undertaken by the Primary Researcher, will take approximately 45 minutes to complete and will take place in a space with which the participant is familiar. To ensure accurate capture of data, interviews will be recorded using a digital audio recorder (ZOOM Q3).

Formality

Ethical approval for this study has been given by the Trinity Laban Research Ethics Committee. Participant anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained throughout the project and information collected will only be seen by the primary researcher, Gemma Feeley. Participation is voluntary, and you will be given the opportunity to withdraw at any stage or avoid answering questions if you so wish. Unless permission is given for it to be otherwise, stored data will not make reference to names or contact details and will therefore be untraceable. All data will be stored confidentially and destroyed once data has been analysed. All data will be gathered and analysed specifically for the purposes of this research.

Enquiries: If you need additional information in relation to the research project please do not hesitate to contact me at the following:

Primary Researcher Contact Information
Gemma Feeley: ███████████████   Tel ████████████

Name of Supervisor(s)
Dr Emma Redding and Dr Patricia Holmes \

APPENDIX 2: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

This information will be treated, as confidential and only those involved in the project activity will have access to it. If any data will be published it will not be identifiable as yours.

Name (please print):

Title of research: A Qualitative Study of Elite Dancers' and Musicians' Understanding of Performance (Part 2)

Please read the following statements carefully. Please sign only when you have agreed with the statements and when you have had any relevant questions answered.

By signing this form, I confirm that;

• I am willing to take part in this research and the procedure it includes.

• The test(s), procedures and research have been fully explained to me. I am clear about the purpose and potential benefits of the research.

• I have/will inform the person conducting the test(s)/research about any medical condition I am currently suffering from or have suffered from which may affect or be affected by the test.

• I am aware there may be possible risks involved in the test(s)/research and these risks have been explained to me. I understand that every effort will be made to minimise these risks based on information that I have provided, and observations carried out by the tester throughout the test(s)

• I am free to withdraw from the test at any time without the necessarily giving a reason.

• I have a responsibility to fulfill my commitment to the project; if for serious reason I am unable to continue my involvement, I will discuss the consequences of this decision with the researcher and/or supervisor of the project.

Your participation in this investigation and all data collected from the above testing procedures will remain strictly confidential. Only the researcher, the project supervisor and advisor involved in the study will have access to your information and the information will not be accessible to any other member of staff. In compliance with the Data Protection Act (1988) and the Freedom of Information (2000), you will be able to access all information collected upon the completion of the study.

I have read the Information Sheet and Consent Form and I fully understand the research procedures. I consent to participate in this research.

Participant Name (please print :)……………………………. Date:……….
Researcher Name (please print :)……………………………. Date:……….

Appendix J: Ethics Application Form: Study 3 (Chapter 6)

Application to the Trinity Laban Ethics Committee for Ethical Approval of

Research Involving Human Participants

Applicant Name and any qualifications relevant to the Study:
Gemma Harman (MSc Dance Science)

Name(s) of Additional Researchers (include names of institutions, if not Trinity Laban):

For Students Only		
Name of Supervisor: Dr. Emma Redding Dr. Patricia Holmes	**Study Programme:** RDP (MPhil - Year 3)	

Proposed Study Title (up to 20 words):
A questionnaire study investigating professional dancers' and musicians' understanding of performance.

Study details		
Starting date: End of Sept/October 2014	**Estimated duration:** 2 weeks	**Source of funding (if applicable):** N/A
Has a similar study protocol already been approved by the Ethics Committee?	Yes (*if yes, please outline briefly*) A Qualitative Study of Elite Dancers' and Musicians' Understanding of Performance (Part 1). A Qualitative Study of Elite Dancers' and Musicians' Understanding of Performance (Part 2).	

Ethics Approval: To be completed by Ethics Committee		
Name of Chair: Dr J Clark	Signature: A Kerkhoff pp J Clark: Approved REC1415-0	Date: 29.04.15
Conditions/Comments:		

11. Background / Introduction to Study (300-500 words)

Please outline your project here. Include background literature, your study rationale/purpose, aims, objectives, hypotheses and research questions as appropriate. Include references as appropriate.

An insight into what underlies dance and music performance continues to preoccupy educators, researchers and performers alike. Further, in most contexts, whether artistic or athletic, performance is considered to be the height of a performer's achievement, of which the individual performer is paramount. To date, knowledge acquired from dance and music performance has been achieved through gaining descriptive data about the individual performer. A consequence of such research is a paucity of research investigating performance from the perspective of the performer. To this end, in order to inform the wider debate about dancers' and musicians' performance, it is evident that the research field must first gain a subjective insight from the performer under-investigation.

This doctoral research is comprised of three studies, which aim to investigate professional dancers' and musicians' experience and understanding of performance. Due to the subjective nature of the phenomenon under-investigation, a qualitative research methodology was deemed an effective way of gaining such insight as it ''aims to understand and communicate its subjects' experiences, interpretations and meaning'' (Mason, 2006 p.22). Furthermore, a qualitative research methodology provided a framework for in-depth exploration of the phenomenon in its natural settings and via participants' accounts, without experimental control (Patton, 2002). In short, this doctoral research employs a qualitative research approach as a means of gaining a multi-dimensional understanding of the performer's experience.

The first two studies used in-depth interviews (semi-structured and naturalistic) as a means of investigating professional dancers' and musicians' experience and understanding of performance. This final study will employ a questionnaire as a means of re-confirming emerging themes from the first two studies. It is also hoped that the employment of a questionnaire will enable the researcher to identify possible trends in participant understanding concerning the constructs of performance.

12. Participants

Please include information about your participants here, including how they will be recruited, inclusion/exclusion criteria, age, and intended number.

Participants will be recruited from professional dance companies and orchestras / ensembles. Professional musicians will be recruited via a 'call for participants' through personal contacts at the London Symphony Orchestra, The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the National Youth Orchestra. Professional dancers will be recruited via a 'call for participants' to the 'Dance UK' professional membership email groups and to all members of Independent Dance. Those participants who volunteered to participate in the first two studies will also be contacted. It is envisaged that between 20-30 performers will be recruited to participate in this study.

It was decided that the most insightful data was likely to emerge from professional dancers and musicians as they are perceived to have greater performing experience and, as a result, able to more clearly articulate their experiences compared to that of lower level performers (Holmes, 2005). The decision was taken to recruit an increased sample size and larger spread of participants in the hope that it would present an opportunity to make larger generalisations about the given

population. Professional dancers and musicians are defined as those for whom performance was their main occupation at the time of the study.

13. Methodology

Please outline your chosen methodology here. Include information about your general study design, protocols, equipment, food, drink or drugs to be administered, questionnaires/interview guides, location of research, and similar. Include references as appropriate.

The proposed study will be conducted using a descriptive research approach and a standardised method of data collection, namely a self-administered questionnaire. A descriptive research approach was chosen for the following reasons. Firstly, a descriptive approach is commonly used when examining any-given situation, such as demographics, characteristics, events, attitudes, experiences, behaviours and knowledge (Kelly et al., 2003). Secondly, whereas an analytical research approach is commonly used in longitudinal research, this study is designed to provide a 'snapshot' of how things occur at a specific time without an attempt to control research conditions or to manipulate variables (Denscombe, 2010). It is therefore hoped that the chosen methodological approach will allow for an examination of the way participants perceive, create and interpret their world, by looking for synthesis rather than reductive explanations (Côté et al., 1993). Questionnaires are a highly-structured method of data collection and are a commonly used method when exploring aspects of a situation, or to seek explanation and provide data for testing hypotheses (Kelly et al., 2003; Silverman, 1993). Moreover, questionnaires have been frequently employed in the domains of dance and music (Kreutz et al., 2008; Nordin and Cumming, 2008; Weiss et al., 2008; Williamon et al., 2009).

Ordinal data will be collected, and values/observations belonging to it ranked using the Likert scale, whereby responses are coded by the interviewer to a seven categories response (strongly agree, agree etc). The response category of 'other' will also be included in the codes for closed questions as a way of avoiding a complete foreclosure of the primary researcher's options when difficult to code. The study will employ variables and questions, involving categories and procedures for respondents to answer. A number of questions will be used to place the respondent on a scale that represents a single continuum of an attitude for which any respondent has a score derived from a number of separate questions. Both closed and open questions will be used within the questionnaire, whereby respondents will be asked to read the questions provided and to answer either by circling or ticking one of the answer's boxes (Wilson and Sapsford, 1996). Items will be developed to represent the responses to questions regarding participants' understanding of performance found in the first two studies and questions will be based upon participants' vocabularies also gained from these studies.

Data analysis will use descriptive and inferential analyses using SPSS. For the analysis of open-ended questions, the primary researcher will undertake composite measurements, a measuring device that combines more than one item in order to measure a concept that is too complex to be measured simply, or with one item. This will, therefore, mean that responses to a set of related questions may be analysed to show two or more dimensions of an underlying attitude. Furthermore, data analysis will see the information presented sorted into categories based on the responding participants, for example whether they are a dancer or musician. Previous music and dance research has seen the use of Likert scales and descriptive and inferential analyses undertaken on questionnaire data collected (Brown et al., 2007; Weiss et al., 2008; Williamon et al., 2009).

14. Ethical considerations

Please outline any ethical considerations of your study here. Include information about degree and likelihood of risk, harm or discomfort, health and safety concerns, and similar. Clearly state the steps taken to address any ethical considerations.

This study will be conducted online using the environment provided by Surveymonkey (www.surveymonkey.com). Each respondent will receive, by email, the same Surveymonkey link, which contain identical versions of the questionnaire. In a covering email, participants will be provided with an overview of the purpose and content of the study and instructions on how to undertake the questionnaire. An expectation from the primary researcher that it would be completed in the same order and following the same questions will also be included (Sapsford and Jupp, 1996). Informed consent will be obtained prior to participants undertaking the questionnaire via a disclaimer included within the Surveymonkey template. Recruited participants will be informed that participation is voluntary, and they will be given the opportunity to withdraw at any stage or avoid answering questions if they so wish. The primary researcher's contact details will also be provided, should clarification of the questions presented be required.

Once completed, questionnaires will be returned automatically to the primary researcher using the Surveymonkey link without participant identification, ensuring anonymity, confidentiality and security of the participants and data obtained. Access to the administration of the Surveymonkey link will be stored under a password protected login, to which only the primary research has access.

15. References (brief)

Brown, A. C., Wells, T. J., Schade, M. L., Smith, D. L., & Fehling, P. C. (2007). Effects of Plyometric Training Versus Traditional Weight Training on Strength, Power, and Aesthetic Jumping Ability in Female Collegiate Dancers. *Journal of Dance Medicine & Science*, 11(2), 38-44.

Côté, J., Salmela, J. H., Baria, A., & Russell, S.J. (1993). Organizing and Interpreting Unstructured Qualitative Data. *Sport Psychologist,* 7(2), 128-137.

Denscombe, M. (2010). *The Good Research Guide: For small-scale social research projects*. (4th ed). London: Open University Press.

Holmes, P. (2005). Imagination in practice: a study of the integrated roles of interpretation, imagery and technique in the learning and memorisation processes of two experienced solo performers. *British Journal Music Education,* 22(3), 217-235.

Kelly, K., Clark, B., Brown, V., Sitzia, J. (2003). Good practice in the conduct and reporting of survey research. *International Journal for Quality in Health Care,* 15(3), 261-266.

Kreutz, G., Ginsborg, J., & Williamon, A. (2008). Music Students' Health Problems and Health-Promoting Behaviours. *Medical Problems of Performing Artists,* March 3-11.

Mason, J. (2006). Mixing methods in a qualitative driven way. *Qualitative Research*, 6 (1), 9-25.

Nordin, S.M., Cumming, J. (2006). The Development of Imagery in Dance. Part 1L Qualitative Findings from Professional Dancers. *Journal of Dance Medicine & Science, 10*, 21-27.

Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Beverley Hills: Sage Publications.

Sapsford, R. & Jupp, v. (1996). *Data Collection and Analysis*. Sage: London.

Silverman, D. (1993). *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction.* London: Sage Publications.

Weiss, D.S., Selina Shah, M.D., Burchette, R.J. (2008). A profile of the Demographics and Training Characteristics of Professional Modern Dancers. *Journal of Dance Medicine and Science,* 12 (2), 41-46.

Williamon, A., Wasley, D., Burt-Perkins, R., Ginsborg, J. & Hildebrandt, W. (2009). Profiling musicians' health, welbeing, and performance. *Proceedings of the International Symposium on Performance Science 2009,* (pp. 85-90), European Association of Conservatoires (AEC).

Signature of Primary Researcher: **Date:** 08/09/2014

G.Harman