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Music Performance Anxiety as Hidden Desire and Emerging Self: The Development and Exploration of a Conceptual Lens for Performers and Practitioners

by

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Submitted for PhD

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August 2019

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'Left to itself, the physiological intelligence is almost incapable of making a mistake'

- Aldous Huxley

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Acknowledgements

ABSTRACT

Music performance anxiety (MPA) is common in musicians performing in the Western classical tradition. Despite being partly beneficial to performance, it is usually conceived as a form of anxiety disorder. The symptoms are extremely varied, and include psychological, behavioural and physiological aspects. However, there is a striking absence of curiosity in the literature about why specific symptoms of MPA occur in an individual. For a performer like myself, and for clients in my performance coaching practice, the problematic aspect of MPA is that it is experienced as an independent part of the self that prevents musical intentions being fully carried out. This research takes an interdisciplinary approach to investigate how one might simultaneously solve both the theoretical problem of the reasons for particular symptoms and the practical problem of their disruption of musical intentions.

Ideas from psychodynamic psychology and existentialism are used to develop a conceptual lens for MPA that suggests symptoms may be seen as specifically signalling an individual's hidden artistic desires or emergent performing selves. The symptoms might therefore be welcomed as suggesting a reappraisal of the musical intentions they interrupt: that is, they might lead in a new artistic direction for that performer. This gives new possibilities for musicians to deal with MPA, and also for practitioners who work with musicians to address this issue.

This research explores the therapeutic, artistic and professional possibilities of the conceptual lens. It asks in what ways MPA symptoms may signal performance desire and emerging performer-selves, how this may contribute to artistic development, and what coaching and performing practices may emerge from this.

In coaching musicians, the spirit of 'gentle empiricism' is used to observe the effects of applying the conceptual lens. Seven case studies elucidate the successes, failures and the beginnings of the development of a practice for working with musicians who have MPA. In the majority of these cases there seems to be a link between MPA and hidden musical desires or new performing selves, and the possibility of artistic development.

There follows a study of how the conceptual lens can lead to my own artistic development. In experimental performances the nature of my 'MPA-self' is explored and new performances and performance practices are developed using MPA as an expressive tool. These show an emerging desire for expressive improvisation and unconventional performance of classical repertoire. In professional performance a method is developed which can balance the expectations of classical performance with the emergent performing desire signalled by MPA. Here, autoethnographic writing elucidates the resulting emergence of transformative narratives in my artistic and professional journey.

INTRODUCTION

I am a musician. I earn my living playing the horn, mainly in orchestras that take a historically-informed attitude to performance. That means I play various types of natural- and early valve-horns. I also work with mainstream symphony orchestras playing the modern instrument from time to time. Performance anxiety is a constant presence in day-to-day rehearsing and performing, whether it is having a disastrous effect on performance, merely preventing me performing at my best, in the background as a worry, or relief at its absence. It is a semi-taboo subject amongst colleagues. Often, when I mention the subject of my PhD, they make sure no-one else is listening, then talk about their experiences, coping strategies and various pieces of advice they have gleaned over the years. There is an appetite for solutions to this common problem.

Twenty years ago, I trained in massage. Although much of the work was in manipulating bodies to make them better, my teacher also impressed upon me that a massage client might have a good and longstanding reason for holding tension in certain areas. As a masseur I could release this tension, but did I have the right? The body may be looking after its owner by physically hanging on to emotions or memories that would be too painful to release. The wisdom of the body in protecting the person from strong emotion by holding it in muscles, developed in me a respect for clients being as they are, as opposed to how a knowing practitioner might think they should be. I also learnt that emotion and physicality are not separate.

At about the same time, one of the orchestras I work for developed an education programme. I enrolled to train in music workshop techniques for children. In participating in these techniques with fellow professional musicians as part of the training, I was struck by how

much the combination of improvisation and playing by ear released a part of my musicianship that had been neglected through orchestral playing.

Noticing how many musicians could benefit from greater freedom both in body and musical expression led me to develop courses for students, amateurs and professionals that combined bodywork and music workshop techniques. However, it became increasingly apparent that a third strand was necessary in this work. As well as physical and musical/creative work, and connected to these, mental or psychological issues became important.

A serendipitous event brought me to process-oriented psychology (POP), developed by Arnold Mindell. This is a post-Jungian paradigm. Jung conceived that night-time dreams are the expression of unconscious contents that, when assimilated into consciousness, make us more complete (Jung 1959). Mindell (1998) widened this idea to include not only dreams but everything unconscious or unintended, including physical symptoms, sudden thoughts or fantasies, conflicts, mistakes, posture, and even serendipitous events. POP has as an axiom that unintended events are signs of processes that 'want' to come into being and are part of the 'dreaming' of an individual that wishes for their *individuation*. Jung describes this individuation process as

> a long-drawn-out process of inner transformation and rebirth into another being. This "other being" is the other person in ourselves – that larger and greater personality maturing within us, whom we have already met as the inner friend of the soul […] into whom Nature herself would like to change us – that other person who we also are and yet can never attain to completely. (Jung, 1959, p.130-131)

Mindell's method of uncovering the emerging process, of which these unintended events are signals, is amplification of these signals. There are various techniques of amplification, but in its simplest form it consists of increasing the strength of the signal. That

means, if the signal is some sort of symptom, to consciously make it worse. Thus, one of the characteristics of my coaching practice became welcoming those aspects of their performance that a client does not like. I treat as allies the problems that they wish to eliminate and that they therefore bring to me to solve. I ask the question "what wisdom is your mind and body showing in giving you these particular issues?". There is a flavour of seeing beauty in the unwanted. My technique is to allow and even to increase a problem rather than suppress it.

I will give two brief examples, one from the physical side of the work, and one musical:

A piano player had stiff fingers. All his effort in performing went towards trying to relax them. I encouraged him to keep them stiff. The result was that he felt more in control, expended less mental effort and played more right notes.

A violinist felt she was making a rough sound. I suggested making it more so. After initial reluctance, the greater contact with the string used to make it rougher transformed the tone into something she had always hoped for - rich and expressive - but had long given up hoping to achieve.

I developed a love for these transformative experiences. An issue experienced as a problem, when accepted and welcomed, may provide a solution to a problem (not necessarily the presented one), or a growth point in the musical life of a player. These positive outcomes are not predictable from the symptom or problem but emerge from allowing them to exist instead of suppressing or attempting to 'cure' them. The wonder I experience at these transformations is a major reason for pursuing this work.

However, amongst my course participants and in my own performing, there was an increasing need to look at the issue of performance anxiety. Surely my approach would work

for this issue too? Experimenting produced mixed results. Sometimes performance anxiety problems are physical or musical problems that can be approached as above, but this is difficult to handle in performance. When there are also symptoms such as worry, or critical internal dialogues, it is difficult to disentangle what is happening. In my own performance there were some successes, as the following example shows.

I was playing in a concert and I noticed a famous horn player in the audience. This made me nervous, with the symptom of continuously thinking about what this person would think of my playing. However much I tried to focus, he kept appearing in my head. I began to make mistakes in my eagerness to impress. Drawing to mind my coaching work, I thought about how to accept and amplify this symptom - could I welcome him into my head? Even more, I could become him. I did not try to imitate his playing – that would have been impossible. Instead I imagined being him: face, body shape, posture. An immediate change occurred. My breathing loosened, I started playing well and confidently. He was exactly the inspiration I needed. But it did not feel like a poor imitation – I also felt I was playing like myself. Another effect was that I was very focussed. Instead of half trying to concentrate on the job at hand and half trying to rid myself of the person who kept appearing in my head, I was fully focussed on maintaining him there, which was easy to do as it had already been happening spontaneously.

This example was successful, but I also experienced difficulties in attempting to apply this approach. First, it takes a certain amount of bravery to try something new in public performance. There are expectations from audience and colleagues that must be fulfilled, and the free-lancer's need to be asked back next time. Secondly, it doesn't always work. I have

spent performances 'chasing' different symptoms, trying various amplifications without obvious benefit. Had I failed to discover the relevant symptom among many? Did I fail to follow one path with sufficient rigour? Does the method simply not work in all circumstances? Is the inability to focus on one path a symptom in itself? If so, how can I amplify it?

The variable results led me to think that there was some value in using these methods to help performance anxiety, but that more investigation was necessary. This was my research 'itch'. Could I find an approach that could uncover an underlying beneficial process in performance anxiety, and use this approach both in my own performance and in coaching others?

This research starts with a critical look at existing research attitudes to music performance anxiety (MPA), including how relevant this research is in a practical way to help musicians who suffer MPA and those who coach these musicians. Most MPA research is quantitative and does not provide this relevance. There is little research that looks at the attitudes used in my approach: that specific symptoms might have meaning; that symptoms might be welcomed as part of a growth process; and that one might respect the wisdom of bodily and other processes (including MPA) that occur in a musician. Research that does investigate these issues include a small number of papers with a psychodynamic approach and Senyshyn and O'Neill's article (2001) which takes an existentialist view.

My first degree background in physics led me to wish for a firm theoretical basis for any new approach to MPA. The psychodynamic and existentialist paradigms, along with techniques from process-oriented psychology, enable me to develop a conceptual lens for MPA that has a theoretical underpinning, and may also be practically applied in performing and performance coaching. This conceptual lens is then explored empirically in my own roles as coach and performer.

1. EXISTING CONCEPTIONS OF MPA

This research develops and examines in practical terms a new conceptual lens for MPA. In order to provide background for this and a review of the relevant literature, this chapter critiques existing conceptions of MPA. In particular, the following questions are relevant in attempting to match a new conceptual lens to my current approach:

- Are there reasons for particular symptoms?

- MPA is known to have beneficial aspects. Are there ways of using these benefits to enhance performance?

- Are the symptoms and root causes of MPA in an individual to be pathologised or welcomed as part of their individuality?

- What outcomes do musicians want?

1.1 What is MPA?

Music performance anxiety is a commonly occurring issue in classical musicians. Van Kemenade et al (1995) report that 59% of respondents from Dutch professional orchestras have experienced enough MPA to affect their working or personal lives. James (1998) puts the figure at 70% in a survey of 56 orchestras. Lockwood (1989) reports performance anxiety that is 'severe' in 24% of US orchestral musicians. Bearing in mind these figures, it is not surprising that Sternbach (1995) goes as far as describing orchestral and opera musicians as a 'neglected working population in crisis' (p.221). A large body of research has not produced a solution to MPA (Kenny, 2011).

But what is it? Kenny's definition is

Music performance anxiety is the experience of marked and persistent anxious apprehension related to musical performance that has arisen through underlying biological and/or specific anxiety-conditioning experiences. It is manifested through combinations of affective, cognitive, somatic and behavioural symptoms (Kenny, 2011 p.61).

Here we have the main assumptions in MPA research: that the symptoms of MPA are a manifestation of something deeper, a disorder known as MPA, which in turn has biological and experiential causes. This might be illustrated as follows:

| Symptoms | caused by | An anxiety disorder known as MPA | caused by | Biological and experiential factors |
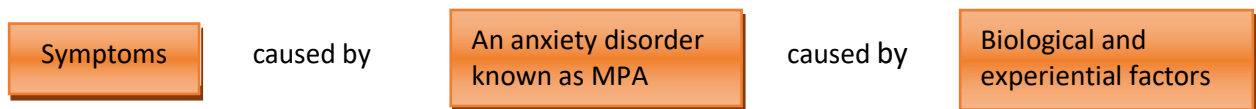
Figure 1: The Structure of MPA

Let us look briefly at each of these elements.

Symptoms are diverse and have physiological, psychological and behavioural manifestations. They include increased heart rate, hyperventilation, dry mouth, sweating, diarrhoea, dizziness, indigestion, muscle tension, cold hands, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, distractedness, distorted thoughts, memory loss, musical and technical mistakes, shaking and much else (Burin & Osório, 2017). It is important to note that not all symptoms occur on any particular occasion.

Biological and experiential factors are as diverse as symptoms, and include generational transmission of anxiety; parental empathy; depression/hopelessness; controllability; trust; proximal somatic anxiety; worry/dread; pre- and post- performance rumination; self/other scrutiny; opportunity cost; memory reliability (Kenny, 2009a). The Barlow emotion-based theory of triple vulnerability is widely accepted in MPA literature (Burin & Osório, 2017; Ortiz

Brugués, 2009; Pehk, 2012). The vulnerabilities to anxiety disorders in this model are:

i. 'A generalised biological (heritable) vulnerability

ii. A generalised psychological vulnerability based on early-life experiences in developing a sense of control over salient events

iii. More specific psychological vulnerability whereby anxiety comes to be associated with certain environmental stimuli through learning processes such as respondent or vicarious conditioning' (Pehk, p.16)

These correspond to Kenny's 'underlying biological and/or specific anxiety-conditioning experiences' above, and may be summarised for MPA as inherited factors, early life experiences, and experiences in the learning and performing of music.

The identity of the middle part of fig.1, an anxiety disorder known as MPA, is less well known. The implication of its place in fig.1 is that it is a sort of link between 'factors' and 'symptoms'. But the plurality of factors and symptoms (causes and effects), echoed by many researchers (Biasutti & Concina, 2014; Kenny, 2006, 2009, 2011; Papageorgi, Hallam, & Welch, 2007; Steptoe, 1989; Wolfe, 1989), calls into question whether it is a single phenomenon. It would be reasonable to question whether, for instance, one musician who had an abusive teacher and consequently suffers stiff shoulders in performance has the same condition as another who has not practised enough and gets 'the shakes'. That is not to imply one is more severe than the other, or that there may not be multiple causes for both these musicians, just that it is reasonable to query whether we are looking at the same mechanism in each case. There is a lack of curiosity in the literature about how the final manifestation as symptom emerges from the many biological and experiential causes. The only link between the two is the central part of the scheme illustrated above, 'an anxiety disorder known as MPA'. Does it in fact supply a useful connection between the two outer parts? Does naming it 'music

performance anxiety' provide this? The 'music performance' part is useful as this is the area of study. Is it useful to include the 'anxiety' part? How much does naming it 'anxiety' affect attitudes to its research? Anxiety is something to be coped with and managed. It is to be treated. It is a disorder. Indeed, the MPA literature is dominated by these medical terms. Amongst other things, a medical model requires MPA to be measured and treated.

1.2 Measurement

Symptoms are often seen not as an issue to be remedied in themselves, but used to help indicate and measure an underlying MPA condition in order to find appropriate treatments (Brodsky, 1996; Kenny, 2006). In turn, measurement is difficult because of the huge variety of physical, psychological and behavioural symptoms. Wolfe (1989) has her own 'Music Performance Anxiety Scale', which uses cognitive and emotional symptoms to give a score for MPA. However, in looking at physical symptoms, Steptoe (1989) claims that 'it is well established that perceived somatic activity and actual responses are poorly correlated' (p.5) and that this explains why musicians with MPA may have objectively similar physiological states to non-anxious people. Similarly, Craske and Craig (1984) show that there is little correlation between subjective measures of MPA and physiological ones. The frequently used Kenny Music Performance Anxiety Inventory (K-MPAI) assesses MPA using not only symptoms but also various underlying factors that are correlated with MPA, such as early relationships and general psychological vulnerability (Kenny, 2009b). K-MPAI was developed in part because of a suggested problem that questionnaires from different research projects are difficult to compare: 'We cannot be confident that each questionnaire is identifying the musicians with the same level of performance anxiety' (Kenny, 2011, p.85). Other researchers concur: 'one of the hindrances to empirical research has been the absence of psychometrically robust psychological instruments to reliably assess MPA' (Chang-Arana, Kenny, & Burga-León,

2018, p.554).

Kenny (2011) wishes to have an objective basis and therefore dismisses the self-reporting of MPA for 'unreliability' (p.95) in favour of underlying factors, psychophysiological measures and behavioural observation. This external approach is considered more objective, and more medically acceptable, but conversely, research also shows that self-report (how nervous someone feels) matters because attitudes towards symptoms itself has an effect on both anxiety and performance levels. For example, symptoms that some performers interpret as anxiety are interpreted by others as excitement (Nagel, 2010; Ortiz Brugués, 2009). Wolfe (1989) notes that symptoms may become causes in a vicious cycle and gives the example of a flautist whose symptom is a dry mouth: worrying about this is likely to increase anxiety, making symptoms worse. Likewise, a positive attitude towards MPA symptoms (for instance, viewing them as facilitating a performance) improves performance quality (Yoshie et al., 2009). There is also evidence that a performer's interpretation of anxiety symptoms rather than the symptoms themselves have an effect on self-assessment of performance (Clark, Lisboa, & Williamon, 2014; Salmon & Meyer, 1998). It is the 'self-report' of MPA that affects both anxiety and performance.

This brings into question whether external measurement is relevant at all. What do you do with it? Does one tell a player who says they have severe MPA that they 'in fact' haven't, according to a 'robust psychological instrument'? Conversely, an external observer might pronounce that a certain person has performance anxiety, but the actual performance might be excellent, and the performer might be pleased with it. It only becomes a problem if the performer thinks it is. In a sense, self-report is all that matters. As Oliver Burkemann says, 'what's the difference between believing you're stressed and being stressed? There isn't one' (2016, para 5).

External measurement of MPA is therefore replaced or expanded in some studies by

musicians' <u>perceived</u> level of MPA. One would expect this to be more relevant because perception is part of the complexity of MPA and can lead to further anxiety. In their sample of musicians from various genres, Papageorgi et al (2013) find that for solo performances, 39.3% reported that MPA affected their performance adversely, 35.2% that it affected it beneficially, and 25.5.% that it had no effect. It is interesting in itself that such a large proportion found MPA to be beneficial. However, one of the factors that contributed to perceived impairment of performance quality was how much MPA the musician saw themselves as having. Their perception that symptoms constitute MPA makes it more likely to adversely affect performance. Papageorgi et al do not infer from their results, however, that musicians' experience (rather than what a researcher measures) is of importance. Instead they claim that reported discrepancies between self-report and objective measures of MPA is because of varying tolerances of MPA. The implication here is that there really is an objective amount of MPA that can be measured and therefore treated in some way.

But can one make two musicians' MPA equivalent at all? Can one compare so many cubic millimetres of sweat with doubtful thoughts per minute, how many nails bitten with how large a teacher's voice looms inside a musician's head? Can these manifestations be reduced to a 'score' for MPA, and is this 'score' useful in remedying the problem?

To summarise, much research centres around the objective extent of MPA in an individual, as measured by externally observable criteria. Others have shown that some external measurements are not well correlated with subjective anxiety in a musician. Some research takes into account a subjective 'self-report', as this has an effect on anxiety levels itself. But this self-report is still used as an element in obtaining an underlying measure of MPA. Measures such as K-MPAI use various factors that assess an underlying anxiety. One might question the meaning and purpose of obtaining such an assessment.

1.3 Treatment

The combination of inherited and early-life factors, and meaningful later experience that are the causes of MPA show that it is both complex and highly individual. A treatment that merely tried to remove symptoms might be unsuccessful. There are deeper causes at work, and there may be problems of symptoms returning if these causes are neglected; or metamorphosing - a phenomenon known as 'symptom substitution', (Tryon, 2014). For this reason, many treatments have tended to focus on causes rather than symptoms.

A common conclusion is that, since MPA is multi-factorial, multi-modal interventions are needed in order to remedy the various factors (Kenny, 2011; Sârbescu & Dorgo, 2014). This seems practically and ethically problematic. Practically it involves interventions in many areas. Can we be sure that such a piecemeal approach can yield convincing results? Kenny (2009) lists twelve underlying factors in the MPA of 159 tertiary level music students in New Zealand. Is it possible to address each of these separately in an individual? Can one divide people up into these parts and hope that they might be put together in a way that makes a whole? Ethically, it disallows the richness of the individual stemming from their unique life experience in favour of a researcher's idea of what is correct. It is as if one can 'fix' someone by pulling them in lots of 'better' directions. Better for whom? Can (and should) people be moulded to fit an ideal by an all-knowing researcher/therapist/teacher?

Many factors that are empirically linked to MPA are in any case untreatable, long-term, or part of the individuality of the person. For instance, the following:

- gender (Coşkun-Şentürk & Çırakoğlu, 2018; Kenny, Driscoll, & Ackermann, 2014; Papageorgi et al., 2013; Sârbescu & Dorgo, 2014),
- age (Kenny et al., 2014; Sârbescu & Dorgo, 2014),
- emotional stability (Sârbescu & Dorgo, 2014),
- self-efficacy (McCormick & McPherson, 2003),

- perfectionism (Kenny, Davis, & Oates, 2004),

- hand temperature (Zinn, McCain, & Zinn, 2000),

- introversion (Salmon, 1990).

There are also various studies (Biasutti & Concina, 2014; Coşkun-Şentürk & Çırakoğlu, 2018; Kenny, Fortune, & Ackermann, 2013; Zinn et al., 2000) that, rather than investigating symptoms or causes, analyse performers' habits, including self-conception, ability to relax, attitudes to problem solving, and praying. These are then compared statistically with measured MPA. The conclusions are usually that a trait that correlates negatively with MPA should be taught to those with MPA. One weakness of this approach is that correlation is not the same as causation. There are also ethical problems as above. Is the assumption that those without these habits are the wrong sort of person? Instead, perhaps it would be possible to find a treatment that respects the unique origins of an individual's tendency to anxiety, rather than pathologise these origins.

Papageorgi et al (2007) advise letting conservatoire teachers know about predictive factors so that instrumental teaching may be tailored with respect to MPA, but this seems unlikely to work in practice. Does one advise a teacher that a new student is female, seems a little introverted and was emotional in her audition, and therefore to take steps to negate her proneness to MPA? How? Does a musician's whole nature have to change in order to treat this tendency? As well as being ethically questionable, this advice negates teachers' ability to be responsive to individual needs on a personal level and assumes validity in corresponding the general to the particular. Can these factors be seen instead as part of the individuality of the student rather than factors that lead to an anxiety disorder?

As I have said, there is little or no curiosity in MPA research about why there are particular symptoms for an individual. Symptoms are rather seen as describers of the condition.

One of the only treatments that attempts to follow the path between cause and symptom is psychodynamic psychotherapy. According to Nagel (2010), MPA symptoms may be seen as 'a "disguise" for unresolved conflicts' (p.144). The resolution of these conflicts can therefore relieve symptoms. The removal of symptoms alone, which might be achieved by other methods, is viewed as inadequate, the equivalent of treating 'only the boil but neglect(ing) the underlying diabetes' (Plaut, 1990, p.61). Plaut discusses the roles of exhibitionism, shame and guilt in causing MPA. Pehk's (2012) case studies include linking MPA symptoms with problematic relationships with the participant's mother, unpleasant childhood experiences, fear of death and unrequited love. Psychodynamic therapy has a wider aim than symptom reduction, and is intended to facilitate a musician's self-knowledge and access their inner strengths and self-esteem, which in turn facilitate performance (Nagel, 2010). Any change in the musician may thus considered to be personally generated rather than the imposition of a 'better' attitude by a knowing researcher. According to Nagel, psychodynamic psychotherapy has a longer-lasting effect on musicians with MPA than cognitive-behavioural treatments which address symptoms more directly.

Papageorgi et al (2013) write 'one of the major concerns for musicians is the impact of anxiety on the quality of performance' (p.19). Kenny (2011) goes further and states that a 'performer's key goals relate to the quality of their performance rather than their mental state' and that they wish to 'perform at their best and with enjoyment and pleasure' (p.202). Despite this almost all MPA research (including Kenny's) focuses on causes, management and treatment of the anxiety rather than performance levels (Finch, 2018). Yet the primary problem about MPA – the reason it is a problem at all – is that it can have a negative effect on performance (Steptoe, 2001).

Other research shows that even if anxiety can be reduced, this doesn't necessarily improve performance or performers' satisfaction. Behavioural treatments can make a musician

feel less anxious, but performance quality is not improved (Mansberger, 1988). Guided imagery can reduce anxiety, but has no effect on performance satisfaction (Esplen & Hodnett, 1999). Systematic desensitisation reduces performance anxiety but has no effect on performance competence (Wardle, 1975 in Wolfe, 1989). It is a fair question to ask to what extent these are desirable results in the light of Kenny's statement. If musicians feel anxious while performing, perhaps that might be acceptable as long as they perceive that they play well. Kenny (2006) lauds improved performance because it improves confidence and therefore lessens anxiety. Is this the right way around? Can we be sure musicians consider the latter as the aim rather than the former?[1] This is perhaps a fundamental challenge of music performance anxiety treatment. Where should one position oneself between eliminating MPA as an underlying psychopathology and enabling good performance?

In a medical model that requires measurement and treatment, I have drawn attention to some problems with establishing a useful role for MPA as an anxiety disorder that links causes and symptoms in the schema of fig.1. For the purposes of relieving MPA, treating symptoms is insufficient because this does not address deeper causes, and adjusting deeper causes is ethically or practically problematic. Psychodynamic treatment may avoid this issue by addressing deeper causes without a 'knowing' outsider that imposes specific solutions. An issue that imposes itself on all talk of 'treatment' is that the reduction of anxiety may not be as important an aim for musicians as performing well and enjoyably.

1.4 What is Anxiety, and is MPA a Form of Anxiety?

Having examined the literature on the measurement and treatment of MPA, let us return

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[1] Hamann & Sobaje, (1983) advocate enhancing performance skills, but not with the aim of reducing MPA. Rather, they find that MPA enhances performance, and does so more in more skilful performers.

to the question of the identity of the middle part of fig.1, a type of anxiety disorder called MPA.

Anxiety, although a term in common current use, is ill-defined as a concept. In the following definitions it is variously described:

'a feeling of dread, fear or apprehension' (Encyclopaedia Britannica).

'an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes' (American Psychological Association).

'extreme apprehension and worry' (Psychology Today, n.d.)

'a state consisting of psychological and physical symptoms brought about by a sense of apprehension at a perceived threat' (Psychology Today, n.d.)

'anticipation of impending danger and dread' (Mosby's Dictionary of Medicine, Nursing, and Health Professions, 2011)

Is it a feeling, an emotion, worry, a state or an anticipation? It is not obvious from these definitions how 'anxiety' furnishes a useful link between symptoms and causes. Perhaps these are just describers of symptoms, in which case anxiety is merely the condition of having anxiety symptoms. This tautology is evident in an otherwise helpful description by Kenny (2011), who writes that the experience of anxiety may include one or more of the following components:

1.   Physiological arousal (elevations in heart rate, respiration, perspiration, etc.)

2.   Subjective feelings of discomfort (the emotion or affect of anxiety)

3.   Disturbed cognitions (worry, dread and rumination)

4.   Overt behaviour (shaking, trembling, posture, muscle tension). (Kenny 2011, p.92)

Firstly, it is interesting that these are described not as anxiety per se, but as the 'experience' of anxiety, as if 'anxiety' is separate from these phenomena. The slipperiness of

the concept of anxiety is also shown by point 2, where part of the 'experience of anxiety' is the 'affect of anxiety'. This tautologous writing is surprisingly common in the literature.

Secondly, in addition to the components of anxiety above, which are for all types of anxiety, not just MPA, Kenny also adds, for MPA in particular, 'embodied anxiety', by which she means manifestations that occur in the body which are not included above, and often without the performer feeling nervous. Examples she gives are spacing out, losing concentration, visual blurring and change in the smooth muscle system (meaning, amongst others the veins, arteries, gastrointestinal system, irises and urinary system, rather than the motor muscles). These examples are such common symptoms for musicians and can have such a strong effect on performance that it is telling that they do not appear in the original list of 'the experience of anxiety'.

Furthermore, if these symptoms can occur without the performer feeling nervous, is this a pointer to the fact that performance anxiety, which we think of as primarily a 'feeling of [...] nervousness' (OED), could be something else entirely?

In a complex picture of causes and effects, is there some unifying factor we can introduce, and is this factor 'anxiety'? While the OED defines anxiety as 'a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease about something with an uncertain outcome', there seems to be something much more varied, and specific to an individual than mere worry. Is MPA a somewhat random form of self-sabotage or is there something more to it?

1.5 Is it a disorder?

MPA is often referred to as an 'anxiety disorder'. I have drawn into question whether MPA is a form of anxiety. I would now like to question whether it is always a disorder. Plaut (1990) comments 'Pablo Casals experienced strong anxiety with every performance up until his death at age 97. We would, however, be on shaky ground if we called his anxiety a symptom

needing treatment, since it did not interfere with his performing' (p.58). McGrath (2012) also makes the point that the effects of MPA only become symptoms if they interfere with the intended performance.

Furthermore, MPA can not only 'not interfere' but can be beneficial. Hamann and Sobaje (1983) find that 'anxiety had positive effects on subjects' performances'. Van Kemenade et al (1995) note that some musicians (although a minority) experience MPA that affects their performance positively. Simoens et al (2015) acknowledge a beneficial aspect of MPA in the form of a 'performance boost': 28% of their sample agree that 'stage fright has a positive influence on my performance' (p.175). Papageorgi et al (2013) state that 'anxiety appeared to have negative connotations, although it was also reported as beneficial' (p.83), and also (2007) that most studies have looked at 'maladaptive' forms of MPA and ways of 'coping' with them. This raises the interesting possibility of 'adaptive' MPA, which may actually be helpful.

The beneficial aspect of performance anxiety is well documented, and is illustrated in the Yerkes-Dodson curve:
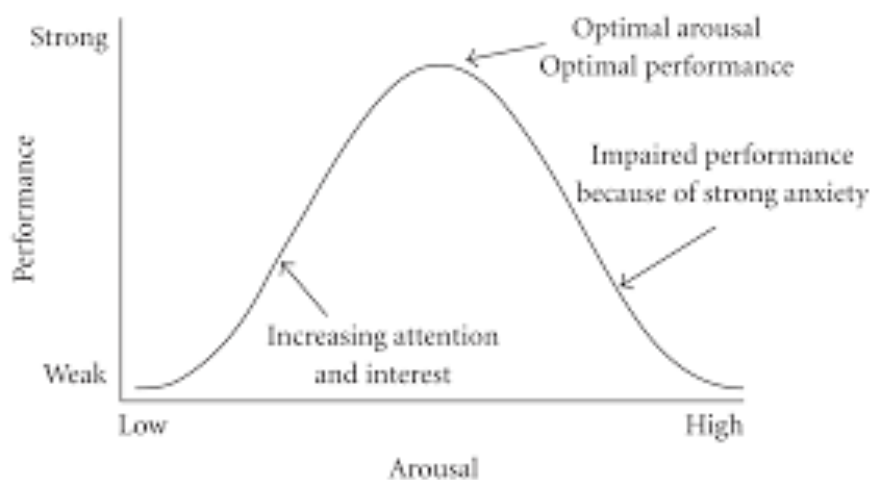
Figure 2: The Yerkes-Dodson curve

(Diamond, Campbell, Park, Halonen, & Zoladz, 2007)

This is often referred to in MPA research and is said to show that a certain amount of arousal benefits performance, but too little or too much impairs it.

Wolfe (1989), quite early in the research history of MPA, bases her paper on research both from anxiety theory and test anxiety, which refers to facilitating (adaptive) and debilitating (maladaptive) anxiety. She notes that the Yerkes - Dodson research shows 'some degree of stress and tension is necessary for effective musical performance'. Thus 'the problem of anxiety for performing musicians is unique in that traditional methods for inducing a state of lowered arousal... may be counterproductive.' Kirchner (2003) and Nagel (2010) also point out that reducing anxiety may not be the correct goal. Finch (2018) goes further, advocating 'high arousal imagery strategies' in order to improve performance.

Kenny (2011) disputes the relevance of the Yerkes-Dodson curve in MPA research as it does not take into account the complexities of an individual performer, their relationship with state and trait anxiety, and task mastery. However, Kirchner et al (2008) point to Social Arousal Theory which says much the same thing as those interpretations of Yerkes-Dodson objected to by Kenny.

According to Papageorgi et al (2007), peak performance occurs at 'optimal' levels of anxiety, while too little or too much arousal are detrimental. Although the idea of adaptive and maladaptive MPA is claimed to be at its heart their paper only refers to one type of adaptivity, namely 'medium arousal' so that the musician can concentrate. 'Medium arousal is hypothesised to be the most optimal level of arousal as, when it is kept under control by the performer, it can improve performance efficiency, alertness and concentration on the task' (p.97). It is conceded that this level will be different for different performers and even the same performer at different times, so it is difficult to define, let alone aim for. The authors say there is a need to study the 'relationship between physiological arousal and performance efficiency' (p.84) but no mechanism is mentioned for how the median amount of anxiety would help

beyond that anxiety makes one alert enough to perform. The particular symptoms are treated as irrelevant, just referring to their degree. Is it really optimum to have a medium level of anxiety, perhaps including medium shaking, medium indigestion and so on?

Papageorgi et al conclude with the hope that educational policy makers should be helping students in 'finding ways to use arousal to enhance performance' (p.101). It is perhaps surprising that so little research has actually done this, concentrating mainly on assessment and anxiety reduction.

Thus, the Yerkes-Dodson curve and the idea of adaptive performance anxiety both question the idea that MPA is always a disorder. There is however little curiosity in the mechanisms by which MPA can help performance beyond a generalised arousal. Perhaps investigating this may provide new insights into MPA. Rather than attempt to reduce MPA, can a method be found which makes MPA facilitative to good performance? The latter is, after all, a major aim of musicians, and may be more important for them than anxiety reduction, as we have seen.

1.6 Summary

MPA in current research is normally considered a form of anxiety disorder requiring treatment. However, it is arguable that the phenomenon may usefully be considered not to be so because:

- the term 'anxiety' as currently used is not useful in considering precise connections between cause and effect;

- some of the symptoms are specific to performance anxiety rather than more generalised anxiety;

- symptoms can occur without a feeling of anxiousness;

- the phenomenon known as 'MPA' is known to be at least partly beneficial to performance;

- contemporary conceptions of anxiety do not provide a mechanism whereby the beneficial aspects of MPA acts, beyond generalised arousal;

- its elimination does not necessarily produce better performances;

- its reduction may not be the central goal of musicians.

I have also questioned the usefulness of measurement and drawn attention to the failures of and ethical issues with treatment.

At the beginning of this chapter four questions were given concerning current conceptions of MPA. Below is a summary of the answers explored here.

- Are there reasons for particular symptoms?

In current conceptions, symptoms are viewed as a factor in measuring the severity of an underlying condition and, except in the psychodynamic paradigm, there is no particular link to causes.

- MPA is known to have beneficial aspects. Are there ways of using these benefits to enhance performance?

Generalised arousal within certain bounds different for each individual is generally the only link made between MPA and enhanced performance.

- Are the root causes of MPA in an individual to be pathologised or welcomed as part of their individuality?

Most MPA research problematises biological inheritance and life experience that are linked to MPA.

- What outcomes do musicians want?

According to Kenny (2011), performing well and enjoyably is more important to musicians than anxiety reduction.

It is therefore perhaps questionable whether MPA should be treated in the same way as other anxiety conditions. Is there a core psychopathology that needs curing at all? Hallam (1985) adopts a social constructivist position by preferring to regard real-life issues such as anxiety sufferers being able to use public transport as the central problem rather than 'reflecting an underlying emotion of anxiety, or, even less helpful, an anxiety disorder' (p.xiv). Can we follow this approach in MPA research by assisting musicians to perform well, and by abandoning the concept of anxiety in this field? Such an approach is supported by Hamann & Sobaje (1983), who show that highly skilled performers are more likely to reap the positive aspects of MPA. However, we also know that being well prepared does not preclude the possibility of performance anxiety. While Rimsky-Korsakov saw performance anxiety as 'in inverse proportion to the degree of preparation' (Neuhaus, 1993, p.210) and it is true that lack of preparation may be linked to MPA (Clark et al., 2014; Papageorgi et al., 2007; Salmon & Meyer, 1998), a performer like Chopin was undoubtedly talented and well-prepared, but still suffered debilitating MPA (Manning 2013). One can say the same about Glenn Gould, who retired from public performance aged 31 as a result and Vladimir Horowitz, who had four major breaks from performing because of MPA.

Rather than abandoning the idea of MPA in favour of better preparation, perhaps it is possible to develop a new way of thinking about it. Instead of considering MPA a disorder requiring treatment, could it be reframed in a way that brings together respect for its personal origins, an explanation for the individual nature of symptoms, and the possibility of improved performance? This new way of thinking need not disregard previous work on MPA, but might provide a new way of conceiving it that may be explored in a practical way in performance and

in the coaching of musicians with MPA. I refer to this reframing as a new 'conceptual lens' through which one may view MPA, and it is developed in chapters 2 and 3.

2. TOWARDS A NEW CONCEPTUAL LENS

Bearing in mind issues I identify in current MPA research, the following list of possibilities are suggested for a new conceptual lens for MPA that may build on existing knowledge, and contribute practical tools for performers and those that teach performers:

1. Suggests reasons for particular symptoms, i.e. explains connections between the causes and effects of MPA;

2. Contains mechanisms or techniques for the adaptive use of MPA;

3. Allows for treatments that aim for performing well and with pleasure rather than improve an underlying condition;

4. Respects the unique origins of an individual's anxiety: psychological predispositions, early life experiences and meaningful life events.

2.1 The experience of MPA - an issue of identity

In *Anxiety: Reification of a Metaphor,* Sarbin (1964) bemoans the multiplicity of causes and effects that make up the concept of anxiety and therefore recommends the abandonment of the term. A phenomenological approach implies that we investigate the phenomenon without preconceived ideas, such as defining it as some sort of 'anxiety'. Instead we look at what is actually happening: in this case, something that occurs on stage that affects a musical performance.

How do musicians experience MPA? Direct quotations from musicians in the research literature include the following:

- 'It definitely keeps me from being free'; '(I feel) failure in the battle with myself' (Kirchner, 2003, p.80);

- 'We (must) control it (MPA) within our own self' (Zakaria, Musib, & Shariff, 2013, p.231);

- 'I do not feel in control of this situation; anything might happen' (Steptoe, 1989, p.5);

- 'I don't think there is anything I can do with it so I just leave it at that' (Kenny 2009a, p.16);

- 'I forgot the notes and fingering totally' (Osborne & Kenny, 2005, cited in Kenny (2009a));

- 'losing technical control in difficult passages', 'feared her bow arm would shake' (Nagel, 2018, p.689);

- 'I cannot control my body, my voice and my brain' (Pehk, 2012, p.7);

- 'Sometimes it influences the quality of my performance badly' (Pehk, 2012, p.57).[2]

Deeper than particular symptoms or performance disruption, the themes here seem to be issues of control and identity: 'I' am not in control; 'my' MPA is. This is backed up by Simoens et al (2015), who show that the most significant components of debilitating MPA in their questionnaire are the following items:

- I don't think I will get through without messing up

- If I make a mistake on stage, I tend to panic

- I don't feel in control of the situation

- At times, my fast and strong heartbeat catches my attention

- I have problems not to show how much I'm shaking or trembling

- I sweat so much that it affects my performance (p.177)

What is noteworthy here is that in all these examples MPA pits a central identity against what actually happens in performance. This is perhaps the dominating experience of musicians

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[2] Pehk is the only researcher who takes an explicitly phenomenological approach.

with MPA, and the aspect that most requires remedy: they wish to perform well but performance anxiety stops them from doing so. More broadly, the central identity of the musician wishes one thing while MPA works against these wishes. Kirchner (2003) uses a qualitative approach to examine the experience of MPA from the perspective of musicians. The structure that emerges is that MPA is a combination of distracting thoughts, physiological symptoms and negative feelings that threaten the identity of the musician. Senyshyn and O'Neill (2001) make this point explicitly: MPA is experienced as outside the self, putting performance beyond control. There is a 'belief that anxiety is ultimately responsible for the performer's actions' (p.46) and that this undermines the musician's sense of agency and autonomy. Other authors do not make this point explicit, although there is plenty of writing that points in this direction. Kenny (2006) quotes Barlow's (2000) definition of anxiety as including a 'sense of uncontrollability … a state of helplessness … because one is unable to obtain desired results or outcomes' (p.55). Lehrer (1987) notes that MPA overrides hours and years of practice with symptoms are 'deleterious to the very delicate and intricate motor and intellectual activity involved in music performance' (p.145). The 'cold hands, palpitations, dry mouth, tremors, etc' (p. 147) that Lehrer mentions as typical symptoms are not necessarily bad or harmful in themselves, they just stop a musician from playing their instrument in the way they intend.

In all these examples, 'I' is stood in contrast to what 'I' do, for instance in the phrase 'I find that my mind goes blank…' (one of the items positively correlated with MPA in Wolfe's (1989) factor analysis). This sentence speaks of a difference between the 'I' and the person who has 'my mind'. Perhaps there may be a way of calming the battle in MPA between musicians' internal identities?

Bearing this in mind, I would like to add a further requirement for a new conceptual lens to add to those at the head of chapter 2.

5.   Contains the possibility of calming the battle between musicians'
identities.

We will return to psychoanalytic ideas, but suffice it to say here that psychodynamic researchers (Plaut, Nagel, Pehk) are at ease with the idea that with every conscious wish there is an opposing unconscious one; a formulation which is very similar to the statements from musicians quoted above, where 'I' want something, but 'I' do this instead. Furthermore, this unconscious wish may be revealing of something important in the performer, according to psychodynamic theory.

2.2 Older Conceptions of Anxiety

While most performers who have MPA do not have serious psychological problems (Kenny, 2011), they do have symptoms that appear to jeopardise their performances. Is it useful to name this experience 'anxiety', or could we follow Sarbin (1964) and Hallam (1985), and abandon the term? The known benefits of MPA make this tempting, but before doing so, let us examine some older conceptions in order to assess their relevance to existing knowledge. Anxiety after all, has had many definitions over the years, originally referring to a fundamental crisis of existence (Kierkegaard, 1844 (1980)), and nowadays more like an emotion 'characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes' (American Psychological Association).

It would be useful if we could find a conception of MPA that unites its many manifestations and origins. This may give rise to new solutions for those individuals who suffer. I would like to show that some older conceptions of anxiety bring more unity into this diverse phenomenon, and also include the possibility of manifestations other than the 'maladaptive' forms usually researched in MPA literature. Let us refer to two earlier

conceptions of anxiety, from the fields of psychoanalysis and existentialism.

2.2.1 Psychoanalysis

According to Freud, anxiety is experienced at the earliest possible stage of life: 'the act of birth is the first experience of anxiety, and thus the source and prototype of the affect of anxiety' (Freud, 1997, p.400n). Birth is the first and strongest experience of separation. In growing up, the infant will have many other such experiences on the way to becoming a more independent being. Especially in early life, these separations are a matter of life or death. The baby is too young to know that mother will return to give sustenance, only that she is not there now, and therefore the baby may not survive. This feeling, anxiety, is thus a long way from the current conception of merely a 'feeling of worry' (OED) – this is serious. All other anxiety, according to Freud, is derived from this. The psychoanalyst Melanie Klein (1988), conceived that our entire personality is formed by our particular methods for avoiding anxiety. In this way anxiety is hardly a disorder, but a necessary part of being human and the basis for individuality.

Freud distinguishes between primary anxiety - the life-or-death struggles mentioned above, which are caused by genuine perceived danger - and secondary, or 'signal' anxiety (Freud, 1959). The latter is a type of warning that there may be a repetition of the primary anxiety and exists so that action can be taken to avoid the threat. We could conceive of Music Performance Anxiety as a type of signal anxiety. There is no actual danger to life in performing a concert, but the experience of it may be a reminder of separation or helplessness in infancy.

It is therefore not a puzzle that the symptoms of MPA are so varied, since they are connected to the individual's complexity, their history, situation and psychology. Most MPA research asks the question "how can we treat this condition?" but it may be more productive to ask, "what do these symptoms mean?".

In *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety*, Freud describes the signal (secondary) anxiety

thus: '…the ego subjects itself to anxiety as a sort of inoculation, submitting to a slight attack of the illness in order to escape its full strength' (Freud, 1959, p.162). Freud thus saw secondary anxiety symptoms as containing meaning. This meaning is hidden, but in a particular way, as a small dose of the primary anxiety.

Freud also points to the common source of symptoms and dreams.

> In both cases we find a struggle between two trends, of which one is unconscious and ordinarily repressed and strives towards satisfaction – that is, wish fulfilment – while the other, belonging probably to the conscious ego, is disapproving and repressive. The outcome of this conflict is a *compromise formation* (the dream or the symptom) in which both trends have found an incomplete expression (Freud, 1923, p.242) (Freud's italics and brackets).

Looked at this way, a classical music recital might almost be designed to produce anxiety. A passion for music that demands expression, coupled with the formal behavioural demands and the expectation of 'correctness' from teachers or parents – there would be no escape! Even those musicians who are dutiful rather than passionate must match their wish for approval to the expectations of those they seek to impress, thereby setting up the conditions for possible symptom formation.

Bearing in mind the meaning contained in secondary anxiety it is not unreasonable to describe music performance anxiety symptoms as 'the incomplete expression of a wish or need of which one consciously disapproves' (Kenny, 2011, p.170). This is also connected to Freud's conception of parapraxis, most famous for the spoken 'Freudian slip', where a supposed mistake reveals a hidden intention. But Freud included in parapraxis not just speech but 'forgetting…misreadings, losses and mislayings of objects, certain errors, instances of apparent self-injury… habitual movements carried out seemingly without intention or in play, tunes hummed "thoughtlessly", and so on' (Freud, 1923, p.240). His research shows, he writes, that

these unintended events are not random but 'strictly determined' and are 'an expression of the subject's suppressed intentions' (p.240). Unintended gross movements, behaviours and thoughts might serve also as a description of some MPA symptoms. Could MPA be a form of parapraxis, revealing hidden intentions of the performer?

To summarise, it seems that a psychoanalytical approach to anxiety may indeed throw some light onto the link between cause and effect in MPA. Signal anxiety shows that symptoms may be caused by, and express, incomplete desire; parapraxis that they may be caused by, and reveal, hidden intentions.

2.2.2 Existentialism

Another fruitful definition of anxiety comes originally from the philosopher Kierkegaard. He understood anxiety as the feeling of not having a fixed sense of self. We are completely free beings, but the constant freedom of choice, and the fact that these choices really matter, gives us anxiety. 'Anxiety is the dizziness of freedom' (Kierkegaard, 1980, p.61). Humans really are free, but the necessary accompaniment to this is relating to the world and ourselves through anxiety.

Once again, this is not a 'disorder', but part of being human. One could exist, and people try, by clinging to a fixed sense of self, but this, in the terms of the existentialist Heidegger, would be 'inauthentic'. There is an infinite number of possible future selves, and if we are open to them, this is 'authentic', but anxiety-provoking. If we try to live an 'inauthentic' life in order to avoid anxiety, this is impossible to sustain, as anxiety will appear eventually. This 'inauthentic' life also restricts the person's potential because it is an avoidance of becoming a different person in the future (Spinelli, 1989).

Not knowing who we 'really' are may be a familiar feeling to some readers. But for Heidegger, this feeling (anxiety, or 'angst') is both inevitable and productive: inevitable because there are an infinite number of future 'selves' so there is no true fixed self; and

productive because this angst is a spur to change. If we cling to our current self, there will be no development of our potential, and anyway, in this case angst will make its presence felt as a feeling that this static self is not quite right (Spinelli, 1989).

Yaroslav Senyshyn (1999) has explained this in terms of anxiety having two aspects, negative and positive. The negative is more familiar, and the only side that is focused on in performance anxiety research. The negative happens when a person tries to cling to the fixed view of themselves and is then suddenly put in a situation where this is not possible. This is very familiar to musicians with MPA. They practise, but then the concert is different - they have to be different. They can't be the same person they were in practice because the situation has changed radically. Their previous self, the one in the practice room, who they are trying to hang on to, effectively has to die. This is truly anxiety-provoking. It is a matter of life or death, as in Freud's conception. It is not just about getting it wrong in the concert but a serious doubt about who we are, about our existence.[3] No wonder MPA is so strong.

The positive side of anxiety is also a feeling of not having a fixed sense of self. But the difference is in accepting this: not clinging to a fixed self but allowing fluidity in who we are. If we are open to this, we could become any one of many different types of people in the future. Another way of putting this is that we are free. It might feel uncomfortable, like you are walking on shifting sand, but you have, in the lovely phrase of Kierkegaard (1980), the 'possibility of possibility' (p.42). Anxiety sets us free. It is 'the dizziness of freedom'.

Senyshyn and O'Neill in *Subjective Experience of Anxiety and Musical Performance : A Relational Perspective* (2001) suggest that performance anxiety may be an opportunity for a new emergent self and that this could be welcomed instead of feared.

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[3] See Kirchner (2003), who demonstrates the structure of MPA as one that threatens the identity of the musician.

During the actual performance, there is great tension arising from the conflict that surrounds the performer's resistance to the emergent 'concert' self in favour of the erroneous 'fixed' self which no longer exists, as such, in the immediacy of the performing moment. By avoiding/resisting the 'flow' of this possible metamorphosis, turmoil, fear, panic, and ultimately an indefinable anxiety…in its most negative manifestations takes control of the situation. The positive opportunity for anxiety is diminished, lost, or squandered in this suppression, repression or 'fear' of that possible emergent self. Thus the 'emergent' self must be 'welcomed' (p.52-53).

This is an idea that may appeal to concert-goers. After all, who wants to listen to a re-enactment of an already redundant fixed self, the one who diligently gets it right in the practice room? The performances we remember may be those that have a sense of creation in the moment, not re-creation in a fixed way.

Senyshyn and O'Neill stop short of allowing the anxiety symptoms themselves to suggest what 'self' is emerging. Instead they recommend that the performer should 'actively imagine a successful (artistically speaking), competent, creative self' and 'actively encourage (it)' (p.50). However, it can be argued that consciously choosing a particular future self in this way is an inauthentic way of behaving. Spinelli is quoted, paraphrasing Heidegger: 'our inauthentic stance leads us to view the self as possessing fixed characteristics which must be applied for the purposes of achieving success' (p.50). And the authors comment that a 'fragmented self with fixed characteristics…is an inauthentic self incapable of actualizing its potential for another authentic self' (p.50). Is not 'actively encouraging' a 'competent, creative self' creating exactly this? Instead one could see what self is emerging from our anxiety by going to the anxiety symptoms themselves. This is to paraphrase the phenomenologist and proto-existentialist Edmund Husserl: 'We must go back to the "things themselves" ' (Husserl, 2001, p.168).

There seems to be much in performance anxiety that is related to attempting to maintain a sense of self. May (1977) says 'anxiety is the apprehension cued…by a threat to some value that the individual holds essential to his existence as a personality' (p.180), and we have seen that musicians view a disparity between the identity of themselves as performer and 'their' MPA. If there was no sense of fixed personality, as Heidegger suggests, there would be no anxiety. Acceptance of new selves may be the key. This may be particularly difficult for the performer who has endured parental criticism and 'hot-housing' when young and never develops enough confidence in 'themselves' to abandon their 'selves' to the possibility of new selves in performance. It is also connected to the issue of perfectionism, where a perfect self, a perfect performance, is thought to be attainable.

This flexibility of what it means to be oneself is recommended by some writers: 'People wish to be settled; only as far as they are unsettled is there any hope for them' (Emerson, n.d.); 'True art, when it happens to us, challenges the "I" that we are' (Winterson, 2013)

Much MPA research refers to the idea that 'fight or flight' anxiety is necessary in nature but is inappropriate in a situation like a musical performance. We are having a reaction as if we are being attacked by a sabre-toothed tiger, whereas all we have to do is perform a Beethoven sonata, and that this is why it is such a big problem. Barlow's model of anxiety (Barlow, 2002), refers to these inappropriate triggers as 'false alarms'. But in Heidegger's terms, the new possible selves that emerge in performance are a genuine threat to a fixed self. What could be false about a genuine threat to one's 'self'?

I have argued that the control that MPA has over what Senyshyn and O'Neill (2001) refers to as the 'core' self (p.45) is the main experience of performance anxiety for musicians. Most researchers effectively attempt to remedy this by regaining control for the core self. Senyshyn and O'Neill rather point to the idea that is unhelpful to think of their being a core self at all, and that belief in one might be the origin of the problematic nature of MPA.

However, even they advocate actively imagining an alternative 'competent, creative self' (p.50), thereby putting the core self in charge of this choosing. Likewise, Brooks (2014) suggests reappraising anxiety as excitement, but it is still the central 'I' that does this reappraisal. Might it instead be possible to balance more the 'battle with myself' cited in Kirchner (2003) so that there need not be a winner in the form of the 'core self'? Similarly, the research that recommends changing habits negatively correlated to MPA (chapter 1.2) also puts a central self in charge in attempting to rectify certain character traits. Is this possible or desirable, bearing in mind Senyshyn and O'Neill's objections that the clinging to the central self is a fundamental cause of MPA?

In summary, existentialist ideas about anxiety do seem to connect the cause of MPA (existential angst) with its symptoms (which express a new emergent self). This has not been explored in MPA research, with the exception of Senyshyn and O'Neill's paper, which welcomed MPA as the sign of an emerging new artistic self. MPA is seen as threatening only when the musician tries to hold on to their current sense of self, rather than allowing the anxiety to reveal an emerging new self in performance. This echoes the psychoanalytical view that anxiety expresses hidden desires, and provides welcome triangulation for using this idea for MPA.

2.3 Comparisons with other Paradigms

These older conceptions of anxiety provide a link between the causes and effects of performance anxiety. Psychoanalytical theory suggests anxiety is suppressed desire, and that unintended behaviour states our hidden intentions. The effect (symptom) can be seen as a signpost to unconscious desire (cause). Existentialist philosophy sees anxiety as the freedom to allow the emergence of new selves. The effect (symptom) is the emergence of a new self (cause). These conceptions also include potential 'adaptive' aspects of MPA, in the form of desire, intention, freedom, and possibility.

Before proceeding to further development of a conceptual lens, let us see how the symptoms, causes and adaptive aspects of MPA suggested above may be compared to those in other theoretical frameworks.

2.3.1 Causes

The causes of anxiety suggested above - unconscious desire and emerging selves - are but two of many theories of anxiety formation, and are out of the mainstream of MPA research.

The cognitive-behavioural paradigm remains dominant, as it does in much psychological research. A cognitive approach focuses on faulty cognitions such as catastrophising thoughts in the genesis of MPA. Particular fears develop in a mild form early in life and are then reinforced over time due to a conscious focus on the objects of these fears. 'Formal operational thought' that focuses on particular fascinations, including the object of fears, develops in adolescence and has been shown to be related to the development of MPA (Osborne & Kenny, 2005). However, Kenny (2011) points out that the cognitive approach does not account for all the phenomena of MPA, in particular its emotional, social, unconscious and embodied aspects. There has been more recent research on incorporating these aspects into cognitive work more generally, according to Kenny.

Classical conditioning, according to Kenny (2011), does not adequately explain the origin of MPA symptoms, but does account for their persistence, as performing becomes a conditioned stimulus once they do appear.

Attachment and relational approaches theorise that anxiety comes about through lack of secure attachment to parents. In musical terms this can include a conditional parental approval that depends on good musical performance. Likewise, operant conditioning theory implies that MPA can develop if only excellent performance is met with parental reward.

Psychophysiological theories see in an individual two separate systems that

nevertheless affect each other – a mostly automatic physiological part and a psychosocial part from which we gain our sense of self. These parts have separate reactions to threat. The physiological part coordinates responses such as heart rate, breathing, muscles and brain chemicals. The psychosocial part attaches meaning to these responses that are dependent on personal history and thus become, or don't become, problematic as a form of anxiety.

Learning theory also addresses the issue that negative experiences of performing do not always result in performance anxiety. Whether these experiences develop into MPA depends on genetic and learnt responses. Emotion-based theory such as Barlow's therefore refer to 'vulnerabilities' to MPA rather than simply to 'causes'. I refer to these triple-pronged inherited, early-life and situation-specific vulnerabilities to anxiety in chap. 1.1.

A psychoanalytical view has nothing in particular to say about the physiological and neurochemical mechanisms by which anxiety develops, pointing to deeper causes (including suppressed intentions and desires) that may set these mechanisms in motion. It has something in common with attachment, operant conditioning and relational theory in that it emphasises early life experiences and parental relationship in the development of anxiety. It may also encompass emotion theory. Kenny (2011) draws attention to the similarities of Freud's and Barlow's conceptions of anxiety, the difference being that Freud refers to previously-experienced threat and Barlow to 'future threats, danger, or other potentially negative events' (Barlow, 2000, p.1249). It is interesting to note, however, that Barlow's 'vulnerabilities' to anxiety are nevertheless backward looking (genetic inheritance, early life and previous specific experience), and that Freud's disciple, and later antagonist, C.G. Jung developed Freud's work to include future-oriented possibilities, as we shall see in the chapter 2.5.

Existentialism takes less interest in the physical, mental and social mechanisms by which anxiety comes into being. Rather it observes it as an inevitable part of being in the world.

In brief, anxiety is a complex phenomenon with many theories as to its origins. Kenny

(2011) describes how her theoretical background was in learning theory and cognitive-behavioural approaches but that she has found it impossible to ignore 'Freud's internal mental world', and attachment, relational, emotion, psychophysiological and neurochemical theories of anxiety in trying to understand MPA. She also states that none of these are sufficient to account for all the observed phenomena. There is thus room for many approaches in the field.

2.3.2 Symptoms

As we have seen, other than in psychoanalytical studies, MPA literature makes no claims for explaining the symptoms that an individual experiences in a particular situation. Rather, symptoms are seen as the manifestation through which MPA is known to be present.

It is perhaps strange that the aetiology of MPA is much researched but the aetiology of symptoms is not. While there are many theories of anxiety formation, these theories do not usually further trace the formation of particular symptoms. However, this seems to be no different from other psychological states and processes constellated as disorders. The standard text on these conditions is *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) (2013), published by the American Psychiatric Association. Here, mental disorders are classified according to various defining features. This classification has, however, been criticised:

'Mental illness diagnoses are often catchall categories that include many different underlying malfunctions. (They) have always been described by their outward symptoms, both out of necessity and convenience. But just as cancer patients are a wildly diverse group marked by many different disease pathways, a depression diagnosis is likely to encompass people with many unique underlying problems.' (Weir, 2012)

The complexity of psychological and some biological disorders, and the different 'pathways' these can take in each individual, as they are likely to have unique genetic, biological and environmental origins, seems to be the most likely reason for the lack of any tracing of the precise route for the emergence of each symptom. In addition, the latter may be of little interest when it is considered more important to treat an underlying condition than merely remove symptoms. Nevertheless, while it is claimed that the DSM categorisations make specific pharmacological treatment easier, Khoury et al (2014) point out that research is unclear and controversial about the disease-specificity of particular drugs, and that the same drug is often used for multiple conditions in order to treat common symptoms. Kenny (2011) points out that MPA has high co-morbidity with various disorders in DSM: generalised anxiety disorder; social phobia; specific phobia; panic disorder; obsessive-compulsive disorder; and depression and therefore may be subject to 'the possible artificiality of categorical classifications of psychological disorders' (p.46).

DSM has also been accused of pathologising conditions that may be considered culturally, rather than medically significant, including 'disruptive mood dysregulation disorder' (behavioural problems in children) which is specific to the USA (Zoler, 2013), and, until 1973, homosexuality (Drescher, 2015). MPA might also perhaps be considered such a dubious pathology, as its symptoms are harmful only in specific cultural settings and include known benefits in these settings.

Psychoanalysis and existentialism take a rather different view. First, they do imply a causal origin for symptoms. In psychoanalysis, this route from causes to symptoms is at least attempted, though it may be complex and take years of therapy, because it is considered the way to cure. Existentialism does not speak in terms of 'cure' or 'symptom' at all, unless it is a cure for inauthenticity. The suggestion here is that what would normally be termed a symptom (if defining MPA as a disorder) is the emergence of a new self.

In conclusion, while there is much research that treats MPA symptoms as descriptors of a type of anxiety disorder related to other disorders and phobias, there is little work on the reasons for the precise form of these symptoms.

2.3.3 Beneficial aspects of MPA

The beneficial aspects of MPA are well documented in the literature, but beyond a generalised attribution to sufficient arousal, (Papageorgi et al., 2007; Simoens et al., 2015) there is little work on the reasons for this benefit, and almost none on how one might train musicians to access it. Papageorgi et al (2013) find that while 39.3% of their respondents report that MPA impairs solo performance, 35.2% say it improves it. In a quantitative study, their results show that this adaptive response has three significant predictors:

1. if the performer perceives MPA to be beneficial;

2. if the performer is experienced;

3. if the performer has low trait anxiety (for solo performance) or high trait anxiety (for group performance).

The first of these is supported by Yoshie et al (2009), who find that the perception that MPA is facilitative contributes to it being so. Kokotsaki & Davidson (2003) support the second, referring to 'the facilitating role of anxiety' (p.53) in more experienced performers. These results may be seen as the mirror of the much more substantial body of research that investigates the factors in maladaptive MPA, which include the opposite predictors: lack of experience (Biasutti & Concina, 2014; Coşkun-Şentürk & Çırakoğlu, 2018; Steptoe & Fidler, 1978; Wolfe, 1989); and the perception that MPA is detrimental (Chang-Arana et al., 2018; Kenny, 2009a; Kenny et al., 2014, Stephenson & Quarrier, 2005; Clark et al., 2014). It seems that reversing these factors may not only mitigate maladaptive MPA, but make it adaptive.

The third predictor includes a surprising result for group performance, which is partially supported by Hamann and Sobaje (1983), who argue that musicians with high skill and high trait anxiety benefit from anxiety, referring to drive theory, which attributes motivational properties to anxiety, a result also supported by Kokotsaki & Davidson (2003).

These results are valuable in attributing factors that contribute to adaptive anxiety. However, there is less to go on if one wishes to facilitate this adaptivity in teaching or performance. One may summarise the factors above as relating to skill (Hamann and Sobaje, 1983), experience, perception of benefit from MPA, and trait anxiety (Papageorgi et al, 2013). Skill can be gained, of course, and this is the chief recommendation of Hamann and Sobaje in accessing the facilitative aspects of MPA. Experience, or exposure to coping with performance anxiety, can also be accumulated, though this is of no use in the immediate situation of an inexperienced performer, and may lead to the cruelty of a 'sink-or-swim' approach in training. It is also the case, as I have said, that skill and experience does not negate the possibility of maladaptive MPA.

The other two factors mentioned above are perception and trait anxiety. It is indeed noteworthy that certain thinking styles or personality types may make MPA more adaptive. But how and to what end might this information be used? One could perhaps train musicians to have different perception and underlying anxiety, but this would be deep, personal work. These factors might be considered as part of the personality of those who are lucky enough to have characteristics that facilitate adaptive MPA, and imposing change might come with the ethical problems mentioned in chap.1.3. However, Yoshie et al recommend the adoption of psychological skills already used in sports psychology, a field much more developed than music performance psychology in terms of practical application to performance.

It is clear, however, that research that investigates the beneficial aspects of MPA is chiefly concerned with observing musicians to whom this applies rather than answering the

call from Papageorgi et al (2007) to find ways to enhance performance by mining the benefits of MPA. Instead of discovering the characteristics of those who have adaptive MPA, and perhaps trying to mimic them, there may be an opportunity to introduce a more active form of adaptivity. I have suggested that the conceptions of anxiety from psychoanalysis and existentialism outlined above may perhaps provide a theoretical background to do this, as they imply access to hidden desires and freedom.

2.3.4 A Way Forward

There are competing theories for the causes of MPA and the factors for the adaptive part of its nature. Kenny (2011) is exemplary in the way she accepts that no one theory can account for all the phenomena captured by the term 'MPA', and that perspectives from science, the humanities and social science are needed as well as competing theories in psychology. Unsurprisingly, there has been substantial MPA research with cognitive and behavioural backgrounds as these have been the dominant paradigms of the late twentieth and current century. Emotion-based theory is also well represented thanks to the support of Barlow's theories by the substantial figure of Kenny. There is little psychodynamic research and only one paper with an existential background. It may therefore be suggested there is room for approaches that draw from these traditions in the research of MPA in addition to those currently undertaken. Psychoanalysis, having at first been uninterested in empirical research (Nagel, 2010), is now in a position where the professional culture rewards it (Shedler, 2001), and according to Nagel, meta-analyses show strong efficacy, and longer enduring results than CBT, although one must be aware of Shedler's (2010) warning, that 'where studies find differences between active treatments (which is rare, according to Shedler), the findings virtually always favour the preferred treatment of the investigators' (p.14). I do not, however, write from the perspective of a psychoanalyst, merely as one who performs, teaches and questions some

assumptions about MPA.

The idea of MPA as a form of anxiety disorder is very deep-rooted in the literature. Kenny (2011) acknowledges the need for a good definition to account for multiple perspectives. This openness is welcome. However, even she, at the very outset, identifies MPA as a 'condition', needing 'treatment', thereby closing down other possibilities in her definition, and excluding perspectives that may not take this view.

Perhaps one may conjecture that MPA becomes a disorder precisely because it is researched as one, in an analogous way to MPA symptoms becoming a problem when they are perceived as such. Negative evaluations of MPA symptoms are a major factor in causing MPA to be a problematic issue (Papageorgi et al., 2013; Yoshie et al., 2009). Anxiety sensitivity - the degree to which anxiety is seen to be a problem - is also a major factor (Chang-Arana et al., 2018; Kenny, 2009a; Kenny et al., 2014, Stephenson & Quarrier, 2005). Perhaps MPA research has the same problem. Is it a disorder because it is seen as one? Might there be a case for researching an approach that takes a different view?

We started with the possibility of abandoning the term 'anxiety' as Sarbin (1964) suggests. The existential and psychoanalytical paradigms provide different conceptions of anxiety which may provide additional insights to research that treat MPA as a form of disorder, and therefore we shall keep the term while exploring the possibilities this gives.

While the literature has burgeoned in the current century, there is still no solution to MPA (Kenny, 2011), although much of the nomenclature, measurement, epidemiology and aetiology have been agreed. It may therefore be suggested that there is the need for other approaches that may add to current understanding. Using the conceptions of anxiety from psychoanalysis and existentialism together in a new conceptual lens may help to further understand of this complex phenomenon, account for some of the observed aspects in a new way, and offer solutions. In particular, it may offer a theoretical view of the origins of

individual symptoms and suggest ways to make MPA facilitative.

2.4 How can these Conceptions be Used?

While the idea that the manifestations of MPA might be specific and potentially helpful is largely absent from the literature, there are some papers based on psychodynamic theory that admit to symptoms containing meaning (Nagel, 2010; Pehk, 2012; Plaut, 1990). Nagel states that the psychodynamic attitude to MPA symptoms is that they are 'a disguise for unresolved conflicts' (p.144), often from early life. However, in order to have practical use for performers and performance coaches without psychoanalytical training perhaps there is a way of investigating the link between these symptoms and a slightly shallower layer of the unconscious: the musical and artistic instincts of the performer. Is this reasonable?

Freud refers to anxiety symptoms being the partial re-enactment of a repressed wish (Freud, 1959). Yet in psychoanalysis, no attempt is made to complete the enactment in order to reveal the wish. Why not? Freud provides the answer that the wish is not only incomplete, but the symptom that expresses it is 'very much reduced, displaced and inhibited' and 'no longer recognisable as a satisfaction' (p.95). Wishes are therefore revealed through psychoanalytic techniques such as dream interpretation, associations, transference, etc. Freud is referring to people with serious psychological conditions, so repression and distortion of the original issue are severe. Perhaps a 'shallower' approach may be justified because although unconscious phenomena could of course point to numerous areas of life, the majority of musicians with MPA simply want to perform better and more enjoyably, and do not have severe underlying problems (Kenny, 2011). Those that do may be beyond the scope of this study and would perhaps be better served by other therapeutic approaches. Can a useful conceptual lens refer performance anxiety symptoms directly to wishes and conflicts *about performance*? Can emergent future selves refer to those pertaining to musical performance? Such a restriction

might be justified. Rocha, Dias-Neto, & Gattaz (2011) state that the 3rd of Barlow's factors for anxiety (specific psychological vulnerability, in this case vulnerability about music performance) is more likely to give rise to specific anxieties such as MPA. Also, Senyshyn and O'Neill (2001) refer to the emergent 'concert' self on stage rather than all possible selves. This restriction would make any solutions that emerge from this research available for teachers rather than only those qualified in psychodynamic or existential psychotherapy.[4] Rather than justify such containment in psychodynamic or existential terms (which I am unqualified to do), one could examine practically whether this approach has benefit for musicians and coaches.

If there is some meaning attached to MPA, and this meaning is connected to emerging new performing selves and hidden desires about performance, there comes about an additional possibility in MPA research. As well as "how can MPA be cured or managed?", we have "how can we know a musician's suppressed or emergent artistic aims?" One could even say "how could this musician be as a performer?". An answer, it is suggested, might be through the precise form of their performance anxiety. This research aims to explore this possibility.

2.5 Jung's Epistemology, and the Independence and Teleology of Psychological Phenomena

In order to explore such an approach through research, a fundamental piece of the data is what a musician's suppressed or emergent artistic aims might be. It is suggested that we can know this through MPA. A question of the form "how can we know…?" is an epistemological question. Are there any paradigms that might support an epistemology that discovers hidden aims through unintended external phenomena?

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[4] Aigen (1995b) comments that research in client-based disciplines should speak to fellow professionals rather than fellow researchers.

In *Jung's Epistemology and Methodology* (2006), Papadopoulos states that C. G. Jung was not interested in epistemology, believing that case studies themselves contain all relevant knowledge. He did, however, have a 'remarkable epistemological sensitivity' (p.9), which Papadopoulos extracts and elaborates from Jung's writing. If epistemology is "how we know what we know", and the knowledge Jung is interested in is how a particular person functions, the question is "how do we know about other people?"

The obvious answer might be that we ask them about themselves. However, in Jung's conception, the everyday self, or 'knowing subject' that would answer these questions contends with numerous other independent parts of the subject's being of which they are less aware, or unaware. These parts have at least as much effect on behaviour as the knowing subject does. An individual is thus not unified but has various independent parts. This 'dissociability of the psyche' is described by Papadopoulos as 'the way various forms of "othernesses" (are) active in one's own personality and the way these "others" interrelate… among themselves and also relate... to the main body of the personality' (p.24).

This conception of the nature of human behaviour is at odds with traditional social research, which assumes a 'transparent, unmediated self', according to Hollway and Jefferson (2013). Taking their attitude from psychoanalysis, they argue that motivations and indeed the whole personality are forged from very early experiences of dependency. When a parent is not there when needed, even momentarily, there is a serious threat to the whole self. The anxiety this causes is so unpleasant that the child (and later the adult) bases their whole way of being on avoiding it. In understanding people we therefore need to consider the 'role of defences against anxiety in mediating our relationship to reality' (p.144). The authors refer to this as the 'defended self'. They also point out that this self is forged not only from this original psychological source but is then affected by events and relationships in that person's life. An interview subject should therefore be considered a 'defended, psychosocial self'. This self is

not the conscious, cognitive self that much research implicitly assumes, but one driven by many unconscious and irrational motivations. A psychoanalytical understanding of human behaviour must include motivations that are beyond the knowing of the everyday self. We do, experience and react to things in ways we do not necessarily understand. In turn, the things we do, experience and react to, give an insight into the various hidden parts.

When some of these parts coalesce to become a 'complex', they become even more powerful, becoming a 'somewhat small secondary mind, which deliberately (though unknown to consciousness) drives at certain intentions which are contrary to the conscious intentions of the individual' (Papadopoulos, 2006, p.21, quoting Jung (1911), para. 1352). Indeed, Jung viewed all unconscious processes as independent of, and with different purposes to, the conscious self. Thus, we can see that Jung considered psychological phenomena to be not only independent but also teleological. 'We conceive the product of the unconscious…as an expression oriented to goal or purpose. (My aim in therapy) is to elicit from the unconscious product a meaning that relates to the subject's future attitude' (Papadopoulos, 2006, p.29, quoting Jung (1921), para.701).

Perhaps it would be possible to view music performance anxiety through this lens. For a musician on stage the independence of performance anxiety from the 'main body of the personality' is a lived experience. The symptoms are experienced as an impediment to the way the musician wants to perform. Phenomenologically, as we have seen, the performer has intentions to perform in one way, and the MPA has different intentions. MPA is a classic example of a product of the unconscious (we do not control it, it interrupts our self-narrative), so can be seen as 'an expression oriented to a goal or purpose'. It is a somewhat independent part that is driving at a future attitude at odds with conscious intentions. It may also be a creative influence, as Jung saw the unconscious as 'truer and wiser' than conscious thinking (Hauke, 2006). The implications of Jung's work may thus provide an epistemological basis for a new

conceptual lens for MPA.

A possible way of seeing music performance anxiety may be as an independent 'MPA-self' (or selves) who exists on stage along with the more central 'performer-self'. Discovering the narratives associated with an MPA-self through their effect on performance may reveal stories different from those intended by the performer-self. Perhaps these narratives may be the hidden and emerging artistic aims of the performer, an idea that also fits with Senyshyn and O'Neill's ideas about an emerging 'concert-self'.

2.6 Process-Oriented Psychology and Symptom Amplification

We are still left with the issue of how to reveal the intentions theorised to be contained in MPA symptoms. As I have stated, the symptoms can be viewed from a psychoanalytic viewpoint as incomplete expressions of desire. From an existential view, they might be the manifestation of a newly emerging performing self. I propose therefore that the emergent desire or new self might be made manifest through the symptoms themselves. Instead of repressing or treating MPA symptoms, might they be encouraged and expressed? There is precedent for this in Process-Oriented Psychology (POP).

As explained in the introduction, POP uses symptom amplification in order to reveal underlying unconscious processes in an individual. Lane Arye, in *Unintentional Music* (2001)*,* applies POP techniques to musical performance issues including unsatisfactory tone, hesitation, wrong notes and much else. This entails interpreting these problems as a signal of an emerging process. The process is unfolded by 'amplifying' the original unintended event, and Arye shows through case studies how the emerging processes help his clients in their musical aims. However, Arye does not specifically address the problem of performance anxiety, and his book is more on the level of self-help or pop-psychology than research.

Fennell (2014) applies POP to sport performance. She sees 'disturbances as a part of

oneself', and that we should be 'working with the opportunities (they) present to *enhance* performance' (p.v, my italics). Sports psychology may be a fruitful field for musicians as sport is a parallel pursuit that involves much physical training plus the necessity to perform well at precise moments.

Thus, there is precedent for the idea of encouraging symptoms in order to elucidate any meaning they might have. Nagel (2010) and others criticise symptom-based approaches to MPA, as they may ignore deeper issues, and result in symptoms returning or metamorphosing. Process-oriented psychology is indeed 'symptom-based', but it is not a 'symptom-reducing' approach, but a 'symptom-increasing' one, attempting to discover underlying causes by this method.

This concept completes the material needed for the conceptual lens, which can now be stated.

3. THE CONCEPTUAL LENS

<u>MPA may be seen as the emergence of desire about performance and of new</u>

<u>performing selves. These can be elucidated by welcoming the symptoms of MPA.</u>

Figure 1 showed the usual way of conceiving MPA. It is repeated here:

| Symptoms | caused by | An anxiety disorder known as MPA | caused by | Biological and experiential factors |
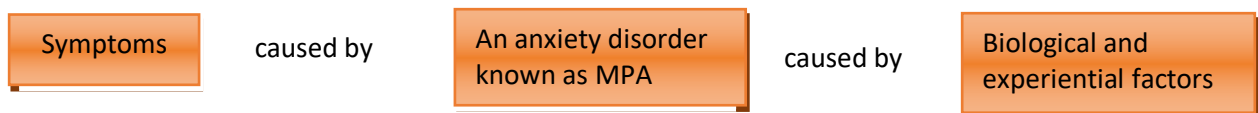
The conceptual lens replaces the problematic middle part as follows:

| Symptoms | caused by | Aspects of performance that have been suppressed or are newly emerging | caused by | Biological and experiential factors |
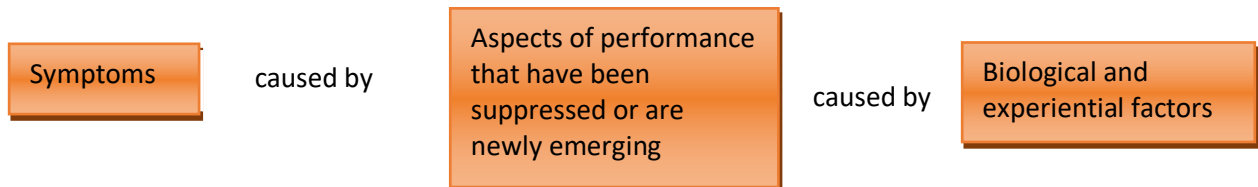
Figure 3: Proposed Structure of MPA in the Conceptual Lens

In this conception, unlike in psychoanalytical work, the biological and experiential factors are not vital as the main aim is to discover aims and desires about performance rather than the reasons these desires came about. There is also no concept here of a condition that needs to be cured by means of knowing these underlying factors, although they inevitably exist. Rather, the underlying factors are part of the richness of the individual musician; and the symptoms the outward expression of a vast inner network of experience, and the possibility of

what they could become.

The lens provides a possible answer to the specificity of MPA symptoms. Why do some musicians get one symptom, and others another? Why does the same musician get different symptoms at different times? Why do some symptoms seem designed to hinder playing a particular instrument (Wolfe, 1989; Manning, 2013)? Why do violinists not get dry mouth? Why don't horn players get sweaty fingers? It suggests MPA might be viewed not as a form of self-sabotage but a specific and potentially helpful message.

Furthermore, from an epistemological view the situation has changed. The conceptual lens suggests a line of research enquiry that asks not so much how one might know about MPA, but how one might know performance desire and newly emerging artistic selves. Both these are connected to artistic development, as I hope to show below.

3.1 Artistic Development

The conceptual lens posits that the 'welcoming' of MPA symptoms may allow the discovery of performance desires. There follows a brief description of what might be meant by 'welcoming' MPA symptoms, and also the terms 'knowing self' and 'fixed self' as understood in the separate fields of psychoanalysis and existentialism, and how this 'welcoming' might therefore lead to artistic development.

'Welcoming' MPA symptoms means the opposite of other approaches to them: eliminating; suppressing; seeing as impediment. Instead they are accepted; expressed; seen as beneficial. It is the word used by Senyshyn and O'Neill (2001) when they suggest that 'the "emergent" self must be "welcomed"' (p.52-53). How symptoms are welcomed is left open. Perhaps they may be simply allowed to be themselves, or they may be acted out deliberately and consciously, or they may be amplified in the manner of process-oriented psychology.

'Knowing self': this is the main body of the personality - that part of ourselves that is

conscious, the conscious mind. In psychoanalysis, this is sometimes known as the 'knowing subject', but I will use the term 'knowing self' in order to connect it with, and differentiate it from, the existentialist concept of the 'fixed self' below. The 'knowing self' is not the whole self, as the latter also includes numerous unconscious parts that have at least as much effect on behaviour and personality. Some of these parts may 'deliberately (though unknown to consciousness) drive at certain intentions which are contrary to the conscious intentions of the individual' (Papadopoulos, 2006, p.21, quoting Jung 1911, para. 1352).

'Fixed self': our conception of ourselves as a stable personality. In existentialist thought, this is known as an 'inauthentic' position, as in fact we are, and can become, many different selves. Indeed, true freedom is found if we accept that we are not fixed, but that there are an infinite number of possible future selves. This is an 'authentic' position, but it must by definition involve the abandonment of the fixed self. This loss is felt as 'angst', or anxiety. In this sense, Kierkegaard is able to describe anxiety as 'the dizziness of freedom'.

The ideas of fixed self and knowing self are obviously connected, as they both feel to ourselves that they are our 'main' self, the one that we are aware of and can relate to. It is beyond the scope of this work to discuss whether they are identical. However, whether they are identical is immaterial from the point of view of the conceptual lens for performance anxiety that has been developed, as the use we can make of these conceptions *is* identical.

In the conceptual lens the knowing self and the fixed self are both threatened by phenomena on stage. Taking each in turn:

The knowing self is threatened by independent, unconscious contents with intentions that are contrary to its own, manifesting as performance anxiety. Welcoming this opens up 'meaning that relates to the subject's future attitude' (Papadopoulos, 2006, p.29, quoting Jung (1921), para.701). Furthermore, the Freudian ideas of secondary anxiety and parapraxis imply that this attitude is connected to hidden desire and suppressed intentions, as I have argued. A

change towards a different 'future attitude' connected to desire and intention in the context of musical performance is, by another name, artistic development.

The <u>fixed self</u> is threatened by a possible different future self, what Senyshyn and O'Neill (2001) term an emergent 'concert self'. The welcoming of this 'concert self' spells doom for the fixed self, at least temporarily, but the new self is the manifestation of 'authenticity' as opposed to the inauthenticity of clinging to the fixed self. This implies the existence of anxiety, but opens the performer to new possible performing selves. A transformation towards a new performing self is also a formulation of the idea of artistic development.

Thus, approaching MPA from an existentialist viewpoint or from a psychoanalytic one, one might explore the possibility that artistic development can occur through the welcoming of performance anxiety. Interestingly, the implication of the existentialist approach is that anxiety will continue to be present as long as artistic development is taking place (there will still be angst as the fixed self is abandoned to future possibility), whereas the Jungian approach might imply the cessation of anxiety as its meaning is expressed (there is no further need for it as the message has been received).

The simultaneous questions that may be asked in using the conceptual lens in performance anxiety-inducing situations are, from a psychodynamic view:

"What unconscious artistic wish is contained in my performance anxiety symptoms?"

and, from an existentialist view

"What new artistic self is emerging in my performance anxiety symptoms?"

Both may be paraphrased as

"What artistic development is occurring in my performance anxiety symptoms?"

This research explores the possibility that these questions may be answered by welcoming the symptoms.

3.2 Embodied Knowledge and Embodied Wisdom

MPA symptoms can be physiological and behavioural as well as mental or psychological, and the conceptual lens here presented does not make distinctions between these different responses to the situation a musician finds themselves in. It also does not enter the debate about whether MPA is primarily a physical issue that engenders worry or a psychological issue that produces physical symptoms.[5] Any MPA symptom can be seen as an emergent wish or new self, including purely physical ones. We have already seen that process-oriented psychology takes physical and other symptoms as part of the 'dreaming' of the unconscious, and Freud's parapraxis acknowledges behaviour and other physical manifestations as part expression of unconscious wishes. One (or perhaps several) of the multiplicities contained in an individual is the body itself. There is increasing acknowledgement that embodied knowledge is worthy of research.

In *The Notion of Embodied Knowledge and its Range*, Tanaka, (2011), claims the predominant cognitive psychological paradigm is derived from the mind-body dualism of Descartes. There is no place for embodied knowledge in Descartes' philosophy. Merleau-Ponty, however, developed a theory of consciousness based on 'I can' rather than Descartes' 'I think'. He conceived knowledge in terms of the body knowing how to respond to 'calls' from objects and situations in the world. The 'affordances' these objects give, combined with the intentionality of performing a task, make the body perform actions without representation in the mind, according to Tanaka. Skilled musical instrument technique, for instance, may include thought in its learning, but becomes useful and adaptable in the moment of performance

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[5] Zinn et al (2000) take the former position, Kenny (2006) and Kirchner (2003) the latter.

when it becomes embodied knowledge through the medium of an instrument. Similarly, Csepregi, in *The Clever Body* (2006) says 'great performances are achieved when the athletes…allow their bodily impulses and powers to organize the movements (p.56)'.

But what is of interest here is the body responding to deeper desires than conscious intentionality. Can the body show the way to desires less known to the performer such as those theorised to have expression in performance anxiety? Can the body be wise as well as knowledgeable? While embodied knowledge, following Merleau-Ponty, arises from familiarity with a task (Tanaka, 2011), the word wisdom implies some sort of deeper craft at work, and some future-oriented goal. Knowledge implies knowing how to do something, wisdom that the knowledge might be put to some use that is 'true, right, lasting and applicable to your life' (Scuderi, n.d.). In the *Inner Game* series of books Gallwey (1977) and Gallwey & Green (1987) attribute wisdom in this sense to a body-based 'Self 2' who can make fine judgements about performance in sport and music. Although these books are self-help in nature, they are cited by MPA researchers Kirchner et al (2008), Yoshie et al (2009) and McGrath (2012).

Many authors point to the inappropriateness of 'fight or flight' anxiety when performing the intricate actions necessary for instrumental performance. Escaping from bears requires a different response to performing Mozart. Yet Lehrer (1987), while making this point, gives examples of the extreme specificity of anxiety responses in the wild: the anxiety symptom of cold hands, for instance, is a result of decreased blood flow in this area so that more can go to the large motor muscles for flight; muscular tension creates a protective layer against attack; sensitivity to small stimuli help identify the position and nature of an enemy. What is remarkable here is how adaptive to the specific situation anxiety symptoms are. Can they also adapt specifically and appropriately to a music performance situation if we know how to read them?

In *The Eventful Articulation of Singularities - 'Chasing Angels'*, Melrose (2003) writes about dance performance that embodied knowledge is necessary but not sufficient to produce performances that are something beyond the mere intentionality of the performer. 'Qualitative transformations' that produce this require an extra element that she derives from creative engagement with others. Could this relational creative engagement be considered a form of body wisdom that shapes performances in the moment of performance? Melrose certainly considers it future-related, but not with any plan that would ensure success. Rather it is a 'gamble' that may or may not succeed but is the only way of producing 'angels'. The conceptual lens does not necessarily imply any relational aspect with other performers as Melrose suggests. One could speculate that the relation be instead with the dissociated parts of the performer, including those parts constellated as performance anxiety.

This research therefore explores whether there might be a form of wisdom in MPA symptoms, including those that are psychological, but also purely physical and behavioural symptoms. Returning to Tanaka (2011), the issue of the body implies that cognitive psychology is less relevant in the conceptual lens than other paradigms that allow the existence of a self that allows a more physical aspect than Descartes' *cogito ergo sum*. The psychodynamic paradigm that includes the work of Freud, Jung, Klein and Mindell already referred to fulfils this aim.

3.3 Summary

The following were given as the possibilities of a new conceptual lens. I summarise briefly how each is fulfilled:

1. *Suggests reasons for particular symptoms, i.e. explains connections between the causes and effects of MPA.* (The symptoms are expressive of performance desires and the characteristics of an emerging concert-self).

2. *Contains mechanisms or techniques for the adaptive use of MPA.* (MPA symptoms are used to discover and further artistic development).

3. *Allows for treatments that aim for performing well and with pleasure rather than improve an underlying condition.* (There is no condition needing treatment, just the possibility of artistic freedom and discovery);

4. *Respects the unique origins of an individual's anxiety: psychological predispositions, early life experiences and meaningful life events.* (Origins are considered as part of the richness of that person's experience and may be the source of performance desire).

5. *Contains the possibility of calming the battle between musicians' identities.* (The lens puts less emphasis on the wishes of a core identity and gives at least equal status to unknown parts of the individual's being).

The table below summarises some of the ontological and epistemological distance between traditional MPA research and the new conceptual lens.

Traditional MPA research	The new conceptual lens	
	Psychodynamic approach[6]	Existential approach
The central "I" should be in control.	There exist multiple parts with their own aims.	The central "I" is an inauthentic fiction.
If "I" doesn't get what it wants, this is a disorder called MPA.	MPA is some sort of wisdom from another part.	MPA is the anxiety at leaving behind the central "I" to reveal new performing selves.
Symptoms are describers of the disorder of MPA.	Symptoms are a clue for this wisdom.	Symptoms are a clue for what new performing self is emerging.

Table 1: Ontological and Epistemological differences between the Conceptual Lens and more traditional approaches.

It is left open whether the conceptual lens is a psychodynamic or existential approach. I have argued that the result in terms of using the lens is the same in each case, but occasionally I will use these terms to make clear which paradigm is under discussion. The choice is always practical. Which paradigm is most useful in discussing a particular coaching or performing situation?

After this theorising, we are left with a conjectural idea about music performance anxiety and how one might apply it. A study of this nature cannot intend to prove the existence of multiple wise or possible selves but, as I have said in the introduction, the intention is to explore a conceptual lens in a practical way that has use in the areas of performance coaching and performance. The research thus takes two paths:

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[6] The word 'psychodynamic' will be used in this submission to refer to the psychological theories stemming from Freud and Jung. In particular it will refer to that part of these theories that are based on the interaction of different parts of the personality, some of which are unconscious.

1. Working as a performance coach with musicians who identify as having MPA;

2. Working as a performer.

The research questions

In what ways can music performance anxiety symptoms signal performance desire and emerging performer-selves?

How may the use of the conceptual lens lead to artistic development?

How might a coaching practice using these ideas be developed?

In what ways can I use these ideas in my own performance?

3.4. How may the Conceptual Lens be Researched?

Before moving on to separate chapters on the coaching and performing aspects, I would like briefly to consider more generally how I intend to proceed.

Using established (if in some quarters unfashionable) concepts of anxiety that seem to have something to say about certain aspects of music performance anxiety, I have developed a conceptual lens which may be used to explore these possibilities empirically. It is to be hoped that this may have the potential to develop new ways of thinking about MPA in addition to the extensive aetiological, quantitative, treatment and epidemiological studies in existence. I further suggest that my viewpoint as performer and coach may be a welcome one to add to the more common purely academic approaches.

Within the two major research areas of coaching practice and performance, many methodologies are available. The question is to find those that are most suitable for this research. It is not necessary to restrict oneself to a single methodology, or even one for each

strand of the research. Stewart (2007) refers to the idea of 'bricolage' - using a variety of methodologies to suit. She argues that it is necessary to understand many paradigms to do artistic practitioner research. A bricolage makes a 'complex, dense, reflexive, collage-like creation that represents the researcher's stories, representations, understandings and interpretations of the world and the phenomena under investigation' (p.128). The Scottish poet Nan Shepherd says that 'the better way to discover a mountain might be not to walk up it, but to walk around it, finding its secret places and crevices rather than its peaks' (Higgins, 2018). This research will do this, tempted though I am through my background in physics to conquer the peaks, prove, and look down on the whole.

It is clear that this is qualitative research, which is comparatively rare in the study of MPA. Merriam (1988) suggests that qualitative implies natural settings, human data gathering, tacit knowledge, purposive sampling, inductive data analysis and theory building, emergent design and idiographic outcomes. These all apply to this research. Theory building, according to Merriam, 'cannot be precisely explained', but rather 'comes from the insights of a sensitive observer' (p.60). Merriam continues by pointing out that despite this, to qualify as research, there must still be evidence, reliability of findings and external validity. In the current research, evidence is gathered by my own 'sensitive' observations. In the coaching part of the research this is backed up by the participants' words, and by audio and video recordings, and by comparing results to the theory that has been developed. In the performance part, the interest is in discovering my own internal transformations (epiphanies). The high subjectivity of this may be seen, in conventional research terms, as problematic in terms of reliability. But the nature of the phenomenon under question - my own epiphany - makes subjectivity the most reliable research tool. How to establish external validity is still subject to debate in qualitative research according to Merriam.

Ansdell and Pavlicec (2010) state that in order to find suitable methodologies, it is

important to acknowledge the 'attitude towards that which we would know' (p.133). Examining my motives, the underlying desire is not practice development or artistic revelation, or even facilitating musicians with MPA to 'perform at their best and with enjoyment and pleasure' (Kenny 2011, p.202), but the <u>wonder at the process of transformation</u> referred to in the introduction. This attitude fits well with the conceptual lens, where the issue is not specifically the outward effect of any changes but the internal realisation of desires hitherto hidden and selves previously unconsidered. These are inner transformations and new personal learning rather than external phenomena, although performance quality may be signifier of such inner change. Methodologies are therefore needed that set up situations where transformations can happen and can be documented. The following chapters document the research undertaken in the two fields of performance coaching and my own performance.[7] I justify the methodologies used, document results and draw conclusions.

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[7] I have chosen to present the coaching research before the performance research. It may be argued rather that a coaching practice might naturally grow from exploring the conceptual lens in my own performance, where I would be more attuned to transformations that might occur. However, broadly speaking, the actual chronology was the reverse (mostly for reasons of opportunity), and, more significantly, the development of a particular method ('ONT', see chapter 9) for using the conceptual lens in performance was codified in the performance part, too late to be applied in the coaching part, which had by then been completed. In presenting the reverse order, it would seem odd that this method was ignored in the coaching part, although one can see the germs of it in retrospect. Further research might apply ONT more specifically in coaching.

4. PERFORMANCE COACHING

4.1 Initial Experiments: Subjectivity and Objectivity

My first degree background in physics led me initially to a positivist approach. I wished to prove a hypothesis – that MPA symptoms are beneficial when encouraged rather than avoided. This could be tested empirically on research subjects. I performed some preliminary experiments, working with students on their performance anxiety symptoms, both one-to-one and in groups. Although the results were fairly good, the biggest learning was in the amount of ego I invested in the hypothesis.

In the first experiment, I worked with the horn class at the Guildhall School. Working with individuals in front of the class, some fairly good results were obtained. For example, one player felt he was unable to 'support' his breath when he was nervous. I asked him to play 'unsupported', and his tone quality became sweeter, quieter, and less forced. But I found myself deflated and dissatisfied afterwards. The work didn't seem to go beyond this type of initial breakthrough, and I had also encountered resistance from some in the class. My unconscious desire, I realised afterwards, was for the students to love the work I was doing, and my 'brilliant idea' for curing performance anxiety, and therefore for it not to be challenged. I was unwilling to go deeper into the students' experience, desiring instead to produce a "wow" moment that would convince them this approach was good – not a valid research or coaching attitude.

To counteract this, I tried being more objective. In a session with two students, I tried to remove my personality from the practice and just apply theory. I found this almost impossible. My eagerness to engage with them kept coming through, in listening to, and telling, stories about our experiences. I tried to minimise this, and the session produced some mildly interesting results:

Fred, a wind player, frequently found in performance a chest tightness and a "disembodied" feeling in his arms. Puzzled about how to welcome these symptoms I took a suggestion from the other participant present, that Fred might perform several press-ups. This did indeed reproduce the MPA symptoms. Playing immediately afterwards made him aware of how difficult it was to breathe well in this state. This made him successfully attempt to use his breath more efficiently. He afterwards remarked that breathing had always been a weak aspect of his playing, and that he had now realised that he can breathe well if he tried to. He was also pleased with the tone he had produced.

This reads as a successful intervention, but in my desire to remove my ego from the session, there was no depth to the experience. It seemed as if this was the beginning of a journey, that there was more to this story than what was given, and no grounding of it to help in the future. I was too eager to prove rather than explore. There was data, but it was not 'rich'. Hollway and Jefferson, in their book *'Doing Qualitative Research Differently'* (2013), refer to the idea that any research that looks for irrational, surprising or unconscious aspects to emerge must allow that research data is a co-production of interviewer and interviewee. The researcher's 'subjectivity as an instrument of knowing' (p.159) may be the missing link in the above experiment.

Thus interesting, but shallow, results occurred whether I applied plenty of ego or attempted to remove it. The latter, though congruent with my undergraduate physics training, failed to produce rich, co-produced data, as Hollway and Jefferson predict. Furthermore, I was temperamentally unable and unwilling to work as a researcher 'on' the research subjects. As for the former, I am indebted to one of my supervisors for pointing out the futility and possible

deep-seated origins of, in Freudian terms, merely 'showing my point' (demonstrating my 'brilliant idea') and that this would inevitably fail to produce any research 'offspring'.

Better results occurred when I worked in a coaching relationship, where I was using theory, and my own knowledge, interest and skills to help someone:

Julia is a professional horn player. She is successful but works in a field where she doesn't really like the music or the working culture, and has felt criticized there. She has developed what she describes as a "head wobble" that she cannot control, and which appears particularly in stressful playing situations such as those where she feels exposed or criticized.

When she played to me there was indeed a slight "head wobble", forward and back. I suggested she didn't try to suppress it, but do it deliberately, and even to amplify it a little. When she did this, she remarked that she now felt more in control of it, that it was more of a choice to do it rather than something happening to her. At the same time, the sound developed a pronounced vibrato.

As she played, she had a sudden realisation that she had always thought of vibrato as an expressive tool. The rest of her family are string players so when she was growing up, she copied their expressive style, using vibrato, not knowing that this is not the currently accepted way of playing the horn in this country. Her horn teacher was "OK with it". Everything was fine, until she went to music college, where the vibrato was forbidden.

She accepted this, and after college started working professionally. For many years there were no problems until stresses brought this particular anxiety symptom.

I suggest that this head wobble, experienced as a 'symptom' beyond her control, is actually a reclaiming of her musical voice at a time when it has been repressed by stress

in the workplace culture and perceived criticism. She said it was relieving to play in the way she really wants to. As she continued to play, with vibrato, the head wobble disappeared, as if it was no longer needed.

So, she had a conscious disapproval of vibrato from her teachers. Yet her anxiety symptom expressed her deeper wish to use vibrato. The standard way of dealing with this symptom would be to focus on making it go away. We would then perhaps gain, at least for a while, a performance in the accepted manner. But we would lose the deeply held and unique expressivity of this performer.

The case of Julia showed me that an interesting part of the work might be in eliciting meaningful stories. In psychoanalytical terms, 'intercourse' in the form of discussing stories led to research 'offspring'. This led to the idea of narrative research. Here, the data is in the form of stories that research subjects tell. Stories only emerge if the subject becomes personally engaged in their own terms, and in this way they may become participants rather than subjects. Using the 'welcoming' of MPA symptoms to bring out meaningful narratives may be an effective way to explore the conceptual lens. These narratives may be part of the research data in exploring the connection between symptoms and any suppressed intentions or emerging selves. They may also perhaps lead to performance-based solutions to problematic MPA.

4.2 Methodology

The intention is to be in a position to explore what transformations occur, if any, when the conceptual lens is applied in practice when working with musicians with MPA, reflect on any issues that arise (such as effectiveness and fit to theory) and draw conclusions about using the conceptual lens in this context. In order to engage with unconscious parts of the research participants through their MPA symptoms, research methods that engage only with conscious

aspects, such as surveys and questionnaires seem inappropriate. Because the research focus concerns personal transformation, this research should be qualitative and idiographic.

Hollway and Jefferson (2013) argue that idiographic studies have advantages because large-sample research generates data that is not strictly accurate for any one person. Such studies may not yield generalisable results, but they do give insight and understanding, which is achieved by 'illuminating context-dependent relationships' (Aigen 1995, p.301). The current research must therefore include observation of the processes by which results are achieved with participants. This is echoed by Kenneth Bruscia (1995), who writes that while any work with people includes observing the work as it happens in order to inform this work, what makes it research is studying these observations for research (metareflection); without this it is just practice. Wheeler (1995) comments that qualitative research was developed in the 1980s because it suits the study of unconscious issues as opposed to behaviours and outcomes, but also the study of processes of therapy. It is thus becoming clear that working with research participants must include an element of practitioner research in addition to the exploration of the conceptual lens. This both justifies and makes inevitable the inclusion of the research question concerning the development of a coaching practice.

Methodologies that allow consideration of processes in both participant and a researcher/practitioner include action research and reflective practice. According to Taylor, (2004) the difference between these is that action research has an emphasis on evaluation in its cycles of plan, act, observe, reflect, whereas reflective practice is 'concerned with documenting and understanding the tacit and known knowledge base which enable(s) reflection-in-action to occur (p.28)'. Action research, in this view, is doing the best for clients: working well with research participants is just good practice that re-evaluates and plans as a matter of course. On the other hand, Taylor argues that reflective practice is connected to ethnography. What happens in encounters with clients? Conclusions are less about new techniques and practice

improvements, but what the practitioner already does and exploring the motives for this:

> understanding the tacit and known knowledge base…to explore how reflective practitioners are reading their world, what decisions they make about importance and value, how they struggle with ambiguity and contradiction, and how they begin to ascertain the logical procedures through which they will collect, analyse and present that struggle (Taylor, p.39).

The problem with having a reflective practice approach in this research is that currently there is no specific existing practice. This work is at the beginning stage. I wish to explore practically a new approach to performance anxiety. I do have some experience of the techniques used,[8] but there is no 'known knowledge base' in treating MPA in this way, or body of practice that can be studied or drawn upon. The situation is closer to the early music therapy research of Nordoff and Robbins. This had a dual aim: helping children through the medium of music; and developing music therapy as a practice. The methodology was a 'combination of inspired hunch and…the Goethean phenomenological tradition' (Ansdell & Pavlicevic, 2010, p.134).

In the 'gentle empiricism' espoused by Goethe, he (Goethe) did not just immerse himself in nature, but also used small changes in his own observational method (for instance, by looking at an object from different angles) so that the phenomenon under investigation yielded its nature without disturbance - it was important to him to 'save the phenomenon' rather than explain it in abstraction. Nordoff and Robbins do not quite do this, as they do have input into the situation, in the form of music, and even use a loosely based theory connected to

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[8] As stated in the introduction I have some experience in working with the acceptance and amplification of symptoms through using process work techniques in my practice helping musicians with various physical, mental or creative issues. I also work as a masseur so have relevant experience of potentially intimate encounters with clients.

following and working with the response of a client, not dissimilar to the conceptual lens here developed. They strike out in a particular direction, and observe the results in situ, and with 'reverence' (Ansdell & Pavlicevic, 2010).

In a parallel to the intentions of the current research, in the classic Nordoff-Robbins case of Edward they work *with* Edward's screaming in order to understand his world (Aigen, 1995a). Aigen says that this became research because it was 'paradigmatic', that is: Edward is a representative case; the authors theorise about the outcome; they analyse data ('using intuition, direct experience, and inference grounded in the data' (p.339)); and illustrate their clinical approach. Aigen also refers to a type of research that is more descriptive. Giving a 'vicarious experience' (p.361) of music therapy sessions is the data. This matches Robbins' wish for their research to 'allow…the work to demonstrate itself' (Robbins, 2005, in Ansdell & Pavlicevic, 2010). Combining the 'paradigmatic' and 'vicarious' approaches means that research may be structured chronologically for individuals, and also incorporate non-chronological theoretical topics. In this way the same interaction can be described several ways from different theoretical viewpoints, but the reader retains a feeling for the whole process. This is the approach adopted here. I give an account of episodes in the work with each participant, and also look at these episodes comparatively, echoing Nordoff and Robbins' study of 'music's help' (Stige, Ansdell, & Pavlicevic, 2010) with 'music performance anxiety's help' for performance and performers.

The research output thus includes accounts in relation to the transformative effects of applying the conceptual lens and also the effectiveness of my interventions in doing so. It explores empirically the effects of applying the conceptual lens and also has a reflexive element that explores my own attitudes, biases and tacit knowledge, as well as the possibility of developing an MPA coaching practice.

4.3 Method

To explore the conceptual lens in a one-to-one session with a research participant the method adopted was as follows.

1. Ask about their performance anxiety. When does it occur typically, and what are the symptoms? Attempt to gain a clear picture of the typical manifestations of their MPA.

2. Ask them to perform something.

3. Ask them to perform while 'welcoming' a particular MPA symptom. This may include accepting it 'as it is' if it is present at that time, adopting the symptom deliberately if not, or amplifying the symptom. Some creative thought may be required to reproduce MPA symptoms that are not present at the time (see the example with 'Fred' above where press-ups were performed in order to recreate 'chest tightness' and 'disembodied' arms).

4. Observe the results, including the participant's opinion on the results. Note changes, including small improvements in one aspect of performing even if other aspects are worse. If no discernible change, the symptom could be amplified further, or a different symptom could be explored.

5. Experiment further with the same or different symptoms.

6. Note any further elucidation or realisations about the participant's MPA as they arise, and act on them in the same way.

7. Especially note any obvious changes in the way they perform and any particular delight or resistances to this, and any personal narratives that arise. Is there an emerging desire about performance or a change in the habitual 'self' that performs? Does the participant welcome it or resist this? Does the desire or change have depth, meaning a connection with personal narratives? This connection should be allowed

to emerge rather than specifically enquired about, consistent with the spirit of gentle empiricism.

8. Attempt to incorporate this desire or new self into performance. Does this constitute artistic development?

In between sessions, both researcher and participant reflect on the previous sessions. In subsequent sessions, there is further exploration in the same way.

Shared sessions with all participants are used to practice any new performance approaches that emerge.

Note that considerable judgement is required of the researcher/coach about which paths to follow, using attentive listening and observation of both musical and personal elements.

The features of the research method follow those summarised by Ansdell and Pavlicevic (2010) for Nordoff and Robbins' research in music therapy (p.134). In brackets I explain how.

1. *'Committed to a "gentle empiricism", explained as allowing the emergent phenomena to show themselves.'* (Goethe's idea of striving to 'save the phenomenon' by welcoming MPA symptoms and being open to what effect this has.)

2. *'Faithful to exploring a phenomenon within its natural setting as far as possible.'* (There are two relevant natural settings here. The natural setting of performance anxiety is performance, and that is why it is necessary to include performing to an audience (other participants) in this part of the research. It is further explored in my own performance in chapter 9. However, the other relevant natural setting in discussion here is the one-to-one session, where the conceptual lens is explored in

a coaching relationship.)

3. *'Devoted to detail, explained as "listening through a microscope" to the micro-level particularity of the phenomenon…'* (I use my expert musical knowledge to observe small and large musical changes. I use my human judgement to gauge reactions of acceptance and resistance to the work including spoken and behavioural reactions, and to listen to emerging narratives.)

4. *'Reverential, explained as allowing love and will to guide the work and its exploration.'* (This is connected to the ethical stance of honesty, sympathy and respect adopted, following Hollway and Jefferson (2013) (see Ethics, chapter 4.8). There is also a reverential attitude to the unfolding of a transformation through welcoming MPA symptoms without assumptions about their meaning in each case and respecting the richness of experience in an individual that gives rise to anxiety.)

5. *'Idiographic, explained as attending to the individuality of each case and of each manifestation of a phenomenon.'* (Not making assumptions about the meaning of symptoms, even if they are similar to other cases. This attitude is re-learnt in the case of David (chapter 5.6). Also, idiographic because the individual descriptions of the cases are the data rather than any statistical analysis across several cases.)

6. *'Seriated, explained as building a collection of exemplary cases for demonstration and comparison.'* (It is to be hoped that the seven cases presented here will be added to in future research)

7. *'Theoretically "agnostic", explained as allowing theory to emerge, rather than fitting phenomena to extant theory.'* (Nordoff and Robbins did apply theory in the loose sense of following the musical ideas, behaviour and moods of clients. They did so in an exploratory manner while staying within the phenomenon of improvised music. Similarly, 'following' MPA symptoms in an exploratory manner

allows theories of a new practice to emerge after reflection.)

8. *'Holistic, explained as searching for the varying circumstances in which the phenomenon occurs.'* (There is initial enquiry about the circumstances in which MPA arises for each participant. The work is carried out initially in closed one-to-one sessions, followed by group sessions, and in one case public performance. I continue the study in my own public performance.)

4.4 Project Design

Seven participants were recruited: professional, amateur and student musicians who identified themselves as having some form of performance anxiety. Invitations to take part were sent to: Guildhall School students in the Wind, Brass and Percussion, and Historical Performance departments (with permission of the heads of department); mailshot to membership of three professional orchestras – Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Monteverdi organisation, English Concert; Facebook invitation to colleagues. The invitation was for 'musicians who identify themselves as having performance anxiety that affects their playing, especially, though not exclusively those with unusual physical symptoms'. It was made clear that 'the commitment would be to have four one-to-one sessions with me, plus one group session with other participants, and a final performance. The sessions would be free and at mutually convenient times'. The full text of the invitation can be found in appendix 1.

The intention was to have 5-7 participants, but the project was over-subscribed. The eventual participants were chosen by availability for weekly sessions over a period of 6 weeks. I did not previously know the participants, with the exception of Richard, who was an occasional acquaintance.

I worked with each participant in four hour-long one-to-one sessions and two sessions shared with the other participants. The first shared session was a 'coached' performance where

all participants performed to each other, with me there to coach or give reminders as appropriate. This was intended as a 'halfway house' to genuine performance. The second shared session was a performance with invited audience, so that what had been worked on could be applied.

Between sessions there was time for both me and the participants to reflect. This reflection was intended to feed in to a more productive way of working in the following session. In the information sheet for participants I framed this expectation as follows:

> The reflection could take the form of a journal or an email exchange, or another form that suits you. The type of questions I expect to be considered in these reflections are "What was helpful in the previous session? What would you like to experiment with further? What was unhelpful? What did you dislike? What had no effect, or seemed like a dead-end?"

Each session was recorded (audio for the one-to-one sessions, video for the shared sessions). The programme for each participant was:

Session 1

    Reflection

Session 2

    Reflection

Session 3

    Reflection

'Coached' performance with other participants

    Reflection

Session 4

Reflection

Performance to other participants and invited guests

The information sheet also contained the following, concerning the conduct of the sessions:

<u>What will we do in the sessions</u>? It very much depends on you! We will talk about your performance anxiety, how it affects you, what your symptoms are, when it happens, and any stories or reasons you have that are connected to it. You will play to me to show me more. I will try to help you using any of my various skills, which include: physical techniques such as yoga, Feldenkrais Method and massage; creative techniques like improvisation, clown and music workshop methods; and psychological approaches such as Process Work, re-framing and visualisation. You won't be made to do anything you don't want to. Which techniques we use will depend on your feedback, your reflection, and what works. I do want to explore the concept of symptoms being helpful in some way, but if something else is the thing that helps you, that is what we will do.

In retrospect, this part of the information sheet seems a little disingenuous. The main point of the work is to apply the conceptual lens, hinted at in the final sentence. I wished to emphasise my duty of care to help participants in any way I can, and give them confidence that I have skills that may be helpful to them, but this emphasis was, I believe, misplaced. The full text of the information sheet can be found in appendix 2.

To summarise the approach adopted in the performance-coaching part of this research:

- I work with participants in a naturalistic manner, exploring their MPA symptoms through the conceptual lens developed.

- The sessions are recorded, and extensive notes are made from these recordings.

- The overall process over the course of the work with each participant is written up.

- Particular attention is paid to events where an MPA symptom develops in a potentially fruitful artistic or performance-related direction.

- Key events and issues are analysed in terms of

    - how much or little they support the conceptual lens.

    - the effectiveness of the interventions I make.

    - what tacit assumptions or ambiguities they demonstrate on my part.

- Conclusions are drawn about the effectiveness of this conceptual approach to MPA, and the possibilities of a practice based on it are begun.

4.5 Analysis of Data

There were four sets of data for each one-to-one session: an audio recording; written notes made during the session; impressions written immediately after the session; and detailed written notes from listening back to the audio recording. The latter was not a transcription, but tracked the detailed narrative of each session and included quotations plus my reflections both during the session and on playback. See appendix 4 for examples. The selective nature of such notes is a familiar phenomenon in ethnography, where it is accepted that notes can neither be complete accounts of any situation, neither would it be useful for them to be so. Rather, what is selected is guided by the researcher's 'developing analytic perspective' (Atkinson, 2015, p.41). Soon after the beginning of the work, I abandoned making notes during a session, except for occasional salient points or reminders to take something up later in that session, as I realised

that the audio recording contained all the material I needed for further reflection apart from various physical clues. Making immediately contemporaneous notes also made me less responsive to the current situation in the room.

The shared sessions were video- and audio-recorded. Notes were made afterwards using an amalgam of these data.

In between sessions the notes were studied, drawing out themes for each participant to explore in the following session. In practice, the participants did little or no formal reflection between the sessions, though they were given the opportunity to do so in notebooks or by email to me. They were, however, active in reflecting on our work during the sessions.

At the end of the project, the notes were studied for each participant, referring to the original recordings when I was unclear, drawing key themes out. The following questions were asked:

- what were the presented performance anxiety symptoms?

- how were they welcomed?

- what effect did this have, if any?

- did this 'welcoming' open artistic avenues to pursue?

- how were these effects pursued?

- what narratives, beliefs, assumptions or tacit knowledge were revealed on the part of participant or researcher?

- how did any effect relate to the participant's artistic development?

- to what extent did this process support the conceptual lens?

- what questions and issues arose about developing a practice?

- what ethical, theoretical or philosophical issues arose?

A useful exercise was to draw up a simplified narrative leading from symptom(s) to

any artistic development. Observing this process in retrospect in this way made these connections clear and suggested possible refinements of practice.

The final versions of the case studies in this paper are inevitably partial. I have selected parts of the process that were important in terms of the questions above, compressed material, and made links to other cases. They are intended to be rich, thick, idiographic descriptions that give the reader a narrative sense of the work with each participant. They vary in scope and complexity: simplified narrative; illustrating details of practice; the chronology of a case; illuminating certain issues that arose; and dealing with philosophical, ethical and aesthetic issues.

4.6 Validity and Reliability

Leitch & Day (2000) point to a school of thought that validity in studying one's own practice may be gained from the 'accumulated personal wisdom' of the practitioner (p.183). This wisdom includes identifying the relevant issues and exercising moral and practical judgement in analysing situations and reflecting on them. In the current case I do claim some accumulation of relevant wisdom derived from 30 years as a professional musician, 20 as a musical workshop leader and coach, and the same period as a massage therapist specialising in musicians' problems. However, there is little previous wisdom accumulated in this specific practice using the conceptual lens for MPA as it is in its infancy.

In looking at case study as a research method, Starman (2013) and Hollway & Jefferson (2013) argue that qualitative study of a small number of cases may have higher validity than a quantitative study using a greater number of cases because of the detail and specificity that can be included. Statistical work can in contrast group together cases that have superficial similarities but are not similar in detail. In the current research it was possible to observe closely what happened in each case and compare the observations with the theoretical ideas in the conceptual lens.

Reliability in scientific experiments is established by repeatability, something not possible in working with people in this way. Even if every detail is described, the practice requires too much sensitive observation and acting on these observations to be repeatable. Starman cites Sturman (1997) for a list of ways in which reliability can be boosted above merely an account claimed to be honest by the writer. This is particularly important in research such as this where it may be possible to level the accusation of confirmation bias in researching my own conceptual lens.

- procedures for data collection should be explained,

- data collected should be displayed and ready for reanalysis,

- negative instances should be reported,

- biases should be acknowledged,

- fieldwork analyses need to be documented,

- the relationship between assertion and evidence should be clarified,

- primary evidence should be distinguished from secondary evidence and description and interpretation should also be distinguished,

- diaries or logs should be used to track what was actually done during different stages of the study, and

- methods should be devised to check the quality of data. (Starman, 2013, p.41)

Some of the above procedures have been followed. I have explained my data collection procedure in the section on data analysis. There are problems with displaying the raw data in the form of audio and video for reanalysis as confidentiality would be compromised, and an undertaking to destroy this data was made as part of the ethical approval procedure. I have however, placed some of the notes made from the audio and video recordings in appendix 4,

and the complete notes remain extant. These notes also constitute a log of the progress of the work.

I have reported negative instances, specifically in the case of Richard, but also those many occasions where the welcoming of a symptom did not lead to the emergence of any significant desire or performing self. I have also discussed objections, possible harm and ethical problems with applying the conceptual lens.

I have acknowledged bias in the preliminary experiments with students in the form of wishing for 'wow' moments and adulation for my ideas. In the practitioner sessions I acknowledge an enjoyment of 'wacky' ideas and iconoclastic results, but also justify this in terms of rigorously following the path implied by symptoms. More generally my own tacit knowledge (both known and coming to consciousness) has been acknowledged.

I have shown the difference between evidence (edited notes from the sessions) and discussion and theorising about the sessions by using different typefaces in the text.

Groenewald, (2004) recommends a validity check with participants to see if they agree with the research account. This echoes Aigen (1995), who says that qualitative results in music therapy research gain validity when they accurately 'mirror the experience of research participants' (p.301). This was not part of the design of this study, and it may be a weakness that this type of check was not carried out.

4.7 Generalisability

It has been suggested (George & Bennett, 2005) that case study research is particularly suited to exploring links between causes and outcomes. This has been an aim in this study. Mesec (1998, in Starman, 2013) argues that it may be theoretically important if a connection between phenomena is made even in one case. The philosopher of science Karl Popper (2002) points out that single examples are important because one that is incompatible with theory falsifies that theory as it stands. Theory must therefore be changed or accommodated to fit the

new data. This is not a scientific study, but in early 'experiments' in applying the conceptual lens with participants, certain methods were rejected because they did not give meaningful results. Some generalisation about practice was made before the main study began as a result of this: that it is better for both the research and the participants for me to act as an engaged practitioner rather than an objective observer or enthusiastic advocate.

However, in a preliminary study of a new approach it is difficult to make results more generalisable. Further studies are necessary.

4.8 Ethical Considerations

In order to proceed with a project like this, it is necessary to consider various ethical implications. Also, in accordance with the research regulations of the Guildhall School, ethical clearance is required. Working with research participants brings up issues which include privacy, consent, anonymity, and confidentiality. In working with them in a coaching role, where some change is sought, there are issues of autonomy, maximising benefit and minimising harm.

I would like to explore these aspects in reference to the Code of Human Research Ethics of the British Psychological Society (BPS) (2014).

4.8.1 Respect for Autonomy, Privacy and Dignity

The BPS Code states that a researcher should have respect for the research participant, not only in terms of the normally expected non-discrimination by gender, disability, faith, sexual orientation etc. but also for their knowledge, experience and autonomy. Because of this respect, the researcher needs to explain the research, and agree that the participant may 'subsequently request that their data be destroyed' (p.9). The participants in this study were given information sheets about the project, and consent forms agreeing to the right for the

withdrawal of their data (appendix 2 and 3). Furthermore, the Jungian epistemological basis used in this research has at its core the respect for the empirical autonomous personal experience above theorising.

4.8.2 Maximising Benefit and Minimising Harm

The Code states the 'need to be sensitive to the potential impact of…interventions, for example, to the possibility of individual distress that may be caused unwittingly' (p.12). This is a research project which aims to have a positive impact on the participants, in ways partly defined by them. However, it is important to be prepared for participants who suffer severe anxiety in the form of a real psychopathology or trauma, which could be revealed by unveiling the meaning of performance anxiety symptoms. Kenny (2011) suggests that most musicians' aims 'relate to the quality of their performance rather than their mental state' (p.202), but that there is a sub-group who have 'a core difficulty with identity and self-esteem' (p.233). I agreed with the GSMD counselling service that if this becomes apparent in a participant who is a Guildhall student, I could refer them there. For others, I would take advice from the service over the next step in possible referral to professional help and in the short term recommend they consult their GP. I also emphasised to participants that they have the right to withdraw from the project at any time if they feel unable to face material that emerges, without giving explanations to me.

An example that the BPS Code gives for potential harm is 'the danger of "normalising" unhelpful behaviours or to creating self-doubt' (p. 12). In the case of musicians who present themselves as having performance anxiety, they already have an awareness of their own unhelpful behaviours and self-doubt. The purpose of this research is to find ways of dealing with this, and the participant will have a say in what they consider to be helpful or unhelpful. Whether my approach of accepting or amplifying performance anxiety symptoms is 'normalising' them is part of the research question. If a performance anxiety symptom becomes

the basis of new artistic development, one could say that it is being 'normalised'. But it would also no longer be unhelpful.

The Code also states that 'a difference in power inevitably exists between researchers and participants, even if researchers seek to minimise it. Sensitivity is, therefore, essential, and caution is usually necessary' (p.12). This is perhaps even more true when the researcher is also a coach or teacher, so that the relationship of the participant to the researcher is one of being a 'client' or 'student'. The study is designed, however, to be collaborative, so that part of the power in deciding the direction of the research for an individual resides with that individual. Observations and opinions from the participants are crucial. But sensitivity is of course necessary - not all feedback is so overt, or even conscious. Being aware of subtle feedback is a crucial part of the skill of a practitioner. This may be particularly important when deciding whether to use touch, but I am well practised in my massage work at knowing when this is appropriate, and at precisely observing bodily cues.

4.8.3 Valid Consent
The Code says:

> In accordance with the Code of Ethics and Conduct, researchers should ensure that every person from whom data are gathered for the purposes of research consents freely to the process on the basis of adequate information. They should be able, during the data gathering phase, freely to withdraw or modify their consent and to ask for the destruction of all or part of the data that they have contributed. (p.15)

I gave a full information sheet to all participants (see appendix 2), and they took part on the basis of signing a consent form with exactly these rights (appendix 3).

However, the theoretical underpinning of this research posits that an anxiety symptom may be an unconscious wish for change. Consent for this is problematic – how can we consent

to anything of which we are unconscious? Perhaps one can only inform the participant of this possibility and emphasise the right to withdraw without giving reasons at any point. Furthermore, Hollway and Jefferson (2013) suggest that consent 'cannot be reduced to a conscious, cognitive process' (p.88), as people are inherently neither rational nor autonomous in making decisions. Rather, decision-making is very dependent on our defences against anxiety and our relations with others. Consent is given or withheld continuously in an interaction with a researcher. Thus, much depends on the researcher's conduct and attitude towards the participant. In their view, the principles that must be applied are honesty, sympathy and respect rather than seeking informed consent, which is impossible when the participant does not know precisely what they will reveal. The central criterion should be 'guarding against harm', but further than that, respecting the phenomena of unconscious processes is central to the theory, method and analysis of this research.

Although the information sheet states that audio- and video-recording will be used, the participants were also asked to sign a separate consent form for this.

4.8.4 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Participants in psychological research have a right to expect that information they provide will be treated confidentially and, if published, will not be identifiable as theirs. In the event that confidentiality and/or anonymity cannot be guaranteed, the participant must be warned of this in advance of agreeing to participate (p.22).

It is in the nature of this work that personal issues may arise. It is easy to assure confidentiality in one-to-one sessions, but there are several possible problem areas:

The 'coached' concert, designed as a half-way house to public performance, makes confidentiality more difficult between the musicians, and makes anonymity impossible. However, I undertook to respect the wishes of any musician not to reveal certain issues on this

occasion, while still working on the MPA symptoms as practised in the one-to-one sessions.

Recordings of all sessions are for the purposes of analysis and reflection on the part of researcher and participant. They are not used as part of the final thesis. They may be useful in research dissemination. Agreement for this use would be sought if necessary.

In common with many practitioners, and as a research student, I would expect to have supervision throughout this process, which may also compromise anonymity. There was a written contract with my supervisors to maintain confidentiality.

Pseudonyms are used in this document.

All raw data including audio and video recordings, my own notes and records of the reflective journals or email exchanges were kept on a password-protected area of my home hard drive. Physical hard copies of notes or transcripts were held in a locked cabinet at home before being scanned and saved to the safe area of the hard drive. After writing up the whole project, and anyway after three years, the raw data on the hard drive will be destroyed. As recommended in the British Psychological Society Code, participants can request that their data be destroyed at any time.

4.8.5 Responsibility

The participants volunteered to join a project in part because they were offered insight into their MPA issues. In trying to improve situations for the participants it is therefore my ethical duty to use any techniques at my disposal to do so, not just those within the narrow constraints of my research questions.

4.8.6 Ethical Approval

In accordance with the research regulations of the Guildhall School, an application for ethical approval was submitted. One objection was raised, relating to the presence of one participant who had been recommended by her teacher to take part. It was felt that this participant may not be sufficiently self-selecting, as they may feel unable to refuse their

teacher's suggestion. This participant was replaced, and the application was then given full

ethical approval.

5. CASE STUDIES

In chapter 4.2 I state that two types of writing are helpful in order to study a new practice: 'paradigmatic' and 'vicarious'. These case studies emphasise the former, telling a narrative for each participant, and forming as a whole a group of representative studies. The first cases described are relatively simple accounts, outlining the process from MPA symptoms to possible artistic development. Later cases bring in more 'vicarious' writing intended to give the reader a flavour of the sessions. The accounts include reflexive observation of my behaviour and thoughts, and also refer to other cases for comparison and contrast. In all cases, the emphasis is on establishing 'breakthroughs', where an MPA symptom may transform to become an artistic avenue to pursue. At the end of each study, there is a summary of how results matched the conceptual lens, and learning about practice.

Chapter 6 is more reflexive in nature and emphasises various issues that arose in how a coaching practice for MPA might be established using the conceptual lens as a theoretical basis.

To make clear the various voices used in these accounts, two writing styles have been adopted as follows.

Accounts edited from notes made during and from studying recordings of the sessions are italicised and indented. ("Double quotes" are used for participants, 'single' for me.)

Analysis and discussion are unitalicised (and bracketed if within edited accounts):

5.1 Elisabeta (flute)

Introduction: This is a relatively simple telling of the story of our work together, constructed after the whole process of analysis. I have removed the various dead-ends and unsuccessful attempts at progress so that this account will be told as if the work was carried out in a straight line of perfect interventions. Needless to say, this was not the case in practice. In chapter 6 I will discuss the various choices that are inevitably made between possible interventions, and attempt to rationalise how these might be made, and how they could become more effective.

Session 1: Elisabeta does not always get performance anxiety. At first, she says it happens at random times, not affected by pressure, task difficulty or the importance of the occasion. Through discussing this, it suddenly occurs to her that it happens when she "realises there are people in the room". It is not fear of what they might be thinking, just their presence. If she performs as if she is "on a different planet" she does not get performance anxiety. Difficulties start when she tries to "bridge between being inside yourself and being in front of people" - in other words, when she tries to communicate to the people there. Then she gets various symptoms: memory loss; restricted breathing; shaking legs; knot in stomach; tight neck and arms; a feeling of "closing in"; and a curious sensation of not knowing what the flute is.

In order to understand this further, I play the role of audience, making my presence felt by staring at her as she plays - it is this eye contact that normally gives her the realisation that people are there, and that leads to the symptoms. After a while she started to block me out, to "internalise more": the feeling of "closing in" she had already mentioned as a performance anxiety symptom. At this point the performance became striking in sound quality and performance intensity (Session 1, 23'). The

"closing in" or playing as if on "a different planet" seemed to be about being absent from the audience, so this absence is the symptom we amplify. I ask her to play, concentrating on 'absence', and her performance is intense and passionate (40').

She says it is her natural instinct to play inwardly – "I can't give my whole self to the audience" - but she is not sure it is a good thing to play to herself on stage. Yet we had just showed that inward focus makes her play expressively and drew me, as a listener, in.

Session 2: Closing her eyes helps this enormously. She has a belief that flautists shouldn't close their eyes (violinists, pianists and cellists can), although some of her favourite performers (Oistrakh, Kissin) do this, and in an ideal world she would like to perform focusing on her "own thing". I give her permission to do this and she plays to me. It "felt really nice, so nice" (Session 2, 21'). It is a relief to her, and it sounds beautiful and expressive.

We explore one more interesting symptom: not knowing what the flute is. To amplify this, I ask her to play with her hands the wrong way around. She loves this. It is a real exploration, like a mysterious ethnic music – "amazing!", "this is so fun!" (Session 2, 34'). I asked her to improvise in the same spirit but with correct hands: "that was so cool!", "I wasn't aware of you being in the room" (like the most successful notated performances she played). She also played her Tchaikovsky piece in an improvisatory spirit and this was effective and enjoyable (42'). Much of session 4 was spent improvising, with enjoyment and excitement on her part.

The Conceptual Lens: Was there any revelation of artistic desire or new artistic selves in connection with deliberately allowing and enhancing performance anxiety symptoms? It would

appear so. My interpretation is that the "closing off" symptom led her to extremely personal performance which was nevertheless outwardly expressive. She had a desire to play inwardly (signified by the "closing off" MPA symptom) but this was hidden by her beliefs that she should communicate directly with the audience and not close her eyes. To succeed, she had to overcome these beliefs. Also, the symptom of 'not knowing', when amplified, was followed by a joyful interest in new sounds and improvisation, and also a new-found feeling of freedom in notated music. The suggestion in the conceptual lens is that these symptoms were meaningful signals of a desire to perform in these ways.

Practice: I chose at first to try and reproduce the genuine symptoms she had referred to, by personifying the sort of audience behaviour that gives her MPA (eye contact). This did indeed give the "closing in" symptom she had described. At this point, my own musical observation was necessary to spot that at this very moment the sound she was making, and her musical expression, became very intense. She agreed, and this could have been a simple end to the process, but what emerged was a belief that this inwardness was not acceptable in performance. I then took the role of asking simple questions about this belief and contrasting it with the manifest improvement in her playing when she went against it. I am unsure whether my questions uncovered her own tacit knowledge, or whether she had already framed the belief consciously, but the result was that she became willing to overcome it in the face of the evidence of the quality of performance and her own enjoyment of it.

The success of exploring this symptom, and the availability of more time, led to exploring another symptom that took my interest, that of "not knowing what the flute is". I used my imagination to suggest welcoming this by placing the hands the wrong way on the flute. The experiment was justified by her own delight in performing this way, and by my musical observation of the unusual quality of the result ('a mysterious ethnic music'). As she is a classical musician in training, I felt it appropriate to suggest applying the same attitude to

notated music, and this too was musically effective and enjoyable. I noted a belief in myself that much conservatoire training encourages a limited and conventional range of expression in standard repertoire that this performance undermined in a highly expressive and personal way.

I note that even in this relatively simple account, I took on several roles in exploring and developing the application of the conceptual lens.

1. Genuine 'loving' listener to the predicament of the 'client'

2. Theoretician

3. Role-player

4. Experienced musical listener

5. Naïve questioner

6. Imaginative problem-solver

7. Responsible practitioner, to return the 'client' to the chief context of their musical life

5.2 Laura (clarinet)

Edited notes from our sessions, with meta-reflections in brackets.

Symptoms: constricted sound, raised left shoulder, silly mistakes. Enjoys performing but also has fear of failure.

When does it happen? When she is being marked, or someone important is listening.

We spend two sessions trying to reproduce the 'constricted' symptoms. We succeeded in reproducing symptoms in the end, but there was no noticeable improvement or breakthrough.

She says it is more about lack of projection. We try playing as if in a tiny, un-resonant box, but it just sounds timid.

(I was hoping it would make her more self-absorbed and therefore expressive, as happened

with Elisabeta.)

Defiance

Then, breakthrough. We go back to the occasions when she is nervous – in exams, auditions and concerts where she knows someone important is listening. When performing in these situations she is feeling that the audience is "judging" and "comparing" her to others. A way of welcoming this symptom is for me to voice her thoughts. As she played, I took the role of this imagined voice – 'this person doesn't seem very good…I wonder how she compares with the next candidate…let's see if she can play this next bit' etc. She immediately started playing very well and very dynamically ("a good version", she says) (session 2, 22'). She was extremely pleased with it and afterwards was herself dynamic and laughing, very different from her previous diffident demeanour. She said, "hearing you say it like that, it was like, oh, I want to prove him wrong!". We agreed that the word that summed up her attitude was 'defiance'. I ask her to play with even more defiance – 'ten times more'. It is even better: energetic, big dynamic range, really phrased (30'). She could even produce this intensity in slow, quiet music (35'). 'Defiance' gives intensity, and being very present in the music – "you kind of do more…what's actually written…even though I'm thinking about that less, I feel it comes across more".

(It is interesting that she is by nature not a defiant person. In Jungian terms, one could say that the defiance was part of her shadow. It is very typical of unconscious contents (such as this uncontrollable internal dialogue) to reveal part of the shadow, that opposite part that is denied in everyday life, but without which we are not complete (Jung, 1959). I will return to this topic in the section on David (chap. 5.6) and in chap. 6.2.

Later that week she played for a clarinet class, something she had been nervous about. She was able to use the 'defiant' attitude. It went well. She felt "really calm, really focussed". It was a good experience, with the feeling of "I can actually do this". The teacher was impressed.

She is nervous about the following group session with all the project participants, but she agrees that she has to "just do the defiance".

At this session, she came in front with her familiar slightly fearful face. I encouraged 'defiance' by gently suggesting she couldn't play it. She played pretty well, but felt nervous. It was "hard to think about defiance because nervous". She played twice, with more defiance second time. This performance was, she said, not as successful as the clarinet class. She didn't enjoy performing, but she did play well. (Perhaps she needs more preparation, maybe with me citing her fears (as I had in session 2) rather than the rather weak suggestion that she couldn't play it.) *She says she didn't have time to gather 'defiance'. She assumed it would be easier to go straight in and have no time to be nervous. We agree that next time she should have as much time as she needs.*

Dance

Another symptom also produced interesting results: her raised left shoulder, which also moves a lot. We try exaggerating this movement, and she phrases much more. When she moved even more, spreading the movement through her body, she 'danced' the music while playing and plays wonderfully. It shows her the phrasing: "It makes everything more clear, what I want to do with it" (session 2, 53'). We also found we could use it to discover the natural phrasing in a piece she didn't know so well (session 3, 41'). Again this 'dance' is against her normal way of being – she is not physically demonstrative.

Trying to combine our two main themes in 'defiant movement' does not produce the best of both, but an ineffective amalgam, not fully either. I formulate the idea that 'dance' is for practice, to find the phrasing, and 'defiance' is for performance. I feel this might be a bit too neat to be true.

(Her shoulder drew my attention, especially the way it seemed to lead the rest of her upper body movement while she played. It was a very strong symptom, such that when I tried physically to restrain it by trying to hold her shoulders still as she played, I did not have the strength to do so. This may seem like a strange approach if I am in the business of welcoming symptoms rather than suppressing them. However, it was borrowed from a Process Oriented Psychology (POP) technique. In POP, symptoms or other unconscious or unintended events are 'amplified' by various means in order to discover their meaning. One way of doing this is, counter-intuitively, to suppress. This can have the effect of making a strong symptom fight even more to be expressed, and this was the approach I used here. Having established the importance of the shoulder movement to her – so important that it occurs despite physical restraint – we allowed it its free expression, and 'expression' in a musical sense was indeed what it was about. Her musical phrasing was intimately connected with this movement. Some players in my experience, conversely, move in order to look expressive, while actually playing in quite a bland way. We also tried miming playing a piece, but exaggerating her body movement, and the movements became clearer, defining the shape of phrases with precision.)

The Conceptual Lens: Deliberately enhancing her assumption that an audience is having critical thoughts about her playing by my voicing of them, gave rise to 'defiance', which in turn gave new energy and intensity, and calmness, focus and presence.

The other symptom that had a positive effect when welcomed was her raised and

moving shoulder. For Laura, movement is an integral part of her thinking about phrasing, and the movement, when allowed and encouraged, gave her the confidence to phrase in a way dictated by her embodied intelligence rather than conscious thought.

Practice: It was necessary to try welcoming various symptoms until a breakthrough occurred. Some thoughts about the concept of 'shadow' begin to become important.

5.3 Zoe (violin)

Session 1: Zoe studied music and is now an arts administrator. She is just starting to play again after giving up for a while. She had stopped enjoying playing partly because of a particular "traumatic" assessed concert at university in which she made a major error and had to restart. After this she altered her playing in order to avoid this happening again, but this has made her tense and she has lost her sense of freedom while playing. She also has performance anxiety with various symptoms.

A symptom for her was the feeling of "worrying ahead" when playing from memory, meaning that she is always thinking ahead to the next part and wondering whether she will be able to remember it, or play it. I ask her to do this more. She tried to think ahead, but instead the words "think ahead" just repeated in her head. This reminded her of a technique she uses with her piano pupils - that of asking them to repeat the alphabet while playing so that they play from muscle memory rather than over-thinking. As an experiment, I voiced the words 'think ahead' for her repeatedly as she played (session 1, 48'). She described this experience as "quite nice", and that the distraction meant she couldn't "get inside my own head" and was playing on "autopilot".

(This description belies the fact that this was a complex case. There were many symptoms (more than I have related here) and she herself had lots of theories about her performance anxiety and told many engaging stories about various incidents and likes and dislikes in playing

the violin.)

Session 2: *She mentioned that in the "traumatic" concert, after the major error she played very well, something borne out by the assessor's report. Following the conceptual lens, could it be that the major error was itself an anxiety symptom that improved her playing? Could we experiment with manufacturing a 'disaster' before a performance to see if this was the case? This proved to be unnecessary as she provided an answer herself. After the trauma of a major error, her attitude was that as the whole thing was a disaster, the rest didn't matter, and it was this that made her play well. It was an attitude summed up in her phrase "screw it!". So, to reproduce and consciously manifest this, she played while I shouted, 'screw it!'. Immediately her playing was more fluent and with a better sound (Session 2, 24').*

She also suffers from a concern about swallowing during a performance. Once again, I voiced this worry as she was playing, and she played well (55'). Afterwards she said the voice made her realise how irrational her fear of swallowing was. However, the main thing to come out of these three pieces of work was that she plays better if I am talking at the same time. It doesn't seem to matter what I say, as it worked equally well whether I was saying 'think ahead', 'screw it!', or 'be careful you don't swallow!'.

We had experimented with amplifying a variety of symptoms, without major success, before the common theme of talking emerged. This came to me when working with some of her physical symptoms. She suddenly said that playing while concentrating on physical issues gave her a "block", whereas when I was talking she felt "busy tuning you out". When we switched to me talking while she played, her comment was "yeah, I really enjoyed that. I really, really enjoyed that" – her most positive response so far (Session 3, 43').

She explained it as follows: "Having my internal voice occupied…made me not so

absorbed". She was thinking "do I tune you out, or do I focus?". There were "too many

things going on, so I was just playing", and "it stopped me focusing on mechanics". It

seems that I just need to say something which occupies her brain.

(or perhaps the part of her brain that interferes with her playing.)

She can then play on what she calls "autopilot". At first, she was worried that the

"autopilot" would play like a robot, but repeated attempts showed that "autopilot" is

musically expressive in a way that pleased her. It was perhaps her musical self being

allowed to express itself.

(This happened towards the end of our third session. Could I have seen this link sooner and

wasted less time? Perhaps there was a missed clue in the form of all her theorising and story-

telling. I saw this at the time as a distraction and impediment to the work: I wanted to

investigate unconscious reactions, not thought-out reasons; and her stories were always adding

complexity to an already full range of symptoms. Instead, perhaps I could have seen this as

another symptom of sorts, that of 'lots of talk'. Lots of talk was indeed the solution to her

problems. In developing a practice, more attention may need to be focused on a client's manner

during a consultation. Being in a room with a stranger, performing music or talking about their

fears, could make anyone nervous. They may well be exhibiting performance anxiety in front

of my eyes.)

How to do this in performance, where the audience doesn't want to hear me talking

over the music? Headphones were the answer. I made her a recording of my voice,

containing inane chat: 'what did you have for breakfast?' etc. She performed in the

first of the shared sessions while listening to this through headphones. This immediately

made her tone better. She made a few slips, but overall was more secure than playing

without headphones. What is more, she remarked; "it felt so much better…I really

enjoyed that". She was also able to "let go of the mistakes…I normally hold on to them

which means I screw up the next part". In the second shared session, she performed Monti's Czardas, without headphones. She did feel nervous, and had symptoms including racing heart and shaking legs, but she didn't feel that she was "battling" (group session 2, 24'). This is a major gain, as her traumatic performance at university had made her perform with tension in order to avoid any repetition of the trauma.

The Conceptual Lens: Once again, the participant's persistent anxiety symptom, in this case various thoughts coming to her awareness, seemed to be the key to performing in the way she wanted. Allowing, and indeed enhancing them by having them physically voiced, made her step aside from over-controlling the performance and allowed her technique to work fluently. Once she had performed like this, she was able to retain some of the positive outcomes when performing normally. One might conjecture that a successful new performing self had emerged that can be used in future performances, and thereby, as argued in chapter 3.1, artistic development had taken place.

Practice: Again, many symptoms were welcomed before there was a breakthrough. It was interesting that something I saw as impediment (lots of talk) was the key for this participant. This is a parallel to the conceptual lens, where a perceived impediment (MPA) is a key to performance enhancement. It also shows that there may be valuable clues in the behaviour of a client during a session in the form of 'nerve' symptoms beyond those they know about and acknowledge to a performance coach.

5.4 Emma (clarinet)

In stressful situations, brain "shuts down" leading to loss of focus and the sense of how she fits into the whole. This can happen when she is distracted by other instruments in an ensemble. Particular traumatic recording session. Recent diagnosis of ADHD and

synaesthesia.

Has worked with Karen O'Connor (an established expert on performance anxiety)*, using meticulous preparation and visualisation in order to be unfazed by situations. But would rather be "more open on stage rather than a character that I've constructed over the last four weeks." And unexpected things completely throw her.*

Session 1: *Loss of focus is her main symptom, so I ask her to play with less focus, but she keeps coming back to practical issues – she wants clarity and control. I feel I have taken a wrong turning, and she later says she was unsettled after this session because she had done so much work previously on focus and preparation, and I was asking her to go against it. She was unhappy to "trust the mess".*

Session 2*: I suggest we do some free improvisation together because I think it will access the type of listening that loses her own part within the whole, as this is one of her symptoms. We improvise together, and she accesses "the part of my brain…that understands music wholeheartedly" (Session 2, 29'). She is "travelling in the sound". We try to access this state while playing notated music (from memory). This is successful, and she feels "closer to my fingers", "on my clarinet, in my own clarinet, almost." Her head feels "next to the instrument" (50'). Her experience is kinaesthetic, aural, and also visual (seeing colours as part of her synaesthesia).*

She is fully able to play the memorised music in this state when I improvise at the same time. This is puzzling because she presented with not being able to focus if other instruments are playing, but she played well and was pleased with the results (55'). She thought the distraction of me playing might be good. "It stops the micro-management." This is the breakthrough we needed. The symptom of being distracted stops "micro-management" and allows her to "understand music wholeheartedly".

<u>Session 3</u> : *Following on from her playing notated music while I improvise, we try her performing while listening to a recording through headphones. Could this be a way of accessing the same state while an external listener can only hear her line? Perhaps it could be a way of distracting a part of her brain that normally impedes her performance in the same way. She "likes to be put in extreme situations" so she plays a Richard Rodney Bennett piece while listening to a Bach cello suite in a different pitch and temperament (Session 3, 20'). The result is excellent. Also, she "really wasn't nervous", though she expected to be. She finds it "fun" and says, "it would be amazing" if she could create that in concert. It is "the silence that is intimidating".*

We think of other forms of distraction that might be more acceptable in performance than listening to other music through headphones – watching a cartoon, observing the movement of a branch through a window. We try playing with me distracting her by waving my arms around randomly and this was also successful (33').

She also demonstrated that she could "play" a series of colours as if it was notation. Her synaesthesia means that different colours are the letter names of notes to her, and flats and sharps are to do with the shapes of the patches of colour.

<u>1st group session</u> : *In this session, we agree on an experiment. Instead of distracting her with sound or movement, I attach many coloured stickers randomly to her Bennett score. As she has synaesthesia this may be the equivalent of music playing simultaneously. She already uses colours stuck in her music as a memory aid and I add to these. The first time she sees them is in the performance. She plays well, and although she is not as relaxed as she expected, she says it was "fun" and that it was "really helpful to have something constantly reminding me that everything's fresh".*

<u>Broadcast</u> : *Alone amongst the participants, Emma had a major performance during*

the project, and this was after group session 1. She was playing the Bennett solo clarinet piece in a concert broadcast on the radio. She used the same part I had added pictures to, and her boyfriend added more, randomly.

Session 4 : In this session, she described how the performance went. It was "the most terrified I've ever been" but went really well. Had the pictures helped? In the first movement she couldn't follow them, she was just "eyeballing the notes, because of the stress". In the second, the colours helped because she was able to "lose myself in the colour before I started, kind of swimming in the colour, and I just came out of it with the first note, and that was really nice – it calmed me down". The third movement was "fine": by then she was "into the performance". Even so, as she came offstage she was convinced she had "screwed up everything" and even that she would "never play the clarinet again". Positive feedback from family and teachers, plus listening to the recording finally convinced her that she had played well.

We discuss what would be useful to do in the final group session and agree on two performances. She would like to play something while listening to random other music, controlled by me. Secondly, we wondered if she could perform using some other distraction while looking more acceptable to a normal audience. But what? Rather than the parallel distraction of simultaneous other music, she suggests a different narrative: the "story" of the music. She has always seen music in terms of "people having a conversation", and these characters are quite vivid for her, for instance one phrase is a "reluctant child"; another is somebody being bold, then not so bold, then acting despite this. She plays with this in mind and we agree that it was 'really alive'.

2nd group session : She plays some of the first movement of the Mozart clarinet concerto. While playing, she is also listening to music from her MP3 player chosen randomly by me. This is very successful as a performance and she enjoys it very much.

She says about a certain difficult passage: "that was the most fun I've ever had playing those arpeggios".

She also plays the same passage while fully imagining the characters she sees in the music. While performing she looks very relaxed and animated. The performance was alive, spontaneous and technically good. She found she could "get into it, almost by imagining somebody actually saying something to someone else".

<u>The Conceptual Lens:</u> The simple story here is that her presenting performance anxiety symptom was loss of focus caused by distraction. The problem was solved when she was deliberately distracted. The lack of focus did not disappear but became of benefit because she was not "micro-managing", but rather allowing her skill and musicianship to express themselves while her more conscious mind was distracted. In this case there was an interesting side issue, that of synaesthesia, and this meant that colours were as good as music to cause the useful distraction.

This seems to be a very precise success in terms of my theorising. The symptom, consciously done instead of suppressed or fought against, made her give up her desire for control in favour of an opposing desire to perform in a less consciously controlled way. This attitude also made her perform well, including in the genuinely anxiety-provoking situation of a solo radio broadcast. There is a parallel here with Zoe (chap. 5.3), who found that the distraction of a voice allowed her "auto-pilot" – a skilled and expressive musician – to perform.

A hurdle she had to get over was the idea that she could "trust the mess". She had done so much work with Karen O'Connor on eliminating any possibility of "mess" that it was difficult for her to use an opposite approach. However, the "mess" (distraction) allowed her to access the part of her that "understands music wholeheartedly" and her enjoyment of free improvisation opened up the possibility of exerting less conscious control even in notated

music.

In addition to the above, there was a longer-term narrative in terms of her artistic direction. She told me that she had always thought of her musical education before two years previously (when she started being more serious) as "rubbish", and that she had been "wasting time". Coincident with our work, she now feels that this was not the case, but that she had been accessing her "intuitive musician" at this time but did not have the technique to express it. The following two years had given her good technique, but also an emphasis on control and focus at the expense of this "intuitive musician". Since our first session, where she found it difficult to relinquish control as I asked, she is now happy to trust her intuition, which she sees as "far more honest in the end". Several things had contributed to this in addition to our work, and she was pleased that "everything is matching up", and it had been interesting to have something "tipped on its head, and so many things contributing to that idea".

<u>Practice:</u> Imagination, and even a 'hunch' that duet free improvisation might be a way of welcoming her distraction symptom was the way to a breakthrough. My own instrumental expertise was necessary here. Imagination was also required to harness her synaesthesia for gain.

5.5 Richard (piano)

This is a brief account of the least successful case in the project, at least until it had finished. Richard is a professional piano player and a strong thinker. He has had many playing problems in the past, including performance anxiety, and is now following a firm path with the well-known Alexander Technique based piano teacher Nelly Ben-Or. Our work together was immensely complex and there was very minor improvement gained from welcoming his performance anxiety symptoms.

I think the lack of success could be for two main reasons, both alluded to above. First,

he has chosen a method of working, with Ben-Or, which is very analytical and therefore somewhat different from my approach, and was unwilling to relinquish this. Secondly, he is an over-thinker, and didn't like trying new ideas without thoroughly thinking them through and deciding what purpose they would serve. We tried using 'over-thinking' as a symptom to be amplified, but no breakthrough came.

I was puzzled by this case and solicited help from one of my supervisors, a psychotherapist, who advised using counter-transference techniques. What did I feel when working with this person, and could this be an indication of his unconscious feelings? I felt restriction and frustration, and that I wanted to 'break out' from the situation. I can certainly believe that these were contained in him. He is a very formal, reserved person who dresses in strikingly old-fashioned clothes, and when he speaks there is often a stammer and a 'break' in the voice.

His meticulous preparation made him unwilling to trust unconscious contents, and perhaps his formality in manner and dress was an indication of the wish for conscious control. This, plus his elaborate thinking, seemed to make him unsuitable for this work.

However, months later he contacted me with a request to do some performances. I arranged a concert which could include some experimental work. On the day of the performance, he had the idea of me doing a voiceover of his own anxieties while he played. This was an interesting experiment and therapeutic for him, and, he felt that he played well as a result. Further to that, he has become interested in my research and has become my accompanist/accomplice in my MPA related concerts and at an academic conference.

5.6 David (horn): Two questions about practice

David was a conundrum. An easy-going, non-committal character, yet strangely enthused by the work; eager to use my unusual methods, yet ultimately did not perform

in an interesting way; and right at the beginning his first words were "I don't really get nervous". This really annoyed me. What was he doing here? There were other people who could have used his place! But it turned out he did get nervous after all. Why was his first act to deny it - on a performance anxiety project he had volunteered for? His lack of response sometimes made working with him like sculpting stone with my bare hands. There was no budging him. Every time he played something it was "ok", "all right", "not bad".

Despite his initial comment, auditions make him nervous. There is always a point, "about two lines down", when his right leg starts to shake. He stops this by stamping his foot, to stiffen the leg. We experiment, playing with shaking legs and then with 'stamped' leg. He felt and sounded more in control when he stamped his foot and left it 'stamped' (session 1, 28'). In fact, spreading this muscular tension to the rest of his body made him happier with his playing and also brought a more forceful attitude. Instead of it being "all right", when he made a mistake he had a much stronger reaction: "bastard!". Could this be the beginning of a more determined attitude in contrast to his placid nature?

It is unusual to advocate an <u>increase</u> in tension like this 'staying stamped' in order to address performance problems. Many solutions to MPA and other performance issues focus on muscular and mental relaxation. The approach here is an example of welcoming whatever happens with 'reverence', even if it is unconventional.[9]

From the point of view of the conceptual lens, I would like to look at the fact that the

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[9] Minassian, Gayford, & Sloboda (2003) advocate embodied tension as an expressive tool. Tension is a common MPA symptom, but most research ignores the aspect that it is the first half of tension-and-resolution, a common expressive device in music that may be mirrored in a performer's physicality. The link between musical expression and listeners having similar physical experiences to performers is explored in their research.

'stamp' produced a good outcome rather than the 'shake'. His symptom is a shaking leg, yet it is his solution to that (the stamp) that produces the good results. What am I to make of this? The theory is that the performance anxiety symptom is the unconscious message that yields hidden performance desires, and therefore should not be 'solved', but continued. 'Shaking' can be part of the solution, as it was in the case of Julia in chapter 4.1. In David's case this did not seem to be so. We could perhaps have persisted with exploring 'shaking', but 'stamping' yielded instant good results, so we followed this path. Is this in line with the conceptual lens? I would ask two questions. How conscious is the stamp, and more generally does a symptom contain the whole solution or can it be the start of a process?

It is important that the symptom which could lead to the uncovering of hidden performance desire is unconscious. It is its unconscious nature that links it to the parts of the psyche dissociated from the main body of the personality. From an existential view, its quality of being unknown is that which permits freedom. But this does not necessarily imply that its origin is very deep, just that it is not 'thought-out' or theorised. A spontaneous thought is just as unconscious in this sense as a dream is. As far as I am aware, this stamping was not a deliberate tactic, but a spontaneous reaction to his situation and thus part of David's psychological make-up which has built up from birth to the point where he is present playing the horn in a stressful situation. We could therefore bracket the stamp as part of the unconscious network of things that happen on stage to a musician and therefore the conceptual lens is applicable.

The other question is whether the presenting symptom is itself the solution, or whether the wisdom of it can be in starting a process that leads to a solution. In Elisabeta's case, for instance, allowing the symptom to be as it is led to instant improvement. When she played with inward focus, the sound and performance became striking. But in several other cases the symptom has been a spur to reaction. It was not the symptoms themselves that produced

development, but reaction to them when they were made more concrete. For instance, voicing Laura's fears provoked in her the defiant attitude she needed to perform well. It was not the fear that she needed, it was the reaction to the fear. It was helpful to 'welcome' the fear rather than suppress it because a positive reaction resulted which revealed a hidden wish to be more defiant in attitude. For Zoe, when the various thoughts that appear in her head were spoken, it overloaded her, and allowed her to "just play". Can I credit whatever it is that generates the anxiety symptoms with enough intelligence to initiate this positive chain of events? Can David's unconscious generate a shake so that the solution to it gets him the tension he needs? I am not sure, but behaving as if it does seem to give good results. We could call this a 'secondary' route as opposed to the primary one of the symptom leading directly to improvement.

But let us return to David.

What causes this leg shake? He says it is when he fully realises the situation, who he is playing to and what the audition panel might be thinking. 'What are they thinking?'

"That I'm rubbish, that I'll never work with this orchestra".

This internal voice is a performance anxiety symptom as much as shaking is, so we try and go with it rather than find ways to suppress it. As he plays an orchestral excerpt, I voice what he thinks the panel is thinking: "this bloke's a bit rubbish, I don't think he'll ever work with us, etc.". He suddenly played with renewed energy, and actually said he was happy with his performance (session 1, 32').

"It was hard", he said, but he felt "more focused".

He couldn't block me out, but he concentrated his efforts on proving me wrong, with considerable success.

This is of course similar to Laura's 'defiance', where negative thoughts, when consciously voiced, led to a beneficial reaction. It is also secondary, as defined above.

We tried this approach with him playing his concerto, but this didn't work so well (session 1, 38'). His reaction, rather than trying to prove me wrong, was to think "fair enough, he's right". Why the difference? He thinks it is because solo performance is more personal - he takes the comments more personally. He feels more vulnerable and it is more difficult to summon up the defiance to show me what he can do. I am unsure how to proceed, but there is always some material to work with. Why not that low key description of his own playing?

'So, can you play in an 'OK' way, no more than that?'.

He did: Strauss' 1st horn concerto with its swooping, soaring melodies in a consciously "not bad" way (session 2, 11').

'How was that?'

"all right"

'Yes?'

"Quite average in the grand scheme of Strauss 1's...as usual"

'Is that what you want?'

"Well, I suppose I'd like to play it so that people are interested in it"

Now I do an intervention. I wasn't sure whether to do it. But I had noticed a connection between the different pieces of work we had done, and that connection was 'stamping'. First there was the physical stamping which stopped his leg shaking. Then there was the stamping of his authority on wrong notes ("bastard") and the imagined opinion of the audition panel ("I'll prove you wrong"). My further clue was the fact that stamping his presence in a situation is the

opposite of his normal character, which is easy-going and self-deprecating. It wouldn't be surprising if unconscious contents brought attention to this shadow side (see below for a discussion of this). Could he stamp his <u>musical</u> authority on this Strauss? He could.

With that thought, he played wonderfully, both musically and technically (session 2, 31'). Afterwards there was no "it was OK", but "yeah!". He had said that playing the concerto was a more personal act than playing orchestral excerpts, and this was very personal playing. It was a relief for him to play like this. He said that he has had "four years, maybe twenty people (telling him) how it should go". Now he can play it his own way.

Why did I doubt this intervention? It seemed to work, but I had reservations about making it. It felt wrong. I felt as though this was against the epistemological stance of openness to phenomena and the spirit of gentle empiricism, and that it wasn't what I was studying as part of this research. Although I am trying to help the research participants with their performance anxiety in any way I can (indeed it would be unethical not to), I am also studying the particular method of taking an anxiety symptom, working <u>with</u> it and seeing the effect. Essentially it is simple. I am not an expert in the fields these interventions lead to, I just naïvely ask the participant to do something and honestly observe the results, both musical ones and in their physical, emotional and social being. The naïvety is important, I feel. It stops me imposing limits on what might be done, and it is also a counterpart to the 'knowing' of the client: that you can't play like that; or my teacher told me not to. These are the thoughts that limit them, and perhaps make performing desires stay hidden. Working with horn players may be problematic, as I know too much about what is expected and what is regarded as 'correct'. I cannot be naïve. Much, perhaps all, of the success in this project came from participants doing

things considered 'wrong' in the eyes of themselves, their teachers or current musical orthodoxy, and this is one of the appealing aspects of the work for me.

This 'stamping' metaphor, drawing together the threads of three different pieces of work with the client, seemed too 'clever' on my part. It is my interpretation, not his. There is a long tradition, from psychoanalysis through to contemporary coaching, where the practitioner does not offer their view, even though it may be clear, but waits for the client to discover it. This makes the breakthrough more personal and more long-lived. Had I transgressed that line and lost a more permanent change for the sake of feeling pleased with myself for thinking of this? As Winnnicott says (1969, p.711)

> It appals me to think how much deep change I have prevented or delayed in patients…by my personal need to interpret. If only we can wait, the patient arrives at understanding creatively and with immense joy, and I now enjoy this joy more than I used to enjoy the sense of having been clever.

Ultimately David did not perform well in front of others in this project. In the final session, he wanted a set-up like an audition. Before he entered the room to play to the other participants, my only available advice was to exhort him to 'stamp his authority'. I felt that I had burnt my boats in the sense that there was nothing else to say. We had made no further progress since the second session, where this came up as a conclusive answer. Was this because from this point I had closed off further development by my 'interpretation'? Indeed, David seemed to think so because from the third session he really only wanted horn playing advice, with me acting the role of horn teacher instead of performance anxiety coach. What would the outcome have been if I had not made this blanket intervention and continued working away at the lines of inquiry we already had: bodily tension; his internal thoughts; and playing personally?

The cases of Laura and Zoe show that similar symptoms and their amplification can give good results for different reasons, and that therefore interpreting or assuming outcomes is unwise. In Laura's case, her internal voice, made external and audible, was a challenge, a spur to action and defiance, whereas Zoe seemed to need the voice in order to occupy that part of the brain that was interfering with her ability to play well. The point for the development of a practice is that no preconception of the meaning of symptoms is necessary or advisable, as this meaning can vary for different individuals. But the method is the same: to allow their expression. This could apply to any symptom.

The Conceptual Lens: Did welcoming David's MPA symptoms open the possibility of artistic development? Yes. We amplified his physical 'stamp' by sustaining this tension throughout his body and this gave his playing and his attitude a more determined aspect. A similar result came from voicing his assumptions of what an audition panel might be thinking. His habitual non-committal manner, though not strictly a performance anxiety symptom perhaps, was also used in a "secondary" manner when he responded strongly to playing in a "not bad" way with playing of great personal conviction and technical assurance. This was emancipatory for him because it allowed him to break free of "four years" and "twenty people" telling him how the piece should be performed.

Practice: The specific questions about practice that arose in this case are:

1. Can the 'wise' symptom be in the form of a provocation? In other words, can the spontaneous reaction to the symptom (when the latter is allowed or amplified) be the key to artistic development, rather than the symptom itself? I call this type of development "secondary".

2. How much should a practitioner interpret the symptoms?

5.7 Anna (voice)

This is a detailed case study which illustrates the methods used and the possibilities of the conceptual lens. It was very successful in some ways but also raised many questions about the development of practice. It is organised thematically rather than chronologically.

5.7.1 High Breath

Session 1: Anna says that when she is nervous she can't let the breath "go deep" and she breathes only in the chest. She sings some Monteverdi, quite beautifully. Afterwards she comments that she "can't sustain the breath" and there was "high breath" and a "small voice".

At this point I introduce the idea that there might be something useful in the symptoms.

"That's different"

I suggest deliberately using this 'high breath', as opposed to the 'low' abdominal in-breath that is her ideal (session 1, 29').

She does, and the first note is immediately striking; pure and focused.

"(giggles) It felt better! (laughs)"

Could she do it again, even more?

She does, and the sound is even more striking.

"I really like that more focused sound that I've found...You've basically asked me to do something wrong and then it (laughs) turns out it's coming out more right!"

Can we try it with even higher breath, so that it feels as though you are breathing into your neck?

This time it is "more focused again" (38'). The voice is "quite small, but I like the focus of it". She also lost the constriction in her neck which she had named as one of her other performance anxiety symptoms, because "my neck is filled with lovely air". I note that while she was using this "high breath" to such good effect, she was still using

abdominal support naturally, without thinking about it.

In the subsequent sessions, we kept returning to 'high breath'. Whenever I reminded her to do it there was a positive effect. Once when I gave a visual reminder, there was a note so striking that she stopped: "That was clear imagery!...Gosh, what is that?".

However, despite her enthusiasm, she also resists using it. It is not physically difficult – the very reverse, it makes breathing seem easier – but she seems to want to fight it. She sang *'O Solitude'* by Purcell. Afterwards she said she tried to do 'high breath' "at times", but other times she was "trying to do it right". There is antagonism between the enjoyable effect of this new breathing and the feeling that it is somehow "wrong".

5.7.2 Loud Breath

In our second session, while we are working on 'high breath', Anna suddenly remarks that she has been told she has a 'loud breath', that is, a loud inhalation. It is too loud, according to her teachers. This seems to be a technical issue rather than anything to do with performance anxiety, but I am eager to follow it up.

She sings with a deliberate 'loud breath' (session 2, 31').

"I like the sound that comes after", though she doesn't like the sound of the loud breath itself - she connects this with being told "that's wrong".

She sings again, really focusing on 'loud breath', and produces an amazing sound. She is very relaxed but is able to sing very high, and there is a disembodied quality to the sound. She says she is "very curious to see how I could use this".

How loud could the breath be?

She sings with a very loud breath intake. My notes say 'Wonderful! Incredibly pure. High' (session 2, 48').

"Very…bang-on sound".

'Is that good?'

"Very straight…(I) could pick some of that and use it in a more classical way".

The effect of this 'loud breath' is thus a continuation of the direction we were going with 'high breath'. The sound becomes purer and straighter (meaning direct, with no vibrato). However, she also has a feeling of it having gone too far, that the sound is too pure and straight to be "classical". Like 'high breath', she still considers 'loud breath' to be "wrong" technique, although she is fascinated by the resulting tone colour.

5.7.3 Applying the discoveries in practice

I have described how these interventions gave very tangible results. The sound became very clear and breathing felt easier. She enjoyed both of these effects. However, I have also hinted that she had difficulties with applying them. Her delight in all the breakthroughs we had was always accompanied with the feeling that we were doing something wrong.

There is of course a delight to be had from transgression. One of the pleasures I have found from this work is the iconoclasm of it. But for Anna these comments proved to be early signals of a spirited resistance. Right and wrong seem to be important for her. After our first two sessions, we had made excellent progress, though there were hints that she didn't quite trust the process despite this.

It is "psychologically so liberating when you say, 'just deliberately fall off, or make it ugly…(but) there is still an instinct that says to (whispers) 'Yes, he says that, but actually we're trying to find a way to make it better', so of course I am also subconsciously trying to make it nice".

It was in third session, after the first group session, where she really started to resist. I don't know what happened or who she spoke to, if anyone, between sessions two and three, but there was a distinct difference in mood. There were technical, cultural and philosophical objections to what we have been doing. These all have relevance to practice more generally and I will explore the first two here and the philosophical objections in chapters 6.3 to 6.5.

5.7.4 Technical Objections

Anna is quite a theoretical person. In singing she says she "always want(s) to find answers" to the physical aspects of singing. Much of the work with her contradicted what she saw as correct technique. 'High breath' was in antithesis to the lower, abdominal breathing she was aiming for. 'Loud breath' presented as a technical deficiency spotted by her teachers, to be corrected, not encouraged. She could feel and hear improvement when she went against these orthodoxies, but she was unwilling to apply this. In the face of manifest improvements, that she enjoys, how could I persuade her to embrace them against her theoretical understanding? As I am not a singer, I cannot give any technical justification. However, as a musician I can hear the effects and as a practitioner and as a person I can observe her enthusiasm for them. Perhaps all that can be done is present her with the benefits of the work and she has to make her own choice whether to use it.

However, she provided partial answers herself. She was satisfied whenever she found a technical justification for the improvement. For 'high breath' it was the freeing of her neck constriction. 'Loud breath' was something she continued to disapprove of from a technical point of view until our last session. Here is a description of part of that session.

She maintained that she wanted to "reduce the loudness" of the breath. When I reminded her that it was very successful in terms of voice production she agreed, but

said she still saw it as a "constriction". I had previously asked her to sing with a consciously quiet breath, and she had said "now there was some constriction again, weirdly" even though not breathing loud is "more right" (session 2, 32').

But when she sang with 'loud breath' it took her to "good vocal places" (session 4, 29'). She needed to understand this as putting the vocal folds and larynx in the right place for the pitch "so it's almost sounding". She told a story about having found a new vocal class where she is advised to breathe in "on the pitch that I'm going to sing". In other words, the vocal set-up should already be in the right place for the pitch as she inhales, almost vocalising on the inhalation. She saw in this a parallel with our 'loud breath' technique, and this new theoretical knowledge made it more acceptable to her.

In summary, for Anna it was not good enough that these techniques worked, they had to match her understanding of theory. This may be an understandable attitude, but from the standpoint of the conceptual lens, we might be losing out on other valuable improvements derived from MPA because she does not approve from a technical point of view.

There was also a further problem in Anna's attitude. Even when she sang in this new way, that she so enjoyed, she also did not approve from a cultural point of view.

5.7.5 Cultural Expectation

In the very first moments of the first session with Anna she matched the phrase "classical singing" with a rather rigid posture and formal, aloof demeanour. I would like to explore the possibility that this cultural expectation of what a 'classical singer' is, is what gives her performance anxiety and also stops her from applying the techniques used in these sessions to improve matters.

In our first session, she states that classical singing is the most stressful for her – it is at

that point that she holds the 'aloof' pose. She does get nervous singing in other styles, but it is not debilitating. In jazz, she says she doesn't think about breathing. I notice as she says this that her neck is swaying and relaxed, unlike her 'classical singer' demeanour. Neck tension is one of her anxiety symptoms when singing classical music, so I suggest singing her Monteverdi aria 'as if it is jazz'. This she does (with finger clicks!), and she agrees that the vocal quality was good. Likewise, her final performance in the second shared session was a folk-like improvisation. She was relaxed in body and produced intense tone, both in contrast to moments earlier when she needed constant reminders from me to keep up vocal quality in singing Purcell. So, it does seem that classical singing is the style that gives her maladaptive MPA, and that adjustments in cultural attitude (to jazz, folk or experimentation) enable her to produce her voice well.

Anna had an ambivalent attitude to the artistic results of the vocal experiments in classical singing as well as technical objections. Our work proceeded in the direction of 'pure' and 'straight' vocal quality in the 'high' and 'loud' breath discoveries. My professional performing background is in historically informed performance, so I do prefer the purer vocal style, especially in the Monteverdi and Purcell pieces that Anna has chosen. Anna seems to have the same preference, but again with the feeling that it is "wrong".

When we were using 'loud breath' in a vocal warm-up a very revealing episode occurred.

She had been doing exercises using rolled r's, then humming. When it came to a similar exercise on the sound "EEE" she made a false start and said "no". She was not satisfied with the sound and says the first vowel is always difficult as it is "proper singing". She continues the exercise, but I say I prefer the sound of the note she was not satisfied with, the false start note. It was more focused, direct and sustained, like

the 'high breath' notes. After that she sounded more like the 'classical singer' (I hold

the 'classical singer' pose) – more vibrato and more restricted. I say I didn't like this

is as much. She says "Personally, I did not as well" (session 2, 38').

So, we have the situation that she has produced a sound that she prefers, that I prefer, but is not "proper singing" in her conception. She later says that it is her teacher who expects this "proper" sound, and that the sound we both preferred would not be welcome in her lessons. There are other glimpses of this attitude when she says, when she gets her "bang-on" sound, that she could "pick some of that and use it in a more classical way". In other words, there is a restriction, in her view, about what sounds are suitable for classical music – there has to be some sort of mediation of what might be called 'directness' in order for it to be acceptable. This brings to mind the aloofness of her 'classical singer' pose, as if the performer is not communicating directly and personally. Later she describes this attitude as looking above the audience, communicating the thought "this is high art".

In terms of the conceptual lens, her performance anxiety symptoms are pointing her in the direction of this directness (because 'high breath' makes it happen). This is the connection between performance anxiety and artistic development that I am looking for. But her image of what a classical singer is stops her wanting to use this. It is not "proper", but it is highly expressive, moving, and she prefers it! This tension between desire and expectation is a clear example of the conditions Freud suggests are needed to generate 'signal anxiety'.

I suggest at one point that her MPA symptom is the thought that 'I've got to be like this, I've got to be the classical singer'. She agrees. It is the strain of having to 'be' something. Apart from within our sessions she is unwilling to let go of this, whether in her singing lessons, recitals or our group sessions. Her expectation of what a classical singer is both gives her performance anxiety and stops her using the techniques we have developed to deal with it.

What is the source of this problem? Is it conservatoire assessment that insists on the formality of a recital? Or the wider musical culture that insists that singers behave in this 'statuesque' way? Or is it Anna not being willing to bend the 'rules' even slightly to suit her? All of these?

In summary, her encultured expectation of classical performance takes two forms: that a direct, pure sound is not suitable; and that there must be formality in her presentation. But both these expectations give her performance anxiety and stop her applying our discoveries and potentially performing in a way that is more personally satisfying and may communicate more directly with an audience.

In our last session, she has realised her weakness in this area and has designed her final college performances to reflect it, opting for a minimum of formal recital, and including folk and multi-disciplinary forms. She also says she has "five hundred other paths" in mind for her career, and now doesn't "need to conquer this area" (classical singing) - a direct opposite of our first session, when she said that classical singing was not her best discipline, but she wanted to "sort it out". Is this the real artistic journey - leading away from classical singing to other forms that more suit her vocal qualities in her view? Did our work facilitate this? Personally, I would love to hear her sing baroque and perhaps later repertoire in this 'direct' way and it is a shame that she couldn't see that this would be possible. After all, singers such as Emma Kirkby have made a good career out of exactly this. There is a market for it. Is it stepping beyond my bounds as a practitioner to persuade, cajole or extol the virtues of a particular type of singing that I love? I think not, though it may not be part of research. Furthermore, Anna herself seemed to want it, prevented only by barriers set up by the wider culture of music, music teaching and her own attitude to these authorities. Formidable barriers indeed, and perhaps more areas that could be unpicked in a counselling setting rather than these sessions.

From a practice point of view, it is interesting that the 'classical singer' attitude arose right at the beginning of our work together. The value of this initial contact to a practitioner,

even in the sort of welcoming chat that always takes place, is something to bear in mind.

5.7.6 Expansion of practice into other 'wrong things'

I would like to describe two more aspects of the work with Anna. Both produced interesting results. Like 'loud breath', they are not performance anxiety symptoms. They seem to show a wider benefit of following not just negative unconscious events in general, but other issues that the performer does not like.

Falling Off

Just as we are experimenting with the "bang-on" sound, Anna suddenly breaks off and tells me about "another thing".

"All exercises, all phrases, the end is...something happens, I haven't really sorted it out...maybe false vocal folds, air flow not enough..."

I say that this is singer-y stuff I don't understand. What happens musically?

"Kind of dropping...in pitch, intensity"

She says it is not running out of breath that causes it, as it happens at the ends of short phrases and exercises too. We call it 'falling off'. Can we treat this as a signal too? Could it lead to positive benefits like 'high breath' and 'loud breath'?

We go with the now normal method – to sing with more of the 'falling off'. Again, there is an immediate effect that she delights in (session 2, 56').

"(giggles) There is actually less of it now...it's more even...This going with the problem really works for me!"

I am pleased and astonished, of course, and also puzzled because I hadn't understood the problem really, and hadn't noticed this 'falling off' (though it is audible from time to time on playback).

In fact, this time I did notice a change at the end of the phrase, this being the first time I had looked out for it. I notice two things on the last note:

1. *it had a different sound quality – still focussed but less direct. I describe it as a 'darker, jazz singer, night club' quality.*

2. *a change in mouth shape – more down-turned*

We try 'falling off' on every note of the phrase and again there is the same mouth shape and darker sound. She is astonished and particularly interested in the down-turned mouth giving the darker sound, as this is what her teacher says she should be aiming for. Her face is "totally more relaxed, and this is what we are striving for in my lessons" (59').

Once again, following the 'problem' led immediately to something she valued, and in this case also solved her worry about the over-intensity of the sound obtained with 'loud breath', which we had just been working on. The tone retained the previous focus but had a darker quality (less "bang-on"), and there was also a release in her jaw that allowed the down-turned mouth (she later calls this release "one of the top five vocal production things").

She immediately formulates a new approach to her singing technique: that she should breathe in using 'high' and 'loud' breath, then 'fall off' when singing. When she sings like this in the session she is very happy with the results.

Circular Singing

There was one more remarkable discovery in our final one-to-one session. This was a continuation of our work on 'loud breath'.

She is keen to "reduce the loudness" of her breath.

I remind her that this 'loud breath' was very successful in terms of sound production. Could we try it again? She sings with 'loud breath' and she admits that it takes her to "good

vocal places". She experiments – maybe the 'loud breath' is doing exactly what her new class suggests and putting her vocal folds and larynx in the right place for the particular pitch "so it's almost sounding" as she breathes in. She shows me that she can actually vocalise on the in-breath. She sings part of 'O Solitude'. On three separate high notes I remind her strongly to vocalise the in-breath at the same pitch, resulting immediately in a 'fantastic' sound on the sung out-breath each time (session 4, 31'). This merely confirms the benefit of 'loud breath', but in addition she really enjoys the discovery that she can sing on inhalation. Could she use this in composition or what she calls her "weird stuff" concerts? Are there any ethnic traditions that use this technique? She is laughing so much about this new thing she can sometimes barely speak.

"Oh my God, what if I get to the end of a phrase and I think I'm not going to make it, and then just…reverse the breath!"

*We try this with the very last phrase of the Purcell, reversing the breath for the final word – "O how I solitude **adore**". It was magical, a perfect echo (session 4,33').*

"This is crazy…a bit creepy"

'But a wonderful effect'

The reversed breath has a special colour, so I ask if she could improvise with it in a continuous line of in- and out-breath, a technique I dub 'circular singing' as a corollary to the circular breathing employed occasionally by wind players. She does so. My notes say 'fantastic, magical'.

In the final group session, she is unwilling to apply this new finding in her performance, but reluctantly agreed to do a 'folky' improvisation incorporating 'circular singing'. To my taste, this was wonderful. The tone colour on both inhalation and exhalation is utterly different from her singing of Purcell. Its intensity is immediately noticeable, borne out by the fact that it is the only point where the microphone becomes distorted.

5.7.7 The Conceptual Lens

Anna's was a rich and complex case. In summary, it seemed that using a well-established performance anxiety symptom (like Anna's 'high breath') led directly in an artistic direction that the performer did not expect, but enjoyed (a hidden desire). Other issues not directly linked to performance anxiety seemed to have the same effect. However, there were difficulties in applying this because of personal resistance on technical and cultural grounds.

Despite this she did think she could apply the new techniques to her non-classical work. Indeed, by the end of our time together she had decided to concentrate on this rather than classical singing. This is a major change in artistic direction. Did our sessions contribute to this? I am not sure, but it may have tipped the balance. The enjoyment she gained from singing in our new ways was, she felt, fine for jazz or experimental work, but not suitable for classical performance, which she took the decision not to do any more. Right at the beginning she said that classical singing wasn't her strong point, but that she wanted to conquer it. By the end she wanted to abandon it. I felt this was a great shame as I enjoyed her singing immensely, especially when she used 'loud breath' and our other techniques. But she couldn't or wouldn't in performance, partly because of technical objections but also because she didn't feel that these new techniques were 'proper' singing in the way that is required for classical performance.

Practice: Anna's resistance gave rise to many questions about practice. These are referred to in the following chapter, which looks at the issues that arose in this part of the research concerning the development of a practice using the conceptual lens. These include observations of my tacit knowledge and instinctive way of working, and whether these are appropriate, useful, rigorous and ethical.

6. ISSUES ARISING ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PRACTICE

6.1 What Tools can I use for Deciding the Course of a Session with a Client?

I would like to consider the question of how one chooses which path to follow when presented with multiple performance anxiety symptoms, as was often the case in this project.

What I have omitted from these case studies is much work that was unproductive. This was done for the sake of clarity, but a major component of developing and improving a practice must lie in exploring what was not successful. Many of the participants presented with multiple symptoms of performance anxiety. With this multiplicity of material to work with, how does one choose the most fruitful path? The first two sessions with Laura were spent trying to work with the symptom of "constricted sound", amongst other things (see appendix 5 for a progress report including a list of approaches tried and not tried after four sessions). I had thought that "constricted" might have led to 'focussed' in sound quality. Why? Because I had in mind my experience with Elisabeta, who needed to play 'in her own box' in order to be outwardly expressive. Perhaps this was something similar? Or perhaps a hidden desire to make a narrower, more focussed sound underlay this symptom, as actually was the case with Anna? However, no progress was made. Instead of focus, we gained timidity and confusion. It was when we investigated the symptom of 'feeling judged' that a breakthrough was made.

Was there a way of avoiding this wasted time? Was, indeed, the time actually wasted, given that part of this seemingly unfruitful exploration helped establish intangibles such as background information and rapport. If this was a professionally-based relationship rather than

a research project, however, it might be that a client would not have booked a second session because of the lack of progress in the first.

Observing my own behaviour in the sessions, I note that I was guided in which path to take by noticing qualities in the performance. Was it better, did the sound change, was it more expressive? I may notice these things before the musician, so I often pursued directions where improvement seems to come, though I didn't feel justified in it ultimately being profitable unless there is marked change in attitude from the player.

Instant good results were part of my justification for following the path of the 'stamp' with David, rather than that of the 'shaking'. I was also guided by the enthusiasm of the participant. For instance, when Elisabeta explored the idea of "not knowing what the flute is", not necessarily an obvious path to follow, she was immediately delighted with the results, and this then led in a new artistic direction for her: that of improvisation. I want to ask if there is something about me that wants to take the easy path of immediate improvement or enthusiasm rather than further following minor improvements? I think there probably is, at a personal level, but I can justify this by the frequency of instant improvement (in directions the musician, at a deep level, wants to go) when the 'right' symptom is followed. Anna's 'high breath' is an example of this. I note a personal excitement for these breakthrough moments that seem to involve so little effort, but hard graft may have to follow to apply these breakthroughs in public, as discussed in the section 'Changing Technique' below.

This instant feedback at an intervention is a key part of the way that Process Oriented psychotherapists work. An indifferent reaction is usually seen as signalling an unproductive line of enquiry, whereas any strong reaction - positive or negative - is a sign that something important has been struck. These strong reactions are themselves unconscious and can be seen as part of the overall process that is emerging. While the unproductive work with Laura was continuing, her comments were typically "…feels OK", or "it felt better, in a way". But when

we discovered 'defiance' as an attitude she said it "felt good" and felt "I can do this". Conversely, Anna's negative attitudes to results that we both agreed were good demonstrated a strong negative reaction. This can also signal productive areas, as the discussion on 'shadow' explores below.

In summary, I note that signs that promising paths are being followed are: improved quality of performance, instant good results, enthusiasm, and strong positive or negative reactions from the musician.

6.2 Shadow

At the heart of psychoanalysis is that resistance can be interpreted as an indication that a fruitful path is being attempted. Unconscious and suppressed issues are so because they have been rejected at some level, and any attempt to bring them to the surface will encounter resistance from the conscious mind. This resistance is thus an indicator of suppression. The breakthroughs in the current work occurred when a suppressed artistic desire comes to the surface. Therefore, resistance to a suggested line of enquiry may well precede this. A client's resistance to the work seems to take many forms including refusal; technical, cultural and philosophical objections; or inability or forgetfulness in applying what we have done.

The idea that a strong negative reaction might also signal something significant is also connected to the psychological concept of the 'shadow'.

> The shadow is everything that is 'not me', and this might include creative qualities that could benefit the whole personality but have been lost or repressed due to the upbringing or social conditions of the subject (Hauke, 2006).

This might be an apt description of performance anxiety in the conceptual lens. The

'upbringing or social conditions' are the musician's training and the expectations of the classical music milieu, as well as their actual family upbringing. In the conceptual lens, MPA expresses 'creative qualities' that have been 'lost or repressed'. It would not therefore be surprising if encouraging the expression of MPA symptoms brings forth shadow elements. If behaviour emerges that is in direct contrast to the 'everyday' behaviour of the client, this may indicate that a promising path is being explored.

When Laura played with 'defiance' for the first time, I also noted that it made her behaviour very different. She was laughing enthusiastically, and defiant in her conversational attitude. Her normal demeanour, as far as I can tell, is rather quiet, shy, placid and obedient. I felt able to be confident we were on a good path precisely because of this change to something in her shadow, in addition to the good performance she gave. A similar change occurred when she started to 'dance' the music in contrast to her habitually undemonstrative physicality. Similarly, David's habit is to have an indifferent reaction to everything - something he realises (his parents have teased him about this). But when I asked him to play with bodily tension he developed a stronger, "bastard" mentality. I realised that I felt confident we were on a good path precisely because of this change to something opposite, as well as the quality of the performance.

It requires extensive training to deal with genuine shadow issues as they will be upsetting for the client, who may also put up serious resistance to even considering them, even though ultimately they may be the key to their personal development. The ethical considerations for this research consider minimising harm, and responsibility towards the participants. It is therefore important not to step into areas in which I am unqualified. However, it may be helpful to note when mild shadow issues occur, to the client's benefit.

Often, reactions are strong because there is a contradiction with consciously held theories or teachings. There is much to see about this in the case of Anna. But this was also a

theme with other participants. Elisabeta had a belief that flautists should not close their eyes, Emma that she should retain control over all aspects of performance. With David, this can be demonstrated in his theoretical statement, typically non-committal, that it is "probably good to be relaxed, like really relaxed, when you play a solo, I guess", versus the immediate improvement when he deliberately played with tension. Thus, in this work, a motive for following a particular symptom over another could be informed by whether there is a strong belief that contradicts it. In David's particular case this was difficult because his beliefs were not expressed strongly, but one can adjust interpretation of strength of feeling after observing the client's habitual use of language. For David, saying he felt "happier" is a strong reaction.

This improvement when a client does something of which they consciously disapprove is an important part of the work, I feel. Players could break free from the bounds of their belief systems, or those of their teachers, educational institutions and musical culture. I note that the unorthodox and iconoclastic are part of my enjoyment of the work, and that I consider these potentially emancipatory for the client in the sense that traditions of technique, pedagogy, musical style, and other aspects of musical performance may straitjacket personal expression, whereas the artistic desires emerging from symptoms of MPA are deeply personal in my theorising. Each of the artistic developments that occurred in the research participants could be seen as breaking the bounds of the participants' normal way of being, and in some cases the accepted social, cultural or pedagogical norms, and I see in this practice an encouragement of this. It is perhaps inevitable that an anxiety symptom that stems from a fundamental conflict of desire and disapproval, as Freud suggests, would, on release, exhibit the 'desire' part of this and therefore be disapproved of in society, culture and education which no doubt provided the disapproval in the first place. In this way the work may emancipate the client from these norms in favour of something more personal.

6.3 Changing Technique

In the case of Anna, there were many times when it was clear what I had asked her to do but she was unable to do so. This is important for practice because while it may be possible to generate interesting breakthroughs, these will ultimately be useless if they cannot be applied, independently, by the musician. It seemed to be very easy for her simply to forget what I was asking her to do. Her best performances came when I gave her constant reminders.

She found it difficult to change her habitual way of breathing in performance, even if she wanted to. In one of the group sessions she "totally forgot" about using our new techniques even though I had reminded her seconds earlier – "I totally went into my auto-pilot zone", which was to think "OK – it's a performance – low breath, silent breath". That is, exactly the opposite of our 'high breath, loud breath' work together.

But when she did remember, her sound became much clearer. When she repeated the performance with me giving her constant visual reminders she agreed that "it was a much more energetic performance" and the sound sometimes had a remarkably searing, 'laser' quality.

No doubt there is a lot to think about when performing, especially when the performer is someone so knowledgeable about technique. Adding a new thought or attitude such as 'loud breath' may simply be too much to do without outside help. Finding the breakthrough is like detective work or psychotherapy, but when it has been found it may be necessary to be more like a teacher, patiently encouraging the musician in adopting it as part of their normal technique. This could take time, like many other aspects of technical learning.

An equivalent process might be a brass teacher changing a student's embouchure. There might be clear benefits to doing so but it could take weeks or months before the new embouchure feels normal for the player. There has to be a process of extreme consciousness in the positioning of the mouthpiece before it becomes habitual and sublimated into normal technique so that no conscious thought is required, and the player can 'just play'. The teacher

might facilitate this with reminders, simple exercises, imagery and much else. There may well be difficulties, backsliding and confusion for the student, and they will need the reassurance of the teacher that they are on a worthwhile journey. The teacher, in turn, has the responsibility of being sure that it is indeed worthwhile. I was the 'victim' of a major change of technique like this when I was a student, and it didn't work. I only found my way back to the starting point by consciously negating everything my teacher had told me. In short, it can be a fraught process for teacher and student, although plainly it can also often be beneficial.

Should this be part of this practice? I have painted a picture of it being a difficult road. However, there is a mitigating aspect. First, the new techniques are not the imposition of a technical orthodoxy from me, but have come from the client, although unconsciously. Might this make them easier to integrate if the musician is willing? Secondly, as symptoms occur spontaneously against conscious wishes it might be more a case of being trained to 'allow' the changes rather than learn them. But in encouraging a client to apply new techniques in performance I, like any teacher, must have confidence that this change is the right one. Do I?

6.4 Ignorance

Another observation of my behaviour in this research is that I was quite fundamentalist in my insistence that any progress comes from unconscious contents or reactions, not from thought-out responses of the client. During this study, this attitude was instinctive, but the theoretical considerations corroborate it. Freud's work on signal anxiety and parapraxis theorise that the meanings of symptoms are precise and have messages that the conscious mind is likely to suppress. Quinn (2010) argues from a psychoanalytic perspective for the inappropriateness of conscious control for artists who wish to extend their artistic range away from their conscious narrative. Senyshyn and O'Neill's (2001) existentialist approach implies that any attempt to control the type of 'self' emerging from a situation necessarily limits the

freedom to discover new selves.

These theoretical approaches are not restricted to music performance anxiety, so I also felt justified in using all unintended or unwanted phenomena related to performance, not just MPA. Although the framework of this research is around performance anxiety, I also used technical problems, social behaviour and physical symptoms as part of the group of unconscious signals that could lead to artistic development. I use faux-naïvety, and genuine ignorance, in order to suggest courses of action that symptoms suggest, but are unorthodox. This attitude is echoed in Jung's epistemological adoption of 'Socratic-ignorance' in order to be as open as possible to phenomena (Papadopoulos, 2006). Indeed, one can argue that ignorance of outcomes is also a sound research attitude.[10]

However, there are potential ethical problems here. My ignorance of technical orthodoxy in instruments other than my own, and my eagerness to follow unorthodox directions if the symptoms suggest them, could lead to long term detrimental effects, both technical and even medical. In Anna's case, she found other vocal teachings that matched a newly found technique, but this may not always happen. Do I have the right to encourage clients to pursue paths of which I have no knowledge? This is a complex question. The idea of new emergent selves from Senyshyn and O'Neill implies that true freedom can only exist if we are open to all possible paths. Furthermore, anxiety is the price we pay for this and, in my theorising, is the signpost to the emergent self. The practice used in this research stands or falls on the pursuance of unknown paths. Conversely, modern ethical practice takes very seriously the issue of the potential impact of interventions. Plainly, some impact is desirable, otherwise there is no point to the work.

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[10] 'A research attitude is like running water, already-knowing is like ice.' (Kurkela, 2017, p.152)

Whether all long-term effects can be predicted by any practitioner in any discipline is debatable. The British Psychological Society's Code of Research Ethics states that practitioners must be 'sensitive' to potential impact, rather than prescient. Furthermore, the same code says that 'a reasoned balance should be struck between protecting participants and recognising their agency and capacity'. Thus, the researcher cannot be solely responsible for the future conduct of the research participant. One could say that Anna demonstrated her agency in ultimately refusing to apply the new techniques we had discovered. Perhaps the best formulation of a good attitude towards clients in this practice are Hollway and Jefferson's (2013) principles of honesty, sympathy and respect.

6.5 Ethics: *should* we always do what produces good results?

Anna, after her technical and cultural objections to our work, also offered resistance that was more philosophical, or at least made me think seriously about the philosophical basis of working with the conceptual lens.

Anna completely understands the theory of what we have been doing but, as I have said, produces technical or cultural reasons not to follow this through even though she likes the results. She has justified some of our work by reframing it in terms of newly learned theories of vocal technique. But if she cannot find a theory that fits our good results, she is uneasy. In one of our sessions we worked on posture. She says she naturally slouches, which is partly why she feels the need to adopt the uprightness of the 'statuesque' singer, so I ask her to sing while slouching. It shouldn't come as a surprise if I say that her reaction was that it was "actually easier to breathe (laughing)". The conceptual lens might imply that her body draws her towards this posture, so there must be some wisdom in this; in this case a more relaxed demeanour making her breathing easier. She can find no technical reason for slouching being better than standing 'properly' so she objects on more fundamental grounds: "I still believe there are some

things that are better and worse… (if I slouch I will) look like a monkey when I'm eighty!".

In other words, even if something works now, could it do long-term damage? This is a good question, and important for practice development. It is certainly possible to imagine that something could have short term benefits but make long term difficulties. I adopted an attitude of naïvety and openness to phenomena in this work, following the approach of gentle empiricism, because it allows a practitioner to welcome MPA symptoms without limits imposed by the conscious mind of either practitioner or client. But this is where my lack of specific technical expertise could be a problem. I could be advising a musician to use a certain method that we can both hear the benefits of, but it may be well-known to more knowledgeable people that this method involves wear and tear that may not be immediately apparent and causes problems months or even years later. There are two aspects to this.

One is that in some ways the conceptual lens is in the business of challenging the orthodoxy of the fixed or knowing self: a potentially emancipatory part of this research that might also challenge the orthodoxy of some conservatoire teaching.

The second was brought up by Anna herself. It depends "if I live for performance". Put another way, it is about whether a musician is willing to risk all to produce a great performance 'right now' and forget the long-term consequences. If Anna produces astonishing performances that nevertheless damage her in the long term, is that a price worth paying? Some would say that this is the sort of performer who is really memorable. The history of music is full of flawed geniuses who damage themselves in the pursuit of their art: for instance, Beethoven, Schumann, Bessie Smith, and Jimi Hendrix. If this fledgling practice is concerned with artistic development, this is something that should not be ignored. The point for a practice is a question of ethics, and also rigour, which I will come to next.

Ethics because, as Anna put it so clearly: "you shouldn't drink six pints even if it does make you perform well!". If I find in my practice that drinking six pints of beer really is

consistently beneficial, should I encourage it? After all drinking is a method favoured by many artists, from some of my personal colleagues to Billie Holiday and Ernest Hemingway. Is the issue to avoid long-term harm or to enable great art? While a part of any MPA practice might be said to be to 'help' clients, it is an interesting question whether enabling them to become highly creative, successful, yet self-destructive artists constitutes 'help'.

6.6 Rigour and the Research Method

Anna stated that she doesn't want to "look like a monkey" when she is eighty, and that therefore she doesn't like the "black and white" of my approach; by which she means my attitude that everything that appears to be wrong, whether performance anxiety or bad posture, is in some way right. This comment exposes a part of my thinking that is positivist, in the sense that I am trying to uncover a truth that already exists: that what happens to a musician on stage against their conscious will has a meaning that is not sabotage but takes them in the direction of their deeper desires about performance. As a former physicist, I note that I see this as a form of fundamental law, which is indeed "black and white". (This is perhaps the mirror of Anna's appeal to theory in singing technique.) Whether this is justifiable specifically or in general is too wide a question for this paper. The question is what effect this attitude has on practice. What happens when I act as if it is a fundamental law? I note that in this research I have been very strict about the source of any change being unconscious. When a client starts theorising about what might be better for them, I try to steer them back in the direction of what the unthought physical or psychological symptoms are saying. This is the very essence of the work. There is a double standard here, I am aware. I am very insistent on theory, but I do not allow them to theorise (unless it is in line with my theory). This is perhaps inevitable in any rigorous practice that takes into account unconscious contents. But my positivist attitude insists that anything unconscious has meaning and is in some way 'right', even, or especially, if it does

not seem so.

Quinn (2010) takes what he calls a Freudo-Lacanian approach by insisting that research that takes into account unconscious processes is rigorous only as far as it puts these processes above conscious thought in importance. This is my justification in research terms. But what effect does this rigour have on a 'client'? Anna is interested in the results of our work but wants to "take something out of this (and put it) into this". In other words, when she finds something interesting she wants to use the bits that she thinks will benefit her. She wants to theorise about what is best. But the very start of the conceptual lens is that it is the object we *don't like* (performance anxiety) that has the useful information. According to my 'fundamental law' view she would miss valuable information if she only takes aspects of the situation that she likes. Anna wants to retain control even after she has seen that the symptoms she cannot control have benefited her so much. Equally, I want my theory to be correct under all circumstances. Our work together reached a point where in our theoretical outlook the irresistible force of my control has met the immovable object of hers.

I note that while I don't find theorising (apart from my own) acceptable, I am very much guided by non-thought-out reactions such as relief, laughter, joy and regret. Anna's delight at our discoveries, which take her towards personal expression, is much more meaningful for me than her technical and cultural thoughts, which lead towards standardisation.

What are the consequences for practice? I am determined to obtain the best result for my client, but in the conceptual lens this is obtained by trusting something they <u>don't</u> want (the performance anxiety symptom). In one sense this might damage the whole ethical research framework. Is a research participant withholding their consent if the research is actively encouraging something they don't (consciously) want? Conversely, if there is resistance to the direction of the work one could easily take this in a psychoanalytic sense, that the person is avoiding the very thing that could give rise to a breakthrough (see chapter 6.2 on 'Shadow').

As C.G.Jung says: 'resistances - especially when they are stubborn - merit attention, for they are often warnings which must not be overlooked' (Jung, 1983, p.164)

Thus, in Anna's case her resistance to, say, slouching, or indeed to anything that goes against theory is itself part of the armoury of the practitioner. Although this research has not been framed as action research, where 'the principle of collaborative resource presupposes that each person's ideas are equally significant' (O'Brien, 1998), this sound principle in the co-creation of data is somewhat undermined by deliberately welcoming unwanted phenomena. However, whether or not to follow newly-revealed ideas that might oppose consciously-held opinions is part of the consent that is continuously given or withheld in research with participants, according to Hollway and Jefferson (2013). This does not make the issue trivial or easy to deal with. The BACP ethical guidelines (Mitchels, 2019) warn that research that seeks unconscious data is 'risky and requires careful exploration…in supervision and with participants, with awareness and consent that the risk is justifiable' (p.19).

6.7 Giving Advice or Enabling Transformation?

My rigorous approach could perhaps lead to a lack of flexibility, especially when resistance to the work is met. I distrust thought-out reasons or objections, and I am also unwilling to give 'tips' or coping strategy, but would rather pursue the unconscious meaning of symptoms in order to find new artistic direction, thereby making tips or strategy unnecessary. However, it may sometimes be that 'tips' are all that is required. Perhaps a problem sometimes just needs to be 'fixed' rather than used to elicit a deeper meaning. One can suggest a postural change that improves breathing, for instance, without going into the meaning of the unimproved posture. Would this mean missing some hidden artistic desire? Perhaps, but one also has to ask whether the client is ready to embrace it, and the sensitivity to this is part of an attitude necessary in the practice.

In my notes reflecting on the first session with David (see appendix 4.6), I question whether I am 'drifting into "advice"' rather than using his symptoms to explore his possible artistic transformation. I note that I prefer the latter. I had a very strong feeling that the business I am in is not giving advice about performance anxiety. It is not like other methods, where one might be advised to breathe deeply, do some stretches, visualise etc. These things may emerge from the practice, but it is important that they do so from the client's unconscious symptoms. What is interesting to me is that transformation comes from something that they already do but is suppressed because it is 'wrong' or a symptom of 'nerves'. There may also be cases, as I have said, where the supposedly 'wrong' thing is 'right' in the sense of providing something to react strongly to (I have called this 'secondary'). It still remains the case that the outcome is not 'advice' in managing performance anxiety, but the revealing of hidden artistic desire. It is therefore possible that the solution to the client's MPA is then a 'labour of love' to follow rather than yet another thing to remember while performing. This is surely preferable. The difficulties posed by the original symptom should, in theory, be absent, as the symptom has either become part of the new artistic approach, as in the case of Anna's 'high breath', or is no longer needed, like Laura's critical voices when she adopted her 'defiant' attitude. The symptom has been re-framed as non-symptom or become redundant.

Thus, I judged the success of a performance in one of the group sessions by a new performance style that is demonstrated, rather than how much the participant managed their performance anxiety or the quality of the performance. 'Managing' or 'coping' is, as I have said, the main focus of much performance anxiety research. For this reason, I found myself shying away from such considerations. This was occasionally frustrating for the participants. Wasn't I there to help them? Wouldn't I tell them what to do?

6.8 Applying the Conceptual lens while Performing

As I have said in chapter 4.3, the natural setting for performance anxiety is performance. Could the research participants understand and apply the conceptual lens to unexpected MPA symptoms while performing? I considered Anna an advanced student, as she had been so open to the work, so I asked her to sing while observing herself. If she noticed anything that appears to be hindering her performance, she could see what happened if she exaggerated it. She was utterly unable to do this. She had "a million thoughts" – a mixture of advice given by current and former teachers. It was "quite confusing". She did notice tightness in her stomach, and consciously let go of it, which "felt really nice" and made her "more open". This is of course the opposite of the method we had been using, which would have suggested increasing the tightness!

I also tried this with Emma, the clarinettist with synaesthesia. Following the success of playing one piece while listening to another, we were looking for a different simultaneous narrative to follow that was more acceptable in performance. Before hitting on using colours, I was keen to try body signals, bearing in mind the connection in the conceptual lens to embodied wisdom. Can she use a 'body narrative' in the same way as she used music through headphones or my improvising? My notes describe what happened:

> She would be happy to focus on a particular body part, but I encourage her instead to observe her whole body and be aware of any tensions, imbalances, itches, anything, as they arise. The reason for this is that while observing, say, one's big toe during a performance might be good from the point of view of distracting from the task at hand, or as a meditative object, I am more interested in spontaneously arising events (performance anxiety or anything else). Are they part of a deeper-seated expressive palette than our conscious minds? She tries this but finds it hard. There are "too many

things to think about", meaning not from her body, but all the musical ideas she wants
to express. She also feels she is "not that bodily aware".

So, neither Anna nor Emma were able to apply the conceptual lens to phenomena arising during a performance. To do so may need extensive familiarity with the lens, and this is where a different sort of teaching may be required – coaching in using the conceptual lens dynamically in performance: not applying a previous interesting breakthrough, but coaching observational and practical skills to 'catch' symptoms and use them as they arise. It may also require considerable body awareness, as Emma points out. My own training in yoga, massage and Feldenkrais Method made me forget that many people may not be sensitive to body signals in the way I am. Does body awareness need to part of this coaching too? And can I apply this dynamic approach in my own performance? Chapters 8-10 explore the latter question.

7. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE COACHING RESULTS

In broad terms there were some encouraging results for the research participants in the performance coaching part of the research. Symptoms were welcomed in various ways, and the reactions to this of the participants and their performance were observed and pursued. In six of the seven cases studied the potential for some new artistic development emerged from the work, and there were promising signs that with further sessions a longer-term artistic process could unfold.

The table below summarises this.

	Symptom	Emerging desire/self
Elisabeta	Closing off from the audience	Personally expressive performance
	Not knowing what the flute is	Improvisation
Laura	Imagined criticism	Defiant performing attitude
	Raised and moving shoulder	Embodied musical phrasing
Zoe	Distracting internal talk	Not over-controlling, playing on "auto-pilot"
Emma	External distraction	Not micro-managing, allowing her instinctive musicianship.
David	Shaking leg, relieved by semi-conscious stamping	'Stamping' his technical and musical authority
	Non-committal manner	Personally expressive performance
Anna	High breath, loud breath	Pure tone quality, relaxed neck
	"Falling off" the end of phrases	Darker tone quality, relaxed jaw
	Loud breath	New technique of "circular singing"

Table 2: Summary of Performance Coaching Results

The seventh participant, Richard, did not have such a successful outcome. I have suggested reasons for this in terms of his over-thinking manner that was unwilling to allow unconscious contents to be expressed.

The research questions:

In what ways can MPA symptoms signal performance desire and emerging performer-selves?

The answer to the first question seems to be that a link between MPA and performance desire can sometimes be made. This was demonstrated in the case studies. There were occasions when the link was not made. Is this because the connection is not universal, the hidden desire too hidden, or my practice was not sufficiently skilled? The research does not answer these questions.

How may the use of the conceptual lens lead to artistic development?

Whether longer term and useable artistic development as a performer occurred in the research participants was not possible to ascertain without a follow-up study and is a possible subject for future research. However, the desires emerging above are certainly possible to pursue further.

How might a coaching practice to use these ideas be developed?

The coaching part of the research could be a model for a practice that uses the conceptual lens to address MPA issues. The model of 'gentle empiricism' is well suited to the attitudes required on the part of a practitioner in such a practice, as it implies openness to the phenomena, careful listening and observation, and reverence towards the client, their history, and their emergent selves. In addition, the following observations were made concerning the conduct of a practice.

1. The behaviour of a client in a session can be seen as a demonstration of part of the pattern of their performance anxiety and welcomed accordingly.

2. It is better to start afresh with each client, rather than assume that the work will proceed in similar directions to outwardly similar cases.

3. Interpreting symptoms can lead to immediate improvement but can also lead to stagnation.

4. It may be better to follow the procedures of psychoanalysis and modern coaching methods by allowing the client to make any interpretations themselves.

5. 'Secondary' effects, when improvement comes from strong reaction to amplification of a symptom, can be effective.

6. There are clues available over which avenues might be productive:

    a. Improvement in an aspect of performing;

    b. Immediate delight;

    c. Immediate resistance;

    d. Strong beliefs that seem to run counter to the symptom;

    e. Shadow elements connected to the symptom.

7. Resistance to the work, as well as more positive reactions, can be interpreted as an indication that a fruitful path is being attempted. Resistance can take many forms: refusal; technical, cultural and philosophical objections; inability or forgetfulness in applying what we have done.

8. It seems to be better to make single strong interventions or suggestions rather than combining various ideas, which seems to dilute rather than strengthen any effect.

9. The practice may have to include teaching a musician to embed newly-found

technique for use in performance.

Issues about the practice arose:

1. Ignorance of technical orthodoxy in instruments other than my own, combined with following unorthodox directions if the symptoms suggest them, could lead to long term detrimental effects.

2. Is it justified to encourage a potentially harmful symptom if it genuinely produces music of the highest quality?

3. A 'fundamentalist' approach which welcomes only unconscious phenomena and dismisses thought-out responses can lead to lack of flexibility in responding to a client's needs.

I was also studying my own beliefs, assumptions and tacit knowledge that emerged through this process, and the following observations were made:

1. I am quite fundamentalist in my insistence that any progress comes from unconscious contents or reactions, not from thought-out responses of the client.

2. I am drawn to use all unintended or unwanted phenomena related to performance in my work, not just performance anxiety.

3. I use faux-naïvety, and genuine ignorance, in order to suggest courses of action that symptoms suggest, but are unorthodox.

4. The unorthodox and iconoclastic are part of my enjoyment of the work. I consider these emancipatory for the client as they may run counter to hegemonic values.

5. I use the Jungian concept of the 'shadow' to inform choices about the progress of the work.

I also note the roles I adopt in this practice:

1. Genuine 'loving' listener to the predicament of the 'client',

2. Theoretician,

3. Role-player,

4. Experienced musical listener,

5. Naive questioner,

6. Imaginative problem-solver,

7. Responsible practitioner.

8. Instrumental performer

8. PERFORMANCE

8.1 Introduction

In some ways, this research is a practical study of the ideas contained in Senyshyn and O'Neill's paper (2001) concerning existentialism and music performance anxiety. They view MPA as the emergence of possible new artistic 'selves' on stage. The 'dizziness of freedom' that anxiety gives in this conception is very much in line with my thinking. However, it implies a new freedom in each performance, or even within each momentary MPA symptom, whereas the coaching part of this project has been mainly about persistent and known MPA symptoms that can be considered and experimented with at length.[11] One could conceive of these persistent symptoms as a new artistic self insisting repeatedly on coming into being, especially if this self has been denied expression. Perhaps more momentary or unexpected symptoms may also be a signal of an emerging performing self on stage. This more dynamic use of the conceptual lens is more consistent with Senyshyn and O'Neill's ideas, where at any moment we have freedom to travel towards an infinite number of future selves and have anxiety as a consequence.

If my theoretical considerations are correct, the performance anxiety symptom is a personal response to the particular situation that can reveal the performer's emerging artistic intentions in that situation. According to the widely accepted Barlow model of triple vulnerability, (Barlow, 2000) MPA results not just from the internal situation of the performer but from the particular circumstances in which they find themselves. Facets of the occasion that could affect the performer include repertoire, acoustic, colleagues, audience, the perceived

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[11] Steptoe (2001) makes one of the distinctions between stage fright and MPA the fact that MPA may be predictable and commence well before a performance, whereas stage fright implies sudden unexpected fear during a performance.

importance of the occasion, the amount of preparation, mood, recent conversations, personal life, previous traumatic occasions, tiredness, and much else. That a performer cannot consciously elucidate each of these on a particular occasion does not mean that they do not have an effect. It seems likely that how the performer feels on stage is a result of all these things, whether acknowledged consciously or not. In a sense, their biological inheritance and their whole life before this point has led to the totality of the current experience. In the conceptual lens, the wisdom behind the performance anxiety, whatever it is, surely takes the situation *totus porcus* and reacts accordingly.

For one musician, the same symptom might recur in every concert - there is something about all performance situations that triggers that response. Another musician (or indeed the same one) might get a symptom only occasionally. The performer might be able to find the common factor to these occasions or they might not. Many musicians have said to me that performance anxiety seems to be random: they get symptoms unexpectedly. Although there may be some common factor in these instances, it might be very difficult to tease out what it is because of the vast variety of possible influences, both conscious and unconscious, on any occasion. The point is this: whatever the cause, whatever factor of the occasion gives rise to the symptom, the course is the same: take the performance anxiety symptom as a genuine helpful response to the totality of the situation, and welcome it. We don't know where it came from and we don't know where it is leading. Can we be brave enough to trust it? The performing part of this project aims to try.

8.2 Researching my own Performance

It is characteristic for artistic research to be an 'unruly' practice (Haseman, 2006). While it may be traditional at this stage to set out the intended methodology to explore particular questions, the process of using my own performance has not been so tidy. Discoveries made in one type of performance have led to shifts in emphasis of what is being investigated, and therefore also to methodology and method.

In this way, it has elements in common with action research. Griffiths (2010), however, notes that in the arts, cycles of 'plan, act, observe, reflect' often only come to light retrospectively, are not experienced as being so discreet, affect each other, and often do not become clear until the end of the process. This has indeed been the case in the current research. As Aigen suggests in *Principles of Qualitative Research* (1995b), research problems have arisen through 'immersion' in the phenomena under investigation.

Performance has been used in various ways to explore the conceptual lens for MPA that has been developed. When working as a coach, it was used to 'road-test' performance strategies, attitudes and techniques that arose from one-to-one work. In working with my own MPA, my own performance is used both as methodology and output, and as both practice and theory.

Kozel (2010) shows that the boundaries of practice and theory are blurred by rejecting any value judgements of either, but looking at them phenomenologically instead. What is their materiality? Traditionally they are seen thus:

Heady, abstract, intellectual, insubstantial

Practice

Theory

Heavy, physical, grounded
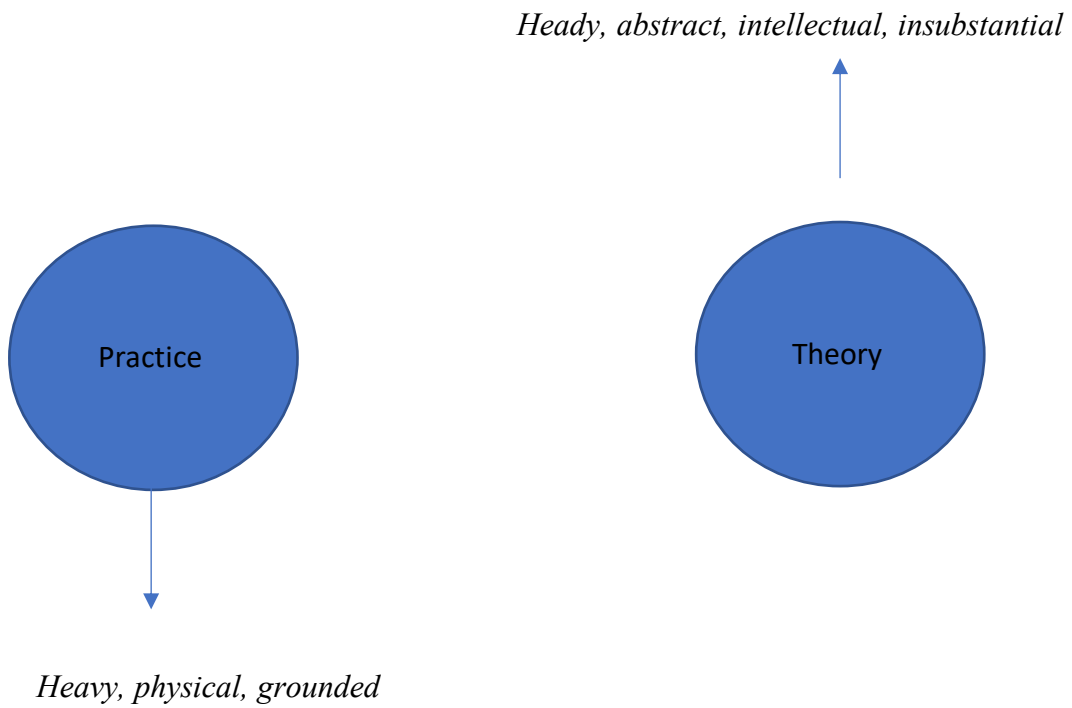
Figure 4: Traditional Gravitational Pulls of Practice and Theory

But they can be seen also with opposite gravitational pulls:

Ephemeral, changeable, disappearing

Practice

Theory

Felt, embodied, lived (see p.157)
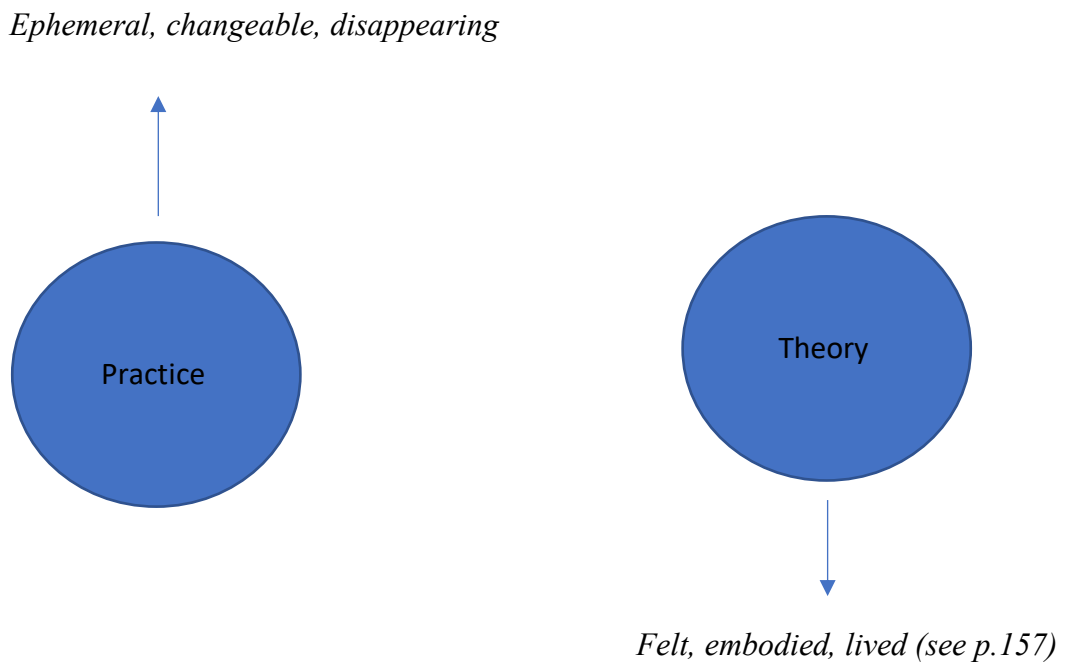
Figure 5: Alternative Gravitational Pulls

And also pull towards each other:
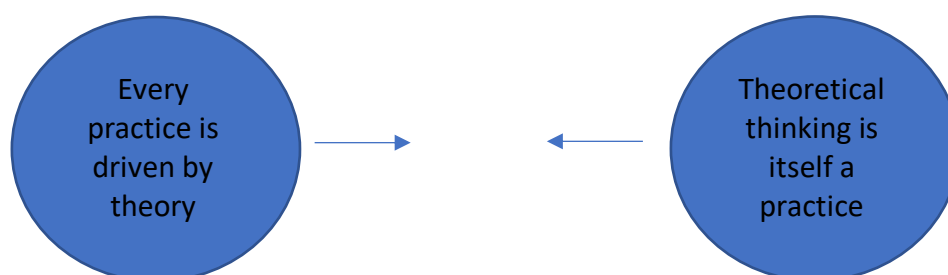
Following twin theoretical tracks from psychodynamics and existentialism, the research method must investigate performing music in a way that gives an entity different from the everyday performing self some control over the performance. This entity is known as Music Performance Anxiety (MPA). In psychodynamic theory, the entity is an anxiety that is beyond conscious control but nevertheless has considerable effect on behaviour, and contains meaning (Nagel, 2010). More specifically, Jung's conception is that this entity is not only caused by past events in an individual's life but has a goal for that person's future (Papadopoulos, 2006). In existential terms, the entity is a new self that emerges in the new situation of a particular performance (Senyshyn & O'Neill, 2001). The adoption of this new self is considered the path to authenticity (Heidegger, 1962) and future possibility (Kierkegaard, 1980).

If MPA has something to say, as I suggest, the question is how much to let it 'speak'. At one extreme (the normal one in classical performance) it is held back, as much as it can be. At the other it could take over completely. In this research I experiment in the space between (and including) these extremes.

How to give this MPA-entity control? From the above theoretical standpoints, it is not known as it is outside consciousness, and because if it were known it would not represent future

freedom. The performer does not know what it is. However, she or he does know what it does: it imposes on her or him certain affects that are usually referred to as the symptoms of performance anxiety. My proposal is to give control to the entity by allowing the expression of these affects. I wish to treat my performance anxiety as a separate 'self': as an entity that has plans that are in opposition to my knowing self or fixed self. In order to find out what these plans are I intend to follow the MPA symptoms as they arise in performance in a 'dynamic' version of the 'welcoming' of known MPA symptoms in the coaching part of this research. But how much? Should I give free rein to the effects that this entity provides? My initial experiments (see chap. 8.3) demonstrated that, if permitted, they can overwhelm the intended performance. This might be appropriate in some situations, but if not, perhaps there could be some balancing control in the form of the performer's artistic intention?

Quinn (2010), however, takes the view that research based on unconscious contents that tries to retain any conscious control places severe limitations on research outcomes. The artistic integrity of the artist-researcher that controls the art is also the self-narrative that stops access to valuable unconscious knowledge. Quinn further notes that the rigour of any research which has a psychoanalytic approach depends on accepting the 'rigorous truth' of unconscious utterance. As research data comes from material that 'interrupt(s) the fiction of self-identity' (p.245), any part this fixed identity is given in deciding outcomes is subtracting from methodical rigour.

The performances resulting from absolute rigour in accepting the unconscious content of MPA are an example of what fig.5 refers to: theory becomes lived and embodied. Some of my experiments became a form of free improvisation, and were personally satisfying, as if fulfilling a need to express this part of myself (see chapter 8.3). This might be artistically appropriate in certain situations, and Quinn might say that it supplies research rigour too. However, there are restrictions and expectations implicit in different performing situations.

At least part of the focus of this inquiry is in the area where my main expertise lies: in classical performance, where there are expectations of some faithfulness to the score and cultural norms to follow. It is therefore more appropriate to experiment with degrees of control between two entities: my artistic and professional integrity and the MPA-entity. But might retaining some artistic control undermine the effort to gain some of the insights available from unconscious contents (and, from an existentialist view, the free emergence of a new self)?

To answer this, I turn to the ideas of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. Bolt (2007) cites Heidegger (1962) in stating that the only way of gaining new knowledge is through 'handling' materials and processes - theory and intellectual understanding come later - and that this is what practice-led researchers do. Both psychodynamic and existential viewpoints imply that MPA symptoms can be considered the workings of an entity independent of, and with different aims to, the conscious performing self. It is part of the unconscious (or, from an existentialist view, part of an unknowable future). It therefore cannot be known through contemplation, but can be considered as material to be discovered and worked with. What methodologies are available to handle the materiality of the MPA-entity?

Kozel (2010) uses the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty in order to connect research and performance. Merleau-Ponty points out that we interact with the world 'chiasmatically'. That is, there is a reciprocal relationship between a person and the world – "I touch the world and the world touches me". This constitutes not only a reciprocal, but a reversible relationship. In artistic work, I touch the material (move the body, initiate playing an instrument…) and the material (body, surroundings, instrument…) touch back, restraining me and sometimes taking me in unexpected directions. Which is the creator - me or the material?

In the places of artist and material we have the performer and performance anxiety. The latter is normally treated in research as material to be manipulated and managed - usually in the form of coping, suppression or denial. Quinn takes the opposite view – that the symptoms

are manipulating the performer (and that this should be welcomed in order to do rigorous research). Merleau-Ponty's chiasm implies that both of these viewpoints are extreme.

In Kozel's project *Contours*, the two sides are herself as dancer, and a computer programme that reflects, mimics and also predicts her movements. She finds that it is not clear to her who is in charge. Although the computer's response is triggered by her movement, the sense she has when linked to the computer was that she was 'dancing with another being: with an "other"' (Kozel, 2010, p.209). It became unclear who was leading and who being led. These roles were explored and exchanged, just as when dancing with another human.

Instead of the 'independent' computer programme, which is nevertheless linked to the dancer, I have my 'independent' performance anxiety, which is intimately linked to me and my whole history and being. I touch the autonomous, unconscious MPA symptom and it touches me. Reciprocally, from the viewpoint of the MPA-entity, it touches the conscious mind and the conscious mind touches back. It is a dance, a playfulness perhaps. What dance will happen between these two beings? Kozel notes that her starting point in researching dance with computer programmes is not measurement or proving the existence of a genuine virtual dance partner 'other', but 'could I base a performance on this?', and to create performances that are 'an attempt to bring to life the question itself' (2010, p.209).

The major challenge remains of applying the conceptual lens to performances in which I am following the strict conventions of professional orchestral playing, and this is investigated in chapter 9.

8.3 Initial Experiments

The issue in using the conceptual lens during a performance is to gain awareness of any new or unexpected anxiety symptoms and use them as they arise. How can performers welcome their performance anxiety symptoms 'on the fly' in performance? Furthermore, might this be

precisely one of the things that makes them perform effectively? Might it be a momentary version of the persistent performance anxiety symptom, giving immediate and personally truthful artistic insight into individual pieces and even musical phrases, and further, into the multiplicity of the current performing situation? How can one apply this 'dynamic' method? The experiments in doing so with Anna and Emma (chapter 6.8) showed that it might be difficult without thorough knowledge of the conceptual lens and fine self-observation.

Preliminary experiments lay on one extreme of the scale of how much control to give the MPA-entity, attaching complete rigour to MPA symptoms. The effect was that physical and psychological symptoms took over as more important than the piece of music I was playing, resulting in some improvisation that I found personally exhilarating. (See appendix 5 for description and video of experiments carried out in October 2015.) It is noteworthy that details other than MPA (which had anyway decreased after filming for some time) became important. Quinn's approach implies that all unconscious processes are equal. Despite this rigour in Quinn's sense, the work began to take on a flavour of Feyerabend's (1978) approach that uses 'chaos', 'opportunism' and even 'sloppiness' in order to explore a phenomenon. Any spontaneous, unintended or unwanted event became something to inject into a performance, either immediately or in a subsequent performance. In successively playing the first movement of Mozart's horn concerto K.417, the performance finally became unrecognisable, but simultaneously extremely satisfying for me (video 10, appendix 5.3).

Following these private experiments, there was an opportunity to explore these ideas in a presentation to fellow doctoral students. This consisted of performing a piece three times. In between each performance I wrote my MPA symptoms down and incorporated these symptoms into the following performance, observing the results. The third performance utilised the most rigorous application of unconscious contents, and, once again, rendered the piece unrecognisable but was highly satisfying from the point of view of self-expression.

Furthermore, the audience reaction was striking: they were shocked and utterly involved in a way not usual in classical performance (video in appendix 7).

Also, because this occasion was a presentation of my research for fellow research students, the writing down of MPA symptoms was done publicly, on a white board visible to the 'audience'. In discussion afterwards, a fellow student commented that the public writing of anxiety symptoms was itself a moving part of the performance. She felt that it laid bare the private struggles of performing on such a "well-loved" instrument. This personal disclosure on my part could in itself be considered a research outcome, in that it constitutes dissemination of knowledge that is at least tacit, and often positively taboo. The combination of this and the third 'rigorous' performance opens the possibility of research outcomes that are more performative in nature, as Kozel and Haseman (2006) suggest.

Performative aspects had already arisen in the coaching part of this research. When Emma performed Mozart while listening through headphones to other random music selected by me, we also agreed that the audience could 'dip in' to this experience by occasionally diverting the music to loudspeakers in addition to Emma's headphones. This was a striking and enjoyable music/theatrical experience. Also, Anna developed the new technique of 'circular singing' and performed using it in one of the shared sessions.

The doctoral presentation thus split the investigation in two: how to apply the conceptual lens in professional classical performance where there are expectations of fidelity to text and performing culture; and a more experimental part which explores the conceptual lens as creative tool for new work and new performance practice. The experimental part examines the nature of the MPA-entity and may:

a. Question how to make the intended music intelligible while retaining the performative power and artistic satisfaction of welcoming the MPA symptoms.

b. Explore the artistic and personal effects of disregarding conventional intelligibility in

favour of thoroughly allowing the MPA to 'speak'.

c. Explore the artistic effect of making MPA external: 'wearing it on the outside' instead of hiding it.

The professional part examines how the conceptual lens may be applied in my professional field and is mainly concerned with point a. above. Both experimental and professional parts are necessary for a thorough exploration.[12]

I will discuss methodology for each of these parts separately (chapters 8.4 and 8.5), followed by a further comparison of the two parts in terms of output and rigour (chapter 8.5.2).

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[12] I have called the two parts 'experimental' and 'professional' for convenience. But in fact, the categories are blurred. I have written about professional performances that were part of my regular work as an orchestral player, but there were other experiments that maintained expected classical norms but were not paid. Likewise, I was paid for some of the experimental performances, so they were professional in this sense. One might refer to the categories as 'experimental' and 'classical', but the word 'classical' is problematic (the repertoire may not be classical), and I wish to draw attention to the fact that this work is 'professional' in the sense that it is my profession and that therefore expected standards are extremely high (it is not 'amateur' performance even if I am not paid), and so are the stakes in terms of reputation. This professional aspect is significant because issues of standards and reputation are themselves contributory to MPA.

8.4 Experimental Performance

One important sense of arts research is the idea that good artists are engaged in an ongoing inquiry into the nature of their medium, into how to produce certain effects through it, and how to expand the capacities of that medium. There can be no doubt, for anyone who has tried it, that this is an intensely rigorous mode of artistic inquiry...extending over the lifetime of an artist. (Johnson, 2010, p.144)

8.4.1 Methodology

The work of creative artists has much in common with research. Both include critical thought; reflection followed by reworking of ideas; knowledge of related fields and accepted practice; and making decisions about conforming, or not, to these. The artist Gillian Russell, who has a background in science research, comments that 'it is almost (but not quite) as if art is already research' (in Gray & Malins, 1993, p.8n). How can artistic practice get over the 'but not quite' and become research?

A conventional answer is that the art should be accompanied by a piece of writing that gives context or explanation to justify the claim that it is research. What questions is the art attempting to pose and answer? In what way is it 'a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared?' (Whitney, 2015, p.109 quoting the Research Excellence Framework (REF), 2011, p.48).

Bolt (2007) argues for the necessity of an 'exegesis' about the art that elucidates 'what has emerged or what has been realised through the process of handling materials and ideas' (p.34). However, Melrose (2002) contends that this implies that the medium over which an artist has control and expertise, through which they can therefore pose relevant questions, and gain and show knowledge, only becomes research when filtered through another medium: academic writing. The implication is that this language is 'the master code, upon which other codes (are) modelled and in whose terms they could be analysed. It (is) also attributed this

unique status, that of the only code which could interrogate and comment upon other codes' (para. 56). Many artist researchers want to claim their original discoveries within their art, not as outsiders looking in, and argue that giving writing the 'last word' (Vincs, 2001) leaves a taste of hierarchy and externality.

Haseman (2007) questions the need to 'say things twice' (p.156), once in the art and once in an exegesis, and proposes a new 'performative' research paradigm to accommodate the epistemological content of performing practice. Melrose (2003) argues that the whole point of performance is to produce live 'qualitative transformations' and that research can set up the conditions for this to occur. However, writing about these transformations 'anaesthetises' them (para. 37, citing Massumi, 2002), and certainly does not make them more likely to occur in the future. Similarly, Rendell (2018) advances the case for writing to do more harm than good when she points out that writing fixes one meaning to a piece of art in place of all other possible meanings. In music, Cook (2015) questions the need for even the 'brief contextualisation' suggested by the REF framework for an audience to understand the research aspect of a performance. The performance practice is research as long as the performer-researcher is 'thinking them deeply together' (p.30). Vincs (2007) and Lawrence (2017) advance the case not only that creative output is sufficient, but that using their practice specifically to answer research questions strips the artwork of its status as art. O'Neill (2014) concurs, arguing that a poem might answer research questions sufficiently, but loses its status as poetry because poems are not written in order to answer specific questions.

Others take a middle path and argue that words are indeed necessary and useful as long as they do not usurp the art itself as the 'primary mode of signification' (Cook, 2015, p.2). Piasecki (2018) does not take offence at the idea of a written part of artistic research since the writing is not the research, merely its concluding product. In the same way, a scientific experiment is the research practice that is then written up.

In the 'experimental' performance part of this research I have used a methodological 'bricolage' (Stewart, 2007), choosing a methodology appropriate for each performance. In general, I have sided with Haseman (2007) who argues that artistic practice has its own 'epistemological content' (p.148) that words cannot do justice to. The experimental performances here thus have their own validity as stand-alone pieces of art, some using the principle of 'critical meta-practice' (Melrose, 2002), where some norms of performance are respected while others are interrogated. Where I have included some explanation, for instance in the comparison with Kozel's *Contours,* this is of research interest, and may also inform a listener about the origin of the piece but is not necessary for the performance. The contextualisation for one piece takes the form of a spoken introduction that also has its own validity as theatre. None of the pieces are critiqued after performing.

Some are 'performative' (Haseman, 2006) in the sense that there is no sense of 'problem', but rather the motivation is 'an enthusiasm of practice: something which is exciting, something which may be unruly' (p.3). Some do have a sense of 'problem'. How can I use the power of MPA without destroying the composer's wishes? What desire emerges from these symptoms?

Experimental performances included the following approaches.

Exegesis in media other than writing. Mullin (2010) argues that commenting on an artist's own work is the only way to give it academic respectability, but that this comment need not be in writing, but should be 'rhetorical' in the sense that it should communicate effectively and have an effect (produce new knowledge) in subsequent art work. I offer a 'rhetorical' exegesis in the form of a spoken introduction which explains the research and incorporates interruptions from my anxiety at doing so. This leads to performing a piece of music with the same interrupted structure. See Appendix 8 for video example.

Chiasmatic improvisation using the same basis as Kozel's *Contours*, where I may be

unclear who is leading the performance - my artistic sense or my MPA-self. It is contextualised in chapter 8.2 (example video in appendix 9):

'Mild' application of the conceptual lens to retain full intelligibility of musical text throughout. Here, I notice MPA symptoms as they arise and incorporate them gently into performance without disturbing the flow or accuracy of the music. See video in appendix 9.

'Critical meta-practice', where a performance makes visible both research questions and research answers within the relevant artistic medium and can 'maintain conventions specific to the discipline (and the judgements it entails) while challenging and/or interrogating certain of its practices' (Melrose 2002, para. 6). This is done in two ways: I vocalise my live MPA through a looping box during a performance (see video in appendix 10); and perform a 'body prelude', where a piano introduction is the site for full expression of physical MPA symptoms.

Anything goes: In addition, the initial experiments (see chapter 8.3) used free exploration, following Feyerabend's (1978) principle of 'anything goes' . (See sample videos in appendix 5.) Feyerabend argues

'without a frequent dismissal of reason, no progress .... for what appears as "sloppiness", "chaos" or "opportunism" .... has a most important function in the development of those very theories which we today regard as essential parts of our knowledge .... These 'deviations', these 'errors', are preconditions of progress… Without chaos, no knowledge.' (p.179)

The experimental performances culminate in a doctoral recital which included several of the above approaches. See chapter 10 for a summary of experimental performance results, and a link to a video of the doctoral recital.

8.4.2 Validity, Reliability and Generalisability

Artistic research is still in its infancy and therefore unstandardised. Gray and Malins (1993) point out that even social science, which has had 100 years of research, is still undergoing argument about methodology. However, its principles of 'subjectivity, individuality, complex interaction, involvement, etc.' are now considered legitimate (p.6). These principles are also present in artistic work.

My own performance also acts as a form of advocacy for the conceptual lens. Such support for one's own idea is usually seen as inimical to validity. However, Feyerabend (1978) supports advocacy as extreme as propaganda for the furtherance of new ideas in research, citing the necessity for Galileo to advocate the telescope in the face of established religious opposition.

Gray and Malins (1993) argue that because uniqueness and originality are prized in art, it is difficult to make generalisations in research that has art as output. However, one could argue that performance practice in music is a form of generalisation: a musician might ask, "how do we play baroque music?", for instance. In the current project some new performance practices have been developed using MPA as an expressive tool. Unique pieces of art can be made using this practice. Interesting performances have been made already and further research may illuminate more general principles. and there is scope for using the same methods in further performances.

8.5. Professional Performance

8.5.1 Methodology

The 'professional' part of this research, where the conceptual lens is explored within my paid employment as an orchestral player, in contrast to the 'experimental' part, uses extensive written exegesis. There is a distinct sense of problem, in that the performance must be acceptable within certain parameters while also discovering the desires theorised to exist in MPA symptoms.

As before, the aim of this part of the research is to explore the idea that music performance anxiety may have something to say about performing desire and emerging artistic selves. Against the MPA-entity, with different ideas about performance, stands the everyday performing self. It is as if an independent entity is trying to force occurrences against the performer's will. What is the best way of exploring the conceptual lens in this context?

It is important to consider the research questions here. Is the issue whether welcoming MPA symptoms in some way leads to more successful performance? One could measure the percentage of right notes, answering the question in this case "does using MPA in this conception increase the technical accuracy of performance?". If so, this would indeed be a major finding, as MPA can certainly increase the 'wrong note count'. Such quantitative data would necessitate recordings of public performances, which are not always available. In any case, music is, of course, judged by more than right notes, so perhaps more qualitative data could be used to judge performance success, such as press reviews and audience surveys. My own artistic judgement may also be claimed as a valid instrument. After many years of professional expertise, my subjectivity has validity (Crispin, 2015); Doğantan-Dack claims 'expert music-instrumental knowledge ...as valid methodological tool' (2015, p.171). How to evaluate, test different approaches and reflect on outcomes has something in common with HIP

research, where new (old) approaches are explored in performance - a field with which I am professionally familiar.

However, the theoretical approach means that the focus here is not so much in the musical effect of certain approaches (although this may be relevant), but the effect of the approach on the performer. The questions of emerging desire and possible artistic development are concerned with inner transformation and new learning for the player that can be used in future performances. Data on performances will not necessarily answer these research questions. Study of recordings and videos, where they exist, may be helpful, but analysis of this kind is not measuring what is of interest: what might be termed revelation. The research concern is in what ways symptoms of MPA signal the emergence of performing desire or new artistic selves. This is more specific and more personal than judging performance success. Only I can recognise in detail what is new or desirous or revelatory for me. In writing about it, I can explain why it is revelatory in terms of my own history. Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, (2010) write about researching the concept of epiphany, which they define partly as 'remembered moments perceived to have significantly impacted the trajectory of a person's life' (section 2, para. 2). The methodology they suggest for this is narrative autoethnography. The question is how in performance MPA might influence my own artistic development and unearth performance desire hitherto buried or currently emerging. Thus, in my 'professional' performances the outcome that will describe the results of applying the conceptual lens is narrative autoethnography.

Wall (2006) points out that there are many styles of autoethnography, ranging from the evocative to the methodologically rigorous. In the current case, the issue is to describe to the reader internal transformations that occurred through applying the conceptual lens in professional performance. These transformations will inevitably be obvious to me. In attempting to write about them, however, it soon became clear that in order to make them clear

to a reader it was necessary to elucidate various assumptions, opinions, stories and other aspects of my personal and professional life, some of which I had never expressed in words before. It is this narrative that opens the data to the external world. In the *Quoniam* section below, it is not enough to say that my MPA led to 'intense ensemble listening'. The narrative of deeply held opinions about the nature of solo playing and this solo in particular is essential because the conceptual lens is concerned with the emergence of desire and new performing selves that run counter to this narrative. We need the old narrative in order to demonstrate that the new is new.

In deciding to write from a personal point of view, I realise that I am opening myself up to objections from both ethnographic and psychodynamic viewpoints. The issue is one of rigour. Atkinson, in *For Ethnography* (2015) points out that in ethnography, as in all social science, the self is seen as fragmented and socially constructed, but a text written from personal expression 'posits a subject of interior subjectivity, a relatively stable "self"' (p.168) that is not compatible with contemporary sociological theory. Autoethnography, by its nature, gives centrality to a singular individual self (the researcher), yet any other type of ethnography follows contemporary sociological theory by insisting on multiple selves for those being studied. Why should the researcher be allowed this unique privilege of singularity? Likewise, Quinn (2010) observes that a singular central self is inimical to the revelations of unconscious contents which will, by their nature, interrupt and contradict it. Writing from the point of view of what Hollway & Jefferson, (2013) refer to as this 'defended self' debases the rigour of any research that takes the unconscious seriously.

I hope to show that both objections can be solved because the theoretical approach takes the symptoms of MPA as parts of independent, unconscious selves. In allowing an MPA-self to have at least some control over a performance, I am honouring both the multiplicity of selves and their ability to contradict my central narrative as a performer. In writing, I describe the

performances and any revelations my approach brings. I use the term 'revelation' to show that what occurs may be the discovery of something contradictory to the central narrative of my performing-self. This is the chief interest of this part of the research. It stands or falls on my central story changing in unexpected ways, and I believe that the openness to this in performance and the description of it in writing will satisfy the claims of ethnographic and psychodynamic rigour.

Autoethnography has its critics, foremost among them John Freeman. In *Solipsism, Self-indulgence, and Circular Arguments: why Autoethnography Promises much more than it Delivers*, he points out that the three parts auto (self), ethno (culture) and graphy (research) may indeed give good results if each aspect is given 'time, space and attention' (Freeman, 2011, p.215). The danger, as he sees it is when there is too much attention on 'auto'. The intention in this account is that 'auto' is there not for its own sake, but because it illuminates my own background and some of the culture of professional performance in the service of research questions about the potentially transformative use of performance anxiety.

8.5.2 Rigour and Research Output

I would like to summarise the differences in approach of the experimental and professional performance parts of this research. In the experimental part, performance is part of the output. In the professional performance part, the considered effect of applying theory (in terms of personal revelation and artistic development) is the research output rather than performance itself. Rather, the performance is the method by which the output is gained. In research terms, these poles are divided not only by outcome, but also by the nature of the research rigour involved, as shown in the following table.

	Method	Rigour	Outcome
Experimental	Public Performance Application of conceptual lens	Following unconscious signals	Performance
Professional	Public performance Application of conceptual lens	Text, style, cultural expectation	Autoethnographic text

The experimental performances involve various ways of allowing MPA to 'speak' in performance. There is a somewhat rigorous application of theory which disregards conventional musical outcomes. The research rigour, following Quinn (2010), is supplied by faithfully following the unconsciously generated MPA symptoms.

The professional performances also apply theory, but within the constraints of public classical performance. I observe my MPA symptoms and allow their expression while respecting boundaries demanded by the situation. The aim is to find a way to apply theory in this situation and develop methods and tools for professional players with MPA to use in real-life performance. In this case, the performance is a research tool, and the research outcome is autoethnographic text that evaluates the success of this. In a professional context, rigour is contained in doing the job in hand properly. Writing about creative and critical practice, White (2018) notes: 'that's rigour, the demands of an academic facility like a teaching hospital, rigour as definitions of life and death and the possibilities of stopping one from becoming the other' (p.58). The demands for rigour in professional performance are perhaps less existential, but nevertheless there are duties to composer, audience, the wider cultural expectation and the necessity of future employment, to play the music as expected. By 'expected', I do not mean that a performance should be unsurprising or routine - that would surely be neglecting a duty for the music to be live - but that it contains, to paraphrase Eric Morecambe 'the right notes in

the right order'[13] (Braben, 1971), is performed in an appropriate, or at least consistent, style, and has 'the logic of indeterminacy and the necessity of uninterrupted flow' (Doğantan-Dack, 2008). That said, the 'dynamic' aspect of the conceptual lens implies that an extra something might be brought to a performance, instigated by MPA. Most professional situations, however, have boundaries on what is acceptable, even while the performer is 'chasing angels' (Melrose, 2003).

8.5.3 Validity and Reliability

The research output here is in the form of autoethnographic text, which brings with it different issues of validity, reliability, and generalisability. Ellis et al (2010) suggest that reliability is a question of the narrator's credibility. I, as author and subject, claim to be a reliable witness while acknowledging and even foregrounding failings of memory, unconscious bias, pride and partiality of editing. Autoethnography is 'a methodology that places the researcher's self-motivations front and centre, bringing to the fore that which other approaches adopt and also conceal' (Freeman 2015, p.30). I have admitted, and also uncovered, some of my own attitudes to performing, but why should you believe this? Bochner & Ellis, (1992) say that there is no reason to do so. One can only ask if the story is possible, and whether the narrator believes it. For validity, they ask further whether the narrative is believable, lifelike and coherent. Can the reader 'enter the subjective world of the teller?' (Ellis et al, 2010, section 4.4, quoting Plummer, 2001, p.401).

Additionally, I have included an example, 'Copenhagen' which was a negative instance in terms of applying the Observe, Narrative, Trigger method developed in '*Quoniam*'.

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[13] That is not to preclude ornamentation or extemporisation where the music demands or suggests it.

8.5.4 Generalisability

Ellis et al (2010) suggest that for autoethnography the focus of generalisability shifts from 'responders to readers' (section 4, last para.). The questions concern whether the story relates to the reader's experience or those of people they know, or whether it informs them about unfamiliar people.

In ethnographic work, generalisability is a question usually focused on whether the experience of participants may be applied more generally. Atkinson (2015) argues that the comparative nature of ethnography allows models of social situations to be made if the researcher has enough reference to their own field of enquiry. The usefulness of ethnography in building up a network of understanding may also apply in autoethnography. Bochner (2002) asks 'how useful is the story?'. It is to be hoped that the narratives in this study may be useful in illuminating part of the nature of MPA not previously considered, and that further performing research sites extend the field of enquiry.

9. THREE RESEARCH SITES

There follow three accounts of research performed in the context of my professional work. They are in the form of narrative autoethnography and attempt to trace and explain epiphanies that occurred as a result of applying the conceptual lens in a professional context. The question is how to apply the conceptual lens while retaining professional integrity and rigour. In the first site (chapter 9.1, *Quoniam*) I develop a method to thoroughly accept the theorised meaning of MPA symptoms while performing appropriately. The method leads to epiphany about my own playing and the musical context of the particular repertoire, and a new method (Observe, Narrative, Trigger). The latter is applied in the second site (chapter 9.2, *Playing Principal, the Shadow*), with success and epiphany about my performance that could be construed as artistic development. The third (chapter 9.3, *Copenhagen*) is initially a less successful application of the new method but raises several interesting questions about the application of the conceptual lens.

9.1 Quoniam

9.1.1 Summary

This is an account of a day's work. In playing the horn obbligato in the *Quoniam tu solus sanctus* in a professional performance of J. S. Bach's Mass in B Minor, I apply the principle that my performance anxiety symptoms are the potential emergence of a new performing self. After reflecting on my MPA experience in the rehearsal, I make a positive and risk-taking decision to adopt in the performance the performing characteristics I perceive in this new self. The result is successful in surprising and personally satisfying ways. In particular, a feeling of 'hiding' in the rehearsal was transformed into ego-less ensemble playing in the performance. I also reflect on the professional risks that must be taken in order to carry out this research and note a change in my view that the conceptual lens can easily be applied in the moment in professional classical performance.

9.1.2 General Context

The *Quoniam tu Solus Sanctus* in Bach's Mass in B Minor sets a unique challenge for horn players. In my professional experience, colleagues refer to "the Quoniam" with hushed reverence or false bravado. Stories are swapped, detailing disastrous performances or victories against the odds. A recent tradition is the social media posting of a well-deserved post-performance beer, enjoyed alone as the horn player has finished work well before her or his colleagues.

Why does this movement have such a reputation? First, the Mass in B Minor sits as a cornerstone of Western religious art music. It was written at the height of Bach's powers, and probably as a demonstration of his skill when applying for a new position as court composer for the Elector of Saxony in Dresden. The horn plays only in this movement (unless one counts the last note, which technically lies within the *Cum Sancto Spiritu*). Stylistically, it is a Polonaise, which may be significant bearing in mind that the Elector of Saxony was shortly to

become king of Poland (Paczkowski, 2007). Although not at the centre of the Mass, it is a highly significant part of the text, proclaiming Jesus Christ as uniquely holy.

Even if a horn player has no knowledge of the religious, historical or musicological context of the movement, the sense of significance for the performer is strong. In addition to the movement's reputation amongst horn players, a major contributor to this is the fact that the horn plays nothing at all for 25 minutes or so, often (but not always) on stage. The sense of an unavoidable sweep towards the obbligato is palpable.

Then, there is the intrinsic difficulty of the piece. It does not lie high in the register, though high enough. It is only five minutes long, though this feels like a long time in full exposure to audience and colleagues. It is not particularly fast, though there are relatively rapid passages. The difficulty lies in the combination of several factors of medium difficulty for the horn player: range; stamina; facility, plus the long wait and the prominence in the musical texture.

In particular, the initial octave leap (written c2 to c3) is problematic. It is relatively hard to play in any context, but in this case, "from cold" and extremely audible, the difficulties are increased. These particular notes are often also a major part of the judgement of a performance, by listeners, colleagues and, in my experience, the player themselves. If they go well, it is possible for the player to look forward with slightly less trepidation to the rest of the movement: one feels "on form". If they go badly, panic can set in.

The difficulties of this octave leap (and many other difficulties in the movement) are compounded if one is playing a historically appropriate instrument (as I was). For instance, the written high c3 is then the 16th harmonic of the natural horn in D rather than the 12th or 8th on a modern instrument (depending on which valve system the player is using), necessitating a corresponding increase in accuracy of pitching.

The *Quoniam* is very lightly scored, for bass soloist, horn, two bassoons and continuo.

The horn is much the loudest instrument (although less so on historical instruments). Since most horn players perform in an orchestral setting most of the time, this prominence, especially for so long, can feel unusual and unsettling.

A pressure of another kind is the fact that the difficulties are sufficiently recognised that the usual fee for this piece is two to three times the normal payment. This reflects the amount of preparation necessary and the soloistic nature of the writing but can also lead to anxiety about justifying this enhancement.

9.1.3 Preparation

My preparation for this performance started several weeks beforehand: practising and experimenting with different set-ups of my instrument. I also considered various historical/practical issues such as whether to correct out-of-tune harmonics using lip, vent-holes or hand in the bell. In the three weeks before the performance I had the opportunity to play eleven recitals for pre-school children and their parents. I included the *Quoniam* in these recitals, in a version for horn and piano.

9.1.4 The particular context

As well as the general context of the *Quoniam*, there are always particularities for any given performance. Before I arrived at the rehearsal, and in the days before, four colleagues I knew would be there entered my thoughts and increased my feelings of anxiety. I wanted to impress them, or at the least I did not want to feel foolish in front of them. Two were prominent players in the orchestra: principal trumpet and continuo cello. Two were less prominent but happened to be married to well-known horn players.

On arrival on stage in the rehearsal, I found my position to be very exposed: right at the front, level with the soloist and rather distant from the bassoons. The bell of my instrument was pointing straight towards another player I admire - the organist.

The hall is a well-known London concert hall: not as famous as some performance

spaces, but perhaps one rank below. It has good acoustics: everything can be heard clearly. The orchestra is freelance professional, the choir amateur. I do not know the conductor, but he shakes me warmly by the hand as I come on stage to rehearse. Just before this, as I warmed up back stage, I felt technically well-prepared and confident.

9.1.5 Description of the rehearsal

However, in the rehearsal I do not play very well and do not feel confident. I miss the high c several times. Despite my preparation in private practice and in recital, my notes immediately afterwards describe my experience thus:

"disembodied, unsure of tuning, slightly pathetic, hiding, random wrong notes (not many, but annoying)."

9.1.6 Reflection on the rehearsal

After the rehearsal, I had around two hours in which to reflect on my experience, and to ponder how to approach the evening's performance. That the performance was ultimately successful, musically satisfying, enjoyable, and that a new musical self did indeed emerge was connected to the many issues I grappled with in this period. My notes at this time say:

I have a reaction that I should 'play out'. Timidity doesn't help high notes, wrong notes etc. This would be the normal course.

But the emerging self is different from someone who plays out. It is more inward, doesn't want to stick out. It is pointing towards a focussed, ensemble way of playing. (There is a lot of tradition and teaching and my own image pointing the other way - the self-narrative is being cut across).

In performance, try intense ensemble listening with bassoons - disembodied.

Although these notes clearly show the dilemma I had between two opposite approaches, there is much here to be explained and analysed. The notes were a product of intense spontaneous and confusing thoughts. These thoughts were not noted at the time for two main reasons:

1.   Many of the thought processes were visceral, passionate and extremely quick rather than reasoned academic debate. I was in a state of annoyance and mild panic.

2.   Part of my internal argumentation was precisely about whether this performance could be part of my research (and that therefore notes should be taken) - there was a strong part of me that was saying that I just had to make sure the performance was good (see below).

I therefore re-assembled from memory the thought processes that resulted in the above quotation three days later. Below I expand on my contemporaneous notes (**_in bold italic_**), explaining as much as I can the thought processes that went into them.

I have a reaction that I should 'play out'. Timidity doesn't help high notes, wrong notes etc. This would be the normal course…

Thinking: From an orthodox point of view, I know how to succeed in the performance. Technically, the reason I missed some notes in the rehearsal was that I was not providing enough breath support. I realise that I was, using a horn player's terms, "tickling it" instead of "playing out" - that is, I was not using enough air to support and stabilise the notes. I think about why. I have been performing the piece frequently with piano accompaniment as part of my preparation. Playing while standing next to a grand piano is rather different from the feeling I had when I rehearsed today. Here, the accompanying bassoons are quiet and distant, the organ

and continuo cello un-percussive. I realise that my reaction was one of being alone. Musically, I hid. I was timid.

The professional thing to do, the "normal course", from my experience and technical knowledge, is to play out more - to be confident, not timid. Otherwise I will miss those notes again.

This attitude is backed up by

a lot of tradition and teaching and my own image.[14]

Thinking: My background self-identity as a horn player is clustered around words like "professional", "proper", "orthodoxy", and "macho". They stem from a perceived lack. I did not become a professional musician through the usual channels. Instead I went to university and did a degree in physics. Then, after a brief period of study and longer periods of unemployment I found my way into the music profession through luck and an ability in ensemble playing. Despite more than twenty years of high-level performance I still feel in awe of those players who went to music college, had weekly lessons with experienced players, and learnt the technically and stylistically accepted way of playing. In playing repertoire like the Mass in B Minor, where the horn part is highly exposed, I feel the need to conform to the internal image

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[14] Tradition and teaching and my own image" form a substantial part of my internal battle at this point. It might seem disingenuous to include them as if they were an active part, as they rather form a set of assumptions, a background to the way I think of myself and my playing, part of the 'unthought known' (Bollas, 2017). They are not unconscious in the same way as my MPA, but they are mostly uninspected and form some of the basis of my self-identity as a musician. I include them as part of my account of the day because they did play an active part in the background and it is important to foreground them in order to explain to the reader my thought processes.

I have of these players – professional, proper, orthodox, macho. This received wisdom includes "proper" breathing and the idea that a solo should be played outwardly.

Another internal image I have, related to the idea of "macho", is the connection of the horn with heroism. This is explicit in music such as Siegfried's horn call (Wagner, 1876) *and Strauss' Ein Heldenleben* (1899)*, but it has always been one of the attractive characteristics of the instrument for me. Battling against the difficulties of the instrument, all horn players are heroes, and we should play like them, especially in solo pieces.*

Yet another part of my identity is that of husband and father. I earn my living as a horn player, and I do not have the right to jeopardise my income by eschewing orthodoxy.

Thus, the narrative that pulls towards "playing out" is a strong one with several strands. It is illustrated below.
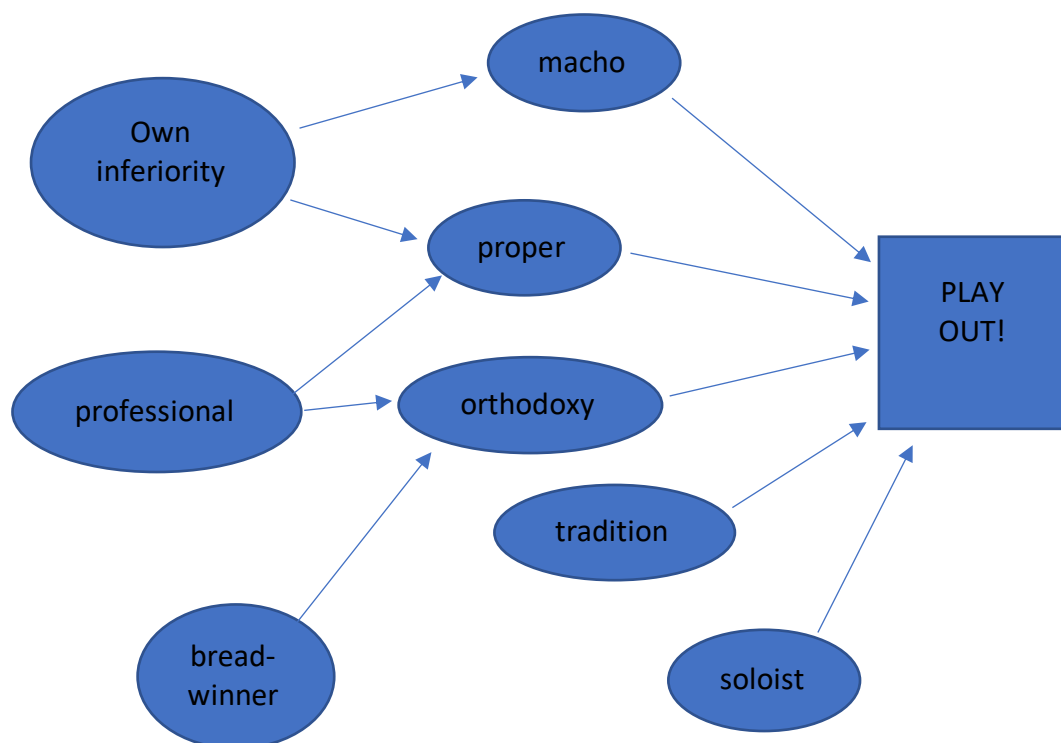
Figure 7: The Narrative towards "playing out"

But the emerging self is different from someone who plays out.

It is more inward, doesn't want to stick out…

Thinking: From the point of view of my research, an opposite view emerges. My problems in the rehearsal were performance anxiety. I was prepared, I felt good just beforehand, but the feeling of exposure had certain effects, most noticeably this feeling of "hiding" and disembodiment. If these are the products of my performance anxiety, the conceptual lens suggests there is some wisdom to be gained from following them. The difficulty is that "hiding", "disembodied", "pathetic" are pulling in an opposing direction from my conscious knowledge, which encourages confidence and "playing out".

the self-narrative is being cut across

Thinking: Quinn (2010) points out that unconscious contents (such as MPA) inevitably "interrupt the fiction of self-identity" (p.245). This is demonstrably true in this case. My MPA is interrupting the narrative of my professional knowledge and also the received wisdom that a performer should be confident and that a soloist should "play out". Furthermore, in research that has a psychodynamic approach, unconscious utterance has the status of rigorous truth. In my choice between "playing out" and "hiding", the latter has this status. According to Quinn, the rigour of my research depends upon adopting the "hiding" attitude.

I note here that my research knowledge is a vital part of deciding how to approach performing

in this concert.

Thinking: I therefore have a choice to make. Do I follow my experience and professional knowledge, or the rigorous truth emerging from my MPA? This is not a trivial question for a professional performer. The performance tonight is not an experimental, research-based one, it is professional, with a paying audience and expectations of high musical and technical standards. I have colleagues and friends in the orchestra who I cannot let down, and want to impress. This is my career, which must continue in order to support my family. As professional, as social being and as breadwinner, this is not an experiment that can fail. I must succeed. That I know this self-identity is a fiction does not mitigate the hold it has on me.

These thoughts, plus my annoyance after the rehearsal and worry about the performance, nearly convince me to abandon the research aspect of the situation. However, I managed to argue the other way.

Thinking:

- *The fact that there is such a strong self-narrative and that the unconscious narrative is so at odds with it demonstrates that this is a perfect example of the type of contradiction I would expect to find in MPA according to my theoretical perspective. From an existential viewpoint, a new performing self that I don't yet know is, in theory, emerging. From a psychodynamic perspective, unconscious contents are contradicting the self-narrative. Now is the only time to explore the emerging self. This is not research that can be done in theory, but only in a genuine anxiety-producing situation like this. Tonight's performance is an*

opportunity to do so. Situations like this are when real-world research can be done.

- *That my self-esteem, my career and my professionalism are at stake here are the reasons I have performance anxiety. I cannot wait for a situation where these factors are absent, as there will then be no MPA to research. Indeed, I have recently performed the Quoniam eleven times to pre-school children and, while the technical challenges remained, I had no performance anxiety and no research could be done.*

- *Although every performance is important, this is not one of my most important performances. I do have responsibility to the music, my colleagues, my family and my own self-esteem, but on the other hand this is not the best orchestra I have played with, nor the best choir, nor the most prestigious venue. The performance is not being televised or broadcast. My career will not end if I mess it up.*

- *If I follow the "play out" course, following my professional expertise, I know that despite my MPA I have enough residual technique and experience for the Quoniam to be acceptable. However, I know from experience my reaction afterwards to doing a "not bad" performance. I will feel frustrated that I did not do better, colleagues will avoid my eyes and I will avoid theirs, or I will receive unmeant "well played" comments. I will feel as if I have fulfilled my place in the hierarchy as not quite "proper", or as someone who probably shouldn't be given solos very often. Instead, I have a strong desire to risk something for potential gain. Theory suggests that something true or new or special should come out of following the unconscious message. If not now, when?*

The equivalent illustration showing the narrative pulling towards "hiding" is as follows.
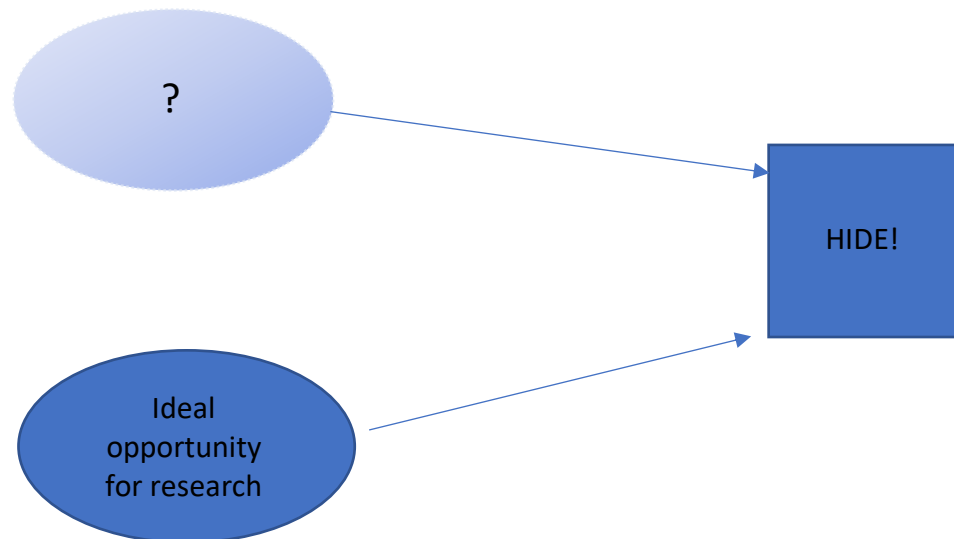
Figure 8: The Narrative towards "hiding"

The entity in the light oval is somewhat unknown. It is the emerging self. I know something about it - it hides, is "disembodied", "unsure", invisible. It plays "wrong notes" and is "pathetic". It does not have the known rich background that is contributing to the narrative towards "playing out". It is the objective of this research experiment to find out more about it. The conceptual lens suggests it has intentions more deeply held than my conscious ones. I make a conscious decision to follow the research option. It is a risk-taking option in terms of the music, my reputation and my personal well-being. Decision made, what do the symptoms mean?

It is pointing towards a focussed, ensemble way of playing…

In performance, try intense ensemble listening with bassoons -

disembodied.

Thinking: I have five symptoms:

- *Wrong notes*

- *Tuning*

- *Pathetic*

- *Disembodied*

- *Hiding*

Although "wrong notes" may not seem to be an appropriate path to follow in public performance, I have had success with this in the past.[15] *Tuning issues may be an interesting route to explore on another occasion. But I choose the latter three symptoms, because they are the most plainly at odds with my conscious reaction to play out with confidence and are therefore most likely to be a genuine unconscious process taking place. I also feel that the wrong notes are, as it were, a symptom of a symptom, caused by the "pathetic" and "hiding" symptoms.*

In thinking about how to incorporate "hiding", "pathetic" and "disembodied" into the performance, I realise they oppose the orthodox <u>"heroic, soloistic"</u> narrative. Could this imply therefore following a counter-narrative to the latter which would be <u>"co-operative, ensemble"</u> playing? Indeed, the word "disembodied" implies a rather extreme kind of subsumption of myself into the whole ensemble.

Two factors corroborate this line of thinking. First, that initial octave leap

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[15] I have experimented with trying to play wrong notes in performance, and have found that it is almost impossible to do. A part of me seems to take over and play the right notes despite my efforts. This part seems to have great respect for the score and the moment-to-moment flow of the music.

over which horn players fret so much is not actually the most interesting line in the first bar – the bassoons have rhythmic and melodic interest that exceeds it, and this continues into subsequent bars. It actually isn't a horn solo.

(Bach, 1989)

Second, I notice that a subsequent octave leap that should be more difficult (because it is quicker) has always been perfect:
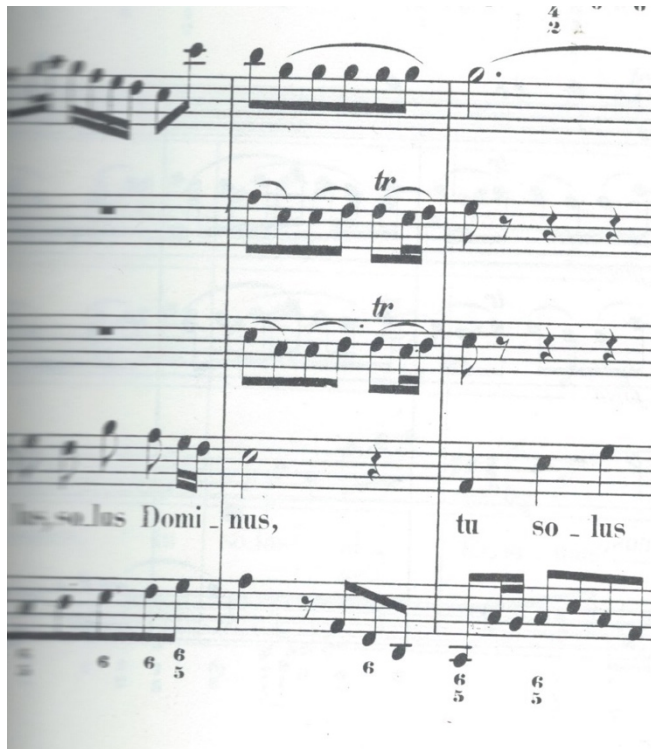
(Bach, 1989)

The success of this faster leap gives me confidence that I can play it without the intervention of a "heroic" personage to do so. At this point, the music is more obviously contrapuntal and unsoloistic. A more subsumed version of myself can do it with ease. These triangulating thoughts further convince me to follow the path of "hiding".

Thus, in thinking about what the symptoms might mean, I adopt a strategy for the performance that honours their rigour and that convinces me as a musician and as a professional. This strategy is what I refer to in my notes as *"intense ensemble listening with bassoons - disembodied."* I choose the word "disembodied" over "pathetic" or "hiding" as containing

more potential, and, perhaps unconsciously, because it is less negative.

9.1.7 Just before going on stage

While waiting to go on stage after the performance had started (I was permitted to wait offstage until the *Quoniam*), I visualised being on stage and applying this new approach of disembodiment and ensemble. I found myself physically cocking my head in the direction of where the bassoons would be. They were distant, and I would need to listen very intently in order to hear them in detail. This "cocking", plus the idea of disembodiment are a sort of distillation of the conclusions I came to from my MPA symptoms, following the complex thought processes I have detailed above. It occurred to me later that they acted as a kind of trigger in maintaining the performance approach I decided to adopt.

My notes just before playing:

> *Go with invisibility, blending, cocked head at bassoons. I*
> *imagine a silky, pure, intense sound*

This "silky, pure, intense sound" refers to my own sound on the horn, and arose spontaneously when I visualised being on stage performing. These adjectives did not appear in my imagination, but rather the sound itself, of which the words are a poor representation. To explore the qualities of this sound, I would further describe it as extremely focussed and silver in colour. It is a sound through which the bassoons could easily be heard, yet had a super-intensity while being quite quiet. I would also note that it is very unlike the orthodox heroic horn solo sound.

9.1.8 Description of Performance

My notes just after the performance (with a well-deserved beer on the table in front of me!):

> *Come on, no time to think, just ear to bassoons. Worked a treat! Chamber playing. Never enjoyed it so much. Noticing intricate detail as it went by. Occasionally stepped out of this zone and messed up, but (came) back to disembodied, invisible feeling.*
>
> *I played <u>much</u> quieter than the rehearsal, but it was better like this. Actually quite magical in parts. I wonder what others thought.*

Working from memory, and acknowledging that what I write is 'mediated and made false by the writer's intentions, judgement and reliance on memories that may not even be real' (Freeman, 2015), what follows is a description of my experience of the performance.

> ***I was almost late on stage as I had misread the musical cue in the movement before the Quoniam. I thus had time to think of nothing but cocking my head towards the bassoons hiding behind the organ. This trigger gave me a clear auditory image of the musical context and sound I had imagined beforehand. Allowing a small amount of focus on the conductor's cue and the rest of my concentration on the bassoons' line, the first phrase emerged precisely as I had imagined. My own sound was intense yet quiet and transparent enough to allow my colleagues' parts to come through. I experienced intense enjoyment of the interplay of musical lines. In addition, my line was perfectly executed. This continued. Occasionally, a familiar part of me wanted to take control of certain passages in my part rather than allow the ego-less ensemble playing I had set in motion to continue. It was in these moments that technical slips***

occurred. I was able to return to the successful way of playing by imagining a sort of

invisibility, that it wasn't me doing the playing, but a playing happening in the context

of Bach's musical lines. Until this performance I had never enjoyed playing the

Quoniam, any pleasure coming from relief afterwards that it wasn't too bad.

9.1.9 Conclusions

The conceptual lens suggests that a new performing self emerges on stage, and that performance anxiety indicates that this is happening. I identify the unknown emerging new self as the producer of the precise symptoms of performance anxiety. These symptoms are therefore a clue to the nature of the new self. A fuller knowledge of the new self can be gained by welcoming the anxiety symptoms.

In this performance of Bach's *Quoniam*, a new performing self did indeed emerge, one that is in contrast to my known 'fixed' performing self. The fixed self has various opinions, examined and unexamined, about performance and also about performing this particular piece. In following the anxiety symptoms, a different performing self emerged: ego-less instead of heroic; ensemble player rather than soloist; listener instead of actor.

It may be contentious that this self emerged from anxiety symptoms. I have given theoretical justification for the possibility, but it is possible that other factors were at play. There is also a danger of confirmation bias in research done on oneself. It is difficult, if not impossible, to rule this out completely, but I offer that I was utterly surprised by the outcome. The symptoms were unexpected, and the emergent performing self that is an ego-less ensemble player, who enjoys the moment-to-moment experience of performing, was a surprise. The approach was also the opposite of technical orthodoxy.

Also unexpected was the learning about the scoring of the *Quoniam*. Seeing it as an ensemble piece rather than a terrifying solo is not only relieving but also gives insight into the

character of the music. Speaking later to a bassoon colleague (not playing in the performance I am referring to), he finds it irritating that the piece is considered a horn solo when much of the rhythmic and melodic interest is in the bassoons. I now have sympathy for this view.

I offer the unexpectedness of the outcomes to persuade the reader that there was no pre-planning in order to prove a particular MPA symptom might lead to a particular result. I did have some thoughts beforehand, of course. In identifying this performance as a potential research site, I imagined that my MPA symptoms might include physical shaking, sleepiness, worry about what a particular individual is thinking, wrong notes, shortness of breath, or facial muscle fatigue, all of which I have experienced in the past. I was worried about how to apply these to my research, and what effect this would have on my professional standing. Could I welcome wrong notes and remain employable? Would shaking lead to vibrato in an unacceptable style? I genuinely did not know how symptoms could be welcomed in such a prominent obbligato in a professional situation. In fact, only two of the above symptoms occurred, and they were over-shadowed by the main group of symptoms: disembodied, invisible, pathetic. Even so, careful observation of the precise events and circumstances was needed in order to lead to the narrative I have described.

This careful observation, and the resultant internal argument, is a large factor in this account. The time and mental energy it took to make sense of and be ready to apply the hypothesised benefits of MPA symptoms was vital. I needed to convince myself to follow a research path, and then devise a plan to do so. The journey from symptoms to performance attitude was not predictable in advance but needed thorough observation and thought.

In my previous thinking, I have assumed that all that is needed in order to mine the benefits of MPA is to follow the symptoms. Indeed, I had been developing the idea that doing so in the moment in performance might lead to a type of performing truth: that the performer might reveal themselves in a way that would be moving for the audience. In this case, however,

I was unable to follow the symptoms in the rehearsal because I was too surprised by what happened, unable to define them clearly and somewhat overwhelmed by the experience. In the performance, I was able to use the idea of disembodiment in order to play as my new performing self, but only because I had thoroughly worked through the meaning of the symptom. There was a return to the disembodied feeling I had in the rehearsal, but the difference was that I had recognised its existence, that I had a different attitude to it (now welcoming it) and that my thinking between rehearsal and performance had given a meaningful and concrete context for it in the form of a personal narrative.

The internal struggle, away from the stage between rehearsal and performance, was essential for the outcome. What was effective in the end was not spontaneously following symptoms nor a dry debate between my professional and research sides. I nearly wrote that it was no academic debate, but actually academic is an important part of what it was. My academic thinking contributed to the decision to follow the path of the MPA symptoms rather than the "proper" professional path. Knowing that MPA can be construed as an independent part of oneself, and that this part is highly likely to have aims at odds with my knowing self, made me see that my symptoms were a very good example of this. As a researcher, this was precisely the type of situation in which I could do my research. The counter side of the argument was not 'dry' in the sense that it contained much of my consciously held beliefs, some passionately held, linked to my performing and personal past, in addition to some panic about the imminent performance. The ego is always ready to defend itself, and it did so in strong terms: dredging up my own felt inadequacies, the responsibility to my family, my standing in the profession and the opinion of respected colleagues. My research thinking was finally able to stand outside this and recognise that this fight is exactly what would be expected from the conscious self when its story is contradicted, and that this was therefore a perfect opportunity to do the research.

It still took three more steps in order to pursue the path I did.

First, some careful argument from the research side was needed: that this performance was not make-or-break for my career; and that I might regret it if I did yet another medium-good *Quoniam* rather than attempt something unusual.

Second, once decided on this course, I needed some justification for following the particular symptoms. Blindly following "wrong notes" or "pathetic" might be interesting for a research-led experimental performance, but here I somehow needed to hold simultaneously the responsibility to my research and also to the music, the audience and my colleagues.[16] Again, my research knowledge helped this. In knowing that a new performing self is emerging in my MPA symptoms, and that is likely to have opposing aims to my known performing self, I was able to guess at these emerging goals. In retrospect, I can see that this guess is a combination of induction and deduction. Deduction from Jungian theory suggests that the new performing self may be opposite in some way from my known performing self. Thus, heroic and soloistic may be opposed to humble and ensemble-based. Induction from the symptoms "disembodied" and "invisible" confirms and makes specific the direction I might take. In this case the implication is a rather extreme form of the negation of the known self: not just unheroic, but not there at all; not just ensemble-based, but complete subsumption into the ensemble. This research-led thinking allowed me to establish an approach that made theoretical sense and, crucially, that I was able to defend as a musician: it makes perfectly good musical sense that this is inherently an ensemble piece, not a solo; the bassoons have the interest, not the horn; balance has always been a problem in the *Quoniam* - this approach could fix it; the sound of

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[16] Doğantan-Dack, (2012) holds the view that no research can be done during a live performance in the Western tradition as the necessary reflection and resulting change in ideas (research) should happen before it is made public. In the current case it was possible to reflect and change in the space between rehearsal and concert. The experimental performances in this research do research during live performance and are thus 'experimental', meaning not in the Western tradition.

the horn that appeared in my imagination when thinking about this approach is exactly the sound I love; and I want to try something different with this piece. All these thoughts and desires about the *Quoniam* and about playing the horn, seemed to come together in this new performing self, and this confirmed me on the course I had decided to take.

Thirdly, and this is new learning for me, is the idea of triggers. In order to fix an attitude for the performance, and also to return to this attitude during the performance, I found that a trigger was necessary. In performance, there is much to occupy one's mind. If things were to go awry, there would be no time to re-enact my whole argument. Instead, a cocking of the head, or the idea of invisibility, was enough to return to the beneficial attitude of the new performing self. This idea came almost by accident when I decided to visualise performing on stage as I waited to perform. I have used the word 'trigger' because it came to mind during the analysis of this research site, but there is a directly comparable technique in Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) where it is known as an 'anchor'. An anchor is a gesture associated with a feeling that can be used to return to that feeling, and can also be used to reinforce certain habits. The difference here is that in NLP the feeling or behaviour that the trigger is meant to encourage is consciously decided upon, while in my approach it originates from an unconscious source that is likely to be opposed to a conscious decision initially.

These three steps - precise observation of MPA, finding an appropriate narrative, and establishing a trigger - are potentially the germ of a method for using performance anxiety positively in professional performance. The following chapters are accounts of exploring this 'Observe, Narrative, Trigger' method in other situations.

There is new learning for me here also in the implications in the conceptual lens about conscious decision-making. Most MPA research implicitly seeks ways in which the central self can regain control of the performance in the face of anxiety symptoms that sabotage it. I have said in the coaching part of this project that I distrust the reasoned decision-making of a central

self since the degree to which it is trusted is the degree to which the unconscious narrative or emerging self is missed. In psychodynamic terms, any 'deciding' about the nature of a new performing self is necessarily conscious, and it is precisely the interruption of conscious narrative that MPA is theorised to do. Senyshyn and O'Neill (2001) advocate developing a new, desirable performing self as part of performance preparation (they suggest the musician should 'actively imagine a successful (artistically speaking), competent, creative self' (p.50)). I am at odds with this approach, as deciding the nature of a new self is 'inauthentic' in the terms they describe (from Heidegger). In contrast, 'authenticity' means being open to the emergence of <u>any</u> new self, rather than an ideal pre-decided one. After criticising Senshyn and O'Neill's (2001) approach as 'inauthentic' in their terms, I find myself in the position of having developed a new performing self before the performance, as they suggest, rather than allowing the 'dizziness of freedom' to manifest during the performance. The caveat is once again that the new performing self was derived from the MPA rather than conscious thought. In the *Quoniam* the clue for what type of attitude to have in performance came from unconscious sources (my MPA), but, once decided upon, the decision was conscious: I decided to approach the performance in a subsumed, disembodied way, though these attitudes had unconscious origins. I thus find myself not completely opposed to conscious decision-making, but at a half-way house where MPA decides the approach, but this approach is then consciously fixed and 'triggered' for the purposes of classical performance. One might further speculate that the nature of classical music matches this approach because of it also translates non-rational content into fixed notation. Experimental performance can take a more spontaneous approach.

In writing this conclusion a few weeks after the events I describe, I see this was the emergence of a new performing self that I continue to use. In my playing, I now frequently cock my ear towards colleagues, with the effect of increasing my awareness and enjoyment of the music as it goes by, and also decreasing worry about technical passages. These passages

seem to 'play themselves' technically, leaving me to be subsumed into a greater musical experience than just my own part.

It may be that this 'ensemble-self' is a common experience amongst musicians. Indeed, I am often aware of colleagues commenting about performances in detail that is beyond me, and I therefore think I have often missed much of what occurred. The point for this research is that this new self is new for me, and that it emerged out of performance anxiety. That I still use this new approach in a variety of other performing situations allows me tentatively to suggest that artistic development has taken place through applying the conceptual lens.

9.1.10 Summary

● I used the conceptual lens. Recognising my dominant narrative, and that my MPA is likely to counter it, was key. Existentially, a new self was emerging. Psychodynamically, a hidden desire was being expressed.

● I was able to adopt a strategy for the performance that honours the MPA-self and the musical text, and convinces me as a musician and as a professional.

● 'Cocking my head' and 'disembodiment' are a sort of distillation of the conclusions I came to from my MPA symptoms, following complex thought processes. They acted as a trigger in maintaining the performance approach I decided to adopt, which meant that I did not have to go through the thought processes again during the performance if focus was lost.

● A method for using the conceptual lens in classical performance has been developed for future use. This may be termed 'Observe, Narrative, Trigger'.

9.2 Playing Principal, the Shadow

I had been asked to play first horn for a Polish orchestra, in a programme of music by Haydn. As I do not often play principal horn, and would probably be nervous, I felt that this would be a good opportunity to apply the Observe, Narrative, Trigger (ONT) technique developed from the *Quoniam* experience. On that occasion, the technique enabled me to take seriously the message theorised as being contained in MPA symptoms, while also fulfilling professional obligations. Below I describe each stage of ONT in turn, and the results of this. Contemporaneous notes are italicised

9.2.1 Observe

My notes before the second of two concerts say:

(I) don't feel 'nervous'. Well, a little apprehensive, but really my main barrier

is worry about playing right notes, and where I stand in comparison with

other guest principals.

In the rehearsal, there was a tendency to 'split' particular notes, but there were also random splits. A physical symptom was bodily stiffness before playing notes I am worried about. I also note

a sense of anger at splits…slight screwed-up face, determined.

Another symptom, at the fringe of my awareness was

Something right at the centre of the mouth. Perhaps technical rather than

There were thus four major symptoms:

1.   Worry about status compared with other guest principals.

2.   Stiffness before certain notes.

3.   Anger at split notes, physically expressed in facial tension.

4.   A somewhat unknown symptom to do with embouchure.

9.2.2 Narrative

Thinking before the concert about the determined, screwed-up face and this something at the centre of the mouth, I realised they could be connected.

> *There could be a narrative here about embouchure - not relaxed, low pressure, but dug-in. I could try this for the concert, as it is quite short, and stamina is not such a problem.*

This may require explanation for the non-specialist reader. There is debate in brass-playing about different types of embouchure. Broadly speaking, a relaxed, low pressure embouchure is said to give greater stamina and flexibility, and high pressure, where the mouthpiece is pressed against the lips, is said to give more solid tone, as long as the facial musculature can withstand the pressure. The first is more orthodox in teaching, although experiments show that experienced professionals use a lot of pressure (Barbenel, Davies, & Kenny, 1986). My personal history in this debate is relevant here. Inspired by the British horn player Dennis Brain, as an undergraduate I developed the more unorthodox and old-fashioned style of using considerable pressure. As a postgraduate, my teacher advocated an extreme

version of the low-pressure technique, 'buzzing' the lips against the mouthpiece with as light a contact as possible. My playing suffered from this, and consequently my confidence. I started using more pressure as I began working professionally. But stamina has always been an issue for me, so I am wary of using too much pressure, even though I am not entirely convinced by the low pressure/stamina argument.

In my note I make the connection between my facial set-up in playing the horn and the one that occurs due to anger at split notes (*'slightly screwed-up face'*). When I test the embouchure-attitude of 'dug-in' and determined, screwed-up face, while warming-up before the concert, I notice that there is a natural accompaniment of tightened stomach and narrowed eyes. These both sound promising: tightened stomach is widely accepted as providing good breath control; narrowed eyes was significant for my playing in a Process Oriented Psychology session many years previously that touched on themes of anger and determination. There was thus a personally significant narrative: Dennis Brain/old-fashioned embouchure; reaction against the embouchure recommended by my postgraduate teacher; a significant therapy session; my own anger; plus strong breathing technique.

9.2.3 Trigger

The next part of ONT is the trigger. I made a note just before going on stage that I could use '*narrow-eyed, curled lip face as trigger'*.

9.2.4 Results

Notes after the concert:

> *Worked well on most notes. Angry attitude – not angry with colleagues, or myself, but the bodily symptoms of anger. Where it didn't work was* (when I

tried) *'retiring' from notes or being too subtle in dynamics. Very successful minuet and trio where I really drove the higher notes* (Haydn, 2014). *Was this because I was inhabiting the anger more for these notes rather than withdrawing? Certainly works technically – enough air. Almost comically loud in some places, but hugely enjoyable, and enjoyed by colleagues and audience I think. Would be difficult to pull off if there was a fussy director. But it felt like grown-up horn playing. I was able to use the odd slip to re-engage with the anger.*

I would like to explain these notes.

1. Angry attitude – not angry with colleagues, or myself, but the bodily symptoms of anger.

Two symptoms of my MPA were stiffness before notes, and anger after (if I split). But actually, the <u>physical</u> effect is the same: stiff neck, lip, stomach and sometimes legs. I used these as a trigger, to engage with the narrative of my MPA symptoms without re-telling this narrative during the performance, for which there would be no time. This is the technique developed during the *Quoniam* experience.

2. Worked well on most notes… Where it didn't work was 'retiring' from notes or being too subtle in dynamics.

This trigger had a positive effect on my playing technique except when I attempted to phrase off or play too quietly, in other words, where I did not conform to the angry attitude.

3. Very successful minuet and trio where I really drove the higher notes.

Noticing where the trigger was successful, I made the decision during the performance to take the meaning of the symptoms as encouraging me not to phrase off, or be subtle, but to be direct and even dominant. This seemed to match the angry attitude and physical tension. There was an opportunity to apply this in this minuet, where the horns take the lead. I did so to an extreme.

4.Was this because I was inhabiting the anger more for these notes rather than withdrawing?

I question this in the notes immediately after the performance, but the answer, in retrospect, is certainly yes. I did not 'withdraw' either in the sense of phrasing off or that of allowing other instrumental lines equal space in the texture. I dominated.

5. Certainly works technically – enough air. Almost comically loud in some places, but hugely enjoyable, and enjoyed by colleagues and audience I think.

The high notes and technically challenging lines in this minuet were rendered easy by the amount of breath I was able to exhale in playing in this dominant way. There were audible gasps from the audience and a tangible excitement in the room. As a piece of research data, this unmistakeable yet unmeasurable atmosphere is perhaps out of place. I can only offer that in my long experience of performing I have known only a few occasions where it has occurred.

6. Would be difficult to pull off if there was a fussy director.

This is a reference to the fact that I took charge of the musical character at this point. There are many musical directors who prefer a 'safe' interpretation, with everything balanced and controlled by them. In this case there was no conductor.

7. But it felt like grown-up horn playing.

See the *Quoniam* section for an explanation of my insecurities about my status in professional performance. On this occasion, my playing had the confidence, technical prowess and power I associate with symphonic players.

8. I was able to use the odd slip to re-engage with the anger.

As long as I was able to play in this way, everything went well. But occasionally I reverted to a more habitual way of playing, and this sometimes caused errors. These errors, as before, led to anger. But since anger, or rather the physical symptoms of anger, were part of my 'trigger', this became a useful response.

9.2.5 Analysis

The way I played is summed up in the left column in the following table, and I contrast it with my more normal way of playing, thinking and behaving. This illustrates the expected counter-narrative that emerges from MPA symptoms.

Playing characteristics emerging from symptoms	Conscious narrative
Anger	English reserve, zen
Stiffness	Relaxation
'Pushy'	Acceptance of my place
Demonstrative	Subtle
Taking over	Blending
Strong musical line throughout	Phrasing-off

Table 4: Comparison of Conscious Narrative and Playing Characteristics Emerging from Symptoms

I note that, in my experience, many principal horns have the characteristics in the left-hand column above. The opposed traits are typical of good 2nd horns - my usual position. So here was a learning about how to <u>be</u> as 1st horn, and also perhaps an understanding of why they are sometimes difficult to deal with!

The Jungian concept of 'shadow' may again be useful here. As a habitual second horn, considered more a supporting role in a horn section, one might expect the characteristics associated with first horn players to be part of my shadow. But there are also more personal characteristics that fit this pattern. I tend to be reserved, compliant and undemonstrative in public, but there are examples in my life of this 'forceful' shadow side coming through, in both distorted unconscious form and in therapeutic situations. I do not wish to go into the personal details of the former, but I will give two examples of the latter. Working on a recurring childhood dream about fighting, a therapist started physically wrestling with me, much to my astonishment. He was strong, and persistent. I had to engage physically and forcefully in order to stay upright. This was surprising and also exhilarating. Afterwards, I felt alive. The therapist had seen the link, or rather the dichotomy, between my normal somewhat reserved persona and the message of this dream. Bringing out this shadow side physically was a successful and very direct way of demonstrating this unacknowledged one-sidedness in my personality.

> The shadow personifies everything that the subject refuses to acknowledge about himself and yet is always thrusting itself upon him directly or indirectly (Hauke, 2006, citing Jung, 1939, para. 513).

The second example comes from working with a well-known conductor. I found his bullying of players unacceptable, yet often the musical results were very good. A therapist pointed out the forceful nature of the conductor's personality was a shadow side of mine, and that it is typical of shadow contents to be projected onto others, which then cause externally-

directed upset. Although the conductor's behaviour was indeed unacceptable, my very strong reaction to it is theorised as a reaction to disavowed parts of myself.

> The shadow is that part of oneself that one does not recognize or claim. It is that part of oneself that is often projected onto others. It may be the sin one sees in others but fails to claim for oneself. The shadow is therefore often an immature part of one's unconscious that has yet to be assimilated into consciousness or yet to be recognized as 'self' (Shrimplin, n.d.).

In seeing this, I recognised the 'good' parts of this forceful personality that, in a broad sense, 'made things happen'. My rejection of 'force' as part of my personality stops me being a bully but has also held me back from pursuing large aims.

'Force', as one might name the group of qualities that emerged through engagement with my MPA symptoms in this performance (see below), is thus a relevant part of my shadow. It has history for me. It was needed in this context, and one could say it is needed in others too.

9.2.6 Conclusion

Referring back to the initial symptoms in this case:

1. Worry about status compared with other guest principals.

2. Stiffness before certain notes.

3. Anger at split notes, physically expressed in facial tension.

4. A somewhat unknown symptom to do with embouchure.

Symptoms 2, 3 and 4 came together as an amalgam of determination, domination and an old-fashioned ideal of embouchure. One might bring these together in the word 'force'. I forced my will and musical expression as well as physically forcing the mouthpiece onto my lips, and produced a forceful sound in a forceful performance. Together, they produced learning about symptom 1: how to be as a first horn. This is of course exactly what I needed in this

situation as I am inexperienced in this role, and had worries about comparisons with other, more experienced first-players.

My understanding of this process is that the MPA symptoms contained a message that was necessary for my artistic development at that moment. Put into a relatively unusual situation, that of playing first horn in demanding repertoire, my symptoms showed what was necessary. It was necessary to 'read' them in a certain way in order to receive the message. That way was to apply the conceptual framework that MPA is a message of hidden performance desire, and the newly developed method of Observe, Narrative, Trigger.

I would like to emphasise the importance of the Narrative part. The previous evening, we had performed a similar programme where I had had similar symptoms. I interpreted them simply as 'tension', and played with deliberate bodily tension for the exposition of a Haydn symphony. This worked well, but when I continued this approach on the exposition repeat, I suddenly started making mistakes. Tension alone did not produce artistic success. In the second concert, however, this tension was allied to a meaningful narrative, and became highly relevant to my situation both in the moment of performance and in my personal history. The issue was more fully concerning forceful assertion than merely tension.

Another important part of this performance was a continuing awareness of the effects of the trigger. I noticed that it was successful only in certain circumstances - when I was not trying to be subtle. This made me decide during the performance to abandon subtlety, to great success. In retrospect, this aspect was also signalled by the MPA symptoms of anger and tension.

From a psychodynamic perspective, it is perhaps an unremarkable story that a symptom of anger is indicative of issues about self-worth (comparison with other guest principals) and self-assertion (habitually playing a supporting role). But speaking as the central character in the story, this experience was profound and transformative. How profound was revealed to me

when reporting to my wife about how I played loud and assertively in Minuet 2 of the Haydn Divertimento. Her remark that this was surely too loud for this context plunged me into gloom and doubt, showing how sensitive I am about the subject matter. This is not surprising. Any experience that is described as transformative must concern deeply-held personal narratives. For me it was my long history about self-assertion. This is a complex, deeply personal story more than half hidden even to myself. I feel uneasy writing about it, but on the other hand, I should know I am playing with fire. In welcoming unconscious contents, profound stories will emerge. Indeed, the premise of my research is that the unconscious contents of MPA are potentially transformative. I perhaps hoped that this transformation would be at the limited level of musical performance (maybe with an interesting and touching back story), but I should not be surprised if deeper issues emerge.

Psychodynamic MPA researchers such as Nagel are explicit about this, seeing MPA symptoms as having 'a gestation originating years before the performer walks on stage' (Nagel, 2010, p.144). Quinn (2010) argues that an approach that takes unconscious events seriously will inevitably 'interrupt the fiction of self-identity' (p.245). This interruption can be both exhilarating and painful. It is tempting for a professional musician to stick with their known self-identity not only because it usually safely negotiates performing and earns them a living, but also simply because it is known. Straying from this known self may make us free, and is authentic in Heidegger's sense, but is inevitably accompanied by anxiety. Senyshyn and O'Neill (2001) make the link with performance anxiety here. A new self emerges on stage, accompanied by anxiety at the leaving behind of the known fixed self that has prepared meticulously for the performance. In this performance I welcomed this new self, once I knew more about it through the ONT technique. In doing this, I experienced what Senyshyn (1999) refers to as 'positive anxiety', where the fixed self was left behind, but felt with a sense of freedom to be something new and revelatory.

As with the *Quoniam* research site, this episode also revealed tacit knowledge - assumptions I hold just under the conscious level in my everyday playing: I hold back slightly from 'digging' the mouthpiece to my lips, even though I have personal evidence (and historical knowledge) that this can be beneficial; I step back from assertion in performance, even when it might be appropriate; I have a persistent belief that relaxed playing is better, despite being inspired by Neuhaus' (1993) description of his teacher Godowsky not being afraid of showing the immense effort that a performance requires.

There is also an interesting contrast between this concert and *Quoniam*. I used the same technique for both, that of Observe, Narrative, Trigger. The MPA symptoms were different, and one could say that the outcomes were opposite. In *Quoniam* the resulting artistic development was about being subsumed into an ensemble, whereas in this concert it was about asserting my own line. Both were highly relevant pieces of learning for both my artistic development and the particular musical context. My normal, barely conscious attitude would have been to 'play out' as soloist in the *Quoniam* and to be an ensemble player in the Haydn Divertimento. The application of ONT to my performance anxiety symptoms turned both of these attitudes around, to good musical effect. Furthermore, both these new attitudes are ones that I continue to use as appropriate in my professional life.

9.3 Copenhagen

I have described two experiences where my MPA symptoms, when considered and followed, have had positive effects on professional performance. Further, the effects were not just positive, but had the character of revelation. By this, I mean that I performed in a way that was new for me, and also personally and artistically satisfying. Adding the fact that they also gave potential for application to future performances, this effect might be named 'artistic development'. This is the new knowledge I am seeking in this research. But in the subsequent research opportunity (a performance in Copenhagen) I was confused about how to proceed. Unlike the two previous accounts, this research site had few significant alarms such as playing in an unusual role as principal or soloist. I was fulfilling a more normal role for me: playing 2nd horn in my regular orchestra. There were no rehearsal nerves, and therefore no symptoms to attach a narrative to before the performance. Instead, noting some MPA during the performance, I was caught in a four-way trap. (Notes made immediately after the performance in italics.)

Should I

1. *use this new performance research site to discover new revelations and new artistic development?* (ie use ONT)

2. *adopt the new artistic attitudes revealed in* Quoniam*: 'intense ensemble listening'?*

3. *adopt the new artistic attitudes revealed in* Playing Principal*: 'assertion'?*

4. *play as my professional-performer-self, to take care of technical and artistic expectations in line with my employment?*

One could say there were four possible selves: research-self (looking for new emergent selves); ensemble-self; assertive-self; and professional-performer-self.

I had a wish for the first choice, but my responsibilities to the music, my colleagues, my job, and my employer encouraged me to fall back to more known methods - either my newly-found revelations, or my older professional pragmatism. This was a live issue during the performance - I kept switching strategies, waiting for something to work. Every time I thought about the tricky second horn solo in the last movement of Haydn's 52nd symphony (1951)*, I got the familiar stiff neck/back/stomach symptom. This is like my 'Playing Principal' experience, where this had the meaning of 'assertion'. I tried applying this in the first movement, but something kept holding me back, and, frankly, I got bored of it. There was no revelation, no feeling of rightness. Ultimately, I played the last movement solo well, but very much guided by my professional-performer-self: pragmatic, unspectacular, but fine. This felt necessary in context.*

This was the situation by the end of the first half of the concert. The time had been spent unsuccessfully searching for a focus, and intermittently attempting to apply the 'assertion' attitude. After struggle, I had successfully used professional pragmatism (my professional-performer-self – no.4 above).

An immediate issue in the first half was that I kept holding back from this assertion. Initially, I blamed this on my colleagues. They were holding back (was this projection on my part?), and I didn't have the confidence to play very differently from them. Then I thought it could be an acoustic effect – the presence of an audience had dampened the string sound from my position. Either way, it felt lonely on stage, in the same way it did in the Quoniam. *If so, perhaps the same approach was called for – intense ensemble listening. When I tried this, the effect was immediate. I started enjoying the*

performance for the first time, and I played in an instinctive and successful way.

Thus, I was finally able to find a narrative - a "holding back", that I understood because it was similar to my experience in *Quoniam*. I was then able to apply the same resulting attitude, that of 'intense ensemble listening' (no. 2 in the above possibilities). However, this was not arrived at without struggle. The question of whether I should attempt to find new revelation in a new performing situation, adopt one of two successful revelations from recent research-performances, or focus on professional pragmatism was a lived one during this performance. This was complex and occurred simultaneously to executing my professional performing duties. How to describe this complex and muddling situation in intelligible terms? Ella Finer (2018) remarks that even in passive listening there is 'always more than meets the (selective) ear, the (editing) body, the (too slow) scribing hand' (p.135, Finer's brackets). How much more true if we are also performing and listening to our own internal voices. I have so far attempted to write about performance using narrative autoethnography, but I present what happened here as a dialogue, as this seems to be the closest form to my experience. I do not claim that these words, or even order of thoughts, occurred internally during the performance, although wisps of this conversation came through, even while pragmatically performing. This dialogue is more a fixing of one of various possible meanings of the whole experience I had in the performance, a meaning that has relevance to research.

Attempting to apply the conceptual lens in performance revealed something like the following internal argument.

9.3.1 Dialogue
A (the rigorous researcher). In order to use a performance as a research site, it is necessary to observe my MPA and follow it. It is not appropriate to consciously apply previous, even if newly-found attitudes in performance. This negates the exploratory attitude that brought them about. These artistic developments have become part of the 'known', part

of my *persona* - the way I face the world. It is tempting to hold on to the known. Here is safety, pragmatism, professionalism, and money ('the persona is usually rewarded in cash' (Jung, 1959, p.123). But this holding on to the known is precisely the reverse of the process by which these new 'knowns' were discovered.

B (the gentle empiricist). But useful research can be done in applying the new attitudes hard-won in previous research-performances. Their longevity and continued effectiveness can be tested, and they can be developed further. Indeed, they can hardly bear the name 'artistic development' if they are not put to use in further performances.

A. Those further performances can be postponed. Now, towards the end of my data-gathering, is the time for new revelations. In this approach, that depends on exploring the unknown, and especially the normally unwanted unknown in the form of MPA. From an existential view, one might say that adopting a known approach, even a relatively new one, means that I have assumed an 'inauthentic' position (Senyshyn & O'Neill, 2001) rather than being open to the freedom (and anxiety) of the authenticity that brought about revelatory results.

B. Sometimes we just need to play, to make a performance work. And you know that the new attitudes not only work, you've shown them to be artistically satisfying.

A. Merely 'plugging in' these new discoveries in this different situation feels mundane or simply inappropriate (there, I just played that bit while applying a sense of assertion, but it just felt false). It might be successful, from the point of view of my professional-performer-self, but it does not have the revelatory satisfaction of the first time. Not every performance is a research site, of course, but could it be that not knowing is also a vital part of <u>artistic</u> satisfaction? From an artistic view, an unthinking application of something that previously worked ruins creativity. A performance that aspires to be revelatory rather than merely correct also needs to be authentic in Heidegger's sense. It needs something more than the successful application of technique; it requires openness to what is happening now. The application of my newly-known techniques would not only stop research, but also artistry.

B. Every performance has knowns as well as unknowns; in other words, uses technique. A performance, especially in the classical music milieu, cannot be a completely new experience in every respect.

A. True, but too much mere reproduction of known technique can make it mundane. There are too many performances like that. The application of a known attitude makes both research and authentic music-making impossible.

B. Wait a minute! 'Intense ensemble listening' is more than a dead technique. Using it now, in the second half, the performance is artistically satisfying. This stems from intense listening to the work of great musical minds (in this case, Haydn and Mozart), my colleagues' articulation of their ideas and my own skilled and instinctive contribution to this. The attitude of intense ensemble listening, subsuming myself to the whole, is applicable in any situation. It is an empty vessel into which art-music can be poured, in the moment of performance. It is a technique, but it is one which allows artistry.

A. OK, but I still need some more revelations for my research. The application of this known (although new) technique – intense ensemble listening - in a performance will not allow research that delivers revelation. No new revelatory attitude can occur if I am not on the lookout for live MPA symptoms in order to see how they may transform into artistic development.

B. But it is artistically satisfying and consolidates the previous research.

A. Applying a technique that was indicated from a previous performance is not part of my conceptual lens. The theory is that MPA is very specific to a situation, and even that this could give authenticity to a performance. Applying a technique that arose from a different situation is not part of this.

B. The ensemble-self is indicated by my MPA in this performance. The "holding back" is very similar to the situation in the *Quoniam,* even if it has taken the whole of the first half to realise it.

9.3.2 Conclusion

On this occasion, the successful approach was the application of one of my newly found attitudes, that of the ensemble-self, which had been gained from my MPA in *Quoniam.* The assertive-self and research-self were not successful; the professional-performer-self was 'pragmatic and unspectacular' in contrast to how I experienced inhabiting the ensemble-self ('instinctive and successful'). However, this result was not obvious in advance. All the possibilities were tempting in turn, and this caused confusion and frustration in the performance, even while I was fulfilling the necessary professional expectations tolerably well. Even in retrospect, I don't know how I could have known what the successful attitude would

be. It was indicated by one aspect of my MPA - a feeling of holding back, I can now see, but so were others.

One might say I got there in the end. But I would like to avoid the struggle. How do I decide, during a concert, which of many approaches to adopt? How do I manage the conflicting ideas that made the first half of the concert frustrating and hard work? This has been framed as a conflict between whether to be pragmatic or to search for revelation, but even when opting for the latter, there is so much data during a performance that it is difficult to follow one path. It may become clear in retrospect, or if there is time to analyse symptoms, but in the moment of performance, in addition to professional duty, there is a sort of floundering after different narratives, symptoms and meanings. One can readily understand why Doğantan-Dack argues that 'live music performance cannot involve any reflective component by the performer' (Doğantan-Dack, 2012b, p.39n). For one thing, there simply doesn't seem to be time. Elsewhere she also argues that research cannot take place in live performance because there is no opportunity to 'change, improve, transform, expand and rework' ideas (Doğantan-Dack, 2012a, p.265) during the performance in the current culture [17] (although I have done exactly this in some of the experimental performances, where cultural norms were suspended). It is true that in the performance now under consideration, passages could not be repeated in order to compare different approaches. However, the nature of the writing meant that many passages were similar, and it was actually possible to observe differences. Thus, different approaches to performing were adopted, assessed, and discarded if they were not successful during the performance. There was certainly an urgency in this, since all the time, the highest professional standards were required. 'Success' here is not measured against 'failure' in the sense of inaccuracy or lack of ensemble: these must be correct. How then did I measure success?

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[17] Östersjö (2017), however, holds that these actions, except 'rework', are the very things that constitute artistic quality in a performance.

In the description of the first half of the performance, above, I refer to there being "no revelation, no feeling of rightness". Success was however recognised in the second half in following terms: "the effect was immediate. I started enjoying the performance for the first time, and I played in an instinctive and successful way." Leaving aside the tautologous thought that success is measured by playing in a successful way, what is being sought seems to be: immediate effect; enjoyment; and instinctual playing. It was these aspects that made me feel that intense ensemble listening was the appropriate attitude for this situation. However, although the above might constitute a 'feeling of rightness', 'A' is correct that no new revelations occurred. There was no one MPA symptom that led to the discovery of emerging performance desire. There was instead a further successful application of a previously discovered desire, that of 'intense ensemble listening'. While this was satisfying, enjoyable and professionally rigorous, I note in myself a little disappointment that there was no epiphany as there was in the two previous performances. Do I value revelation more than professional and musical success? Is not revelation also more relevant to the research questions?[18] MPA is theorised to signal emergent desire. Is this therefore newly emergent each time? Conversely, that this desire may lead to artistic development implies that a longer-term application of this desire might take place, and this needs to be researched too. One might say that the current research site brought these questions to the foreground.

Perhaps these questions are inevitable because of the theoretical speculation in two separate fields: psychoanalysis and existentialism. The latter implies a new emerging self on each occasion of MPA, the former that a hidden desire may continue to impress itself on each occasion until it finds satisfaction. Psychoanalysis suggests that a new attitude might be found

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[18] Skantze (2018) writes of the requirement for good argumentation in academic writing. She comments that 'one quality of practice is that it reveals: is revelation an argument?' (p.30).

that makes MPA redundant, therefore 'intense ensemble listening' or 'assertion' might be applied in a new situation, as was the case here. Existentialism implies new revelation each time and requires continual revelation in order for the performer to be free.

This performance raised the question of whether the only way of applying the conceptual lens during a classical performance, (rather than having the luxury of time to gather an appropriate narrative beforehand) is to try several different approaches until one falls into place that has the qualities of immediate enjoyment in performing. This 'fishing' for different possible attitudes made for an uncomfortable first half to the concert, although I was able to be pragmatically successful. In persuading myself that intense ensemble listening had connection to a narrative concerning a certain shyness about dominating, I was ultimately able to have an experience that was enjoyable, instinctive and successful. However, there was none of the theorised benefits of the 'dynamic' application of the conceptual lens, where MPA might give revelatory insights during the flow of the music.

In summary, applying the conceptual lens during the performance led to confusion and internal debate, until a solution was happened upon that was successful but contained no new revelation. Further work is required in order to apply the conceptual lens in situations such as this.

10. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE RESULTS

10.1 Notes on PhD recital

A recital was included as part of the submission of this PhD. A full video may be found at   https://www.dropbox.com/s/5nzz5aai7w1w54u/DoctoralRecital.mp4?dl=0,   and   the programme is included in appendix 6.

The recital is intended to stand alone as performance. It did, however, include some spoken explanation, some of which is itself research-performative. I include here not an explanation or answers to specific research questions, but some thoughts from the point of view of being the performer in this situation.

Ave Maria (Schubert): my live, spoken and looped MPA served to disrupt this well-known piece. I was genuinely nervous, resulting in occasional shakiness in the sound and some split notes. I refer to these in the looped voice part, including my overriding emotion of annoyance and anger, especially at splits, which seemed to me to show a frail technique, unacceptable to me in front of horn-playing colleagues. I have a doubt that this performance is research, as it does not explore the possible emergence of new performing selves or hidden desires, merely wears MPA on the outside, contrary to custom. This aspect was gratefully received however by some performing musicians in the audience as a welcome expression of what is normally hidden, and therapeutic relief that they are not alone in this. I did not particularly enjoy performing this piece, as I was too angered by exposing some of my shortcomings. However, viewing it afterwards, I believe it is an unusual and engaging performance

Spoken Introduction: Here, I spoke briefly about the conceptual lens, while giving defined spaces for my MPA-self to enter fully into the presenting role. This is effective and informative, I believe, but there were aspects that felt false to me. There was benefit, as I point

out, of making the audience pay more attention when I fully inhabited my anxiety, but this was also a result that had occurred before, and had even been rehearsed to some extent. Was I open enough to other possibilities? When I first tried this way of presenting, in front of fellow doctoral students, it had a genuine spirit of discovery largely absent here. However, it was theatrical in this recital, and, as I comment to the audience, fun.

Mozart horn concerto no.2, 2nd movement: The structure of the previous talk was continued here, with alternate phrases given over to complete control by performer-self and MPA-self. In the former sections, I once again felt anger at some imperfections. In the latter, I felt confused about whether to conform in part to, or at least follow, the musical line, or whether to let go completely, and therefore felt caught in the middle. I did not particularly enjoy performing, but on playback it seems effective and striking, especially in the MPA-controlled sections.

Britten Prologue: I speak about Kozel's approach in *Contours* (2010) and draw the parallel between her computer-generated other self and my MPA-self. I perform while attempting not to know which of my selves is leading. Again, I am unsure how open I was to input from either, and in effect there was a similar turn-taking to the Mozart. Aware of this in the performance, I tried hard to notice small cues from my MPA-self. I notice a tendency to avert my eyes downwards, and towards the end of the piece I exaggerate this, ending with an increasing bowing of the head and eventually a collapse at the waste, letting the instrument hang from my hands. I wonder at the time whether this may be a desire not to engage with the audience, or whether it may not an MPA symptom at all, but some other body-based impulse. I decided to follow it, partly because I was a little bored with the turn-taking earlier in the performance, which has happened similarly in previous research-performances of this piece. The performance was, however, effective overall.

Improvisation: After talking a little about exploring the materiality of MPA in performance, rather than knowing it by contemplation, I perform an improvisation with looper and piano. Again, I am unsure while performing how much of the improvisatory material stems genuinely from MPA, and how much is improvisatory impulse from the rich sound world we had created. I attempted to follow the possible non-engagement symptom noted in the Britten by moving more behind the piano, away from the audience, but this quickly became ineffective in my view, and I gave up. I felt a little failure because of this inability to pick up on and gain benefit from an MPA symptom, but once again, I believe the performance was effective.

Saint-Saëns Romance: The improvisation segued into this Romance. The intention here was either to be a culminating performance fully using any new artistic self emerging from the previous performances, or, in the absence of this, a 'mild' application of the conceptual lens. It was the latter, as it was not clear to me that any particular 'concert-self' had emerged, or hidden desire revealed. Disappointment at this, and some anger over being fatigued and perceived technical aspects of the performance, meant that this is the least successful of these performances. I could not break free to truly express these feelings because I had chosen the 'mild' application, and also because I was not sure they 'counted' as MPA.

Thus, my overall feeling at the end of the concert was one of frustration and disappointment. However, I believe it was a successful performance, and the parts where I genuinely expressed frustration and did not control outcomes were the most enjoyable for me, and perhaps the most striking for the audience.

10.2 The Research Questions

<u>In what ways can music performance anxiety symptoms signal performance desire and emerging performer-selves?</u>

The 'experimental performance' part of this research explored how the application of the conceptual lens might affect performances where there was little or no obligation to musical text or classical music performance norms. The final recital is intended to stand alone as performance, as are the further examples in appendices 5-10. Conclusions drawn from these performances are perhaps too 'unruly' to be neatly encapsulated into the answer to a research question. However, showing MPA symptoms in performance, sometimes in extreme ways, has challenged established performing practices, and this has been a very satisfying artistic experience for me. I would claim that my MPA has shown me that transgression of norms is an artistic direction I wish to take and thereby they signalled performance desire and an emerging performer-self. Further, in welcoming MPA symptoms, there has often been a struggle between the research aspect that wishes for rigour, and a 'musical' aspect that wants to make a performance 'work' in some way, even if not in a conventional classical performance sense. This in-the-moment improvisatory sensitivity has also been artistically satisfying and new for me.

For the 'professional performer' part of this research, three performance 'sites' were chosen. In the '*Quoniam*' site the MPA symptoms of 'hiding', 'pathetic' and 'disembodied' were transformed into a new 'ensemble-self' that subsumes itself into the texture of the music and listens to the whole. In the 'Playing Principal' site the symptoms were worry about comparison with other players, bodily stiffness, anger at mistakes, and an embouchure issue. These were transformed into a dominant style of playing. I explain through narrative autoethnographic text how these attitudes are indeed new selves for me. That they were deeply satisfying and addressed important performing and personal issues previously hidden below

conscious level leads tentatively to the suggestion that the symptoms signalled performance desire.

<u>How may the use of the conceptual lens lead to artistic development?</u>

I claim that there was artistic development because these new attitudes are ones that I continue to use in my professional work. The third professional site, 'Copenhagen' demonstrated that I was able to use the 'ensemble-self' with success in a different situation. In addition, allowing performance anxiety various degrees and types of control in performance has led to new artistic possibilities away from professional performance norms, and I continue to enjoy more experimental work.

<u>In what ways can I use these ideas in my own performance?</u>

My experience of applying the conceptual lens in performance has been one of battles between different aspects of performing. There is tension between symptom and text, and also between symptom and improvisatory impulse.

| text | ⟷ | symptom | ⟷ | Improvisatory impulse |

Figure 11: Tensions present when applying the Conceptual Lens in Performance

The former has been dealt with in the situations where the text must be followed in two ways. A 'mild' application, where MPA symptoms are permitted a small intrusion into accepted performing style while adhering to the text was included in the final recital, but this approach necessarily limits the scale of any revelation of hidden desires or emergent selves.

Secondly, there has been the development of the Observe, Narrative, Trigger method.

This is a satisfying approach to performing that respects, and even reveals, the score, and equally reveals and respects underlying performing desires and emergent performing selves. However, time to discover a meaningful narrative and accompanying trigger is necessary, such as between rehearsal and performance, or in a concert interval. The third performance site, 'Copenhagen', showed that ONT is difficult to use while performing. Further research would be useful in applying ONT 'live'. The precision of the ONT process is key, both in text and symptom. The text must be followed appropriately for the artistic and professional context; the symptom is observed very precisely in itself and for its relevance to personal performing assumptions and history. The performing self adopted can be traced precisely to the MPA symptom in this way.

In attempting to use the conceptual lens in more experimental performances precision has been harder to maintain. In order to explore unconscious content with rigour, not only did any text disappear, but also, in my experience, the strict adherence to MPA symptoms. Other impulses - spontaneous, body, vocal, technical, musical - had a tendency to push out MPA and become part of a free-improvisatory palette, or be resisted because they are not part of the research subject. Like MPA, these are less-known than my normal performing attitudes, having the character of physiological, mental or behavioural events, and often purely physical, experienced as the expression of bodily tension.

This palette, however, has a rich expressive potential, and is even a 'cure' for MPA, as this tends to be absent when full expression is given to these other factors. They also supply Quinn's necessity of rigour as they are not bounded by any conscious demarcation of what constitutes the 'relevant' unconscious event in artistic endeavour. Aside from the traditional adherence to text (which can be solved using ONT) there seems to be much to recommend them. There is further discussion of this in 11.2.

11. CONCLUSION

11.1 Contribution to Knowledge

The research questions were:

In what ways can music performance anxiety symptoms signal performance desire and emerging performer-selves?

How may the use of the conceptual lens lead to artistic development?

How might a coaching practice using these ideas be developed?

In what ways can I use these ideas in my own performance?

They have been answered directly in the summaries of results following the coaching and performance sections (chapters 7 and 10). In brief, there does seem to be some evidence that MPA symptoms may signal hidden performance desire and emerging performer-selves in ways that may lead to artistic development, and the coaching and performance parts explore the various ways in which this process may be facilitated. The coaching part of the research has explored how a practice might be developed, and there has been extensive exploration of the conceptual lens using my own performance.

The main contributions to knowledge that have emerged are as follows.

A new conceptual lens for MPA.
The conceptual lens has been developed that suggests alternative attitudes to certain difficulties with mainstream MPA research.

Symptoms are seen as somewhat random. There is no clear connection between symptoms and underlying causes. Kenny (2009) laments MPA research that focuses on

symptomatic 'state cognitive and somatic anxiety', pointing to the 'etiological complexity of the condition' (p.37-38). I would concur with this complexity, and agree that this research focuses on such symptoms, but would argue that symptoms and aetiology may not be separate. The conceptual lens suggests that the aetiology of symptoms is the emergence of desires about performance and new performance selves, and that these are expressed by the symptoms. These desires no doubt have a deeper aetiology related to the personal and biological history of the musician, but this history is not seen in the conceptual lens as something to be 'solved' (unless the musician has severe psychological problems), but contributes to their richness as an individual musician. Such personal narratives may however be an indicator that an emerging desire is relevant.

MPA is complex in manifestation. Steptoe (2001) notes that 'one person may show impairment of movement or posture without feeling very upset, while another may experience their principal difficulties in cognitive disturbance' (p.295). Brodsky finds that current understanding of MPA is so diverse that it 'cannot be blended into a single theory' (p.88). The conceptual lens renders dissimilarities in manifestation simple if they are all conceived as a signal of specific artistic desires for an individual in the current situation.

MPA is known to be partly beneficial but no mechanism is suggested for this. Papageorgi et al suggest that moderate arousal may improve 'efficiency, alertness and concentration', but this is very general in conception, and may not be relevant where symptoms are not those of 'arousal'. The conceptual lens is more ambitious by suggesting that specific MPA symptoms may give specific artistic benefits.

Underlying causes of anxiety in an individual are seen as problematic. Kenny (2009a), Salmon, (1990), Sârbescu & Dorgo, (2014) and others investigate factors that contribute to MPA so that they can be separately addressed, but they are frequently aspects of a person that might otherwise be welcomed or at least accepted. The conceptual lens sees them as part of the

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richness of that person's experience. This echoes Klein (1988), who sees an individual's relationship with anxiety as forging their individuality.

Anxiety is seen as a disorder. The theoretical underpinning of the conceptual lens sees anxiety as the expression of hidden desire and the inevitable accompaniment to freedom.

Treatments aim for anxiety reduction even though this is not the main aim of musicians. Kenny, despite devoting much of her research to the alleviation of MPA, also points out that the aim in doing so for most musicians is to be able to perform well and enjoyably. The conceptual lens can facilitate this more directly.

Treatments emphasise the regaining of control by a central self even though the centrality of this self is often the cause of MPA. Senyshyn and O'Neill (2001) point out that existential thought implies that clinging to a fixed self will lead to destructive anxiety. A positive anxiety that accompanies the free emergence of a new 'concert-self' may be obtained by ceasing to cling to the fixed self. Conversely, McGrath (2012) states that cognitive-behavioural therapy is successful because it counteracts 'negative thought patterns with the integration of more positive, encouraging cognitions' (p.101). One might say that in the latter case the central self is deciding to replace one falsehood (everything is going badly) with another (everything is going well) rather than welcoming what is really happening. It also ignores those less conscious parts of a musician that may have more wisdom than the central self. The conceptual lens implies that a good outcome for musicians may not be greater control but accepting the lack of it. It is not about finding 'a rational island haven in a random and unpredictable universe' (Weiner & Simmons, 2009, p.1) but embracing what we don't know and thereby finding depths of creativity.

The Beginnings of a new Coaching Practice for MPA

This research suggests that a practice for coaching musicians with MPA may be developed using the conceptual lens. The 'gentle empiricism' used in the research seems also

to be a good basis for such a practice. Theory, techniques, attitudes, conduct, roles and ethics have been developed, although all may need further refinement.

New Performance and Performance Practices

New performance practices have been developed that welcome MPA symptoms in different degrees and by various methods. These include:

- revealing symptoms verbally (either written or spoken) during performance;

- giving space at pre-determined moments in a score for a theorised MPA-self to take control of the performance;

- allowing the MPA-self to control the performance spontaneously;

- exploring the materiality of MPA in free improvisation;

- 'chiasmatic' improvisation, where the MPA-self and performer-self 'touch' each other in a reciprocal relationship, jointly generating a performance that expresses this relationship;

- fully expressing the physical symptoms of MPA in the rest bars of accompanied solo music;

- 'mild' welcoming of MPA symptoms while retaining the musical text.

Using these methods, new work has been created that are contributions to artistic knowledge in themselves.

Observe, Narrative, Trigger

An important aim was to use the conceptual lens in my own profession of classical orchestral performance where there is the necessity of fidelity to existing text and performance practice. The *'Quoniam'* research site led to more thorough exploration through the development of a method I have called 'Observe, Narrative, Trigger' (ONT) which welcomes performance anxiety symptoms more fully within the narrative of a particular performance and the musician's attitudes to performing, while also retaining the rigour of professional

performance. Two research sites demonstrate that this can be effective in performance and artistic development. The fact that newly discovered desires or selves in these cases were in some ways opposite seems to imply that MPA symptoms may not only signal these revelations but take into account the particular circumstances of the performance.

11.2 Implications of the Research

Musical Training

The results of this research imply that there is something important in MPA symptoms that may have a bearing on what type of performer a musician might be. This is a crucial question for musical training.

It is striking from table 2 (p.147) how much the emerging desire or self of the research participants is connected to more personal expression, in opposition to the 'correct' way of performing given by teachers and the wider musical culture. For Elisabeta and David, personally expressive performance became important. Laura showed a desire for defiance against how she felt perceived by musical authorities, and also a wise embodied musical phrasing perhaps countering the normal narrative of formal analysis or the study of performance practices. Zoe and Emma's instinctive musicianship came to the fore, opposing control. The initial experiments in my own performance had a similar effect. For teachers and educational institutions, these findings reinforce research that shows MPA is connected to expectations from authority. But it also shows that in many cases MPA may be alleviated by allowing more personal deviations from accepted norms.

One of the implications of this research is thus to recommend that instrumental and vocal teaching emphasises more personal musical aims. This matches research that shows such an approach would have benefit for the well-being of students (Ascenso et al (2017), Gaunt

(2006)). However, according to Persson (1996), deviations from traditional norms is not encouraged in conservatoires, especially in the direction of personal expression. Furthermore, Gaunt finds that even if a teacher is aware that a student has distinctive needs, teaching often remains inflexible in approach.

The challenge for conservatoires is to ask how far they are both producing musicians conforming in all respects in order to win auditions (but therefore making a substantial number of students into anxious performers), and enabling their musical development, whatever that means for the individual. Where do conservatoires place themselves on the line between technical colleges, where a job is learned, and art colleges, where a voice is discovered (although technique will of course be learned)? This research implies that the latter is important in negotiating performance anxiety, and also, importantly, gives a mechanism for discovering this voice.

At the start of conservatoire education, it is important for students to be sure that the four or more years of training they are about to embark on is in fact the direction they wish to pursue. It may be relevant to question whose ambitions they are fulfilling in following this path, both for their own future well-being, and for conservatoires and funding bodies. Are they following their own aims or the expectations of parents, teachers and others? A student who has known little alternative to their current path may not be conscious of the answers to this. This research suggests that performance anxiety may help in this regard. A new student who exhibits MPA may not just be someone with a problem that needs solving, but stating by non-verbal means that they may not be pursuing a path that suits them. The positive part of this is that the precise nature of the MPA may hold answers to what the right path may be. Two of the research participants (Elisabeta and Anna) showed evidence that part of their courses might be better skewed towards improvisatory skills. Indeed, Anna's MPA showed that classical training wasn't where she wanted to be at all. It may thus be useful to study the performance

anxiety of new students through the conceptual lens in order to help choose an appropriate curriculum. Some training in understanding and applying the conceptual lens would be required on the part of staff.

Most conservatoires and universities have professional counsellors and therapists who have undergone training in particular paradigms and may or may not have sympathy with the approach this research has taken. It is not my place to question their expertise. However, this research is particularly at odds with those (cognitive) therapists who hold that problems are caused by faulty thinking. This research implies that the word 'faulty' in this context may be misplaced. What is considered faulty may be wiser than it appears to be on the surface, and indeed the idea that MPA is a 'problem' at all has been called into question. I have suggested that it is a problem only from the viewpoint of a fixed, inauthentic, conscious self. Those paradigms that cannot include the concept of multiple selves may struggle with this idea. However, others may take heart from the results obtained here by a researcher who is not trained in psychoanalytic or existential therapy, but uses some theory in order to work in the relatively 'shallow' area of music performance without digging too much deeper into personal issues. The implication is therefore also that instrumental teachers may also be able to address MPA issues in this way without the full training required of counsellors.

In a broad sense, teachers, musical coaches and counsellors might be encouraged to see MPA not as a weakness or problem in performance, but an artistic sensitivity that may be used constructively. It might be glib to express this as a plea for more 'desire' and 'freedom' in performance, but this research implies that a lack of these can lead to MPA and, happily, that the consequent MPA symptoms might illuminate what they signify for an individual. Such an approach may also benefit the wider musical culture, which may be suffering from a surfeit of performances complying extremely narrowly to certain culturally permissible norms (Leech-Wilkinson, 2020).

Conventional Performance

The newly-developed technique I have named Observe, Narrative, Trigger is an important practical tool for performers. I continue to use it myself, documenting each instance in order to build up a series of personal 'cases', and it continues to give new insights into my own performance and enables me to convert performance anxiety into personally meaningful performances within professional expectations. Other performers will, I believe, find it useful. In order to apply it, some coaching would probably be required, and this may be done in two distinct ways. The first is a general training in the theory and practice of the conceptual lens; the second might be using a 'real-time' performance coach. In the latter case, a person thoroughly familiar with ONT might coach a performer before, or even during, a performance, asking about symptoms, connected narratives and counter-narratives, encouraging visualisations and developing triggers for a particular performance.

Creative and Improvisational Opportunities

Where performers improvise, or have the opportunity or desire to broaden the possibilities of classical performing practice, the research provides new tools and techniques to do so. Experiments in rigorously welcoming MPA symptoms 'dynamically' as they arise in performance led to the intended piece of music being rendered unintelligible, but also to the possibility of artistically interesting work that explores the nature of MPA and the expressive characteristics of an 'MPA-self'.

However, in practice, as I have said, it has been difficult to separate MPA and spontaneous improvisatory and body impulses. The tension between welcoming MPA symptoms and following other impulses arose from the subject of this study. It is about MPA, not these other phenomena. The latter may stem in part from deep levels of anxiety (indeed, Klein might argue they must, as all aspects of being have their origin in anxiety), or they may have other sources. The issue is that I did not experience them as MPA symptoms, but as

spontaneous events that occur when control over musical outcomes was loosened. I had to decide, in the performing moment, whether to follow them or not. For an intellectual reason concerned with the named subject matter of this research, I have been unwilling to include them. But what riches occurred when I let go of this!

The initial experiments, where MPA soon faded, had a profound effect on me. I discovered efficient technical improvements, expressive devices, trust in my body to do the appropriate thing if I let go of intention, and even an experience of a sense of self relocated from head to gut (see appendix 5). There is much to recommend here for performers and others, but until now I have confined these results to the appendix as they seemed outside the bounds of this study.

However, a question will arise for musicians who wish to incorporate this research into their performance, as it did for me: how much to follow body or other spontaneous events, not just MPA. I have certainly found that responses related to fear, anger, indifference and other emotions may be artfully used by bringing them in as an unexpected transgressive element. They may (and do, as I have shown) produce striking performance moments, such as the shout and stamp at the end of the Mozart movement in the doctoral recital.

However, a part of this research has been about whether unintended responses take into account the particularities of the occasion and the performer's knowledge about the music and may say something of personal value to them. Do they merely produce something transgressive or could they produce insight? Once brave enough, it is relatively easy to insert shocking and unusual elements into a recital, and these are effective and can be genuine (although they can also be faked). However, my MPA has also given other artistic avenues to pursue, not connected with shocking the audience or upsetting norms, and in some ways I consider this the more valuable aspect of the research. The transgressive possibilities are a subset of the ways in which applying the conceptual lens has led in new directions. MPA may, the research seems

to show, give insight into hitherto unconsidered, or perhaps forgotten, ways of performing that have personal meaning. Could other impulses and body events also have effects specific to occasion, expectation and repertoire?

I have some evidence that this can indeed be so. Professional rehearsals shortly after my initial experiments bore out the idea that letting go of controlling outcomes did result in playing that was professionally acceptable and retained a sense of spontaneity, ease and discovery to the same degree as some of my 'wilder' improvisations. It was as if the spontaneous impulses take into account what is appropriate. I did not shout, or perform spontaneous musical outbursts as I did when experimenting alone: I let go completely, but played Mozart's Gran' Partita expertly with my colleagues.

This result is potentially of wider significance than those concerning MPA, and indeed may form part of an alternative explanation for the results obtained in this research, without the need for Freudian concepts such as hidden desire. Instead, a form of 'body wisdom' that does the right action for both performer and context without conscious control might be conjectured, an idea not dissimilar to those of Gallwey (1977), Gallwey & Green (1987) and Bonpensiere (1953) (see page 243). For performers, the implications are to trust more in what their body does beyond conscious control, and to experiment.

Nomenclature

Kaplan (1995) says 'stage fright is no disease of the psyche, unless all powerful apprehensions about significant and worthwhile enterprises are likewise pathologic'. This attitude, which chimes with the approach of this research, point towards the necessity of a new nomenclature for MPA. The medical model which most research follows uses words such as 'disorder', 'symptom', and refers to musicians who 'suffer from' MPA, who therefore need 'treatment', 'management' or 'coping strategies'. It has been difficult to avoid some of these terms in this document, but perhaps they could be replaced by more neutral terms or those

implying opportunity and growth. I have justified the use of the word 'anxiety' as long as it is used in a psychoanalytic or existential sense, but perhaps it would be better to move towards a term that incorporates all that happens to a musician on stage, especially as it has proved difficult to avoid including unintended phenomena that are not MPA in this research.

11.3 Alternative Explanations

This research has been framed as mainly psychoanalytic and existential in approach. It has explored these avenues via a conceptual lens in order to see if this has benefit. The benefits seem to be real, but there may be different sources than hidden desire and emergent new performing selves for the artistic ideas that seem to inhabit MPA symptoms. The emergent artistic ideas and possibilities are the important part, and I do not wish to rule out other explanations if they may encourage further research and suggest opportunities for coaching and performance. Spontaneous 'body wisdom' may be one explanation, as discussed above. There are two others I would like to discuss briefly: flow and the fight-flight response.

Flow

The initial delight Anna had in our discoveries didn't only change her breathing technique and bring her closer to a sound she liked, it made her sing with a spirit of discovery which was highly expressive. Her delight expressed itself to the listener. This was noticeable in the times when I gave her clear physical reminders of 'high breath': the sound become remarkably pure and furthermore she felt she gave "a more energetic performance". Even clearer was the discovery of 'circular singing'. Her playful attitude in doing this was moving and striking for those in the audience. Similarly, Elisabeta played with freedom and delight when we experimented with two of her symptoms: 'absence', and not knowing what the flute is. Other participants also had experiences where the exploration and welcoming of symptoms

was accompanied by striking performances. The question is this: how much of what 'works' in this practice is due to revealing hidden desires, and how much to engagement with the 'here and now' situation of playing with a new technique? The experience of 'flow' is associated with this engagement and has been cited as an effective and enjoyable aspect of performance, (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008).

In a flow state, a performer is immersed in the moment-to-moment process of the performance, allowing the body to perform the required actions without distracting inner monologues. Flow and MPA have been found to be negatively correlated (Cohen & Bodner, 2019; Kirchner et al., 2008). The latter suggest that, since one of the characteristics of a flow state is a type of positive feedback where successful outcomes reinforce themselves, a flow state in music performance could be obtained by countering 'negative statements with statements that are more positive and supportive' (p.64). Conversely, from the point of view of the conceptual lens, negative statements, as an MPA symptom, would be welcomed rather than countered. This, however, can also make sense from the point of view of flow. Flow could stem from accepting the moment to moment thoughts rather than attempting to counter them.[19] After all, is not countering negative statements the type of distracting inner monologue that might interrupt flow? Moment to moment process includes MPA, indeed it is often the most present process. Kirchner et al are interested in the concept of flow but insist that momentary thoughts should 'relate logically back to the stated goals' (p.64) rather than actually flow.

Flow also has a relationship with creativity (MacDonald, Byrne, & Carlton, 2006, cited by Kirchner et al., 2008 for the field of composition) and the specialness of a musical experience (Bloom & Skutnick-Henley, 2005). Perhaps there is also a link here to what

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[19] Countering MPA is of course difficult to do (hence the amount of research interest). A colleague has remarked to me that "the thing is, if you are riding a horse and the horse turns left, the best course of action is also to turn left yourself".

Senyshyn and O'Neill refer to as the 'flow' of metamorphosis (that is usually resisted) into a new 'concert-self' that emerges on stage (see chapter 2.2.2). Using MPA as part of the flow process might have an effect on producing special or memorable performances. There is precedent for this in forms of drama training which actively engage the performer's genuine response to the performing situation in order to increase 'presence', or the believability of and audience engagement with the performance. In *Acting Emotions: Shaping Emotions on Stage*, Elly Konijn (2000) advocates using 'task emotions' including nerves, euphoria, joy and fear which are provoked by the task of acting, as opposed to the 'character emotions' actors are usually asked to evoke. Could performance anxiety in musicians be used in the same way? A genuine response to the situation, even if that response is named performance anxiety, might enhance audience engagement.[20] The genesis of this idea for me goes a long way back to a recording of Mahler's second symphony I heard when I was a student, where the soprano soloist sounds genuinely nervous, and this is particularly moving and appropriate at this point in the piece. Other occasions where I have been moved by the admission of nervousness, whether expressed verbally or worn without concealment include solo performances for friends and family; wedding speeches; and at close hand with orchestral colleagues performing in difficult circumstances.

To summarise, flow might be an alternative explanation for the results of this study. But it also contains a new possibility. If musicians wish to perform in a flow state, welcoming current MPA symptoms may be a method for doing so.

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[20] The leading voice coach Patsy Rodenburg connects stage presence with the embodiment of an actor's innate nature. If MPA is literally an embodiment of how a performer feels about a performing situation perhaps it can also be connected to stage presence. Conversely, removing the symptoms of MPA may make the performer no longer embodied.

Fight-Flight

The literature on fight-flight points to various body responses which all have quite specific purposes. I list some of them in chap. 3.2. I suggest there that if the body is so adaptable in this way in a fear-giving situation, it may therefore also be so in a concert-giving situation, and the responses may have specific value here too.

Does the literature on fight-flight justify this? Body responses may be extremely specific, but further reading may be needed to find out if the fear response can be minutely adaptable in this way. For instance, does knowledge (or learned instinct) that a grizzly bear can easily outrun you but has poor eyesight give appropriate symptoms? The cold hands that give extra blood to large motor muscles for flight would not be appropriate here, but rigidity (scared stiff) might help. Barlow perhaps lends support to this idea: 'The alarm or fear response…reflects an interaction between *learning* and innate, biological systems designed to help animals adapt to threat.' (Schmidt et al, 2008, p.292, referring to Barlow (2002), my italics). Barlow also refers also not only to real and false alarms, but also 'learned' alarms that may be either (Barlow, Bouton, & Mineka, 2001).

Steptoe (1982), however, points out that the body has a 'parsimonious' range of responses to all strong emotional states - anger, love, fear and MPA all have similar symptoms, for instance. It is just considered unfortunate that these, for instance 'sweat gland activity, salivation, muscle control and the breathing pattern' (p.537) are all potentially harmful to performing music. This does not however rule out the possibility that these body responses can have quite different meanings and purposes for individuals in different situations.

Thus, it is conceivable that bodily responses to fear may have extremely adaptable symptoms that are appropriate to situations, including music performances. It is also the case that inserting these in performance can produce striking effects. However, it is more difficult to account for the importance of counter-narratives in the Observe, Narrative, Trigger method in these terms. This surprising and useful part of the research seems to need the idea of a

conscious desire and a counter-desire that is signalled by MPA symptoms, an idea that does not appear to be explained by the fight-flight response. However, this might be the subject of further research.

11.4 Validity, Reliability and Generalisability of the Conceptual Lens

Two major traditions were drawn upon: psychoanalysis and existentialism. The fact that theorising in these different paradigms provided similar ways of conceiving MPA provided welcome triangulation for the validity of the conceptual lens. Although I have kept open whether MPA symptoms signal hidden desire or emergent new selves (the implications respectively of the two paradigms), I have argued that in an artistic context these are both equivalent to new artistic attitudes.

This study is concerned with exploring the lens and whether it is a useful and reliable tool. This was done in three different areas: practitioner research with participants; experimental performance; and professional performance. There were interesting results in all these, perhaps giving tentative reasons to suppose the conceptual lens may be a reliable tool and has a more general applicability. Hilevaara and Orley (2018) write a call to arms for practitioner-researchers to include their creativity in their research and offer a variety of ways of doing this. These paths may or may not be generalisable, but more importantly 'offer new paths forward' (p.15). It is to be hoped that this research does the same.

11.5 Limitations

There were some of obvious limitations to this research, particularly the small number of participants. However, as Hollway and Jefferson (2013) point out there is a corresponding gain in richness of material and narrative content not available in more statistical studies. There

is limited evidence in this study for a proven connection between MPA and artistic development. However, it has not been framed as positivistic project but an exploration of a new conceptual lens.

A further limitation is the sparse participant voice in the coaching part of the research, excepting those quotations selected by the researcher, and lack of any follow-up interviews with the participants.

Although the conceptual lens has proved interesting, this research does not show that it is <u>always</u> true. In addition, there may be other possible explanations for the results obtained.

This study focusses on classical musicians who are of advanced standard and has therefore not examined the conceptual lens through musicians from other genres or who are less advanced. It also excludes that minority of musicians who have severe psychological problems that may lead to MPA.

11.6 Ethics

The ethical issues that arose in the coaching part of this study are in three linked areas. They may broadly be headlined as respect, continuous consent and minimising harm.

In reviewing the literature I questioned the ethics of researchers recommending the adjustment of aspects of personality that are deemed likely to lead to MPA. Likewise, personal background that is a root cause of MPA is sometimes viewed as an issue to be addressed. This may be legitimate in people who have psychological problems, but most musicians do not have serious issues in this respect, and those that do are beyond the scope of this study. The conceptual lens rather has a radical form of respect that welcomes musicians as they are, including those aspects or behaviours (including MPA itself) of the person that are not accepted by that person or the culture in which they work or study. The acceptance of rejected (consciously or not) aspects is at the heart of the conceptual lens.

In applying the conceptual lens in a coaching role, this acceptance is actioned by a 'Socratic ignorance' that does not assume knowledge of the meaning of symptoms. In a researcher/coaching role, acceptance of unconsciously generated symptoms is a measure of rigour. But the following of paths signalled by these symptoms has ethical consequences.

First, the fact that the lens demands the welcoming of symptoms that are by definition not welcome (because they are symptoms, interfere with conscious intentions, and act against conscious wishes), questions whether consent is given. This is answered in the idea of continuously given consent, where the client can at any time withhold consent without giving reasons. Nevertheless, an awareness is necessary of shadow aspects that may arise and be resisted, that may be also the key to a breakthrough. Care and respect (and possibly supervision) are needed to negotiate these areas.

Secondly, there is the issue of the consequences of rigorously following paths with unknown destinations. The necessary ignorance and rigour can extend to suggesting paths that may be detrimental. The issue is, to whom? If to convention, either technical or cultural, this can be framed as to the dominant powers in the field, and the path may be seen as emancipatory. If career prospects are threatened by this, we may return to the idea that the consent for following a path may be withdrawn at any time, and also to respect for the autonomy of the musician in deciding their own path. If the detriment is to soundness of technique or health, the issue is more problematic. There may be a value judgement necessary to balance a genuine artistic gain against possible harm, but otherwise this issue is not resolved here. It may however be possible to find schools of thought that back up an unconventional technical approach.

11.7 Further Research

One might expect at this point to suggest research that tests the validity of the conceptual lens, especially as I am aware that this research might be criticised for lack of

objective verification. Steptoe (2001) dismisses psychodynamic approaches to MPA for this reason (and because he has 'little sympathy with such views' (p.296)). Although the conceptual lens is not fully psychodynamic, there might be work to be done in this direction. However, one of the issues with proving the effectiveness of psychodynamic work is its extreme variety and idiographic nature ('one size does not fit all', Nagel, 2010, p.143). Because of this, and the small sample of cases in this study the most appropriate further work might be to continue with the attitude of gentle empiricism that has been adopted so that a large case study portfolio might be made. These case studies might form the basis for work on the validity of the conceptual lens.

The client-based practice part of the work is perhaps more art than science. There is no 'method', but there is theory, an attitude of openness to what is presented, and a willingness to move on to a different symptom or way of approaching the same symptom when something isn't working. There is certainly work to be done, however, in developing more fully such a practice for working with musicians who have MPA, and also perhaps in training others to use it. If it is a valuable approach, it would be a shame if it dies with its only protagonist (see Sloboda, 2005, p.404)!

There is a relevant sociological field in illness narratives, which explore the idea of illness transforming a person's self-conception. Frank (2013), in *The Wounded Storyteller*, recounts how debilitating symptoms call for the discovery of a new personal narrative. This might be further researched in the MPA field.

The concept of flow has been connected to MPA (Cohen & Bodner, 2019; Kirchner et al., 2008) but only as opposing each other. Since for a musician MPA is often the most present experience, the conceptual lens implies that work could be done in using MPA as a gateway to flow.

Sloboda, Minassian, & Gayford (2003) investigate the problem that repeat

performances of music fail to 'come alive', and develop a programme called 'Feeling Sound' to counter this. Further research could explore how MPA could link to this 'coming alive' by using the here-and-now MPA to counteract any staleness, in what I have termed the 'dynamic' application of the conceptual lens. Sloboda (2005) discusses their 'evaluative research' in this project, which measures 'the level of expressive performance' (p.404). Such a measure may also be of use in developing more quantitative data on the conceptual lens.

I give three examples in this paper of the Observe, Narrative, Trigger method. The first two relied on time to establish a relevant narrative. The third example showed that using it more fluently during performance is difficult. More research is required for this method both 'dynamically' in performance and also with time to establish a narrative before performing, in order to establish a body of examples.

The conceptual lens focuses on anxiety, but both parapraxis and process-oriented psychology imply that other unwanted phenomena might be used to further artistic development. 'Enthusiasm of practice' (Haseman, 2006) also led to phenomena other than MPA to be welcomed both in the coaching and experimental performance parts of the work. Further research is needed in this area.

The more general area of embodied knowledge and, in particular, embodied wisdom in musical performance may be fruitful. At the head of this document is a quotation of Aldous Huxley: 'Left to itself, the physiological intelligence is almost incapable of making a mistake'. It is from the preface of a little-known book *New Pathways to Piano Technique* by Luigi Bonpensiere (1953). This ambitious volume turns most piano tuition on its head. It attempts to use the body's innate intelligence, unmediated by conscious thought, to learn piano technique. This includes exercises such as hitting correct chords without thought, and even with closed eyes. His descriptions of effortless playing without conscious control precisely match some of my own best performing experiences. Bearing in mind the main wish of musicians with MPA

is to perform well and with pleasure, at one point on the journey of this research I felt that its aims could be fulfilled by developing a horn-playing practice of Bonpensiere's work. This remains an ambition.

Some of the experimental performances that formed part of this research have used MPA as a sort of truth about the performer that might be moving for an audience, following the work of Konijn (2000) and Davison (2015). It would be interesting to explore this further in both experimental and classical performance.

The showing of genuine emotion in classical performance might be explored in the same way that Konijn uses 'task emotions' in theatre practice. There may be an emancipatory aspect to this. For classical music performance the everyday performer-self might be split into two: the artistic choices of the performer; and their training. It is clear that MPA can have the effect of halting the delivery of certain artistic decisions made by a performer. But the performer is not entirely free even in these conscious decisions. Professional classical performance and its training emphasises technical perfection and musical expression dictated by tradition and the demands of musical leaders and maestros, and certain norms of stage behaviour and appearance, such as a minimum of visible emotion and little overt body movement. These expectations are often the causes of performance anxiety (Persson 1996), and the symptoms that result often subvert these expectations, causing visible signs of emotion, inappropriate movement and musical inadvertencies. A certain amount of concealment of genuine feelings is seen as beneficial in current classical musical training and performance (and indeed MPA research in its aim of limiting its effects). The work of Freire (1993) and Shor (1992) imply that the power structures that uphold this concealing might be questioned. Shor viewed the aim of education as the empowerment of students to critically challenge educational and cultural 'dominant myths, official pronouncements, traditional clichés, (and) received opinions' (Shor, 1992, p.129). The conceptual lens might facilitate this questioning.

In new and experimental performance there is more to explore in using the creative power of the MPA-self. New work and new performance practice may be built on what has been started here.

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Appendix

1. Text of invitation to take part in the research

I am studying for a PhD at the Guildhall, researching a new approach to helping musicians with performance anxiety, and I need volunteers!

The commitment would be to have four one-to-one sessions with me, plus one group session with other participants, and a final performance. The sessions would be free and at mutually convenient times at the Guildhall School. They would be recorded and/or videoed for research purposes only. I hope to complete this study before Christmas.

As well as researching the effectiveness of this new approach, it would be my ethical duty to help you in any way I can, using my considerable experience in working with musicians' physical, psychological and artistic issues. I am also an experienced professional performer.

'Action Research' is a relatively recent research methodology which aims simultaneously to help practitioners become more effective and improve the situation of the client. What constitutes 'improvement' is defined by both practitioner and client and the research is thus a co-learning process, simultaneously solving problems and improving practice. It is in the nature of Action Research that the plan for this project is flexible, as various outcomes may emerge from the collaborative process.

I am looking for musicians who identify themselves as having performance anxiety that affects their playing, especially, though not exclusively those with unusual physical symptoms. The anxiety may be small or large.

Please contact me for more information at…

(note that this project was originally framed as action research before it became clear that 'gentle empiricism' was more suitable)

2. Information sheet sent to participants

<u>How the research will be carried out</u>: I have recruited a small number of participants (5-7) for this project. They may be professional, amateur or student musicians who identify themselves as having some form of performance anxiety. I will work with each participant in four hour-long one-to-one sessions and two sessions shared with the other participants. The final shared session will be a performance, either public or with invited audience, so that what we have worked on can be applied for real. Before that there will be a 'coached' performance where all participants perform to each other, with me there to coach or give reminders as appropriate. This is intended as a 'halfway house' to genuine performance.

Between sessions there will be time for both participants and myself to reflect, and this reflection will feed in to a more productive way of working in the following session. The reflection could take the form of a journal or an email exchange, or another form that suits you. The type of questions I expect to be considered in these reflections are "What was helpful in the previous session? What would you like to experiment with further? What was unhelpful? What did you dislike? What had no effect, or seemed like a dead-end?" Each session will be recorded (audio for the one-to-one sessions, video for the shared sessions), and these recordings will be available to you to aid your reflections.

The programme will be:

Session 1

      Reflection

Session 2

      Reflection

Session 3

      Reflection

'Coached' performance with other participants

      Reflection

Session 4

    Reflection

Performance

    Reflection

At the end, I will write up the project in the form of a dissertation, including case-studies. These will be anonymised (see 'Confidentiality' below). The case studies will describe the process and progress of each participant and analyse how my practice influenced this.

This process will take about two months, and will be complete by Christmas 2016. I will complete the write-up of the project in the following Spring.

What will we do in the sessions? It very much depends on you! We will talk about your performance anxiety, how it affects you, what your symptoms are, when it happens, and any stories or reasons you have that are connected to it. You will play to me to show me more. I will try to help you using any of my various skills, which include: physical techniques such as yoga, Feldenkrais Method and massage; creative techniques like improvisation, clown and music workshop methods; and psychological approaches such as Process Work, re-framing and visualisation. You won't be made to do anything you don't want to. Which techniques we use will depend on your feedback, your reflection, and what works. I do want to explore the concept of symptoms being helpful in some way, but if something else is the thing that helps you, that is what we will do.

Research Participant Consent

Title of project: Music Performance Anxiety and Meaning

Study approved by School Research Ethics Committee 31st October 2016

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research. The person organising the research must explain the project to you and you should have read any accompanying information sheet before you complete this form.

- If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to participate. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.

- I understand that I can withdraw or modify my consent while I am participating in the research.

- I understand that if I decide at any time during the research that I no longer wish to participate in this project, I can notify the researchers involved and withdraw from it immediately without giving any reason. Furthermore, I understand that I will be able to withdraw my data up to the point of publication.

- I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information will be treated in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.

- I understand that my participation in this research will result in a written dissertation. Please note that confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained and it will not be possible to identify you from any publications.

Participant's Statement:

I _____ *(full name, please print)*

agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in the project. I have read both the notes written above and the Information Sheet about the project, and understand what the research involves.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

4. Examples of notes from one-to-one sessions

(Participant quotes "double", mine 'single').

4.1 Zoe (violin), session 3

18/11/2016, listening back 23/11/2016, excerpt:

(She is suffering from tension in her jaw while she plays)

So, deliberately play with tense jaw, and whole face.
Plays Disney piece from memory (35'10") - sounds better to me
"didn't like it at all"
Try again, with the music (36'00") - good attitude, alive
"Distinctly unenjoyable", "Felt so horrible", "face made me feel angry", "Angry, not enjoyable"
(distinct difference of opinion here!)
When she does the things I ask, it takes up a lot of "brain power…I'm not thinking about what I'm playing".
I say that can make you play better, and expressively.
She says that physical stuff shuts down 'autopilot' [a concept developed in a previous session, where she plays well, and expressively, without thinking], whereas me voicing in her ear doesn't - "internal, psychological". This is OK.
Again (38'45") while I try to distract her - good, expressive, good sound.
"less distracting", "felt more like the autopilot", " harmonics came out better".
In performance, could focus on something external.
Play, looking at curtain hooks in the room (41'00") - good, serious.
Kept trying to count the curtain hooks, but couldn't get beyond 4. This "still felt like something physical", so got "block". But 'sound projected', 'intensity', 'one note with the most fantastic vibrato'.
Wants something "in between the two". My dancing about [earlier} was better.
Closer to ideal is when I talk, so we do that. Plays while I talk about her day (43'40"). Good, I think. ' Good?', " Yeah, I really enjoyed that. I really, really enjoyed that" (most positive response so far). Brain is "busy tuning you out". She is hearing, but not engaging. "Not worrying about it".
Do it herself - play while going through the story of her day (46'30"). Also good, not quite as sweet a sound? Not "successful at going through my day, but it was quite interesting trying…because it kept my head occupied". "Stopped me focussing on mechanics"

4.2 Laura, session 1

4/11/16, listening back 8/11/16

Beginning of session 1

Loves performing.
But something (that is) marked (is) more difficult. "Even a piece I know really well will end up being, something will go wrong, or I just get really, like, constricted and it all sounds a bit tight I guess, in a way."
Doesn't happen as much in concerts, unless someone important there etc.
Constricted: can't really feel this, but can hear it, "not my sound", "bit thinner", harder to play.

Raises left shoulder when nervous.
'Any thoughts?' Panic - wrong note, then it gets worse - bit of a state.
(Why ask about thoughts, when physical symptoms are so clear?)(Don't make so many notes - it breaks the flow, and I repeat myself)
'Will you play?'
Pulls face. This means "oh no, I don't want to do that".

4.3 Emma, session 2

10/11/16, listening back 12/11/16

Earlier, she talked about "the part of my brain that understands music wholeheartedly". Where or what is that? "I think I become part…I'm travelling in the sound…and the sound is a like visual thing, I'm sort of mapping it out somehow, I'm not quite sure how".
Play the Bennett 'in that channel' (48'05") "wasn't able to do it", "I have to be focussed" (again).
Try a small extract and really get into that 'following' the sound (49'56") "that was better"
Again (50'09") "Yes, it's like I actually get closer to my fingers"
Get closer still to the fingers (50'29") Good. "Yes". I even get a strong image of being "closer to the fingers". She says that when she improvises she is "on my clarinet, sort of. I hadn't realised it before, following, I'm in my clarinet almost". "My head is here (next to clarinet)". So there is a kinaesthetic sense here, as well as aural and visual.
Play like that, three attempts (52'22"). Good.
To play like that she will have to play from memory. Can we find a way of reading and doing that at the same time? Where does she feel she is, more precisely? She is not sure so asks to do another improv, as that is when it happens.
Improv (53'37"). I get a sense of being in the same place – finger-y, aware of pitches, especially the relationship between the two pitches. "I'm just sort of in the…(I interrupt – don't!)…has sense of the space"
I suggest playing the Bennett in the same space. She asks me to play too, to help. I improvise an independent line. This "changed it, mixed it up, and I could then have more of a sense of the space". Was her performance good? "Yes, I think so." Why? I am making it more complicated, and surely other instruments put her off?! "Yes, but maybe that's good…" Me: Maybe it takes her ego out of the situation? Maybe it takes her focus away?
"It stops the micro-management" Yes!

4.4 Anna, 1st shared session

25/11/16, notes from28/11/16

Notes from video and audio playback

She wants to sing "what is most stressful…really slow music".
I say we are going to do what we have been working on, and tell the audience that 'contrary to perceived wisdom' we are going to use 'high breath', 'loud breath' and 'falling-off'.
Sings (14'15"-18'20" audio). Sounds 'fantastic' – very effective performance. Was it good for her? "Partly – sometimes OK, sometimes not OK"
'Were you able to keep up the (I indicate high breath)?'
"Well, the thing is, I totally forgot about it. I was just going into my usual 'OK it's a performance' (deep in-breath) – low breath, silent breath" (!)

'That was why I did the reminders at the beginning!'
Towards the end she thought "oh yeah, that was what I was supposed to be doing…I totally went into my auto-pilot zone"
How was it when she did remember – "a relief" to do quick, high breaths, especially as the phrases were short at that place. (On the video you can plainly see the difference in breathing – careful, low breaths at the beginning, and higher breaths towards the end, where the sound becomes much more clear. Previously, the sound was also good, but with a silkiness rather than that searing quality.)

I suggest doing the beginning again, really remembering this time. OK, "loud, high" breath. Sings (20'22"-21'37" audio). Seems much more pure and alive, easy, sometimes with a 'laser' sound, searing. "It was a more energetic performance now". (So why doesn't she do it like that first time?).
We agree that on the other hand it is always easier second time around. But she says she is naturally quite excitable, so "when I'm allowed to have a bit of that (higher, more excitable breath), I find more energy". She sings a short phrase with this breath. It suits her and her performance, rather than "(calm voice) OK, I need to do a very silent…(breathes in, sings the same phrase)". They have 'totally different sounds'.
There is still though a feeling that it is wrong, even though it suits. I say it is wrong 'except that it sounds better, and you enjoy it more and you are able to express yourself. Apart from all those reasons, it's completely wrong!'.

4.5 Laura Progress report

I now feel unsure about the 'talking the fears' method to induce a reaction, because she found it difficult to summon up defiance as a performing attitude. Could need more preparation before a performance, citing her fears, so the defiance comes organically. This makes more sense to me than positive thinking etc. It is what is really happening.
What works: fighting the restriction; focus on own sound; defiance against her own thoughts; movement – being aware and doing it more.
Not tried: "Oh no" face; heart racing, eyeballs, headphones, physical warm-up

4.6 David, Reflection on session 1

I think he is doing this in order to be a good student and take advantage of things going on at (his conservatoire). I could have worked with D (another horn player who was disappointed not to be chosen for the project) instead!
Lots of "it was OK", "whatever" attitude. Is there something missing? Could the doubting moments point to a more dynamic musical personality? Certainly, more vitality came from me abusing him in his ear, and more right notes and enjoyment too.
Also, interesting that this didn't work so well in Strauss as opposed to (orchestral) excerpt. He says it is more personal, and when he took ownership of the Strauss, it was very good.
Am I drifting into 'advice' rather than using his symptoms? Does he have real symptoms, or is he disguising them? To my mind, his plodding manner might be a symptom – a covering up of the beautiful musician he might be (as opposed to a pro note-getter)? Can I impose my own symptom like that? Why not? Could amplify just as a suggestion rather than make the symptom explicit?

5. Initial Experiments

I performed my own 'experiments' at home. Performances were videoed, and my anxiety at performing to camera, and the probability that my supervisor would watch the video, was used. The idea is to notice any anxiety symptom and to play <u>from</u> it. No attempt is made to suppress it. I deliberately 'do' the symptom and often exaggerate it. I try to 'hold' the symptom while performing, noting the effect. Often a new symptom arises and I use this in a subsequent performance. This produced some notably good results. For instance, 'the shakes', when permitted and subtly enhanced, became a subtle and expressive vibrato. On another occasion a stiffness in the chest region rewarded me with greater air compression and therefore a more focussed sound.

There follows a table made from 'Experiment 3' (October 7, 2015). Arrows signify how a symptom is followed to be the dominant attitude in a subsequent performance.

Video	Performance style	Observations	Result	Learning/Questions
1.	Straight	Worry about splitting notes	Good, perhaps a bit dull	
2.	Worrying about splitting notes	Mind wandered	Rounder sound, more intensity.	
3.	Letting mind wander	Mind wandering, but coming back to focus at key points	Flexible in body and tempo, pleasurable, good.	
4.	Further emphasising wandering mind, allowing distraction and going wrong		Pretty good, couple of slips	Not worse than "concentrating" versions, so why not relax?
5.	Really wandering mind, allowing to go off-page completely	More on-page than I expected	Very intense sound, fast, much tempo variation. 2 slips, 1st came out quite well with a bit of spontaneous exaggeration. 2nd just sounded bad.	
6.	Pushing the boundary. Any mistake to be hammed up, almost made fun of.		Some really terrible bits, some strikingly good things. Last bit completely wrong but quite pleasingly jazzy.	Some spontaneous ornaments I might use in future

Table 5: Experiment 3

Often there are quite good results – exaggerating or deliberately doing the anxiety symptom does add something to the performance. But often I feel dissatisfied with this and have a desire to go further into the symptoms that occur. Also, after the first few experiments the video camera stopped making me nervous, so I feel I am working with other anxieties such as technical, artistic or self-worth issues. It seems to be more about letting the wisdom of the body

do the playing, to greater and lesser extent (and I am thinking that actual nerves in a performance situation are part of that wisdom).

There follow some notes from one session, in the spirit of Feyerabend's 'anything goes'.

> *I started to focus on other details. Once, fatigue made me unable to provide enough lip tension to play the higher notes. Frustrated, I decided to enhance this too, playing with lips and facial muscles as slack as I could. The result was magical. My breathing transformed to provide the required pressure to produce the notes. This could seriously increase my stamina – lower facial tension equals less fatigue and less bruising. But also, the enhanced breathing gave me a tonal quality and security that I had always wanted, but had almost given up on. I loved the way my own body compensated for its own shortcomings. Perhaps one could even say that my body <u>gave</u> me the symptoms of lip slackness so I could discover better breathing? A few research questions could come out of this!*
>
> *How does my body know how to compensate? Is there a deep impulse to make the sound I always wanted to make? I certainly wasn't aiming to do it consciously. Perhaps this impulse is too often buried by trying to play 'correctly'. Can we access it by following the 'difficult' or 'unwanted' symptom? Is it just a coincidence that this particular symptom occurs, or is there some purpose to it? If there is a purpose, does it come from an internal source; the unconscious, or some type of embodied wisdom? Or is it external; our fate, the Tao, or God? I felt I had discovered something more important than an interesting theory about performance anxiety.*

Experiment 7 (November 19-20, 2015) is typical: playing the 1st movement of Mozart's 2nd horn concerto to bar 63.

Notes written semi-automatically immediately after the performance in standard font. *Notes on viewing the video 5 days later in italics.*

5.1 Video 8. Let body lead

Good performance, relaxed, good sound, flowing, easy, accurate. What more could I want? Feeling of wanting it to continue to be good (i.e. it was going well and I tried to <u>make</u> it continue

to go well, rather than use the approach that was already working) half way through, like a complete justification (of my approach), but just momentary. Managed to return to body leading. Nice wu-wei (the Chinese practice of 'doing without doing') feeling, but constrained to the music. Although "what more could I want?" I still feel a little dissatisfied and maybe will try a more body-led experience less constrained by the text. Why do I want to do that, I wonder, when it was good? Just my ego? But my ego did enter even so when I wanted it to be 'good' half way through. Perhaps I want that body experience more than I want the music to work.

Conventional performance, quite good.

Video at

https://www.dropbox.com/s/0r6fr314vc87lvz/78.MP4?dl=0

5.2 Video 9. More body, less text

Odd performance, ending quite introverted. Careless and bulgy in places, still felt constrained. Perhaps continue via exaggerating mistakes like Experiment 3? Or just go with body much more.

Ear-catching. Sweeter sound. By no means perfect, in fact some embarrassing wrong notes, but very affecting and spontaneous. Feeling of being able to go in any musical direction at any time, which maintains listener interest. Can see the body struggling for release.

Video at https://www.dropbox.com/s/81khs4jfbc87g9e/79.m4v?dl=0

5.3 Video 10. Watch text but let body do anything

Like a body interpretation of my feelings about each bar. No Mozart, but different body reaction depending on music. Pleasing abdominal tension afterwards, like 'manning up'.

Upright, commanding, good breath now. I am in touch with my body-self. Now I have it perhaps I can play from it.

very free, lots of body movement, and movement of mouthpiece. Fast, quite short, exciting. Slightly embarrassed to show to someone else, but the result was personally exhilarating free improvisation, almost music theatre, leaving me feeling extremely 'embodied'. I felt I could trust my body to do anything as long as my mind didn't interfere too much. Walking down the road later I felt tall, strong, open, my sense of self contained in my stomach, not my brain. Not thinking, being. A spontaneous image of a proud tribal man came into my head. I was a warrior.

Video at https://www.dropbox.com/s/szbl4zjasea0lnb/710.m4v?dl=0

5.4 Video 11. Play totally from body

Afterwards, I feel hot, worked, exhilarated, in body. Good improv, especially at start. Leaked into pelvic staccato stuff but decided not to shout,[21] kept as breath and the odd note. Inspiration to then play Mozart 2. As I started I realised I had done a <u>body prelude</u>. Could this be done in public performance in the same way that 18th century musicians played improvised preludes? Performance quite good and although feel exhilarated physically I also feel frustrated a bit when thinking about Mozart as it wasn't precisely good. Is this the lot of classical players – never good enough for the music? Whereas body improv is perfect as it is. Interesting to have

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[21] Previous totally free 'body-improvisations' had resulted in extremely strong staccato exhalations from the deep musculature below my diaphragm. It is often so strong that it blows the embouchure off the mouthpiece, and becomes vocalised as a very loud "Ha!". I do not know the meaning of this. It could be an artistic impulse, an expression of tension in the abdomen, or a 'healing' release of this tension. Perhaps all 3!

both feelings at once. Mozart felt careful, wasn't sure how much to be careless. The 'good musician' or 'good boy' came out and I am a bit fed up with him.

Improv not as effective as previous, but some very good and effortless high notes. Mozart not bad but sounds rather conventional in comparison. I would rather have the fantasy version of video 9. Good towards the end

Video at https://www.dropbox.com/s/jpbfv9dozpbrnv3/711.m4v?dl=0

6. Doctoral Recital

The full recital may be found at

https://www.dropbox.com/s/5nzz5aai7w1w54u/DoctoralRecital.mp4?dl=0

The programme for the performance is below.

'without a frequent dismissal of reason, no progress .... for what appears as "sloppiness", "chaos" or "opportunism" .... has a most important function in the development of those very theories which we today regard as essential parts of our knowledge .... These 'deviations', these 'errors', are preconditions of progress… Without chaos, no knowledge.' (Feyerabend, 1978)

"The eventful articulation of singularities - 'chasing angels'" (Melrose, 2003)

Doctoral Recital

Handling the material of performance anxiety

Ave Maria, op. 54, no.1   Schubert, arr. Gallay

Research findings are being created now, in this room

Spoken introduction   (a rhetorical exegesis)

The performance today is one of many ways this programme could go. "Anxiety is the dizziness of freedom" (Kierkegaard, 1844)

Concerto for horn, K417, 2nd movement   Mozart

The researcher/performer collects, analyses and interprets data in the moment of performance

Research by "immersion in the phenomenon" (Aigen, 1995)

Prologue, from the Serenade for tenor, horn and strings, op.31   Britten

Theory as "felt, embodied, lived" (Kozel, 2010)

"Subjectivity as an instrument of knowing" (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013)

Improvisation

"Expert music-instrumental knowledge as research tool" (Doğantan-Dack, 2015)

Romance, op.36   Saint-Saëns

Practitioner/researchers may be led by "an enthusiasm of practice: something which is exciting, something which may be unruly" (Hasemann, 2006)

Exploring a phenomenon within its natural setting

"artists are engaged in an ongoing inquiry into the nature of their medium, into how to produce certain effects through it, and how to expand the capacities of that medium. There can be no doubt, for anyone who has tried it, that this is an intensely rigorous mode of artistic inquiry...extending over the lifetime of an artist" (Johnson, 2010)

> People wish to be settled; only as far as they are unsettled is there any hope for them
> - Ralph Waldo Emerson

Following twin theoretical tracks from psychodynamics and existentialism, I investigate performing music in a way that gives an entity different from the everyday performing self some control over the performance. This entity is known as Music Performance Anxiety (MPA). In psychodynamic theory, it is an anxiety that is beyond conscious control but nevertheless has considerable effect on behaviour, and contains meaning (Nagel, 2010). More specifically, Jung's conception is that this entity is not only caused by past events in an individual's life but has a goal for that person's future (Papadopoulos, 2006). In existential terms, the entity is a new self that emerges in the new situation of a particular performance (Senyshyn & O'Neill, 2001). The adoption of this new self is considered the path to authenticity (Heidegger, 1962) and future possibility (Kierkegaard, 1980).

If MPA has something to say, as I suggest, the question is how much to let it 'speak'. At one extreme (the normal one in classical performance) it is held back, as much as it can be. At the other it could take over completely. In this performance I experiment in the space between (and including) these extremes.

As another part of my research, I have developed a way of tapping the artistic development potential of MPA in more conventional, professional performance, where there is a requirement to respect colleagues, there are expectations of behaviour and musical outcome, and the free-lancer's need to be asked back. Today's performance is not like that.

> Left to itself, the physiological intelligence is almost incapable of making a mistake
> - Aldous Huxley

7. Doctoral Presentation

There are 3 performances in this video, up to 8'40". Repertoire: Study no. 4 from *Twelve Studies* op.57 by J-F Gallay.

    I.   Performance, followed by writing my MPA symptoms on the white-board.

    II.   Performance incorporating and amplifying one of these symptoms (shaking arms).

    III.   Performance where symptoms are allowed to dictate the outcome entirely.
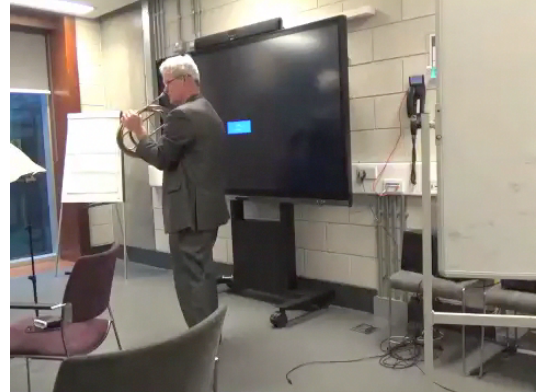
followed by a talk which sets out my theoretical position from an existential viewpoint, and about my experience in these performances.

Video at https://www.dropbox.com/s/b5lxdiwuenmuh4i/Seminar%201.m4v?dl=0

8. Interrupted Britten Prologue

Here, I choose moments in the Prologue from Britten's *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings,* op. 31 for my MPA-self to take over the performance.

From a presentation given to the South Bank Sinfonia, London.

Video at https://www.dropbox.com/s/jn3p3m411ohae59/SB%20Sinfonia.m4v?dl=0

9. Improvisation on a Drone, leading to 'Mild Application'

Performer-self and MPA-self improvise over a drone.

Segue to *Romance, op. 36* by Saint-Saëns, using a 'mild' application of MPA symptoms to preserve fidelity to musical text.

Video at https://www.dropbox.com/s/6yzwvbvhohev0x3/Drone to Romance.mov?dl=0

10. Schubert MPA Loop

I speak my live MPA symptoms through a loop pedal during a performance of *Ave Maria* (Schubert, arr. J-F. Gallay).

Video at https://www.dropbox.com/s/u7bp4judmmebk8k/Schubert%20Loop.m4v?dl=0