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LOVE AT FIRST SOUND:
Engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation

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Thesis approved for the degree of DMus at

Guildhall School of Music & Drama

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Time stamps for full concert videos:

Concert #1

00:52	J. S. Bach: Prelude, Solo Cello Suite No. 2, D minor
11:27	W. A. Mozart: Duo for violin and viola, G major, Allegro
23:05	C. Debussy: La fille aux cheveux de lin
37:36	Audience request: Musician's reflection in response to recent dramatic event (London terrorist attack)
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1:13:47	Audience request: “Reflecting on the biblical story of Job”

Concert #3

0:28	L. van Beethoven: Sonata No. 3 for cello and piano, A major, op. 69 Allegro ma non tanto – Scherzo: molto allegro (13:24) – Adagio cantabile (19:13) – Allegro vivace (20:57)
34:55	F. Chopin: Prelude No. 6, op. 28, B minor & improvised variations (36:56)
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43:42	H. Wolf: Mausfallensprüchlein & improvised variations (44:58)
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55:40	Audience request: “Note of encouragement to someone who is feeling down”
59:46	Audience request: “Joy”

Concert #5

4:23	J.S. Bach: Solo Violin Partita No. 1: Sarabande & improvised variations Double & improvised variations (9:56)
18:00	A. Dvorák: Rondo, op. 94
28:42	Improvised Rondo with audience input (character approach)
37:26	Improvised Rondo with audience input (storytelling approach)
44:48	Audience request: “Strawberry fields”
47:40	Audience request: “A prayer for Ukraine”
58:05	H. Berlioz: La Captive, op. 12 & improvised reflection (1:02:44)

Abstract

This artistic practice research project explores re-introducing improvisation to Western classical performance practice as a musician (cellist and ensemble partner/leader). Improvisation was part of concert culture and performers' skill sets until early 20th century. Historical accounts as well as recent studies indicate that improvisatory elements in the programme may contribute specifically towards the audiences' experience of enhanced emotional engagement during the concert. The investigation follows four concert cycles of artistic practice of the researcher, who seeks to gain solo and chamber music improvisation techniques (both related to and independent of repertoire), conduct ensemble improvisation rehearsals, design concerts with an improvisatory approach and reflect on interactions with audiences after each concert. Data is collected through use of reflective diary, video recordings, measurement of sound parameters, questionnaires, a focus group, and interviews. The performer's empirical experiences and findings from audience research components are reflected upon in an autoethnographic, narrative frame, and interrogated to better understand the (1) rehearsal and planning processes that enable improvisatory elements to return to Western classical concert experience and (2) the emotional experience and type of engagement that occur throughout the concert experience for both performer and audience members. This motivation informed the development of a concert model, in which the performer designs and presents a program of solo and chamber music repertoire and improvisations, as well as engages in spontaneous exchange with audience throughout the concert (including improvisations based on audience suggestions). In designing concerts, inspiration was drawn from historical concert culture, where elements of risk-taking, spontaneity and audience involvement (such as proposing themes for fantasies) were customary. The research identified features of ensemble improvisation, such as empathy, emergence, mutual engagement and collaborative creativity, that became mirrored in audience's responses, generating higher levels of emotional engagement, empathy, inclusivity, and a participatory, co-creative experience. Similarly, the performer's experience of highest risk-taking and moments of flow often corresponded with audience's experience of most emotionally engaging moments of the concert, regardless of ensemble size, program, event, and audience. Examining interactions between all involved during the concert revealed that performer-audience impulse exchange occurred on multiple levels of awareness and seemed to build upon each other, resulting in particularly strong experiences of both performer and audience's engagement.

Acknowledgements

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CHAPTER 1: Overview

1.1 Personal prelude

"The programme you played was interesting and impressive, but the improvisation at the end was the most exciting"

It was these types of comments from concert audiences that eventually led me to this project. Between completing my Bachelor and Masters' degrees in Cello Performance at Sibelius-Academy, Helsinki, I lived in Los Angeles for 2,5 years. During this time, I learned how to build professional networks, gain performing opportunities and even engage in building a personal audience in a new city and culture. Highlights from this time include performing with world-class professional orchestras in venues like the Walt Disney Concert Hall and Hollywood Bowl; accompanying Stevie Wonder and appearing as a cellist on a TV show; and performing self-organized solo recitals at intimate venues across Central California. I observed how whether at the WDCH or a small wine country town hall, performers and conductors seemed to engage openly, warmly, and effortlessly with their audiences. I perceived audiences responding with enthusiasm, gratitude, and commitment to these efforts, which made them feel welcome and included. Inspired by the surrounding experimental and optimistic culture, I decided to start including small improvisations to my recital programmes and performances – something I had always been interested in.

My education at Sibelius-Academy can be described as standard conservatory training. Stylistic Western classical improvisation was not offered as part of the curriculum. In November 2014, shortly before graduating with my Masters, I took part in a 3-day master class by David Dolan and became instantly convinced of the necessity of both learning and re-introducing stylistic improvisation to my personal practice. However, due to existing orchestra and teaching commitments, I could fully pursue this motivation only a year later (though I did have the opportunity to participate in a second master class by Dolan during that time). Working as orchestral musician and cello teacher after returning to Finland from Los Angeles, the experiences I had from both countries and Dolan's master classes matured towards the

devising of an artistic doctorate project. What drew me so strongly towards learning classical improvisation was the image of freedom and fluent musicianship it presented. The ability to improvise within structures, and to learn the grammar(s) of classical music, appeared something worth pursuing as it seemed to offer the possibility to add, through creative and spontaneous means, my own voice to performances.

Impacting me in the background throughout the research, the initial responses I received from professional colleagues in orchestras and music schools were similarly encouraging. Sharing the project and its aims (even at beginning stages) was met with enthusiasm, genuine interest, and excited expressions of "you must return to teach us what you learn". I launched into the project with a firm impression that classical improvisation was a sought-after ability that inspired and attracted professional musicians across the field. Similar interactions with colleagues continued throughout the project, contributing to my awareness of an existing community expectant of the contributions of this work.

During this project, I resided (and continued to work as a cellist and teacher) in three cities across three countries. Travelling provided a positive backdrop for thinking, listening, reading, and writing – and situated me firmly between 'home and London'. At the end of year 2, I gave birth to twins, and when they were 13 months, I started learning to juggle work and motherhood.

1.2 Background

Launching this practice research project was motivated by experiences from professional performance practice and wanting to understand better the related emotional exchange occurring between performers and audience members. Whenever higher level of spontaneity or a personal component such as experimenting with improvisation was present, audiences seemed to respond with similarly more spontaneous and relationally engaged reactions. Many elements of Western classical concerts have changed vastly from the time the music was composed and first performed, particularly through the disappearing of improvisation practices and the related spontaneous creativity and risk-taking in live concerts (Moore, 1992; Philip, 2004; Gooley, 2018a). Contrasting to historical evidence, the individual performer is no longer expected or allowed to contribute to the performance of a composition through creative,

improvisatory means – even though such contributions were natural, expected elements in Western classical music contexts until early 20th century (Dolan, 2005; Gjerdingen, 2007; Gooley, 2018a). Furthermore, improvising as part of musical performance and concert culture remains a fundamental component to most other music cultures of the world (Nettl and Solis, 2009; Higgins, 2012). The past century's changes in Western classical performance practices, as well as the intrinsically engaging nature of improvisation together with my past experiences brought me to question whether there might be something for both performers and audiences to gain through re-introducing improvisation to classical concerts.

1.3 Rationale

The rationale for this inquiry is presented as three-fold:

(1) Unique engagement of improvising. As musical improvisation contexts have been utilized in several studies exploring neuroscientific brain activity associated with creativity, improvisation has been shown to be a uniquely engaging activity for those participating in it. When comparing brain activity during improvised and non-improvised playing, the former was found to have activated a unique combination of functions, indicating enhanced creativity, problem solving and engagement (McPherson *et al.*, 2014; Pinho *et al.*, 2014; Beaty, 2015; Lopata, Nowicki and Joanisse, 2017).

(2) Historical precedence of improvisation performance practice. Improvisation was part of Western classical concert culture and performers' skill sets until the early 20th century. Historical accounts indicate that improvisatory elements in the programme contributed towards communal experiences, were often received by audiences with particularly strong enthusiasm, and musicians knowingly utilized their improvisation skills to enhance the social and relational aspects of concert and music-making culture (Gooley, 2018a).

(3) Impact on audiences. Recent Western classical audience and improvisation studies suggest that re-introducing improvisatory practices may contribute specifically towards the audiences' experience of enhanced emotional engagement during the concert (Dolan *et al.*, 2013, 2018). This provides indication that re-introducing improvisatory practices into Western classical concerts might have an effect of increasing both performer and audience emotional engagement in the moment, as well as the presence of flow experiences when performers engage with an "improvisatory state of mind"[1].

[1] Term first introduced in (Dolan *et al.*, 2018)

1.4 The problem

This artistic research project emerges from identifying a problem within performing practice and personal artistic motivation to address it. Though I had experimented with improvisation in my concert programmes, my standard 20th century conservatory training had not equipped me for stylistic improvisation skills in Western classical context. This project stems from a double motivation: to increase my skill as classical improviser, including the reflective awareness that occurs in live performance, and to understand better how interaction and mutual engagement with audiences develop as a result.

Considering historical evidence and recent findings, I wanted to specifically understand better the emotional experience and type of engagement happening with live concert audiences throughout the concert, and to test how the suggested heightened engagement from recent improvisation studies could be mutually experienced by performers and audience members, integrated in concert and programming structure, and detected through collecting evidence about performers' and audience members' experiences.

1.5 Research questions and sub-questions

This inquiry explores the following research questions:

If I, from within the present-day Western classical concert tradition, learn, develop, and add improvisational elements to concert programmes, how would it affect audience engagement in this context?

As improvisation is known as an intrinsically engaging activity for those participating in it (McPherson *et al.*, 2014; Pinho *et al.*, 2014; Beaty, 2015; Lopata, Nowicki and Joanisse, 2017), how does the inclusion of improvisation impact upon musicians' performance and engagement, and is that a contributing factor in audience's experience of emotional engagement during the concert? Two sub-questions that follow, what and how can I observe about the exchange between audiences' and performers? Does incorporating improvisation into everyday practice impact upon technique and interpretation, and if so, how?

1.6 Objectives of the research

(1) To develop improvisatory conceptual and practical skills in Western classical styles and add them to concert programmes with the aim of creating communal experiences and meaningful, authentic interactions with audiences.
(2) To examine the interactions, impulses and type of engagement that happens throughout the live concert performance between myself and the audience and interrogate gathered data for emerging themes.
(3) To reflect critically on rehearsal and performance processes to identify and systematize pedagogic strategies that enable re-introducing improvisatory elements to Western classical performance practice.

1.7 Thesis structure

This thesis consists of 6 chapters, bibliography, 4 appendices, 4 concert recordings and 27 video clips. **Chapter 1, Overview,** elaborates on the context and background of the researcher, states the rationale and research objectives, presents the research questions, shows the timeline of the project, provides context to core concepts and outlines the thesis structure. **Chapter 2, Literature review,** situates the study within existing literature, provides justification and illustrates the knowledge frameworks surrounding this artistic practice research. It also illustrates how artistic inspiration throughout the project is drawn from literature and historical evidence.[2] **Chapter 3, Methodology,** discusses and establishes a theoretical and methodological framework for the study, situates the research within current artistic research practices and elaborates on the specific methodological models this inquiry draws on. **Chapter 4, Concerts,** explains chronologically each of the four concert cycles and audience research conducted in practice, illustrated through a narrative, autoethnographic frame. Coming to this project as a musician and cellist, concert programmes and repertoire were approached through the role and repertoire written in Western classical canon for cello.[3]

[2] Interacting with past traditions is often considered a core element in both jazz and Western classical contexts.
[3] With the exception of concerti cadenzas, as organizing orchestral elements was not within the scope of the project and learning cadenza improvisation is closely related to other elements where stylistic improvisation skills are applied.

Chapter 5, Analysis: Identifying themes, elaborates on five main themes derived from the practice and presents critical analysis of the full project and introduces questions to be explored in the final viva recital. **Chapter 6, Conclusions,** presents a summary of findings and discusses key results and further implications of the study.

1.8 Definitions

This inquiry is situated within a Western classical musical performance context. To assist the reader, basic framing of key concepts within this context are offered here[4].

Improvisation. In 20th and 21st century Western classical music contexts, a common language use of 'improvisation' appears primarily related to playing unwritten notes. This research considers *improvisation* an overarching umbrella description, inclusive of the various and more specific types of Western classical performance practices, including ***repertoire-related*** (for example, ornamenting, elaborating, embellishing, fermatas, eingangs and cadenzas); ***independent-of-repertoire*** (free forms such as Minuets, Rondos; and more open-ended forms such as Theme & variations, Preludes and Fantasies) and in-between formats (free forms related to or in response to repertoire, for example interludes, postludes). Acknowledging its historical context, *improvising* includes meanings derived from German verbs *fantasieren, präludieren,* and *extemporieren* (Gjerdingen, 2007; Sanguinetti, 2012; Gooley, 2018a).

Improvisatory approach. Application of method, which acknowledges and incorporates what is known of historical performance practice and notation of compositions, regarding the expectation of performers to add improvisatory elements to performances. Improvisatory practices that have been found in early music recordings (Leech-Wilkinson, 2010) show, that both the creation of spontaneous pieces (for example preludes, interludes, postludes, and fantasies) as well as an "improvisatory approach to notated music" was regularly applied (Hamilton, 2008; Dolan *et al.*, 2013). Applications of the improvisatory approach include treating performance of compositions as was expected at the time of their creation, including playing unwritten notes, applying spontaneous and creative decision-making to written material, and viewing improvisatory creativity in a broader context (which may or may not include new notes) (Butt, 2002; Gjerdingen, 2007; Hamilton, 2008; Dolan *et al.*, 2013, 2018).

[4] Further elaborated in chapters 2 and 3.

Stylistic improvisation. Creating musical material in real-time that corresponds with pre-determined forms, structures, harmonies, voice-leading and the compositional and gestural languages of a chosen composer, musical style or historical era.

Audience, audiency, audiencing. This research recognizes the challenges rising from ambiguous use of vocabulary related to performing arts audience discussion, including the multitude of roles, assignments and definitions audiences have been given in scholarship, policymaking, and marketing practices (Walmsley, 2019, p. 7). In this project, use of audience-related terms is informed by Walmsley's recent review and subsequent formulations, including his suggestion of the term 'audiency' as a "general *state* of audiencing and the conceptual theorization *of* it" (p. 8, original italics). In the context of performance studies, Walmsley draws on Reason and Lindelof, who have similarly elaborated on 'audiencing' as work of the spectator, or acts of attention, of affect, of meaning-making, of memory and of community (Reason and Lindelof, 2016, p.17). As is further elaborated in Chapter 2, this research aligns with recent decade's emerging views of performing arts audiences as active participants and stakeholders (Walmsley and Franks, 2011; Pitts and Burland, 2014; Walmsley, 2019; Liedke, 2021) to the aesthetic event.

Emotional engagement. Examined from both audience and performer perspectives, the subjective experience of emotional engagement (including its development, contributing factors and perceived impact) is at the core of this inquiry. In performing arts audience literature, definitions and contextualization of 'audience engagement' still vary greatly, and the use of vocabulary is often vague (with concepts like 'attendance', 'participation', 'activity', or 'involvement' often used interchangeably and overlappingly (Latulipe, Carroll and Lottridge, 2011; Radbourne, Glow and Johanson, 2013b; Walmsley, 2019). While this study recognizes that emotional engagement is a complex psychological phenomenon (Latulipe, Carroll and Lottridge, 2011), in this artistic research context, it is viewed as an emotional state, which can be empirically detected through subjective experience and includes elements of, for example, emotional arousal, alertness, attentiveness, and awareness (Dolan *et al.*, 2018).

Intuition: drawing spontaneously on a growing body of ***sub-conscious, embedded knowledge.*** A central component to artistic practice research (Nelson, 2013), the use of intuition, or applications of embedded, sub-conscious knowledge, becomes highlighted in the context of

this inquiry. Drawing on Haseman's Performative Paradigm, the performing of embedded, sub-conscious knowledge can be viewed as both the *what* and the *how,* and the research as generating "end-products that have thinking embedded" (Haseman, 2006, 2007). Throughout the concert cycles, where *intuitive* is used to describe choices made in practice, it is relevant to note that this 'intuition', representing both *how* and *what* in the context of this research, became increasingly informed by knowledge, empirical experiences and the forming academic praxis (Nelson, 2013) as the project progressed.[5]

1.9 Project timeline

Sept 2016	Start of project
June 2017	Concert #1: "Pilot"
Oct 2017	Concert #2: "Dialogues"
Apr 2018	Concert #3: "Storytelling"
Jun 2018 – Aug 2019	Maternity leave
Sep 2019 – Dec 2019	Residing continuously in London
Dec 2019	Concert #4: "(Un)Expected"
(Mar 2020	Covid-19 Pandemic starts to cancel all in-person activities)
Oct 2020	Writing up begins
Dec 2021	Thesis submission

[5] Expanded further in Chapters 3 and 5.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

2.1 Historical context of Western classical improvisation performance

Initially learning that improvisation was a central component to Western classical canon and performance practices was one of the motivations that brought me to this project. Questions rising from my artistic experiences seemed to find a faint echo in historical descriptions. For example, why did improvisatory moments in my concerts seem to have a different type of impact on audiences than standard repertoire? How could I learn more about what happens in these moments and expand upon them in my personal artistry? Starting to discover the rich and elaborate history of improvisatory performance practices, it brought me to re-evaluate several aspects of my own artistry. I found inspiring the historical ways in which improvisation was included in training, practicing, and performing classical music that is largely absent today. These discoveries have also prompted me to consider my position, motivation, and identification as performer in relation to the audience.

Section 2.1.1 will discuss early practices and pedagogies which formed the foundation of musicians' skill sets well into the 19th century. As I learned about them, these concepts started to inspire and inform my everyday artistic practice in search for pathways to re-introducing improvisation into both my rehearsal room and concert stage practices. Section 2.1.2 will explore how concerts and performance practices before the 20th century included improvisation, informing concert design and repertoire choices of this research. Section 2.1.3 will attempt to highlight some outcomes that occurred from these practices and the socio-communal contexts in which the concerts took place, which influenced audience research design and analysis. Section 2.1.4 will highlight some values that replaced improvisation during its decline, illustrating the gap between pre-20th century and modern conservatory training and performance practices.

2.1.1 Improvisation in musicians' training and skills

What constituted professional musicianship? What was the breakdown of skills and how were they acquired in 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries? Approaching the question as a cellist,

compositions by Bach, Vivaldi, Marcello and Händel mark the beginning of what has become standard repertoire for Western classical cellists. Music making within the Reneissance, Baroque, Galant, Classical and Romantic styles has been abundantly researched, and it is known that composing and performing music served specific, contextual purposes in courts and churches; musicians' training was rooted in the mainly orally taught tradition of *partimento*, figured and unfigured bass practices[6]; and the profession of musicians included the ability to perform, improvise and compose to an extent in both solo and ensemble settings (Gjerdingen, 2007; Sanguinetti, 2012). Though my conservatory education familiarized me with the prevailing rhetoric of these styles it did not include any stylistic improvisational training – even though it has been established, that improvisation was historically a key component to professional music education and performance.

Partimento*, the stockpile concept, and *ars combinatoria

Unlike the later, popular romanticized image of composing,

"-- The galant composer lived the life of a musical craftsman, of an artisan who produced large quantity of music for immediate consumption, managed its performance and performers, and evaluated its reception with a view towards keeping up with fashion" (Gjerdingen, 2007, p. 7).

The aim of composing, performing, and music-making was not to portray personal emotions but to please, through illustrative expression, the patrons upon whom they depended. Gjerdingen presents galant style music making as a performative art, comparable to modern figure skating – building a programme from compulsory and free-style figures, which may look like jumps and pirouettes to the untrained eye but have multiple layers of details and nuances to the experts and judges (p.10). Similarly, a galant musical score often provided only a bare notation of the sequence of schemata, leaving graces, ornaments, and elegant variation to the skilled performer. It seems, that while the individual musician was situated within a more defined and restricted performative frame, they had creative freedoms of a different kind: "Many musicians could improvise entire pieces as soloists, drawing upon their family's or

[6] Figured bass was an overall European music phenomenon but the Neapolitan *partimento* was initially established in Italy, reaching Germany, France, and England in the 18th century (Sanguinetti, 2012)

teacher's musical *zibaldone* for standard phrases and cadences." (p. 10)[7] *Partimento* was a widely used notational system and pedagogical concept that influenced Western classical musicians' training for centuries. Through study of *partimento*, students could gain proficiency in continuo playing, improvisation, unfigured bass, counterpoint, diminution, and fugue (Sanguinetti, 2012, p. 6). Sanguinetti defines *partimento* as "a scketch, written on a single staff, whose main purpose is to be a guide for improvisation of a composition at the keyboard" – and calls the development of "automatic composition" one of the greatest benefits of the practice (p.1). Fellerer interestingly emphasizes the improvisatoriness of partimento *performance* and defines it as a "guided improvisation (*gebundene Improvisation*). -- The thematic content and the form are fixed, but the final aspect of the piece is left to the performer's fantasy." (Fellerer, 1940, p. 8; in Sanguinetti, 2012, p. 14)[8]

Gjerdingen draws a connection between musical improvising ensembles and troupes of comic actors in *commedia dell'arte* (p. 8). The improvising actors, as noted by Barbieri in 1634, would build a wide variety of "sayings, phrases, love-speeches, reprimands, cries of despair and ravings" from which to draw on seemingly spontaneously (p.7). The performance script would provide only a skeleton of the play, fitted on one sheet of paper, leaving the "moment-to-moment dialogue and action depending on actors knowing when and how to knit small set-pieces into an apparently continuous mode of entertainment" (p. 9). In musical ensemble performance, musicians operated on a common knowledge base, or stockpile of schemata, from which they drew on to create seemingly spontaneous but coherent performances. They "…could draw upon a number of stock melodies, basses, and harmonisations - everything would fit together." (p. 51) This echoes the *ars combinatoria* philosophy and etymological roots of "compose" as "put together", *com posare* (Riepel, 1996, p. 1; Gjerdingen, 2007, p. 115). In partimento-embedded practices composition and improvisation appear to be "different extensions of the same basic skill set" (Gooley, 2018, p. 18). As a cellist my attention is drawn also to the detail that lower string players seemed to have had a significant role in directing the

[7] *Zibaldone*, or lesson book, was a music student's notebook of exercises and rules, included figured and unfigured bass (*partimenti*) and examples of melodies - and provided the base for their personal stockpile of musical phrases and schemata, which allowed them to create improvisations.

[8] Even though Sanguinetti analyses the concept mainly in relation to keyboard playing and composition, there are multiple accounts of performing, composing and improvising string players, such as violinist Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf (1739-1799), who jointly improvised sonatas with his keyboard accompanist (Lebensbeschreibung, Leipzig 1801; in (Gjerdingen, 2007).

musical outcome through emphasis of directionality and harmonic power (Gjerdingen, 2007, p. 34).

The developing role of the cello in 17th and 18th centuries repertoire highlights an increasing demand for cellists to cultivate improvisatory and leadership skills through specific partimento, improvised figured bass and continuo practices (Sanguinetti, 2012; Suckling, 2015; Olivieri, 2021). In sacred music context, cello players could be required to elaborate together with the organist, or even replace them specifically on the antiphon bass; and continuo realising was "conceived horizontally and developed through the study of patterns and schemata, to be memorized in a process that blended together performance, improvisation and composition" and was not that separate from figured bass (Olivieri, 2021, p. 89). Olivieri points to recent studies suggesting that "a method similar to keyboard partimento practice was known to cello players", aimed "to develop a solid competence in improvisation and contrapuntal elaboration" (p. 83). Passacaglias were used as pedagogic tools with unlimited possibilities, and relevant repertoire and pedagogy existed within the specific parameters of a 4- or 5-stringed instrument. "The left hand technique demanded by arpeggios is identical to that required to perform chords in recitative, whilst the flexibility required by the right arm to execute arpeggios and batteries bequeaths the cellist realising recitative with exceptional control and variation" (Suckling, 2015, p. 84). Through these practices, the overall competence that developed "was not only a key element in the formation of the cello virtuoso, but also the foundation of the techniques of accompaniment" (Olivieri, 2021). From these descriptions it appears, that developing ensemble and harmonic leadership ability in improvisation was a particularly important feature of the professional cello player, placing them in a unique role.

From late 17th century towards a common practice in the 18th century, traveling vocal and violin soloists often preferred an accompanying cellist as their accompanying partner, and utilized "the virtuosity of the cellist to marry the emancipated melodic strength of the cello with its ability to realise harmony" (Suckling, 2015, p. 82). Examples of such duos include violinist Nicola Cosimi and cellist, Nicola Haym; famed violinist Geminiani and his most preferred cellist Charles Pardini; cellist Lanzetti and violinist Veracini; violinist Manfredi with virtuoso cellist and composer, Boccherini, in 1760s; and Baumgartner himself, who would go on to write the first method for realising recitative at the cello, gave recitals with the virtuoso violinist Heinrich de Hey (Seifert, 1999; Lindgren, 2000, 2011; in Suckling, 2015). A particularly interesting phenomenon was the "new-found equivalency between violin and cello [that came

to] allow the development of a sonata genre in which violin and cello are equal partners, both thematically and in their responsibilities to the harmony through ornamentation (violin) and realisation (cello)" (p.85). String duos were a common performing unit and regularly played full duo recitals, in which the violinist and cellists appeared to have operated in remarkable fluency regarding both melodic and accompanying material, weaving inseparably together improvisation, composition and performance (Olivieri, 2021).

These foundational concepts, reaching far into music history from today's point of view, set the stage for both the value improvisation has the potential to add to performances, and path of how to get there. Music-making happened in spaces and situations that were communal and relational; creativity was demonstrated not only through the efforts of an individual, but through collaborative and communal expression; and music-making was situated in surrounding society and passing moment in time. These descriptions may suggest that performers and listeners may have shared a mutual awareness of each other, and music culture was generally more influenced by elements of a two-way relationship between stage and audience – as well as unplanned surprises ensemble members threw at each other.

Musicians as composer-performer-improvisers

When I entered my improvisation studies as a cellist, the language and vocabulary used related to composition and music theory (in which I had only basic training, mainly due to personal lack of motivation during study years). Having approached musical forms from a cellistic, single line melody perspective, I was now challenged to zoom out and examine compositional structures and full scores from a new perspective. Talking and hearing about structures, applying previously distant theoretical concepts to my instrument and learning to simultaneously carry more voices than one required a shift in both thinking about and during playing. As I became aware of these past improvisational practices, a pivotal point was understanding how the fundamental attitude and "spirit" behind the historical profession was a type of all-inclusive music making; rooted in *partimento* practices but essentially stretching its influence on both composition and performance until the beginning of the 20th century. Though always fluctuating and evolving with surrounding circumstances, musicianship in these past centuries embodied a much more blurred intertwining of performance, composition, and improvisation practices than during the past century (Butt, 2002; Gjerdingen, 2007; Sanguinetti, 2012; Gooley, 2018a). This point is further illustrated by the evolution of notation.

The relationship between notation and performance, composer and performer, has varied a great deal (Butt, 2002) - implying a need for much more advanced and complex musical score-literacy than, in my experience, is generally applied. At one end, notation appears as a simple guideline for performance, like in the case of *partimento*, and at the other, the score includes rigorously exact and specific performance markings (Butt, 2002). The 20th century's idea of the score as highest authority on performance (Cook, 2013) was preceded by centuries of performers, with their improvising and performing powers, being active participants in the creative process.

Treatises and pedagogies in structural improvisation

The historical treatises on improvisation, composition, preluding, violin, and piano playing (specifically those by C.P.E Bach, Carl Czerny, Leopold Mozart, and Pierre Baillot) offer a natural starting point of exercises and strategies in stylistic improvisation. A cornerstone of music pedagogy and keyboard playing, including ornamenting and improvisation, C.P.E. Bach's treatise became a primary influence, providing a comprehensive and clear method from which one can understand what improvisation is. In fact, 21st century scholarship has proposed the notion that J.S. Bach did not 'compose musical works' but that the notated elaborations were intended as improvisation pedagogy – and should be viewed rather in the context of performance practice (Lutterman, 2006). Be that as it may, the foundational musical language of J.S. Bach, inseparable from improvisation, and the comprehensive treatise of his son, became foundational, directly influencing music education, composers, and performers well into 19th century. C.P.E. Bach's systematic approach to improvisation practice, including ornamenting and preluding, treatment of written material and performance, has not lost relevance to date. Before the 20th century, a professional musicians' skill set developed from Galant music and *partimento* practices, through C.P.E Bach's treatise and his fathers' compositions, up to mid-19th century composing and performing practices surrounding, for example, Chopin and Liszt – illustrating profoundly, how improvisation was an inseparable part of musicianship (Bach, 1759; Eigeldinger, 1986; Hamilton, 2008; Gooley, 2018a). However, when it comes to free formal improvisation, Gooley argues that

"These pedagogical treatises are indispensable but as historical evidence they are limited…they describe rules for how to start making extemporaneous music, but say little about the details of elaborating freely, which must have been transmitted aurally through direct modeling and imitation" (p.8).

He continues to point out that those who wrote treatises about improvisation in the 19th century were typically not known as exceptional improvisors (like Czerny or Kalkbrenner) and those who were, did not write much about it (Vogler, Hummel, Moscheles, Liszt).

Starting to study classical improvisation, two forms appeared foundational – preludes and dance forms like minuets - which I later discovered are reflected in historical pedagogies as well. Improvising preludes, or "preluding", was an established practice in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, though the techniques involved have only recently started to receive in-depth attention[9] (Goertzen, 1996; Hamilton, 2008; Gooley, 2018a). Improvised preludes were used to draw the audience's attention and to adapt a given piece to a particular audience or modulating preludes (interludes) as transitions between pieces in different keys, and as a way of personalizing and interpreting the works of others (Goertzen, 1996). "An introductory gesture could heighten both the performer's ability to communicate and the listener's receptivity, as it drew all of those involved into the musical world of the composition to follow." (p. 304) Pedagogical treatises give some indication of preluding exercises; however, they were created for amateurs and students and are not descriptive of the range of possibilities open to accomplished artists. Even though principles of preluding were relatively similar on both keyboard and violin (Hamilton, 2008; Gooley, 2018a), the most applicable study on preluding for me as a cellist rises from the solo cello suites by J.S. Bach, each of which open with a full Prelude. When starting to attempt preluding, the immediate challenges I faced had to do with harmony – my inability to spontaneously create beyond basic chordal progressions or modulations – of which, as I discovered, learning techniques must be sought outside the written and established repertoire of cello exercises and pedagogies.

[9] Preludes were improvised before or in between composed-out works, with the purpose of giving "a proper introductory gesture to prepare for or lead into a substantial work, either by accommodating specific circumstances of the performance (e.g., testing the instrument, alerting listeners) or coordinating musical characteristics such as mood or character, or pitch, mode, or key. The elements of spontaneity and creativity in performance are fundamental to improvised preludes." (Goertzen, 1996, p. 302)

Learning piano and accompaniment as secondary study was considered an essential resource to all musicians (Gooley, 2018, p. 250), a practice that included improvising preludes, harmonic progressions, accompaniments, etc., and was part of conservatory training until late 19th century[10]. The aim was to make students capable of improvising "harmonic" and "melodic" preludes through various exercises and by internalizing preludes and fugues by Bach and Händel (p. 251; drawing on Baillot's, Czerny's and De Bériot's treatises). The ability to improvise a prelude was seen as a basic skill, which could be extended to larger and freer fantasy forms if the student was talented and motivated. Similarly, minuets could be seen as miniature forms of larger works such as movements from sonatas, symphonies and concertos (Riepel, 1996; Gjerdingen, 2007). A form not tied to solo playing or specific instrumentation, it appeared a useful and simple enough unit for starting to learn structured improvisation and applied harmonic theory both alone and with others.

2.1.2 Improvisation in concert culture

The golden age of improvisation

Following the transition from *partimento* and early music notation, the late 18th and first half of the 19th century have been called by many "the golden age of improvisation" (Borio and Carone, 2018). At the turn of the century, improvisation ability represented one of the most important demonstrations of a musician's status as a serious professional, and performances often included improvising in free forms such as the fantasy (Gooley, 2018a).

"Composers and players released from responsibility to figured bass (though still versed in it), redirected their improvisational impulses toward freer methods of elaboration based on motives, arpeggio patterns, and harmonic modulation." (p. 10)

Today the most widely known improvisor of this era, Beethoven, had a number of contemporaries whose fame at the time, as both improviser and composer, exceeded his own. Between 1815-1830 concert pianists like Hummel and Moscheles brought *stile brillante* to its peak, replacing the traditional (keyboard) free fantasias with new values:

[10] Especially useful in this regard are the treatises by Czerny, Panseron, Pierre Baillot and Charles de Bériot, as illustrated by (Gooley, 2018, p. 250-252).

"They aspire not to private, intimate expression, but to efficacious communication with large listening audiences.. …*Stile brillante* pianists pitched their improvisations to the social character of the concert event, taking themes from the audience and incorporating overtly popular, pleasing elements and well-known tunes." (p. 10)

While this reflects remarkable, spontaneous, and improvisational skill, it is important to understand that the ways in which any improvisations were presented at concerts had a remarkable degree of structural organization and complexity (Borio and Carone, 2018, p. 1), resulting in what appears, in hindsight, like something of a "genre within the genre". Through possessing practically applied knowledge of compositional forms and structures, musicians were able to interweave them with varying degrees of free improvisation in live performance. According to recent analysis, fantasias, capricci, and preludes can be seen as a type of reflections of 18th and 19th century improvisations (p. 2).

Kapellmeisters, the free fantasy form and Hummel

Credited with keeping improvisation alive in the 19th century, the *Kapellmeisters* embodied both the old versatility and emerging, more specialized concert virtuoso values of musicianship aimed at larger audiences, potentially less knowledgeable. Typically, with international performing careers before *Kapellmeister* appointments,

"they were versatile generalists, called upon to fulfill a variety of functions as instrumentalist, composer, conductor, teacher, administrator, pedagogue, and sometimes theorist. …The *Kapellmeister* had to be highly skilled on an instrument, thoroughly grounded in harmonic and contrapuntal theory, versed in a variety of compositional genres, and fluent in score-reading, notation and transposition." (Gooley, 2018, p. 13)

Many pianists and violinists, who were known as master improvisers, held a Kapellmeister position at some point of their lives. The virtuoso musicians of the *Kapellmeister* network contributed especially to the role of the improvisational form of free fantasy. An early predecessor to the modern associations of improvising, playing a free fantasy (or *fantasieren*) developed from an early general concept towards an established form of concert improvisation

in the 18th and 19th centuries[11]. It contributed towards the concert's aesthetic experience in an exceptional way:

"The placement of the improvised fantasy at the concert's conclusion served a ritual purpose. After a series of pieces that mediated the musician's talents through other performers, the concluding fantasy brought forth the artist "himself", making direct contact with the audience and displaying a type of knowledge and skill that the other performances…could not convey." (Gooley, 2018, p. 68)

It was a way for the performer to achieve a sense of intimacy with the audience and communicate actively and directly with a larger public. Eventually performing free fantasias developed into an interactive feat between performer and audience, who were asked to give themes for the musician to improvise on. They could be from operas, folk songs, symphonies, or popular tunes, which the pianist then would weave together in a structured manner. Hummel, a peer and rival of Beethoven, was described as the most celebrated improviser of his time, delivering free fantasias that became the yard stick of the style:

"Audiences expected him to improvise full free fantasies on themes offered by audience; critics and listeners would praise the performances for their "instrumental virtuosity, evident spontaneous inspiration and their fluent handling of diverse musical vocabularies." (p. 62)

Interestingly, multiple sources mention Hummel's personal aura and performative style as contributing factors. The "legend" status assigned to him comprised of two features: musical virtuosity and a performative persona, through which he successfully created illusions of social and communal agency with concert audiences.

"When improvising at the piano, Hummel seemed to bridge some of the most troubling gaps – between elite and popular, connoisseurs and amateurs, professional guilds and the public sphere…his free fantasies produced…a listening community of an exceptionally heterogeneous and inclusive kind." (p. 63)

[11] In its complex harmonic and multilayered expressions, it belonged predominantly to the dominion of keyboard playing, so the musicological evolution or free fantasy techniques per se will not be discussed within the scope of this project.

Improvising string players and their performance practices

String players, like pianists and singers, were known to improvise in free forms as well as standard cadenzas, fermatas, preludes, interludes, and postludes as well as extemporizing and decorating written out works. In the late 18th century, duet improvisations were common enough for the violin to be designated regularly as either solo or accompanying voice in duet forms (Coppola, 2018), indicating a rather impressive level of improvising accompaniment skills among violinists. In the 19th century, hearing free and extensive forms of improvisations in public concert performances became rare (however, private events were the typical medium for those engaged in such practices). Violinists Franz Clement, Alexandre Boucher, Niccoló Paganini and Ole Bull were among the most improvising of their time, engaging in a range of solo and duet improvisations:

"In the 1810s Franz Clement was playing concerts where he not only improvised on unaccompanied violin, for up to thirty minutes at a time, but also on the piano. …A couple of years later, Clement played a completely free fantasia in collaboration with the most famous piano improviser of that time, Johann Nepomuk Hummel." (Gooley, 2018b, p. 114)

French violinist Alexandre Boucher was known as a strong improviser; a theatrical, eccentric personality, who "liked to pick up themes of immediate relevance to the event at hand and work them up into a virtuoso capriccio for solo violin." (p. 114) During a Weber duet with Mendelssohn, at the point of the cadenza, the pianist improvised first, passing it to the violinist who continued to improvise a series of motifs from a renown opera. Similarly,

"as late as 1844, upon a chance encounter with Mendelssohn at Wiesbaden, Boucher took a cue from an approaching storm and 'improvised on the spot, with his usual fire, an unmatched fantasy where the strange sounds of the wind, rain, and hail mixed harmoniously with deafening peals of thunder and flashes of lightning." *(Etudes d'histoire* by Vallat; in Gooley, 2018b, p. 115).

Similarly, violinist Ole Bull improvised more than any of his contemporaries, and in the widest possible range of genres. He embellished composed pieces extensively, preluded to larger-scale works and, in the manner of Paganini and Lafont, even "extemporised obbligato lines to Italian

arias with leading sopranos" (Gooley, 2018b, p. 115).[12] He improvised variations on national anthems or folk songs when appearing before sovereigns and "played free fantasies on given themes to large audiences, a practice associated mainly with virtuoso pianists". Paganini, the only violinist whose fame as composer outlived his colleagues, is said to have thought out his improvisations beforehand, even "going as far as writing out the part of the second instrument he would perform with" (Carone, 2018).

Keeping in mind the cellists' unique role as providing harmony and melody simultaneously in numerous performance formats, specific improvising cello performers are mainly documented in contexts of string duos, vocal & violinist virtuoso accompanying (both chamber music and orchestral recitativo settings) and the standard improvising practice done by touring cello virtuosos within composed works such as concerti (Walden, 2004; Suckling, 2015; Olivieri, 2021). To become a well-known cello virtuoso meant demonstrating musical fluency in embellishing, decorating, and improvising cadenzas, thus fulfilling the high expectations of composers and audiences. Two such virtuosos, Luigi Boccherini and Jean-Louis Duport, remain slightly better documented as cellist-composers (Raychev, 2003; Speck and Chapman, 2005; Borowsky, 2019). Boccherini appears to have embodied the 'performer-improviser-composer' musicianship masterfully, jumping to play violin parts at pitch when a player was taken ill and composing numerous works that leaned on performers' improvisation ability such as string duos. His cello sonatas are among works in which the accompaniment was written as unfigured bass, to be improvised on by a second cellist or keyboardist (Borowsky, 2019). Both his and Duport's compositions include clear indications for cadenzas, fermatas and Eingangs to be improvised by the performer (Walden, 2004; Borowsky, 2019).[13]

[12] Gooley refers to Lafont embellishing arias with Italian sopranos, in Mongrédien, Le Théâtre-Italien, vol. 6 (1825–6), pp. 56–7.

[13] In later years, it seems that when virtuoso cellists turned composers, the temptation to write out a cadenza grew irresistible as they became increasingly concerned about who, in addition to themselves, would be performing their works. (Walden, 2004)

2.1.3 Impact of improvisation on audiences

From churches to salons and concert halls; from active to passive audiency

The ways in which live music has been consumed and the purposes it has been composed for have naturally varied enormously throughout the creation of the Western classical canon. What stands out in historical review, from courts to churches to salons and concert halls, musicians appeared to be naturally aware of their audiences and catered to social contexts as a part of their performative disposition. Improvisatory elements provided a natural way for community and audience building, catering the varying contexts and advancing collegial relationships (Gooley, 2018a)[14].

The modern concert model, including purpose-built spaces, programme notes, silent listening, seating arrangements and programming choices, has been relatively unchanged since these elements became implemented one after the other as part of the cultural shift during 1850-1880 (Philip, 2004; Nicholls, Hall and Forgasz, 2018). The development of music audiency and concert experience prior to this relatively late solidification was determined largely by spaces and contexts; originating in churches and cathedrals and developing through salons and smaller spaces towards purpose-built concert halls of various sizes. Performing music as an independent entity, for the sake of mere listening, evolved during the Baroque era, as music started to be composed for 'art's sake' (Nicholls, Hall and Forgasz, 2018). Public concerts started emerging in the early 18th century, presenting alternatives to church, opera, and court music. Musical language shifted from the heavier structures of Baroque towards lighter and, presumably, easier-to-connect-with Galant and Classical style music-making. By the turn to the 19th century, a new culture was forming: concert halls were being built across cultural capitals of Europe, music audiences had developed into 'connoisseurs and amateurs', and programming of past composers' music was becoming commonplace (Gooley, 2018a; Nicholls, Hall and Forgasz, 2018).

This development portrays a range of music experiences. Cathedrals were uniquely large spaces, gathering what were perhaps the most democratic of crowds; salons and courts promoted intimacy and exclusivity; and though the first public concerts were free of charge

[14] A practice which organists still engage with in their respective church traditions (Johansson, 2008).

street-events (Nicholls, Hall and Forgasz, 2018), by early 1800s, purpose-built concert hall audiences started to include some level of mixing of the 'connoisseur and amateur' groups (as Hummel's example illustrates).

Perhaps not unrelated, the 'golden age of improvisation' in performance practices flourished simultaneously with the rise of the concert phenomenon, public's accessibility to live music, and performers such as Hummel and Beethoven catering to 'newly mixed audiences'. Declining later alongside the establishment of the modern concert model, the evolving role of improvisation in Western classical concerts appears to have a commonality to that of audiences – both can be described having moved from active to passive involvement, and rather simultaneously (Small, 1998; Philip, 2004; Gooley, 2018a). J. S. Bach was most known by his contemporaries as a virtuoso organist improviser - perhaps because it was an aspect the public could easiest connect with - and improvisatory elements in performance were knowingly utilized in creating community and accessibility across 18th and 19th century audiences (Dolan, 2005; Gooley, 2018a). In the 20th century – when concert programmes started lacking in improvisatory practice – a different approach addressing the same problem appears to have emerged: important musical figures, most often composers, advocating publicly for educating audiences, intellectual listening, and accessibility through understanding (Nicholls, Hall and Forgasz, 2018).

Historical contexts of audience participation and improvisation

Concerts, in general, were much more interactive events as they are today. Programmes were typically miscellaneous and could include a variety of ensembles, instruments and soloists performing what would today seem like a random selection of composed pieces, movements, opera arias and improvisations (Philip, 2004). Audiences would respond freely by clapping in between movements or after particularly moving passages as well as shouting, gasping, mumbling, and laughing through the concert or opera (some documented cases even in early 20th century). Symphony orchestra audiences could demand encores in the middle of symphonies and concertos, as hearing such works were rare and momentous occasions (p. 10). This level of flexibility on the musician's part is astonishing to a 21st century orchestral player such as me, as is the idea of a symphony concert audience communicating and affecting the course of events at the concert so powerfully. In solo and chamber music concerts, audiences were accustomed to being asked for themes for improvisations, having the power to demand

encore improvisations or perhaps hearing a local folk song personally improvised on by the visiting performer (Gooley, 2018a). Through the 19th century, concert audiences developed from initially separate knowledgeable elite and uneducated laypersons towards a large, heterogenous public. Hummel's status as legendary improviser was greatly influenced by his ability to create an experience of community; of overcoming socioeconomical differences in the audience by catering to "all tastes" through his improvisation performance and free fantasy technique on audience-given themes. Similar examples of harnessing the communal power of improvisation emerge across descriptions of audience responses to improvisation in concert programmes (for extensive list of reviews, see (Gooley, 2018a). According to Gooley, Hummel's example modelled "a solution to one of the major problems of this period: the gap between experts and laypersons, dilettantes and connoisseurs" (p. 15). In some ways, the pull between these poles – serious art and entertainment, learned and popular – not only poses real, practical questions for musicians and concert organizers in the 21st century but also seems to characterize musicological debates irrelevant of era. In the large number of reviews, letters and other writings about improvisation performance presented by historians, a tendency can be depicted: critics describing the audience having a particularly enthusiastic response to improvised moments, even if the critic didn't think the technical execution was particularly skilled.

Social and communal agency with audiences and co-musicians

In 18th and 19th century practices, utilizing the social and communal agency of improvisation seemed like a natural component, intentionally applied to performances (however, as existing literature constitutes mainly of keyboard and solo violin performance, applications to ensemble performance are left indicative). Catering to their specific community was an evident part of the job description of the resident Galant court composers and the Kapellmeisters. However, from the individual performing musician's point of view,

"Improvisation opened up a more informal, intimate mode of communication that licensed the audience to approach the stage" (Gooley, 2018a, describing Moscheles' use of improvisation in concert p. 84).

Amidst romantic influence, Liszt developed his free fantasies in a new direction:

"Listeners were not asked to passively take in the familiar melodies and brilliant virtuosity, but were encouraged to 'follow along' in his thought process… The improvisations activated a more direct artist-audience bond and suspended the commodity form of music" (p. 203).

According to Liszt, taking themes from the audience was a way of improvising that established a more direct rapport between the public and the artist, thus becoming a communal work (quoting Liszt's 1935 essay "*De la situation des artistes"* p. 225). Use of improvisation as a vehicle of intimacy and emotional expression in creating uniquely engaging moments between the performer and audience was a trademark of master improvisers – one which is often described eliciting the most enthusiastic, emotional reactions of the evening from audience members, sometimes even to the frustration of the performer-composer (Borio and Carone, 2018). Even as concert life shifted towards larger venues and a broader public, and "catering to all tastes" became increasingly difficult, virtuoso performers still used their improvisatory powers in intimate salon concerts to win over key figures, create a following - indicating a very specific type of engagement - and thus grow their career and audience for larger stages (Gooley, 2018a). Gooley describes the effects of improvisation on 19th century performance ontology:

"In comparison with today, the balance was shifted more toward the *transmissive* elements of performance and the *agency of the player*. Improvisation, in other words, radicalized the performative by bracketing or weakening the influence of the object – the piece or given theme – within the experiential field" (p. 7) (italics added).

Even as improvisation in public concerts became a growing rarity, it was still carried out in private events and gatherings between friends as what seems like a fun-filled, cherished activity. Clement, Boucher, Moscheles, Mendelssohn and Hiller, among others, engaged in various public and private duets – descriptions of which reflect informality and friendship (Gooley, 2018a, p. 90). Gooley discusses such an account of Moscheles and Mendelssohn improvising games together:

"This fascinating exercise in intersubjective communication comes closer to the "dialogic" ideals of jazz improvisation than do most forms of classical improvisation. It demands strenuous attention to the immediate thought-pathways of the other player and provokes instantaneous elaboration on the implications and affordances of the other players' ideas. It

requires, in others, the player's entry, or attempted entry, into the "other space" of the opposing improviser's mind--" (p. 89).

Though formal and framed by stylistic restrictions, the spontaneity and playfulness described here seem to resonate with modern images of improvisation, especially those associated with jazz.

2.1.4 Consequences of the decline

What ideas and values replaced improvisation? Why has it been absent from recent century's concert performances and conservatory training, and what have the consequences to concert audiences been?

Romantic rhetoric and *improvisatoriness*

The second half of the 19th century was marked by romanticism and a democratization and popularization of music culture that enabled a large, music-appreciating heterogenous public and a substantial group of amateur music makers. The traditional values of the free fantasy form – learnedness, mastery, stylistic diversity – had been replaced with those of the romantic rhetoric (Gooley, 2018a, p. 212) and, according to critics, technically poor or simplistic improvisations. Though the actual phenomena of free, form-related improvising in public concerts became less common, the romantic rhetoric of improvisation gained momentum:

"This was the consequential new meaning improvisation acquired in the context of romanticism. It became part of a rhetoric invested with…desire for the perfect performance. - The romantic rhetoric of improvisation thrived on a dialectic in which real phenomena oscillate with their idealized representation."

The idealized descriptions of past master improvisers contributed towards this ideal of a "perfect performance" (p. 106) and the lines became blurry. The aim of the performer transpired towards creating such perfect performances – ones that did not necessarily need execution of technically challenging, actual improvisation, but the idealized, romanticized likeness of it. Violinist Joseph Joachim, whose performances were praised precisely because

of their apparent improvisatoriness, became a pivotal figure in this shift: "The improvisation imaginary, then, allowed Joachim to be both "interpreter" and "improviser" at once, without any sense of contradiction." (Gooley, 2018a, p. 269) However, even though the ideal of improvisatoriness as a specific performative technique didn't last, there is an interesting observation to be made from various listener accounts and reviews: no matter what arguments were made by critics or composers, audiences were consistently reported enthusiastic, if not most enthusiastic, about the improvisation/seeming improvisation number of the programme.

During the "golden age", improvising and organizing musical ideas according to the principles of traditional forms were always interwoven (Carone, 2018). Though I did not know it at the beginning of my improvisation studies, engaging with structural forms and improvisational practice naturally led to a sort of re-organizing previously learned musical ideas, in resemblance to a "personal stockpile" of compositional forms, musical phrases, harmonic gestures, voices and performative tools (Gjerdingen, 2007). Similarly, principles of *commedia dell'arte* and galant style ensemble improvisation, many of which are applied today in improvisational theatre (Frost and Yarrow, 2015), provided natural structures for any group improvisation activities. The concept of a gestural vocabulary, with a heavy performative and communicative streak, emerged as another necessity – something that appears integral to improvisation performance across styles and eras[15]. However, with practical applications of the performative rhetoric of *improvisatoriness* being similarly absent as improvisation itself, any such commonly understood vocabulary must be revived, relearned, and recreated for both modern musicians and audiences.

Decline of improvisation and rise of the composer

Separating the roles of composer and performer - fostering a new work-like, intellectual ethos in the former and instrumental, technical brilliance in the latter – happened at the expense of improvisation ability, which required similarly great effort but without such tangible rewards (Gooley, 2018a, p. 230). The underlying juxtaposition of composition and improvisation

[15] In addition to evident galant style court music associations, also Liszt, as a later example, deliberately refined a gestural vocabulary that signified "improvisatory" performance (Gooley, 2018a, p. 219)

resulted in composition coming out as "winner" in the value system of the late 19th century.[16] Contributing elements to the decline of improvisation are many; for example, the increased movement of musicians and scores across Europe and North America started emphasizing performance markings, and music styles and associated improvisations became blurred at the hands of amateurs - to the frustration of those who knew them expertly. It seems, that even though improvisation as part of concert programmes elicited enthusiastic and appreciative responses from audiences, this benefit was rejected by critics and composers, who assigned value to improvisation through the lens of compositional achievement – a goal that only the most advanced master improvisers still capable of the traditional free fantasy style could reach. Gooley argues, that even though some composers made public, intellectual arguments against improvisation together with critics, they continued to engage privately with various improvisatory practices, to the benefit of their personal artistry and composing careers (p. 192).

The 20th century: the era of recording, an ethos of interpreting and the changing role of the audience

The 20th century was marked by an interpreter ethos, which elevates the composer and their score to highest authority, assigning the performer an executing, interpreter identity – until scholarship in musical performance started gaining strength towards the end of the century (Cook, 2001; Rink, 2003; Philip, 2004). The possibility to record sound propelled cultural change in music consumption for both musicians and audiences. Live concerts lost their uniqueness as only occasions to hear large or difficult works, repertoire and technical accuracy became familiar to the growing public - and musicians, who now were able to hear themselves, became focused on technical perfection, mistake-avoiding and accurate execution of the score (Philip, 2004). Before recordings, inviting the audience to follow the rarely heard music through performative tools such as use of rubato was a driving aim of performances: "It was not primarily an exercise in giving a perfect rendering...but to put over a narrative in a way that would make sense to the audience at single hearing" (p.12).[17]

[16] This was illustrated in the lives of composer-performers such as Schumann and Liszt, who at the beginning of their careers were renown virtuoso improvising performers, considering it a part of their composing processes, but eventually ceased this practice, succumbing to and joining the rising cultural values of discipline, economization, and German work ethos (for more, see Gooley's Schumann chapter).

[17] This idea has significant repercussions to musical performance choices and is echoed in the juxtaposing of "What" and "How", discussed in modern improvisation pedagogy (Dolan, 2005).

Solo and chamber performers would also allow themselves to "warm up" on stage (or have a ”bumpy beginning”), as mistakes and roughness were soon forgotten (p. 13). Before the yardstick of edited, perfect recordings, this type of informality was welcomed by both performers and audience members (p. 22), and audience members could connect with the personalities and differences of each artist more naturally. While composers and performing musicians became increasingly concerned with their divided, specialized fields towards the 20th century, another shift was taking place in concert culture: the transition from active to passive audiency (Small, 1998; Philip, 2004; Lawson and Stowell, 2012a; Pace, 2012). Lawson describes the premiere of Stravinsky's Rite of Spring in Paris 1913 as one of the last documented instances of active audience response – resembling something that today can rather be found in popular music concerts (Lawson and Stowell, 2012b). Philip makes a startling case for concerts being deprived of the kind of spontaneity, uniqueness, risk-taking and excitement associated with the audience experience of live music only a century ago. Arriving at the turn of the 21st century, it seems Western classical music practices in conservatories, studios and concert halls had largely dismissed their improvisatory and interactive roots.

2.2 Musicians & improvisation: what is the goal and how can it be achieved?

What are the components of a "good" or "successful" improvisation and how can it be assessed in a Western classical music context? In the following section, I approach this question through existing models of improvisation pedagogy, cognitive processes of improvising, styles, techniques and how to develop them as well as drawing on evidence from existing strategies in musical performance.[18] As improvisation within the Western classical music sphere has started only recently gaining momentum again, pedagogies and criteria applied vary greatly. One of the aims of this work is to contribute towards a practical, clearly framed concept of what might classical improvisation practice and performance look like, and criteria by which to assess it.

In the mind of an improvisor

The cognitive psychology – what happens in the mind of the improvisor – has fascinated scholars across disciplines and genres of musical performance. Understanding of the related processes has been advanced through the established works of scholars (Pressing, 1988; Nettl and Solis, 2009; Berkowitz, 2010; Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). In the scope of this study, I will not provide an overview of current theories but draw on specific works that directly influence my everyday practice as a classically trained cellist learning to improvise within the defined frame, ie. the specific processes that have to do with learning or acquiring improvisational skill and applying it to performance in front of live audience.

Berkowitz approaches the questions around Western classical music improvisation through the common metaphor between improvisation and language learning (Berliner, 1994; Monson, 1996; Kenny and Gellrich, 2002; Berkowitz, 2010). Both actions have a producer, listener, and sound system to communicate between the two; pre-composed music can be thought of in performance as that of prepared written text; and the everyday use of spontaneous speech, "an infinite variety of phrases constructed in the moment to respond to the context of the discourse

[18] A natural body of technical and theoretical criteria rises from the historical context of the canon and is easily defined according to what is known about eras, styles, and composers. Defining criteria for improvising on such an established canon draws from understanding 1) the collaborative aspect of the relationship between performers and composers until 20th century, and how notation was understood between them at different times and 2) standard concert performance practices that included a wide range of improvisation and spontaneous elements, as well as lively interactions with audiences (Butt, 2002; Gjerdingen, 2007; Gooley, 2018a).

underway", most closely comparable to improvisation (Berkowitz, 2010, p. 10). Considering the variety of styles belonging to the established canon of Western classical music, this comparison provides a useful foundation from which to approach the process of learning.

Conservatory training includes, to various degrees, study of stylistic harmony, theory, and performance, but expanding understanding in these areas is necessary to acquire improvisational ability – or, to continue within the metaphor of language, to learn the underlying grammars of the different styles. As Robert Levin states,

"—The task of inventing within the individual languages of the great composers is daunting if not impossible for a performer who has not had extensive training in the grammar, syntax, rhetoric and texture of music, and indeed in composition itself" (Levin, 2009, p. 143).

In this project and for the purpose of adapting a systematic approach, I have situated myself within the pedagogical frame and method to learning classical improvisation, including fusing awareness of the multi-layered elements of music-making in real-time, as characterized by David Dolan (Dolan, 2005; Dolan *et al.*, 2013).[19]

According to Berkowitz, in order to learn how to improvise, the pre-learned knowledge must be first organized into formulas which are then internalized into a knowledge base that can be instantly and creatively accessed through a referent (Pressing, 1988; Berkowitz, 2010). This knowledge base is created and extended through strategies like transposition, variation and automatization, with the goal of allowing the musician to engage in recombination (not unlike *ars combinatoria* or *partimento*), a feature of improvisation used in a wide variety of musical traditions - the idea of all learned music becoming a personal collection or "stockpile" from

[19] This includes solo and ensemble coursework with aims of integrating knowledge of structural, harmonic, and stylistic elements with natural gestures of motion and expression; the practice of emotional expression, awareness of body language and gestures of movement in the context of communicating and listening; and combining the practice of structures, counterpoint and harmonic progressions with extemporised gestures of motion, see (Dolan, 2005). The improvisatory approach is applied through learning free forms of improvisation (such as preludes, fantasies), as well as more structured forms such as baroque dances, rondos, classical sonata form, and various extemporizing techniques related to solo and ensemble repertoire (Dolan *et al.*, 2013). In his model, extemporization is characterized as the meeting point of planning and spontaneity in real time, or the immediate creative application of pre-learned (and not always fully conscious in the moment of performance) knowledge within a planned structural frame. His pedagogy draws partly on Schenker's ideas regarding improvisation and structure in composition (Burkhart and Schenker, 1978; Rink, 1993) with enhanced emphasis on harmonic and/or motivic rhythm. According to Dolan, this approach can be applied successfully to all types of musical performance especially in chamber music settings (Dolan, 2005; Dolan *et al.*, 2013).

which to draw inspiration spontaneously (Pressing, 1988; Gjerdingen, 2007; Levin, 2009; Berkowitz, 2010; Sanguinetti, 2012). However, practical strategies offered by Berkowitz and Levin are keyboard-based and designed to be executed individually. As a cellist, solo works are a very minor part of the repertoire and in the context of Western classical canon, as soloistic material requires usually at least one accompanying instrument. However, all of these processes become more complicated as more people are added and the setting shifts from solo to ensemble improvisation (Dolan, 2005). When it comes to string instrument or ensemble improvisation and non-keyboard specific improvisation pedagogy, mapping out strategies has not materialized in scholarship the way it has for (solo) keyboard players. While keyboard strategies, including historical treatises, are informative starting points, the available information needs to be adapted to the characteristics and limitations of specific instruments.

2.2.1 Looking outside Western classical contexts for improvising strategies

Ensemble improvisation historically relied on the fact that keyboard harmony, *partimento* and improvisation were in varying degrees part of all instrumentalists' training (Gooley, 2018a). Where models and strategies for Western classical ensemble improvisation have only recently started developing, there is pedagogical as well as scholarly knowledge to draw from in neighbouring contexts of organ tradition, jazz music and dramatic arts (specifically improvisational theatre). Absorbing techniques and mastering skills through long-term, goal-oriented practice for the purpose of live improvisatory performance is a core part of these art forms. The following section will review goals of improvisation performance and how they are achieved within these disciplines.[20]

Improvisation in other Western musical traditions

As seen from its rich history, improvising continues to be a core component to the practice and profession of organists up to date. A look at pedagogic strategies reveals a purposeful study of

[20] As improvisation has a role in almost all music cultures of the world (Nettl and Russell, 1998; Nettl and Solis, 2009), the concept is often associated with the experimental improvised music scene, ethnic musics as well as other innovations of free improvised performance – such as Sound Painting (est. 1974, see www.soundpainting.com) or cross-genre examples like the Glasgow Improvisers Orchestra – but they have been excluded from the scope of this project. The constraints that define Western classical improvisation are most comparable to jazz, which also includes both pre-composed and improvised material within a clearly defined musical language and in a performance setting of concert and live audience (Monson, 1996; Berkowitz, 2010).

harmony, theory, and structure, with the direct aim of improvising according to specific styles and liturgy and church life-related purposes. Learning the profession typically happens in master-apprentice settings and simultaneously in academies and parishes, where skills are applied into composing-in-real-time for specific contexts (ranging from liturgical and contemplative to the popular music requested in weddings) (Johansson, 2008). According to Johansson, the prevailing notion on organ improvisation is that it should be viewed as 'composing at the keyboard' which "rests on knowledge of tonality and compositional forms" (p. 14). Though this suggests an assessment system that promotes soloistic virtuosity of the individual musician, it is noteworthy that apart from those organists who aim at a concert performance or academic careers, the parish is also seen as "the other master" (Johansson, 2008) – promoting similarly the practical abilities to spontaneously combine and create music in and for communal contexts (not unlike the *kapellmeisters*).

Though the central role of improvisation has been acknowledged within the historically informed performance movement, its application to performances has been left rather ornamental and interpretative (Butt, 2002). It is telling that "--while four of the most expert modern performers of Baroque violin are fully capable of improvising their own ornaments…they take the notated ornaments as more or less fixed" (p. 111). The prevailing trend of the 21st century seems to be a compromise of sorts: creating, practicing, and even writing out one's' own ornaments before the performance (and thus naturally eliminating the risk-taking element of improvisation). More advanced improvisational structures like preludes, fugues or fully improvised chamber works are difficult to find in standard concert programmes or education strategies within the movement (Butt, 2002) – with exceptions of organ and keyboard music.

Jazz: the ideal of a performer and the ontology of improvisation

My earlier experiences of audience interactions highlighted the difference in how audiences connected to the performance when improvisation was included, which brought me to ask: what would it mean to be an improvising (classical) performer and how does one become one? Where improvising Western classical individual performers are quickly counted, ensembles scarcely found and learning strategies rare, all three are established elements in jazz tradition. As is commonly understood, improvisation is a core component to jazz performance. Examining further, it becomes evident that even this is an understatement, as the culture and

value systems of jazz music are fundamentally intertwined with the impact of improvisation. Johansen (Johansen, 2018) lays out three levels of improvisation achievement in the context of jazz education: performing creatively in the moment and the ability to do so with others (Monson, 1996), long-term development of a personal and musical improvising "voice" (Berliner, 1994; Ake, 2002; Louth, 2012) and joining ongoing historical and stylistic development that comes through constant experimentation with existing conventions (Nicholson, 2002). This ideal image of a jazz performer - a creative individual with a personal "voice", improvising spontaneously and communicatively with their ensemble, interacting with their audience *and* the musical tradition – is very different from that of a Western classical performer. A Graz university study comparing jazz, folk and classical music students showed that while classical music students were more focused on achievements related to solo professional work and technical proficiency (Creech *et al.*, 2008; de Bézenac and Swindells, 2009), jazz students played significantly more concerts, devoted more time to informal musical activities and professional conversations and were much more open towards new experiences within a broader musical field (Benedek *et al.*, 2014). Jazz musicians are also known to experience more pleasure in musical activities than classical musicians, who in turn suffered from higher performance anxiety (Papageorgi, Creech and Welch, 2013; Benedek *et al.*, 2014).

The idea of projecting original personality in performance is not easily found in conventional Western classical pedagogy. As pointed out by Rea when working with students on dramatic and musical improvisatory performance in conservatory training (Rea, 2015), for classical musicians, accuracy of interpretation typically takes precedence over, for example, portraying a positive personality as objective of performance. He argues that visual cues, body language and personality projection need to be addressed in conservatory training and draws on evidence from several studies, indicating that

"even in the domain of live musical performance, where it is normally considered that the quality of sound is paramount, the visual codes projected by the musician will affect the audience's reception of the music" (Juchniewicz, 2008; Behne and Wöllner, 2011; Tsay, 2014; in Rea, 2015, p. 196).

In these studies, projecting a confident, positive personality, communicated through visual cues and body language, was found decisive of how musical excellence was judged by amateurs and professionals alike. "If the musician appears lifeless, we are less emotionally engaged." (Rea,

2015, p. 198) His and Dolan's work with drama and music students demonstrated that engaging in improvisatory performance, on the other hand, enabled the development of positive projections in both pre-notated and improvised performance of classical music students. Illustrating the stark contrast between traditional Western classical music education culture and that of jazz indicate, that in order to re-introduce improvisatory techniques into performance practice, a thorough examination of the conditions that foster creative and original improvisatory performance in education and practice culture must be de- and reconstructed.

Learning, teaching, and assessing jazz improvisation

A jazz improviser must learn first a repertory of tunes, second to embellish melodies convincingly and master the melodic and harmonic language and third, to improvise in an ensemble setting and respond appropriately to the flow in the band (Monson, 2002). Even though the musical language of jazz is codified and includes systems of scales, chords, pre-determined bar counts etc., "jazz improvisation can be manifested in a virtually infinite number of acceptable musical outcomes" (Smith, 2009, p. 219).[21] Scholarly attention has increasingly turned towards the learning of jazz improvisation in social settings and ensembles (de Bruin, 2019) drawing on (Berliner, 1994). What stands out in comparison to traditional Western classical paths of learning is the high value placed on informal and experimental learning and the pedagogically built-in expectation to develop a personal, holistic improvising voice:

"It is through the learning acquired outside of classes in informal learning situations that assists musicians in gaining professional knowledge, ´on the gig´ skills and real life performative experiences essential to a working *improvising* musician" (de Bruin, 2019, p. 100, italics added).

It seems that because of the intertwined nature of improvisation and ensemble in jazz performance, this informal learning is vitally important. De Bruin identifies three categories of learning - practice, community, and identity – and concludes that

[21] In his project developing assessment methods for wind jazz improvisation in a higher degree education context, two critical factors emerged: "Performance skills -- include jazz theory, melodic motifs and/or sequences, confidence, time feel, technique, intonation, and solo development. Once a progressing improviser is relatively proficient at the skills related to this factor, those skills can be transcended and attention can be focused on the elements of creative development, which include fluidity, expression, imagination and/or creativity, and so forth." (Smith, 2009)

"Improvisational expertise is acquired from the melding of both individual and collaborative skill and knowledge" and "acquiring improvisational skill treads between individualism and creativity on the one hand and teacher centred pedagogies and theoretical abstraction on the other" (de Bruin, 2019, p. 110).

Where technical exercises for melody instruments are not found in Western classical improvisation literature, jazz education has established resources, giving some initial structure in how to systematically practice scales, chords, and melodies on fixed number of bars; how to combine thinking and muscle memory; and how to think about ensemble skills.

2.2.2 Special features of improvisation

In her analysis of musical collaboration in jazz performance (and similarly found by many others since), Monson discovered that for musicians, the interactional 'give and take' moments are "aesthetic high point of performances" (Monson, 1996, p. 80). Since the foundational work of Berliner and Monson regarding jazz ensembles and improvisation, similar observations have been made by Sawyer: aspects relating to the ensemble work of the performance emerged as most successful moments from performers' perspectives (Sawyer, 2006). These moments were described through metaphors such as "when the group was in sync", "when everyone gets locked in together", "to strike a groove together", etc. (Berliner, 1994; drawing on Monson, 1996; Sawyer, 2006). Since Sawyer's initial suggestion of "group flow"[22], the concept has been established and widely discussed in relation to group peak performance (Bishop, 2018; Cook, 2018).

"In this state, each of the group members can even feel as if they are able to anticipate what their fellow performers will do before they do it. Group flow can inspire musicians to play things that they would not have been able to play alone, or that they would not have thought of

[22] Sawyer's group flow: relating to Csikszentmihalyi's (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) flow theory but with clear distinction. Sawyer says: "Group flow is an emergent group property and is not the same thing as the psychological state of flow. It depends on interaction among performers, and it emerges from this process. The group can be in flow even when the members are not; or the group might not be in flow even when the members are. The study of group flow thus requires a fundamentally social psychology and must proceed by examining the interactional dynamics among members during performance." (Sawyer, 2006, p. 159)

without the inspiration of the group. There is an open communicative channel among the performers; each performer is open and listening to the others and each performer fully attends to what the others are doing, even as they are contributing to the performance themselves" (Sawyer, 2006, p. 159).[23]

In studying improvising jazz and theatre ensembles, Sawyer identifies three characteristics of group creativity: improvisation (the moment of encounter), collaboration (performance as result of members' contributions and interactional dynamics and not attributable to any individual) and emergence (sum of collective phenomena) (Sawyer, 2006). He observes that group improvisation takes place within a background of structuring elements and the performance relies upon a common ground of contextual, cultural understanding. How these underlying structures and techniques are combined with the spontaneous, unplanned outcomes and collaborative creativity, contribute towards performer's experience of group flow/peak performance – which performers themselves often associate with success of the performance (Monson, 1996; Sawyer, 2006; Bishop, 2018).

Discourses of creativity in Western classical contexts

Sawyer argues that while group creativity is needed also for pre-notated performance, the process of creative negotiation is hidden from audience in rehearsal stages, resulting in the "misleading" appearance that musicians are reading 'the musical text as the composer intended it, under the direction of the conductor then-and-there' – and that actual improvisational coordination happens only when a mistake is made (Sawyer, 2006). Cook advocates for a view of all creativity as improvisation at different points of the timescale (Cook, 2018) and calls for further shaking of the conventional mythologies of creativity in Western classical music (divine inspiration of the mythical great composer and so on). He proposes an integrated model of music as creative practice, bringing equally together performance and composition as well as collaborative and solo creativity (p. 75). He does not, however, consider existing performers or discourses of Western classical improvisation but settles for describing an example of the seeming ontological differences of improvisation in so-called art music, where it can be thought of as more 'undivided', of belonging to composer's domain and part of the composition, versus

[23] There is some indication of group flow also in Dolan et al's study of a trio performance of a Schubert piece, where performers reported experiencing certain elements of flow state in a performance when improvisatory approach was applied (Dolan *et al.*, 2018).

jazz, where it is rather seen more 'divided' , belonging to musicians' domain and performative (Cook, 2018). Classical musicians' experiences of feeling like their work does not allow them to be as creative as they would like is, according to Cook, rather an issue of re-framing the concept of creativity. Even though it is understood that all composed and notated musical performance requires creativity and spontaneity (Dolan, 2005; Rink, 2016; Cook, 2018) as well as various degrees of improvisatory problem-solving (Sawyer, 2006; Bishop, 2018), excluding the specific type of creativity that is manifested during improvising is inconsistent with both historical accounts from concert audiences and recent neuroscientific studies on musical improvisation (elaborated further in next section). As shown in this review, improvisation had a centrally performative and divided role in Western classical music - as illustrated through the many forms of free and repertoire-related improvisations as well as substantial portions of concert programmes devoted to improvising fantasies, preludes, audience requests, etc. (Caplin, 2018; Gooley, 2018a). As a musician with traditional, 20th century non-improvisatory training, the experience of creativity applied to pre-composed material was a different kind of experience for me than the intuitive, spontaneous, constant 'problem-solving' creativity that needed to be employed to both create and perform music simultaneously, under real-time pressure.

The cognitive processes of creativity in ensemble performance in Western music repertoire including group flow, collaborative creativity, and emergence, have recently been discussed by Bishop (Bishop, 2018). According to her review, most studies around musical cognition and creativity thus far have focused on the processes of the individual and in frameworks that typically have a high level of control, leaving spontaneous and creative group problem solving in real time, such as in authentic musical performance in front of live audience, overlooked. She draws on studies involving musical improvisation as well as ones around pre-notated music, stating that

"In performing creatively, ensemble musicians face two primary challenges: generating original (but stylistically appropriate) ideas and maintaining coordination while translating these ideas into musical output" (Bishop, 2018, p. 4).

A distinction between improvised and non-improvised musical performance should be made when theorizing these concepts further, as the demand on instant, real-time creativity and collaboration in improvised performance is significantly different and by all accounts more

urgent than that with pre-written or composed material.[24] Bishop concludes: "Largely absent from the literature, however, are systematic, empirical studies... We have some idea of the conditions that are necessary for group flow to develop, but what triggers the onset of a flow state? What conditions trigger emergence?" (Bishop, 2018, p. 11). These questions emerge practically relevant when searching for pathways for a classical ensemble to improvise together without pre-existing techniques.

Risk-taking

This brings us to an element present across musical performance literature but emerging at the very centre of improvisation literature: risk-taking (Levin, 2009; Seddon and Biasutti, 2009; Dolan *et al.*, 2013, 2018; Clowney and Rawlins, 2014).

"In the Western classical music tradition, musicians prepare for public performances of a piece with extensive rehearsal and careful study of the score. Yet at the same time, they value creativity and spontaneity, as do their audiences" (Bishop, 2018, p. 9, drawing on Repp, 1997; Chaffin, Lemieux and Chen, 2007).

In a study comparing creative communication strategies of a string quartet and an improvising jazz sextet, creative risk-taking was one of the main indications of the highest level of collaboration achieved and the authors argued that creative risk-taking occurred to a similar extent in both ensemble performances (Seddon and Biasutti, 2009).

"When empathetically attuned, the musicians seemed to respond to each other in an atmosphere of risk taking and challenge that extended their joint creativity. They took risks with musical phrasing, timing, and dynamics, and in so doing they challenged each other's musical creativity. On occasion this more animated, 'risk taking' performance could result in the production of unpredictable musical variations on interpretation when participants engaged each other in challenging musical interaction." (Seddon and Biasutti, 2009, p. 407)

[24] For an overview of existing cognitive theories, studied processes and potential mechanisms contributing towards a theory of collaborative creativity, see (Bishop, 2018; Cook, 2018); for group flow including emergence see (Sawyer, 2006; Hart and Di Blasi, 2015).

Similarly found by Dolan et al, creative risk-taking increased together with level of expressivity, emotional communication and ensemble work when the improvisatory approach was applied, to the preference of performers themselves, audience members and expert listeners (Dolan *et al.*, 2013, 2018). Musicians spontaneously deviated from the text by means of timing, extended dynamics, and timbre as well as extemporized notes, making the performance less "safe" to manage – but still appearing more together in key structural points and freer between them (Dolan *et al.*, 2018). It seems that encouraging and enabling students to take creative risk in performance is still rare in conservatory training (Hart and Di Blasi, 2015; Rea, 2015). I am tempted to speculate that if the study of Seddon and Biasutti would have been conducted with an aspiring young string quartet, trying to win competitions, and being constantly compared with countless others rather than an established quartet, whose members have negotiated personalities, musical preferences, and body language for years, the level of creative risk-taking may have been quite different from the improvising jazz sextet. As stated by Robert Levin,

"Today's performers, shaped in the crucible of competitions and recordings, learn early to avoid risk as a threat to consistency and accuracy. There is nothing more risky than improvisation, but there is nothing more devastating to music's dramatic and emotional message than avoidance of risk. -- If we want the audience to pay attention, we must do what actors do: invest our performances with spontaneity and danger. Improvisation guarantees both." (Levin, 2009, p. 148)

However, it is relevant to note that in formats such as 'free improvisation' – which today has developed into a sub-genre of alternative music of its own – or other improvising performances, where the aim is not to stay within a pre-defined musical grammatical language, the ethos of improvising appears to purposefully reject expectations, thus eliminating the risk-taking element. It seems that while the phenomenon of creative risk-taking has been identified in some musical performance narratives, the contributing factors, fluctuating degrees and types of risk-taking, not to mention its impact on concert culture, have not been discussed to date.

Engagement of improvising musicians

Musical improvisation is known as an intrinsically engaging activity for those participating in it (Pinho *et al.*, 2014; Beaty, 2015; Loui, 2018) and playing an improvised melody engages

different areas of the brain than playing a reproduced one (Sawyer, 2011). From a neuroscientific perspective,

"The improvising musician faces the unique challenge of managing several simultaneous processes in real-time… Other forms of artistic performance, while similarly demanding, do not require such spontaneous creativity" (Beaty, 2015).

Findings from a growing body of literature suggest "cooperation between large-scale brain networks associated with cognitive control and spontaneous thought" (Beaty, 2015) and "combination of generative and reactive processes that coordinate their functions to give rise to perpetually novel and aesthetically rewarding improvised musical output" (Loui, 2018, p. 1). These findings are consistent with the musicological and empirical outcomes reported by performer and audience respondents in Dolan's multi-disciplinary studies, conducted in Western classical musical performance setting (Dolan *et al.*, 2013, 2018).

However, within a Western classical musical performance context, the question of a performer's relational engagement – or direction of focus and awareness - remains relatively unexplored[25]. Performativity and stage persona of the musician, whether intuitive or carefully rehearsed, are typically associated with audiences having the impression of "an engaged performer" (Kartomi, 2014). A recent study examining eye gaze as means of communication found that within ensemble work, "visual monitoring of co-performers' movements and attention may facilitate feelings of engagement and high-level creative collaboration" (Bishop, Cancino-Chacón and Goebl, 2019, p. 73). Similarly, it is known that physical body language and subconsciously processed visual cues contribute decisively to both expert and inexperienced audiences´ assessment of the musical performance (Juchniewicz, 2008; Behne and Wöllner, 2011; Tsay, 2014; Rea, 2015).

As musicologists have only recently moved away from the 20th century primacy of notation over performance, the relational direction of the performer, in my experience, is still assumed to be towards the score or composer (Small, 1998; Brand *et al.*, 2012; Cook, 2013; Rink, 2016). John Rink argues that rather than this traditional ontological view, a piece of music should be

[25] The term "mutual engagement" has been used to describe "inter-performer interaction during periods of group flow" (Bryan-Kinns and Hamilton, 2012; cited in Bishop, 2018), however this is only in relation to co-performers and without empirical evidence.

seen in "vertical relation to its performances" (Cook, 2001), leading to a model where the musicians' "engagement with the work therefore yields innumerable new conceptions and constructions thereof, rather than a singular version that musicians are expected to reproduce in performance" (Rink, 2016).[26] However, despite strong historical precedence, the idea of being aware or open towards the audience, or intentionally engaging with them during the performance, may not as such even occur to performers or their teachers - or musicologists, as the matter is almost unaddressed though identified by some (Small, 1998; Van Zijl and Sloboda, 2010).

[26] Keeping in mind repertoire-appropriate improvisatory elements like elaboration and preluding, this has the potential of giving the performer much more creative power.

2.3 Audience & improvisation: what is an engaging concert experience?

The recent century has seen many areas of knowledge around music's impact on listeners advance in the fields of, for example, psychology, neuroscience, and musical performance-study, however the *experience* of attending a concert where 'music is being played and other things happen' is something different (Small, 1998). Though research has clearly shown that extra-musical or performative aspects about the performance contribute to the audiences' experience (Small, 1998; Stephanie E Pitts, 2005; Walmsley and Franks, 2011; Radbourne, Glow and Johanson, 2013b), the notion of the musicians' main responsibility towards the composer still seems to define attitudes among performers and researchers alike (Small, 1998; Brand *et al.*, 2012; Cook, 2018). However, indication of the necessary problematization of this is present already in Small's critique of 20th century concert audiences' role: "…while our attention is without doubt active, it is detached; we no longer feel ourselves to be part of the performance but listen to it as it were from the outside" (Small, 1998, p. 44).

In spite the recently growing interest in performing arts audiences[27], both scholarship and performing arts sector have systematically overlooked audience research in the past (Walmsley, 2019). Where theoretical scholars have conspired to make general assumptions about audiences, speak on their behalf, assume simplistic homogeneity or construct "bad" or "ideal" audiences (Sedgman, 2014, p. 17), artists similarly tend to either praise or vilify audiences according to their own projections (Walmsley, 2019, p. 5). Walmsley argues that the role of audiences as an "active, skilled and discerning participant in the creative process" (Conway and Leighton, 2012, p. 37) has been neglected and undervalued in contemporary practice, leaving audiences to be seen as "a homogenous mass incapable of creativity" (Heim, 2010, p. 1) cited in (Walmsley, 2019, p. 5). Similarly, audiences have been seen as 'passive recipients of an artists' expertly prepared offering' (Freshwater, 2009; Johanson, 2013) whose influence on performers is generally not recognized nor studied (Brand *et al.*, 2012). Research around performing arts audience experiences has tended to emerge from the needs of institutional marketing or public funding decision-making, with the aim of seeking ways for audiences to engage with performing arts outside the artistic scope of the performance. However, as Radbourne et al observed, "The audience and performer crave a connectedness so

[27] See, for example, the Understanding Audiences programme at Guildhall School (Sloboda and Ford, 2012).

that creativity is shared. -- All audiences can describe quite powerfully the impact of a 'flow' moment" (Radbourne, Glow and Johanson, 2013b).

Audience engagement

The purposes for which audience engagement has been defined and measured vary greatly (Latulipe, Carroll and Lottridge, 2011; Radbourne, Glow and Johanson, 2013a). Audience "engagement" can carry a wide range of meanings and tends to be used inconsistently and overlappingly with concepts such as attendance, participation, activity, and involvement. As stated by Latulipe et al,"--emotional engagement is a complex phenomenon that involves both valence and arousal" but the ways of describing it in relation to audiences are plagued with ambiguity (Walmsley, 2019), lack proper theorizing and are used without specific contextualization (Radbourne, Glow and Johanson, 2013b; Lindelof, 2015). Measuring the audience experience, though valuable in many ways, has often failed to include the quality of the artistic and emotional engagement. Walmsley suggests the framing of engagement as a "*philosophy*, underpinned by an audience-centric ethos that recognizes audiences as *partners* in processes of artistic *exchange*." (Walmsley, 2019, p. 10, original italics)

In theatre performance, different applications of immersive performance have gained some momentum in recent years but remained a sort of *niche* experience. In classical music, innovations aiming to engage audience members with the performance in non-traditional ways tend to use the term *participation* (Radbourne, Glow and Johanson, 2013b), aiming to engage audiences with a wide range of experimental activities from pre-concert talks to technological solutions (Rink, 2016; Walmsley, 2019). It is important to make a distinction between engagement and participation in this context, as audience involvement can take both active and passive forms of participation; the passive participant may be highly engaged though not actively participating in an action initiated by the performers/performance (Walmsley and Franks, 2011). Unlike in many experimental audience participation or immersive models, it is important to me as an artist that interactivity between performers and audience members is both voluntary and not predefined. This shifts the focus from "active or passive participation" to rather active engagement with emotional, cognitive, and relational indicators (for

engagement indicators, see (Kemp, 2015); for active/passive participation see (Walmsley and Franks, 2011)[28].

In an audience study at a chamber music festival, Pitts found that social aspects affected the overall experience of audience members particularly strongly (Stephanie E Pitts, 2005). The findings highlighted relationships as a factor; ones that the audience members had formed with performers but also with fellow audience members. This resonates with other analysis pointing to the fact that there is a shift happening in the way audiences view live music events – in place of forming or cultivating a relationship with the often-dead composer or centuries old composition, they are seeking one with the performer in front of them (Sloboda and Ford, 2012). Interestingly and perhaps not unrelated, the main body of audience studies seem to be based on jazz music performance (as are the examples of Csikszentmihalyi's flow theory in music (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). "Jazz seems to offer up a particularly intense example of audiencing" (Walmsley, 2019, p. 37), one that is associated with intimate spaces and witnessing creative improvisation in informal atmospheres that specifically support feeling connected in the moment to both other audience members as well as performers (Brand *et al.*, 2012). In their pilot study with jazz musicians, Brand et al explored the question of "What makes a successful jazz gig?" through inquiry into the reciprocal relationship between performers and audience. One of the main findings was that the jazz musicians in question were revealed to juggle between multiple relational directions:

"Musicians regularly found themselves managing the expectations of jazz, along with the expectations of the audience in front of them, balanced with their own expectations and hoping that all three sets did not clash too harshly" (p. 647).

These findings led to including specifically designed components of audience-awareness and live group performance in conservatory jazz training – which has significant implications for the development of musical identities and performance interactions skills for those benefiting from this training. Questions of audience impact upon performer have been overlooked in both

[28] In a study comparing engagement for business and art marketing strategies, five areas of impact were defined: emotional, cognitive, behavioral, social, and connective/relational elements (Kemp, 2015). In a classical concert context, emotional, cognitional, and even connective/relational responses could be speculated to fall under "passive participation but active engagement" whereas behavioral and social elements demonstrate the development of this active engagement, resulting for example in voluntary participation of the performance or follow-up activity.

performing arts sector and scholarship. However, indication of the vital importance of the reciprocal experience is echoed also in Walmsley's conclusion:

"In many empirical studies undertaken with both audiences and performers, the communal and collaborative nature of performance emerges as a core component of impact, providing both groups with an empathetic human experience" (Walmsley, 2019, p. 50).

This type of 'communitas' is defined by Kattwinkel as a desire amongst audience members to "feel like they are creating and expressing common sentiment along with the performers and each other; a goal of active spectatorship" (Kattwinkel, 2003) cited in (Walmsley, 2019).

Collaborative creativity and relational art

Audience experience discussion has brought to scholarly debate concepts such as active spectatorship, collaboration, and co-creation, but their contextualization is still in early stages – even though "co-creation, whether understood as the co-creation of art (product) or the co-creation of value and meaning (process), have been part of the performing arts since Ancient Greek and Shakespearean performance" (Walmsley, 2019, p. 31). Co-creation occurs, for example, when audience members "contribute something to an artistic experience curated by a professional artist" (Brown and Ratzkin, 2012, p. 15) or when "art producers embark on a 'collaborative journey' with audiences, aiming to create something new together" (Govier, 2008; Walmsley, 2019). Walmsley draws on the notion of relational art, as portrayed by Bourriaud and Debord (Debord, 1992; Bourriaud, 2009), in which the aesthetic project is transformed from an object into an encounter that unites artists and audiences in a common aesthetic endeavour (Walmsley, 2019).

Bishop writes about collaborative creativity as distribution of creativity across members of a group as they collaborate to solve a shared problem (Bishop, 2018). Group flow and emergence can result from collaborative creativity manifested in, for example, musical improvisation – but who in the room is included in the experience, and to what extent? How do audience members feel or perceive the impact of these occurrences? As noted by Brand et al, research into the impact of music on listeners or musicians and performance has almost always happened in "separate rooms" (Brand *et al.*, 2012) or in artificial, controlled situations (Bishop,

2018). However, irrelevant of how performers judge the musical outcome, or if the judgement is impacted by experience of group flow,

"Audiences are sensitive to aspects of the interaction that occurs between ensemble performers… And listeners use cues relating to temporal and harmonic coordination to decode social intentions (attitudes such as domineering, disdainful, or conciliatory) in improvised duo performances. Attentive audiences may pick up on evidence of group flow, and their perception or engagement with the performance might be enhanced as a result" (Aucouturier and Canonne, 2017; Bishop, 2018, p. 11).

Musicians' level of attention or involvement with the musical activity has been shown to grow higher when improvisation is included (Kenny and Gellrich, 2002; Dolan, 2005). This brings the question of audience impact even further: whether the increased engagement or involvement on the part of musicians is associated with increased engagement or response from audiences. As suggested by the interdisciplinary studies conducted by Dolan at al, the improvisatory approach may have specific impact on audience members in addition to musicians (Dolan *et al.*, 2013, 2018). In both comparative studies, audience members reported a deeper and more fulfilling musical experience and detected enhanced levels of creativity, risk taking and enjoyment of the musicians performing, when the improvisatory approach was applied. Findings also suggested an enhanced type of shared experience between performers and audience members through synchronization of brain wave activity and questionnaire responses. As Dolan describes in his previous paper on improvisation in classical performance,

"The experience of extemporisation includes the listener as well, who occupies the opposite end of what we might call the line of communication from the creator or performer (who are obviously not necessarily the same in pre-composed music). All the elements important in solo improvisation take on greatly increased importance in group improvisation: in such situations, the level of active listening between the musicians themselves, and between the musicians and their audience, becomes heightened" (Dolan, 2005, p. 95).

A possible contributing factor may have to do with emotional contagion: "The process by which emotional states spread from one person to another – called emotional contagion – is speculated to occur during creative collaboration" and is strengthened or even mediated by empathy (Egermann *et al.*, 2013; in Bishop, 2018, p. 11). There is indication that emotional

contagion may occur also between performers and listeners (Lundqvist *et al.*, 2009) or within an audience (Garrido and Macritchie, 2020) but this has not been systematically tested in live concert situations or with performing ensembles.

Emotional communication and meaning-making

In recent decades, scholars have explored the emotional communication of music, as well as the emotional arousal of the listener, but the emotional impact on the performer remains, with some exceptions, relatively unexplored (Van Zijl and Sloboda, 2010; Lamont, 2012). Even less investigated is the notion of the emotional states of the performers and audience members, through intermediary musical and aesthetic exchange, impacting upon one another. Though the foundations of emotional communication in music (Sloboda and Juslin, 2011), as well as the uniquely and creatively engaging character of improvising have been established, the cross section of the emotional impact of musical *improvisation* on both musicians and audience members, remains unexplored. Critical improvisation scholars have written about the blurring and merging of insider-outsider perspectives in musical improvisation activities (Sansom, 2007), and collaborative aesthetic meaning-making in musical improvisation has been studied and theorized in music education and therapeutic settings (Keith, 2007; Higgins and Mantie, 2013). However, these questions have not transferred to musical performance or audience research contexts and can inform this research indicatively at best. To date, no systematic investigation is known to me regarding the emotional impacts of solo/ensemble improvisation on audience-performer interaction in Western classical concert context.

Global perspectives

When looking outside of Western cultural context, audience motivations across musical and ethnological cultures are extremely diverse and the role of audiences vary greatly (Nettl and Russell, 1998; Nettl and Solis, 2009). In both folk and art music traditions[29] improvisation and audience participation practices, including emotional communication and codified improvisation, are more elaborate and inclusive than in their Western counterparts. The scope of this work does not allow for extensive review; however, it is noteworthy that Western classical music's past century's exclusion of both performer creativity in the form of

[29] For example Arabic and Iranian classical music, which are separate from popular music traditions.

improvisation and audiences' active participation or lively responses during the concert is a stark exception in musical performance cultures of the world.

2.4 Summary and research questions

This review has demonstrated the historical precedence of improvisation practice, its versatile applications to performance, and impact on audiences and concert culture. As shown, the decline and subsequent exclusion of improvisatory elements in practice resulted in a 'non-improvisatory understanding' of Western classical canon and repertoire, which was the prevailing notion of my 21st century conservatory education. To follow the artistic motivation of reconciling my understanding of the repertoire with the historically evidenced improvisatory approach, the first question to ask was "how can improvisation ability be acquired?". This review found that strategies of learning and incorporating stylistic Western classical improvisation to concerts are scarce and typically articulated for keyboard instruments - revealing a particular gap in melody instrument and ensemble improvisation pedagogy[30]. This project aims to address this gap through identifying, testing, and developing existing learning strategies in cello and ensemble context, as well as contribute towards a better understanding of both the practical questions and ontological framing of musical improvisation in Western classical context. Furthermore, classical improvisation in ensemble setting is identified as a focal but particularly unexplored area, the closest examples for which are drawn from jazz tradition.

There is evidence that the main motivation for audiences when coming to a concert or theatre performance is to become engaged, but this engagement does not happen by itself (Walmsley, 2019). As suggested by Sloboda & Ford, Pitts, Walmsley and many others, reasons for attendance or non-attendance may be more relational than previously understood. The experience of "being a passive observer whose presence or absence makes no difference" (Stephanie E. Pitts, 2005; cited in Brand *et al.*, 2012, p. 648) is powerful and one that musicians nor arts organizations should ignore – especially when looking to attract (and unavoidably educate) new audiences to Western classical music concerts. Despite growing interest in the quality of the 'audiencing' experience, individual audience members' emotional journey of a full concert experience has not been studied. Several sources cited in this review have called

[30] An additional challenge, the existing material, written for keyboard players, appears to contain 'silent knowledge' explicit to those who are in possession of keyboard instrument technique and repertoire. As noted in the review, historically all instrumentalists could be expected to have at least basic proficiency in a keyboard instrument, which subject typically included some improvisation training (Gooley, 2018a). This is no longer the case: orchestral instrumentalists, for example, are not expected to have 'insider' knowledge of a keyboard instrument nor does modern conservatory training require it.

for empirical studies related to musical performance and audience experience. Walmsley describes an urgent need for empirical approaches to understanding audience experience, underlining, that this necessity has been identified even by traditional theorists (Blau, 1990; Reinelt, 2014; in Walmsley, 2019, p. 4). Bishop calls for systematic empirical studies to better understand the conditions for group flow to develop, and how emergence is triggered in collaborative musical performance. Similarly, indication exists of emotional contagion occurring between musicians and listeners in controlled research studio circumstances, but a part from a recent study between concert audience members (Garrido and Macritchie, 2020), emotional contagion between performers in concert or in relation to audiences has not been investigated (Lundqvist *et al.*, 2009; Bishop, 2018).

Artistically, the process of re-introducing improvisatory approaches into their own performances and concerts has not been explored by performer-scholars to date. This inquiry follows the work of (Dolan *et al.*, 2013, 2018), which is the only prior artistically led research to examine audience and performer reaction to improvised classical music. However, these studies focused on specific moments and examined, in comparative light, separate performances of repertoire with and without the improvisatory approach. As a performer, my previous experience in recital and chamber music performance led me to rather consider the entire concert event as aesthetic medium between performer and audience. Examining the empirical experience, interactions and mutually exchanged impulses between performer and audience during a full (Western classical) concert, even without the element of improvisation, is something for which no prior examples in musical performance scholarship can be presently found.

Research questions

As demonstrated above, there is a substantial gap and many unexplored questions rising from review of existing literature, for example: could re-introducing improvisation (and all that it implies for musicians engaging in it) act as an agent for performers within Western classical tradition to include more creative, collaborative, and co-creative components into concert performances and, in doing so, become – in a controlled way – more relationally accessible or engaged with live audiences? How do performers engage with each other, their audiences and vice versa throughout the concert? How could concert programmes be designed to include audience awareness or relational aesthetics? In formulating research questions for this inquiry,

the following three elements were highlighted: (1) learning and re-introducing improvisation ability to existing musicianship, (2) adding it to concert programmes and performances in a historically inspired way and (3) observing both performer and audience experience, specifically regarding development of emotional engagement and the mutual impulse exchange. Drawing on existing knowledge on the engaging nature of improvisation as well as findings from (Dolan *et al.*, 2013, 2018), this project was launched with the working hypothesis that in this context, improvisation is associated with experience of heightened engagement. Research questions were subsequently formulated to examine both performer and audience experience of the concert situation, and specifically, the fluctuation of emotional engagement.

If I, from within the present-day Western classical concert tradition, learn, develop, and add improvisational elements to concert programmes, how would it affect audience engagement in this context?

As improvisation is known as an intrinsically engaging activity for those participating in it (McPherson *et al.*, 2014; Pinho *et al.*, 2014; Beaty, 2015; Lopata, Nowicki and Joanisse, 2017), how does the inclusion of improvisation impact upon musicians' performance and engagement and is that a contributing factor in audience's experience of emotional engagement during the concert? Two sub-questions that follow, what and how can I observe about the exchange between audiences' and performers? Does incorporating improvisation into everyday practice impact upon technique and interpretation and if so, how?

CHAPTER 3: Research stance and methodology

In the first section of this chapter, I outline the conceptual frameworks and theories underpinning the research approach taken. I situate this project within musical performance practice research and elaborate on the paradigms that frame the inquiry. In the second section, I present the methods used and in the third section, challenges and ethical considerations of the inquiry.

3.1 Conceptual frameworks

This artistic research project is located within the field of musical performance and engages with research questions by drawing on conceptual models from practice research in the performing arts (Haseman, 2006; Nelson, 2013). Arts practice research has advanced in recent decades, and many have contributed towards distinctions between practice-led, practice-based and practice as research - however these formulations remain fluid, and applications vary. Building on Frayling's foundational characterizations of arts research (Frayling, 1987), Hope illustrates the complexities that emerge in artistic practice research through a colour wheel approach:

"If Frayling's research into (yellow), through (red), and for/as (blue) practice are the primary colours, secondary colours come from mixing these approaches. It is in these shades of oranges, greens, and purples that I suggest the nuances of practice-research might be found." (Hope, 2016)

Under these categorizations, this project is assigned the colour 'purple', generating end-products that have thinking embedded (Frayling, 1987; Hope, 2016). In such projects, artists research both *through* their practice and *as/for* their practice to explore a set of questions through an embedded process of practice/performance – and the research emerges because of an engagement with the practice itself (Haseman, 2007). In artistic research, methodologies tend to emerge because of the practice rather than prior to it (Haseman, 2006; Rolling, 2010a; Hope, 2016). Haseman writes that rather than coming to a research project with a sense of

'problem', practitioner-researchers 'dive in', and see what emerges from the practice. As further discussed by Hope,

"This does not mean the process is any less rigorous, rather that the theory and analysis come at different points within the practice, and it is not always easy to separate them out. --The researcher-practitioner is able to draw on knowledge of previous iterations of practice to intuitively follow the next steps." (Hope, 2016)

In Nelson's 'Practice as Research' model (PaR), regardless of terminology, practice is at the heart of the inquiry, knowing-doing is inherent in the practice and research is typically evidenced through practice/performance and traditional pieces of writing (Nelson, 2013, p. 10). In her multimode approach, evidence is produced through different modes of knowledge: 'know-how, know-what and know-that'. Her proposed arts "praxis", the merging of artistic practice with theory in academic inquiry, makes visible both theory that is imbricated within practice and the ongoing dynamic dialogue between the modes of knowing. "Reflection upon this process of building knowledge allows for the making visible of an intelligence which nevertheless remains fundamentally located in embodied knowing." (p. 40) Know-how, or tacit insider knowledge (Schön, 1983), illuminates the procedural and embodied knowledge that an artist brings to the project as intrinsic to their practice; know-what, or outsider knowledge, is developed through critical reflection, spectatorship studies and application of conceptual frameworks and cognitive propositional knowledge; and know-that represents the tacit made explicit through critical reflection and academic knowledge articulated in words and numbers.

This research started off as artistic practice-based inquiries often do (Haseman, 2006; Rolling, 2010a; Hope, 2016), not knowing beyond a hunch what would come of my "diving into" classical improvisation study and its application to concert programmes – nor what methodology would make the processes, outcomes and types of generated knowledge most visible and logically organized. As the project progressed, autoethnography within a narrative framework to which performative paradigm and reflexive practice are applied, emerged as natural, methodological response rising from within the inquiry (Nelson, 2013).

The performative paradigm. The challenges of arts-based practice research within the qualitative paradigm have been recognized by increasingly many scholars (Haseman, 2006; Rolling, 2010a; Nelson, 2013). Haseman formulates a third paradigm of Performative

Research, separate but aligned with the qualitative tradition, in which practice becomes the research itself, rather than a description or illustration of the research (Haseman, 2007). He posits artistic praxis as 'performative', deriving its definition from Austin's (Austin, 1975) work on performativity in the utterance of words. "It not only expresses the research, but in that expression becomes the research itself. When research findings are presented as such utterances, they too perform an action" (p. 7). Knowledge is evidenced through symbolic language and forms specific to their practice, rather than traditional forms of words and numbers, and examination or outsider understanding of the embedded knowledge thus requires experience of it (Haseman, 2007; Hope, 2016).

Reflexivity. Practice as Research in the performing arts is fundamentally rooted in reflexivity and critical reflective practices (Bolton, 2006; Rolling, 2010a; Nelson, 2013). Though referred to in arts scholarship seemingly interchangeably, it appears that reflective practice is slightly more situated in daily practice, whereas reflexivity is used when that practice is turned, through methodological rigor, into academic praxis (Etherington, 2007; Nelson, 2013).

"Reflexivity is one of those 'artist-like processes' which occurs when a creative practitioner acts upon the requisite research material to generate new material which immediately acts back upon the practitioner who is in turn stimulated to make a subsequent response." (Haseman and Mafe, 2009)

This constant negotiation is described as a "double articulation between theory and practice, whereby theory emerges from a reflexive practice at the same time as practice is informed by theory" (Bolt, 2007; cited in Nelson, 2013, p. 29) and, in Nelson's model, as dynamic and dialogical movement "between the tacit know-how and the explicit know-what", which is critically reflected upon through intellectual, diagnostic rigor (p. 60). This results in "a kind of chaos" and complexities, from which "the results of the creative research will begin to emerge and be worked through." (Haseman and Mafe, 2009, p. 219) Reflexivity makes transparent the values and beliefs we as researchers hold that almost certainly influence the process and outcomes (Etherington, 2007) and as practice, it should embody a "deeply questioning enquiry into professionals' actions, thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values and identity in professional cultural and political contexts." (Bolton, 2006)

When applying reflexive rigour to 'artistic-like processes', specific attention must be paid to the occurrence of artistic habituality (Schön, 1983; Nelson, 2013). "Tacit knowledge may be too close (proximal) for it to be fully recognized. Moreover, through non-reflective iteration, it might become habitual." (Nelson, 2013, p. 46) It is through reflecting that the artist "can learn and criticize the tacit understandings that have grown up around the repetitive experiences of a specialized practice" (Schön, 1983; cited in Nelson, 2013, p. 44). Nelson suggests that in order "to achieve profoundly critical reflection, an additional dimension is required to dislocate habitual ways of seeing" (p. 45). In her model, this can be achieved through the dialogical model; in Smith and Dean's model, through an 'iterative cyclical web' of practice-led research, research-led practice, and academic research (Smith and Dean, 2009).

Narrative inquiry. Through re-iterations of the research process, or the 'emerging chaos' of artistic practice (Haseman and Mafe, 2009), it became evident that some of the arising complexities specifically related to the pedagogical nature of the inquiry would be best made visible through a narrative inquiry lens. Narrative inquiry "generates the possibility of new story arcs emerging from reinterpretive acts of research" (Rolling, 2010b) and "invite[s] the description and meaningful interpretation of experiences, artifacts, phenomena, performances, and events as research data (Connelly and Clandinin, 2006; cited in Rolling, 2010b). Through a narrative approach, "order and security can be created out of a chaotic world" (Bolton, 2006, p. 204); it serves as a pedagogical tool of organizing new knowledge and adheres specifically to educational settings (Clandinin and Connelly, 2004). Through narrative reflective practice, the researcher challenges existing structures and familiarities, faces uncertainty and embraces "an awareness of the complex interrelatedness of stories within practice" (Bolton, 2006, p. 211). The narrative influence of this research is observed in that the lived experiences of me as the actively learning performer-researcher as well as other participants (co-musicians and audience members) are collected to gain understanding of the phenomenon (introducing an improvisatory approach to Western classical concert programmes).

Autoethnography. Through autoethnography, "artistic and analytic demonstrations of how we come to know, name and interpret personal and cultural experience" (Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis, 2015) can be made visible, whilst confronting "the tension between insider and outsider perspectives" (Reed-Danahay, 2009; cited in Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis, 2015, p. 1). Autoethnographers study and write culture from the perspective of the self (p. 46), looking both inward and outward with purpose of taking readers through the same process

(Denzin, 1996; Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis, 2015). Through narrative writing, autoethnography aims to foreground personal experience; illustrate sense-making processes; use and show reflexivity; illustrate insider knowledge of a cultural phenomenon or experience; and describe and critique cultural norms, experience, and practices, and seek responses from audiences (Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis, 2015, p. 26). In recent decades, artist researchers have increasingly turned towards autoethnographic methods to understand and communicate embodied knowledge of creative, artistic, personal, and cultural experience; and musicians to reflexively explore the ways in which they learn musical skill (Bartleet, 2013).

3.2 Methods and data collection

Unlike in Haseman's earlier formulations, many recent voices seem to align with Nelson in that "embodied knowledge remains in need of further articulation" (McNiff, 2008; Nelson, 2013, p. 57; Savin-Baden *et al.*, 2014). In transforming artistic practice into data-collecting reflexive praxis, the "key method used to develop know-what from know-how is that of critical reflection – pausing, standing back and thinking about what you are doing. …In the actuality of PaR it demands a rigorous and iterative process." (Nelson, 2013, p. 44)

Practice-as-research projects draw upon a range of methods, rising from within the specific needs of the inquiry and practice itself (p. 99). Most often, this happens through variations of reflective practice, participant observation, performance ethnography, ethnodrama, biographical/autobiographical/narrative inquiry, and the enquiry cycle from action research (Haseman, 2006). In this research, the narrative of my artistic development provides the shell for methodology, which is designed to assist the reflective process. This investigation was carried out by designing, rehearsing, and performing four concerts and critically reflecting on those processes in a narrative, autoethnographic framework. The cycles of concert design, rehearsing and performing, placed me in several roles in various situations and stages of the research: during this project, I have positioned myself as student, teacher, ensemble member, ensemble leader; artist, performer, researcher, and interviewer. Responding to these complexities as they occurred led to the gradual emergence of a research stance, evolving in response to the progress of the inquiry – and reaching its conclusive formulations during reflective analysis at the end of all four concerts.[31] The reflexive processes applied during practice rose mainly from the practice itself; however, when analysed in later stages, the following frameworks became identified and solidified: narrative inquiry informing a reflexive practice specifically related to pedagogical contexts of the inquiry (Clandinin and Connelly, 2004; Bolton, 2006; Rolling, 2010b); performative autoethnography informing the constant critical examining and organizing of ideas as they emerged from the 'chaos' of artistic practice (Haseman, 2006, 2007); and Nelson's above described multi-mode 'PaR' model informing the constructing of theory-imbricated artistic praxis and knowledge production (Nelson, 2013).

[31] Artistic practitioners tend to proceed with their research according to the constraints of practice, often in a different order than is customary under traditional paradigms (Haseman, 2007).

Reflecting and analysing occurred at three stages of the project: (1) within daily artistic practice, (2) between concert cycles, and (3) at the end of the full project. In constant critical dialogue with emerging observations of practice, meaningful outcomes of each concert cycle were purposefully sought and integrated through reiteration into the following one. Making decisions in the midst of practice was a mix of intuitive and carefully considered choices (Haseman, 2007; Nelson, 2013; Hope, 2016).

Applications of traditional and empirical musicology

Supported by the above frameworks, the first and foremost method of this inquiry is engaging with the practice itself, i.e., designing and performing four concerts. This includes systematic study of Western classical improvisation from available literary and recorded materials, participating in coursework, engaging rigorously with experimentation and various exercises, and applying a reflexive process of observation and selection (Clarke and Cook, 2004). Justification for choices regarding repertoire and improvisatory techniques is drawn from existing historical and musicological evidence (illustrated in Chapter 2). Applied methods, emerging from both traditional musicology and recent decades' advances in empirical musicology, include critical, informed listening; observation, or engaging the performer in 'talking analysis' throughout rehearsal and concert processes (systematic reflection of what happened, when, and why); providing a post-performance commentary; and analysing visual components of performances (Clarke and Cook, 2004; Honing, 2006). Critical listening is applied not only to performances and recordings in the traditional sense but also to real-time playing. Developed further in the specific context of this project, it is a core component to structural improvisation ability, and critical listening in real-time (as well as immediately after) is therefore embedded deeply into the nature of the inquiry (Dolan, 2005). In her musicological research on Bach's solo violin works, Fabian points out that historically, performers have initiated tradition changes (like in the case of the 'HIP' movement), and musicologists have followed with theorizations – maintaining the artistic process as primary instigator (Fabian, 2016). Similarly, in this investigation, artistic motivation leads to experimental practice, out of which 'sense is made' through observation and performance analysis, including computational methods, such as music analysis software (Cannam, Landone and Sandler, 2010) and analysis of recordings (Clarke and Cook, 2004; Honing, 2006). Computational methods are used to enhance subjective critical judgement by objective measures.

Objective analysis of sound parameters

Allowing examination of an objective perspective, software analysis was applied to certain moments in concert recordings, to contribute to the musicological knowledge and performance analysis. This enabled a deeper level of juxtaposing performer, audience and computer/objective perspectives and pursuing a fuller understanding of specific moments. The Sonic Visualizer (Cannam, Landone and Sandler, 2010) is designed for analysis, visualization, and annotation of recorded sound, and enables separate and combined analysis of isolated musical performance parameters. Allowing both separate and combined assessment of tempo and dynamic within an objective framework, this analysis was conducted to highlight and demonstrate the developments and inter-relations of evolving intensity and tempi of specific moments in concerts. However, as Clarke points out, though measuring timing, dynamic and even timbral aspects of recorded performances adds to musicological knowledge of a performance, it is important to maintain that they give limited view of what happens in concert, particularly the social dimension (Clarke, 2004).

Constant analysis through reflective practice

In each concert cycle, daily reflective practice was documented through note keeping and intentional reflective journaling, with a double motivation: to support enhanced learning (Aggett, 2010) and for identifying processes and developing research praxis (Nelson, 2013). Concert performances were subsequently evaluated and reflected upon, with the aim of formulating critical responses to the following:

(1) Assessment of both the live experience and the video recording of the performance according to known tradition of classical improvisation and my own predetermined artistic goals

(2) The performer's reflective awareness of how the audience was reacting in the room (assessed afterwards). What did I perceive to have happened between me and the audience at different stages of the concert program? What cues did I receive from the audience, and how

did they affect my engagement and performance? Where was my engagement focused on at different times?[32]

(3) The responses gathered from my audience members. This feedback was collected to gain understanding of the audience's perception of what happened in the room and their own experiences at different stages of the concert program. It was then juxtaposed with the outcomes of (1) and (2), and the performer's experience. Though questionnaire samples were small and focus group and interview responses took place in the presence of the performer, arguably omitting a level of objectivity, the collected feedback turned out to be substantial and was regarded highly meaningful and influential to the direction of the inquiry.

While these elements independently drew on existing musicological and audience research practices,[33] this specific procedure was designed in the context of this research, in order to examine both audience and performer's perspectives together, and to gain understanding from their full concert experiences through juxtaposition.

Data collection

Note-keeping and intentional reflective journaling. As stated, the praxis was documented by keeping a diary of notes, writing, acknowledging, and reflecting on my thoughts, feelings and experiences (Bolton, 2006; Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis, 2015). Notes were organized according to thoughts on concert programme design, solo and ensemble musical rehearsal processes and the live performance situation and post-concert evaluations.[34]

[32] These questions were, in practice, addressed in the days immediately following the concerts. During the concerts, I was fully engaged with performing and unaware of this level.

[33] For audience and performer's experience juxtaposition at certain moments, see (Dolan *et al.*, 2018).

[34] According to Bolton, reflective practitioners must "examine a particular incident, exploring motives, feelings and thoughts, their actions and those of others, recording it as accurately and as widely as possible from their own memory, and possibly also consulting others' perceptions." (Bolton 2006) As part of an international professional community and conservatory environment, learning and thinking during the course of this project happened also in unplanned and informal situations ("Improvisation study thrives on informal interplay and spontaneity" (de Bruin, 2019). Rigor in documenting the instances of "spontaneously occurring collaborative critical reflection" (Nelson, 2013, p. 57), which took place in hallways or on the tube a week later, was difficult, nor did the value of these interactions occur to me until the later stages of the research. This further supported the use of narrative inquiry and autoethnographic writing in analysis stages as a dynamic method for meaning-searching, 'learning *through* enquiry' and making sense of the naturally storied professional and personal experiences (Bolton, 2006).

Video recordings. All concerts of this project have been recorded on video. As part of this multi-mode submission, the four concert recordings provide overarching documentation of process (Nelson, 2013, p. 86), but it is important to note that they lack in capturing subtle interactions, performative or body language nuances and detections of a general atmosphere (or 'embodied knowledge in action' (p. 84) – as well as general audio and video quality, as they were considered demonstrative and documentative, rather than performative, of this inquiry. As such, these recordings deliver an 'outsider view of the work' (p. 86), which must be assisted by other modes of evidence. While concert cameras were positioned to provide 'a view of stage from within the audience', it was acknowledged from the beginning that for this specific inquiry, the video would not be able to capture all relevant aspects of the concert (i.e., atmosphere, communal feeling, subtle gestures of body language)[35]. The concert recordings' main contribution towards analysis was considered musicological (visual, performance and objective sound parameters perspectives) and assisting the artistic reflective practice.[36]

Audience feedback. Audience experience in Western classical concerts has often been measured through a combination approach, with data-collecting devices including traditional questionnaires, focus groups and interviews (Stephanie E Pitts, 2005; Thompson, 2006; Dobson, 2010; Dobson and Sloboda, 2014) as well as various types of electronic hand-held or body-strapped devices (Radbourne, Glow and Johanson, 2013b; Dolan *et al.*, 2018). Out of the four concerts of this project, three incorporated specifically devised audience research elements. In the "Pilot", concert #1, questionnaires, a focus group, and non-intrusive video recording of audience for behavioural responses and body language were employed and tested. For the following concerts, semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were considered most useful for assisting the artistic inquiry further, as they generated an easily accessible resource for me to interact with (keeping in mind my coming to this project as musician). Transcriptions and compiled questionnaire answers revealed quickly which elements emerged meaningful in respondents' subjective experiences, thus allowing me to form a chronological

[35] The initially intuitive logic leading to this decision in the first concert has since been strengthened through discovering indication that the presence of other audience members impacts the listening experience (Lamont, 2012; Gabrielsson, 2010), audiences at live concerts mirror more actively basic emotions of the music, emphasizing the live situation (Kayser, Egermann and Barraclough, 2021) and that even emotional contagion may occur between members of a concert audience (Garrido and Macritchie, 2020), impacting the experience.

[36] Some rehearsals were also recorded, with written consent from participants, but it often appeared problematic and interfered with the rehearsal or creative process itself (Nelson, 2013, p. 87). It was done selectively and discreetly, for the only purpose of assisting my memory and post-analysis in later stages.

narrative of the concert event including both audience experiences and my corresponding performer perspective.

3.3 Challenges and ethical considerations

Subjectivity and biases. Questions of methodological rigor present ongoing challenges to all approaches to practice research (Haseman, 2007; Nelson, 2013; Hope, 2016). Issues of subjectivity and biases are always present; however, these emerging methodologies stand on the increasing recognition that human subjectivity is inevitably involved in the production of knowledge (Nelson, 2013, p. 52; Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis, 2015) and that through reflexive rigor and intelligent practice, as suggested by Nelson's above-described 'PaR' model, these issues can be successfully undertaken. One of the main reasons for adapting an autoethnographic approach to this study had to do with responding to concerns of subjectivity and biases ever-present in such an inquiry. Embedded into this specific approach, the aim is to make visible and transparent the motivations and subjectivities both in the background and emerging continuously throughout the research. Formulated as a response to the crisis of representation in ethnography (Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis, 2015, p. 11), autoethnography maintains "subjectivity, experience, emotions and bodies as integral elements of research and rationality" (Keller, 1985; Pelias, 2011; in Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis, 2015, p. 8) and seeks to make use of subjectivity in research processes (p. 26). In this project, transparency is demonstrated through a process that knowingly exposes the researcher, including their musical and academic journey, feelings, and experiences. Two elements are particularly important to disclose: first, the real-life process of 'musician-to-academic-researcher', and the steep learning curve that it presented throughout the project; and second, the struggle between the two, i.e., conflicting motivations of 'researcher' and 'musician'. Notes from reflective practice reveal a fluctuating relation between the two throughout the project, as the musician('s ego) wanted to, for example, hand-pick only those moments from concerts which satisfied the performer's critical ear, and disregard the audience's experience altogether.

Practical challenges. This project included undertaking the following tasks: organizing concerts (venue, personnel, advertisement) with ethically carried out audience research elements; recruiting and instructing research assistants; recruiting musicians; scheduling rehearsals, providing sheet music, rehearsal spaces and applying for and distributing funding

and organizing AV recording equipment and/or personnel. Though many of these tasks are part of standard professional practice, together with learning to improvise in performance, formulating a research stance, and ensuring ethical practices for all participants at all turns, the organizational element grew substantial during the final weeks before concerts. Through the cycles my understanding of organizational feasibility grew, and at the end I wish I would have considered these matters more carefully, ideally laying out a practical framework, already at the start of the project.

Ethical considerations. Due to the multiple layers of the inquiry, ethical procedures have been carefully considered individually at each step of the research and continuously re-narrated according to the fluctuation of the inquiry (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. 170). This has been demonstrated in that approval has been sought and awarded by the Ethics committee separately for each concert cycle involving audience research, including detailed plans of concert procedures and audience research components. Rather than designing and seeking approval for all concerts at the start of the project, tailored ethics proposals were submitted for each concert, as the requirements of the research became clearer through the sequence of investigations (concerts). All participants (co-musicians and those audience members choosing to take part in the research) have provided written consent agreements of their involvement[37]. Audience responses have been anonymized in raw data and analysis. All forms and other materials and Ethics approval forms are included in Appendices.

Though not at the centre of this inquiry, the roles and representations of my co-musicians were carefully examined and interrogated from the perspective of ethical practice. The need to include these 'others' (Tullis, 2013) rose from the artistic setting; as a cellist, solo performance is a minor part of the repertoire and including at least one other musician is standard professional practice. As the project progressed, findings started to resonate with existing jazz group improvisation studies, which found that though it adds complication to the inquiry, a relevant contribution of the presence of improvisation has to do with overcoming the challenges of a group improvising together (Lamont, 2012; Wilson and MacDonald, 2016). This led to growing significance in playing with 'others' towards the end of the project, and had I known

[37] Illustrative of this process, the level of detail in Ethics applications, including Consent Forms (see Appendices A, C and D), increased through the concert cycles. In concert #4, the application included interviewing chamber partners as preparatory measure, in case questioning them would contribute significantly to the overall data of this concert cycle.

this at the start, I may have sought to integrate their perspective into the research design in at least one concert. However, the scope and original design of this work would not allow examining and including co-musicians' experiences in a more substantial depth and so emphasis was limited to how my working with others impacted the autoethnographic narrative, artistic decisions, and audience's responses. Co-musicians' contributions were assigned relational (Etherington, 2007) and anecdotal (Nelson, 2013) value and interactions examined drawing on narrative reflective practice.[38]

In written forms of this research, presenting and protecting both self and others (Etherington, 2004; Tullis, 2013) is specifically emphasized as the action at hand, engaging with improvisation, may be experienced as a particularly vulnerable and personal one. This vulnerability intertwines with professional practice, reputation, and career developments, and therefore both the anonymization related to the rehearsal processes and the representation of others (Tullis, 2013; Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis, 2015) is of great ethical importance in this research. Musicians choosing to participate in this project demonstrated a commendable kind of trust, and as a friend and colleague, I am committed to ensuring it remains unviolated in all outputs of the research.

[38] Specifically through facilitating awareness of roles in relation to clients, students, colleagues and peers, and an effective working grasp of ethics and values, while also developing responsible empathetic attitudes (Bolton, 2006).

CHAPTER 4: Concerts

The study was conducted through a series of concerts, which can be viewed as action cycles (Haseman, 2006) or autoethnographic case studies (Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis, 2015), in which the artistic processes are applied, tested, and developed – or "worked out in practice". The constantly active, reflective learning experience is at the core of the inquiry and each concert cycle develops upon learned, meaningful outcomes of the previous cycle(s). Participants, or co-musicians, were recruited as volunteers and approached based both on instrumentation (to play repertoire with cello) and a pre-existing connection to the stylistic approach to classical improvisation.[39] Improvisation experience levels of participating musicians varied from beginner to expert.

In this chapter, four concert cycles are presented in a chronological format, describing the planning and preparation/rehearsals in first section and post-concert evaluation and audience research components (when included) in the second section. Concert recordings are recommended to be viewed in between the first and second sections, providing the chronological narrative of preparation, execution, and reflection. The text includes passages from my reflective note log, transcriptions from audience research and references to 'Demo clips'. These are short video clips, cut from full concert recordings, and demonstrative of the aspects elaborated on in text.

4.1 Concert #1: "Pilot"

Timeline reference: this section refers to Sept 2016 – July 2017, months 1 – 11 of the project; concert on June 5th, 2017 (month 10). All materials of this concert cycle can be found in Appendix A.

[39] The pool of musicians and music students fitting these criteria was rather narrow, and it was not possible to recruit only experienced improvisers (especially without a professional budget). The chosen participants were approached privately by me, extending an invitation to take part in the project on voluntary basis, offering to pay for expenses and accommodate, where possible, existing commitments. (The only instance where my invitation was declined had a conflict on concert date.) In my experience, participants were easy to recruit, and musicians appeared excited at the chance of taking part in the project as it was presented to them.

4.1.1 Planning and rehearsing

Launching into systematic classical improvisation study

I began my project by participating in the available classical improvisation group courses as well as solo sessions with Professor Dolan (Sept 2016). I took on a regime of daily improvisation exercises related to harmonic awareness, modulations and voice leading: ear training, study of harmonic and melodic structures of repertoire, searching for the actual inner lines of these structures and performing them simultaneously while the actual work is performed by a colleague; and increasing my awareness of the variants of real-time performance related parameters (durations, pulse, meter, layers of timing and intensity) (Dolan, 2005). Coursework included improvising alone and with chamber partners independently of repertoire on forms such as preludes, fantasies, minuets, rondos, etc., as well as various extemporizing techniques related to solo and ensemble repertoire (Dolan, 2005; Dolan *et al.*, 2013).[40] Emphasis in the beginning was on Baroque and Classical styles, and the foundational concepts of how to approach stylistic improvisation. I started practicing improvising on smaller structures such as simple and double periodic phrases, *ABA, Minuets* as well as the following solo exercises:

Sing & play: Duet with myself on cello and my own voice extemporising simple melodies followed by more elaborate counterpoint, later including diatonic & chromatic modulations. This series of exercises intends to develop a higher level of independent listening first of two and later, three voices, with aims of re-directing the conception of harmonic movement from vertical towards a linear awareness in real time (moving away from analysing present harmonies, to feeling 'where it came from and where it may go next' as an expressive gesture).

R*eduction work*: First, based on harmonic rhythm and degrees-progressions as well as voice leading and motivic structure, searching for a line according to the harmonic-reduction of Bach's d minor cello Prelude (Suite No. 2 BWV 1008). Second, while performing it, leading

[40] Dolan's model includes integrating knowledge of structural, harmonic and stylistic elements with natural gestures of motion and expression; the practice of emotional expression, awareness of body language and gestures of movement in the context of communicating and listening; and combining the practice of structures, counterpoint and harmonic progressions with extemporized gestures of motion (Dolan, 2005). Dolan's pedagogy draws on Schenker's ideas regarding improvisation and structure in composition (Burkhart and Schenker, 1978; Rink, 1993) and, according to Dolan, can be applied successfully to all types of musical performance especially in chamber music settings (Dolan, 2005; Dolan *et al.*, 2013).

another player who was simultaneously playing the actual text by means of emphasizing the *direction* of harmonic movements towards goal-points, as well as the expression. A more advanced stage was to open the harmonic reduction extempore in different versions of elaborations and expressive narrative.

Passage of time: learning how to feel actual passage of time while performing. Learning to improvise phrases or small structures that last, regardless of chosen tempo or character, 15, 30, 45, 60 and 120 seconds.

Ensemble work: In addition to solo work, these exercises were applied to group work in chamber ensemble context, with the additional challenge of communicating, leading, and following co-musicians. This included tonal and tonally-free group improvisation, active listening, and intentional rehearsing of 'mind-reading' within the ensemble. Individual skills such as modulating and timekeeping were rehearsed in structural contexts, or improvising small 'Minuets', 'A-B-A' and 'Rondos' forms, with a common goal (for example, "Minuet with two modulations" or "a 5 minute-Rondo [A, B, A', C, A"] where every section lasts approximately 60 seconds").

These exercises, to mention a few, increasing in complication as one progresses, would eventually contribute towards a knowledge base of harmony, awareness of time and background compositional structures from which to draw on in live improvisation.

Though highly motivated, I found this process of increasing my awareness of compositional and theoretical structures and real-time harmonic awareness challenging. I stumbled upon an unforeseen gap in my background education, which I needed to reconcile - instrument-specific, applied music theory. I had learned musical theory, analysis, and harmony concepts exclusively on the keyboard and sheet music; my thinking of these subjects was startlingly detached from my instrument playing. I was acutely aware of my inability to be aware of harmony in a linear progression while playing the cello. I was accustomed to thinking about music theory through careful vertical analysis on paper, without the technical elements of cello playing and, by extension, real (performance) time. Building awareness of these elements within a frame of simultaneous creation and performance was something I had never done. In my thoughts, I started organizing the rapidly building new knowledge according to the helpful metaphor of learning a language (Berkowitz, 2010) – certain elements, like letters and grammar, must be

learned in order to build words and sentences and eventually, produce original and spontaneous text.

Deciding to alter my technical approach

I soon realized that I wanted to explore a new approach to cello bow technique. To consult with this as well as other aspects of repertoire, cellist and virtuoso improvisor Adrian Brendel was brought on my supervision team (Jan 2017, month 5). I subsequently decided to adapt a different bow hold and sound projection technique (or switch "technical schools") – which was a substantial undertaking and took months to solidify. My motivation rose from the argument that this approach better supported improvisational spontaneity and instant switches between bow techniques (because a smaller range of motion is needed for changing between techniques).[41]

Group work in London and Helsinki

As part of my coursework in "Interpretation through improvisation" at GSMD, I started playing regularly with a group of five musicians in London (Nov 2016, month 3). In addition to quintet playing, we often rehearsed in duos and trios, practicing following and leading each other, modulating, accompanying and voice leading. A few months into this course, I started meeting with a group of professional musicians in Helsinki who were interested in practicing and learning classical improvisation (Feb 2017, month 6). This led to me assuming a teacher-role, instructing and teaching the 'Helsinki group' what I was simultaneously learning from work with my 'London group' - which enhanced my learning process immensely and helped me take ownership of these new skills. Reflecting on my notes daily, this double role helped facilitate also a more research-minded practice: I started formulating a position as both insider and outsider researcher, as well as exercising constant reflexivity in my practice between two

[41] In practice, this meant shifting my bow hold towards the centre of the bow, releasing the thumb and little finger grip and instead, supporting the weight of the bow between the first and fourth finger; lifting the elbow and leaning into the bow through the first finger with my whole arm, resulting in the elbow being lifted from a "locked" downward angle and the string approached from above, through the strength of the upper arm. During the first year, my supervisions with Brendel mainly focused on real-time sound projection related to this change; and how to access techniques that normally are practiced in multiple repetitions before performing, in improvisation. The mental philosophy behind this technique was stemmed from direction of release and effortlessness of sound which I found a welcome contrast to the technical tradition I originally came from.

frequently rehearsing groups. This launched me in a natural way towards formulating a more academic artistic research praxis (Nelson, 2013).

While working with initial stylistic improvisation studies on Bach, Mozart, and free forms, I continuously considered ideas for concert programming and chamber partners in the frame of my research questions. The idea of a pilot concert emerged to test both audience research methods and the live performance of the different improvisation elements. It was to serve as an informal "test-kitchen" event which would include repertoire-related and free improvisations according to my studies during the first two trimesters.

My group in Helsinki met twice in spring 2017 (rehearsals #1 and #2) followed by workshop with David Dolan in May (marked as rehearsal #3). The pilot concert was planned for the beginning of June with a combination group of two musicians from Helsinki and one from London. Working with two separate groups, and finally a third one which combined certain members from both, the elements of group improvisation appeared twofold: musical and social. The skill set we needed to improve the musical outcomes of both our structured and free improvisations was surprisingly separate from the skill set we had as professional classical musicians or students. Group improvisation exercises required focusing on musical structures and compositional forms, while simultaneously learning to become aware of performative body language, possibly overcoming perfection-complex or shyness and staying open and present enough to engage in improvising. Naturally we had all learned to be present and communicate interpretational elements of pieces, but now we needed to develop real-time group communication skills regarding the notes, harmonic progressions, structural patterns, and time signatures we were planning on playing. In addition to delivering clear and strong musical signals, we had to develop conscious body language to communicate ideas and intentions. This pushed all of us out of our comfort zones and occasionally created tension in the group.

Planning the programme

A natural part of professional practice, I continuously circled around these questions: *what pieces to put in the program? Who to play them with? Where and how to improvise around and within them? How do all the elements fit together, what would the concert flow be like? What and how to share with the audience?*

Wanting to create stylistic improvisatory elements around core cello and chamber music repertoire, the programme was chosen to be reflective of important composers to both cello material and the surrounding era. Both chronologically and musicologically, the Bach solo cello suites presented a plausible starting point, followed by the stylistic and harmonic language of Mozart. However, these two composers and the respective stylistic languages they represented, signalled a steep learning curve for my stylistic improvisation study. During the first 9 months of the project, leading up to concert #1 (Pilot), I experienced constant inner conflict, feeling impatient about my learning process, while simultaneously thinking about what I wanted to present to the audience. The gap between (self-inflicted) pressure to advance in ability as quickly as possible and the contrasting reality of the learning process (specifically when it came to stricter expressions of stylistic improvisation) was in the background of programme planning for the first concert. I eventually concluded that some Mozart and Bach segments should be included, even if they were still work-in-progress, because it demonstrated the real process – and as such, would be a valuable contribution to the research. To balance the level of improvisatory challenge, I decided to include a simple impressionistic Debussy piece on the programme because it would allow, I hoped, for greater improvisatory freedom in terms of harmony and voice-leading and provide a particularly fitting context for freer forms of improvisation.

Demonstrative of the reduction work I had engaged in, the first movement from Bach d minor solo cello suite, Prelude, was planned to open the concert program. It was to be offered as an improvisatory duet, with a partner playing the composed text while I played a non-written supporting voice [42]. This voice was to be based on the harmonic structure (based on the rhythm of the harmonic changes, their inversions and directions/goal points). This provided a bass line and drove the melody forward, with the background idea of turning the performance upside down; the melody appearing 'improvisation-like' on top of the bass line and derived from it. Though pre-planned to the extent of harmony and structure, multiple decisions related to voice leading, directionality, decorating, elaborating, etc., were left for the improvisatory moment of performance. I was going to play the piece first as written, followed by an improvised interlude (a common practice at the time of the composition) and then play the piece again as duet, this time improvising a second voice (me) and elaborating on written text (partner), and finally

[42] I had worked intensely on the Bach d minor suite in my improvisation and repertoire studies, which meant searching structural harmonic reductions and voice-leading lines as well as developing general awareness of harmonic and melodic structures within.

finishing with a small, improvised postlude. These decisions were based on historical evidence of common performance practices (Goertzen, 1996; Levin, 2011).

The second piece, Allegro from Mozart G-major string duo for violin and cello (after KV 423, originally for violin and viola), was chosen as representative of the classical era, presenting an essential building block in improvisation performance practice. As Mozart did not originally compose solo works for cello, this duet gave me the rare opportunity to expand my understanding of both harmonic and melodic elements of his compositional language. To give the audience a taste of our process and demonstrate our approach to classical improvisation, the viola player was asked to join the duet, turning it into a trio. She would take over the lower melody line, freeing me to improvise a third voice according to the underlying rhythmic and harmonic structure. This was a similar approach to the one we applied to Bach d minor Prelude, but with added challenge as there were now two melodic lines and a completely different stylistic approach for me to harmonize with. Similarly, as with the Bach segment, this performance scenario was inspired by historical evidence from the time of the composition.

To balance the challenging improvisation segments of the program, I leaned towards a more familiar setting for the remainder of the program: I had previously played with a kantele player[43], and wanted to include a recent piece we did together, *La fille aux cheveux de lin* by Debussy, in the program. Originally a piano prelude, this piece presented intriguing possibilities for improvisation in an impressionistic and structurally freer context, and we had prior experience in performing it. In the performance, we would first perform the piece as written (duet), then transition into a freely improvised section inspired by the idea of "telling this girl's story further" and finish with playing the written piece again as a trio, so merging composed text and improvised elaboration. I was to be the third voice, with the aim of harmonizing, embellishing, and accentuating the composed material. Here we applied a different approach to improvisation, rising from study of well-established connection between musical improvisation and human communication, in which improvisers become aware of the differentiation of the "What" and "How" levels (Dolan, 2005), utilize intentionally prosodic

[43] The *kantele* is a Finnish instrument, its roots originally in folk music but with a century-long classical music history, resembling the harp in sound and sitar in technique. The player in question, my sister, had also participated in Dolan's master classes and was part of my group in Helsinki.

level of communication and the specific interrelations between musical parameters and musical parameters of speech intonation (Kenny and Gellrich, 2002; Dolan, 2005).[44]

In addition to these repertoire-related improvisatory elements, I wanted to experiment with the idea of using short, structurally simple, free fantasy-like group improvisations, modelled after historical accounts of improvising on audience requests (Gooley, 2018a). During the first months of my doctorate studies, I found myself constantly thinking *how could I give my audience a meaningful participatory experience* and *how could improvisation serve to create a feeling of togetherness in a concert setting*. The idea emerged, to ask audience members for requests, or messages, that we could do short group improvisations on in performance – like sending 'musical postcards', compact in form and with a singular focus. Though there is a strong precedence for improvising on audience-given musical themes, I felt the postcard idea was, at this early point of my study, easier to implement. I brought the concept to my group, and we started rehearsing the complexities of improvising short but structured fantasies. In rehearsal, we had many frustrating moments – but when we felt like it worked, and we "telepathized" with each other, it fuelled us in a powerful way[45]. Though we had high hopes of re-creating these electrifying moments in concert, I actually had no idea what will happen when we take this to the live audience.[46]

Planning the audience research[47]

For the initial audience research, a range of data gathering instruments was used with the intent of collecting different types of data, as there was no existing precedence of a study conducted in such a 'through the eyes of the performer' context, looking into the phenomenon of an entire concert in which improvisations are included, as one whole event. The purpose of this was to gain both understanding of feasibility and a rich resource from which to extract the most useful

[44] In both music and speech, the 'What' and 'How' levels can be observed: "The latter manifests itself in what linguists call intonation, or the prosodic level in speech. This is the natural 'music' of speech, consisting of an organizing in time of primary musical parameters: pitch, duration, intensity, and timbre. The presence of a naturally improvised musical dimension in speech is an important common element with musical extemporisation. -- Changes [in intonation] are instinctively understood by listeners who unconsciously decode what they hear." (Dolan, 2005)

[45] These were some of the early experiences I would later characterize as group flow (Sawyer, 2006).

[46] Because it was impossible to anticipate how the 'musical postcard' improvisations would go, I had planned a small meditation on Bach-Gounod's Ave Maria as a postlude when the audience exited the room. It ended up not being commented by performers or audience members in any feedback.

[47] See Appendix A for all materials.

type of data, for more precise audience feedback from future concerts. I set off wanting to gain understanding regarding the concert experience of the audience and the kind of a role, if any, improvisation played in it. I wanted to juxtapose the experience of both performers and audience members and interrogate some aspects from the perspective of what they expected, and what had then happened. As a performer, I specifically wanted to know if the heightened levels of risk-taking, artistic vulnerability and emotional engagement that we as musicians were taking through improvisation were reflected in the audiences' experience.

Some fundamental boundaries for the audience research components were set by the context of the project: I organized the concerts myself and expected a small audience in an intimate space, so the research would need to be executed without outsider, specialist understanding or equipment. It was important to me that members of the audience were only given tasks to do before and after the concert, so that their listening experience could be an uninterrupted one (Bennett, 2014). Though literature suggests that introducing a research element to a concert audience may increase their attentiveness to specific features and impact the situation in a positive way (Dobson and Sloboda, 2014), the focus of this event being on exploring as performer the real-time interaction with audience members, reducing any potential distracting elements was a priority. This led to ruling out extravagant or intrusive equipment such as pressing handheld devices, giving the audience personal electronic devices, or asking them to perform tasks during the performance.

Three different but complementary and widely used methods for data gathering in classical concert experience were used: a questionnaire, post-concert moderated group discussion and video recording of the audience during the concert (Radbourne, Glow and Johanson, 2013b; Pitts and Burland, 2014; Halpern *et al.*, 2017). Everyone present would be invited to an informal focus group discussion at a nearby wine bar and cameras were set up to record both stage and audience. Launching into designing these audience research components, I wanted to learn 'what I did not even know to ask' both about the effect of improvisation in performance and the concert experience around it. It was this motivation that led to knowingly designing an abundant collecting of data, in hopes of tapping into different kinds of audience responses. Probing into matters of emotional experience, I wanted to give respondents multiple ways of expressing themselves and decided to include both a live focus group discussion and camera to record applause or visual body language.

I wanted to include questions that would give me both details on the emotional engagement of audience members and sufficient open space for respondents to bring up thoughts independently. To achieve both, I decided on a two-part questionnaire, to be filled before and after the concert, followed by an informal focus group discussion at a nearby wine bar. Together with the questionnaires, the transcribed discussion would supply me with audience members' thoughts and assessment of their own emotional states from different times surrounding the concert: how they felt when they arrived, how they expected to feel afterwards, immediate post-concert reactions, and reflective thoughts together with others afterwards at the wine bar. In my formulations, I was drawn towards the possibly emerging differences between the expectations and the lived experience of audience members, hypothesizing that improvisation would contribute something unexpected to their experience.

Questionnaire. A 15-question questionnaire with two parts (before and after) was devised, with answers collected using mixed questions, including yes/no, marking a point on a line and free text. As I was particularly interested in the emotional experience of audience members, I approached it through a pattern used widely in emotion research (Sloboda, O'Neill and Ivaldi, 2001; Van Goethem and Sloboda, 2011). For each of 11 different binary dimensions (e.g., happy-sad) respondents were asked to mark their emotional state as a point on a 10cm horizontal line, in which each end represented an opposite pole on the dimensions concerned. This approach was chosen to facilitate intuitive answering, without excessive analysis or guessing expectations. It also made visible the subtler changes in emotional states, which would not be achieved through yes/no questions.

Open questions were used to give audience members the chance to bring forth thoughts and reflections and yes/no questions to give background information for possible correlations between their emotional concert experience and existing classical music or improvisation familiarity. (Age and gender were asked about in case the audience would, by chance, represent a particularly narrow demographic, and this should be disclosed.) For background information, familiarity with both classical music and classical improvisation was asked about, as well as any pre-existing attitudes towards its re-introduction in modern performance practice, to provide some frame for their post-concert assessments. In this first concert, I wanted to know how the addition of improvisation and the associated experimental context would impact the experience of audience members, and how it compared to their expectations of a typical, non-improvisatory classical music event. A series of repeated questions, intended to measure

different aspects of the expected experience and afterwards, the lived experience, were designed: before the concert, respondents were asked to rate their current emotional state, how they expected to feel after the concert and how they would characterize the atmosphere at a traditional concert without improvisation (expectation of classical concert atmosphere without the improvisatory component). The post-concert portion of the questionnaire would ask these same questions about the concert they had just experienced, as well as present the chance to give specific feedback on all the individual pieces on the programme – which I wanted to learn about for identifying any moments of specific impact.

Post-concert group discussion. The group discussion was designed with the main aim of capturing and drawing out the typical performers' and audience members' post-concert comments and views for research purposes. It was to provide a platform for the audience members to describe their thoughts and impressions through their everyday language and reflect on the event together with the musicians. The discussion, to be moderated by an experienced research assistant, was designed to provide comments on the experience of the concert, general perceptions, flow of programming (having designed the full programme myself, I had artistic interest in the outcome) and possible differences between repertoire and improvised moments. (The protocol used by the moderator, with topic prompts, is in Appendix A.)

Video recording. In addition to performers (performer camera), the audience was to be recorded on video during the concert as well (audience camera). The main purpose for filming the audience was in case a specific moment would emerge in questionnaires or focus group discussion, and further examining would benefit from a visual image.[48] Additionally, should something non-performance-related happen during the concert (such as a phone ring tone), this moment could be examined from both the subjective and the objective perspectives afterwards. The audience camera was meant to pick up basic body language, facial expressions, and type of applause, but not very subtle details. It was a small, subtle device and situated at the side of the stage (see Figure 1 below; the audience camera is seen at the right side of the stage, on top of the grand piano). Footage was to be examined by myself (not software), primarily for double-checking specific moments described in questionnaires or focus group.

[48] See further details in Ethics application in Appendix A.

Concert circumstances

Figure 1. View of stage, concert #1.



Because of the experimental nature of the concert program, the intention was to create a relaxed and informal event around it. The concert was organized on Monday, June 5, 2017, at 7:30pm at GSMD in a medium-sized chamber music room with chairs set up in the middle of the rather intimate space, and with a complimentary wine cart at the back. A research assistant, who was to serve as moderator of the focus group discussion at the pub afterwards, welcomed audience members, explained procedures related to questionnaires and invited them to a glass of wine. Promotion of the concert and recruitment for audience happened through networks of friends, school posters and social media. I was particularly pleased with a mixed audience turnout in terms of classical music knowledge, ranging from professional colleagues to audience members that had minimal experience as classical concertgoers. I knew personally about half of the audience. The amount of people in the room, including performers, was approximately 30. Everyone was invited to a post-concert discussion at a nearby wine bar, in which a section had been reserved for us. We were a small enough group (14 people) to fit around two tables pushed together, with the recorder placed in the middle.

Concert recording and printed paper programme

The printed paper programme is in Appendix A. The concert recording has been edited for the convenience of the viewer and excludes elements like tuning and stage re-organization. Full concert #1: https://youtu.be/nxrko-DdEAU

4.1.2 Post-concert reflection and audience data analysis

The following section has been constructed from reflective diaries and analysis conducted for the upgrade submission. The observations, if not otherwise stated, were generated at the time (in the months following the concert), but the way they are organized, and vocabulary used to present them, matured during final analysis at the end of the whole project.

Personal post-concert reflection

During my first two trimesters (Sept 2016 – Mar 2017), the repertoire related improvisation studies I worked on had focused on Baroque and Classical periods, which brought me inadvertently to include programming elements in this Pilot concert that I was not yet confident in. In the weeks prior to the concert, I had felt overwhelmed by absorbing intense amounts of new information, managing my improvisation groups in both countries as well as changing my bow technique in cello playing. Even though I intellectually understood that there was no other way to practice improvisation performance and live risk-taking than to do it, the uncertainty of preparing for the first concert had me constantly hoping I would have been more experienced. I felt painfully aware of how far both my and my group's skills were from the ideal I had, and inadvertently created pressure for myself.

My immediate reactions after the concert were both relief and disappointment; I felt relieved that there had been electrifying moments, the kind that I wanted to give the audience - but disappointed about what felt like a majority that were not. However, continuing immediately from the concert to the focus group discussion and then reading the anonymous questionnaires over the following days, my self-criticism was juxtaposed against a supportive audience, appreciating our risk-taking, overlooking those mistakes I thought had been so severe, and giving genuine, enthusiastic feedback on their experience. I did not systematically document my immediate post-concert reflection of the performance at the time, but as doing so emerged relevant a few weeks later, I proceeded to document what I recalled posthumously (and resolved to do so immediately after future concerts). As evidenced by these notes, I felt most insecure during the first Bach segment, and genuinely relieved, when the applause afterwards appeared supportive and affirming. During the Debussy-inspired improvisation, I experienced a specific high moment (characterizing it later as flow moment; demo clip #1), and similarly again with two of the 'musical postcards' (demo clips #2 and #3). The 'musical postcard' free

fantasies, I felt, were not musically particularly accomplished, but I had noticed how the audience seemed to respond in a more active and engaged way during that segment. These impulses, which I would only start discerning at later stages of the project, were received through an increase in applause, enthusiastic facial expressions, making non-verbal sounds and what I intuitively interpreted as more alert and engaged body language.

These specific moments, as experienced by performers, demonstrate the freer forms of ensemble improvisation of the programme and include some early indication, or fleeting moments, of 'group flow'.

Demo clip #1: Unstructured free improvisation following Debussy's *La fille aux cheveux de lin*: creating a development section, finding harmonic and rhythmic unity, and arriving at a goal point together:
https://youtu.be/7Kmcnfk7H7I

In these two Musical postcards at the end of the concert, the ensemble appeared relaxed and comfortable. In demo clip #2, the violinist launched a theme from a children's song, to which the ensemble readily responded, and maintained the character even through occasional "wrong" harmonies; in demo clip #3, we intuitively didn't limit ourselves to style or harmonic progressions and ended up creating coherence in structure through expressive and rhythmic means.

Demo clip #2: Audience request: "*A motivational song for a young musician girl*": https://youtu.be/AHtmO6gLK68

Demo clip #3: Audience request: *Story of someone who is "stuck on the Central line at rush hour in summer…who is far from home but wants to be home":*
https://youtu.be/Qs_x1JXjFoc

Audience feedback

The audience consisted of approximately 30 people, to whom filling the questionnaire or participating in the focus group discussion were presented as entirely voluntary. Gathered data consisted of 15 completed questionnaires, a transcription of the 40-minute post-concert group

discussion (with three musicians, one supervisor, the moderator and nine audience members) and the raw video data. The questionnaires were processed with statistical software in a general interest and exploratory frame (as I was interacting with the data as an artist rather than a scientist), to find statistical significances or other possible tendencies. The results of the questionnaire were paired together with the transcript of the focus group discussion, which were then compared to the video recording for contrasting or confirming elements.

The set of 15 questionnaires exhibited a mixed audience, in both classical music expertise and improvisation experience. Those audience members participating in focus group discussion included experts in classical music but not improvisation, experts in both, and audience members who expressed both mid-range and low familiarity to both.

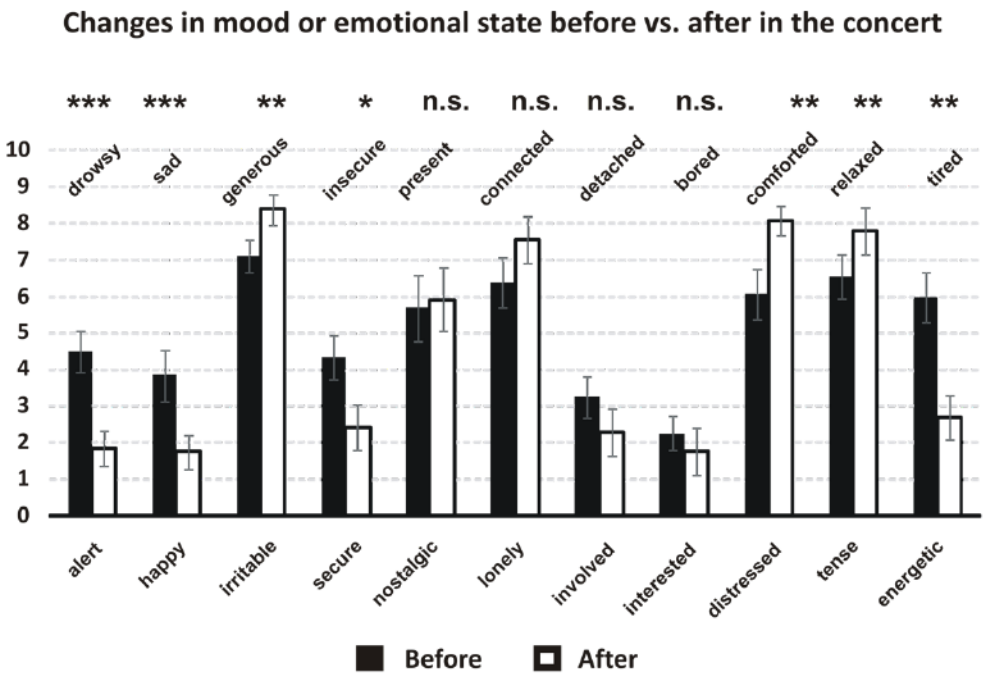
As planned, an overflow of different types of data was generated, and I found the process of familiarizing myself with the responses, reactions, and overall information of my audience's experience very impactful. As music student and seasoned auditioner, I was used to being scrutinized by a panel of critical judges but immersing in the experience of these different audience members, who had a variety of contrasting and unexpected viewpoints, was entirely different. Detailed immersion in the audience data (questionnaires and discussion transcript) yielded artistically pertinent information, which were grouped under the following eight topics.

Changes in emotional state. Tracking the emotional states of audience members at different points in time of the event proved a rich resource for learning about both their pre-disposed expectations and lived experience. Questionnaire analysis showed that there were statistically significant changes in several areas of shifting emotional states: after the concert, respondents felt more alert, happy, generous, secure, comforted, relaxed, and energetic (Figure 2) (even more so, than they expected to feel). Though it is unclear what particular impact improvisation had on the positive outcome, the largest increases were reported in feeling more alert and energetic - which could possibly indicate that improvisation had provided a surprising element and contributed towards heightened engagement.[49]

[49] For a truly scientific conclusion, a comparison study involving a concert with the same repertoire and performers but not including improvisation would have had to be organized; to do so was not within the scope of the artistic inquiry in this project.

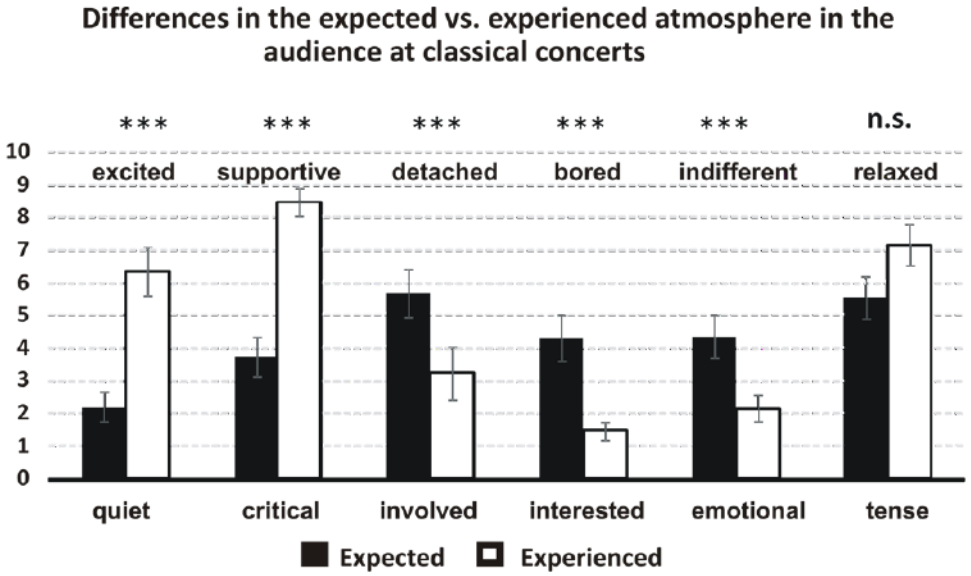
Figure 2. Graph of changes in mood or emotional state before vs. after the concert. "Please mark the point on each line that most closely represents your current mood or emotional state (with neutral being the mid-point)" (Questions 6 and 10)

***= p<0.001; **= p<0.01; *=p<0.05; n.s.= not significant; n= 13; error bars indicate s.e.m. (standard error of the mean)



Experience of atmosphere. Having intentionally designed an informal and experimental framework for the performance, I wanted to know how that, as well as the engaging nature of improvisation, would be reflected in the audience's experience of general concert atmosphere. To avoid leading, I decided to approach this similarly through emotional parameters, hypothesizing that they would feel more involved and relaxed than they would expect to in a traditional, non-improvisatory classical concert. However, the contrast between their expectation (of a typical classical concert atmosphere) vs. the experience of this concert came out as highest significant difference in the entire questionnaire. Audience members marked their perception of a *typical* atmosphere at classical concert to lean towards critical, quiet, and detached, but thought the atmosphere at this concert was, in contrast, supportive, excited, and involved (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Graph of differences in the expected vs. experienced atmosphere. "In my experience, atmosphere in the audience during classical concerts tends to be (question 8, black) / in this concert was (question 11, white)" ***= p<0.001; n.s.= not significant; n= 13; error bars indicate s.e.m. (standard error of the mean)



Flow of the concert program. I was eager to find out how my planning of the programme flow was received. Most respondents identified with the Debussy as the point in programme when atmosphere shifted but perceived an overall progression of increased freedom and mutual engagement towards the end of the concert. As illustrated in these comments from the post-concert focus group discussion (selected as typical responses or examples of general discussion):

[Moderator: When you think about the flow of the whole concert, the combination between composed and improvised, how did the relationship feel like? Did you notice any changes in yourself, in the music, in the musicians, in your perceptions?]

Audience member #4:
I think for me again the Debussy was the turning point [of the flow]. And where I felt you were more free.

Audience member #3*:* (in response to conversation about concert highlights)
For me the Debussy was where all of a sudden… more humour was introduced. And I felt a little bit more relaxed with that, even though we did have quite serious moments afterwards.

Co-musician #3 [entered for the Debussy]:
I felt that the atmosphere was created since then you had been playing for a while. And then I could just jump into it. So, it was very easy for me.

Audience member #2:
For me the highlight of the concert was the audience requests or the participation. But in order to get there, there was a nice build-up of the previous pieces. And somehow, I felt like every piece had a slightly greater degree of freedom that came with it… And that it somehow culminated in these audience requests.

Speaking to the audience. Respondents in both the focus group and questionnaire feedback made special notice of the fact that I, as performer, addressed them and felt that this contributed towards them feeling invited and included in the concert situation (particularly so, if they were less experienced classical concert goers).

Audience member #1:
I really appreciate the musicians stopping and telling us why they picked that piece of repertoire, what it means to them, what they're doing with it and what their thought process is. To me, it was really valuable to have that.

Audience member #8:
It [performers speaking to the audience] really helps the understanding… I think it's very rewarding. [It] also creates a bit more of an interaction--. You warm up to the performer and to the music.

Addressing the audience in this pilot concert was not specifically planned but occurred as a sort of side product. I had felt that as performer, the speeches distracted me from my musical performance and made me more nervous. My immediate post-concert reaction was to find a way to reduce them. Reflecting on it a few days after the concert, however, I had to acknowledge that I also had felt the support and enthusiasm of the audience more clearly when turning towards and engaging with them in this way.

Visual cues and body language. Focus group respondents remarked on enjoying the increased visual cues and body language of ensemble improvisation. Some remarked also on the presence or absence of sheet music and stands. (There is a strong convention of playing chamber music from score, so we performed the Mozart duo/trio with sheet music). It appeared that an ensemble performing without a score, as happens in group improvisation, particularly invited respondents to notice and reflect on the visual and body language cues they observed. In response to discussion about ensemble improvisation:

Audience member #2:
I really looked more closely at the musicians. Seeing how they communicate with each other. Who's taking the lead now, who's taking over. That helps me sort of anticipate and understand better what's happening, how this is progressing, what's going on.

Musical expression and interpretation. A co-musician remarked that through learning improvisation techniques, they had gained deeper ownership of their individual repertoire pieces without actually working on them (and I personally had the same experience). This experience was shared in informal conversations with everyone in the ensemble.

Co-musician #2:
For me [it] was really amazing -- I didn't practice it in terms of my repertoire. And the last time I played it was some years ago. And now just in a matter of few days I was able to play the whole piece, the full text in a very different way. Very deeply connected, completely without any memory slips or anything and it was a part of me.

Engagement and risk-taking. In my performer's experience, performing improvisatory techniques activated a different, more intense type of engagement, than standard repertoire (and one that I had no routine experience in at this stage). Audience members reflected on their experience of fluctuating engagement levels:

Audience member #5: (In response to conversation about noticing when it fluctuated between repertoire and improvisatory material)
When I noticed it no longer being the piece, that's when I was the most interested in it … it's the bit that arrested my attention most. … And then you have a sensibility that's coming from

the artists' present, from a very intimate place. So, it's that. It's the contrast [of Debussy] with something that I feel very situated to a time and a place.

Moderator (also an audience member at the concert):
I preferred the ones [improvisations] without the music even more, because it felt more in the moment. ...There was something that I felt [during improvisation], you are connecting in another way, with a different sort of attention.

Even though the topic was not on the moderator's sheet and had not occurred to me beforehand, respondents commented on the way they perceived the personal presence and contribution of personality of the performers particularly during improvisations:

Audience member #3:
I really enjoyed your individualities. I thought the players were all different.

Reflecting on improvised moments. The free group improvisations on audience requests sparked enthusiastic conversation in the post-concert focus group. In response to discussion about communicativity in improvised vs. notated sections, audience members reflected on the live problem-solving of group improvisation:

Audience member #7:
I felt that there was a bit more of a dialogue sometimes [when I knew they were improvising]. The dialogue was more tentative at times, but then it resolved in some. Sometimes it went perhaps a little bit funny, but then it found itself. And I think that sound together I really, really liked. ...Also the mistake made more sense, also the discordances made more sense. The things that didn't quite work then resolved and actually, oh yes, we got there!

Audience member #1:
I also thought that there was a lot more interaction, a lot more energy in the purely improvisatory pieces. As an audience member, I could tap into your cues and see the energy building up. I appreciated that.

In the discussion as well as questionnaires, these free group improvisations based on audience requests emerged as high point of the programme for many respondents:

Audience member #4:

I absolutely enjoyed the completely improvised things the most. ...I think that's something that probably we can all feel that there's a real sense of empathy and that was very clear in the way you were playing. And that was like a transcendent moment for me.

Audience footage. Watching the body language of audience members supported the questionnaire results and post-concert group discussion, showing that audience members relaxed towards the second half of the concert and that interactivity in terms of body language and facial expression (smiling, eye-contact towards stage, movement during applause) increased during the 'musical postcard' segment. However, no aspects contradicting the responses in questionnaire and focus group, nor any specific excessive behaviours, were detected. As I interacted with and analysed the audience data in the months following the concert, the questionnaire and focus group responses offered a rich resource and a way to engage with the direct, subjective experiences of respondents. This subsequently pulled the direction of the inquiry towards a narrative frame. The decision was made to limit examining of audience's subconscious behaviours (such as body language) to my performer's intuitive perception of them in real-time, and it was subsequently decided that there would be no need for recording audiences in future concerts.

4.1.3 Conclusions

The excessive amount of data from this first concert appeared useful for considering subsequent audience research components, provided a clearer picture of the kind of data I wanted (subjective reflection on specific aspects of the conscious experience) and how to better obtain it. Additionally, the mutually confirming questionnaire and focus group data provided a strong sounding board to compare future audience feedback with. The above selected observations emerged meaningful when interacting with the feedback as performer, with an artistically curious and relationally open and engaged attitude. I was particularly struck by what I learned about the audience's expectations of classical concert atmosphere and their contrasting experience of this concert, and my attention was drawn towards the significance of the social and relational dimensions of the audiences' concert experience.

This concert #1 (Pilot) cycle provided me with both audience feedback and personally learned aspects I was eager to develop and improve upon. As anticipated, much of the audience data was considered irrelevant to the artistic inquiry, and subsequently disregarded from future methods (such as recording the audience and full, detailed processing of questionnaire answers, or searching for correlations with age through software analysis).

As the Pilot concert design included keeping the programme shorter to allow time for questionnaire filling and drinks reception, going forward, I wanted to expand the programme towards a fuller, two-part concert with intermission. (This was possible because the next concert would serve as my upgrade performance, and no audience research component was planned in addition). Musically, I wanted to become more confident in the stylistic repertoire-related improvisations, which meant continuing rigorous practicing of harmonic awareness, compositional structures, and stylistic improvisation exercises. Based on these first experience of structural improvisation in live performance, I felt the urgent need to turn my full attention towards further practice and rehearsal processes. This artistic motivation rising from concert #1 experience was, in a sense, straightforward: wanting to bring both solo and ensemble improvisations musically and technically as high as possible, including search for strategies to become more comfortable with the risk-taking involved in live (improvisation) performance. Finally, following the audience feedback of the Pilot, I concluded to perform the entire programme without sheet music, hypothesizing that it would help deepen our understanding of the repertoire, enable to improvise on it and apply the 'improvisatory approach' to the entire performance.

Two aspects rising from reflecting on my own experience, the discomfort of speaking to the audience and balance between composed and improvised material, were taken to further consideration in programme planning for the next concert. The decision was made to include a more extensive printed paper programme and an extra repertoire piece, to shift balance towards less speaking and more composed material. Reflecting on the programme flow and related audience feedback, my attention was drawn to programme structure. I wanted to explore programme sections as larger segments, illustrative of a wider vision than individual pieces; demonstrating, what I was learning about the improvisatory approach to repertoire (for example, regarding Mozart and his contemporary *salon* performance practices), and communicating this dimension to the audience as well.

Though the notes and basic observations listed above were made in the months following the concert, I didn't precisely know which of them would turn out significant, and how, in the long run. To illustrate: though I observed a significant experience emerging related to moments of free fantasy ensemble improvisation immediately after concert #1, I would grow to understand the factors that contributed to it – such as the thrill of witnessing real-time problem solving and communication – better through future concert cycles.

4.2 Concert #2: "Dialogues"

Timeline reference: this section refers to Aug 2017 – Nov 2017, months 12 – 15 of the project; concert on Oct 29th, 2017 (month 14). Rehearsals started in late August, marked in text as Rehearsals #1 - #6 and were followed by Practice Concerts #1 - #3 in October.[50] All materials in Appendix B.

4.2.1 Planning

Setting goals

Following critical reflection of concert #1 process, artistic goals for the next concert started to become identified. First, I wanted to expand the programme to include larger segments around individual pieces; second, to conduct a rehearsal process that would systematically approach the various skills and techniques associated with improvisatory elements, as well as support the musicians in becoming more comfortable with the live situation of improvisation performance; and third, to perform the entire programme without sheet music. Continuing to design and prepare a follow-up concert, stemming directly from concert #1 with partially similar and partially new elements, supported developing the improvisation skills and techniques I had been introduced to during my first year of study.[51]

Planning programme and rehearsals

In concert #1, I had aimed to perform in a well-rehearsed and confident manner, but one of the outcomes of the experience was that as my first stylistic Western classical improvisation performance, I hadn't actually known what specifically to rehearse in order to achieve this goal. I reflected that rehearsing processes, especially related to the Debussy and 'musical postcard'

[50] An important but independent background session, we had taken part in an ensemble workshop with Dolan in May 2017. Rehearsals were all conducted in Helsinki, Finland, and practice concerts in Turku, Helsinki, and London.

[51] Because of these priorities, and because it would serve as my Upgrade Performance, the concert was planned without audience research components. Concert #1 had included a student colleague from London and two from my Helsinki group; for concert #2, the full Helsinki group was recruited. This meant, that the two meetings we had in spring 2017 (without a specific goal at the time) would be followed by an intense rehearsing and performing period in September and October, culminating at the final 'Upgrade' concert at GSMD in October 2017.

ensemble improvisations, would need to be more systematically explored (and afterwards, analytically examined). This presented a clear goal for the rehearsal process: what specific skills, both repertoire-related and independent, will be needed and how can they be rehearsed? To explore these questions in practice, I devised a detailed and comprehensive rehearsal plan, with separate rehearsals for different segments, repertoire, repertoire-related improvisations, and independent improvisations. The plan included run-throughs and "practice concerts" with live audiences; reflecting and giving notes between rehearsals; and learning everything from memory.[52] I thought about which techniques we would need to practice for a 'musical postcard' segment, how to break down skills, guide rehearsals, and what kinds of instructions to give different instrumentalists.

An observation from my personal process of negotiating the 'musician' and 'researcher' within, the feedback I received from audience members after concert #1 had an encouraging impact on me, and the effort I poured as a musician into the artistic pursuit of this next concert became fuelled by the specific positive aspects I had learned of the audience's experience. The theme "Dialogues" became formulated as I reflected on my engagement with both audiences and co-musicians in light of the past years' improvisation study, and I decided to explore this theme, in concert, through four different segments: Bach, Mozart, Fauré and Debussy, and free fantasies on audience requests. Immersed in a process of reconciling my non-improvisatory knowledge of Western classical repertoire with that of improvisatory approach, I studied the dialoguing elements of improvisation both in group and solo settings. I wanted to communicate to the audience what I was discovering, and to invite them, as insiders, to share in this process. The vision was to picture dialoguing between past and present; notated and improvised; introspectively with oneself and outwardly with ensemble partners and as extension, between audience and performers.

The Bach segment rose from my fascination with the shared harmonic motif of Bach's Chaconne (Partita in D minor for solo violin, BWV 1004) and Prelude and Sarabande for cello (Cello Suite in D minor, BWV 1008), and wanting to illustrate that to the concert audience. The second segment, Mozart duet, was to be expanded and include the full piece, while

[52] An aspect that has been identified as a typical 'side product' when immersing in chamber music improvisation, (Dolan, 2005).

illustrating a playful approach that we, performers, associated with the historical performance practices of this time.[53]

The third segment, Debussy, was extended to include a small piece, Papillon from op. 77 by Gabriel Fauré, for two reasons: to improve the concert flow by increasing the segment and supporting the shift from Mozart to Debussy, as well as for my own benefit - to perform a piece completely without the element of improvising new notes. Because of the positive feedback from concert #1 audience on musicians speaking to them, I decided it should be included but sought to find a way to do it in a more controlled way that would not interfere at crucial moments of concentration. I decided to use an assistant/ensemble member in welcoming the audience at the beginning and included extended background information in the printed programme.

I eventually concluded that the concert should start with the Bach segment, portraying an intimate, introverted atmosphere, which would be developed on through use of space (myself on stage, co-musicians behind the audience). I wanted to illustrate dialoguing between past and present, or composer and performer, by placing two musicians behind the audience, so that we played together and for each other over the distance, with audience in between. Towards the end of the segment, to signify the movement from written (past) text to (present) improvisation, the musicians in the back were to join me on stage, for the final 'Minuet' improvisation. The information in the printed paper programme was particularly important for this first segment, so audience members would be specifically invited to familiarize themselves with it as they were welcomed into the space.

Designing a two-part concert with large ensemble and full program, which would also be my upgrade performance, the "Dialogues" (concert #2) event was considered more formal and serious in nature (and concert design) than that of "Pilot" (concert #1) from the start. Guided by the artistic vision, and the desire to create a coherent aesthetic related to the theme 'dialoguing', I hoped to gain improvisation performance experience in this context.

[53] We created an imaginary 'backstory' for the performance, pretending to be in a salon concert, and turning the third movement into a trio as "a friend walked in" – see printed programme in Appendix B for further details.

4.2.2 Rehearsing

Our first Dialogues rehearsals (#1-#3) followed the general plan of playing exercises on modulating, keeping real time and forms like Minuets, Rondos, and little free Fantasies during first half, and second half, practicing repertoire-related ensemble improvisation on Debussy or Bach and structural mini fantasies for audience requests. Separate rehearsals were scheduled for the repertoire pieces without improvisation (Fauré), or where the improvisational elements would be added at a later stage (Mozart). I applied the approach from my pedagogical training: assessing and separating skills for individual practice and once secured, combined into a coherent concert journey which itself was rehearsed in practice concerts. I thought of rehearsals as practicing the individual skills and practice concerts as rehearsing the combination of various challenging components; programme flow between various degrees of repertoire and improvisation, the emotional challenges of live ensemble improvisation, and taking requests and engaging with audiences.

Rehearsals followed standard chamber music practice procedure, in which talking and playing alternate, and discussion includes the whole ensemble reflecting on what was done and what would be attempted next. At first, my double role of teacher and ensemble member was distinctive, but as rehearsals advanced, common vision seemed to grow, and the ensemble became more democratic. Towards the final rehearsals (#4-#6), members came with their own ideas of what we should work on and how, contributing to the group dynamic development positively.

From my notes after Rehearsal #2:
We focused specifically on practicing getting away from "circling" and rather playing more intentional inputs and phrases. We are also practicing Minuets for learning to follow and lead modulations. I think we were also a little too much in our own heads. I wonder how to get us to practice demanding instrumental skills but also lift our eyes and shift focus into interactive space between us, to each other…

Differences in musical background and emerging emotions related to improvising

In the beginning, rehearsals felt a bit erratic, even confusing, and I perceived multiple challenges. Though I tried to create a safe and positive space, underlying professional

expectations were still undetermined and members, though positively motivated to participate, appeared impacted with various insecurities and uncomfortable feelings that occurred during rehearsals. It was clear that those more experienced with improvisation had an advantage in this sense.

As there was no sheet music or recording to pre-study, the rehearsal process started from exactly the musical knowledge each member brought internally into the space. This meant greatly varying levels of harmony and ear training; different types of repertoire library which to draw on; different internalized ideas of leading, following, cueing, adapting, and blending; and ability to apply spontaneous reactivity to all the above, or the lack thereof. Some members were more advanced in ear training; others in leading and following. Spontaneous reactivity became the element which needed rehearsing the most in early rehearsals – whether related to modulating, developing a theme or joining the music.

What appeared hard and what appeared easy

Harmonic, **tonal structures** presented a level of difficulty we found ourselves needing to practice again and again; when improvising tonally-free, improvising an otherwise coherent or structural ensemble piece became immediately more accessible. This became a practice technique: allocating tonal and ear-training exercises a separate rehearsal segment and rehearsing other aspects of ensemble improvisation without stylistically bound tonality. I discovered that my colleagues apart from the pianist, had a similar realization to mine in the beginning: they discovered that awareness of harmonic structures while playing was a missing skill, but increasingly vital to creating tonal and structural ensemble improvisations.

Spontaneity in ensemble playing, or quick leading and following responses, seemed to be more readily accessible to members who played orchestral instruments[54]. String players were fast in adapting to others as well as creating and jumping between contrasting accompanying and melodic voices both improvisatorically and performatively (applying soloist sound vs. accompanying sound, for example). The setup posed another challenge: while the kantele and grand piano were stable, violinists had the advantage of turning around freely and creating more bodily movement within the space of the ensemble.

[54] I made the same observation previously in my London group.

We discovered that creating themes was easy, but **developing themes** together as an ensemble was more difficult:

Rehearsal #3:
We agreed that our main challenge from past two rehearsals was developing themes. As we tried it, it seemed that our ideas of how to do it collided, no one took the lead in a clear way - and then the whole thing started to circle without direction.

As there was no score to tell us what was going to happen next and the only material to start with was the members' individual internalized musical knowledge, the need for communicating and understanding each other through **body language** as well as musical cues became crucial. In my notes, talking about eye contact (mainly asking for more of it from each other) and our interpretations of giving, receiving, and understanding each other's cues appeared in discussion in every rehearsal.

Rehearsal #4:
Examples from discussion today: did I understand your intent correctly when I took the theme to the minor… Did you want me to join when you looked at me like that… I tried to take it to a dominant pedal but only one member of the group got it… We seem to talk a lot about these types of things. How to understand each other better.

Eye contact and body language seemed to be related to the challenging, underlying positioning of self in the improvising-performing space – negotiating one's vulnerability and risk-taking in a professional setting. Whether members appeared open/accepting or closed/rejecting, seemed to impact on the rehearsal atmosphere more than in standard repertoire rehearsal, according to my experience. Especially in early rehearsals, I perceived a tendency of retreating, becoming closed in body language and withdrawing from the group – which, I presume, had to do with feeling uncomfortable and insecure with the tasks at hand. This quickly affected both the musical outcome as well as discussion atmosphere of the whole ensemble. I reflected, that as free improvisation rehearsal meant following series of cues from each other, the perceived 'openness' or 'closedness' of individual members affected the atmosphere of the rehearsal in a more personal way. To improvise as an ensemble, we all had to find a way of dealing with the situation socially and professionally.

4.2.3 Performing practice concerts

Looking back on the entire concert cycle, I experienced the biggest leaps forward during the three practice concerts. Reviewing these events on video, an increase in comfortability, confidence, freedom, and expressivity can be seen – notable in body language, speaking to the audience, and the musical output.

Practice concerts were advertised as intimate, local events, through social media and networks related to the venues (a music school, church parish hall and synagogue hall) and through networks of friends, family, colleagues, and acquaintances. Keeping the events small and friendly was intentional, as we needed an in-between step before the final GSMD concert; a safer space to practice live risk-taking, ensemble improvisation in performance time, and a chance for the less experienced ensemble members to have their "first experiences" in improvisation performance. Practice concert audiences ranged between 30 and 50 people and in Finland, included friends, family, colleagues, and students of ensemble members.

I received affirming feedback from my co-musicians regarding the planning of these practice concerts. Knowing that we will be able to run through this unique programme a few times and practice live improvisation with small and friendly audiences was something that we relied on individually and as a group. Coming from rehearsal stages, I looked forward to the test of 'real performance time': the ensemble needing to adapt to the present moment, working to find unity in expression, without time to analyse or re-takes – in essence, the real risk-taking, which would show how far the work we had done in rehearsals would carry us. The warm, excited, and supportive atmosphere these friendly audiences provided was very helpful to our process, as we started experimenting with our new improvisation techniques in front of live audience.

Having included a lot of information in the printed paper programme to diminish speaking, my concert model still required addressing the audience in several segments (supported by the concert #1 feedback). I grew to feel more comfortable with the speaking segments through the practice concerts, but when reviewing the final concert video, my body language was still more fidgety and nervous than I had thought.

The practice concerts also allowed us to get used to performing the Mozart chamber piece without music, gradually leaving it out. Playing chamber music from memory was another decision that was partially influenced by concert #1 audience data, and it turned out to be a more substantial undertaking for everyone involved than I had anticipated.

When reviewing recordings, it was clear that we all advanced a great deal in our harmonic awareness and ear training skills. We improvised at least one Baroque Minuet in each concert, and it always felt fun, playful, and connected. These moments ended in big smiles and happy, light moments which the audience reciprocated in their applause.

At Practice Concert #3, we made an exception to the programme and excluded the Mozart and Fauré, compensating by improvising more 'musical postcard' fantasies on audience requests at the end.[55] In my personal reflection, this concert seemed to be a culmination point of the project. The ensemble had "formed": we had overcome our emotional, social, and musical challenges and started to feel comfortable and confident on stage, and enjoying the performance, our ensemble work, and the live interaction with audiences.

Concert circumstances

Figure 4. View of stage, concert #2.



[55] Practice Concert #3 took place the evening before the final "Dialogues" Concert at Guildhall School, and this was done to save energy and concentration for the following day.

Due to ensemble members' availabilities, the concert was organized on a Sunday afternoon at 2pm and the venue, chosen for acoustic benefits and possibility to create an intimate setting, was the Music Hall at the Guildhall School. Assistants guided audience members to be seated as front as possible and the stage was framed with screens, in hopes of creating a more intimate setting and diminished distance between performers and audience members. Promotion of the concert and recruitment for audience happened through networks of friends, school posters, social media, and online platforms through the school. The audience was approximately 60 persons in total, including some family, friends, and acquaintances, but also many with no immediate personal connection to me or other performers.

Concert recording and printed paper programme[56]

The printed paper programme is in Appendix B. The concert recording has been edited for the convenience of the viewer and excludes intermission, as well as elements like tuning and stage re-organization. Full concert #2: https://youtu.be/typ3YR1H76s

[56] The video camera used for this recording had a setting unbeknownst to me or the recording assistant, which automatically cut the recording after a certain time. In the first half of the concert, this cut happened towards the end of the second movement of Mozart, which is the video cuts to a separate clip from Practice Concert #2. In the second half, the cut happened during the last audience request, eliminating only the last moments of music and final applause.

4.2.4 Post-concert reflection

Personal reflection

Due to the experience gained in practice concerts, I felt completely different at the beginning of this concert than at concert #1. I felt confident in my programme planning and the journey I was about to invite the audience on, as well as in my ensemble's ability to be flexible and recover from whatever might happen along the way. The overall experience of performing this concert was a very positive one, and I felt the audience was reacting to what we were offering them. Unlike at the start of concert #1, I 'knew' more than the audience did – having learned about the multiple dimensions contributing to their concert experience, I anticipated that our unconventional use of performance space in the opening Bach segment and deliberate use of humour in Mozart would go a long way in winning them over, and that we as an ensemble were prepared to improvise successfully on the Debussy.

In the opening Bach segment, I sought to embody the theme of 'dialoguing' through my personal performativity as well as use of space – starting from introspective, intimate dialoguing with oneself in the solo Prelude; dialoguing through time with a composer, centuries gone; and evolving towards openness and dialogue with chamber partners and the present moment, embodied in improvisation. I reflected on the performance afterwards:

After the Bach, I felt a forthcoming warmth from the audience that was relaxed already now, after first applause, unlike in the Pilot… The artistic vision I had for this segment seemed to be received by the audience and I sensed a very present, open, and warm atmosphere from them from the start. (Research diary extract, 30.10.2017)

Though I had started noting my awareness of the audience at these earlier stages of the project, the impact of these impulses on my own performance would increase in importance in later stages of the project. We end the Bach segment with an improvised Baroque Minuet, which lands on a major/minor dissonance. Reflecting on this moment, I sub-consciously perceived support and enthusiasm from the audience.

Demo clip #4: Applause after Bach segment: https://youtu.be/nxx0z1AFKTI

Including Papillon by Fauré (op. 77) was initially for the purpose of balancing repertoire and improvisation in the programme but ended up providing an important empirical discovery: how different it felt to perform repertoire with and without improvisatory element (referring specifically to creating new notes). During Papillon, I 'fell back' on my pre-existing performing routine – and experienced, in turn, freedom and prompting to take different types of creative, spontaneous risks than in my pre-improvisation-study treatment of the piece. I had intuitively applied what I had learned thus far of the improvisatory approach to interpretive repertoire performance (Dolan *et al.*, 2013), and wanted to explore this further in following concerts.

When the full ensemble entered for the first time in the Debussy segment, we experienced challenges in hearing each other (contrasting the ideal acoustic circumstances at Practice Concert #3 the previous evening), and became thrown off our guard. However, the experience we had gained carried us, and though there was a collective feeling of disappointment afterwards (voiced in comments such as *it wasn't our best ensemble improvisation*), there was also a sense of accomplishment relating to how we managed to manoeuvre the situation. In my personal reflection, watching the Debussy improvisation and subsequent audience requests on video, I felt impacted by the deep level of trust and empathy we, as an ensemble, were projecting:

Even as the previous evening's triumphant experience melted in the face of acoustic challenges, each member's body language and stage presence seemed the more committed to supporting and encouraging each other. (Research diary extract, 23.11.2017)

Demo clip #5: Debussy middle section, full ensemble improvisation, demonstrating empathy and trust: https://youtu.be/wvc2m-5ZD0I

4.2.4 Conclusions

At the time, I judged the overall outcome of this second concert cycle as positive and satisfactory. The "Dialogues" performances concluded the intense work done since the beginning of the project (14 months), and many of the musical goals set were achieved. Over the course of four performances of the "Dialogues" programme, as performers, we had

experienced several electrifying, successful improvising moments – strengthening the initial experiences from concert #1 regarding indication of group flow, emergence, optimal performance, and empathy (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Sawyer, 2006; Bishop, 2018). In the months after the concert, reflecting on the experience and critically examining the rehearsal process and concert recordings of specific segments as well as the overall cycle, the following observations were made.

The practice, preparation and performance of this complex ensemble programme and wide variety of repertoire-related and independent improvisatory techniques and styles proved a steep but valuable learning curve. I had rigorously formulated, tested, and explored **ensemble improvisation rehearsal & pedagogical strategies**, with the motivation of creating professional practice from the complex processes of training and forming a classically improvising ensemble, as well as overcoming the social, emotional, and musical challenges related to the risk-taking element. However, overcoming these aspects seemed to have brought about a bond of trust and empathy within the ensemble[57]. At the end of this concert cycle, I personally experienced my performer's confidence 're-gained', having now performed both repertoire-related and independent improvisations in a total of five concerts with live audiences, for whom we had improvised around 20 'musical postcard' free fantasies.

Looking back at both experiences of concerts #1 and #2, an awareness of the impact of visual aesthetics on audience's experience started growing and I wanted to start developing further a **'performative self'** (Kartomi, 2014; Rea, 2015)**.** My attention was drawn to cultivating intentional performativity related to musical expression, as well as physical stage persona, with aim of supporting musical expressivity and projecting personality (Rea, 2015). I wanted to understand how to better control body language, including the deliverance of clearer cues to ensemble partners and by extension, audiences.

The approach to **programme planning** that started emerging through these first two concert cycles was something that, though observed at the time, would grow more significant towards the end of the project. The expanded improvisatory programme I had designed around the composed pieces (originally inspired by historical events and improvisation performance practice), combined with concert #1 audience data awareness, brought me to complex, multi-

[57] A phenomenon that can be expected in improvising contexts; see Chapter 2, p. 35).

layered approach to designing a concert. I considered matters of audience experience and accessibility already when drafting the programme and experimented with binding creatively together different repertoire and improvisatory elements through a personalized theme, rising from the wider context of the project. Following the audience feedback from concert #1, I made sure the printed paper programme and spoken segments gave relevant background information and the entire programme was performed from memory to minimize any possible visually obstructive effects of music stands.[58] Reflecting on both concerts #1 and #2, these individual decisions were made in (intuitive) response to both audience feedback and performer experience; however, in later analysis at the end of the project, such decisions came to signify a deeper approach to concert programme planning.

Going forward

Concert cycle #2 with its large ensemble, multiple concerts, and complex rehearsal schedules, was an ambitious and challenging organizational undertaking, and led to concluding that future concert cycles must be more practically manageable (especially as they would, according to project design, include audience research components again). The estimate following reflective analysis, and the specific observations made in both these first two concert cycles at the time was, that the experience and data gathered was starting to provide some initial understanding of the exchange between audience and performers. Having now performed a similar programme twice and gained experience of audience response through one feedback data set and five live concerts, turning my artistic attention towards a different part of the repertoire, and exploring the related audience interaction, appeared as the logical next step. Would asking the same questions about audience experience related to improvisation, atmosphere, and engagement, generate similar or different responses when the type of improvisatory elements, stylistic repertoire language, and concert design were changed? As one of the artistic objectives of the project was to explore as many styles as possible within the Western classical canon, I started drafting a programme of Romantic repertoire, considering alternative ensemble formats, and immersed in studying the historical improvisatory performance practices of this era.

[58] Though research exists on music stands impacting audience's experience only in a minor way (Kopiez, Wolf and Platz, 2017), within the context of this project, attention to this element came from the performer's motivation to engage also through visual cues with audiences, and the removal of music stands was mentioned as a positive factor related to 'most engaging moments' in concert #1 audience data.

4.3 Concert #3: "Storytelling"

Timeline reference: this section refers to Dec 2017 – May 2018, months 16 – 21 of the project; concert on April 16, 2018 (month 20).[59] All materials in Appendix C.

4.3.1 Planning

Setting goals and combining changing parameters with audience response

In response to the artistic goal formulating after past two concert cycles, I immersed in study of Romantic-era harmonic and melodic languages, aesthetic approach, expressivity, and compositional structures. Rich in examples of performance practice, the 19th century "golden era of improvisation" informed the exploring of improvisatory elements different from the ones done in previous concert cycles. After experiencing the notable difference between performing Papillon (Fauré, op. 77) without any improvised notes and, on the other hand, the 'musical postcards' with only improvised notes, I wanted to gain further understanding of this aspect and the 'shades' of improvisation performance I was starting to observe (which, I hypothesized, may be related to the risk-taking element). To support these aspects of the inquiry, I concluded to explore specifically the range of repertoire-related improvisations in this Romantic concert. A specific question to explore in practice, would the performer's experience of risk-taking change, and how, when improvisational elements were changed?

Starting to draft a programme according to the above criteria, the following changes were applied to the concert design (to explore contrasting parameters to those in concerts #1 and #2): shifting the balance between improvisation and repertoire towards repertoire; rather than combination of shorter movements, including full-length pieces; and rather than taking substantial requests from audiences (like in 'musical postcards'), experimenting with different, more subtle forms of input; and rather than a large ensemble, playing with only one additional musician and forming a cello-piano duet.[60]

[59] The project was subsequently paused for the duration of my maternity leave from June 2018 to August 2019.
[60] This inquiry is approached through Western classical cello canon, in which the most common ensemble form is a cello-piano duet, where the voices are either equals or the piano is in an accompanying role.

As for the audience input, in concert #1, respondents expressed perceiving a noticeable difference in the concert atmosphere and their own way of listening during improvisatory moments. In this concert cycle, the follow-up questions that I wanted to explore, were: would this be the case when improvisational elements were different kind (more pre-planned and repertoire-related)? What would the audience's experience of improvisatory and repertoire moments be like in a Romantic-era programme context? As ensemble improvisation had emerged as a significant aspect to the experience in previous concerts, how would diminishing the ensemble size impact upon both performer and audience experience? These questions were to guide planning the audience research component.

The programme

To explore these questions within a Romantic-style frame, the programme was chosen specifically to reflect a century-long development of improvisation performance practice. Devising a journey from early Romantic character Beethoven A major sonata (1808) up until late/post Romantic 'Tale' by Janacék (1910-1926), Schumann's Fantasy pieces (1849) and two Preludes by Chopin (1839) were included to illustrate this 'golden era of improvisation'. This specific repertoire invited exploring multiple possibilities of improvisatory performance practices through the works of composers who, apart from Janacék, were themselves known as master concert improvisers (Gooley, 2018a). I wanted to explore the improvisatory approach in Beethoven with emphasis on interpretive and performative spirit, with unwritten notes being improvised only in embellishments during repeats and fermatas. Schumann's Fantasy pieces presented the inspiring opportunity to improvise a prelude before and interludes between the movements, and the Janacék piece, with its ever-evolving background already at the hands of the composer[61], invited us to follow the piece with a reflective, improvised fantasia of our own. Finally, a giant of Romantic improvisation practice, I felt necessary to include Chopin in the program, and decided to do so through a segment of two Preludes and their improvised variations. This segment presented the possibility of experimenting with a more subtle approach to audience participation: instead of asking for entire requests, I was going to ask them only for minor input[62], rather illustrating the practice process and inviting the audience as insiders to the specific steps of learning improvisation in Romantic style.

[61] See printed paper programme in Appendix C.
[62] When improvising on Chopin Preludes, I would ask the audience for a character to inspire us and to give notes/tones that we would work into the improvisation at the end.

This concert programme presented a motivating artistic opportunity: to take what I had learned through systematic, stylistic improvisation study into repertoire performance: exploring the 'improvisatory approach' by applying more intentional spontaneity to interpretive choices during performance (for example, by agreeing to try to surprise each other through unplanned use of dynamics). The Romantic language brought me to a different kind of risk-taking element as well: in previous concerts, this element been intensified by either adhering to rigorous stylistic rules or negotiating freer improvisation between large ensemble; in this programme, I wanted to specifically explore risk-taking from a different, more repertoire-related angle (in contrast to free, independent forms), and modify the elements contributing to it.

The theme "Storytelling" became formulated through two influences: immersing in the Romantic repertoire and rhetoric, which thrives on fantastical, storytelling expressions; and the experience I had recently gained at a Guildhall School improvisation course titled "Storytelling".[63] This theme and the way it inspired the concert as part of my improvisation journey, would be communicated to the audience through marketing materials, printed paper programme and speaking about it at the concert.

Audience research

Following the kind of data obtained through questionnaires and focus group discussions in concert #1, I decided that the subjective concert experiences of audience members would be best interrogated in interview setting. I estimated that this would enable more in-depth conversations with audience members than would occur in a focus group, while providing an opportunity to record their personal reflection on how they engaged with the performance. I wanted to hear the individual reflections, rather than focus group discussion, to avoid respondents being influenced by others' reflection, vocabulary, or points of view. I decided to use semi-structured interviews to interrogate the experience of select audience members (Brand *et al.*, 2012) and devised a question sheet to glance at during interviews (the purpose of which was mainly to remind myself of the types of questions I was interested in; not to go through systematically. See Appendix C). The data from concert #1 indicated that improvisatory

[63] Taught by Ken Rea and David Dolan, this course involves pairing musicians with actors to explore dramatic and musical means of storytelling over the course of a semester, leading eventually to participants working in small mixed groups (or "troupes" of both actors and musicians) to create an assessed performance together.

elements in the concert programme contributed, in audiences' feedback and performers' experience, towards experiencing heightened engagement and a shift in atmosphere. This time, rather than tracking emotional states, I wanted to specifically investigate audience members' subjective perceptions of atmosphere development during the concert; how they perceived the programme flow at different times; if they identified anything different between improvisatory and repertoire moments; and what general reflections they had on the experience afterwards. I envisioned my role in the conversation most importantly as assisting their subjective reflection and opening specific topics.

Interviewees would be selected by asking concert audience to fill in a voluntary mini questionnaire with three questions; age group, previous association with classical improvisation and whether they would be willing to be contacted for an interview in the days after the concert. Out of the ones who responded affirmatively to the last question, I would choose four respondents to contact for interviews, reflective of the audience demographic.

4.3.2 Rehearsing

Solo work

Following the ensemble-centred work of the past concert cycles, emphasis in rehearsing the Storytelling programme was on my individual study, and ensemble work was limited to duet work with a pianist – a familiar and conventional setup. As all the planned improvisations were related to repertoire, I started by taking what I had learned thus far regarding the improvisatory approach (Dolan *et al.*, 2013) into my repertoire preparation. I subsequently observed how my rehearsing process had started to change as a result: I was more aware of harmonic structures, progressions and events, which provided a strong foundation for building harmony-connected interpretation; my cello-centric comprehension of the pieces gave space to active listening of the full composition; and I became more courageous in interpretive and performative gestures, resonating what I had learned about story illustration, creative risk-taking and fantasy – elements, which I would later connect with 'improvisatoriness' (Gooley, 2018a).

As an orchestral string player, I was more familiar with Schumann and Beethoven, but less experienced in the detailed, characteristic, melodic language of Chopin. I started listening to

his preludes, ballads, and concerti, as well as early recordings in *bel canto* style. In supervisions with Dolan, we explored the harmonic and melodic approaches to Romantic styles improvisation. This included, for example, chromatic voice leading from melody aiming at more than one goal-point; use of rubato; emotional expressions inspired by speech intonation; and the unexpectedness, enharmony and lack of symmetry or tonal confirmations in harmonic structure. As a result, these specific exercises were added to my daily improvisation practice: singing romantic, decorative and *bel canto* melodies, and eventually playing them; *sing & play* with voice leading from the top; practicing harmonic progressions through arpeggiated gestures landing away from expectations on the cello; and preluding with single gestures and characters in mind (in preparation particularly for the Schumann).

Regarding my cello technique adaptations, I explored applying the Romantic, fantasy imaginary as inspiration to the way I moved my bow arm, and experimented with fluctuating legatos and short, whole arm gestures. In supervisions with Adrian Brendel, I sought for more effortless ways of applying power to the bow stroke and explored moulding the sound within the stroke, in hopes of developing ability to spontaneously switch between opposite types of movement - the kinds that are needed in Schumann and Janacék – but in improvisatory context.

Ensemble work

Duo rehearsals started in late February and the concert was scheduled for Apr 16th, 2018. We started by working on the repertoire and included improvisational elements later, after initial sessions together with Dolan (in person and via video call). Observing Dolan and my duo partner – both piano virtuosos – navigate stylistic improvisation as keyboard instrumentalists was valuable and 'ear-opening' and became a vital part of my personal learning process.[64] Ensemble-wise, fitting together two instruments in a clear, conventional duet setting was naturally more straightforward. Additionally, our planned programme did not have the element of fully free improvisations based on audience requests, but everything was repertoire-related, to varying extents. I observed that this provided support and clarified the necessary skills and subsequent rehearsal processes. We practiced specific stylistic harmonic progressions and

[64] We ended up having many short rehearsals, because we could schedule them conveniently in between our weekly teaching commitments in Helsinki – which, in retrospect, was an effective strategy for improvisation rehearsal. In total, we had eight rehearsals (the final one with a practice audience) and five sessions with Dolan, including two live sessions at the start of the project, two remote video sessions and a short master class in Helsinki a day before the concert (advertised privately to friends and colleagues).

modulations; explored techniques and ways of relating to existing material in free fantasy improvisation; and preluding and interluding from one character to another (related especially to Schumann). The Chopin Preludes, and associated improvised variations, presented a specific challenge to me, and the pianist graciously created a recording of his part for me to practice between rehearsals.

Duo rehearsal strategies rose from the range of relating improvisation practice to repertoire: from subtle and restricted in Beethoven to free and imaginative following the Janacék. Our attention was directed towards developing inventive ways of quoting, borrowing, variating, and elaborating – which, I reflected, was a less risky, less emotionally vulnerable starting point than that of a clean slate or non-musical reference point (like for the mini fantasies based on audience requests in previous concerts).

For this concert, we organized two practice performances: a run-through for colleagues and an open master class with Dolan a day before the concert. Transitioning from rehearsing to performing, I considered more intentionally the 'performative self' I wished to bring forth in concert, related interpretive choices and what I had learned about physical performativity, projecting personality and body language in my improvisation coursework at GSMD (Rea, 2015). I considered the Romantic rhetoric and 'storytelling' aesthetic as inspiration and worked to cultivate performative and body language awareness to better embody these elements.

Concert circumstances

Figure 5. View of stage, concert #3. The traditional setup of this instrumentation meant, that direct eye-contact was difficult or even impossible.



The concert was organized, courtesy of my alma mater, in the Wegelius Hall in Sibelius-Academy, Helsinki, on Monday, April 16th, 2018, at 6pm. The back wall of the 4th floor medium-sized chamber music hall consisted of windows, providing bright spring evening light. Stage faced the windows, and chairs were organized in several rows of half-moon circles, with their backs to the windows. The hall had no backstage area, so I needed to exit through the entrance door to access a break space. Printed programmes were placed on a music stand at the entrance and a recording setup was placed in front of the first row. Promotion for the concert and recruitment for audience happened through social networks and social media, where the event gained positive visibility. I expected around 40 people, but more than 100 turned up, and chairs needed to be added as the room filled up. Most (but not all the) audience members had some link to me; though having previously lived in Helsinki more than 7 years prior, I had not been in contact with most of them for at least that time.

Concert recording and printed paper programme

The printed programme is in Appendix C. The concert recording has been edited for the convenience of the viewer and excludes intermission, as well as elements like tuning and stage re-organization. [65] Full concert #3: https://youtu.be/YGf5Oc7yEe8

[65] Please note, that the recording does not fully reflect the acoustic situation – there are scratches in the cello close-up sound, ensemble balance is distorted (cello is overall louder in recording) and natural echo of the room is not captured.

4.3.3 Post-concert reflection and audience data analysis

The reflective documentation of this concert cycle was done at two time points: in the days and weeks immediately after the concert and, due to maternity leave, a year later when I returned to the project and watched the recording again.[66] My immediate feelings after the concert, as noted in reflective diary, were relief and joy, and disappointments were quickly diluted by the enthusiasm of the audience. When reviewing the concert video after the gap year, my observations matured and the notes I had made in the immediate aftermath were analysed further.[67] The reflective protocol from previous concert cycles, which generated meaningful topics, was applied both to the performer experience and the audience data. According to this protocol, observations from reflective notes were grouped under both recurring and new topics.

As in previous concert sections, the organization and vocabulary used to describe these topics was modified at final analysis of the full project for coherence; however, the original observations were noted in the reflective diary between the third and the fourth concerts.

Personal reflection

Difference in general approach to playing. Reviewing the video, I observed myself taking more creative risks in terms of time, breathing and expressivity, especially in the Beethoven, in two different ways: first, when comparing the general level of my playing to before starting the project; and second, between the first and second repeats of this performance. One of the motivations to choosing this sonata was, that as it represents a particularly sensitive, challenging piece of cello repertoire, I was curious, if rehearsing and performing it with an improvisatory approach might affect this uncomfortable, 'cellistic' predisposition. The 'improvisatory approach' to this performance was agreed to include freeing the repeats, which meant applying spontaneous decision-making to embellishing melodies, improvising cadenzas, or initiating unplanned interpretive decisions (to the possible surprise of the duo partner).

[66] Because of (twin) pregnancy issues following the concert (which was April 16), the audience interviews were conducted in early May, and I went on early maternity leave beginning of June.
[67] For example, my immediate notes state that "*I appear to be taking more time and creative freedom in the repeat*". Scrutinizing this further a year later led to identifying these and other more detailed and specific impacts of adapting the 'improvisatory approach' on this performance (further elaborated on in Chapter 5).

The following excerpts demonstrate the beginning (demo clip #6) and repeated beginning (demo clip #7) of the first movement, with 'improvisatory approach' applied to the repeat, in which the above-described differences can be observed. The repeat, though it depicts minimal improvisation of new notes, illustrates a subtle but noticeable shift in our treatment of the material; the first time, aiming to convey the information of the score, and second time, to 'make it our own' in more creative, freer expressive and improvisatory spirit. In doing so, we seem to have applied greater fluctuations of tempo, dynamics, and longer-term beat reference to phrasing, and the projected sound appears more open.

Demo clip #6: Beginning of Beethoven's Sonata: https://youtu.be/vYtzolc3mbw
Demo clip #7: Repeated beginning of Beethoven's Sonata: https://youtu.be/TqiQnCkRLsU

Elaborating on Beethoven revealed a weakness in my left-hand technique, related to spontaneous performance, and highlighting a need to develop instrument-specific practice strategies. Choosing spontaneously which notes or embellishments to play on the fingerboard included unplanned shifts which turned out inaccurate. I had practiced embellishment possibilities but left the choice to the moment (typical approach to repertoire-related embellishments and decorations (Levin, 2009; Berkowitz, 2010), but to an unwelcome surprise, I became unsupported by muscle memory in the moment of performance. Reflecting on this afterwards led me to observe a specific challenge of string-instrument improvisation: the areas in between "right" and "wrong" notes, and the need for developing more specific practice strategies.

Sheet music. This time, I performed Beethoven and Schumann from memory and the Chopin and Janacék with music on the stand (though not directly in front of me). Watching the video, I noticed myself trying harder to project performative body language when sheet music was used – perhaps remembering the feedback from concert #1 audience. However, this time, the pianist was seated behind me, so sheet music didn't "compete" with ensemble eye contact to begin with, and the aspect seemed less relevant.

Performativity and body language. Reviewing the recording, I observed that we both appeared to project a higher degree of positive, free, and expressive body language in improvisatory moments compared to repertoire sections. Unlike in previous concerts, this entire programme was played without direct eye contact – a stark contrast to the previous

concerts' large ensemble interaction. This was a major parameter shift and placed emphasis on my personal body language more than I had anticipated. I reflected on the projected performativity in my post-performance commentary on the Beethoven (after gap year):

In the first movement [12:10-12:20 in full concert video], *there is a moment when first I connect with the pianist and open my eyes "towards" him – even though he is behind me – and unbeknownst to me, he looks at me a few seconds later, and a special feeling of unity is perceived. A bit later, he goes on to do an unplanned, playful decoration and to my glee, I managed to follow him and respond to it.*

Reflecting on improvisations. Due to the shift in balance of repertoire and improvisation, fully improvised moments were rarer than in previous concert programmes, and especially the Chopin segment provided a step-by-step illustration of incorporating improvisatory elements. Something that initially was mentioned in audience interviews, and subsequently caught my attention on the video when analysing further after gap year, was how noticeable the shift was when transitioning from repertoire to improvisatory performance. Particularly strong when transitioning from Chopin's Prelude 'as is' to first variation, I attempted to describe my performer's memory of this moment (demo clip #16), assisted by the video recording, in my notes:

As the first variation starts, intensity of the situation rises immediately. I am aware that this is the first moment I am stepping into riskier improvising waters in front of this audience… I also perceive an electrification, in the sound I project but also in my body language, listening and interacting with the pianist. Curiously, when watching the recording, I notice that even though I am more nervous now [than previously in the programme], I appear more in command than before.

Demo clip #16: Chopin (Prelude B minor) 'cello variation' beginning:
https://youtu.be/Suvq20Fq3j4

During the concert, I was acutely aware that my abilities to utilize harmonic richness in Romantic style was at beginner stage, and I tried that much harder to embody other performative means rising from the improvisatory approach (Dolan *et al.*, 2013).[68]

The Prelude to Schumann has good moments, but it's too long. I am too timid and don't develop the wonderful impulses the pianist is giving me… But I seem to be compensating by leaning more into expressivity and other [non-pitch] performance parameters. The first interlude takes off much better and the transition to Schumann's second movement is seamless.

In both these improvisations (prelude and first interlude), my use of pitch is safe and simplistic; the first, I fiddle mainly around one note (e) and in the second, running scales up and down. However, it seems I am trying to compensate by interjecting stronger directionality through timbre, loudness, vibrato, and physical body movement.

Demo clip #8: Improvised Prelude to Schumann's *Fantasy pieces*:
https://youtu.be/oETi0wX-bSI
Demo clip #9: Improvised first Interlude between 1st and 2nd movement of Schumann's *Fantasy pieces:* https://youtu.be/KpJHCCsPf4Q

Impulses from audience. My experience of interaction with audience in this concert was warm and positive, starting from the moment I walked into the hall and discovered an audience nearly triple the expected size. I felt a strong projection of excited expectation and support throughout the program, specifically after the Chopin segment, and culminating in a sense of celebration at the end. Afterwards, I realized that I had heard several sounds from the audience that had impacted me during the concert, though it was intuitive at the time. Interrogating the experience afterwards, I had heard laughter, gasping and small comments before and during applause, and even during the music, and had intuitively interpreted them as positive. I specifically recalled these impulses during the Chopin segment which, I speculate, led me to venture into greater risk-taking towards the end, only to find myself in an unknown harmony – in which situation I intuitively trusted the audience to remain supportive and ended the improvisation abruptly in open laughter. Another distinct impulse, that emerged from this internal interrogation, was the moment when Janacék's composed piece ended and we launched into our improvised reflection

[68] This was first identified in my immediate post-concert note log and further reflected on after the gap year.

(which was the least pre-planned part of the entire concert; demo clip #14[69]). I experienced an increase and intensification in body language and visual cues between me and my duo partner, but also recalled a visual cue from the audience; a stiffening in body language and change in facial expression. In the moment, I intuitively interpreted these impulses as signals of being fully engaged, fully present with me in that moment. Reflecting on this, I observed that it had fuelled me in the moment of performance, likely contributing to the intensity of my ongoing improvisation, expressivity, and even physical performativity.[70]

Audience interviews

Interviewees were selected from those audience members who opted to return their mini-questionnaires and responded positively to the notion of being contacted for an interview. The main criteria for interviewees were to gather a group that demonstrated variety in classical music and concertgoing experience. Four people were contacted in the days following the concert and they all agreed to be interviewed (materials in Appendix C.)

The motivation to interview respondents portraying a variety of experience as concertgoers, and not be professionally involved with classical music, rose from the experience of concert #1 focus group discussion (in which musicians took part in). This time, I wanted to hear reflection and descriptive vocabulary that would not be influenced by others, particularly the 'experts', but rise from the subjective, personal experience of the interviewee.

Due to personal (pregnancy-related) circumstances, interviews took place a couple weeks after the concert – which turned out fruitful, as it pre-dispositioned the interviewees for genuine reflection on which impressions and aspects of the experience emerged most memorable. Interviews were semi-structured, and I wanted to give space for the respondents' own, intuitively occurring reflection, using the question sheet as a guide for natural conversation. Each interview started by asking the audience member to describe their general experience, followed by asking about their classical concert experience and expectations, and experience

[69] See Demo clip #14 in Chapter 5: Beginning of improvised reflection after Janacék's Tale https://youtu.be/TDpHXyygTY8

[70] I was aware that the support of family and friends as well as my pregnant appearance likely contributed to the enthusiasm of the audience, who had arrived in large numbers to support this rare occasion to hear me play in Helsinki.

of atmosphere in this concert. Often the discussion progressed naturally, and respondents reflected intuitively on many aspects on my sheet before I asked about them[71]. While it could be expected that me as the performer conducting the interviews created a bias and predisposition for respondents to speak politely and positively of their experience, I still acknowledged this at the beginning of each interview and reassured them that I would not be offended by anything they would say. When planning the interview questions, I tried to word questions in a way that would appear as neutral and non-leading as possible. In my personal assessment immediately after the interviews, the responses appeared genuine, because respondents had often intuitively offered reflection or answers to questions before I had asked them.[72]

The analytic process (started before and finished after the gap year) launched from a similar stance as after concert #1: engaging with the audience members' experiences as a performer, with a purposefully open attitude[73]. However, due to the amount of text and especially to the format of the interview, mainly freely flowing conversation, forming an understanding of both the emotional engagement fluctuations and audiences' experience as well as specific observations from certain moments during the concert required a more systematic approach. Drawing on topics from previous concert cycles, I first identified and organized specific comments related to these 'recognizable' topics (such as *speaking to the audience* or *changes in emotional state*). I then proceeded to interrogate the transcriptions for possible other, new topics (connecting with emotional engagement, improvisatory moments, or general audience experience) that respondents appeared to refer to (such as *co-creative experience*). The following seven topics were found meaningful and derived from interviews in this concert.[74]

Interviewees:

Audience member #1: female, 25-35 years old, medium familiarity with classical music, occasional concertgoer (friend to me, occasional contact)

[71] Such as noticing a difference in the way they listened to improvisatory and repertoire moments, being more alert and engaged than expected in a classical concert, enjoying the performers speaking to them, and excitedly following the increased visual communicativity between musicians during improvised moments.
[72] Interviews took 30 minutes and were conducted in a secluded corner of the café at the Music Centre in Helsinki. Two were conducted in Finnish (quotes translated by the author from transcript) and two in English.
[73] This meant, for example, choosing to dismiss the 'performer's' critical voice; interrogating attitudes and dismantling any prejudice or bias related to the audience, or specific members of it.
[74] According to research design, a 'merging analysis' of both concerts #1 and #3 audience data was not to be conducted at this stage but was to take place at the end of the whole project; illustrated in chapter 5.

Audience member #2: female, 55-65 years old, regular concertgoer, symphony season ticket holder (acquaintance to me, prior contact over 10 years ago)
Audience member #3: male, 25-35 years old, low familiarity with classical music, not regular concertgoer (acquaintance to me, prior contact over 10 years ago)
Audience member #4: female, 45-55 years old, high familiarity with popular music, medium with classical, not regular concertgoer (no prior contact to me)

Uniqueness of the experience. When asked to describe their concert experience at the start of the interview, all respondents gravitated naturally towards reflecting positively on the surprising nature and unexpected elements of this concert, compared to their expectation or previous experiences of non-improvisatory classical concerts. All respondents described feeling fluctuating, heightened levels of engagement throughout the concert, and the words "surprising" and "engaged" occurred often. Two respondents (low and medium familiarity with classical music) noted having a similar emotional experience as they would expect to have at a rock concert but never at a classical one.

Audience member #1:
After leaving the concert I felt quite surprised and amazed… It had quite a powerful impact on me, emotionally. I felt like the experience was more like being at a rock or pop concert…. There was a sort of exhilarating feeling in the concert hall.

Audience member #3:
I was really excited about this concert because the intensity of the experience, and my own alertness rose constantly, and the final piece [fantasy reflection on Janacék] was a real climax. …It was different from any classical concert I had experienced before.

Atmosphere. Respondents reflected extensively on their experience of atmosphere of the concert, which they found to be relaxed, enjoyable, informal, supportive, expectant, and "electrified". Two respondents described enjoying feeling invited and relaxed as audience members, as opposed to feeling self-conscious like they would at a typical classical concert ("*you're always worrying about moving or coughing or breathing",* audience member #2). One respondent (experienced classical concertgoer) described having contemplated an urge to start dancing during the Chopin segment, as they felt the creative playfulness of the situation was contagious. Respondents generally described feeling invited and included in the space in

a different way than they would have expected at a classical concert (comparisons to jazz and folk were made). Three respondents had experienced the Chopin segment as a moment of shift in atmosphere:

Audience member #1:
[After the Beethoven] when you started talking, that's kind of when the situation changed and then after listening to the first [Chopin] improvisation…that was kind of the first window to what this is all about. And I was sitting next to friend of mine and we looked at each other like, I don't really know what happened here, but that was amazing. I think that kind of shifted the whole tone of the concert.

Audience member #2:
Chopin, it touched me deeply and I started crying… there's something in the flow of notes that just brings…an emotional reaction.

Speaking to the audience. Without asking, respondents gave specific feedback on me as performer speaking to and creating dialogue with them. Respondents complimented both the material in the printed paper programme and the information I shared as attributing positively to the experience:

Audience member #2:
You asking something the audience made a difference. It was easier to… express your feelings, the audience was more relaxed after that. …Any moment that the performer is doing something unexpected or is in somehow interaction with the audience, it does make the atmosphere more relaxed.

Audience member #1:
When you were talking about the music to us, and what you were doing and the complexities and emotions within it, it made us in the audience support you even more.

Changes in emotional engagement. All four interviewees described experiencing higher engagement, alertness, and intensity levels during improvised moments, and perceiving them in the performers as well (particularly so in Chopin and Janacék segments). Three described the final free fantasy as the culmination point, and one, a Chopin variation. Two respondents

described experiencing strong emotional reactions (spontaneous crying) in certain improvised moments. All four respondents commented on the increase in performer body language and how fascinating it was to follow our communication during improvisations (two respondents speculated independently on how interesting it would be to see a larger group do it). Respondents reflected on the difference they perceived when listening to written versus improvised moments:

Audience member #1:
While you were playing the piece, I thought it is very well played and beautiful music, but my thoughts drifted…. But when the improvisation started, I felt completely engaged and it generated a strong emotional reaction in me–Even though I couldn't actually know when the improvisation began…yet instinctively it changed the whole mood.

Audience member #2:
I was excited, expecting something new, what will they do next, and how… Especially how will you as two players interact during the improvisation.

Visual cues and body language. All respondents reported enjoying the increased visible communication and body language in improvised moments. Reflecting on their overall emotional experience, respondents enjoyed the genuine, creative, and relaxed nature of the event and found it to contrast their previous experience of standard classical concerts. Two respondents speculated about the built-in "repetitive vs. novel" nature of classical music, and how it possibly contributes to classical repertoire concerts being less emotionally exciting for them – in contrast to the special, co-creative experience of this concert. One respondent perceived a special type of empathy generated in free duo improvisation and how it 'democratized' the ensemble:

Audience member #1:
When you left the [Janacék], there was an emotional leaning towards each other… It looked like you were very intently and intuitively listening to each other – it wasn't about making you shine or anyone being in the background, it seemed a very equal situation.

Respondents, when reflecting on their emotional experience and comparing how they felt during repertoire and improvised moments, mentioned moments of "mistakes" or "getting lost" as particularly interesting or rewarding:

Demo clip #10: The final moments of the Chopin segment, which ended in me being so lost that I ended the music abruptly in laughter: https://youtu.be/rfCNoqbhlaQ

Audience member #2:
I didn't think there were mistakes…Because something that takes you away from each other, that also is interesting. The dissonance is what is interesting. What comes out, and then how you find again to the same path.

Audience member #1:
Humanity of the situation made it more interesting, you are waiting to see what happens. You have no idea where it's going, you have no idea if it's going to succeed or not, it's a very authentic situation. You find yourself anticipating, where is this going, what's happening. Oh, it went that way!

Respondents remarked on the contribution of personality and personal presence of performers:

Audience member #1:
You put your own personality into it, you were so genuine. That kind of changed the atmosphere. – It puts the audience into a very different headspace, and you kind of feel like you are sitting there with someone you know.

Experience of co-creativity. All four respondents expressed at some point of the interview being impacted by how skilful the improvisation was, and one particularly described "*it's one of the coolest things, witnessing a skilled musician, just spontaneously playing around with their instrument*" (audience member #3). Two other respondents, when asked about how they felt during the concert, reflected on a co-creative, insider feeling:

Audience member #1:
The possibility that something can go wrong and then we can be all there together, it's a bonding experience… When you were improvising, I felt that we were collectively doing

something. It felt like a group effort somehow… Like we were inside the music with you, instead of just sitting.

Audience member #4 [on Chopin final variation with notes requested from audience]:
I enjoyed the Chopin…and then suddenly I realized that you started bringing those [audience requested] notes into it and it was so clever!

Experience of 'audiencing' (Walmsley, 2019). Another aspect that emerged in interviews, was the way respondents described their own role in the event. Several respondents intuitively reflected on their experience of being a member of the audience at not only this but in previous experiences of classical concerts, and the positive difference they experienced in this regard. Respondents described feeling invited and included in the space as audience member, as well as feeling more relaxed and less self-conscious, which contrasted with past experiences.

Asking about the atmosphere often elicited spontaneous reflection on the subject in general. Respondents described a range of 'audiencing' experiences; feeling self-conscious, restricted, or fearful of disturbing others and being criticized by surrounding audience members; or relaxing when feeling like a welcomed participant, and not having to be so worried about a specific code of conduct. Respondents felt that their desire to support the performers, take part in the event or express their enthusiasm was restrained by strict behavioural code in classical music contexts, and reported feeling freer and relaxed, like they could express themselves through a variety of means in addition to traditional applause, in this concert.

4.3.4 Conclusions

Regardless of past classical concert experience, respondents described their concert experience as positive, emotionally impactful, and typically, *surprisingly engaging – nothing like I expected*. Reviewing the interview transcripts revealed several aspects that required further consideration. Confirming my memory of long stretches of contemplation on the respondent's part, with minimal guidance or questioning from myself, the transcriptions provided a rich resource of audience members' thoughts related to the concert event. Though the 2,5-week time gap between concert and interviews was not planned, it turned out beneficial, as it was particularly interesting to observe which aspects of the concert experience emerged most memorable a few weeks afterwards. However, even though they were asked to speak freely, as

the interviews happened in intimate one-to-one settings, it can be presumed that respondents may have been prone to omitting critical aspects of their experience. Aware of this beforehand, I had planned to start the interviews with questions relating to practical elements, in hopes of inviting respondents to enter the conversation through more 'neutral' topics (not related to personal experience or perception of other people). While conducting the interviews, this strategy appeared beneficial, as respondents ventured towards the more emotional and personal aspects of the experience independently, without prompting.

Reviewing the transcripts side-by-side, I observed respondents intuitively reflected on the aspects of the concert experience that specifically elicited **emotional responses** in them. I suspected that this was related to the gap in time (as it is known that our memory is linked to emotions (Teroni, 2021) and it can be speculated that the less significant details of the subjective experiences had blurred. However, as a musician, I found this to be thought-provoking and a welcome challenge to the detail-orientation of daily practice, prompting me to think about the aesthetic value, artistic motivation, and the kind of memorable, emotional imprints that artists generally may hope to deliver. Two respondents' independent comparison of this classical concert experience as similar to a "stadium rock concert experience", in which value is derived from seeing the previously known performers in live situation, where they speak, tell stories related to the songs they perform, and the togetherness experienced with the people around you (Lawson, 2002), struck me as particularly interesting. It strengthened further my viewing of the concert as a single aesthetic entity, but also highlighted modern neglect of social, communal, and relational potential in classical concert culture (Small, 1998; Pitts and Burland, 2014; Walmsley, 2019).

When observing the emotional sequences and key moments of concert #3 from both performer and audience perspectives, as portrayed in the above data, a connection between my experience of creative **risk-taking** and **audience response** seemed to occur. It appeared, that even with the changes made to concert and programme design, audience members' reactions to different moments in the programme resonated with the level of artistic risk-taking, as improvised moments generated a more attentive type of listening and were more readily experienced as emotionally engaging. Furthermore, within the spectrum of improvisation, the tendency continued: the freer and more unplanned, the more exciting and emotionally impactful it appeared – which, as I speculated at the time, might be related to the increased body language, visual cues, and emphasis on directionality and expressivity that we performers employed in

these moments. The Janacék fantasy reflection was most and Chopin variations second most mentioned when discussing highlights and most engaging moments of the programme, correlating accurately with my experience of risk-taking of the entire concert.

In later, final analysis of the full project, my attention was drawn to something that I hadn't fully identified at the time, though it was described by respondents in this concert as well: an **insider, co-creative experience** related specially to witnessing ensemble improvisation**.** When interrogating the full project data in search for significant themes, my attention was drawn to comments appearing in concert #1 focus discussion and recurring in these concert #3 interviews, in which respondents describe a participatory, insider experience, when following the ways in which we musicians worked out the ensemble improvisation in live performance. As this observation was made at a later stage, it was not specifically considered in the design of the next concert; however, I did conclude from this data, that strongest emotional responses reported during this concert, like in previous ones, appeared in moments of ensemble improvisations and the less pre-planned, more risk-taking range of improvisatory techniques.

Going forward

Concert cycle #3 generated valuable data on both the audiences' and performer experience, and the audience's response to improvisatory elements followed the tendency of previous concert cycles. However, questions related to a deeper level of impulse exchange occurring between performer and audience, as well as the (direct and indirect) impact of improvisation on the 'audiencing experience' were further brought to my attention, leading to conclude that another concert would still be necessary before engaging with in-depth, conclusive analysis of the full project.

This conclusion was supported by the artistic experience of this concert cycle, which introduced a range of new techniques to my improvisatory ability, resulting in eager motivation to refine and test them a step further. I observed, that reflecting on the specific rehearsal processes of this concert #3 programme, particularly in relation to repertoire-related improvisatory elements and comparing them to previous concert cycles, resulted in three very different kinds of experiences. I determined, that evaluating and making sense of these findings would be best achieved in further practice (Haseman, 2006) through the preparation of a final concert, in which a 'combination' approach – drawing on experiences and findings from past

three concerts – would be applied to rehearsal strategies, programme choices, ensemble format and audience research.

4.4 Concert #4: "(Un)Expected"

Timeline reference: this section refers to Sept 2019 – July 2020, months 22 – 32 of the project, with concert on Dec 14th, 2019 (month 25). All materials in Appendix D.

4.4.1 Planning

Setting goals

Simultaneously while reflecting on data from past concert cycles, my study of historical performance practice was now extending to the developments of the modern concert format and particularly its 'predecessors' from the 'golden age of improvisation' (Musgrave, 2012; Gooley, 2018a). Fitting with the artistic objective for this concert programme, of combining and refining previously tested improvisatory elements (or, as the 'musician-within' would say, to test whether successful moments in previous concerts had been merely 'happy accidents'), inspiration was subsequently drawn from the design of a "typical golden age of improvisation" concert, including miscellaneous-seeming program, mix of instrumental and voice pieces without pre-set order, and diverse styles and ensembles (Philip, 2004). Following previous cycle's varied rehearsal practices, I wanted to implement what had appeared most successful regarding ensemble rehearsal strategies and experiment with devising performance segments in which the benefits, as experienced in both repertoire-related and independent-of-repertoire ensemble work, could be combined. I decided to re-introduce the 'musical postcard' segment (because of the way free fantasy ensemble improvisations emerged in previous audience data), but this time, with experienced improvisers, to keep the related rehearsal process more manageable. A specific aspect of improvisatory practice, maturing in the background at previous stages of the project, it was now time to bring my process regarding the foundational improvisation practice of *preluding* to performance stage. This was to be approached in small steps, by including mini preludes to repertoire where applicable.

In seeking connections between concerts #1 and #3 audience data, the active role, or positive experience of 'audiencing' that respondents associated with the (direct and indirect effects of) improvisatory elements, emerged as a new perspective within the project. For this final concert, the following goal was set: to explore more intentionally inviting audience members into an

active role, including asking them for input related to improvisations, encouraging them to respond freely throughout the concert and conversing with them (Philip, 2004; Gooley, 2018a). A questionnaire was planned, with the possibility of follow-up interviews, to investigate audience response.[75]

The programme

Rather than specific stylistic language, composers or improvisation techniques, this concert was to be inspired by what I had learned of 19th century chamber concerts, and how the related programming disappeared together with improvisation practices. I wanted to explore the aesthetic values that transpired when spontaneity and diversity were part of the structural design. To imitate this model more comprehensively and to add the experience of working with voice and text to the repertoire covered by the project, a singer was recruited. Stirring modern traditions, the above historical convention was applied to programming, including removing restrictions on eras, movements, instrumentations, or styles. This led to an open drawing board in terms of repertoire choices, and a different aim emerged: creating coherence in terms of aesthetic experience through emphasizing and adding creative power to performers and their improvisatory contributions (rather than composers) – a phenomenon with strong historical precedence[76].

Having concluded to attempt improvising a small solo Baroque prelude in public, the Prelude from Solo Cello Suite n:o 4 in Eb major by J. S. Bach was chosen as context in which to explore this element. Two GSMD students were recruited, a pianist and soprano, for the main repertoire portion of the program. Neither had previous experience in free ensemble improvisation, and little experience in the type of repertoire-related improvisation planned for this program. However, this setting provided me with the opportunity to observe the learning process of a singer and add a new dimension of repertoire to the project, while initiating a clear and defined ensemble rehearsal process (which placed me in triple role of 'teacher', 'student' and 'ensemble leader').

[75]See all materials, including Ethics application, in Appendix D.
[76] For further discussion of the historical shift changing the performance event as primary medium of the performer towards composer, see (Philip, 2004; Musgrave, 2012; Gooley, 2018a)

Unlike in previous cycles, work with the trio ensemble started by discussing, listening, and trying out repertoire together. This helped create both vision and ownership for everyone involved. Through the more democratic process, we selected two songs by W. A. Mozart, one by Hugo Wolf and, fitting with the miscellaneous nature of the program, a 20th century Hebrew song by Marc Lavry, which I was thrilled to learn about from my trio partners. Finally, the first movement from Sonata for cello and piano, D major, by Felix Mendelssohn – another giant improviser himself – was included (because of its celebratory and spontaneous spirit, and the rich improvisatory practices related to the composer). The improvisatory elements would be tested and subsequently decided in rehearsal stages; however, with the aim of including a wide variety, and for me personally to explore more systematically the different types of risk-taking involved.

Due to the audience data from previous concerts, I had decided to re-introduce the component of 'musical postcards' but with adjusting experience levels of participating musicians (to make the rehearsal process more manageable). For this segment, the trio would be joined by two experienced professional classical improvisers, resulting in a dynamic of three experienced ensemble improvisers and two newcomers – which made it possible to have fewer rehearsals and less responsible roles for those participating for the first time.

The theme of the concert became formula–ed as I reflected on the past concert cycles and my current improvisation study, combined with the recent experience as new mother to twins. Preparing to share this with the audience, I wrote in my reflective diary:

I want to explore the moment between the expected and the unexpected, where – in life and music and improvisation, human and musical communication, we must find our way – when loss of control, technique, spontaneity, and emergence intertwine.

Drawing on the spontaneous spirit of historical concert design and supported by the aesthetic connection to the above theme, it was decided that the printed paper programme would not reveal the order of pieces, but they would be announced as the concert progressed. The decision followed previous concert cycles' audience feedback on the positive impact of informal atmosphere and performers speaking to audience members, and I wanted to investigate in practice, how these elements could be further integrated into concert design.

Audience research

Audience feedback was to be collected to add to previous concert cycles' findings; gain further understanding of the dimensions and contributing factors of the 'audiencing' experience; and to construct a narrative of the concert, where my experience as performer would be juxtaposed with the audiences' throughout the duration of the concert. A combination approach was devised from previous concerts' audience research: a questionnaire would be distributed to be filled in after the concert, followed by a small 'drinks reception' in the hall, and if an audience member would offer comments particularly relevant to my inquiry, I would ask them for an interview later. The drinks reception was to create a natural situation for informally occurring comments and feedback, which I could follow up if so desired.

Following the implications emerging in concert #3 audience data related to the mutually detected impact of risk-taking, one aim of this programme was to illustrate and explore the range and variety of the risk-taking element. I wanted to better understand how the different types of spontaneity and risk-taking were perceived by audience and if, or how, reflected in their overall experience. The questionnaire was modified from the one used in concert #1. Questions about background, atmosphere (both expectation and present experience) and emotional state after the concert remained unchanged[77], as did questions regarding concert design, moments of heightened engagement, favourite moments, and any perceived differences in the way they listened during improvised moments. Three new questions were included to gather feedback on concert design choices and gain further understanding of the dimensions of the 'audiencing' experience: whether the respondents preferred receiving information through speaking or printed paper programme (following feedback from previous concert cycles); if respondents noticed anything different in the concert design (intentionally left vague to draw out their first impressions, as there were several unconventional elements); and asking to choose two main reasons (from a list) for coming to the concert. The latter was included to illustrate their expectations as well as provide additional context for reviewing their questionnaire responses. As both the publicity/marketing of the concert and the planned programme emphasized a range of improvisational elements (allocating 'as is' versions of

[77] However, tracking audience members' emotional states both before and after, or the expectations of it, were discarded as it was not feasible to separate the effect of improvisation from that of the rest of the program, and because the inquiry had developed towards a narrative frame and the respondents' subjective, conscious experience.

repertoire minor performance time), I was particularly interested in learning if audience members' primary motivations for attending the concert were reflected in the outcome of their experience, and if so, how.[78]

Answers were collected using mixed questions, including yes/no, marking a point on a line and free text. Possible follow-up interviews of select audience members would be conducted within few days, and a reduced version of the semi-structured interview protocol used in concert #3 would be applied. The purpose behind this was to allow the possibility of further inquiring about specific comments made in the post-concert situation.

4.4.2 Rehearsing

Solo work

The main personal work in this programme was improvising voices for songs written originally for voice and piano; performing Bach Eb major Prelude followed by a reflective, improvised interlude, and a postlude variation of the theme with pianist as duo partner; and improvising small preludes to the Mendelssohn sonata movement and Lavry song. I documented this rehearsal process more analytically than previous cycles because I had more experience and confidence in the ensemble work, freeing resources for my own process. I reflected almost daily on my progress in written form, which provided me with detailed documentation of both my and my trio's learning processes.

During fall 2019, I worked intensely on solo preluding elements related to the chosen repertoire. By now, my Baroque language, improvisation, and ear-training *sing & play* exercises (p. 66) included more advanced modulating, two or three voices, solo preluding and cultivating stylistic gestures across several eras and stylistic languages. A substantial part of this work was related to Bach's Eb major Prelude and included the steps of (1) internalizing an arpeggiated harmonic reduction, (2) using it as "skeleton" for elaborating and preluding, (3) preluding freely but connected to the deep harmonic structure and finally, (4) fully improvising a prelude without a pre-determined harmonic structure. I reflected on this intense process:

[78] Retrospectively, it would have been useful to include this question in previous concert's audience feedback as well.

Including the full internalization of harmonic structure is a substantial effort in the rehearsal process and brings me also to reconsider my previous interpretation. I am also observing that only after I've really learned the harmonic structure of the piece inside out, I can start actual "practice work" on improvising, with performance or live preluding as goal.

In addition to Bach[79], I practiced preluding gestures on Mendelssohn and Lavry. Including the Lavry provided an opportunity to share something with the audience that was, though unfamiliar to myself, uniquely meaningful to my co-performers and contributed positively to the concert model.

Trio and ensemble work

The starting point for trio ensemble work was different from previous cycles in that I personally was more familiar with the performance concept myself and could guide both the creative and technical processes of the group more intentionally. Both co-musicians being students at GSMD, the rehearsals were easy to organize as we were in the same building almost every day.[80] We started by familiarizing ourselves with the harmonic structures of the **Mozart and Wolf songs**, and practiced elaborating, decorating and improvising voices within the written composition. We applied a **Theme and variations approach** and explored character variations, and how far can we abandon the harmonic structure. Text was a fresh and inspiring element for me, and it invited new possibilities for improvisation performance. The songs were all composed with piano accompaniment, so the first step was for me to improvise a third voice. After our initial meetings, the core concepts of what we wanted to practice and improve upon started emerging in rehearsals:

Rehearsal #4:
Trio rehearsal, 60min.

[79] The performance segment of the Bach was eventually set to include me playing the Prelude first as written, followed by a solo elaboration/improvisation on Bach's structure, a fully improvised interlude, me improvising an aria to Bach's Prelude played by the pianist and finally, an improvised duet postlude. In accordance with historical performance practices, this could also be simply described as "Bach's Prelude and improvised reflections on it".
[80] I worked on different segments of the concert programme with one or both partners in a total of 13 meetings, between 30 and 90 minutes each, starting on Oct 6th and performing the concert on Dec 14th, 2019. During this period, we had 4 coaching sessions with Dolan and one practice performance.

We started by doing a theme and variations exercise on "An Chloë", trying the following variations:

- *Keeping the written harmonic structure, but elaborating freely according to the original character*
- *A contrasting character or rhythm (we did a march)*
- *A minor variation, starting to take liberties with the harmonic structure*
- *A dramatic or jealous variation, abandoning the harmonic structure but keeping bar count*

We did a few rounds on each, using the A + B sections of the composition. The singer found it helpful to speak the text rather to sing a pitch, which of course helped me as I was left alone to improvise a voice with pitch. We continued improvising the same variations but changing only one variable [releasing one element of the written piece, i.e., rhythm] at a time – which turned out the most useful exercise we had done so far, and we finished in happy spirits.

Rehearsal #7:

Trio rehearsal, 60min.

We continued from yesterday's exercises on "Oiseaux…", with harmonic reduction work and exchanging melody lines (in the style of duet ping pong). The singer and I noticed that we need to think about how to improvise as two melodical voices. Transitions continue to be a challenge for the whole ensemble.

Regarding the Wolf song, we attempted the same approach but quickly realized the composed material of this style left little space for elaborating or decorating. We then decided to try applying an evolving story line to the Theme & variations structure, emphasizing the "How", or prosodic level (Dolan, 2005), while keeping the structure throughout the variations.

Rehearsal #5.

Trio rehearsal, 30min.

This was the first time my chamber partners engaged with the idea of using a story as guide for improvisation. We didn't have much time, so we simply practiced playing the song, first from the perspective of "the mouse" and then "the cat". Lastly, we improvised a free interlude of "cat and mouse" where I was assigned the role of cat and the singer was the mouse. It felt promising.

Rehearsal #8.

Trio rehearsal, 75min.

We worked mainly on Wolf, me trying to find different ways to improvise my third voice, and together improvising preludes between variations. We decided to play the following variations: "enhanced character", "mouse & cat" and "witch". It was great fun and had many promising moments... However, we realized that we all need to learn the harmonic structure of the Wolf piece much better to be able to do this!

As was my experience in concert #2, the depth in which harmonic structures of pieces needed to be learned appeared the main challenge to overcome when starting a rehearsal process with musicians new to classical improvisation practice. From my experience with 11 chamber partners in my project thus far, it seemed that while pianists were far more advanced in harmonic awareness, other instrumentalists had an advantage with ensemble skills, such as simultaneous playing and listening to others, and spontaneous reacting. Launching into this concert cycle with a singer new to systematic improvisation techniques was particularly interesting to me, and it helped me strengthen the strategies I was developing for reconciling existing knowledge of Western classical repertoire and performance with the improvisatory approach. Initiated by the singer, we met to work on some fundamental concepts also without the pianist:

Rehearsal #9.

Duo rehearsal, 60min.

We looked for the reduction and harmonic forms of songs together and wrote the chord names in the music, for practice. We improvised a very basic 'Theme and variations'. We then created the bass and melodic reductions of both Mozart songs, then opened it up, then switched voices. We are planning on doing the same with Wolf before resuming trio rehearsals. We also took the opportunity to rehearse melodic duet lines, both together and ping-pong style, and search for different melodic voices within the pieces.

Regarding group dynamics, my previous experience of the process was repeated: the initial steps of learning improvisation could appear emotionally uncomfortable. However, as understanding increased and skills grew, professional objectivity returned, and ownership of the risk-taking was re-gained.

Our ensemble rehearsal process led us to decide to perform the Mozart and Wolf songs with theme and variations approach, all from slightly different angles and with varying degrees of pre-planning. The harmonically most straightforward one, "*Oiseaux*…", would be opened for audience input; *An Chloë* would be performed with the full range of variations, extending from stylistic to post-modern/fully free; and the most harmonically complex, *Mausfallensprühlein*, would be performed with a Theme & variations story narrative guiding the interpretation of variations and interludes, while keeping the composed structure.

For the **audience request 'musical postcard'** segment, I asked two colleagues, both experienced in classical improvisation performance, to join us. I concluded that this would enable my trio members to join the high-risk fantasy improvisation more securely. This group met for two rehearsals, about 60 minutes each, and we discussed the concept and practiced improvising short, structural *ABA fantasies* with a single focus point or word. We gave special attention to balance, with two pianists on one piano, and how to integrate a singer into the democratic context of ensemble improvisation. Part of the experiment was to not be "more prepared" than this, and rather rely on the experience my colleagues brought to the table.

These decisions led to a range of both repertoire and improvisatory elements in the programme, and I was eager to find out how my experience of risk-taking would fluctuate during the concert, when performing them all consecutively. Finally, I had initially wanted to be spontaneous regarding the programme order but realized it was not feasible in this circumstance and decided that performers would know the order, but the audience would not.

Reflecting on practice

Looking back at this point of the project, a lot of both solo and ensemble practice time appeared to aim at creating an access point from the existing, embedded knowledge of the participants to spontaneous creativity within a structural, stylistic, and tonal frame – including live applications of traditional harmony and form analysis exercises. Solving harmony awareness problems in real time without a keyboard – where I could switch between "knowing" and "not-knowing" notes or harmonies by quick glance – brought me eventually to test various approaches with the specific parameters of the cello. Having learned harmony on keyboard, one of the main focuses of a string player – playing the correct pitch to microtonally fit everything around it – had been eliminated. At first, when applying study of

harmony to the cello (where notes do not exist visually; strings are organized in fifths; the physical hand position without extending, jumping or excessive string crossing has spontaneous access to only certain intervals or four consecutive notes, etc), the psychological experience was almost like learning on a new instrument. In search of more spontaneously accessible left hand (or pitch) technique on the cello, my supervisor Adrian Brendel recommended to incorporate specific exercises into my routine: for the left hand, practicing systematic jumping across possible intervals on the keyboard; shifting over octaves; shifting to a note that I could hear in my head before it was played (not necessarily aware of which note); and general fluency in all major and minor keys (ability to find scales, tonal harmonic progressions, and chords in any key). Double stop harmonic progressions in multiple keys, different fingerings, and in various positions were also practiced; thumb position double stop octaves and position shifts across the fingerboard; and fast-paced running figures leading up to tonics or dominants of a chosen key. For the right hand, a variety of bow techniques was incorporated.

At this point of the project, I knew that repertoire-related improvisations, such as Theme & Variations, would require a deep level of knowledge of the composed piece, extending beyond the standard procedure of memorizing. This "macro and micro level knowledge" of the composition meant analysing and internalizing (1) the harmonic structure, including written & implied harmonies and voice-leading; (2) phrase structure, including bar counts of each phrase; (3) what kind of voices to improvise above, under and within the written melodies; and (4) meaning of the text throughout the piece to understand dramatic high points, especially if there were several verses. This generally meant, that the normal notation for chamber music – melody voices and instrumentalists reading only their own line – was rendered useless, and full score was printed out for everyone to study.

I started to view this process as learning the architecture of the musical composition by breaking it into small steps. In the duo practice sessions with the singer, we first analysed the piece on paper, after which one of us would play something fixed from the score, like the harmonic reduction bass line or the melody, and the other would practice different versions of an improvised element relating to that line. This proved a useful way to bridge the gap between our subconscious knowledge, or informed intuition, and the intellectual harmonic and structural analysis. Through repetition we 'drove' the piece into our minds and bodies, until the harmonies and phrase structures became automated and improvisation within and

around the written score became accessible. This work turned out fruitful in multiple ways. While we studied the piece together in this way, memory slips became eliminated, and we started to experience intense 'mind-reading' moments with each other. What initially appeared to me as a weakness – not being able to do alone the kind of harmony-learning and leading work that keyboardists can – evolved into an unexpected strength, which became reflected in the outcomes of the entire project (elaborated in Chapter 6, p. 177).

Concert circumstances

Figure 6. View of stage, concert #4.



The concert was organized in the Music Hall of Guildhall School on Saturday, Dec 14th, 2019, at 6pm. Promotion of the event was done as before, through personal networks, online platforms, social media, and posters around school buildings. As it was the busy holiday season, a small audience of 20-30 people was expected, with final turnout at about 25. About 10 of those had no personal connection to me. Expecting an intimate situation, set up was done on floor stage area, using screens to create a half-circle stage opposite a half-circle audience. A white screen was set up for projecting lyrics and translations. The programme was designed without breaks, but afterwards audience members were invited to fill in questionnaires and enjoy a complimentary glass of wine together with musicians in the room.

Concert recording and printed paper programme

The printed paper programme is in Appendix C (including programme order sheet not revealed to audiences). The concert recording has been edited for the convenience of the viewer and excludes elements like tuning and stage re-organization. Full concert #4: https://youtu.be/JVNRfPjlsFk

4.4.3 Post-concert reflection and audience data analysis

Personal reflection

As previously, I had mixed feelings after the concert; I was unsatisfied with my repertoire performances, but apart from the Mendelssohn prelude, felt a sense of accomplishment in my initial steps in solo preluding performance. Again, the audience's enthusiasm and chamber partners' joy of experiencing the thrill of improvisation performance quickly helped recover from any personal disappointments. In the post-analysis of this concert, particular importance was assigned to immediate documenting of **impulse exchange** I experienced from the audience. Unpacking the experience immediately after, it was apparent how the impulses I perceived from the audience had affected what I did next, and how there appeared to develop a build-up of mutual interaction:

I felt the first wave of warmth and togetherness from the audience after Bach. In Mendelssohn I was drawn to a more introverted position because I wasn't that satisfied with my improvised Prelude, but my immediate memory is that the applause was still warm, and I felt I had the audience's open, positive attention.

After An Chloë, I felt like the audience was "fully won over" and I sensed the mutual atmosphere in the room was on a whole new level. Our final Ghost variation of An Chloë ended up departing from the written piece so completely that it became necessary for us musicians to depend more totally on each other… which I felt was mirrored in audience's behaviour.

In this 'Ghost variation' of *An Chloë*, our body language towards each other increases and our engagement with each other appears particularly heightened, and according to my perception in the moment, the audience responds with heightened enthusiasm as well.

Demo clip #11: Improvised *Ghost* variation of Mozart's *An Chloë:*
https://youtu.be/uwK7epMPrr8

After "Oiseaux…", preparing to start "Maus", I felt again a moment of mutual expectance and very heightened, present engagement. During the Wolf, I think we knew it was our climax, and were cheered on by the audience spontaneously clapping after third variation!

Demo clip #12: Spontaneous applause after 2nd variation to Wolf's *Mausfallensprüchlein:* https://youtu.be/-M0VSoPCNUk

Audience data analysis

Questionnaires. After the performance, audience members were invited to fill in a questionnaire and stay for a drink in the hall. I received 11 fully completed questionnaires, which I reviewed manually without software analysis. Only three respondents reported having weekly or daily engagement with classical music, leaving the majority to exemplify a clearly more general, non-professional concert audience. The main reasons for attending the concert (question 6) were wanting to hear the specific performers (most votes), wanting to hear the specific pieces, and being invited to join by friends. When asked about noticing differences to a standard classical concert, respondents mentioned audience participation (5 times), improvisation (4) and interesting ensemble variety (3) as most obvious unexpected elements. All respondents described a development in atmosphere (described as *apprehensive to enjoyment; spectating to involved; tense to relaxed; quiet to energetic* and *formal to engaging*), but there was variety in which parts of the programme were experienced as particular shifting moments: among those mentioned were the solo cello improvised prelude in the Bach segment, the first time audience members were asked for requests in Mozart's *Oiseaux,* the improvised variations ("when you left the style") of *An Chlöe* and the Wolf segment.

Respondents described 'not knowing the order of program' contributing to increase in *fun, excitement*, or *alertness* (8 times) of the experience. Only two respondents preferred to read information in a printed paper programme, and everyone else (9) preferred spoken or combination. Audience members described their own position during improvised sections as *listening more intentionally, attentively*, and *becoming more alert and excited*. Respondents elaborated further on differences between improvised and repertoire moments:

The improvised sections really piqued my interest. I listened a lot more.
When something was improvised, you could see the eye contact between performers.

I listened much more intently to the improvisation, due to expectations.
Both were fascinating, but when you know it will be improvised, it is more energetic and fun.
The improvised felt more relevant and current.
The improvisation was more playful, and I paid more attention.

Audience members gave a variety of answers as moments they were feeling most engaged (question 15), as well as to favourite moments (question 16). When compiling them together, final audience request segment ('musical postcards') received most mentions (8), Wolf segment second most (6) with Bach (3), Mozart (2) and "engaged throughout/everything was my favourite" (2) each a few.

Interview with audience member. During the drink reception, I became intrigued by specific comments about engagement, alertness and co-creativity made by one audience member and asked them for an interview, which was conducted a couple days later. They lived nearby and their school-aged children had taken up instruments, introducing the family to classical music. As audience members, the family represented a rarely accessible demographic in my project, and I wanted to learn more about their experience.

The parent, who was interviewed alone, described the overall experience:
It was not like anything I've been to before, in a very positive way. I found it very engaging, very interactive and I very much felt part of it, as opposed to just sitting in the audience and listening to it. I think I can also speak on the behalf of my kids, who normally find it difficult to engage after a certain time in the concert… They were totally engaged throughout the whole time, and they commented positively after we left the concert.

When I continued to ask about the feeling of being part of it (insider experience, co-creativity), they elaborated:
I very much enjoyed it, because it made me feel as if I was part of the making of the music, in a funny sort of way, as opposed to you guys playing and me just listening, so a very different experience. …When someone would say something [as a request], you looked at each other and just [made] that music for me. It was fascinating how you're speaking; you are making a statement; you are composing something that represents my request… It's my feelings, but I can hear it in the music.

Both the parent and one child requested themes for pieces of music in the 'musical postcard' segment. In the interview, I asked the parent if they felt those requests fulfilled:
Spot on. -- I could hear it in the music, which I thought was incredible. It's like you're writing a story, they go into your heart or into your mind, and I felt the same way with the music, but in a way that I've never experienced before in other concerts. It was brilliant.

It turned out, that the experience had impacted the child in a special way, and continued to stay with them because I had invited audience members to record the improvised requests segment:
[My child told me,] 'I'm so glad we went, I've never been to something like that… Did you hear the music that was composed for me!' And my son taped it, so we've been listening to that… And he can identify the feeling that he was trying to put into music through you guys composing it, which was quite powerful.

Demo clip #13: Improvised Musical postcard on audience request "Joy" (concert #4):
https://youtu.be/Hbd5Req_NiQ

4.4.4 Conclusions

The audience feedback from this concert cycle was conclusive with previous cycles: respondents described heightened emotional engagement related to moments of improvisation, appreciating the spontaneous, informal, and relaxed atmosphere, and experiencing the event as unique and memorable. Respondents appreciated being spoken to and enjoyed giving input for improvisations, and they detected increased body language, visual cues, and musical expressivity of performers during improvised moments in the programme. I concluded from both my performing experience and audience comments, that the experimental concert structure supported the development of a spontaneous and playful event atmosphere and abandoning traditional programming parameters didn't elicit negative feedback (some changes were individually commented on positively).

When I encouraged the audience to behave freely, giving the example of 19th century concerts, I had the impression of being met with surprised, smiling and somewhat stunned expressions. Reflecting on these types of impulses, as documented immediately after the concert, I decided to specifically examine the development of mutual impulses in analysis stage of the full project.

When reflecting on this fourth concert cycle it became evident that the practice stage of the project had been completed and it was time to engage with in-depth analysis of the full experience. As performer, I had now explored various ways of communicating with my audience in practice and put forth the artistic rehearsal and performance choices, which had been received and responded to by audiences. However, for the 'researcher' within, questions emerging from the experience thus far – for example, moments of ensemble improvisation becoming highlighted in the overall data - prompted exploring a wider range of independent-of-repertoire free fantasy forms, performed with a larger ensemble. It was, however, concluded, that these questions would be taken to the final viva recital, and the inquiry would now be directed towards analysing findings from all four concert cycles together.

CHAPTER 5: Analysis and identifying themes

Framing the analysis

Immersed in practice and reiterative action cycles of concert planning, rehearsing, and performing, the artistic practice and related learning experience appeared at the heart of the inquiry. Reflecting and analysing occurred at three stages of the project: (1) within daily artistic practice, (2) between concert cycles, and (3) at the end of the full project. After each concert cycle, meaningful outcomes were taken forward into the following one. Making decisions in the midst of practice was a mix of intuitive and carefully considered choices (Haseman, 2007; Nelson, 2013); however, as the project progressed intuition became increasingly founded upon experience, analysis and knowledge. Following Nelson's 'PaR' approach, artistic praxis in this project formed through engaging in the naturally occurring artistic reflexivity (including group settings), and simultaneously formulating research objectives for the practice; for example, "*learn as much of the detailed process as possible*" or "*observe as much of the performance interaction with audiences as possible*". At the beginning, I didn't know how many concerts would be conducted, but after the third one I made the considered judgement that one more would be needed to bring the practice stage of the project to maturity.

The purpose of this chapter is to engage with in-depth analysis of the learning experience, to examine connections, and draw conclusions of the full experience. During practice, problem-solving happened through intuition embedded with knowledge in and of practice[81], and through reiterating the emerging artistic processes which this chapter aims to examine and make visible. As documented in my reflective journal, rehearsal note log and video recording data from all four concert cycles, certain themes started recurring in early stages while others evolved at final analysis. These themes are examined by drawing on post-reflective analysis conducted after each concert, the recurring elements of rehearsal processes, and data gathered on performer and audience experience.

[81] See Chapters 1 and 3 for the role of intuition in artistic practice research (Haseman, 2007; Nelson, 2013).

Identifying themes

At final analysis, the following themes became identified when systematically **examining processes** that occurred during the four concert cycles of the project:

1. The impact of improvisation practice on musical skills and cello playing
2. The special nature of ensemble playing
3. Risk-taking: how to practice and perform it
4. Performativity and personality projection
5. Engaging in relational exchange with audiences

5.1 Theme 1: The impact of improvisation practice on musical skills and cello playing

Observations through the project

Launching into improvisation practice and incorporating a regime of daily exercises placed me behind the cello for substantial amounts of time each day but developing skills that, at first, didn't seem to have anything specifically to do with cello playing – at least not in the way I was used to. Exercises related to **ear training and real-time awareness** of harmonic and compositional structures became the daily routine. One of the first challenges to developing improvisation ability (as identified early on), lack of real-time awareness and instrument-specific applied music theory and harmony, emerged as a core element throughout the project. Creating music in real-time, as opposed to repeating what was done in the practice room, appeared to provoke a shift in the way I listened: from hearing the note in the millisecond after it is played, these exercises pushed me towards developing a mindset of simultaneous listening-while-playing, in which the note is heard by the inner ear *before* it becomes audible (also described in aural training and Dolan's method as 'strengthening the inner ear').

According to Dolan's pedagogical approach and my practical experience, repertoire-related improvisation work started with extending study of the score beyond the written notes to its compositional form, including harmonic, rhythmical and motivic structures. To improvise according to the style of a specific piece, **a deeper theoretic and harmonic ownership** of it had to be gained. Consequently, this developed into a personal new-found **motivation to (re-)learn and study music theory, harmony, and history**, as I felt them strongly supporting my improvisation studies and practice.

Immersing in improvisation exercises, I started noticing both new strengths and weaknesses in my **cello technique**. When improvising in relation to repertoire, musical ideas would often be withheld due to what was technically accessible spontaneously, which was in contrast with the prepared repertoire portion. A question that quickly emerged in the practice room, how could instant technical ability be expanded, and how could certain skills be made spontaneously accessible, that in traditional circumstances would be solidified through multiple repetitions? Seeking solutions in practice, I first decided to alter my bow hold (p. 68). This goal of

spontaneous accessibility of techniques became increasingly adapted throughout the project. I started incorporating basic exercises in my warm-up routine, related to specific improvisatory elements, in hopes of strengthening the appropriate techniques and spontaneous accessibility to them before performances.

Expressivity mindset

Actively practicing awareness and engagement with the present moment[82] as part of improvisatory daily routine led to an unexpected increase in confidence in repertoire performance as well[83]. Growing awareness of the 'How' and 'What' levels of musical parameters[84] started informing my repertoire practice in addition to improvising, as did the intentional utilization of human emotional communication through parameters of speech intonation (Dolan, 2005). Building improvisatory tools through connecting, understanding, and learning to harness **expressive musical parameters and gestures of emotional communication** emerged at the core of the learning process. Impacting the way musical gestures were approached in both composed and improvised performance, this work typically elicited longer-term phrasing, awareness of underlying structures, and increased clarity regarding the emotional agenda/characteristic of the music. When playing with others, this became manifested in clearer body language, leading to stronger feelings of togetherness (as found similarly by (Dolan *et al.*, 2013, 2018). The 'letting go', or 'expressivity' mindset, previously associated mainly with performance situations[85], became activated when engaging with improvisatory elements even at early rehearsal stages. Over time, I personally experienced this shift contributing towards increased psychological control, including experiencing less self-criticism, performance anxiety and stress, in actual performance situations.

[82] Or committing to the moment, as is often described in dramatic arts (Frost and Yarrow, 2015)
[83] See, for example, concert #3, p. 108.
[84] In both music and speech, the 'What' and 'How levels can be observed: "The latter manifests itself in what linguists call intonation, or the prosodic level in speech. This is the natural 'music' of speech, consisting of an organizing in time of primary musical parameters: pitch, duration, intensity, and timbre. The presence of a naturally improvised musical dimension in speech is an important common element with musical extemporisation. -- Changes [in intonation] are instinctively understood by listeners who unconsciously decode what they hear." (Dolan, 2005)
[85] Focusing on projecting musical expressivity, directionality, and character rather than judging isolated details of technical execution, and not stopping for re-takes.

The moment of transition from Janacék's *Tale* to improvised reflective fantasy in Storytelling (concert #3 - link below) depicts a change in body language when the improvisation starts, and the 'expressivity mindset', or sole focus on expressivity, is fully employed. My sound projection immediately becomes more focused, phrasing and treatment of rhythm more coherent and as a duo, we start referring to longer time-periods – manifested through hyper-measures (several measures turning to become one unit in which every bar is one beat). This led to a change in our treatment of pulse. Both our eye gaze and body postures are moving more actively towards each other (though we don't have full eye contact), manifesting alert and more sensitive listening, with immediate response. Improvising a lyrical melody, my shifting (between two notes) is more accurate, bow sound more focused and legato more coherent (than in the section of the composed piece I am loosely imitating). Stylistically, the language of Janacék did not require high-level harmonic or pitch-related control, which set us free to create this improvisation from a purely emotionally expressive state-of-mind. This beginning moment, as well as the whole improvised reflection, were specifically mentioned as moments of heightened engagement in audience interviews.

Demo clip #14: Beginning of improvised reflection after Janacék's *Tale* (concert #3; final piece): https://youtu.be/TDpHXyygTY8

Comparing performance of Chopin's Prelude B minor 'as is' with improvisatory variation

In concert #3, the approach to improvisation study was shared with the audience through performing two Chopin Preludes with improvisatory variations. The B minor Prelude (concert #3, second segment), demonstrated here, is first performed 'as is', followed by first variation where cello is free to improvise while piano plays the written text, and a second variation with roles reversed.

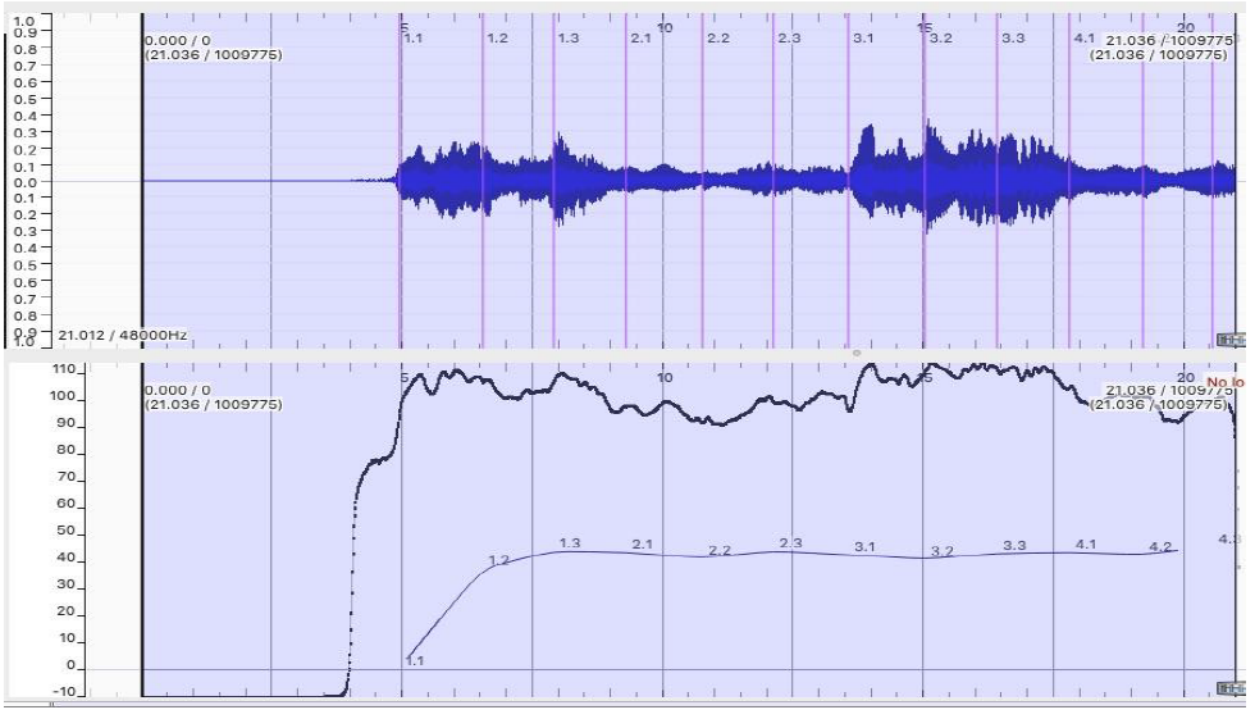
Demo clip #15: Chopin (Prelude B minor) 'as is' beginning:
https://youtu.be/uVOh42pQdJo
Demo clip #16: Chopin (Prelude B minor) 'cello variation' beginning:
https://youtu.be/Suvq20Fq3j4
Demo clip #17: Chopin (Prelude B minor) 'piano variation' beginning:
https://youtu.be/poVkuXCVXbU

Reviewing these moments, the duet appears both technically and expressively more together as the variations develop. Though use of rubato and phrasing are employed expressively by both performers in 'as is', it appears to be done more so *together,* with shared intent, in the improvised variations. A shift can also be perceived in both our body language gestures when transitioning from written text to improvised sections (start of Demo clip #16); we appear to spontaneously give clearer visual cues and engage with each other more sensitively (this observation was also made by two audience members in interviews).

The following animations and images from the Sonic Visualizer allow for examining fluctuations in tempo and intensity more closely. These allow for objective observations of expressive parameters, independently of the performers & listeners' reports. (X axis relates to the real-time flow in seconds, and the Y axis relates to the amplitude of changes of tempi and intensity in units of bpm and db respectively).

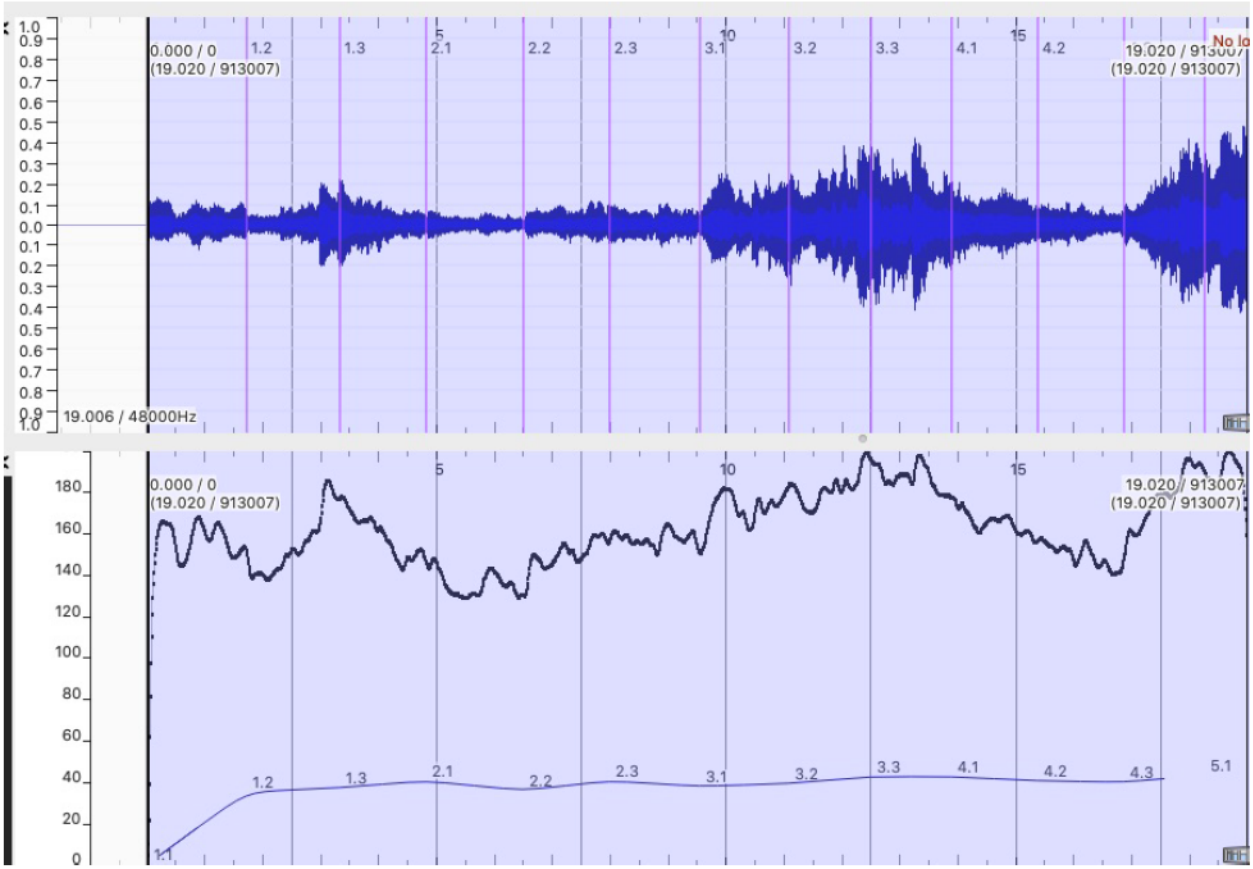
Demo clip #24: Sonic Visualizer animation of Chopin 'as is':
https://youtu.be/0XW1XnWMCsc

Figure 7. Sonic Visualizer image. Beginning of Chopin B minor Prelude, 'as is' version (bars 1-4). Vertical lines indicate beat subdivisions (3 beats per 1 bar); horizontal axis shows fluctuation in timing (lower thin wave with numbers) and dynamic (upper thick wave) profiles in lower pane.



Demo clip #25: Sonic Visualizer animation of Chopin 'piano variation':
https://youtu.be/2MsrqIV8quQ

Figure 8. Sonic Visualizer image. Beginning of Chopin B minor Prelude, 'piano variation' (bars 1-4).



As I recalled the experience of performing the 'piano variation', the improvised melodical material of the pianist pulled me to join his use of rubato in an effortless way, and playing the melody felt lighter and easier (because it felt like shifting from 'driving' towards 'joining' – see figure 8, 'piano variation'; arrival to beat 3 in bars 1 and 2, in which the sense of directionality, and of arrival, is created through a combination of crescendo and gentle accelerando. Comparing the 'as is' (demo clip #15; figure 7) and 'piano variation' (demo clip #17; figure 8) in Sonic Visualizer, the 'as is' version depicts more inconsistency and individual treatment of beats and bars. In the improvised part, variations of tempo curves follow larger melodic phrases and gestures which can be observed in the graphs, such as one-bar gestures 1.2 – 2.2; 2.2 - 3.2 and 3.2 - 4.2 (numbers signifying bars and beats). Though culmination points of tempo and intensity are identical in both versions (2.1 and 3.3), the shape of the intensity curve in the improvised variation shows more clearly two swells and beginning of a third – following the melodic and harmonic structure of the composition (harmonic rhythm in

this excerpt follows one harmony per two bars; reflected also in Chopin's phrasing slur of two bars). In this variation, performers appear more connected to a deeper pulse and longer-term phrase structure as well as each other's lines, even though they are richly and improvisatorially elaborated on.

When listening, the cello (playing the written text in both versions) appears to accommodate spontaneously the use of rubato initiated by the pianist, both by giving space and by accelerating to follow the improvised melody. A specific use of rubato (a distinctive characteristic of Chopin's style) is demonstrated, for example, in the first bar of the variation: first, the cello phrasing aims towards beat 1.2, followed by improvised, imitating response from the piano aiming towards 1.3, pushing both tempo and intensity up, which the cello joins, resulting in arriving together at 2.1. Comparing both versions, it appears that the cello treats certain beats or moments of the melody systematically differently when the pianist is improvising, such as 1.3 - 2.1 and 3.1 - 3.2, contributing to greater coherence and longer phrase structure. Comparing bar 3 in both images, the 'as is' version (figure 7) shows accents on beats 3.1 and 3.2, bringing the phrase to an end (disrupting its coherent flow) sooner than in the improvised version (figure 8), where the goal point of the phrase is 3.3. Continuing in the improvised version, at 3.1, when piano takes the lead through improvised material, cello responds to the character, and both musicians unite in arriving together on the down beats of 3.2 and 3.3 – indicating the presence of deeper mutual connection to underlying structure as well as each other, evidenced by arriving *together* at a more distant goal point. Observing these tendencies may be related to the experience of improvising with partners, especially in structural setting such as this one: a higher degree of sensitivity, or 'musical mind-reading', becomes activated when one partner doesn't know what the other will do.

5.2 Theme 2: The special nature of ensemble improvisation

When reviewing the full data, my performer's intuition was confirmed in that programme segments with freer forms of ensemble improvisation emerged highlighted at all stages: in rehearsal processes, concerts, and audience responses. In this section, I will explore further the processes of both repertoire-related and independent-of-repertoire ensemble improvisation, and in a later section, the corresponding responses from audience.

As the inquiry was approached as a cellist, it soon became evident that improvisation in chamber music contexts emerged at the core of practice.[86] In this post-performance stage analysis, I identify processes that occurred during the reiterative cycles of rehearsal and performance, formulate learning and teaching strategies and present observations on the impact of ensemble improvisation on performers. As observed early on, the challenges appeared twofold: musical and social. I will explore what that means and how the cross section of these elements emerges as meaningful to the whole study.

Reflecting on the full experience, it appeared that rehearsing and formulating pedagogic strategies for improvising in ensemble context advanced together. When immersed in practice, these concepts – rehearsing, learning, and teaching – seem to be used somewhat interchangeably, and in the experimental context of this project, they appeared intertwined[87].

In practice stages of concert cycles, rehearsal strategies were constantly and flexibly adjusted and rehearsals became increasingly planned through a pedagogical approach - as it was discovered that pre-learned knowledge had a diminished, or different kind of role, even when all participants were professional musicians, advanced students, or even expert improvisers[88]. Rather than approaching the rehearsal situation with everyone having an equal, shared vision of the 'end-product', the vision needed to be created and communicated, as well as strategy of 'how to get there'; which, as I learned, was best tested together in an explorative, democratic learning environment. Coming into the space, each musician would have instincts and a

[86] Ensemble work also postulated a suitable environment for the type of "working it out in practice" (Haseman, 2007; Nelson, 2013) that is characteristic of PaR research.
[87] Resembling jazz education culture, in which learning/teaching roles are purposefully blurred, especially in ensemble improvisation contexts; see Chapter 2, p. 34.
[88] Especially in independent-of-repertoire fantasy rehearsal, the democratizing element of improvisation highlighted the difference of the situation compared to repertoire rehearsal.

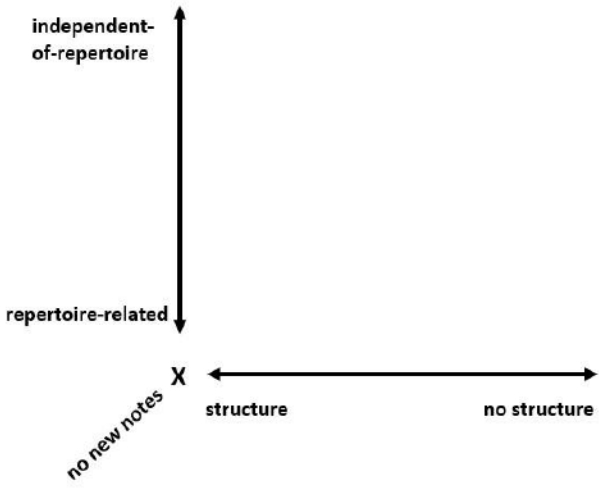
personal musical and behavioural vocabulary, based on internalized musical knowledge and past experiences (Pressing, 1988; Kenny and Gellrich, 2002; Dolan, 2005; Berkowitz, 2010). Thus, the first step of ensemble improvisation emerged as a need for establishing common ground, both musically and socially (including body language and social interactions).

Creating musical common ground – "A core business of improvisation is determining how much structure is infused with free fantasy"[89]

In the type of systematic improvisation rehearsal setting that was conducted in this project, two parameters needed to be adjusted and agreed upon in order to start playing: whether the task would be (1) related to or independent of repertoire and (2) what type and amount of structural parameters, or rules, would be applied. Learning to constantly adjust the balance between pre-planned and unplanned decisions and structures according to skills, established common ground of the ensemble and finally, concert program, emerged at the core of the artistic inquiry[90]. Initially, there wasn't a strong sense of distinction between techniques related to repertoire and those independent-of-repertoire (or formal/structural improvisation). However, this categorization became increasingly preferred as a way of systematizing both (macro-level) pedagogical strategies and (micro-level) exercises for specific skills and techniques, because, in my practitioner's experience, it emerged as the most effective way of creating common ground. As I had experienced myself, I also observed in others: when starting to engage with classical improvisation, lack of real time harmonic and structural awareness emerged as a "first hurdle"; and musicians often sought to practice related exercises individually between rehearsals, which naturally contributed towards further ensemble development. Individual work in between rehearsals - for myself and others - was particularly relevant to the ensemble outcome, when working on repertoire-related improvisations where specific stylistic and harmonic parameters were strictly applied.[91]

[89] A recurring expression from Western classical improvisation workshops with Dolan.
[90] However, as my empirical experiences from concert cycles started including both conscious and the spontaneously emerging, growing unconscious applications of pre-learned knowledge, it informed my intuition, and I started anticipating outcomes more accurately - which led to more efficient ensemble leadership towards latter concert cycles. See Chapter 1, *intuition*.
[91] I didn't iterate this to the musicians entering the project; motivation seemed to come intrinsically and rise out of professional intelligence, and personal homework exercises were often requested at the end of rehearsals.

Figure 9. A simple visualization from my reflective journal when seeking to contextualize improvisational elements.



The following videos demonstrate two independent-of-repertoire improvisations contrasting in structure and style, both of which were experienced as 'successful improvisations' by the performers in conversations after the concert (despite the trio Minuet ending in unintended dissonance). First, a trio launching a minuet in Baroque style with clearly defined, pre-set structure (including number of phrases and modulations) and stylistic parameters (demo clip #18). The second, a free fantasy based on audience request with no pre-set agreements (demo clip #19). Though the tasks are very different, the ensemble members appear intensely engaged with each other through exchanges of eye-gaze and body language gestures.

Demo clip #18: Improvised Baroque trio minuet (concert #2; end of Bach segment): https://youtu.be/Lo0ZEaWy47w

Demo clip #3: Improvised Musical postcard to audience request "*Bored man on the tube*"[92] (concert #1, final segment): https://youtu.be/Qs_x1JXjFoc

Even though a systematic rehearsal process familiar from professional orchestra and chamber music settings was applied, the emerging emotional and social aspects related to group

[92] Full description of the request: *Story of someone who is "stuck on the Central line at rush hour in summer… who is far from home but wants to be home"*

improvising affected the rehearsal space and even defined the musical progress at times.[93] With a score, there is a pre-determined frame and aim for what to rehearse – but also an established social structure, habitual experience of how to conduct a rehearsal, and what the finished product should generally sound like. An ensemble coming together to improvise, especially independent-of-repertoire pieces, meant starting from a different point: not only the music needed to be created – also sociodynamic and political underlying structures were not pre-defined and needed at least some level of establishing.[94] Even though participants had high-level skills of ensemble leading and following, a structured social space still needed to be established for these skills to be engaged. As initially observed in concert cycle #2:

It's not immediately clear what it means to show up as 'professional musician' in improvisational setting. No score to learn, no part to master, no recording to listen to. What counts is body language, visual and musical expressivity, emotional openness… It feels like a different skill set must be activated when entering the improvisation rehearsal space. (Reflective diary entry, 29.09.2017)

Since the experience of concert cycle #2, in which freer forms of ensemble improvisation were most intensely worked on, including specifically rehearsing improvising on audience requests in practice concerts, the impact of the audience on the musicians' process started to become increasingly highlighted. In concert #2, breakthrough both musically and socially seemed to happen during three practice concerts (according to comments from all members); and repeated in cycles #3 and #4, the bonding experience that occurred as a result of this specific kind of risk-taking and problem-solving, and the responses of live audiences to improvisation performance, seemed to both solidify ensemble musical skills and stimulate a new, extraordinary level of trust and empathy between musicians.

[93] At the time, I turned to resources on positive psychology and group dynamics, in hopes of understanding how to better facilitate a safe, creative, and productive atmosphere. However, as the project progressed, I had to resolve that the musical and social aspects of group improvising were more intertwined and multi-layered than I had envisaged, and this was only peripherally helpful. It is important to acknowledge, that especially in the beginning, though we were motivated, confusing subtexts were present and likely contributed to emotional tensions. We were in a professional setting, but without predetermined tasks or roles; I, as "teacher", was barely more experienced than my "students", which surely contributed towards less-than-optimal pedagogical communication.

[94] I observed, that adjusting to the democratic situation of improvising meant removing hierarchy, that especially orchestral instrumentalists are accustomed to in Western classical contexts.

Path to 'group flow' moments

Ensemble work appeared a particularly fruitful setting for observing the impact of improvisation practice on musical performance parameters. Improvisation taught us an entirely new perception of the subjective sense of performance-time (versus the clock's objective time), and rehearsals often focused on learning to avoid "circling", "boring", "nothing is happening" moments. Musicians became challenged to examine their individual playing body language, and work towards further cultivating a physical and visual performativity, to better embody the musical intent. In the most structurally free segments, such as 'musical postcard' requests or variations that evolved furthest from the original theme, we depended on body language communication in an extreme way. Launching into playing with only one or two pre-set rules, such as a chosen key, length ("*let's keep it short*") or form ("*let's do ABA*"), and a word or message as abstract inspiration, the importance of non-verbal communication, including eye-gaze intensity, appeared at its highest. The more unstructured and independent-of-repertoire the task, the more emphasis turned towards eye contact, body language and clarity in musical expression – as musicians tried to intuitively figure out what others around them are intending to do next regarding rhythm, harmony, character, tempo, timbre, etc. Practicing this type of 'mind-reading' (Dolan *et al.*, 2018), where social and musical cues and communication intertwine intensely, emerged as a core component of the rehearsing process. Though we rehearsed various exercises (like modulating, practicing specific roles, instrumentations, and developing themes), once in a live concert, with real performance-time and risk-taking influence, the ensemble would intuitively seek to unite first and foremost on the expressive, or "How", level. When finding unity in the level of "How" (character and emotional intent, to do with the performers' choices), uniting on the "What" level – (pitch, rhythm & time-signature, harmony, etc. - to do with the composition) became accessible (confirming the experiences of (Dolan *et al.*, 2013). These moments would, in the musicians' post-performance reflections, typically be viewed as most successful, 'flow, or 'magical' moments of the performance.

Example: Moment of group flow and 'mind-reading'

In concert #2, a programme segment was created around Debussy's *La fille aux cheveux de lin*, first performed as duet, followed by full ensemble free improvisation through storytelling approach, and returning to play the written piece with full ensemble and improvised elaborations. This piece was reflected in performers' experience as a particularly high moment,

including strong experience of unity, awareness, and emotional arousal, indicating presence of group flow (Sawyer, 2006). The following two clips from concert #2 illustrate several aspects that occurred in this performance. Clip #5 includes the full improvised middle section and clip #20 an excerpt from the end of it, when the ensemble created a new pulse together, developed a transition from a contrasting section and moved from atonality towards tonality, preparing to return to the piece.[95]

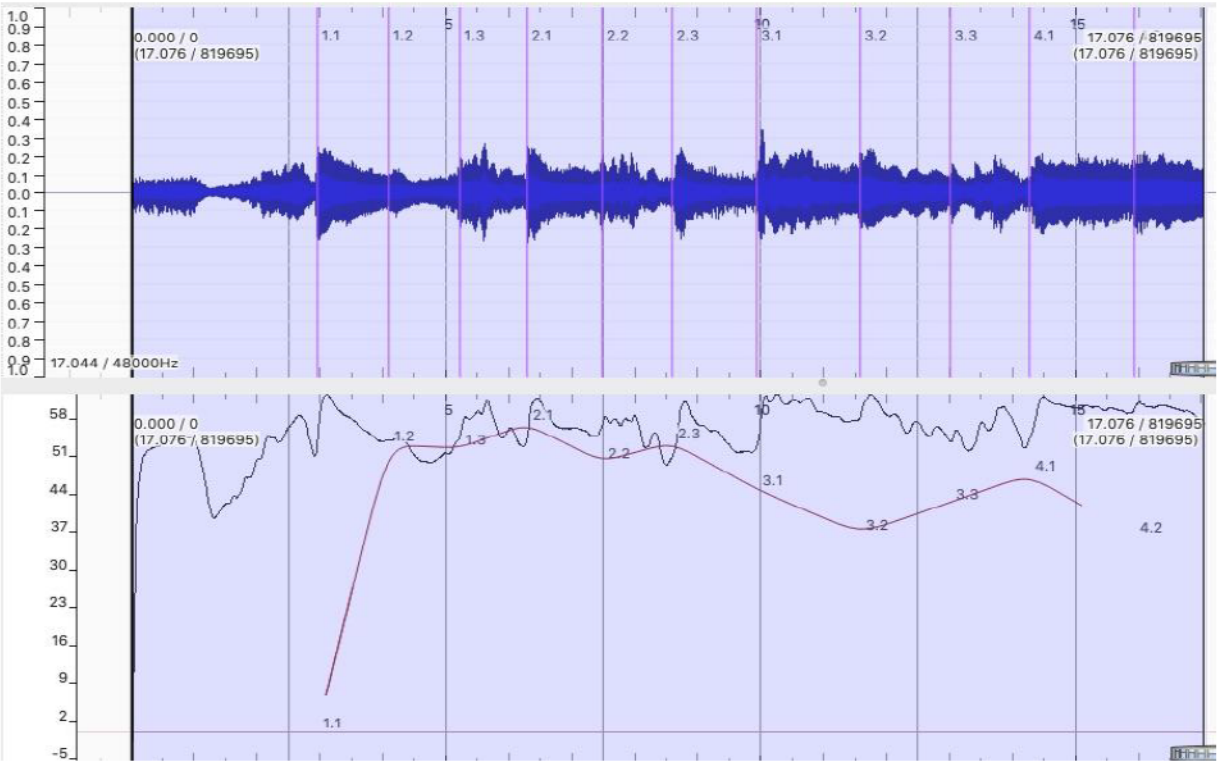
Demo clip #5: Launching into the improvisation after Debussy's composed piece: https://youtu.be/wvc2m-5ZD0I
Demo clip #20: Excerpt from Debussy ensemble improvisation, developing tonality from atonal section: https://youtu.be/ZGyPjuoxo3c

A few seconds later, we returned to the composed text once more with the whole ensemble (demo clip #21). Examining this excerpt in the Sonic Visualizer demonstrates what, in my experience, was a 'mind-reading' ensemble moment. As the melody provider, I was to play the written text without improvising new notes; everyone else, including the kantele playing the accompaniment, was free to improvise. No other instruction was given – however, we had now performed this segment a total of five times and felt relatively comfortable with it.

Demo clip #21: Debussy 'mind-reading' moment with Sonic Visualizer image: https://youtu.be/aM_GcacgkG8
Demo clip #26: Sonic Visualizer animation of Debussy 'mind-reading' moment: https://youtu.be/-E-64smBAT4

[95] This concert did not have an audience research component, but informal feedback received from audience members mentioned the *free improvisation in Debussy* as particularly impactful. The Debussy segment in concert #1, however, was marked as one of the highest emotionally engaging moments in audience research.

Figure 10. Sonic Visualizer image. Excerpt from Debussy segment, *La fille aux cheveux de lin* (concert #2), bars 7 –11 of the text with improvisatory approach.



At the end of this clip, the phrase ends with a ritardando, which is preceded by accelerando, the driving movement coming from kantele and piano. The tempo curve is drawn in a relatively consistent line towards turning points 3.2 and 4.1: first, ritardando from 2.3 to 3.2, followed by accelerando from 3.2 to 4.1, after which the kantele finished the gesture alone. In the same interval, between 3.2 and 4.1, the intensity line deviates from tempo, illustrating a break from common patterns (Cohen and Inbar, 2001) through a shared emotional intent. The violin and viola enter with improvised lines, in a joint crescendo between 1.2 and 1.3, supporting a sense of movement towards sub-goal points (2.1, 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3) within the rhythmic structure, which is created by the kantele and piano duet. This uncommonly opposite and remarkably coherent movement of intensity and tempo curves between 3.2. and 4.1 may signal a shared level of emotional intent, or 'musical mind-reading', between all five musicians.

The primary movement that directs the ritardando-accelerando leading to 4.1 is done by piano and kantele, who are intertwining written (kantele) and improvised (piano) material simultaneously. They are situated at far opposite ends of the stage, with very limited visibility between the two and with three string players between them. Out of the three, one is playing a

solo melody and two are improvising lines which support both the melody and character without giving leading cues. These chosen roles were, though explored in different ways in previous performances, not pre-planned, rehearsed, or agreed upon. The video shows how at the beginning of this moment, the violinist and violist look at each other and their body language suggests a dialogue along the lines of "shall we do this - yes, let's go for it". The ensemble is experiencing an intense moment of unity (as reflected on in post-concert discussion). While illustrative of the work we had done on learning the harmonic and melodic structures of the piece, including embellishing, and connecting to hyper-measures/feel of time together (Dolan, 2005; Dolan *et al.*, 2018), this moment, in performers' experience, is demonstrative of an extraordinary musical outcome facilitated through emerging trust and empathy (in line with findings related to awareness, empathy, and improvisation (Sawyer, 2006; Bishop, 2018; Dolan *et al.*, 2018).

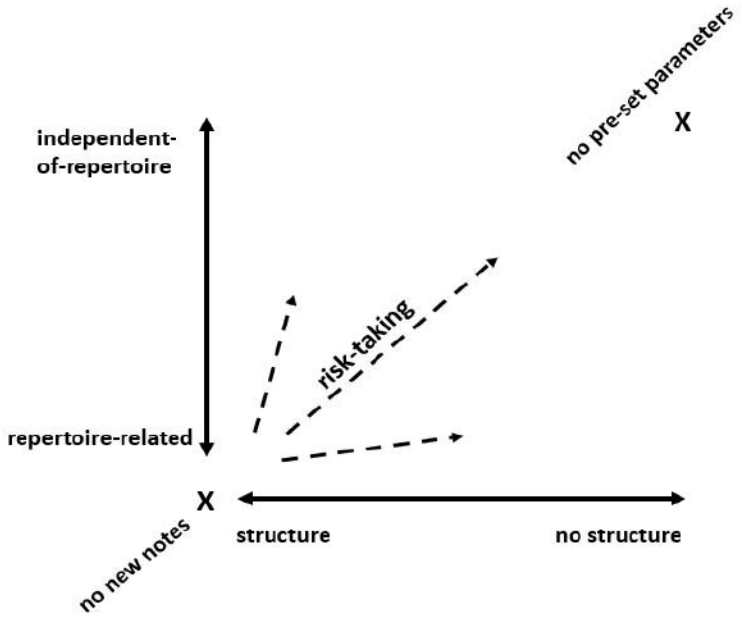
5.3 Theme 3: Risk-taking: how to practice and perform it

Reflecting on the processes of improvisation rehearsal and performance, juxtaposed with audience responses, an element became increasingly highlighted through the project: risk-taking. Looking at the full experience, a repeating tendency can be observed from the musicians' side: as beginners, myself including, the initial steps of engaging with improvisation and starting to create music outside a score seemed often accompanied with feelings of discomfort, insecurity, and possible emotional vulnerability (even among musicians excited to engage with improvisation). The element of risk-taking seemed to intensify particularly in ensemble contexts, and it appeared, that the absence of a score initiated a different type of underlying expectation: to enter the space and social situation in a creative, and therefore artistically and emotionally riskier, role.

Considering the risk-taking factors wasn't part of concert planning but emerged when reflecting on the performances. It seemed that ensemble size and the type of structure or style applied determined the experience of risk-taking, which varied from moment to moment. (Though generally, the more musicians and the less structure applied simultaneously, the more intense it became.) In solo settings, it appeared more subjective to personal experience and skill level; for example, a solo prelude could feel highly risky, when strict stylistic harmony and voice leading parameters were expected. In the context of this project, the most unrestricted ensemble moments (for example, 'musical postcard' segments) seemed to represent a particularly intense type of risk-taking, likely related to the enhanced group communication effect.[96]

[96] Resonating with observations of improvising jazz musicians juggling multiple relational directions of awareness simultaneously in improvisation performance (Brand *et al.*, 2012).

Figure 11. Adding the element of risk-taking to my earlier visualization.



During practice, I concluded that the initial emotional challenges of engaging with improvisation were likely related to the risk-taking element unique to this type of musical performance context, where relationship between structure and 'freedom' can be a complex one and surrounding culture typically emphasizes 'right or wrong' narratives (Benedek *et al.*, 2014). As participating musicians' awareness of real-time playing grew and confidence in improvising with structures and harmonies increased, boldness in taking creative risks appeared to follow. This meant embracing unplanned modulations initiated by other musicians, getting lost in less familiar harmonies, changing time signatures, and abandoning pre-set structures – trusting that the gained improvisatory know-how would emerge in a spontaneous and intuitive way. A significant finding that supported consciously embracing this creative, positive risk-taking, was the feedback from audience which showed that 'mistakes', 'failures' or 'not so successful' moments in improvisation – when risk-taking did not turn out triumphant – had contributed positively to the audience's overall experience. This outcome, which initially emerged in concert #1 audience responses (and was repeated in concerts #3 and #4), increased my confidence in further risk-taking, and became one of the most significant aspects of the entire learning experience. Reflecting on these outcomes, the following process was identified:

- ➔ Experiencing emotional vulnerability and pressure related to risk-taking
- ➔ Developing trust in self through gaining improvisational skill & technical toolkit

- ➔ Developing trust in co-musicians through shared experience and practice
- ➔ Developing trust in audiences through performing experience (including unsuccessful risk-taking and loss-of-control moments)
- ➔ Negotiating and integrating this new risk-taking aspect with performing persona
- ➔ Ability to apply creative risk-taking to all improvisation and repertoire performing activities, and ability to control the type of risk taken in real-time

When reviewing post-concert reflections, it seems that higher risk-taking moments often invited (or "squeezed out") a level of intuitive know-how that surprised even the performers.[97] Exploring these discoveries further in practice was particularly useful through a Theme and variations approach (as found in concert #4), in which the improvisatory portion developed one step at a time and the variations advanced within comfortable and pre-planned boundaries. According to musicians' post-concert comments, this segment from concert #4 (demo clip #23), though relatively pre-planned and pre-structured, included a particularly wide range of intense, risky-feeling moments (leading to both successful and unsuccessful outcomes). In the first and second variations, 'riskiness' was related to keeping with the agreed style, harmony, and Mozart's structure; in the third and fourth, to creating new characters and harmonies and depending increasingly on ensemble partners.

Demo clip #23: Mozart's *An Chloë* performed with Theme and variations approach (concert #4): https://youtu.be/z-QvtP9UoH4

[97] For example, my experience in the Chopin segment of concert #3, when the musically best outcomes appeared during those improvisatory moments that I had personally felt most insecure about. See p. 110.

5.4 Theme 4: Performativity and personality projection

Adding my own voice…

At the start of the project, one of the aims rising from historical context was to *add my own voice to concert programmes*. However, as practice progressed, the concept emerged more complex than previously realized. Despite having successfully developed personal performer and musician identities[98], introducing improvisation seemed to re-shuffle the situation and initiate a re-constructing and even merging of these identities.

Engaging with musical ensemble improvisation meant engaging directly with the people in the room: the individual personalities, backgrounds, musical preferences, communication styles, and body language of others – but also our own. Learning that to function in this setting, everyone must communicate expressively with personal body language, eye contact and clarity in musical expression, and all that in real-time, was a substantial challenge - especially when compared to a traditional score-centred chamber music rehearsal. It became evident, how the well-established connection between musical improvisation and human communication (Hargreaves, MacDonald and Miell, 2005a) was, in fact, deeply connected to personality, drawing participants into personal exchange. Cultivating this personal exchange into something that we could perform on stage as part of a musical, aesthetic event, emerged as fitting characterization of the process of ensemble improvisation rehearsal and performance[99]. Communicating through eye-gaze has been identified as a strong element in repertoire ensemble performance, activated especially to signal a need to interact or when feeling uncertain (Bishop, Cancino-Chacón and Goebl, 2019). Neurologically, eye-gaze is known to activate the "social brain", a network of structures involved in human communication and social interaction (Senju and Johnson, 2009). In this project, the element of eye-gaze emerged as a pivotal, defining element: the intensity, with which musicians gazed at each other when communicating during improvisation, appeared to contribute towards a shift in social atmosphere, as well as experience of emotional engagement (detectable not only by those participating, but audience members as well). This resonates with findings from jazz ensemble

[98] Developing identities as musician and performer are understood as somewhat separate achievements (Hargreaves, MacDonald and Miell, 2005b; Lamont, 2012).
[99] In this project, the eye-gaze phenomenon appeared similar with both small duet and larger quintet ensembles; though minor indication exists of it occurring between performer and audience in solo performance as well, a more specific inquiry would need to be designed to investigate this aspect further.

improvisation studies, suggesting a link between flow and group cohesion, generating a state of intense emotional empathy (Sawyer, 2006; Lamont, 2012; Dolan et al., 2018) and that a relevant contribution of the presence of improvisation may be related to overcoming the specific challenges of a group improvising together (Wilson and MacDonald, 2016). Activating this level of personal exchange appeared to contribute towards facilitating authentic, emotional openness, trust, and inter-personal empathy, which then became elements in the performance.

…To concert programmes

In concert #1, the aim was to create an intimate and informal concert atmosphere fitting with the experimental character of the event. This was planned through informal speaking with performers and audience members during the concert, by offering a complimentary wine reception, and by inviting audience members to a post-concert discussion with musicians to a nearby wine bar. Interacting with the audience feedback from this concert confirmed what is known from audience research scholarship: everything about the event contributes towards the experience of concertgoers (Sloboda and Ford, 2012; Pitts and Burland, 2014; Walmsley, 2019). In this unique experience, as performer, I received feedback relating to a wider range of matters than the musical performance (for instance, speaking to the audience, written programme, social atmosphere), which resulted in an unforeseen opportunity: to respond as performer, by exploring these aspects through programme planning – and in doing so, merging artistic vision with the motivation to interact with audience members and shape the entire aesthetic concert experience.

Exploring historical improvisation concepts and techniques, and the circumstances that surrounded compositions at the time of their creation, became essential. Drawing inspiration from the way the pieces existed in culture and society, these 'background discoveries' impacted the artistic process. Wanting to share it with audiences led to creating segments of concert programmes, where repertoire, improvisation, and context, historical or present-day, became intertwined. Audiences were thus offered not only the pieces of repertoire, but why I as the performer had chosen them, how I personally related to them, and how they inspired me to respond through my own, improvisatory creativity, in present-day concert performance.

Example: Improvising through performers' own storytelling

As described in programme notes of concert #4 (see Appendix D), the Hugo Wolf piece *Mausfallensprüchlein* was chosen because of its whimsical nature, composed in his early years to a children's poem, and as such, inspired us as performers to add our own voices to the performance through storytelling improvisation techniques.[100] Though the storyline of the full performance (number of variations and their narratives) were pre-planned, no agreements were made on harmonic, rhythmic, timbral or dynamic dimensions. However, examining a short excerpt from the performance with Sonic Visualizer, spontaneous application of musical structures, gestures and tendencies can be detected. Full variation (demo clip #19) and excerpt (#22):

Demo clip #19: Wolf's *Mausfallensprühlein,* improvised third variation "*Witch*": https://youtu.be/en_LsjnKQ9Y

Demo clip #22: Excerpt from "*Witch"* variation: https://youtu.be/Dk1PHiQGZoI

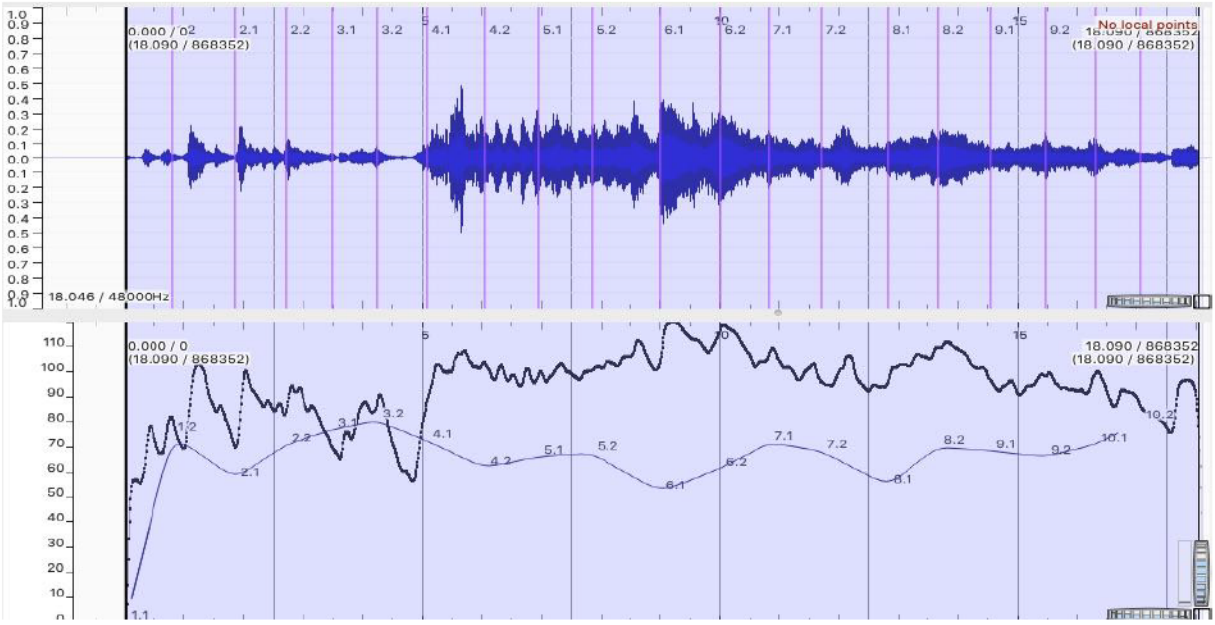
In this "*Witch*" variation moment (demo clip #22; figure 12; bars 20-29 in score, Appendix D), the singer instigates a gesture of high pitch laugh in a non-composed moment for voice melody. The pianist starts supporting this character with an increased rhythmic, imitating response (still somewhat following the composed text). However, he intuitively leads the interlude into crescendo (rather than written diminuendo), creating a melodic gesture and follow-through which supports the new character. I, the cellist, remember making the intuitive decision to not join in the interlude, but prepare to emphasize the next phrase with a contrasting, melodical entrance. The cello entrance character is immediately imitated by the singer, and a duet moment follows to end the phrase. In this clip, we end up performing with opposite dynamic markings than those written (without having ever discussed it). Demonstrative of the work we had engaged with regarding harmonic structure and storytelling through prosodic level of musical parameters (Dolan, 2005), knowing the underlying structural levels of the composed material allowed us to re-define certain parameters - for example, applying melodical, dynamic,

[100] As described in Chapter 4, the programme for concert #4 was chosen through a democratic process, and this piece emerged directly from my chamber partners' personal artistic motivation. It ended up providing a fruitful ground for fun, creative experimentation regarding the improvisatory approach.

rhythmical and timbral freedom within the composed harmonic structure - and make intuitive, spontaneous choices within them in real-time.

Demo clip #27: Sonic Visualizer animation of Wolf 'witch variation' moment: https://youtu.be/YwDqYA-F1uE

Figure 12. Sonic Visualizer image. Improvised *Witch* variation to Wolf's Mausfallensprühlein, bars 20-29 (concert #4).



Examining the tempo and intensity curves (figure 12), gestures of approximately two-bars hyper-measures can be observed with strong down beats at 2.1, 4.1, 6.1, 8.1. (Manifested by the peaks of the intensity curve). This indicates the performers' connection to hyper-measures[101]. In the first three hyper-measures (or 6 bars), the off-beat that follows, shows tempo and intensity deviating from each other (pattern of breaking expectancy), further indicating the presence of a shared emotional intent performed across the ensemble – even though performers are deviating improvisatorically from the written score.

This visualization illustrates another particularly meaningful improvisatory gesture between voice and cello, demonstrative of intuitive, live problem-solving. When listening, pitch and rhythm of the voice at 2.1 becomes imitated by cello in 2.2, and the cello continues the gesture

[101] The term hyper-measures, a fundamental element in Dolan's pedagogy, draws on Schnabel's work in which the performer creates their own meter, combining two or more bars together and treating each bar as a single beat or pulse (Dolan *et al.*, 2018).

with a third imitation from 3.2. This imitative motif follows a standard sequence, with each gesture diminishing in volume while tempo accelerates towards the end of the sequence, contributing to coherence in phrase structure. A vivid memory from the performance, I felt like the notes/pitches I played in this moment came out unimaginative and lacking in character; however, post-analysis shows how I immediately and intuitively compensated by creating a rhythmically and structurally expressive, supporting line.

Speaking with audiences

Initially, speaking to the audience was merely to provide background information due to the experimental nature of the concert, but the strong positive feedback from audience impacted further decisions. Though I had spoken to audience in concerts previously, I hadn't received any training in the delivery of spoken material in my conservatoire education, and the combination of performing, improvising, and speaking about improvisation turned out to be an intense undertaking. However, between organizing concerts and improvisation study, turning attention to this element was not feasible, and I decided to accept my non-experience in spoken performance as an authentic example of the outcomes of the research.[102] Furthermore, when reviewing audience data, positive feedback about speaking emerged after each concert. My attention was drawn more critically to body language and general spoken presentation at the end of the project and becoming aware of the crucial importance of speaking and performance pedagogy as part of performative aesthetics and musicianship studies - and the lack thereof in modern conservatory training – emerged as important, empirical finding.

[102] This was a typical example of conflict between the inner 'researcher' and 'performer' (see Chapter 3), and I decided to accept my discomfort in speaking as part of the research. However, for the 'performer', a lingering motivation was created, and I resolved to seek resources and develop the skill of intertwining speaking and playing further in the future.

5.5 Theme 5: Engaging in relational exchange with audiences

The above processes led to the concert presented to audiences. Starting to learn about the audience's experience through research components was artistically eye-opening and brought about critical reflection on several elements. In this section, audience input will be examined first, through questionnaires, interviews and focus group data and second, through the subjective experience of live impulses exchanged during the concert.

Engaging through feedback: summary

Certain elements were repeatedly mentioned and reflected on by respondents as positive contributors to their experience. During the reflective stages between concerts, audience feedback was systematized by creating sub-topics, to which various comments related. The following topics (in bold) were commented or reflected upon in all three concerts where feedback was gathered.

Changes in emotional state. Confirming the working hypothesis, audience responses were in line with previous studies regarding heightened engagement and emotional arousal related to improvisatory moments in concert program. Audience members reported experiencing specific moments of heightened engagement and alertness or attentiveness, occurring almost always during improvised moments. However, they also often described 'exciting' and 'emotionally engaging' as overall characterization of the concert – thus describing both micro and macro levels of the experience as highly engaging.

Respondents specifically appreciated the performers **speaking to the audience** and asking them for various input or requests. This was significantly so for the less experienced classical concertgoers, who expressed this as one of the most important positive contributors to their concert (and 'audiencing') experience. Several respondents said it made them feel invited and appreciated as audience members, and as a result, they became more relaxed and less self-conscious.

Respondents mentioned in passing enjoying the perceived individual differences and **personal presence** of performers. This caught my attention, because it resonated with an observation

from rehearsal stages: improvising moments elicited stronger personality projection, enhanced by the interconnectedness of personal, emotional, and musical communication. When examining audiences' responses to "highest point of engagement" from all three concert cycles, a connection can be observed to moments when my performers' experience of artistic risk-taking was highest. This correlating **performer risk-taking and audience engagement** emerged specifically in 'musical postcard' free fantasy improvisation segments, which were the least pre-planned (or 'most free') improvisations explored in this project. They were most mentioned when included, and in concert #3, 'fantasy reflection' on Janacék's *Tale* was most and Chopin's *Prelude variations* second most mentioned – corresponding, again, with least and second least pre-planned moments in the program. Furthermore, when compiling answers to "favourite moments and why", my experience of risk-taking remained mirrored in responses (though slightly less) and respondents often described heightened engagement and a co-creative, participatory feeling as reasons.

Uniqueness of the experience. Respondents reported enjoying the surprising, in-the-moment nature of improvisation, and it contrasted with their previous experiences of non-improvisatory Western classical concerts positively. Uniqueness of this experience was reflected in the rarity of hearing classical repertoire and improvisation combined, but also in that audience members were included in the process through asking for requests, highlighting the specific time, place, and people of that moment. Respondents described having a stronger emotional response than they had expected to have to the event and noticed themselves reflecting on the experience in days and weeks to come.

Respondents reported specifically enjoying the heightened **visual cues and body language** of musical communication that occurred during ensemble improvisation. It appears to have contributed towards a participatory, insider, **co-creative experience,** which respondents described as becoming active participants, or co-musicians, when intensely engaging with and followed the creative communication of ensemble improvisation[103]. Asking the audience for input and then improvising on it as an ensemble seemed to generate a "democratic playing field", where audience members had the same information (or illusion of it) as musicians, and could follow the creation of the music, reflective of human communication, as it unfolded in

[103] The democratizing impact of group improvisation, including participation and empowerment, has been utilized and explored in music education and music therapy setting (Keith, 2007; Higgins and Mantie, 2013).

real time. Respondents expressed feeling like they gained access and "became part of the creativity", watching and listening the real-time problem solving of the ensemble members through musical and visual cues. These moments were typically connected to favourite moments of the respondents' concert experience.

In all forms of feedback gathering, audience members signalled the **atmosphere** in the audience as a significant positive contribution to their concert experience. In their reflections, the supportive, engaged, and relaxed atmosphere contrasted their expectations (and possible past experiences) of Western classical concert culture. Interrogating these responses further led me to observe the 'audiencing experience' (Walmsley, 2019).

The 'audiencing' experience and improvisation

Respondents in focus group and interview discussions often reflected on their own role as audience members, or experience of 'audiencing' (Walmsley, 2019). The significance of circumstances surrounding the musical performance, and how vital their contribution was to audience members' concert experience, was more substantial than previously understood. As a performer, the practical and organizational matters of a concert, though important, typically were not at the forefront. Becoming aware and starting to engage with the extra-musical aspects of the concert, the way I presented myself on stage started changing. Relevant to any performer, knowing that all aspects of the concert experience influence the audiences' assessment of the musical performance (Juchniewicz, 2008; Rea, 2015), the circumstances of the performance started appearing as an artistic priority. This resonated with the way improvisatory elements were historically used to cultivate relationships with patrons, create emotional bonds with specific audiences and adjust the presented music according to the performance situation at hand (Gooley, 2018a).

Asking the audience for requests was experienced as an invitation to participate, and the communal experience and emotional togetherness it created was experienced by both performers and audience members. It appeared that the processes ensemble members engaged with in improvisation rehearsals resulted in a shift of certain musical and social parameters in the actual performance as well. The democratization, empathy, group creativity and emergence associated with ensemble improvisation or group flow (Sawyer, 2006; Seddon and Biasutti,

2009; Bishop, 2018) appeared to impact upon, or become extended to, concert audiences as well, as they reported the emotional effects of improvised ensemble moments.

The presented concert model was specifically positively received by those audience members who were less experienced Western classical concertgoers. In questionnaires, those who reported lower levels of familiarity with classical music took specific delight in performers speaking to the audience and following the 'musical postcard' ensemble improvisation - and the insider, co-creative experience they derived from it. Presumably, the enhanced communication (visual cues and musical improvisation reflecting human interaction) made the musical performance appear more accessible. They could see and hear the invention of the music and, especially in the musical postcard model, it existed in the present moment and was attached to a simple message or meaning to begin with. As identified by (Sloboda and Ford, 2012), when there is little to no pre-existing relationship with the composers or repertoire pieces, both emphasis and desire to connect, fall on the concert situation and the specific performers. The effects of improvisation practice and performance on the 'audiencing' experience appeared, in this case, particularly significant for those seldom concertgoers, less familiar with Western classical music. Respondents (who reported little or no familiarity) commented positively on the accessibility created through performers (both improvising and speaking to audiences about it) in every form of audience feedback throughout the project, including focus group (concert #1), interviews (concerts #3 and #4) and questionnaires (concerts #1 and #3). In their experience, the informality, relaxed atmosphere, and inclusivity increased their enjoyment of the concert in a significant and meaningful way.

Live interaction and exchange of impulses during the concert

Examining the interaction between myself as performer and the audience, I noticed, that my engagement with audience started, in fact, at the planning stages of the concert. Interacting with the audience feedback data increased awareness of and openness to the audience in live performance. The more I examined the subtler impulses exchanged in concerts, the more there appeared to be a level of intuitive interaction, that was relatively subconscious. I had started off simply wanting to improvise something on audience requests, inspired by historical precedence; however, my awareness of subconscious levels grew as the project progressed, and it became evident, that intuitive interactions happen in multiple ways throughout a performance.

During the concert, I intuitively picked up - and subconsciously interpreted – impulses from the audiences' body language, sounds they made and facial expressions, in addition to the more obvious shades and lengths of applause. In each concert I experienced a turning point, when I felt the atmosphere relax; when interrogating this impression, I recalled the audience shifting more, possibly moving their head to the beat, breathing audible 'oohs and aahs', laughing, or perhaps saying something during applause or in response to speaking. Comparing with audience's responses, I typically perceived a first shift in atmosphere slightly earlier than they did – leading to the reflection that I had subconsciously received a subtle, affirming impulse, which fuelled the musical expressivity, freedom and creative risk-taking of my performance, which in turn impacted their perception of it.

In my subjective experience, receiving live feedback, which I intuitively interpreted as supportive, positive and attentive, facilitated feelings of empathy and affirmation[104]. All concerts had moments which I critically considered suboptimal or unsuccessful; however, the impact of audience impulses remained a positive influence, and even if there were vast differences in the shades of applause experienced during this project, in the moment of performance, the only critically negative impulses I registered came from within. Although the type of open-minded audience attracted to experimental concerts like these, and the substantial portion of audiences who had personal ties to the performers likely strengthened this contrasting dynamic of self-criticism versus audience support, as performer's experience, this resonates with the high level of self-criticism associated with classical music culture (Benedek *et al.*, 2014).

Improvisation practice and intentional openness to the audience had empowered me to stay engaged with music making and reject the internal, critical impulse to 'play it safe' and withdraw from creative risk-taking. Having heard similar experiences from chamber partners throughout the project, resonance of this can be observed as reversal of what Philip describes happening during the 20th century, when recordings and absence of improvisation turned performers' focus away from audiences and towards flawless execution and avoiding mistakes (Philip, 2004). Engaging with the audience in the above-described ways appeared to have

[104] Described in reflective diary as, for example, a "wave of warmth" from audience, or "completely engaged with me in the moment".

initiated a positive cycle of relational exchange, in which the performer became more empowered through intentional practice of openness and audience awareness, and the social dimension of audience's concert experience became strengthened in response.

5.6 Concert #5: Viva recital

When interacting with findings of all four concert cycles and conducting final analysis, two aspects became highlighted for further exploration in practice.

First, arising from interacting simultaneously with historical information and modern-day practice, there is a specific phenomenon that has contributed inadvertently towards the initial decline of live improvisation in concerts: this is the romantic rhetoric of '*improvisatoriness'*, which provokes relevant questions for performer-teacher practitioners today. When the shift from improvising to pretending to improvise happened (Gooley, 2018a), musicians remained educated in the former – however, what is the situation for following teachers and students? Having now personally discovered the changes when performing repertoire applying the improvisatory approach, exploring this historical shift with hopes of reversing it in practice, appears increasingly relevant. What does it mean instrument-technically and musically, when a repertoire piece is marked or expected to be performed in a *character* or *spirit* of improvisation? How could this search be shared with an audience in a performative way? To explore this, repertoire pieces by Johann Sebastian Bach, Antonín Dvořák and Hector Berlioz will be included and intertwined with repertoire-related and independent-of-repertoire improvisatory elements.[105]

Second, combining all the different improvisatory formats explored in concerts, the special nature of ensemble improvisation became increasingly established throughout the project. In the fifth concert, this will be both demonstrated and further explored through a range of independent-of-repertoire forms, most of which have been independently tested in previous concerts, with an ensemble of 4-6 musicians. Audience input will be requested for free formats such as musical themes, words or phrases and storytelling devices.

5.6.1 Reflective commentary on viva recital

The viva recital took place on March 16th, 2022, at 2:30pm in Milton Court Concert Hall. While the concert appeared an overall positive event, in my assessment, there were some elements

[105] To be finalized in rehearsals; most likely include a combination of *Prelude*, *Interlude*, *Fantasy*, *Theme & variations* formats, and improvising on repeated material where appropriate.

that contributed towards some 'artificial undertones' in the experience. When asked in the viva discussion about my impression of the live audience response compared with previous concerts, I described it as slightly stiffer, less relaxed, and less responsive than previous concerts' experiences. According to my personal perception, the more formal, examining nature of the event made it harder to foster an atmosphere of improvisatory playfulness and creativity. While communicating their enthusiasm generously during applause, my personal experience of the overall impulse exchange was impacted by these elements, resulting in a more formal performance experience.[106] The pressure of keeping to a strictly defined timeframe - while leading a new-to-each-other improvising ensemble in first live performance - was a stress-adding element that reduced my personal level of ease especially during improvisations and audience interactions. However, becoming aware of these aspects happened in post-reflection and during the concert, the experiences gained throughout the project enabled me to self-facilitate a positive psychological state-of-mind both off and on stage.

Performing the Dvorak with three levels of creative elements – written composition, preplanned and spontaneous improvisations – provoked specific artistic reflection. In my personal observation of both on-stage experience and reviewing the video, the preplanned improvisations tended to have more musically and technically weaker moments than written or spontaneously improvised parts. Similarly, when watching the recording, I observed a difference in body language between spontaneous improvisations (for example, the increased eye contact and facial expressions during the fermata at 23:10-20) and other moments, leading to the impression that the preplanned improvisatory moments (such as the first recurring A section at 20:50-21:00) did not portray an equally strong appearance of heightened engagement. Whether this was related to the novel nature of such an 'experiment', or something that would be repeated, remains a question for future practice. Regarding the free ensemble formats, such as *Rondos* and *ABA*'s, the viva recital strengthened my previous thinking in that there appears to be important and undiscovered potential in this specific area of improvisatory performance practice. As was in all previous concerts, also here highest moments of risk-taking, enjoyment and visible interaction (when reviewing the recording) occurred during these segments. On video, what stood out was how these elements appeared highest immediately after something went "wrong" and the ensemble sought to "solve the

[106] However, it is noteworthy that some of my co-performers did not share this impression, highlighting the subjectivity of the performers experiences and the difference between the reflective analysis of this and previous concerts, where a more thorough systematic process was applied.

problem", working most intensely together to move on and find unity again (for example, during the audience request on "Strawberry fields", which we launched soon realizing that we had misunderstood our on-stage communication, and none of us was actually truly familiar with the piece. We labored through and while it was very loosely related to the requested melody, we managed to re-create musical unity in the final segment; see recording at 46:23-53). Though we had prepared for on-stage discussions and type of requests taken from audience, the live experience prompted reflective post-performance discussion within the ensemble and a desire to further explore, modify and test approaches to taking audience requests. The post-performance reflective reactions from co-performers were enthusiastic and resulted in a desire to continue towards future performances and follow-up development as an improvising ensemble. Personally, I shared this motivation deeply, as in the context of this inquiry, it had not been possible to advance with a specific ensemble beyond the initial stage.

Audience members' informal post-performance comments:
I've never been to a concert like this before. The emotional connection between the musicians and audience was amazing.
It was incredibly brave, to improvise like that in a performance! Thank you so much.

CHAPTER 6: Conclusions and implications

6.1 Framing and discussing key findings

Re-introducing improvisatory practice and performance to Western classical concert programme in the context of this study was seen to impact on both performer and audience members' experiences of emotional engagement and relational exchange, resulting in a mutually reported, shared experience. The two-fold artistic motivation to explore improvisational performance practice in a historically evidenced context and to engage in meaningful interactions with audiences informed the development of a concert model, in which the performer designed and presented a programme of solo and chamber music repertoire and improvisations and engaged in spontaneous exchange with audience throughout the concert. Findings highlight the different natures of repertoire and improvisation performance at all stages: in personal practice, ensemble rehearsals, and live concert situation. When analysing specific moments through juxtaposition of subjective performer, audience, and objective perspectives (through the Sonic Visualizer tools), a multidimensional framework of interaction in real-time can be observed. Examining mutual engagement during the concert revealed that performer-audience impulse exchange occurred on different levels and seemed to reinforce each other, resulting in particularly strong experiences of both performer and audience's emotional engagement. The concert model appeared to facilitate the development of an empathetic, social, and supportive atmosphere, and improvisatory elements were seen impacting the respondent's experience of 'audiencing' positively, which contrasted their expectations of a Western classical concert.[107]

Acquiring skills: returning to the roots of re-integrated musicianship

In the same way as a jazz improviser develops their creative voice in experimental dialogue with traditions past and present[108], this project brought me to interact with previously unknown narratives of music history and the Western classical canon. Discovering a rich, well-evidenced and centuries-long culture of improvisation drew me into reflective dialogue – from which an

[107] Including both direct and indirect impact, such as musicians conversing with the audience about improvisations.
[108] See Chapter 2, p. 32.

invitation to 're-join the tradition' was derived. When improvisation was a natural part of performance practice, professional musicians' skills and abilities corresponded with today's specializations in performing, composing, or improvising in a more holistic way, comparing with the modern, somewhat compartmentalised one. In drawing conclusions of this study, I have found it useful to view the processes of improvisation practice in response to this historical characterization.[109]

All musicians involved in this project (myself included) identified primarily as performers when joining this project. Exploring and identifying the skills required to apply the improvisatory approach to performances led, in my experience, to adapting a 're-integrated' approach to musicianship, in which the performer draws on specific skills of 'improvising' and 'composing' as part of their performance practice (informed by historical precedence of 'performer-composer-improvisor' musicianship). Described in practice (Chapter 4) and discussed further in Analysis (Chapter 5), the following summary illustrates key findings of the artistic learning process.[110]

Developing and re-integrating 'composing' with 'performing':

- Developing harmonic awareness and connecting applied music theory and solfege to instrument playing; gaining understanding of basic compositional forms and music analysis and utilizing them in live music-making; and real-time awareness of all the above (see theme #1 in Chapter 5)
- Forming deeper stylistic understanding, including appropriate creation and development of melodies and themes; embellishing and decorating repeats; extemporising fermata points, eingangs and cadenzas; creating stylistic counterpoint and voice-leading lines; and approaching repertoire through informed score-literacy (theme #1)
- Working out instrument-related challenges specific to improvisation technique and developing strategies that enable spontaneity (vs. the underlying notion of the non-

[109] Please note the distinction between the art of composition and, as is the case here, drawing on certain skills or basic knowledge, that in today's music education systems has been assigned mainly to the specialized field of composition and is not typically included in performer training.
[110] These formulations were made by summarizing successful strategies from concert cycles and viewing them together with existing improvisation literature, when applicable.

improvisatory approach, that everything performed can be practiced in multiple repetitions) (theme #1)

- Developing a technical toolkit for ensemble playing, such as creating coherent and appropriate voices, roles, and harmonic approaches; the ability to improvise small structures as part of an ensemble; and systematic utilization of the prosodic (or 'How') level of musical performance parameters (theme #2)

Developing and re-integrating 'improvising' with 'performing':

- Embracing spontaneity and engagement to the present moment; increasing the ability to control positively the psychological task of performing, including risk-taking both when it is successful and when it fails (themes #1 and #3)
- Developing increased immediacy and spontaneous access to multiple levels of know-how, or informed intuition; including the ability to communicate intuitive intentions and structures in real-time (themes #1 and #2)
- Contributing and interacting in an ensemble setting through social and emotional sensitivity, genuine respect, and empathy as well as musical techniques (theme #2)
- Developing a more conscious performative self, including positive projection of personality, body language, and on-stage interaction (themes #4 and #5)
- Embracing different expressions of creative risk-taking (themes #3 and #4)

Impact of adding the performers' own, creative voice to concert programmes

This study found that the performers' improvisatory contributions impacted concert audience's experience positively as they supported facilitating a more personal connection to the performers and created inclusivity and accessibility to the musical experience. Initially perceived through a change in atmosphere reported by audience members, improvisatory moments became highlighted in audience's feedback, and the concert model appeared to have an overall strong impact on the social and personal experience of 'audiencing' (Walmsley, 2019). This impact appeared particularly meaningful for audience members who were seldom concertgoers and had little familiarity with classical music. In all forms of audience feedback (concerts #1, #3 and #4), respondents had felt more emotionally engaged than they would have expected to feel at a "typical classical concert". Overall, findings were in line with recent

audience studies that suggest heightened emotional engagement related to improvisation (Dolan *et al.*, 2013, 2018) and the importance of connecting to the personality of the performer, especially for new classical concertgoing audiences (Sloboda and Ford, 2012).

In this concert model, musicians were invited to contribute to the process personally and creatively at all stages, from programme planning and throughout a live concert. The type of democratic, personal, creative, and empathetic collaboration that emerged as a result, appears unique in Western classical contexts, rather finding resonance in jazz ensemble, drama, or interdisciplinary settings. Furthermore, features of ensemble improvisation, such as empathy, emergence, mutual engagement, and collaborative creativity (Sawyer, 2006; Bryan-Kinns and Hamilton, 2012; Gaggioli *et al.*, 2013; Canonne and Aucouturier, 2015), became mirrored in audience's responses, generating higher levels of emotional engagement and a participatory, co-creative experience (as described by audience members themselves). The performer's experience of highest risk-taking and flow moments often corresponded with audience's experience of most emotionally engaging moments of the concert (as marked in questionnaires and interviews), regardless of ensemble size, program, event, and audience. It appears that during these moments, audience members started feeling more like active participants in a creative, collaborative exchange, and became stakeholders in a deeper phenomenon of meaning-making (Keith, 2007) and narrativization (Meelberg, 2014). Small, who yearned for a more connected 'audiencing' experience, formulated that a performance creates relationships between participants as an embodiment of relationships created between sounds (Small, 1998). The kind of ensemble improvisation with audience input explored here could be viewed as an extension of his idea, deliberately making the relation between human and musical communication explicit; intentionally pursuing emotional parameters of speech intonation through musical performance parameters; and purposefully directing the aesthetic of the event towards empathetic, emotional, and human representations.

Performer-audience engagement: Discovering a mutually developing impulse exchange

Examining the interaction between performer and audience further revealed, that performer-audience impulse exchange occurred on multiple levels of awareness throughout the concert and appeared to develop upon each other, resulting in particularly strong, shared emotional experiences. Reflecting on the performer experience and audience data from concert #1 directed the inquiry towards exploring the entire concert event as relational, aesthetic medium

between performer and audience. Having learned through audience data that risk-taking in improvisation contributed positively to audience's concert experience even when the attempt 'failed', as performer, it enabled the development of a more stress-free, relaxed, creative, and engaged stage persona. Examining the developing sequence of emotional impulses from piece to piece, a trajectory could be observed independently in all four concerts, and the relational exchange – conscious and subconscious – seemed to build from impulse to impulse. To illustrate, the more affirmative impulses I as performer sub-consciously received from the audience, the more creative risks I felt comfortable taking – to which audience members, in turn, responded with heightened emotional engagement, empathy and further support, which fuelled the performance. As no prior studies exists examining the developments that occur during a full concert event, these findings suggest there may be undiscovered potential to do so for both musical performance and performing arts audience research.

A developing pedagogical vision

Applications of improvisation or non-written music-making appear relatively common in the beginning phases of instrument learning and music education (Siljamäki and Kanellopoulos, 2020). However, when taken to Western classical repertoire performance and more structured forms, or improvisationally decorated repeats, improvised preludes/postludes and ensemble improvisation formats, the practice requires reviving from early stages onwards.[111] According to the findings of this study, systematically incorporating certain elements of improvisation practice to instrument pedagogy may enable musicians to engage with classical improvisation performance, enhance learning of their specific instrument and repertoire, and strengthen students' motivation through providing access to more diverse genres and music-making communities (for example, playing popular music styles with bands). The pedagogic approach developing from this work aims to support musicians in developing their own creative voice, dialoguing with musical traditions & composers, and interacting with their co-performers and audience members in a positive, personal, and emotionally engaging way. The following elements emerged highlighted in this context, practical applications of which can be drawn at all stages of instrument study:

[111] With a few notable exceptions, such as the pioneering work of David Dolan at the Menuhin School and East Helsinki Music Institute.

(1) Cultivating an 'expressivity first' mindset (see p. 44) which is actively developed through playing the "How" (emotional agenda) over the "What" (Cohen and Inbar, 2001; Dolan, 2005; Dolan *et al.*, 2013). This can be done, for example, through exercises that focus on the emotional meaning, phrasing and gestural direction of improvised notes, lessening the element of pitch or conventional "execution" of written notes. Cultivating this mindset promotes practice of conscious detachment from a (self-imposed) prioritizing focus on technical perfection, gives musicians tools to overcome self-criticism by focusing on positive performativity and musical expressivity, and highlights live interaction with co-musicians and audience members. The aim of adapting this mindset is to release and empower all levels of students to improvise on their current level.
(2) Intertwined and instrument-applied study of improvisation, harmony, style, music theory and history. This study recommends re-thinking and re-shuffling pedagogic formats of these subjects towards more overlapping and practical, applied study in ensemble settings.
(3) Systematically developing active, heightened listening (Dolan, 2005; Dolan *et al.*, 2013) and democratic playing environments in ensemble improvisation settings through ensemble leading-and-following exercises and structural improvisation formats. As evidenced in this and previous studies (see Chapter 2, p. 35), ensemble improvisation creates a uniquely intense learning environment for chamber music, interpersonal musical and aural skills. It can strengthen learning of the full score; playing and listening in ensemble and orchestra settings; enabling a new level of collaboration between harmony and melody instrumentalists; and introducing new kinds of rehearsal practices through impacting ensemble dynamics positively by inviting a more creative and empathetic environment (see, for example, preparation work leading towards concerts in Chapter 4, p. 95 and p. 133).

In the context of this project, observing the challenges that classically trained musicians often faced when starting to engage with improvising led to cultivating a specific methodical goal: creating a musically and psychologically inviting entry point for trained musicians to engage with Western classical improvisatory practices. This appeared most successful when emphasizing the participants' own, pre-existing, embedded & informed intuitive knowledge as starting point. Creating a bridge from the pre-existing knowledge, including intuitive harmonic awareness, to the risk-taking creativity of the improvisatory approach led to adapting and tailoring improvisation exercises to consider (1) the specific, pre-existing, intuitive and embedded knowledge of a particular instrument tradition and (2) the parameters that define their specific approach to the repertoire canon (for example, technical limitations of different

instruments; are they customed to reading a single line or full score; playing a certain part in the symphony orchestra). The goal emerged as providing participants with a personal experience of the benefits of improvising (see Chapter 5, especially themes #1, #2 and #4) within the initial session(s).

This approach gives particular attention to the parameters that define engaging with improvisation study as a string player, ensemble, and orchestral musician. In melody instrument training, most of the repertoire and general music-making happens by reading a single line, and harmony is created together, always dependent on the sounds, intervals, and harmonies other people produce in real time. As observed in this project, there appears to be a substantial amount of silent, intuitive knowledge about harmony and structures – especially among string instruments – which appears implicit but becomes activated in ensemble settings. An example from practice: though melody instrumentalists often communicated frustration about lack of intellectual awareness of harmony, when asked to improvise a duet with myself as teacher without instructions beforehand (and during which I provide "unspoken" leadership through use of single-line bass, phrase structure and elements from repertoire of the specific instrument, thus leaving multiple ways to react and respond), immediate responsiveness, 'mind-reading' and intuitive structural and harmonic awareness typically emerged at a high level. Creating a bridge from this silent knowledge to real-time awareness (one of the foundational concepts in Dolan's pedagogy) emerged as core element in the pedagogic approach developing from this study. The research recommends incorporating regular exercises, practice, and performance of solo and ensemble formats of structural improvisation to instrument learning, and programming them in concerts and performances at all levels of Western classical music study.

6.2 Implications and future directions

Implications for the performers' community and for conservatoire education

Several outcomes of this study were considered artistically transformative by the performer-researcher. Re-introducing improvisation into daily playing routine facilitated an 'expressivity-first mindset' (Chapter 5, p. 144), which was found to increase enjoyment, creativity, and instrument-technical flow during performing, while disarming/lessening self-criticism,

performance anxiety and stress[112]. Observing the instrument-specific challenges related to learning improvisation underlines the need for further pedagogical strategies to be devised especially for non-keyboard instrumentalists and ensembles, leading to the researcher's personal engagement of starting to formulate practice specifically for string instrument improvisation. Incorporating structural ensemble improvisation into practice and performance appears to have significant, unexplored potential, extending beyond pedagogical contexts and the artistic and emotional experiences of performers to those of concert audience members. Finally, the findings of this study explicitly encourage performers to engage with their audiences through developing open, empathetic, and aware attitudes; cultivating personality projection and on-stage speaking; and engaging in authentic relational exchange with concert audiences. This study supports a critical examination of modern Western classical concert culture and conservatoire education considering historical precedence of improvisation and audience involvement; and calls for re-introduction of stylistic solo and ensemble improvisation skills, including audience awareness, to conservatory curriculums.

Implications for concerts and events' organizers

As the study progressed, it became increasingly evident, that this research offers new insight to concert and festival organizers, arts institutions and classical music venues hoping to further engage old and attract new audiences. The study found that re-introducing improvisatory elements to Western classical concert programmes has particularly strong potential for reaching new-to-classical-music audiences, increasing existing audience's emotional engagement with the musical performance, and enabling audience members to connect more personally with the individual performers. Improvising as an ensemble on audience requests was highlighted as a uniquely inspiring and engaging experience in audience feedback, generating an 'insider experience' to the musical performance, inclusivity to the social situation, and a longer-lasting emotional impact.

Social elements as contributing aspects to the concert experience have been marginally identified and discussed (Stephanie E. Pitts, 2005; Walmsley, 2019), including the desire of audiences to connect more with performers (Brand *et al.*, 2012; Sloboda and Ford, 2012). However, the type of direct performer's engagement with audiences as demonstrated in this

[112] Confirming the findings of (Dolan *et al.*, 2013, 2018).

project suggests there may be significant unexplored potential in strengthening the relational, social, and communal elements of the Western classical concert experience (echoing the historical contexts of improvising, (Gooley, 2018a). This study invites a re-examination of modern concert culture and supports re-introducing elements from historical concert practices, including improvisatory programming elements, performers conversing with audiences, creating meaningful experiences through improvising on audience requests, and sharing possible personal connections to the repertoire they are performing.

Limitations of the research and potential future directions

The novel aspects of this inquiry, including 'through-the-eyes-of-the-performer' research design, combining subjective performer, audience, and objective software analysis perspectives, and including both the learning and performing of new skills, led inevitably to some level of 'learning-through-doing'. If I had been more aware of overall feasibility (including improvisation study, concert organization, audience research components and co-musician recruitment) at the start of the project, perhaps it would have been possible to diminish time spent on working out these aspects and rather, for example, include a co-musician perspective in the scope of the study. In my experience, the bond, which formed between ensemble members through the component of improvisation appeared unique and I would have liked to include it, through co-musicians' perspectives, more systematically - however, this does present a clear follow-up possibility for future research. Similarly, feasibility of audience research components posed limits on the amount and kind of data that was possible to obtain, and a follow-up study with a research team would enable a more systematic approach.

This study identifies a strong need for pedagogical improvisation strategies tailored both to ensembles and to the technical dimensions of different instrument groups – something, that might be done, for example, through a combined working group of Western classical instrumental performers, pedagogues, and expert improvisers together. Additionally, the use of objective software analysis in this project was merely illustrative; however, sound analysis (through software such as the Sonic Visualizer) could be further utilized in research design that focuses on the juxtaposition of subjective and objective parameters of live music

experiences[113]. Finally, the first investigation exploring the sequence of a full concert programme, this work suggests expanding existing narratives of musical performance scholarship to consider the full aesthetic concert event (including the trajectory of mutual impulses) as object of study, as well as supporting a systematic re-birth of solo and ensemble improvisation in Western classical music contexts.

When I knew it was improvised, it becomes a little bit more relevant… Relevant to me, to the audience, as opposed to something that was already prepared. I mean, equally delightful… But it's that bit of you being part of it, isn't it? It's to do with you [the performer] and [me], the audience.

Audience member (concert #4)

[113] Including timbre analysis and its integration in the reading of all performance-related parameters, the conducting of which was not within the scope of this project.

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APPENDIX A: CONCERT #1

Printed paper programme

Cooking with Bach, Mozart and Debussy

An evening of chamber music, classical improvisation and a glass of wine

Monday, June 5th 2017 at 7pm

Room 208, Guildhall School of Music and Drama



Pauliina Haustein, cello *that doctorate student who commutes to London from Finland*



Valerie Albrecht, viola *Guildhall's sparkling gift to the world of improvisation*

Timothy Chua, violin *from the deep jungles of Brunei*



Juulia Pölönen, kantele *rocking those 39 strings*

Event will begin with a complimentary wine reception and some relaxed mingling. After the concert, everyone is invited to join the musicians for a post-concert pint and chatter at the pub around the corner!

This event is a part of the doctorate project *Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation* by D.Mus / M. Phil student Pauliina Haustein. Audience members will be given the opportunity to take part in a related audience research if they wish to do so.

Bach: Prelude from solo cello suite II, d minor

Improvised reflection on Bach: Prelude from solo cello suite II, d minor

Mozart: Duet in G major, Allegro (after KV 423)

Exploring improvisation-state-of-mind in Mozart: Duet in G major, Allegro (after KV 423)

Debussy: "Girl with flaxen hair"

Improvised reflections on Debussy: "Girl with flaxen hair"

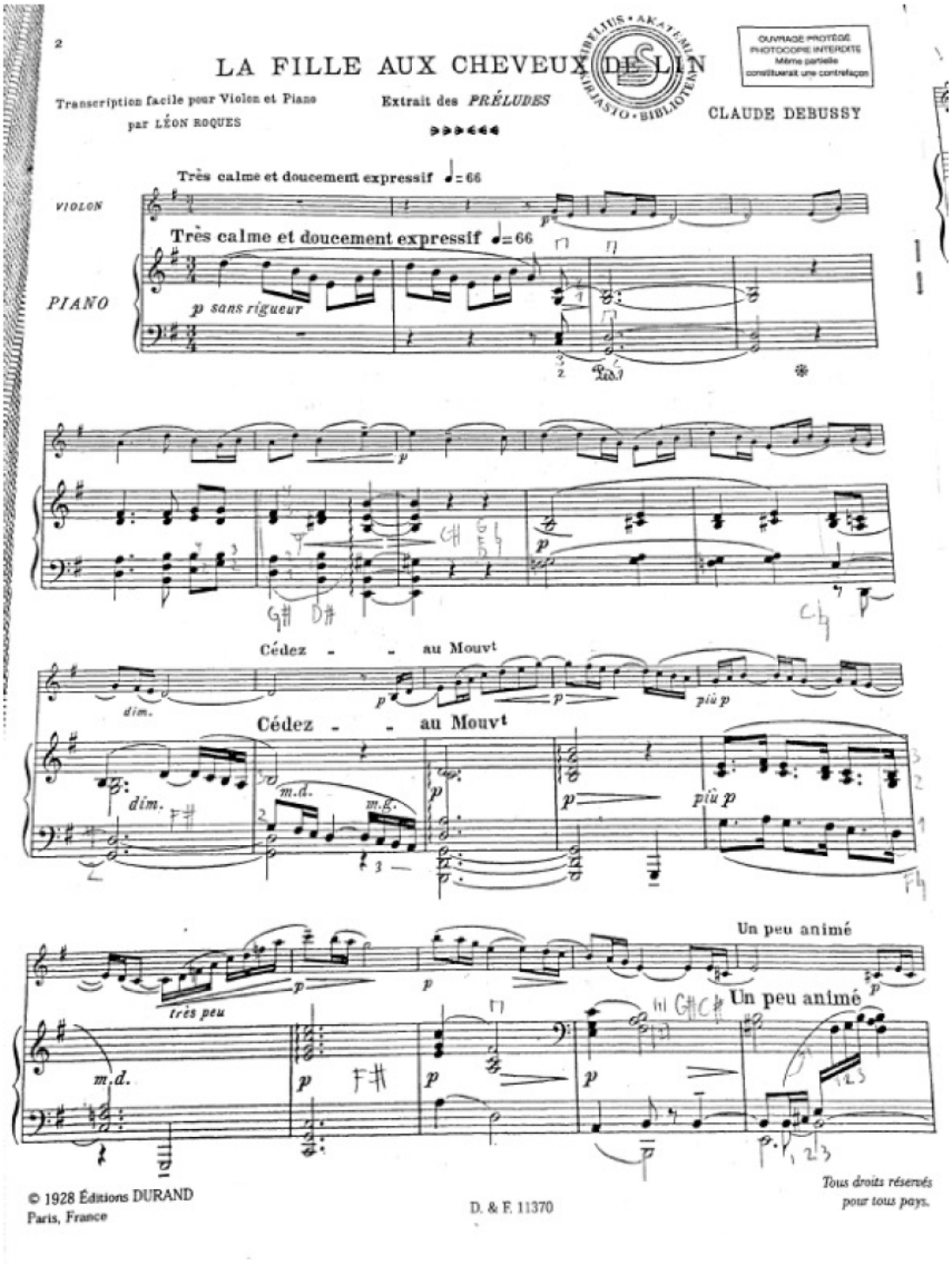
Meditation on Bach: Prelude C major, KWV 846

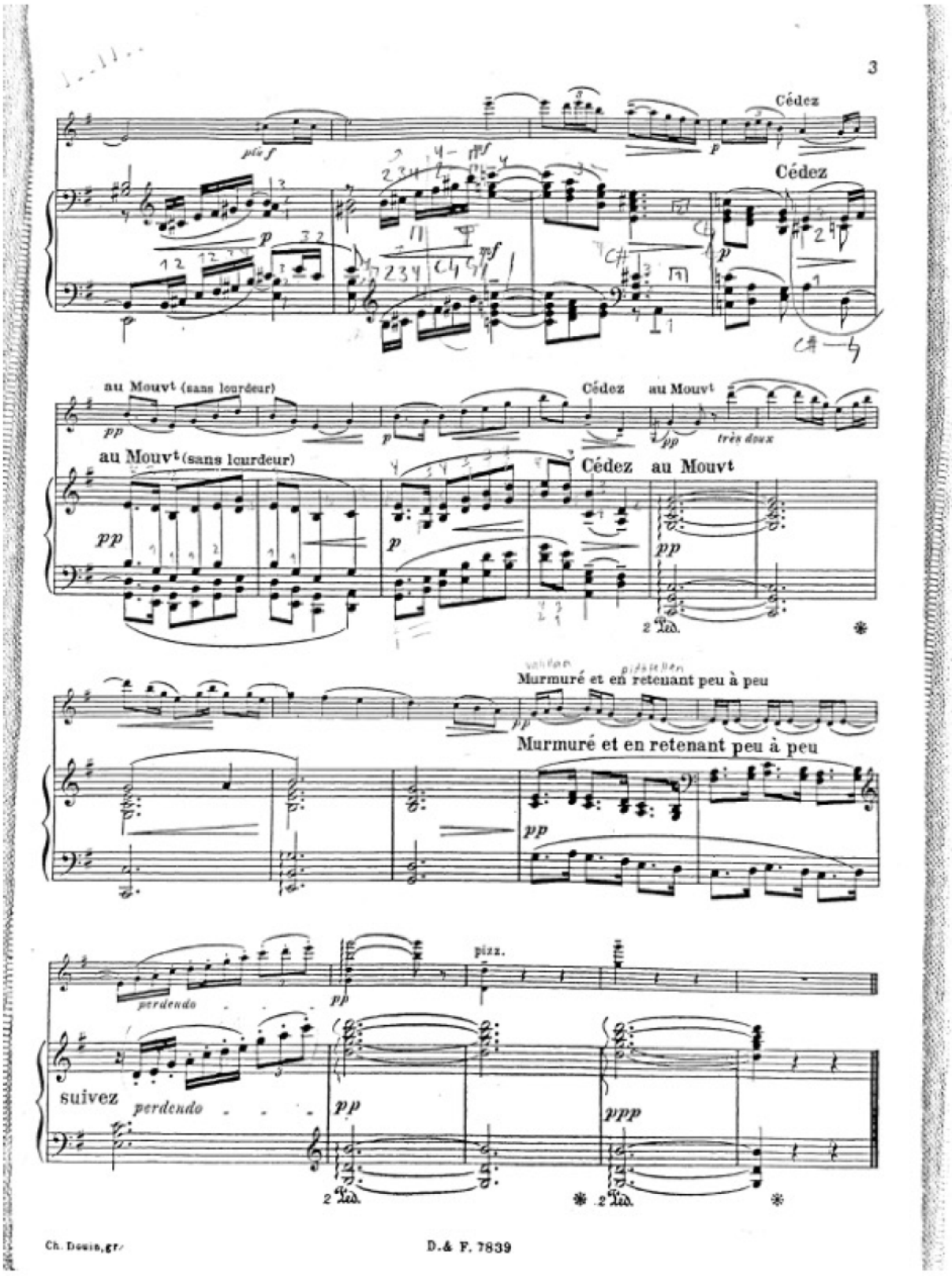
Some other pieces of music

Scores

When available, a link to a direct online source is provided.

Mozart: Duet in G major, Allegro
Bach-Gounod: Ave Maria
Debussy: *La fille aux cheveux de fin*




3
Cédez
Cédez
au Mouvt (sans lourdeur)
Cédez au Mouvt
très doux
au Mouvt (sans lourdeur)
Cédez au Mouvt
Murmuré et en retenant peu à peu
Murmuré et en retenant peu à peu
pizz.
perdendo
suivez
perdendo
Ch. Dorin, gr.
D.& F. 7839

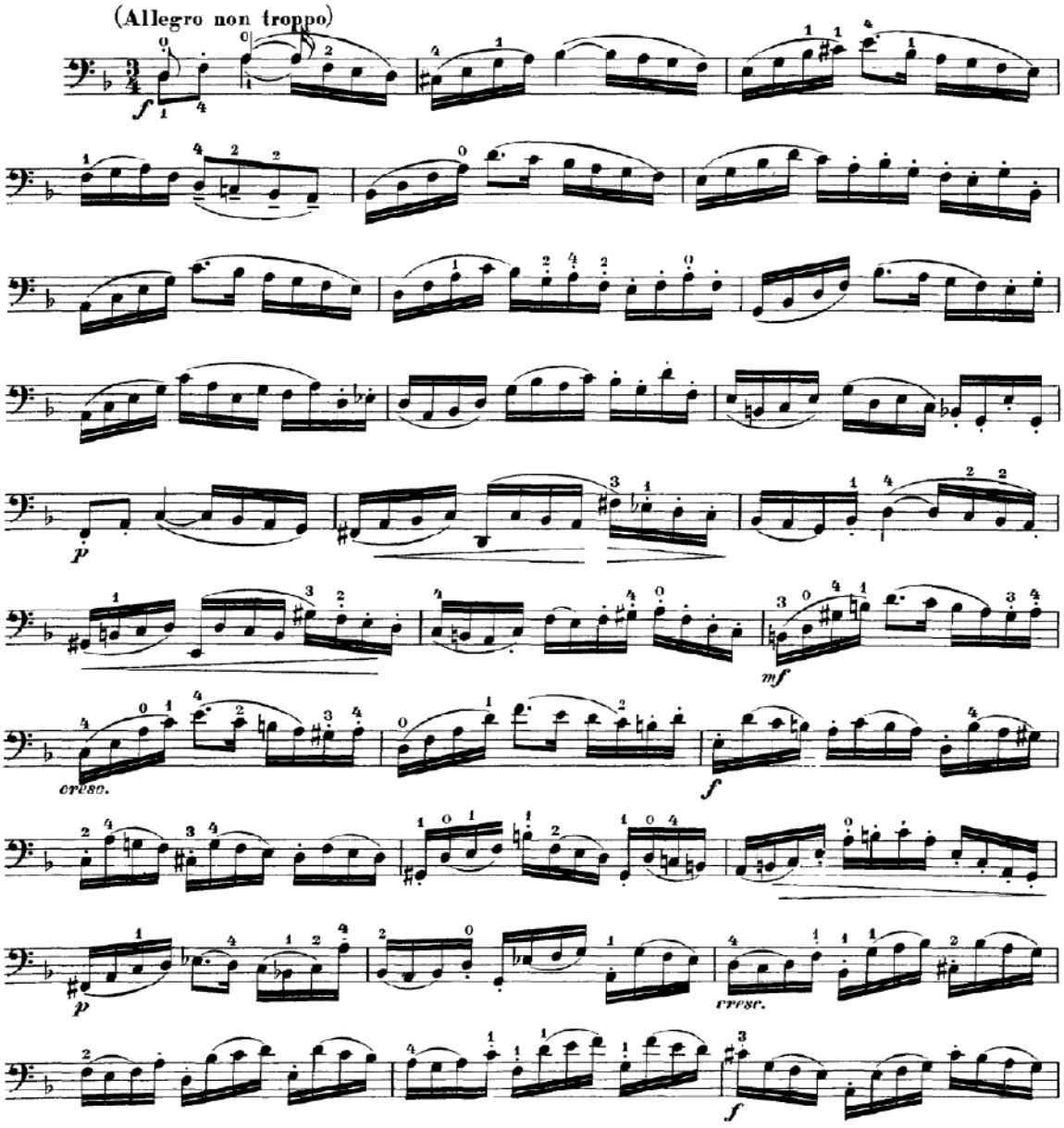
Bach: Prelude, Suite No. 2, D minor

Johann Sebastian Bach

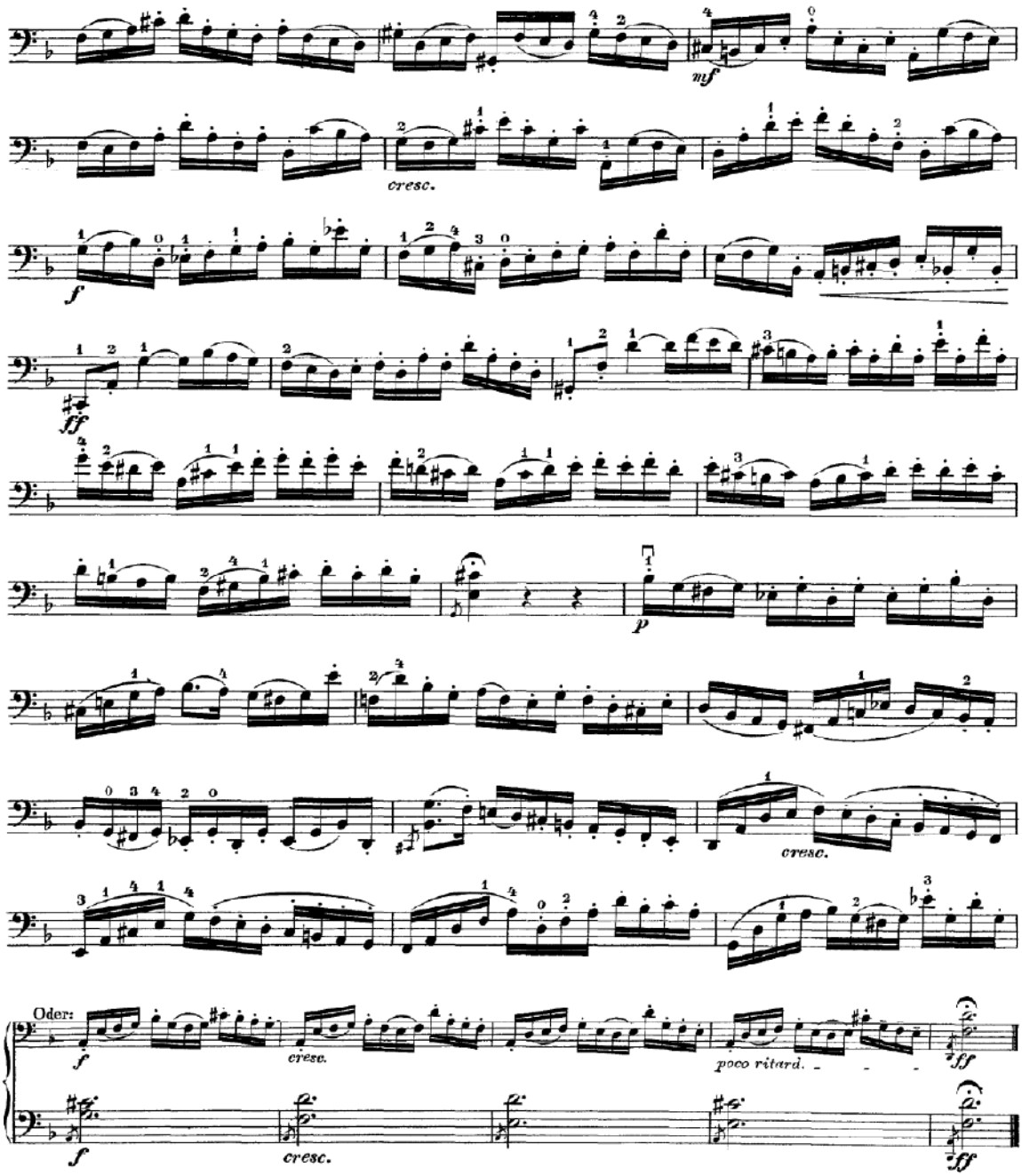
Suite No. 2 in D Minor

BWV 1008

Prélude



1


mf
cresc.
f
ff
p
cresc.
Oder:
f
cresc.
poco ritard.
ff
f
cresc.
ff

Consent form (chamber partners)

Consent for Participation and Recording

Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation

---

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, 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 consent to the researcher video recording, storing video footage and analysing video footage of the improvisation ensemble rehearsals and performances in which I take part between January 2017 and November 2017. I understand that I can at any time ask the researcher to stop recording or to delete specific sections of footage immediately without giving any reason.

- 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 researcher and withdraw from it immediately without giving any reason. I understand that I may withdraw my data from the project until the point it is included in the researcher's upgrade document (January 1, 2018).

- I consent to the processing of my personal information and video footage for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information and video footage will be treated in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.

- I understand that the video footage, musical improvisations and conversations recorded in this research project will be submitted in the researcher's doctoral thesis. I will be sent a copy of any papers or theses containing my contributions.

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: _____

Ethics application

Application form for the ethical approval of a research project

For office use only (tick completed or attached)			*For office use only*
Part 1: Basic information		☐	Risk level: High /Medium/Low (circle)
Part 2: Human participants		☐	
Part 3: Obscene or potentially offensive material		☐	
Part 4: General		☐	
Part 5: Declarations		☐	
Attachments:	Question set or sample	x	
	Participant information sheet	x	
	Participant consent sheet	x	

Part 1: Basic Information (to be completed by principal lead researcher)

1. Full project title

Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation

2. What is the hypothesis/~~research question~~?

Using a variety of classical improvisation techniques and interactive devices in a concert program of traditional classical repertoire will positively impact on audience experience.

3. Nature of the investigation

I and my chamber music partners will be playing a concert program of standard repertoire combined with classical improvisation in order to engage with audience members in an interactive relationship. A combination of methods (questionnaire, video, post-concert discussion) will be used to gather responses from audience members on their concert experience.

4. Principal researcher's name and position/student ID

Pauliina Haustein, D.Mus/M.Phil student, 1617073

5. Departmental address of principal researcher

Research department, Guildhall School	Work/mobile phone no.	+358 468102881
	Emergency no.*	
	Fax	

	Email	Pauliina.haustein@stu.gsmd.ac.uk

6. Principal researcher's qualifications and experience in the past five years (relevant to proposed research)

I am a first year doctorate student, M. Phil/D. Mus.

I will have research assistants to help with facilitation of the event. Mirjam James will act as hostess and research announcer of the concert as well as moderator of the post-concert discussion. She is a staff research associate of Guildhall School, she is not part of my supervisory team and she has been engaged for this modest professional honorarium because of her experience in running focus groups. She will be offered a small fee for her assistance.
Other research assistants include fellow Guildhall first year doctorate students Lindsey Fillingham, Stefania Donini and possibly some others. They will serve in voluntary capacity as part of mutual collegial support.

7. Co-researcher's name(s), qualifications and position(s)

A	
B	
C	

[delete or add co-researcher boxes as necessary]

7.1 Address of A above

	Work phone no.	
	Emergency no.*	
	Fax	
	Email	

7.2 Address of B above

	Work phone no.	
	Emergency no.*	
	Fax	
	Email	

7.3 Address of C above

	Work phone no.	
	Emergency no.*	
	Fax	
	Email	

8.	Provide details of location of research activity (eg on campus or at placement, or postal) with address and contact details where relevant.	Concert at Guildhall School of Music, Silk Street building, room number 208. Post-concert focus group discussion at private room of a nearby pub.

9. Does the research project take place on NHS property or involve NHS patients? ~~YES~~/**NO**
If Yes, you must follow NHS ethical approval procedures.

10. Does the research project involve human participants? **Yes**/ ~~No~~ If yes complete part 2

11. Does the research involve obscene or potentially offensive material? ~~Yes~~/**No** If yes complete part 3

Part 2: Human participants

1. In what way do you intend to involve human participants in the project (tick all that apply)?

Interviewing		Observation (non-invasive)	X
Paper questionnaire	X	Observation (invasive)	
Computer questionnaire		Testing	

Other [X] Semi-structured post-concert focus group interview

2. **Consent** – Are all participants able to provide consent for themselves? [X] Yes [ ] No
If **no**, please explain why not

3. How many participants do you intend to recruit?	Expected concert audience maximum 40 people, out of which everyone will be invited to fill in the questionnaire and be recorded during concert for performance-related behaviour (applauding, etc). 8-15 people expected for focus group interview.
4. How will they be selected and recruited? Are participants to be compensated for the time/travel? (if so provide details)	Participants are invited to the concert by social media and through networks of friends. There will be an open invitation for all audience members for the post-concert focus group discussion. The event will be advertised as a relaxed, informal concert with a small research commitment.

5. Interviewing/questionnaires (*complete where relevant*)

5(a) How many questions do you intend to ask (and give approximate timings)? In what format are you collecting the answers [eg yes/no, 4point scale, 5 point scale, free text, mixed]? What method of analysis, quantitative or qualitative, do you intend to use?	The questionnaire will have approximately 15 questions, divided into two parts (before and after the concert). Answers will be collected using mixed questions, including yes/no, marking a point on a line and free text (an advanced draft is attached). Focus group discussion will be guided by three general topic areas and sample questions that will assist the moderator to steer the conversation (a sheet of potential questions is attached). Video recording will be monitored for performance-related characteristics of the people being filmed (e.g. movement, facial expression, degree of attentiveness and engagement). For details please see attachments.

5 (b) Please attach either the full questionnaire /set of interview questions or a sample (at least 20% covering all methods). Where the full questionnaire is not submitted it must be signed-off for use by the line-manager or supervisor and a copy lodged with the Committee Secretary prior to data collection.

6. What do you think will be the effects of your observations/questioning on your participants? Are the effects likely to differ for different groupings (eg male/female, people with or without a disability, different ethnicities)? What safeguards or follow-up care arrangements need to be put in place?

None anticipated, particularly since participation is entirely voluntary and that will be fully explained by the host of the event. Concert audience members are expected to come from networks of fellow musicians, their friends and family and to be fully aware of the nature of the event.

7. How will the raw data be stored and for how long? Who will have access to this data?	It will be stored in a confidential area of the shared online drive, only accessible to me and supervisors. Video will be stored on a flash drive kept in a locked cabinet in the Guildhall research office. All raw data will be destroyed after 5 years.
8. Describe how you intend to make the results of the study known to participants?	When the form of my dissemination takes shape I will let them know and it will be made available for the participants via email, if they have chosen to give it.
9. Proposed collection starting date (dd/mm/yy)	05/06/2017
10. Proposed finishing date (dd/mm/yy)	05/06/2017
11. Proposed final report date (mm/yy) and format	

Part 3: Obscene or potentially offensive material

1. Please describe the nature of the material to be used and its significance to the research project	
2. How will this material be gathered? *(please indicate whether you intend to use School IT equipment in any form)*	
3. How will this material be stored and for how long? Who will have access to this material	
4. Proposed starting date (dd/mm/yy)	
5. Proposed finishing date (dd/mm/yy)	
6. Proposed final report date (mm/yy) and format	

Part 4: General

Describe and discuss any ethical issues arising from this project, other than those already dealt with in your answers above.

You may wish to consider issues of:

- Sample size and anonymity
- Issues of informed consent in older children and whether they are 'Gillick competent'
- Peer pressure to be involved or not involved
- The need to exclude participants during the project if they become ill etc (and who decides).

This section should also reference subject-specific ethical guidelines or reference points, eg

- Research Ethics Framework [ESRC]
- Ethics and Educational Research [BERA: British Educational Research Association]
- Rigour, respect and responsibility: a universal ethical code for scientists [Council for Science and Technology]
- Conducting research with people not having the capacity to consent to their participation [British Psychological Society]

As the event is a pilot project, the expected concert audience will be rather small and homogeneous by background. For this research, special efforts will be made to invite people who are less affiliated with classical music to bring balance and contrast to the more classically trained listeners. We have included questions about engagement and relationship with classical music in the questionnaire.
Key areas in terms of ethics of this research have been identified as peer pressure, the wellbeing of my chamber music partners in the post-concert group discussion and security of data and anonymity.
Extra care will be taken in both written instructions of the questionnaire and verbal instructions by the host of the concert to make sure participants know they are under no obligation to participate and that choosing to do so will not reflect on them in any way. They will be invited to participate in the research but the situation will be made easy for them to decline, for example by stating that if you wish to not participate, please simply take a seat that does not have an envelope on it. (Envelopes will be laid out only on seats visible to the video camera.)
Performers will meet with the host/moderator of the event beforehand in order to establish trust in the neutral and positive atmosphere of the post-concert group discussion. The moderator will be instructed to keep the conversation positive and to make sure musicians are protected from any critical or harmful comments.
Anonymity of the questionnaires will be secured by asking for contact information for future purposes (dissemination and possible future participation) in a separate sheet and by using envelopes to collect the questionnaires.
If, contrary to our expectations, underage children come to the concerts, they will be exempt from filling in the questionnaire and will be asked to be seated so that they are not visible in the camera recording.

Part 5: Declarations

1 Declaration by principal researcher/student

The information supplied in this application is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate. I have considered the ethical issues involved in this research and believe that I have adequately addressed them in this application. I understand that if the protocol for this research changes in any way, I must inform the ethics committee.

Name of principal researcher (please print):	Pauliina Haustein
Signature of principal researcher	
Date:	2.5.2017

2. Declaration by line-manager of principal researcher or student's supervisor

I have read the application, and it is appropriate for this research to be conducted for the purpose stated. I give my consent for the application to be forwarded to the ethics committee.

Name (please print):	JOHN SLOBODA		
Signature:	JAS	Department:	Research and Enterprise
Date:	3 May 2017	Designation:	Supervisor

Where the line-manager is also one of the co-researchers, the line-manager declaration must be signed by Director of Music or Director of Drama as appropriate

3. Declaration by the senior manager of a participating organisation (where applicable)

I have read the application, and it is appropriate for this research to be conducted in this department. I give my consent for the application to be forwarded to the ethics committee.

Name (please print):			
Signature:		Organisation:	
Date:		Designation:	

Information sheet

Information Sheet for Participants

Title of project

Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation

Event

Concert, June 5th 2017 at 7pm "Evening in the test kitchen – chamber music and classical improvisation with a glass of wine"

I would like to invite you to participate in this doctorate artistic research project. Participation is entirely voluntary and if you choose not to take part, it will not disadvantage you in any way. Before you decide whether to participate or not, please read carefully what the research project is about and what your participation will involve. Please feel free to ask the host of this event if there is anything that is not clear or if you wish to have more information. Future questions regarding this research can be addressed to Pauliina.haustein@stu.gsmd.ac.uk.

This concert is a "pilot concert" of an artistic doctorate project, which includes the artistic development in learning the art of classical improvisation and creative performance and using those elements to connect with concert audiences. The research is designed to understand better the experience of an audience member in a concert that includes classical improvisation.

If you decide to participate in the research, it will include the following elements:

- Filling in a short questionnaire before and after the concert
- Consenting to being recorded on video as part of the audience during the concert

As a nice ending to the event we invite you to join us after the concert in an informal, relaxed 30-minute post-concert discussion with the musicians at a nearby pub. This is entirely voluntary and you do not need to decide if you want to join until after the concert. However, please note:

- If you decide to join the post-concert pub chat, the conversation will be recorded

You may withdraw at any time, or decide not to return your questionnaire. Please note that only the back row will *not* be visible in the video recording.

As participation is anonymous it will not be possible for us to withdraw your data once you have returned your questionnaire.

Consent form

Research Participant Consent

Title of project

Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation

Event

Concert, June 5th 2017 at 7pm "Evening in the test kitchen – chamber music and classical improvisation with a glass of wine"

I have read the **Information Sheet for Participants** and understand that if I choose to take part in this research

- Participation is anonymous and it will not be possible for me to withdraw my data once I have returned the questionnaire
- I will be recorded on video as a member of audience during this concert for performance-related characteristics only
- If I choose to attend the informal post-concert discussion, the conversation will be recorded

□ I wish to receive a report of the findings of this research when they are made available

□ You may contact me about possible follow-up events or interviews for this research in the future

EMAIL: _____

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:

Audience research procedures

Questionnaire procedures

Audience members are invited to come at 7pm for a glass of wine and some pre-concert mingling. There will be a host at the door collecting signatures on a common consent form, stating that by attending this concert, the guests give their consent to be part of this research. This means filling in questionnaires, consent to being recorded during the concert and, if they choose to attend, the post-concert group conversation. Between 7:00 and 7:30pm research assistants will welcome people, distribute questionnaires and pens and answer any possible questions. The information sheet and consent form (which they will have already seen or received and signed upon arrival) will be available as a copy for participants to read or take smart phone pictures of if they wish to do so.

The consent form will include the possibility to leave an email address in order to receive a report of the results of the research.

The questionnaire has two parts, for before and after the concert. Audience members will receive both parts of the questionnaire stapled together in an envelope. They will be instructed to fill in the parts at certain points (before and immediately after the concert) and upon exiting the room they will asked to hand in the envelope with both parts of the questionnaire to the research assistants or leave the envelope on their seat to be collected.

Audience members will be informed in the beginning that they will be asked to reflect on the concert afterwards, however if they wish to take note of something specifically meaningful to them during the concert, they are still welcome to do so.

In addition to the instructions on the questionnaire, research assistants will be available for answering questions in the beginning and at the end of the concert. Basic instructions will also be given verbally during the questionnaire time both before and after the concert. For example, ”the questionnaires will be anonymous and cannot be traced back to anyone”, ”please feel free to be totally honest”, ”simply fill out according to the impressions you have”, ”thank you so much for participating”.

Video recording of audience during the concert

The audience will be recorded during the concert by 1-2 subtly situated cameras. The main purpose for filming is to have audience responses from during the concert so that audience members are free from their questionnaires, the concert program can flow normally and they can have a natural and uninterrupted concert experience. This is made possible by using a non-intrusive camera to record behavioral responses and body language.
The camera(s) will be situated in the front of the room behind and as high as possible above the performers, for the most inclusive angle and a view of the majority of people sitting in the audience (though it is unlikely it will be able to include every single person).
The camera will pick up major body language, such as applause, walking around, clear body movement (such as shifting crossed legs, raising of hands, nodding and shaking of heads, looking at smart phones, etc.) and strong facial expressions (smiling, yawning, crying, laughing, etc.) The camera will most likely not pick up subtle facial expressions (such as eye movements) or very subtle body movements. The film will show if the audience are reacting in a certain way somewhat together, for example the typical increase of body shifting towards the end of a long concert or other lengthy event where people are seated. The kinds of expressions of engagement of the audience, that we hope to see on film, include: the increase and decrease in restlessness, tension, focus, relaxation, the readiness to engage when directly addressed and enthusiasm (or the lack of) communicated through applause, for example. The recording will be kept confidential to the researcher, the supervisory team and a small number of rafters not known to any members of the audience who will be be asked to rate segments of the video solely for performance-relevant characteristics of the people being filmed (e.g. movement, facial expression, degree of attentiveness and engagement, etc).
Another camera will record the stage and performers, so that it will be possible for the researcher and people analyzing the footage to know to which specific point in program the audience are reacting to.

Upon arrival, every member of audience will be presented with the Information Sheet and asked to sign a consent form that includes giving permission to be recorded on video during the concert for research purposes.

Post-concert "focus group" discussion

At the end of the concert, members of the audience will be invited to join the musicians at the nearby pub, where a private room has been booked. They will be informed that the event itself has ended and that they are free to join or to go home. The invitation will state that there will be a moderated informal discussion together with the performers that is not expected to last more than 30 minutes. Audience members will also be asked to leave the questionnaires in a pile at the exit of the concert room at Guildhall. This way the people who come to the pub will come only with their immediate memories and not be able to refer to something they wrote in the questionnaire. Upon entering the concert room, guests will have signed a consent form that also covers being recorded at the post-concert group chat for research purposes. The voice recorder at the pub will be in plain sight.

It is expected that there will be natural chatter on the way to the pub, and it might be that the "recording" of conversation that begins in the pub will touch on or continue from comments or subjects that have already come up on the way.

The focus group will be facilitated by a moderator, so that the head researcher can commit to the role of performer for the duration of the entire event. Recording devices, such as smart phones and voice recorders, will be operated by research assistants (fellow research students from Guildhall).

The moderator will have a set of example questions and notes on the areas that are of particular interest to the researcher. The role of the moderator is to provide a loose structure and frame work, in order to facilitate the reflection of the focus group as well as make sure the discussion stays appropriate. The event will start by the moderator inviting the performers to share their experiences (as is natural after a concert) with each other and with the people present. The performers will be informed that they will be invited to express their experience of the performance (as naturally happens after any concert) by the moderator in the informal focus group setting. This dynamic will hopefully provide an easy discussion for audience members to join in, with the facilitation and help of the moderator.

Question sheet for discussion moderator

Questions to assist post-concert discussion moderator

Welcome & warm-up, thank you all for coming!

General experiences of the concert

I would like to invite the musicians to share your thoughts and experiences of today's performance?

What were some of your favourite moments? Why?

What about least favourite moments? Why?

To the audience members:

What was your favourite thing about the concert? Why?

How do you respond when hearing the musicians discuss their own performance tonight?

How has hearing musicians discussing these issues affected your thoughts of the concert?

Has it changed your impression of the concert some way?

Does it explain something to you of your own experience?

Difference between repertoire and improvised sections

How did you experience the flow of the concert, going from composed pieces to improvised and back?

Did it bother you that improvisations were not always "perfect" according to classical music theory or style?

Did you notice any differences between repertoire sections and improvisations?

(For moderator: some examples of indicators we are looking for: musical expression, stage presence, musical communicativity, emotional engagement, audience engagement, musicians' engagement with each other, musicians' engagement with audience)

How, if at all, did the musician's communication with each other change from repertoire sections to improvisations?

Were the repertoire pieces familiar to you from before?

If yes, were you able to distinguish where the more subtle extemporisations were added? Did you find them enhancing or distracting the flow of the composed music? If you noticed them, what effect did the small extemporisations have on the piece, if any?

How, if at all, did their stage presence/musical expression/engagement with each other or audience/technical ability change when comparing the repertoire sections with improvisations?

Did these changes have some effect on the flow of the concert, in your experience? If there would not have been any reflections or improvisations, how would that have changed the concert experience in your opinion?

Other questions

Have you been to classical concerts before where performers verbally address the audience directly?

How did it feel? What was the response or atmosphere like in the audience when that happened?

How did you experience the only fully improvised section of the concert, the commissioning of songs?

Was it possible to follow the musicians' intentions to communicate something specific?

Could you relate to the songs that were being improvised? Did you listen differently, when you knew there was a meaning or message they were explicitly trying to communicate?

What was your experience as bystander/commissioner/recipient of the commissioned songs?

At the end

Has this discussion affected your

A) Experience of the concert
B) Experience on the evening as a whole
C) Thoughts on classical improvisation

If yes, how?

Anything additional you want to say on the topics we discussed or other related thoughts?

Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CONCERT AUDIENCE MEMBERS

This questionnaire is part of an artistic doctorate research project on classical improvisation and audience experience, conducted by Pauliina Haustein (Guildhall School of Music and Drama).

Please do not identify yourself by name, as all data from this research will be treated anonymously. This questionnaire has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Guildhall School. Any questions about the research may be addressed to Pauliina.haustein@stu.gsmd.ac.uk. You are under no obligation to complete the questionnaire, but if you do decide to complete it, please leave it in the envelope either on your seat after the concert or on in a pile on the table next to the exit.

This questionnaire has two parts. Please fill in the first part before the concert and the second part once instructed to do so after the concert.

Please select the most appropriate option.

1. **Age:**

   □ 16-24 □ 25-34 □ 35-44 □ 45-54 □ 55-64 □ 65-74

   □ 75 or over

2. **Gender:**

   □ Male □ Female □ Prefer not to say

3. **How familiar are you with classical music? Please tick the most suitable option.**

I engage with classical music through listening, playing, attending concerts or some other form:

□ Once or twice a year □ Several times a year □ Monthly

□ Weekly □ Daily

4. **Improvisation is more normally associated with jazz music, however this is a concert with classical improvisation. How often have you been to a concert with classical improvisation?**

□ This is my first time □ Once or twice □ Quite a few times

□ I'm in the field and attend them regularly

5. **To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements? Please mark the most suitable spot on this line according to your views on classical improvisation:**

Everything on the sheet music
is sacred and you shouldn't
change any notes

Classical improvisation belongs
in every performance as an
integral part of classical music making

6. **Please mark the point on each line that most closely represents your current mood or emotional state (with neutral being the mid-point).**

Alert	----------	Drowsy
Happy	----------	Sad
Irritable	----------	Generous
Secure	----------	Insecure
Nostalgic	----------	Present
Lonely	----------	Connected
Involved	----------	Detached
Interested	----------	Bored
Distressed	----------	Comforted
Tense	----------	Relaxed
Energetic	----------	Tired

7. **During this concert I hope to feel**

Alert	----------	Drowsy
Happy	----------	Sad
Irritable	----------	Generous
Secure	----------	Insecure
Nostalgic	----------	Present
Lonely	----------	Connected
Involved	----------	Detached
Interested	----------	Bored

Distressed	----------	Comforted
Tense	----------	Relaxed
Energetic	----------	Tired

8. Please mark according to your experience

In my experience, atmosphere in the audience during classical concerts tends to be:

Quiet	----------	Excited
Critical	----------	Supportive
Involved	----------	Detached
Interested	----------	Bored
Emotional	----------	Indifferent
Tense	----------	Relaxed

AFTER THE CONCERT

9. **To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements? Please mark the most suitable spot on this line according to your views on classical improvisation:**

Everything on the sheet music
is sacred and you shouldn't
change any notes

Classical improvisation belongs
in every performance as an
integral part of classical music making

10. **Please mark according to your current mood or emotional state (with neutral being the mid-point).**

Alert	----------	Drowsy
Happy	----------	Sad
Irritable	----------	Generous
Secure	----------	Insecure
Nostalgic	----------	Present
Lonely	----------	Connected
Involved	----------	Detached
Interested	----------	Bored
Distressed	----------	Comforted
Tense	----------	Relaxed
Energetic	----------	Tired

11. **Please mark according to your experience**

In my experience, atmosphere in the audience during this concert was:

Quiet	----------	Excited
Critical	----------	Supportive
Involved	----------	Detached
Interested	----------	Bored
Emotional	----------	Indifferent

Tense ---------- Relaxed

12. **How would you describe the atmosphere in the audience during the concert in your own words?**

13. **What was your favourite moment in the concert? Why?**

14. **What was the thing you least enjoyed or was least successful in your opinion?**

15. **Is there anything else you wish to say about this concert?**

If you wish to and still have time, this would be helpful for our research project:

For each work on the programme mark those boxes corresponding to elements which you experienced as being at a heightened level. You can mark as many or as few as you like.

Bach: Prelude in d minor, performed by cello

□ Musical expression □ Stage presence □ Musical communicativity
□ Emotional engagement □ Audience engagement
□ Musicians' engagement with each other
□ Musicians' engagement with audience

Reflections on Bach: Prelude in d minor, performed by cello, viola and violin

□ Musical expression □ Stage presence □ Musical communicativity
□ Emotional engagement □ Audience engagement
□ Musicians' engagement with each other
□ Musicians' engagement with audience

Mozart: Duet in G major, Allegro (after KV 423), performed by cello and violin

□ Musical expression □ Stage presence □ Musical communicativity
□ Emotional engagement □ Audience engagement
□ Musicians' engagement with each other
□ Musicians' engagement with audience

Beethoven: Sonata No. 3 for cello and piano, A major, Op. 69, Allegro ma non troppo, performed by cello and piano

□ Musical expression □ Stage presence □ Musical communicativity
□ Emotional engagement □ Audience engagement
□ Musicians' engagement with each other
□ Musicians' engagement with audience

Debussy: "Girl with flaxen hair" and improvised reflections, performed by kantele and cello

□ Musical expression □ Stage presence □ Musical communicativity
□ Emotional engagement □ Audience engagement
□ Musicians' engagement with each other
□ Musicians' engagement with audience

Fully improvised commissioned songs

□ Musical expression □ Stage presence □ Musical communicativity
□ Emotional engagement □ Audience engagement
□ Musicians' engagement with each other
□ Musicians' engagement with audience

Bach-Gounod: "Ave Maria" and improvised reflections, performed by kantele, cello and viola

□ Musical expression □ Stage presence □ Musical communicativity
□ Emotional engagement □ Audience engagement
□ Musicians' engagement with each other
□ Musicians' engagement with audience

Ethical approval

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
GUILDHALL SCHOOL OF MUSIC & DRAMA

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Pauliina Haustein
Research Dept
Guildhall School

17 May 2017

Dear Pauliina,

Re: Research Ethics Application

Thank you for submitting your research ethics application, entitled "Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation" which has now been reviewed by the Research Ethics Committee.

I am pleased to confirm that the Committee are satisfied with the research proposal submitted and that **full ethical approval has been granted** for your project.

Please note that you should report any untoward events or unforeseen ethical problems arising from the execution of your project to the Research Ethics Committee within a week of any occurrence. Any feedback which you provide to the participants of the project should be forwarded to the Ethics Committee.

Should you have any queries relating to this letter, please get in touch.

We wish you every success with your project.

Yours sincerely,

Pauline Galea,
Research Co-ordinator

cc. John Sloboda, David Dolan

APPENDIX B: CONCERT #2

Printed paper programme



Dialogues – a concert

2pm, Sunday Oct 29th 2017
Music Hall
Guildhall School of Music and Drama

Pauliina Haustein, cello; Isa Halme, violin; Valerie Albrecht, viola; Juulia Pölönen, kantele; Stefanie Tuurna, piano

J. S. Bach Prelude, Sarabande, Minuets I & II from Solo Cello Suite no. 2 d-minor Theme from Chaconne, Solo Violin Partita no. 2 d-minor (BWV 1004)

In 1720 Johann Sebastian was Kapellmeister at Cöthen court and had spent the previous years specifically composing instrumental music. The solo violin partitas and solo cello suites were created during this time, but in which specific order – this remains unknown. What we do have account for, however, is that in spring 1720 Johann Sebastian left his healthy and happy family to accompany his employer on a trip for two months, only to return to devastating news of his wife having passed away due to illness and being

buried only a week earlier. The grief-stricken composer returned to work on the D minor violin partita and composed what would eventually become the most famous violin piece in the world, the structurally and stylistically unprecedented virtuosic solo violin piece "Chaconne". The theme of Chaconne has a hidden layer underneath it; the Morimur prayer chant, evident through the bass line. The D minor solo cello suite, where Bach uses the same chant as a background motive and seems to even meditate on it, is known to be composed sometime between 1717-23. This leaves us to wonder – was this motive, that lies in the background of the cello suite, already meaningful to Bach even before the tragedy of summer 1720 and Chaconne, where it finally evolved to its fulfilled highest form? Or did it continue to stay with him afterwards, as a memory, as an echo? Whatever the motivation, it seems clear that the chant and motive rising from it were intimate to Bach. In our performance today, we invite you to join us on a journey in exploring this connection. We will approach it from a place of dialogue, by bringing the chant motive of Chaconne audible and by improvising additional voices to the solo cello pieces based on Bach's composed harmonic structure. We will first hear the chant, which is then meditated on the Prelude once on solo cello and a second time from the underlying bass line, followed by the building of Chaconne theme on the chant and continuing to Sarabande (with an improvised voice on repeats to illustrate the background motive) and Minuets I & II. We will finish the journey by improvising Minuets of our own, in the spirit of Bach and his journey of the d minor violin and cello suites. We ask that you hold applauses until the end of the Bach segment.

W. A. Mozart Duet for violin and cello no. 1 G-major, KV 423 (1783) Allegro – Adagio – Rondeau

Originally for violin and viola, the arrangement and simple change of octave of the viola part gives cellists a rare opportunity to play some of the more melodic material of Mozart. The piece is like a breath of fresh air coming to us from a time, when chamber music literally meant chambers and salons filled with the excited hustle and bustle of people, instruments, chatter and the lively, shared experience of music. Today we will take a playful approach and pretend to do a bit of time travel – we will imagine ourselves in a 1780s Viennese salon, where at the beginning of the third movement we notice that a friend with her instrument has joined the party. We naturally invite her to join the music as well but alas, she is a violist – this means she will be taking over the lower melody, leaving the cellist to improvise a third voice. The cellist, being familiar with the piece, will attempt do so by using the harmonic structure of the piece as a point of departure.

Intermission

G. Faure Papillon, op. 77 (1884)
C. Debussy La fille aux cheveux de lin, "Girl with flaxen hair" (1910)

"Girl with flaxen hair" was originally composed for piano, as part of an etude collection. According to Debussy, his inspiration for the piece came from a similarly named poem by Leconte De Lisle. We, as Debussy, have been startled by the beauty and innocence of this girl, and feel inspired to tell her story further. Today we will perform the piece first as is, arranged for kantele and cello, and then continue to tell her story through improvisation - however it will appear

today.

On the lucerne midst flowers in bloom,
Who sings praises to morning?
It is the girl with golden hair,

The beauty with lips of cherry.

For, love, in clear summer sunlight,
Has soared with the lark and sung now.

Appendix B
Concert #2

(Excerpt from the poem "A girl with flaxen hair" by Leconte De Lisle)

Improvisations based on audience themes and requests

This concert is part of the doctorate project "Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation" by cellist Pauliina Haustein.

Scores

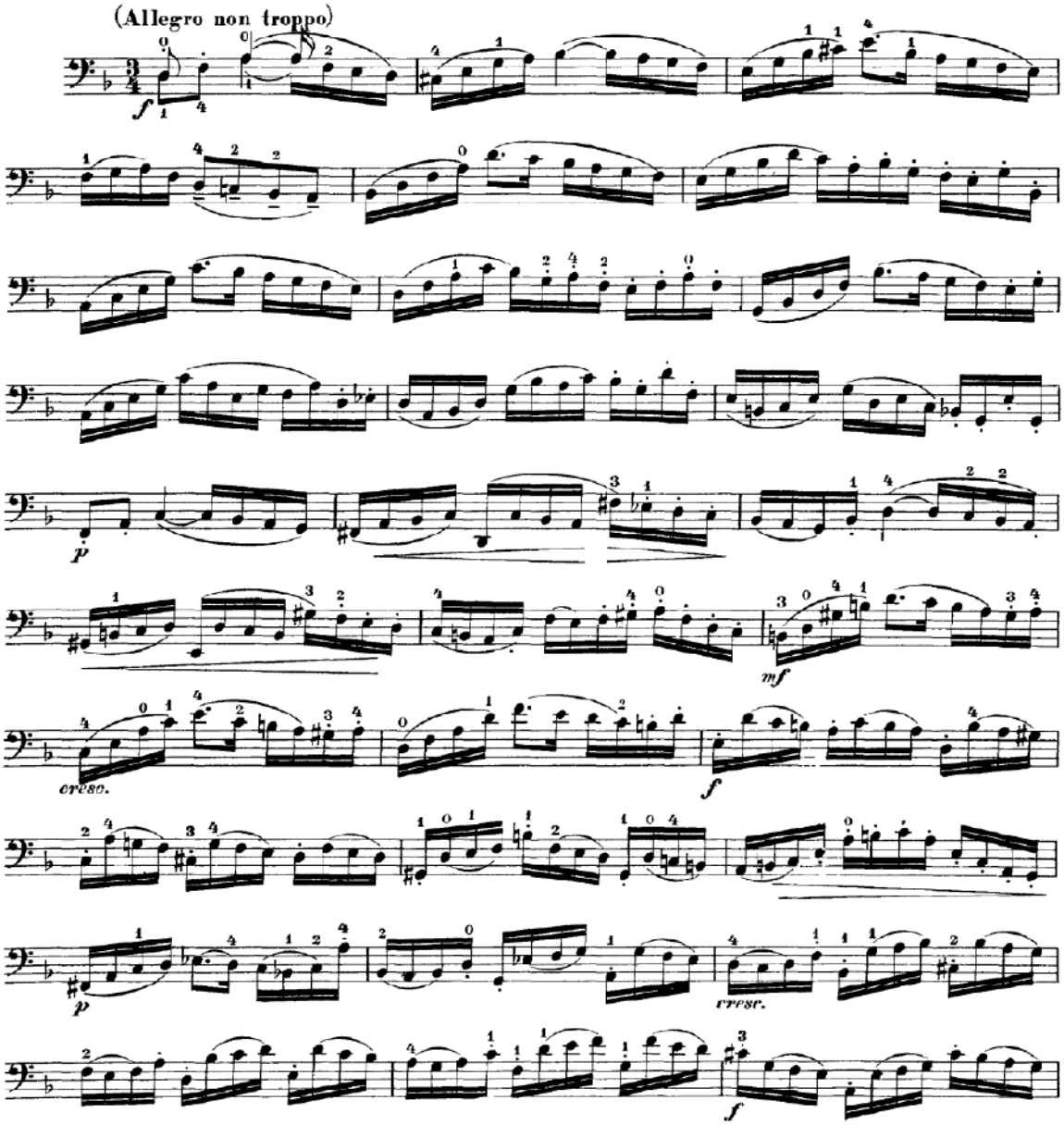
Mozart: Duet No. 1 for violin and viola, G major
Fauré: Papillon, op. 77
Bach: Suite No. 2, D minor (full suite)
Bach: Prelude, Suite No. 2, D minor

Johann Sebastian Bach

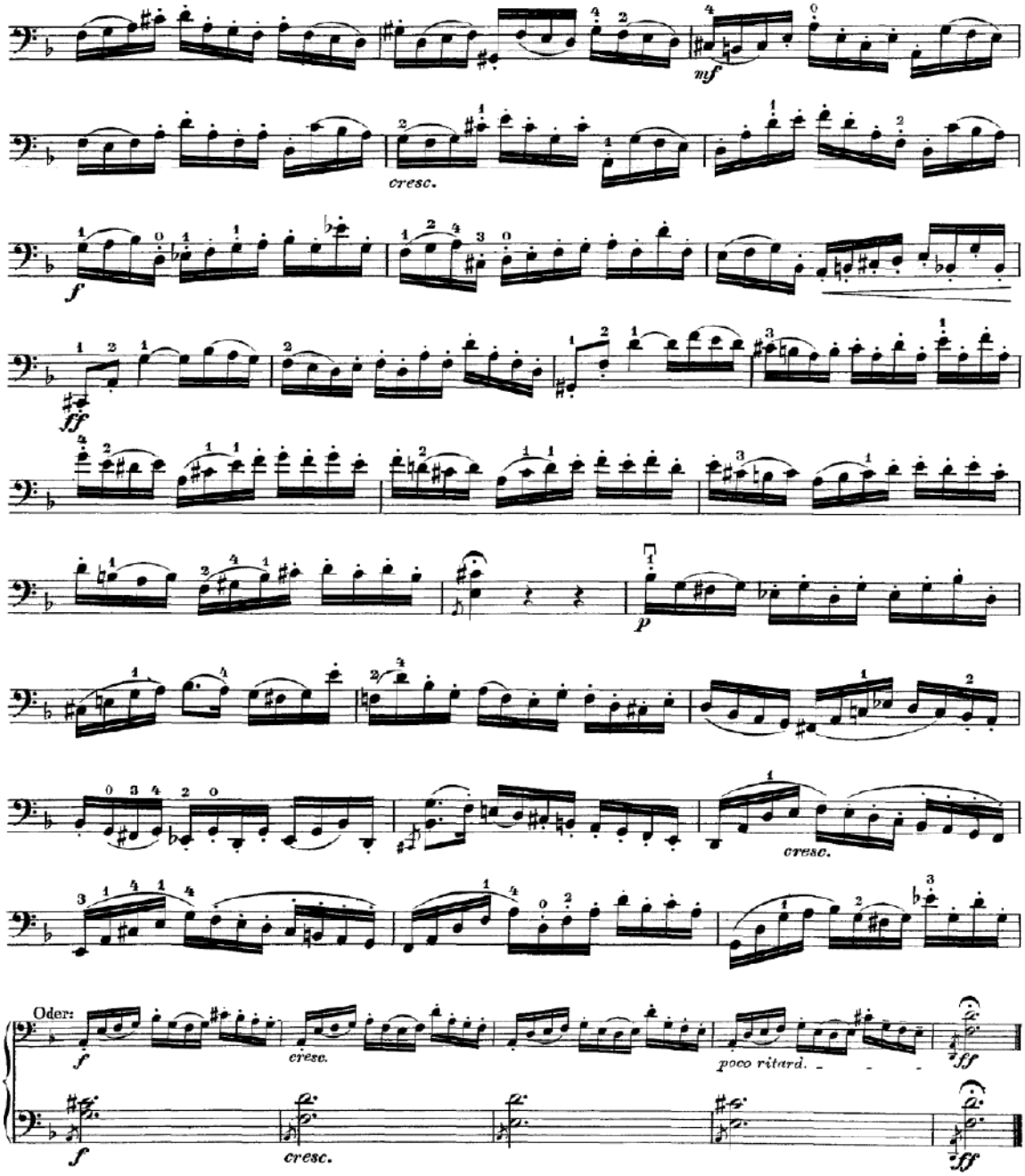
Suite No. 2 in D Minor

BWV 1008

Prélude

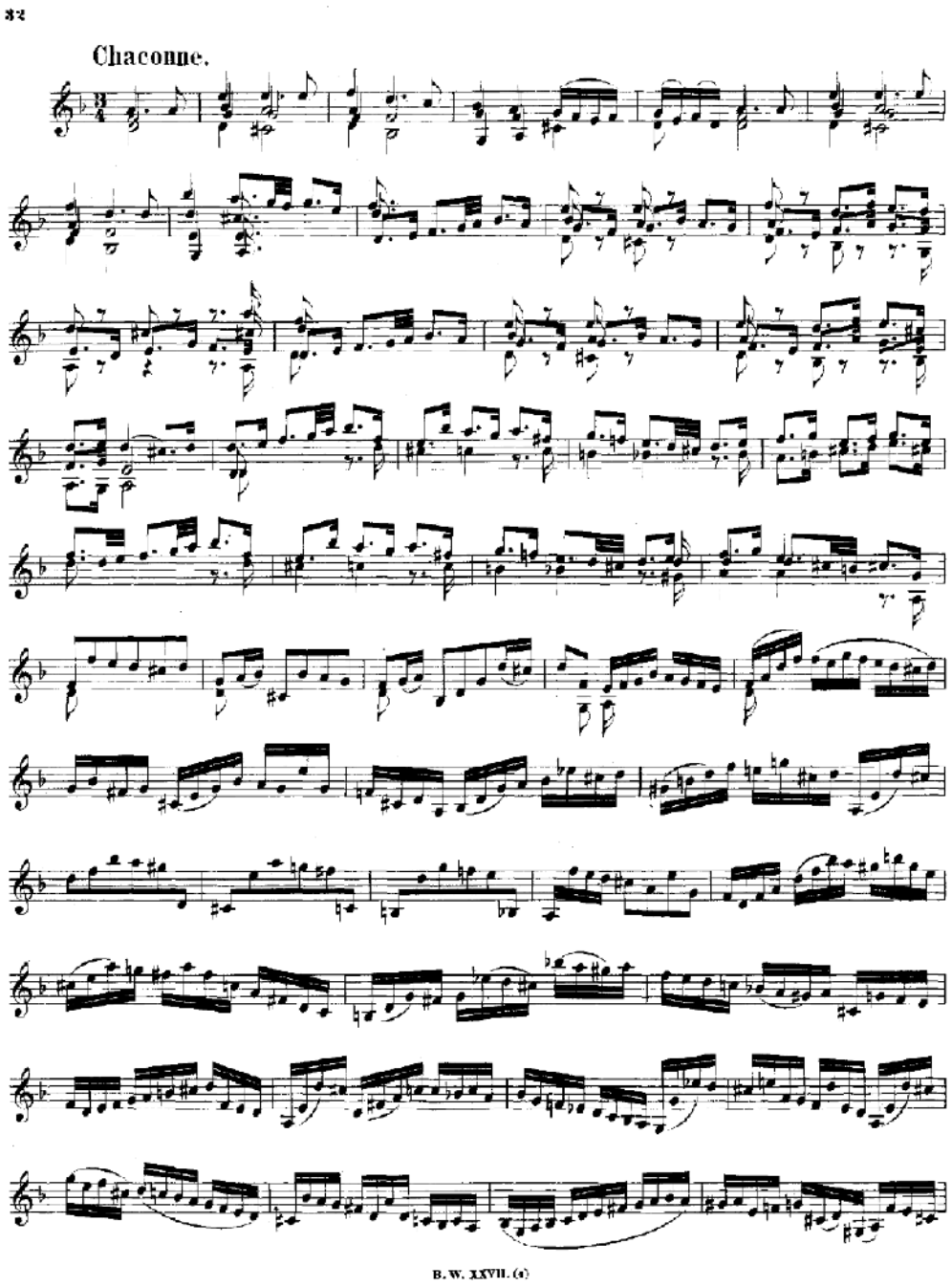


J. S. Bach — Suite No. 2 in D Minor



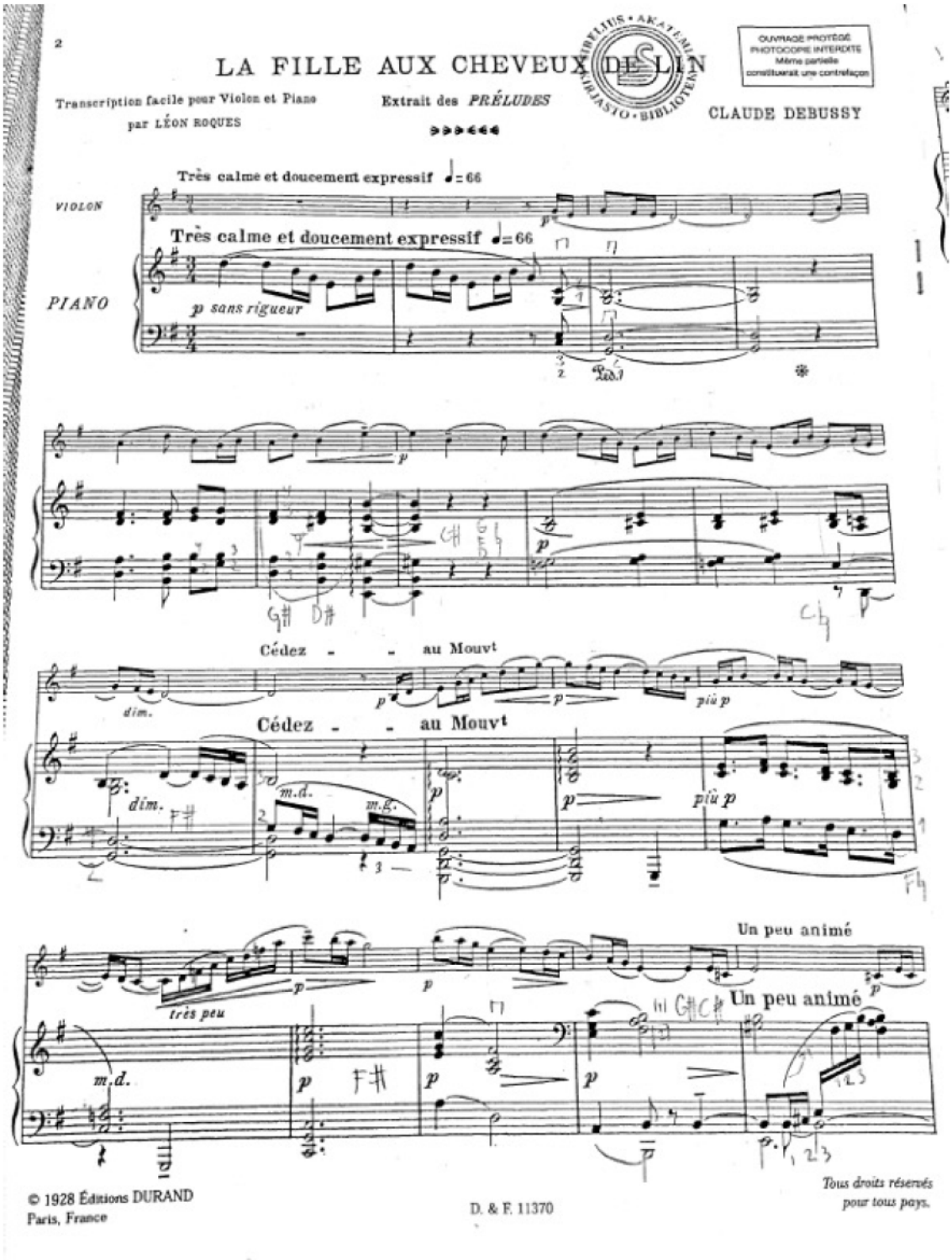
Appendix B
Concert #2

Bach: beginning of Chaconne, Violin Partita No. 2

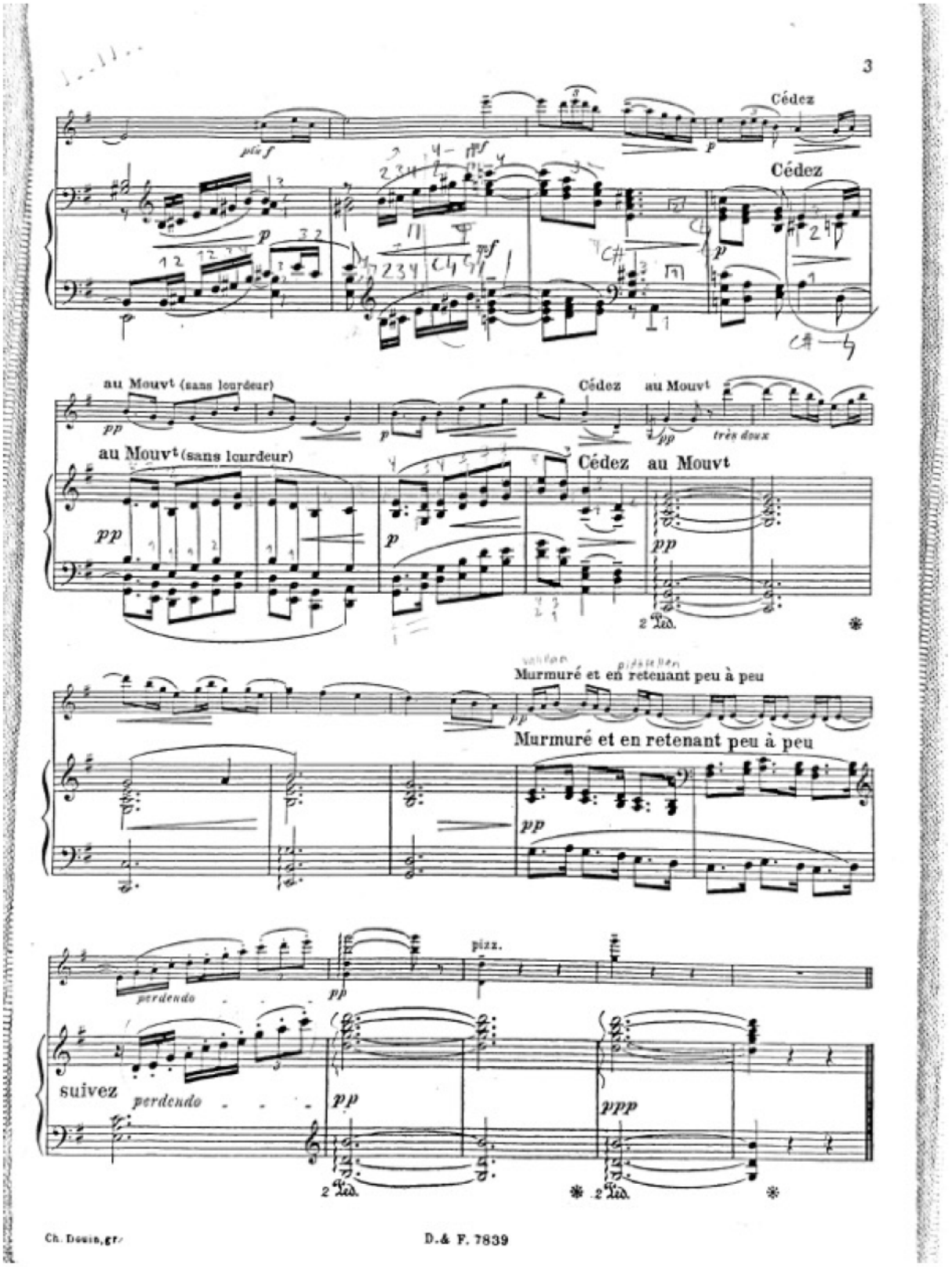


Appendix B
Concert #2

Debussy: *La fille aux cheveux de fin*



Appendix B
Concert #2



Appendix B
Concert #2

Consent form (chamber partners)

Consent for Participation and Recording

Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation

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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, 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 consent to the researcher video recording, storing video footage and analysing video footage of the improvisation ensemble rehearsals and performances in which I take part between January 2017 and November 2017. I understand that I can at any time ask the researcher to stop recording or to delete specific sections of footage immediately without giving any reason.

- 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 researcher and withdraw from it immediately without giving any reason. I understand that I may withdraw my data from the project until the point it is included in the researcher's upgrade document (January 1, 2018).

- I consent to the processing of my personal information and video footage for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information and video footage will be treated in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.

- I understand that the video footage, musical improvisations, and conversations recorded in this research project will be submitted in the researcher's doctoral thesis. I will be sent a copy of any papers or theses containing my contributions.

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: _____

APPENDIX C: CONCERT #3

Printed paper programme





This concert is part of doctorate project "Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation" of Guildhall School of Music and Drama student Pauliina Haustein. The program explores performance practices of repertoire pieces around the Romantic era, which include a range of improvisational elements from stylistically restricted small ornamentations to fully free fantasies.

Appendix C
(Concert #3)

L. van Beethoven:

Sonata No. 3 for cello and piano, A major, op. 69 (1808)

Allegro ma non tanto – Scherzo. Molto Allegro – Adagio cantabile – Allegro vivace

Beethoven wrote the A major sonata at a very special time of his life. His two earlier cello sonatas could be characterized rather as piano sonatas with cello obligato and had been finished almost a decade earlier. The A major sonata was worked on between 1806 and 1808, by which his deafness had reached an acute stage. In a letter written in 1802 he admitted having harbored thoughts of suicide, but "*it was only my art that held me back. Oh, it seemed to me impossible to leave the world until I had produced all that I felt was within me*." Among those works was this sonata – astonishingly, one of the most positive and joyous works imaginable, with only a faint undertone of the phrase Beethoven wrote to accompany it, "amid tears and sorrow". Where previous cello sonatas had leaned on the virtuosity of the piano, the A major sonata was created to portray the two instruments as equals – which ended up developing into a whole new genre of cello and piano music.

In today's performance, we will explore the sonata from the point of its creation. As was custom in the classical era, performing musicians were expected to embellish and spontaneously highlight the written material during repeats. For the composer to write these embellishments out would have been an insult to the creativity and professionality of the musicians, as the improvisation skills of the performer would distinguish him or her from an amateur. This creative state of mind, which was central to Beethoven's own composing and performing, included spontaneous decisions also in terms of dynamics, phrasing and other interpretation choices. To illustrate, if he himself played a concert in the same city on three consecutive nights, people would go every night because he would make spontaneous choices and improvisations that differed from the previous nights' performances entirely. Though this technically virtuosic and full sonata does not leave a lot of room for improvisation of "unwritten notes", our approach draws inspiration from this joyful, creative and spontaneous "Beethovenian" mindset.

A giant of the romantic era and specifically of improvisation, Chopin and his unique melodic language are particularly central to pianists through his huge contributions to piano repertoire. Himself a virtuoso pianist and improviser, Chopin required that his students practice improvisation daily through vigorous exercise and insisted that the same piece should never be played twice alike. With fewer compositions for string instruments, his exercises are typically not part of central technical training among violinists and cellists today. To rectify this, we will demonstrate some of the basic elements and raw stages in starting to learn these practices with the help of two simple piano preludes, commonly played by cello and piano.

F. Chopin

Prelude no. 6, op. 28, b minor (1839), followed by two improvisatory variations

Appendix C
(Concert #3)

Prelude no. 4, op 28, e minor (1839), followed by one improvisatory variation and one improvised reflection

Short Intermission

R. Schumann: Fantsy pieces, op 78 (1849)

I. Zart und mit Ausdruck ("Tender and with expression") II. Lebhaft, leicht ("Playful, light") III. Rasch und mit Feuer ("Quick and with fire")

Portraying a different kind of romantic language, Schumann's Fantasy pieces are widely played by cellists, violists and clarinetists (the latter of which was the instrument written to partner with piano in the original score). As noted by himself, the single voice part of the Fantasy pieces could be played on any of these instruments, all which bring out the intense beauty of his song-like melodies. This poetic title, used by Schumann in many of his compositions, also highlights the romantic era notion that creative expression is the product of the artists' unrestricted imagination. Performers were considered equal to composers in this aspect of creative expression, and as would have been expected at the time, also we will add our creative voice to the performance today with a small improvised prelude and interludes to tie the movements together.

L. Janáček A Tale (1910 / 1926)

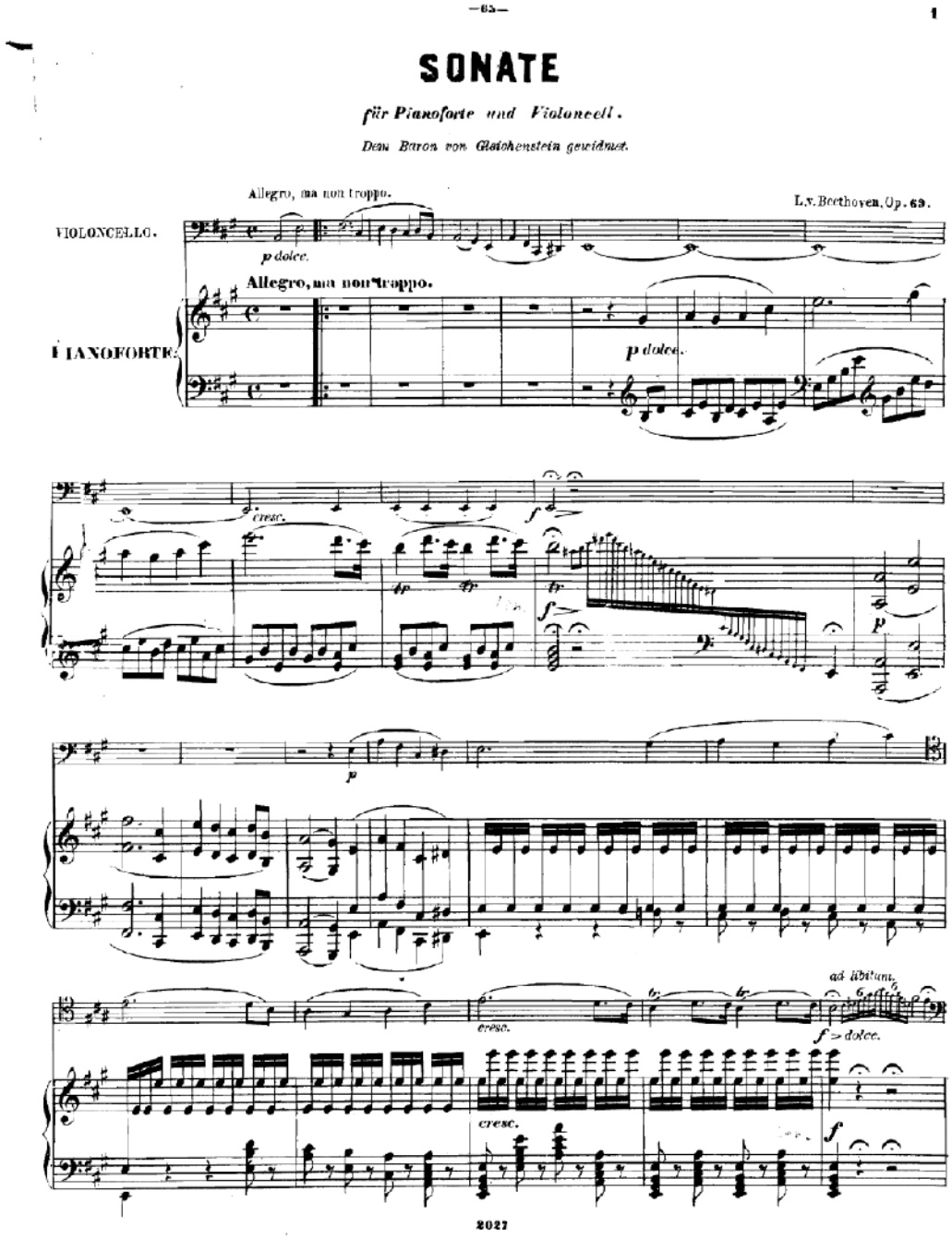
Bringing us towards the end of the romantic era, Janacek's Tale is composed in a similar fantasy-like, storytelling style. The piece is based on an epic poem by Russian author Vasily Zhukovsky, which inspired Janacek to illustrate certain points in the story and build a composition around them. Also famous for his love for birds, the effects and sounds of a fairytale forest come to mind from this short piece consisting of three movements. During his lifetime, Janacek modified and changed the composition at least two times, and the one that lasted is the third version. This continued creative work gives us today a playful platform for takeoff, and after Janacek's Tale, we will close tonight's concert by improvising a *tale* of our own.

Appendix C
(Concert #3)

Scores

[Beethoven Sonata A major, op. 69 (full score)]

Excerpt of beginning in Demo links #6 and #7:



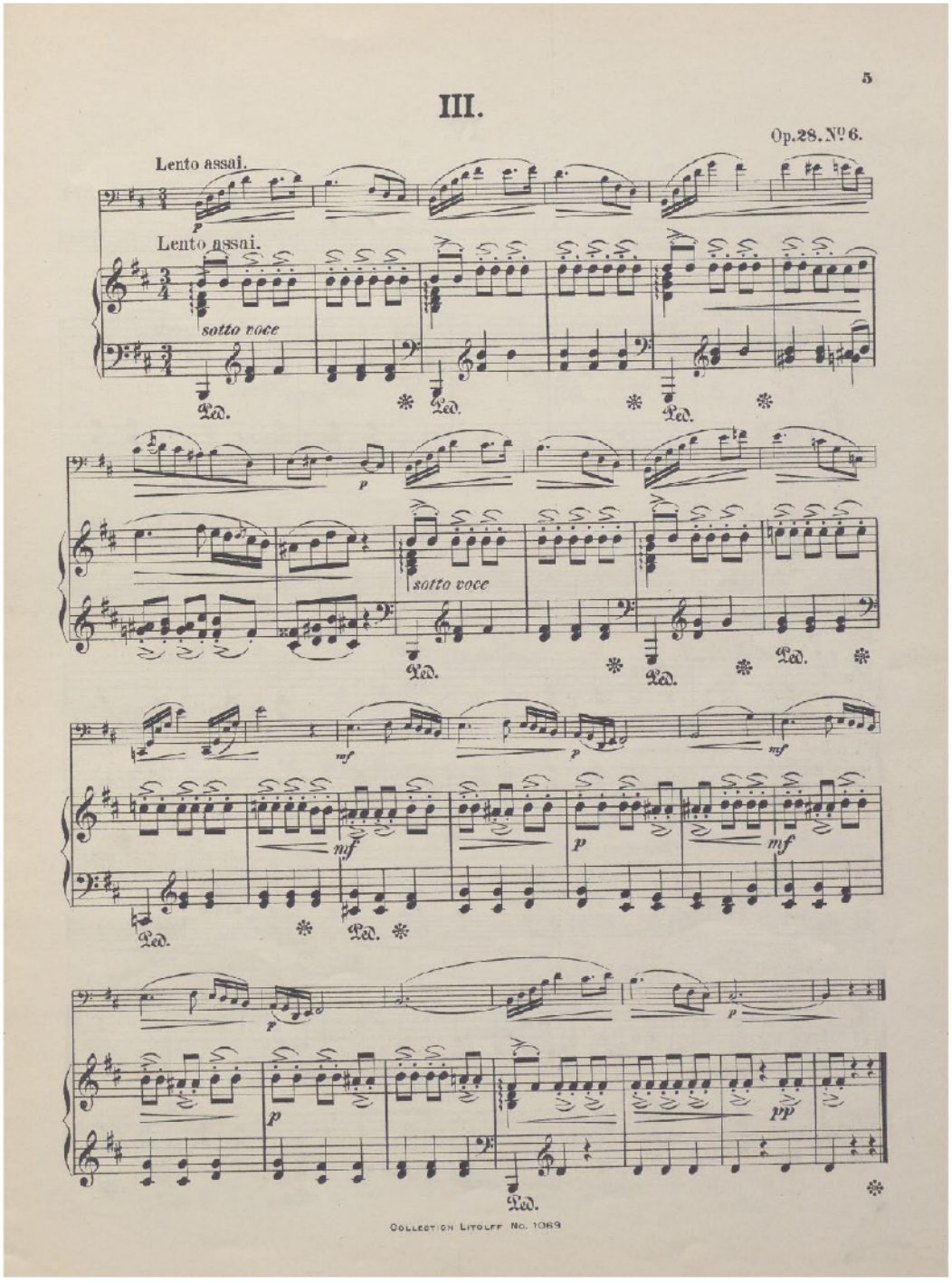
[Schumann: Fantasy pieces, op. 73]

[Janacek: Tale]

Appendix C
(Concert #3)

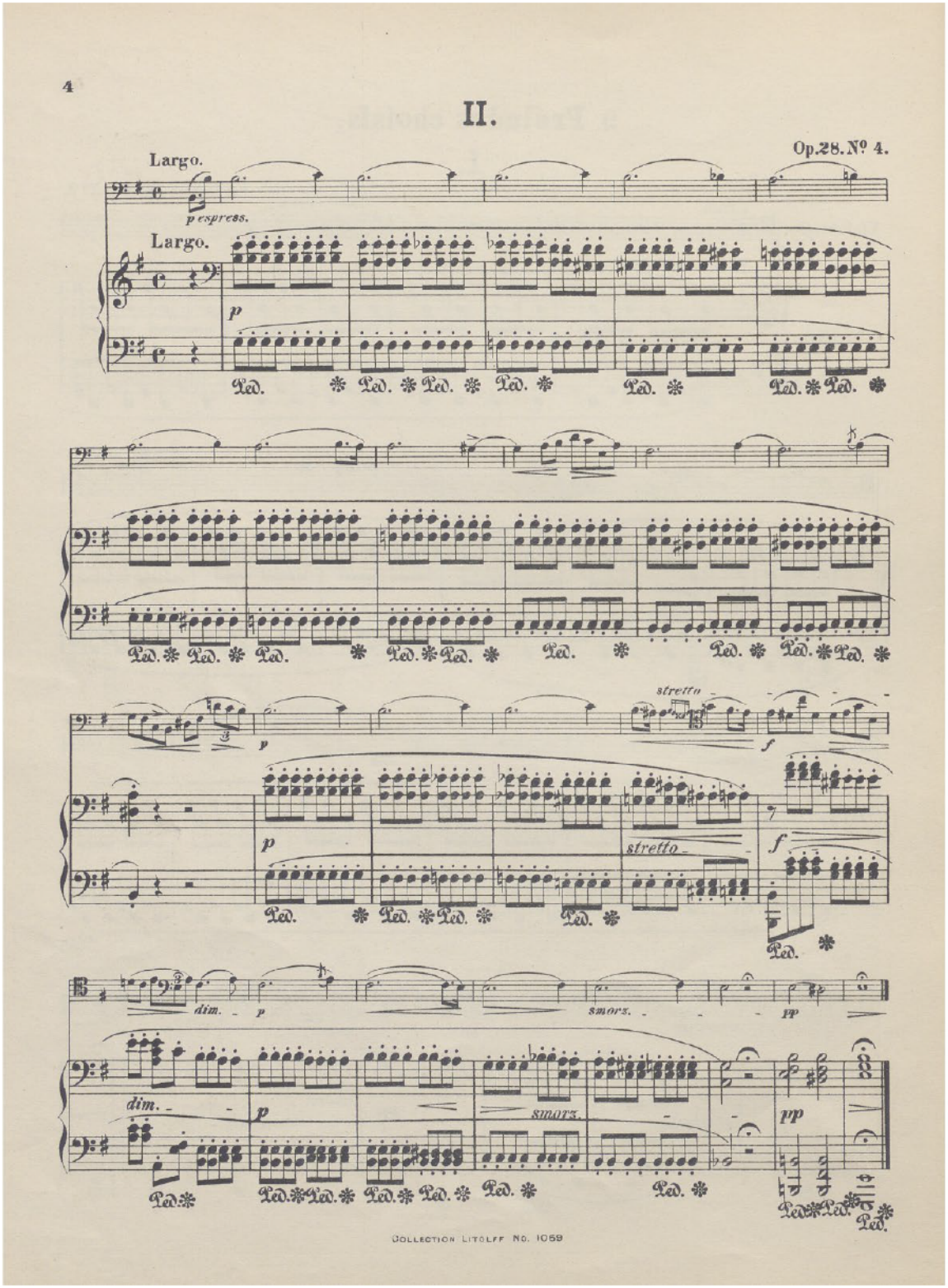
Chopin: Prelude No. 6, B minor, op. 28

Excerpt of beginning in Demo clips #15, #16 and #17:



Appendix C
(Concert #3)

Chopin: Prelude No. 4, e minor, op. 28



Appendix C
(Concert #3)

Ethics application

Application form for the ethical approval of a research project

For office use only (tick completed or attached)		*For office use only*
Part 1: Basic information (circle)	☐	Risk level: High /Medium/Low
Part 2: Human participants	☐	
Part 3: Obscene or potentially offensive material	☐	
Part 4: General	☐	
Part 5: Declarations	☐	
Attachments: Question set or sample	x	
Participant information sheet	x	
Participant consent sheet	x	

Part 1: Basic Information (to be completed by principal lead researcher)

1. Full project title

Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation

2. What is the hypothesis/research question?

Using a variety of classical improvisation techniques and interactive devices in a concert program of traditional classical repertoire will positively impact on audience experience.

3. Nature of the investigation

I and my chamber music partner will be playing a concert program of standard repertoire combined with classical improvisation in order to engage with audience members in an interactive relationship. A simple questionnaire will be distributed to gather responses from audience members on their willingness to be contacted for an interview on their concert experience afterwards. 3 to 5 respondents will be chosen for semi-structured interviews carried out during three weeks following the concert. A recording of the performance will be made available to interviewees prior to the interviews if they wish.

4. Principal researcher's name and position/student ID

Pauliina Haustein, D.Mus/M.Phil student, 1617073

5. Departmental address of principal researcher

Research department, Guildhall School	Work/mobile phone no.	+358 468102881
	Emergency no.*	

	Fax	
	Email	Pauliina.haustein@stu.gsmd.ac.uk

6. Principal researcher's qualifications and experience in the past five years (relevant to proposed research)

I am a second year doctorate student, M. Phil/D. Mus. In my first year I conducted a similar concert with a broader audience research component.

7. Co-researcher's name(s), qualifications and position(s)

A	
B	
C	

[delete or add co-researcher boxes as necessary]

7.1 Address of A above

	Work phone no.	
	Emergency no.*	[redacted]
	Fax	
	Email	

7.2 Address of B above

	Work phone no.	
	Emergency no.*	[redacted]
	Fax	
	Email	

7.3 Address of C above

	Work phone no.	
	Emergency no.*	[redacted]
	Fax	
	Email	

Appendix C
(Concert #3)

8.	Provide details of location of research activity (eg on campus or at placement, or postal) with address and contact details where relevant.	Concert at Wegelius Hall in Sibelius Academy, Helsinki, on Apr 16th at 6pm (Töölönkatu 28). Hall is provided courtesy of SibA to me (the researcher) as an alumn.

9. Does the research project take place on NHS property or involve NHS patients? YES/**NO**
If Yes, you must follow NHS ethical approval procedures.

10. Does the research project involve human participants? **Yes**/ No If yes complete part 2

11. Does the research involve obscene or potentially offensive material? Yes/**No** If yes complete part 3

Part 2: Human participants

1. In what way do you intend to involve human participants in the project (tick all that apply)?

Interviewing	X	Observation (non-invasive)	
Paper questionnaire	X	Observation (invasive)	
Computer questionnaire		Testing	
Other			

2. **Consent** – Are all participants able to provide consent for themselves? [X] Yes [ ] No
If **no**, please explain why not

3. How many participants do you intend to recruit?	Expected concert audience maximum 40 people, out of which everyone will be invited to fill in the questionnaire and state their willingness to be contacted for an interview. 3 to 5 respondents will be chosen for interviews. Choices will be made with efforts of corresponding to the general demographic of the concert.
4. How will they be selected and recruited? Are participants to be compensated for the time/travel? (if so provide details)	Concert audience members are invited to the concert by social media and through networks of friends. The event will be advertised as a chamber music and classical improvisation concert which is part of an artistic doctorate concert series and has a small, voluntary research component.

5. Interviewing/questionnaires (*complete where relevant*)

Appendix C
(Concert #3)

5(a) How many questions do you intend to ask (and give approximate timings)? In what format are you collecting the answers [eg yes/no, 4point scale, 5 point scale, free text, mixed]? What method of analysis, quantitative or qualitative, do you intend to use?	The questionnaire will have four questions regarding demographics and any prior classical improvisation experience. The interviews will be semi-structured, recorded and transcribed interviews. Both question sheets are attached.

5 (b) Please attach either the full questionnaire /set of interview questions or a sample (at least 20% covering all methods). Where the full questionnaire is not submitted it must be signed-off for use by the line-manager or supervisor and a copy lodged with the Committee Secretary prior to data collection.

6. What do you think will be the effects of your observations/questioning on your participants? Are the effects likely to differ for different groupings (eg male/female, people with or without a disability, different ethnicities)? What safeguards or follow-up care arrangements need to be put in place?

None anticipated, particularly since participation is entirely voluntary and that will be fully explained. Concert audience members are expected to come from networks of fellow musicians, their friends and family and to be fully aware of the nature of the event.

Though the event will be in Finland, it will be held in English as is custom for international events in arts and sciences. Instructions relevant to the research (like being seated outside of camera shot in the concert) will be given in both languages.

7. How will the raw data be stored and for how long? Who will have access to this data?	It will be stored in a confidential area of the shared online drive, only accessible to me and supervisors. Video will be stored on a flash drive kept in a locked cabinet in the Guildhall research office. All raw data will be destroyed after 5 years.
8. Describe how you intend to make the results of the study known to participants?	When the form of my dissemination takes shape it will be made available for the participants.
9. Proposed collection starting date (dd/mm/yy)	16/04/2018
10. Proposed finishing date (dd/mm/yy)	16/05/2018
11. Proposed final report date (mm/yy) and format	

Appendix C
(Concert #3)

Part 3: Obscene or potentially offensive material

1. Please describe the nature of the material to be used and its significance to the research project	
2. How will this material be gathered? *(please indicate whether you intend to use School IT equipment in any form)*	
3. How will this material be stored and for how long? Who will have access to this material	
4. Proposed starting date (dd/mm/yy)	
5. Proposed finishing date (dd/mm/yy)	
6. Proposed final report date (mm/yy) and format	

Appendix C
(Concert #3)

Part 4: General

Describe and discuss any ethical issues arising from this project, other than those already dealt with in your answers above.

You may wish to consider issues of:

- Sample size and anonymity
- Issues of informed consent in older children and whether they are 'Gillick competent'
- Peer pressure to be involved or not involved
- The need to exclude participants during the project if they become ill etc (and who decides).

This section should also reference subject-specific ethical guidelines or reference points, eg

- Research Ethics Framework [ESRC]
- Ethics and Educational Research [BERA: British Educational Research Association]
- Rigour, respect and responsibility: a universal ethical code for scientists [Council for Science and Technology]
- Conducting research with people not having the capacity to consent to their participation [British Psychological Society]

The expected concert audience will be rather small and homogeneous by background. Audience members will be invited to fill in the short questionnaire but it will be made clear that this is entirely voluntary. They will also be notified of the recording and be provided with the easy option of simply sitting behind the camera (which will be in the front section of the audience anyway). These instructions will be made clear to them both verbally and in written form in both English and Finnish.
Key areas in terms of ethics of this research have been identified as security of data and anonymity of interviewees. Interviews will be recorded, transcribed and anonymized in the analysis stage, and respondents will be given a chance to withdraw their data until final submission of written thesis.
International events in arts and sciences are regularly held in English in Finland and the using English as primary language of the event will not weaken the ethics of the research, as all relevant information regarding the research will also be given in Finnish. The interviews will be conducted in English, unless specifically requested by the interviewee (in which unlikely case I as a bilingual researcher will translate the transcript).
Extra care will be taken in both written instructions of the questionnaire and verbal instructions at the concert as well as at the start of the interviews to make sure participants know they are under no obligation to participate and that choosing to do so will not reflect on them in any way.
If, contrary to our expectations, underage children come to the concerts, they will be exempt from filling in the questionnaire and will be asked to be seated so that they are not visible in the camera recording.

Appendix C
(Concert #3)

Part 5: Declarations

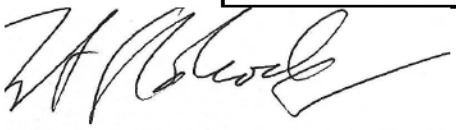
1 Declaration by principal researcher/student

The information supplied in this application is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate. I have considered the ethical issues involved in this research and believe that I have adequately addressed them in this application. I understand that if the protocol for this research changes in any way, I must inform the ethics committee.

Name of principal researcher (please print):	Pauliina Haustein
Signature of principal researcher	
Date:	2.5.2017

2. Declaration by line-manager of principal researcher or student's supervisor

I have read the application, and it is appropriate for this research to be conducted for the purpose stated. I give my consent for the application to be forwarded to the ethics committee.

Name (please print):	Prof John Sloboda		
Signature:		Department:	Research
Date:	4 April 2018	Designation:	Supervisor

Where the line-manager is also one of the co-researchers, the line-manager declaration must be signed by Director of Music or Director of Drama as appropriate

3. Declaration by the senior manager of a participating organisation (where applicable)

I have read the application, and it is appropriate for this research to be conducted in this department. I give my consent for the application to be forwarded to the ethics committee.

Name (please print):			
Signature:		Organisation:	
Date:		Designation:	

Appendix C
(Concert #3)

Consent form (chamber partner)

Information and Research Participant Consent
for Chamber Partner

Title of project

Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation

Event

Concert, April 16th 2018 at 6pm "Storytelling - A Concert"

I understand that this concert is part of an artistic doctorate research project conducted by Pauliina Haustein at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and that by performing in this concert

- I will be recorded on video for the duration of the performance. The recording will be used for both personal artistic reflection of the researcher as well as in an audience research and improvisation pedagogy example context
- My participation in this concert will be included in the write-up of the audience research and final thesis
- The recording of the performance may be shown as part of presentations of the audience research at public events such as lectures and conferences
- I will be asked for separate consent for any non-research use of any parts of this performance recording (for example, publication on an online platform)

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 the information and understand what the research involves.

Signed:

Date:

Appendix C
(Concert #3)

Consent form

Research Participant Consent for Interviews

Title of project

Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation

Event

Concert, April 16th 2018 at 6pm "Storytelling - A Concert"

Interviews to take place at an agreed time within three weeks after the concert.

I have read the **Information Sheet for Interview Participants** and understand that if I choose to take part in this research

- My interview data will be anonymized, cannot be traced back to me and it will not be possible for me to withdraw my data after the write-up of the thesis has been submitted (June 2021)
- I will be asked about my own experience and my impressions of the various elements of the concert and I can stop the interview at any point
- Possible quotes from transcriptions of the interview recordings will be used in the write-up of this artistic research project and final thesis, which will eventually be publicly available

□ I wish to receive a report of the findings of this research when they are made available

□ You may contact me about possible follow-up events or interviews for this research in the future

EMAIL: _____

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:

Appendix C
(Concert #3)

Information sheet

Information Sheet for Interview Participants

Title of project

Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation

Event

Concert, April 16th, 2018 at 6pm "Storytelling - A concert"

I would like to invite you to participate in this doctorate artistic research project. Participation is entirely voluntary and if you choose not to take part, it will not disadvantage you in any way. Before you decide whether to participate or not, please read carefully what the research project is about and what your participation will involve. Please feel free to ask the host of this event if there is anything that is not clear or if you wish to have more information. Future questions regarding this research can be addressed to Pauliina.haustein@stu.gsmd.ac.uk.

This concert is a part of an artistic doctorate project, which includes the artistic development in learning the art of classical improvisation and creative performance and using those elements to connect with concert audiences. The research is designed to understand better the experience of an audience member in a concert that includes classical improvisation.

This interview will last maximum 60 minutes and will be conducted by Pauliina Haustein. You will be asked about your own experience and your impressions of the various elements of the concert. You may stop the interview at any point.

The data will be anonymized and cannot be traced back to you. Personal data will be used only to contact you, after which it will be disposed of. Transcriptions of the interview recordings will be used, and information will eventually be distributed as part of the audience research component of the project and final thesis. Raw interview data will be stored until the publication of the written thesis (or up to 5 years, whichever comes first) and will follow the Data Protection Act and ethical procedures of Guildhall School of Music and Drama. You may withdraw your data at any time before June 2021 by contacting Pauliina Haustein.

Appendix C
(Concert #3)

Interview question sheet

Advanced draft of question sheet for semi-structured interviews regarding the Storytelling Concert on Apr 16th, 2018

(Please state your name and consent to this interview and the use of data, which will be anonymized, in this research project. Bear in mind that you can stop this interview at any point and withdraw your data from the project up until June 2021.)

Please describe your experience of the concert in your own words?

What, if any, previous experience did you have of attending a concert with classical improvisation?

What expectations did you have when coming to this concert? How did the concert experience compare to those expectations?

How would you describe a typical classical concert experience from an audience point of view? How would you describe the general atmosphere in the audience of a typical classical concert?

In your experience, how would you describe the atmosphere in the audience during this concert? Was this similar or different to other classical concerts you have attended (which did not include improvisation)? How?

Were there any specific moments in the program when you perceived shifts in attitude or changes in the general atmosphere of the audience?

Did you perceive any changes in the atmosphere in the audience when musicians switched from composed material to improvisation? If yes, what kind of change?

How did you experience the progression or flow of the concert program between the different pieces?

Were there any highlighted moments for you during the program? If so, which ones and why did they stand out?

Did you notice any difference in the way musicians performed improvised and composed sections?

Did you notice any difference in how you listened when you knew something was improvised versus composed?

How would you describe your own attentiveness as a listener at this concert? Was it what you expected when you came to this concert?

How would you describe your role and experience as an audience member at this concert? Was it what you expected?

Would you characterize your own experience at this concert as a typical classical concert experience? If no, why?

What, if any, thoughts or impressions of improvisation in classical music did you have before attending this concert? Did the experience possibly confirm or confront those thoughts and if so, how?

Is there anything else you wish to say about the concert or your experience?

Appendix C
(Concert #3)

Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CONCERT AUDIENCE MEMBERS

This questionnaire is part of an artistic doctorate research project on classical improvisation and audience experience, conducted by Pauliina Haustein (Guildhall School of Music and Drama). This research has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Guildhall School. Any questions about the research may be addressed to Pauliina.haustein@stu.gsmd.ac.uk. You are under no obligation to complete the questionnaire, but if you do decide to complete it, please leave it in the pile on the table next to the exit.

Please select the most appropriate option.

1. **Age:**
   □ 16-24 □ 25-34 □ 35-44 □ 45-54 □ 55-64 □ 65-74

   □ 75 or over

2. **Improvisation is more normally associated with jazz music, however this is a concert with classical improvisation. How often have you been to a concert with classical improvisation?**

   □ This is my first time□ Once or twice□ Quite a few times

   □ I'm in the field and attend them regularly

3. **We would like to interview a selection of the audience members about the concert. Interviews will take place in person within 3 weeks of the concert and last no longer than 60min, and the data will be anonymised. If you are willing to be invited for an interview regarding your experience at this concert, please mark accordingly.**
   □ No, thanks

   □ Yes. My name and contact information (email & phone number):

   _____

Personal data will only be used to contact you for a possible interview. All information and data acquired will be treated and stored according to the Data Protection Act and ethical research guidelines of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Appendix C
(Concert #3)

Ethical approval

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
GUILDHALL SCHOOL OF MUSIC & DRAMA

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Pauliina Haustein
Doctoral Student
Guildhall School

10 April 2018

Dear Pauliina

Re: Research Ethics Application

Thank you for submitting your research ethics application, entitled "Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation" which has now been reviewed by the Research Ethics Committee.

I am pleased to confirm that the Committee are satisfied with the research proposal submitted and that **full ethical approval has been granted** for your project.

Please note that you should report any untoward events or unforeseen ethical problems arising from the execution of your project to the Research Ethics Committee within a week of any occurrence. Any feedback which you provide to the participants of the project should be forwarded to the Ethics Committee.

Should you have any queries relating to this letter, please get in touch.

We wish you every success with your project.

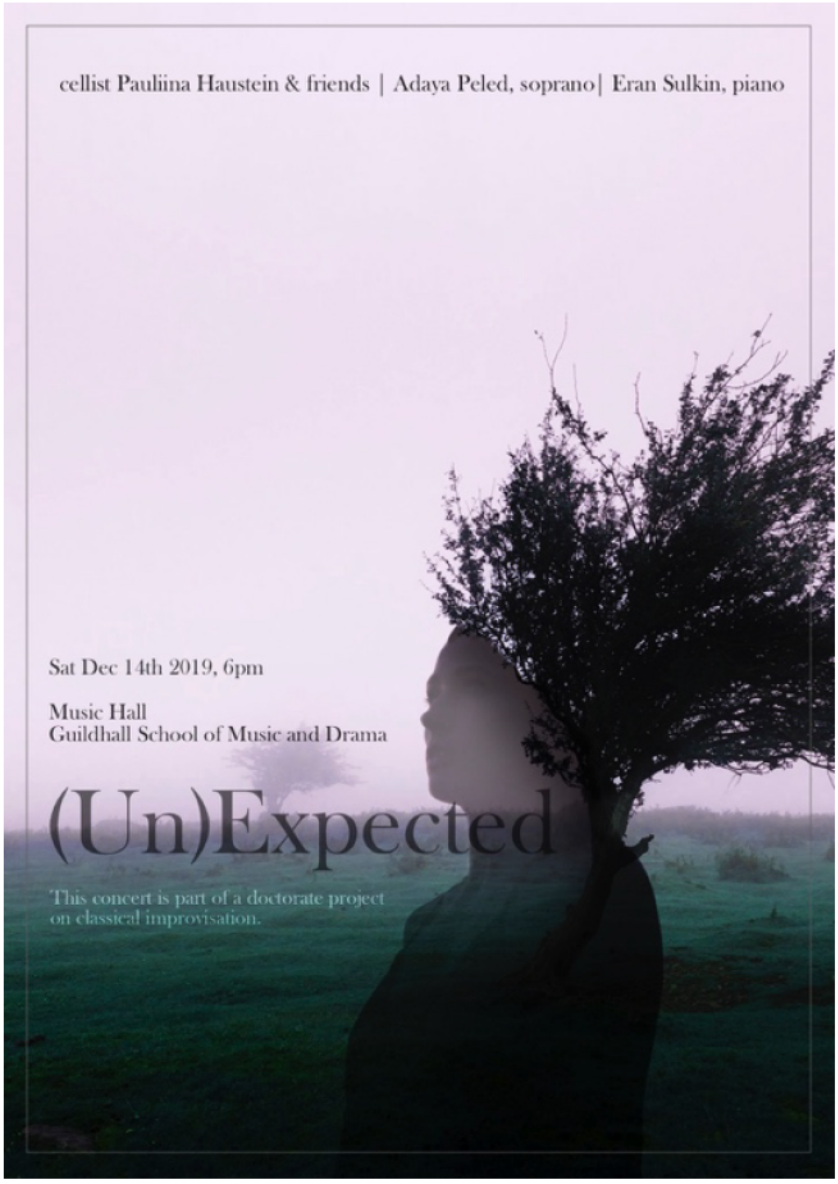
Yours sincerely,

Pauline Galea,
Research Co-ordinator

cc. John Sloboda; David Dolan; Adrian Brendel

APPENDIX D: CONCERT #4

Printed paper programme



Pauliina Haustein, cello
Eran Sulkin, piano
Adaya Peled, soprano
Lindsey Fillingham, flute
Thibault Charrin, piano

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

J.S Bach: Prelude Eb major, Suite for Solo Cello n:o 4
Followed by solo cello and duet improvisation inspired by Bach's prelude

W. A. Mozart: Ariette (K. 307/284d)
Followed by improvised variations

Audience requests

F. Mendelssohn Bartholdy: Sonata for piano and cello D-major, Allegro assai vivace (op. 58)
Preceded by an improvised solo cello prelude

H. Wolf: Mausfallensprüchlein
Followed by improvised variations

M. Lavry: I am black (from the oratorio "Song of Songs")
Preceded by an improvised solo cello prelude

W. A. Mozart: An Chloe (K. 524)
Followed by improvised variations

About the compositions. The opening *Prelude* of **Bach**'s fourth cello suite is both technically and harmonically much more complex than the earlier suites. It has served as my guide into the deeper waters of baroque language and its harmonic structures, gestures and motifs. This movement, infiltrated with a special spirit of optimism, has become a dear friend to me on this improvising journey and I look forward to sharing it – and where the waters take me today - with you.

A breathtaking melody to the intimate words of a maiden to her lover in Song of Songs, **Lavry**'s "*I Am Black*" inspires us to give voice to what is implied but left unsaid. She is dark skinned…*because she worked on the streets*. She is still beautiful…*though no one ever called her that*.

Sparkling with joyful energy, the first movement *Allegro assai vivace* of **Mendelssohn**'s Sonata for piano and cello in D major is like a dance party of its own time (especially if you look at the pianists' fingers). When initially performed, audiences would take part in the merriment by clapping and tapping their feet. Feel free to give it a go!

In 1777 **Mozart** was inspired to compose music to a French poem by Antoine Ferrand, *Oiseux, si tous les ans.* It is a beautiful allegory describing how love, like birds, ends up always leaving at the end of summer - but thankfully returning in the spring. A decade later Mozart birthed melody to the beloved poem *An Chloë* by Johann Georg Jacobi and this piece quickly became a favorite amongst audiences, specifically because of its melodically dramatized nature.

Mausfallensprüchlein, "The Mousers Magic Verses" by **Wolf** (1822, text by Eduard Mörike) is a whimsical little piece and composed before the major works that made him famous. This poem is spoken by a child, trying to entice a mouse towards the trap they have set. Today, we find this little piece has set our appetites for a bit of imaginative whimsy as well…

About the improvisations. Extemporising, preluding and creating improvised variations based on a theme are examples of the type of improvisation that was a natural part of Western classical concerts until beginning of 20th century. In this concert, we introduce various improvisation techniques and structures that are not, in fact, novel but based on the historical evidence of performances throughout music history – and use them to make a truly unique evening for all of us.

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

The order of pieces, though not revealed to audience, was:

1. M. Lavry: I am black (from the oratorio "Song of Songs"); Preceded by an improvised solo cello prelude
2. J.S Bach: Prelude Eb major, Cello Suite No. 4; Followed by solo cello and duet improvisation inspired by Bach's written prelude
3. F. Mendelssohn Bartholdy: Sonata for piano and cello D-major, Allegro assai vivace (op. 58); Preceded by an improvised solo cello prelude
4. W. A. Mozart: An Chloe (K. 524); Followed by improvised variations
5. W. A. Mozart: Ariette (K. 307/284d); Followed by improvised variations
6. H. Wolf: Mausfallensprüchlein; Followed by improvised variations
7. Audience requests

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

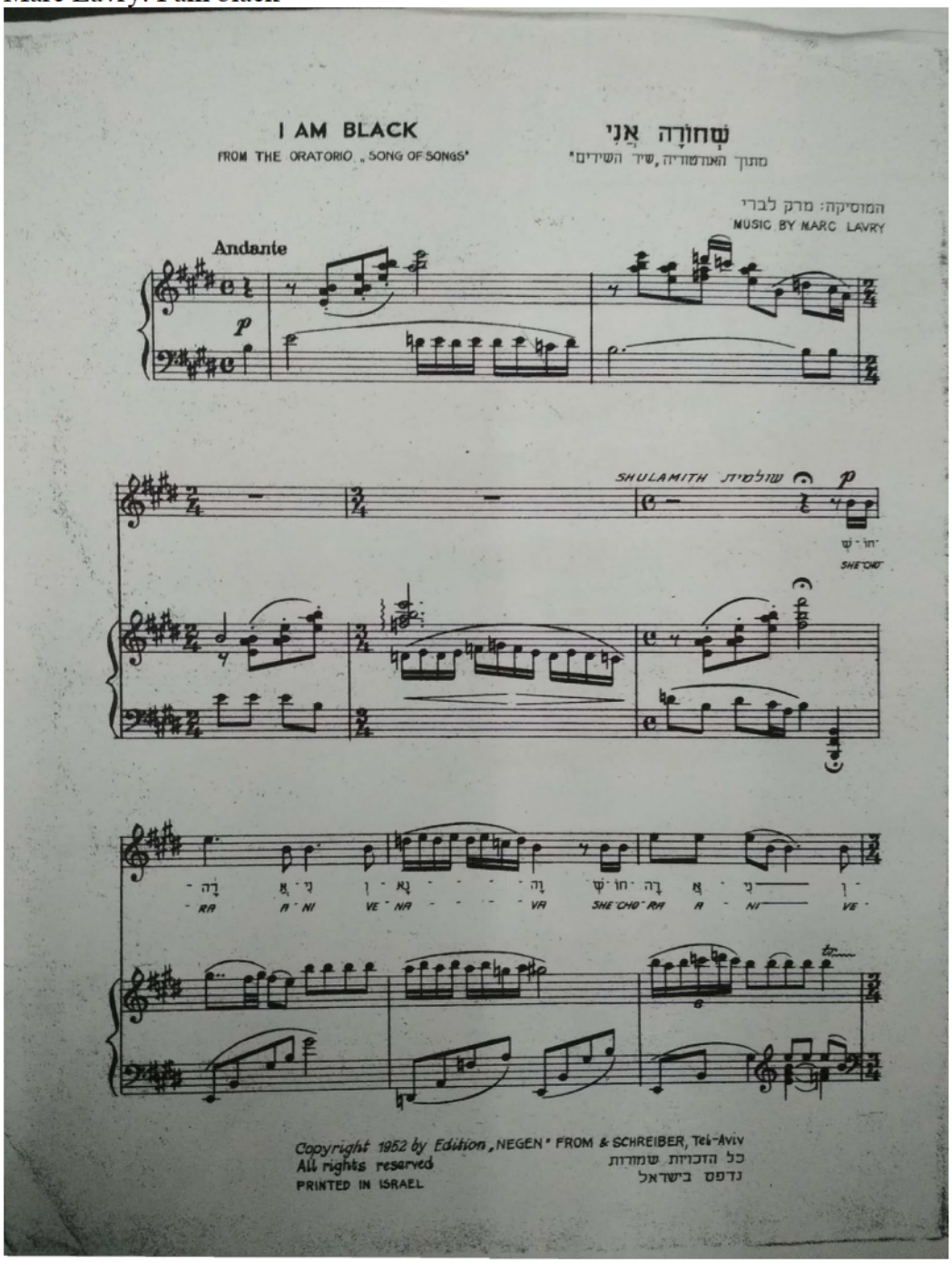
Scores

Mendelssohn Sonata D major, Allegro assai vivace

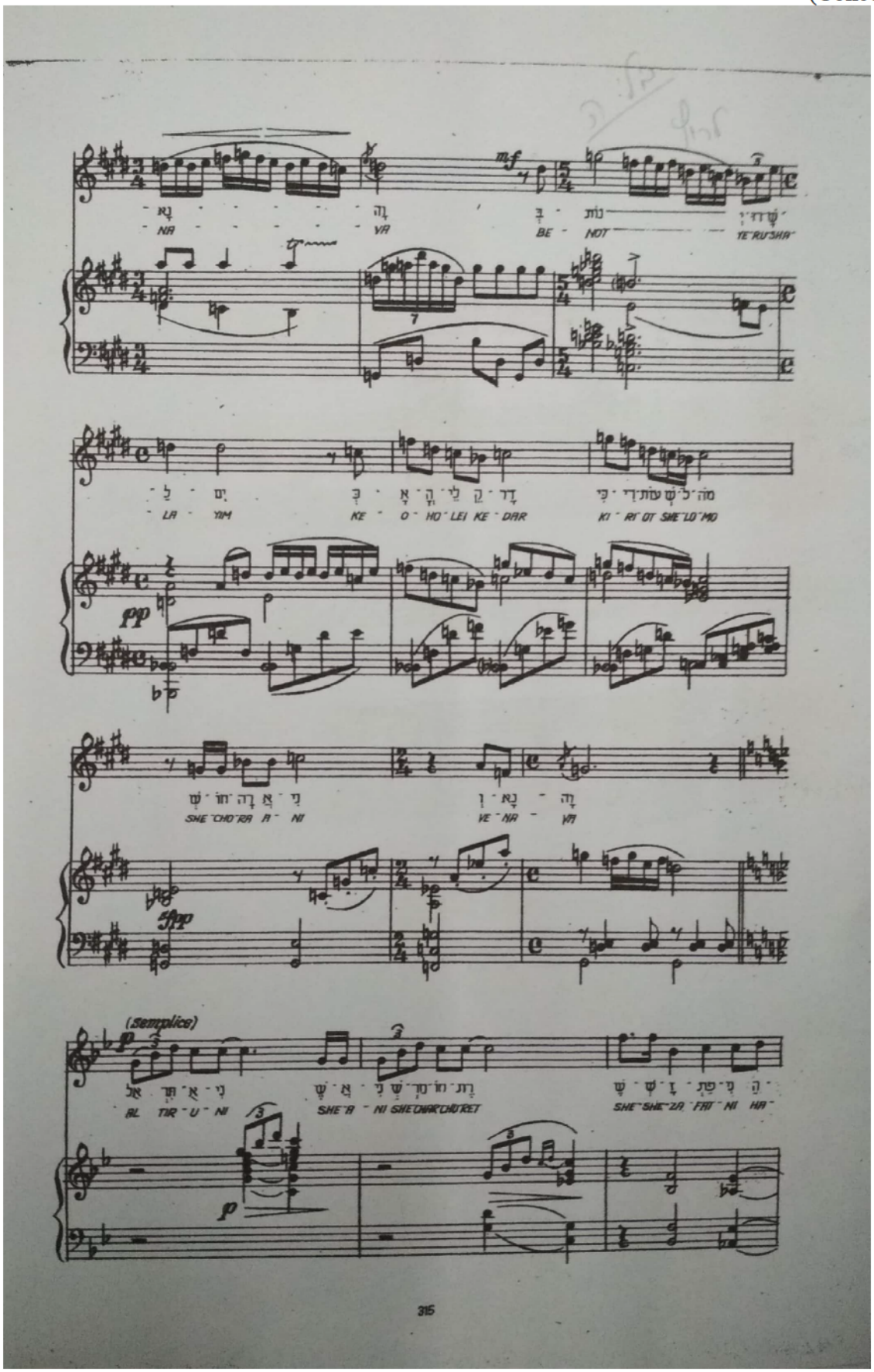
Mozart: An Chloë, KV 524

Mozart: Ariette, K. 307/284d

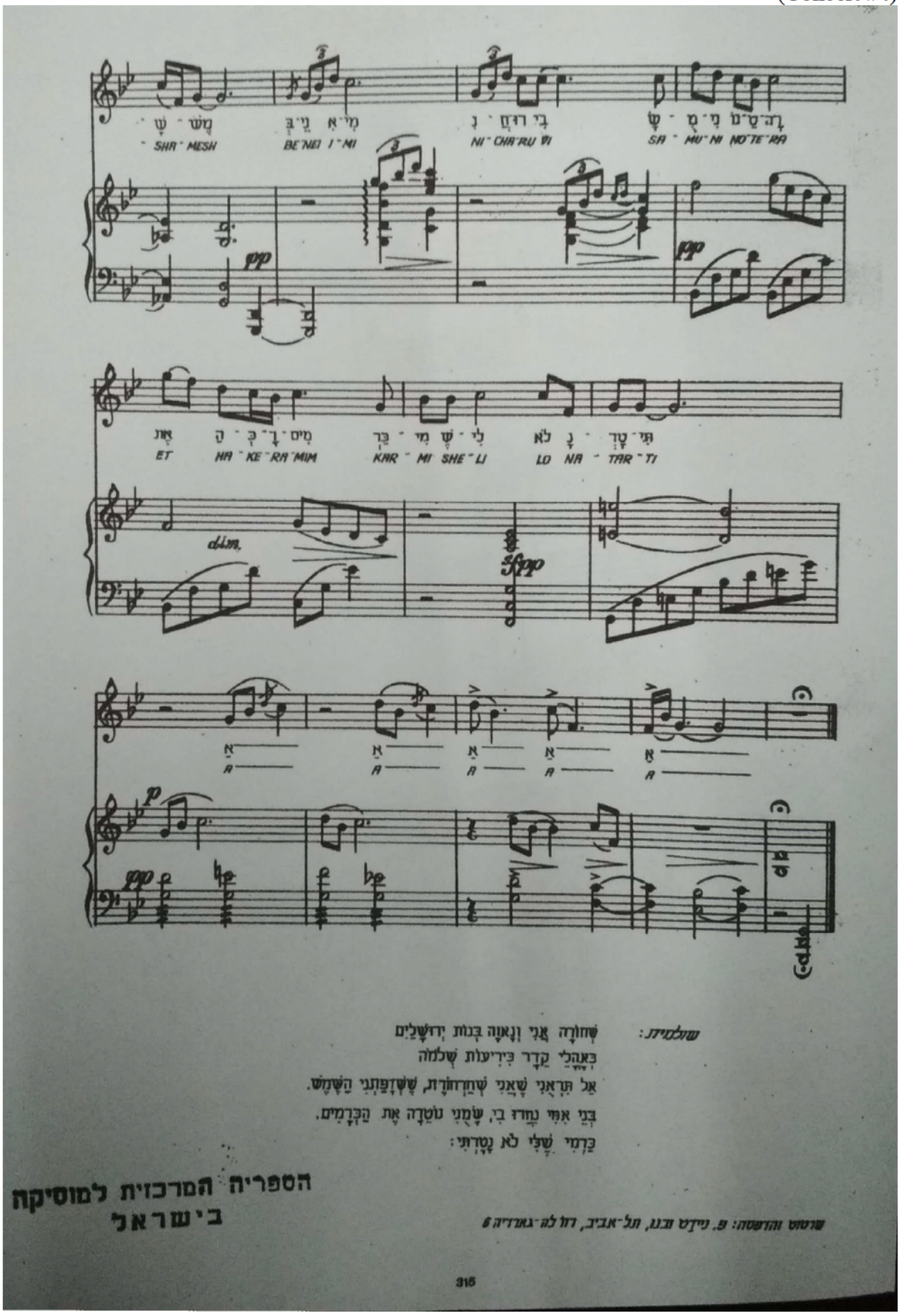
Marc Lavry: I am black



Appendix D
(Concert #4)

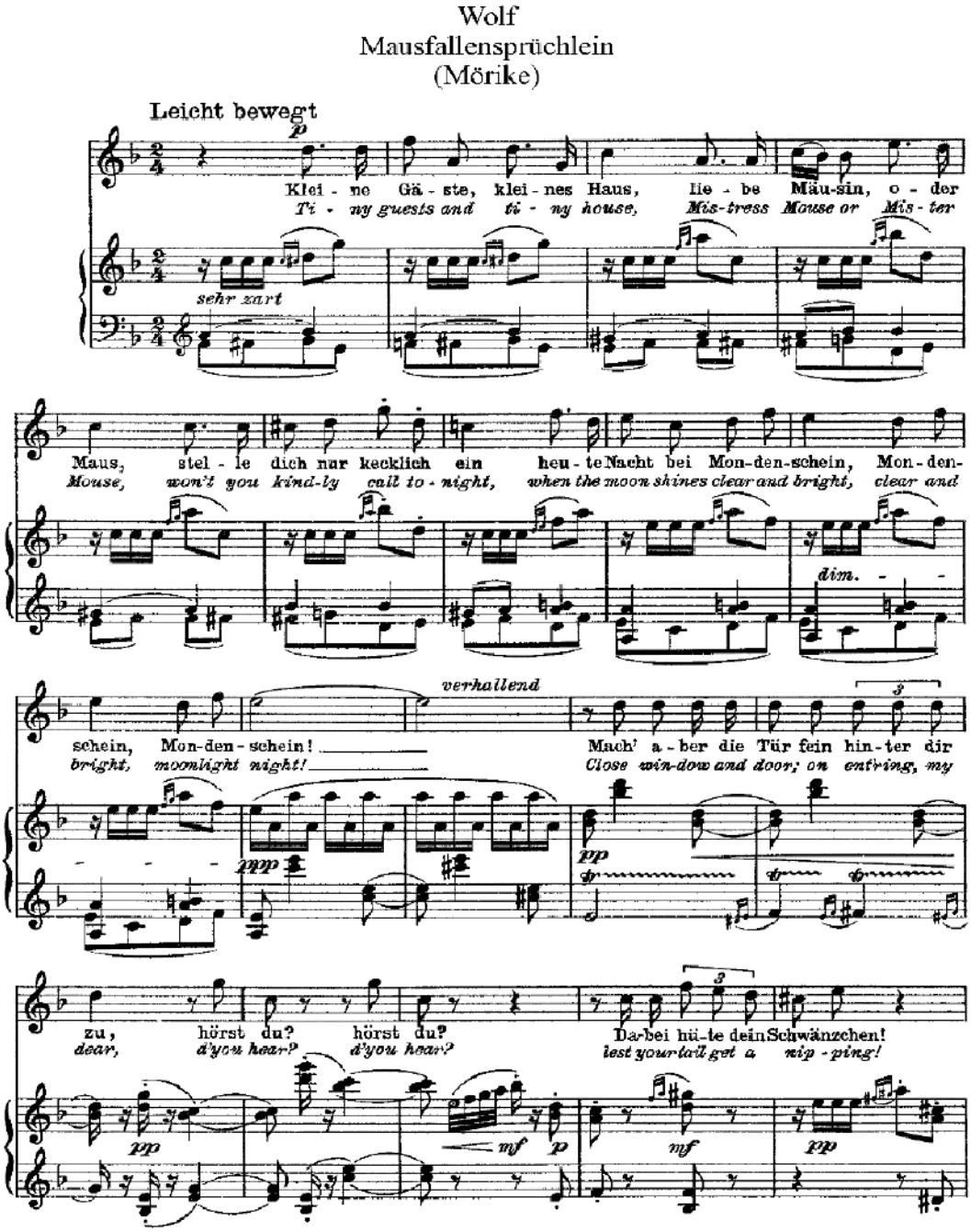


Appendix D
(Concert #4)

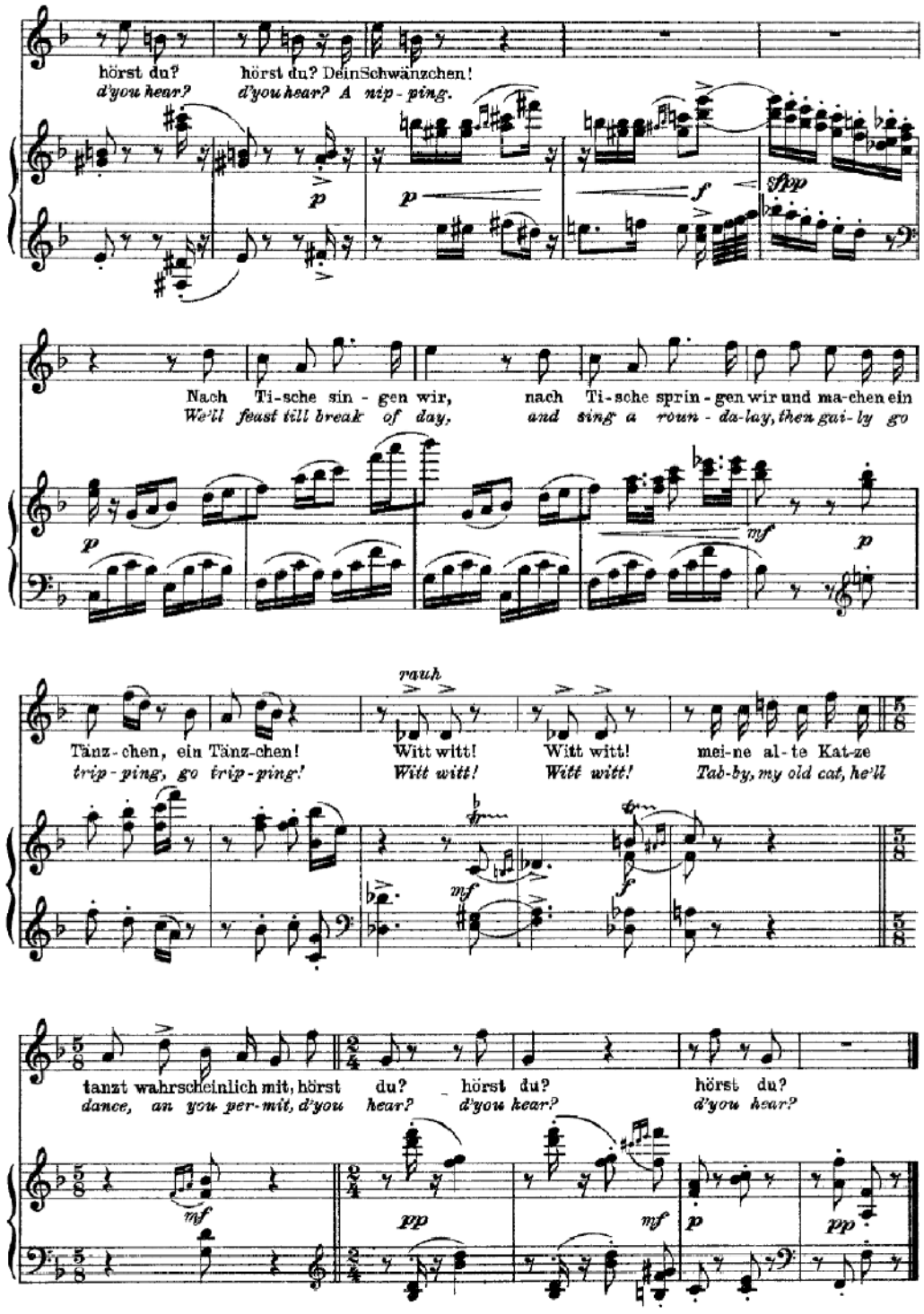


Appendix D
(Concert #4)

Wolf: Mausfallensprühlein



Appendix D
(Concert #4)



Marc Lavry: I am black

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

Lyrics

M. Lavry: I am black (from the oratorio "Song of Songs")

Shechora ani venava
bnot yerushalayim
Ke'ohalei kedar kiriyot shelomo
shechora ani venava.
Al tir'uni she'ani shcharchoret
sheshezafatni hashamesh.
Bnai i'mi, nicharu vi,
Samuni notera et hakeramim.
Karmi sheli, lo natarti

I am black, but beautiful,
O ye daughters of Jerusalem
as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.
Look not upon me, because I am black,
because the sun hath looked upon me:
my mother's children were angry with me,
they made me the keeper of the vineyards;
but mine own vineyard have I not kept.

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

W. A. Mozart: An Chloë (K. 524)

When love looks out of your blue, bright and open eyes
And the joy of gazing into them
causes my heart to throb and glow;

And I hold you and kiss
your rosy cheeks warm
Sweet girl, and clasp you
trembling in my arms

Sweet girl, sweet girl, and press you
firmly to my breast
Where until my dying moment
I shall hold you tight

My ecstatic gaze is blurred
by a sombre cloud
And I sit then exhausted
but blissful by your side

W. A. Mozart: Ariette (K. 307/284d)

You birds, so every year
You leave your climates
As soon as the sad winter
Strips our groves.

It isn't solely
For a change of foliage
Or to avoid our foggy winter weather

But your destiny
Simply doesn't allow you to enjoy love
Beyond the season of flowers.
For when she (springtime) is gone,
You look for another place
To make an end of love every year.

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

H. Wolf: Mausfallensprüchlein

Kleine Gäste, kleines Haus.
Liebe Mäusin oder Maus,
[Stell][1] dich nur kecklich ein
[Heut'][2] nacht bei Mondenschein!
Mach aber die Tür fein hinter dir zu,
Hörst du?

Dabei hüte dein Schwänzchen!
Nach Tische singen wir,
Nach Tische springen wir
Und machen ein Tänzchen:
Witt witt!
Meine alte Katze tanzt wahrscheinlich mit.

Little guests, little house
Dear Miss or Mister Mouse,
Just boldly present yourself
Tonight in the moonlight!
But shut the door tight behind you,
Do you hear?

And be careful of your tail!
After supper we will sing
After supper we will jump
And do a little dance;
Witt, witt!
My old cat will probably dance with us.

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

Ethics application (audience)

Application form for the ethical approval of a research project

For office use only (tick completed or attached)		*For office use only*
Part 1: Basic information	☐	Risk level: High /Medium/Low (circle)
Part 2: Human participants	☐	
Part 3: Obscene or potentially offensive material	☐	
Part 4: General	☐	
Part 5: Declarations	☐	
Attachments: Questionnaire	x	
Interview questions	x	
Participant information sheet (questionnaire)	x	
Participant information sheet (interviews)	x	
Participant consent sheet (questionnaire)	x	
Participant consent sheet (interviews)	x	

Part 1: Basic Information (to be completed by principal lead researcher)

1. Full project title

Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation

2. What is the hypothesis/research question?

I want to find out if and how rehearsing and performing a concert program from the perspective of reconciling the improvisatory and non-improvisatory approaches to Western classical repertoire can positively impact on both performer and audience engagement in live concert.

3. Nature of the investigation

I and my chamber music partners will be playing a concert program of standard repertoire combined with classical improvisation in order to invite the audience members in a concert experience of possibly heightened, mutual engagement. Audience members will be invited to fill in a questionnaire about their concert experience at the end of the concert. They will also be given the possibility to leave their contact information if they are open to a possible follow-up interview. This is for the purpose of allowing me to follow up on any potentially interesting or unexpected post-concert comments from audience members. From experience, audience members tend to approach me after a concert. Should any of those comments be particularly interesting (for example ones related specifically to changes in engagement with the event), I would ask them if I can contact them for a short interview because of what they have just said, which is of great interest to me.

4. Principal researcher's name and position/student ID

Pauliina Haustein, D.Mus / M.Phil student, 1617073

5. Departmental address of principal researcher

Research department, Guildhall School	Work/mobile phone no.	+358 468102881
	Emergency no.*	
	Fax	
	Email	Pauliina.haustein@stu.gsmd.ac.uk

6. Principal researcher's qualifications and experience in the past five years (relevant to proposed research)

I am a third year doctorate student at GSMD.

I will have one or two assistants to help with facilitation of the event (collecting questionnaires at the end and making sure people know where the camera is, so that they can choose to sit outside the shot). These volunteer assistants will be fellow GSMD doctorate student Lindsey Fillingham and my husband, Dr. Martin Haustein.

7. Co-researcher's name(s), qualifications and position(s)

A	
B	
C	

[delete or add co-researcher boxes as necessary]

7.1 Address of A above

	Work phone no.	
	Emergency no.*	
	Fax	
	Email	

7.2 Address of B above

	Work phone no.	
	Emergency no.*	
	Fax	
	Email	

7.3 Address of C above

	Work phone no.	
	Emergency no.*	
	Fax	
	Email	

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

8.	Provide details of location of research activity (eg on campus or at placement, or postal) with address and contact details where relevant.	Concert at Guildhall School of Music, Silk Street building, Music Hall December 14th 2019 at 6pm

9. Does the research project take place on NHS property or involve NHS patients? YES/**NO**
If Yes, you must follow NHS ethical approval procedures.

10. Does the research project involve human participants? **Yes**/ No If yes complete part 2

11. Does the research involve obscene or potentially offensive material? Yes/**No** If yes complete part 3

Part 2: Human participants

1. In what way do you intend to involve human participants in the project (tick all that apply)?

Interviewing	x	Observation (non-invasive)	
Paper questionnaire	X	Observation (invasive)	
Computer questionnaire		Testing	
Other			

2. **Consent** – Are all participants able to provide consent for themselves? [X] Yes [ ] No
If **no**, please explain why not

3. How many participants do you intend to recruit?	Expected concert audience maximum 40 people, out of which everyone will be invited to fill in the questionnaire. 1-2 audience members may be contacted for a follow-up interview within 5 days of the concert.
4. How will they be selected and recruited? Are participants to be compensated for the time/travel? (if so provide details)	Participants are invited to the free concert through social media and other networks of friends. The event will be advertised as a cello and chamber music concert which is part of a doctorate project on classical improvisation and has a small, voluntary research component.

5. Interviewing/questionnaires (*complete where relevant*)

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

5(a) How many questions do you intend to ask (and give approximate timings)? In what format are you collecting the answers [eg yes/no, 4point scale, 5 point scale, free text, mixed]? What method of analysis, quantitative or qualitative, do you intend to use?	The questionnaire will have approximately 15 questions. Answers will be collected using mixed questions, including yes/no, marking a point on a line and free text. An advanced draft is attached. Possible follow-up interviews will be conducted either in person or via video chat or phone and are not expected to last more than 20 minutes. Interviews will take place within one week of the concert. They will be semi-structured, recorded and transcribed. A sample sheet of questions is attached.

5 (b) Please attach either the full questionnaire /set of interview questions or a sample (at least 20% covering all methods). Where the full questionnaire is not submitted it must be signed-off for use by the line-manager or supervisor and a copy lodged with the Committee Secretary prior to data collection.

6. What do you think will be the effects of your observations/questioning on your participants? Are the effects likely to differ for different groupings (eg male/female, people with or without a disability, different ethnicities)? What safeguards or follow-up care arrangements need to be put in place?

For those who decide to participate, filling in the questionnaire may prompt them to reflect more than they otherwise would on their concert experience. This may result in greater awareness of themselves and their expectations regarding classical concerts.

For possible interviewees, a similar effect of heightened reflection and awareness regarding the topic of classical concert experience may occur.

Other effects are not anticipated as participation is entirely voluntary, declining will be made very easy and the situation will be fully explained before the start of the concert. Concert audience members are expected to come from networks of fellow musicians, GSMD students and other friends and to be aware of the nature of the event.

7. How will the raw data be stored and for how long? Who will have access to this data?	Envelopes with questionnaires will be stored in a locked cabinet only accessible to me and in emergency, Guildhall facility staff. (Please note that questionnaires are anonymous and respondents will be impossible to identify.) When analysis proceeds, the questionnaires are kept in a secure place at my home and once data is transcribed into electronic form, it will be stored in a password protected folder and paper copies destroyed. Interview data will be transcribed after which audio files deleted. The transcriptions will be stored and backed up on password-protected hard-drives. All raw data will be destroyed after 5 years.
8. Describe how you intend to make the results of the study known to participants?	A copy or link to the thesis/publication will be made available for the participants via email, if they have chosen to give it.
9. Proposed collection starting date (dd/mm/yy)	14/12/2019
10. Proposed finishing date (dd/mm/yy)	22/12/2019
11. Proposed final report date (mm/yy) and format	08/21, final thesis

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

Part 3: Obscene or potentially offensive material

1. Please describe the nature of the material to be used and its significance to the research project	
2. How will this material be gathered? *(please indicate whether you intend to use School IT equipment in any form)*	
3. How will this material be stored and for how long? Who will have access to this material	
4. Proposed starting date (dd/mm/yy)	
5. Proposed finishing date (dd/mm/yy)	
6. Proposed final report date (mm/yy) and format	

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

Part 4: General

Describe and discuss any ethical issues arising from this project, other than those already dealt with in your answers above.

You may wish to consider issues of:

- Sample size and anonymity
- Issues of informed consent in older children and whether they are 'Gillick competent'
- Peer pressure to be involved or not involved
- The need to exclude participants during the project if they become ill etc (and who decides).

This section should also reference subject-specific ethical guidelines or reference points, eg

- Research Ethics Framework [ESRC]
- Ethics and Educational Research [BERA: British Educational Research Association]
- Rigour, respect and responsibility: a universal ethical code for scientists [Council for Science and Technology]
- Conducting research with people not having the capacity to consent to their participation [British Psychological Society]

The expected concert audience will be rather small and homogeneous by background. For this research, special efforts will be made to invite people who are less affiliated with classical music to bring balance and contrast to the more classically trained listeners. The event is free and filling in and returning the questionnaire is entirely voluntary. The concert will be advertised through friends and personal networks on social media.

Key areas of ethics have been identified as peer pressure to participate, the security of both paper and digital data and anonymity of both questionnaire respondents and interviewees. Interviews will be recorded, transcribed and anonymized in the analysis stage, and respondents will be given a chance to withdraw their data until submission of written thesis. Anonymity of the questionnaires will be secured by asking for contact information for interviews or other future purposes in a separate sheet (Consent Form) and by using envelopes to collect the questionnaires.

To minimize peer pressure, extra care will be taken in both written instructions of the questionnaire and verbal instructions to make sure participants know they are under no obligation to participate and that choosing not to do so will not reflect on them in any way. They will be invited to participate in the research but the situation will be made easy for them to decline, for example by stating that if you wish to not participate, simply leave the envelope under the chair.

If, contrary to my expectations, underage children come to the concerts, they will be exempt from filling in the questionnaire and will be asked to be seated so that they are not visible in the video recording.

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

Part 5: Declarations

1 Declaration by principal researcher/student

The information supplied in this application is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate. I have considered the ethical issues involved in this research and believe that I have adequately addressed them in this application. I understand that if the protocol for this research changes in any way, I must inform the ethics committee.

Name of principal researcher (please print):	Pauliina Haustein
Signature of principal researcher	
Date:	22.11.2019

2. Declaration by line-manager of principal researcher or student's supervisor

I have read the application, and it is appropriate for this research to be conducted for the purpose stated. I give my consent for the application to be forwarded to the ethics committee.

Name (please print):	John Sloboda		
Signature:		Department:	
Date:	22.11.2019	Designation:	

Where the line-manager is also one of the co-researchers, the line-manager declaration must be signed by Director of Music or Director of Drama as appropriate

3. Declaration by the senior manager of a participating organisation (where applicable)

I have read the application, and it is appropriate for this research to be conducted in this department. I give my consent for the application to be forwarded to the ethics committee.

Name (please print):			
Signature:		Organisation:	
Date:		Designation:	

Information sheet (audience questionnaire)

Title of project: Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert aud improvisation

Study approved by School Research Ethics Committee:

_____

I would like to invite you to participate in this doctorate artistic research project. Participation is entirely voluntary and if you choose not to take part, it will not disadvantage you in any way. Before you decide whether to participate or not, please read carefully what the research project is about and what your participation will involve. Please feel free to ask the host of this event if there is anything that is not clear or if you wish to have more information. Future questions regarding this research can be addressed to Pauliina.haustein@stu.gsmd.ac.uk

Aims of the research
This concert is part of an artistic doctorate project, which includes the artistic development in learning the art of classical improvisation and creative performance and using those elements to connect with concert audiences. If you decide to participate in the research, it will include filling in a short questionnaire before and after the concert. It is up to you to decide whether to take part or not. If you decide not to participate, simply leave the envelope under your seat. As participation is anonymous, it will not be possible to withdraw your data once you have returned your questionnaire

This concert is filmed. If you do not wish to be visible in the recording, please make sure to take a seat behind the camera.

All information and data acquired will be treated and stored according to the Data Protection Act 2018 and ethical research guidelines of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

If this study has harmed you in any way you can contact the Guildhall School of Music & Drama using the details below for further advice and information:
Research Department / Dr. Alex Mermikides

Appendix D

Consent Form (audience questionnaire)

Research Participant Consent
Audience Questionnaire

Title of project:
Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation

Study approved by School Research Ethics Committee: _____

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 may have a copy of this Consent Form with (or take a picture with your device).

I have read the **Information Sheet for Participants** and understand that if I choose to take part in this research

- Participation is anonymous and it will not be possible for me to withdraw my data once I have returned the questionnaire
- I understand that personal data, should I choose to give it, will only be used for the researcher to contact me personally for the below stated reasons. All information and data acquired will be treated and stored according to the Data Protection Act 2018 and ethical research guidelines of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

□ I wish to receive a report of the findings of this research when they are made available

EMAIL: _____

□ You may contact me about a possible short follow-up interview

NAME & PHONE NUMBER: _____

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: _____

Information sheet (audience interview)

Information sheet for participants
Audience Interviews

Title of project: Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation

Study approved by School Research Ethics Committee:

_____

I would like to invite you to participate in this doctorate artistic research project. Participation is entirely voluntary and if you choose not to take part, it will not disadvantage you in any way. Before you decide whether to participate or not, please read carefully what the research project is about and what your participation will involve. Please feel free to ask the host of this event if there is anything that is not clear or if you wish to have more information. Future questions regarding this research can be addressed to Pauliina.haustein@stu.gsmd.ac.uk

Aims of the research
This concert is part of an artistic doctorate project, which includes the artistic development in learning the art of classical improvisation and creative performance and using those elements to connect with concert audiences. If you decide to participate, you will be interviewed regarding your recent concert experience. Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Interview data will be anonymized and you can withdraw your data without giving any reason until the submission of the thesis (est. 08/21).

If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet and be asked to sign a consent form. A copy of both will be available for you to keep. It is up to you to decide whether to take part or not. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

All information and data acquired will be treated and stored according to the Data Protection Act 2018 and ethical research guidelines of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

If this study has harmed you in any way you can contact the Guildhall School of Music & Drama using the details below for further advice and information:
Research Department / Dr. Alex Mermikides

Appendix D

Consent form (audience interview)

Research Participant Consent
Audience Interviews

Title of project:
Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation

Study approved by School Research Ethics Committee: _____

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 may have a copy of this Consent Form with you (or take a picture with your device).

I have read the **Information Sheet for Participants** and understand that if I choose to take part in this research

- My interview data will be anonymized and it will not be possible for me to withdraw my data after the write-up of the thesis has been submitted (est. 08/21)
- I understand that personal data, should I choose to give it, will only be used to contact me personally by the researcher for the below stated reasons. All information and data acquired will be treated and stored according to the Data Protection Act 2018 and ethical research guidelines of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

□ I wish to receive a report of the findings of this research when they are made available

EMAIL: _____

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: _____

Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CONCERT AUDIENCE MEMBERS

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

This questionnaire is part of an artistic doctorate research project on classical improvisation and audience experience, conducted by Pauliina Haustein (Guildhall School of Music and Drama).

Please do not identify yourself by name, as all data from this research will be treated anonymously. This questionnaire has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Guildhall School. Any questions about the research may be addressed to Pauliina.haustein@stu.gsmd.ac.uk. You are under no obligation to complete the questionnaire, but if you do decide to complete it, please leave it in the envelope either on your seat after the concert or on in a pile on the table next to the exit.

This questionnaire has two parts. Please fill in the first part before the concert and the second part **once instructed to do so** after the concert.

BEFPORE THE CONCERT

Please select the most appropriate option.

16. **Age:**

□ 16-24 □ 25-34 □ 35-44 □ 45-54 □ 55-64 □ 65-74 □ 75 or over

17. **Gender:**

□ Male □ Female □ Prefer not to say

18. **How familiar are you with classical music? Please tick the most suitable option.**

I engage with classical music through listening, playing, attending concerts or some other form:

□ Once or twice a year □ Several times a year □ Monthly

□ Weekly □ Daily

19. **Improvisation is more normally associated with jazz music, however this is a concert with classical improvisation. How often have you been to a concert with classical improvisation?**

□ This is my first time □ Once or twice □ Quite a few times

□ I'm in the field and attend them regularly

20. **Please mark according to your experience**

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

In my experience, atmosphere in the audience during classical concerts tends to be:

Quiet	----------	Excited
Critical	----------	Supportive
Involved	----------	
Detached		
Interested	----------	
Bored		
Emotional	----------	
Indifferent		
Tense	----------	Relaxed

21. I came to this concert because (you may choose up to 2)

□ I want to hear the specific pieces of program live

□ I want to see the specific performers live

□ People I know were going and asked me to join

□ I came out of professional interest or am a colleague of the performers

□ Someone I know recommended the concert, which made me decide to go

□ I came across publicity and the concert interested me

□ Other reason:_____

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

AFTER THE CONCERT

22. **Were there any aspects of the design of this event that seemed different to other concerts you have attended? How?**

23. **Was this concert experience what you expected? YES / NO (please circle)**
Why?

24. **Please mark according to your experience**
During this concert I felt:

Quiet	----------	Excited
Critical	----------	Supportive
Involved	----------	
Detached		
Interested	----------	
Bored		
Emotional	----------	
Indifferent		
Tense	----------	Relaxed

25. **Please mark according to your experience**
In my experience, atmosphere in the audience during this concert was:

Quiet	----------	Excited
Critical	----------	Supportive
Involved	----------	
Detached		
Interested	----------	
Bored		
Emotional	----------	
Indifferent		
Tense	----------	Relaxed

26. **Please describe your experience of the atmosphere in this concert in your own words. Did it change during the concert? How?**

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

27. **In your personal opinion, do you prefer to read the program-related information in a handout or listen to it explained by the performers? Why?**

28. **Did not knowing which piece will come next affect you in any way?**

29. **Did you notice any difference in how you listened when you knew something was improvised versus composed? If so, can you describe how?**

30. **Can you identify any moments during the concert when you felt most attentive or engaged with the event? If so, when?**

31. **What was your favourite moment in the concert? Why?**

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

Question sheet for audience interviews

Interview questions for audience members

(Please state your name and consent to this interview and the use of data, which will be anonymized, in my research project.)

Please tell me in your own words about this experience.

After the concert you mentioned… Please tell me more about that.

Why did you come to the concert?

Had you been to a concert with classical improvisation before?

What expectations did you have when coming to this concert? How did the concert experience compare to those expectations?

How did you feel during the concert?

Were there any specific moments in the program when you perceived shifts in attitude or changes in the general atmosphere of the audience?

Were there any highlighted moments for you during the program? If so, which ones and why did they stand out?

Did you notice any difference in how you listened when you knew something was improvised versus composed?

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

Ethics application (chamber partners)

Application form for the ethical approval of a research project

For office use only (tick completed or attached)			*For office use only*
Part 1: Basic information		☐	Risk level: High /Medium/Low (circle)
Part 2: Human participants		☐	
Part 3: Obscene or potentially offensive material		☐	
Part 4: General		☐	
Part 5: Declarations		☐	
Attachments:	Question set or sample	x	
	Participant information sheet	x	
	Participant consent sheet	x	
	Participant consent sheet	x (specifically for interviews)	

Part 1: Basic Information (to be completed by principal lead researcher)

1. Full project title

Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation

2. What is the hypothesis/research question?

I want to find out if rehearsing and performing a concert program from the perspective of reconciling the improvisatory and non-improvisatory approaches to Western classical repertoire will positively impact on both performer and audience engagement and potentially enhance the interactive relationship between the two in live concert.
NOTE: This application is for filming and interviewing co-performers regarding the artistic process and a separate application will be submitted for the audience research in the concert.

3. Nature of the investigation

Appendix D
(Concert #4)

The chamber music partners together with myself will engage in a rehearsal process of repertoire and classical improvisation technique. The nature of the investigation is to examine the type of artistic preparation that happens when reconciling the non-improvisatory with the improvisatory approach, with the purpose of an interactive public concert with live audience at the end of that process. In order to address the research questions, I examine the rehearsal process leading up to the concert. According to the working hypothesis, performers' engagement increases when improvisation is present. What is the artistic process behind this? What does engaging with group improvisation mean for the preparation process and how is it rehearsed, before eventually being done in front of live audience? How is the final concert program and design shaped through this process?

To investigate, rehearsals with chamber partners will be recorded on video. Audio recording would be insufficient, as facial expressions and body language play a crucial role in real-time improvisations and specifically, when negotiating outcomes and solving surprising moments during playing (without speaking). The level of challenge the different pieces present will also be visible through the amount of overall time spent on each of them. I expect to gain understanding of, for example, what is particularly hard and what comes more easily. Discussions during rehearsals will be more carefully examined when changes in engagement levels are indicated, and otherwise considered informative of the subjective experiences of participants. The video recordings provide the possibility for me later in the autoethnographic process to check back for moments that emerge meaningful in my practice diary and log of notes from group rehearsals as well as interviews. The videos will also provide me with information not otherwise practical to obtain, like the exact amount of time spent on each piece and the types of phases of learning that naturally occur in the overall process, which would be hard to reconstruct from memory or notes. Once the concert has been performed and audience feedback is taken into account, it may be meaningful to examine the rehearsal progress of specific moments, even if they did not emerge particularly meaningful in my own notes at the time.

Chamber partners may also be asked to be interviewed after the concert as part of the inquiry. They can accept or decline and it will not reflect back to them in any way. This is mainly to gain additional understanding about their subjective experience particularly of their own and the audiences' engagement during the performance but also to give them a chance to reflect on the entire experience and contribute to the research from their point of view. Chamber partners will not be named in the final thesis or any other publication.

4. Principal researcher's name and position/student ID

Pauliina Haustein, IT1617073

5. Departmental address of principal researcher

Research department	Work/mobile phone no.	+358 46 8102881
	Emergency no.*	+358 46 8102881
	Fax	
	Email	

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6. Principal researcher's qualifications and experience in the past five years (relevant to proposed research)

Doctorate student at GSMD, third year.

7. Co-researcher's name(s), qualifications and position(s)

A	
B	
C	

[delete or add co-researcher boxes as necessary]

7.1 Address of A above

	Work phone no.	
	Emergency no.*	[redacted]
	Fax	
	Email	

7.2 Address of B above

	Work phone no.	
	Emergency no.*	[redacted]
	Fax	
	Email	

7.3 Address of C above

	Work phone no.	
	Emergency no.*	[redacted]
	Fax	
	Email	

8.	Provide details of location of research activity (eg on campus or at placement, or postal) with address and contact details where relevant.	Rehearsals will take place mainly at GSMD and possibly on some occasions at the homes of musicians or possible concert venues.

9. Does the research project take place on NHS property or involve NHS patients? YES/**NO**
If Yes, you must follow NHS ethical approval procedures.

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10. Does the research project involve human participants? **Yes**/ No If yes complete part 2

11. Does the research involve obscene or potentially offensive material? Yes/**No** If yes complete part 3

Part 2: Human participants

1. In what way do you intend to involve human participants in the project (tick all that apply)?

Interviewing	x	Observation (non-invasive)	x
Paper questionnaire		Observation (invasive)	
Computer questionnaire		Testing	

Other [ ] Provide description

2. **Consent** – Are all participants able to provide consent for themselves? [x] Yes [ ] No
If **no**, please explain why not

3. How many participants do you intend to recruit?	Up to 15 (three remaining concerts involving up to 5 in each)
4. How will they be selected and recruited? Are participants to be compensated for the time/travel? (if so provide details)	The musicians are recruited from a pool of people who have studied classical improvisation with either myself or Prof. Dolan. They are volunteers and they will be compensated for expenses. If non-students are recruited for future concerts, they may be compensated for their time out of an external grant through my Finnish employer that I have applied for for this purpose.

5. Interviewing/questionnaires (*complete where relevant*)

5(a) How many questions do you intend to ask (and give approximate timings)? In what format are you collecting the answers [eg yes/no, 4point scale, 5 point scale, free text, mixed]? What method of analysis, quantitative or qualitative, do you intend to use?	After the concert, the chamber partners may be asked to be interviewed on their experience of the rehearsal and performance process. If they are asked, they can accept or decline without it disadvantaging them in any way. These interviews will be conducted in person at the earliest convenience of the interviewee, between 1 and 5 days after the concert. Interviews will be semi-structured and answers in the form of free text. Qualitative methods of analysis will be used. A sample sheet of questions is attached.

5 (b) Please attach either the full questionnaire /set of interview questions or a sample (at least 20% covering all methods). Where the full questionnaire is not submitted it must be signed-off for use by the line-manager or supervisor and a copy lodged with the Committee Secretary prior to data collection.

6. What do you think will be the effects of your observations/questioning on your participants? Are the effects likely to differ for different groupings (eg male/female, people with or without a disability, different ethnicities)? What safeguards or follow-up care arrangements need to be put in place?

I expect there to be an initial response to the video-recording of rehearsals as the knowledge of recording a rehearsal may at first feel uncomfortable to some. There is a possibility that the knowledge that we are being recorded will change the way that we behave, in particular that we might become overly self-conscious. To minimise this effect, the recording device (a tablet) will be placed in as unobtrusive a position as possible. I don't anticipate any longer lasting effects beyond the initial situation as they get used to both the idea and the recording device in the room. It will be clearly communicated that the recordings of rehearsals will not be viewed or evaluated in any other capacity than by myself within the autoethnographic research process.

The recording of the concert is a standard procedure and I don't anticipate any particular effects. The consent form differentiates between recordings of the performance and rehearsals to make sure participants understand the different uses of the rehearsal and performance recordings.

Other overall effects of taking part in the project may include, for example, greater skills of improvisation and chamber music as well as a more engaged awareness of audience in performance.

7. How will the raw data be stored and for how long? Who will have access to this data?	All raw video footage will be transferred within 48 hours from a password-protected memory card to a password-protected hard-drive and backed up on a second password-protected hard-drive. My supervisory team, the co-performers, GSMD research office staff, upgrade and thesis examiners and I will have access to footage and data and will be able to view videos when necessary for research and assessment purposes. I have selected players to ensure that they are not students of any examiner. Interview data will be analysed using NVivo software; files generated in this process will be stored and backed up on password-protected hard-drives. All data will be stored until completion of the doctorate (expected to be 2021 at latest), at which point it will be deleted unless express permission has been secured from all co-performers. No data will be used in online and social media platforms without the express permission of all co-performers and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.
8. Describe how you intend to make the results of the study known to participants?	A copy of the thesis/conference papers will be made available to the participants if they so choose.
9. Proposed collection starting date (dd/mm/yy)	20.11.2019
10. Proposed finishing date (dd/mm/yy)	30.08.2020
11. Proposed final report date (mm/yy) and format	Thesis submission by 08/21

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Part 3: Obscene or potentially offensive material

1. Please describe the nature of the material to be used and its significance to the research project	
2. How will this material be gathered? *(please indicate whether you intend to use School IT equipment in any form)*	
3. How will this material be stored and for how long? Who will have access to this material	
4. Proposed starting date (dd/mm/yy)	
5. Proposed finishing date (dd/mm/yy)	
6. Proposed final report date (mm/yy) and format	

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Part 4: General

Describe and discuss any ethical issues arising from this project, other than those already dealt with in your answers above.

You may wish to consider issues of:

- Sample size and anonymity
- Issues of informed consent in older children and whether they are 'Gillick competent'
- Peer pressure to be involved or not involved
- The need to exclude participants during the project if they become ill etc (and who decides).

This section should also reference subject-specific ethical guidelines or reference points, eg

- Research Ethics Framework [ESRC]
- Ethics and Educational Research [BERA: British Educational Research Association]
- Rigour, respect and responsibility: a universal ethical code for scientists [Council for Science and Technology]
- Conducting research with people not having the capacity to consent to their participation [British Psychological Society]

In any project in which participants work closely together over time, with increasing personal and professional bonding, there is a risk of peer pressure to remain involved. To lessen this risk, I will make it very clear verbally and in writing that participants may withdraw at any point without causing damage to personal or professional relationships. Should a co-performer withdraw from the research project – i.e. ask for a discontinuation of all video-recording, or want previous video footage to be deleted, this would be done. If a musician is to pull out more than 10 days prior to the concert, a new recruit would be sought but if it would be under 10 days, the concert would need to be postponed until a new musician is recruited and sufficient rehearsal time is allowed. Should a co-performer become ill or unavailable for large amounts of time, this could be disruptive and potentially harmful to rehearsals and concert prospects, and we would discuss possible solutions to this as a group.

As is typical when improvisation is involved, musicians new to it may need to process the emotions that often accompany the beginning of learning improvisation: feeling vulnerable, insecure or self-exposed. This is the most visible ethical dilemma I perceive, as it can be that a co-performer may at some point regret their involvement but continue to stay with the project out of peer pressure or fear of professional failure. (Those with improvisation experience have typically dealt with these types of associated emotions previously and tend to come across unaffected.) To address this, great efforts will be made for the atmosphere of rehearsals to be as encouraging and reassuring as possible. Co-performers will be explained at the beginning that once the rehearsal process is reaching its final stages, we will together decide which type of improvisations we perform/do not perform and no one is expected to do anything in concert they don't feel comfortable with.

Due to the small size of the ensembles, the public nature of performances, and the possible need to discuss the roles of different instrumentalists in thesis and dissemination, complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed. However, the co-performers names will be omitted from any written research and presentations, and if they so wish, their faces blurred in any video excerpts in thesis or dissemination. As discussed earlier, the video footage of the co-performers and any personal data will be securely stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

I will be keeping a reflective practice diary and autoethnographic log of notes, including group rehearsals, artistic supervision, concert design development and my personal process. None of the chamber music partners will be named in the final thesis or any other publication. In sum, all research will be carried out in accordance with the ethics and norms of the Guildhall School of Drama and Music and the Economic and Social Research Council's Research Ethics Framework. The project will be continuously be monitored against these criteria.

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Part 5: Declarations

1 Declaration by principal researcher/student

The information supplied in this application is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate. I have considered the ethical issues involved in this research and believe that I have adequately addressed them in this application. I understand that if the protocol for this research changes in any way, I must inform the ethics committee.

Name of principal researcher (please print):	Pauliina Haustein
Signature of principal researcher	Pauliina Haustein
Date:	4.11.2019

2. Declaration by line-manager of principal researcher or student's supervisor

I have read the application, and it is appropriate for this research to be conducted for the purpose stated. I give my consent for the application to be forwarded to the ethics committee.

Name (please print):	John Sloboda		
Signature:		Department:	
Date:	6.11.2019	Designation:	

Where the line-manager is also one of the co-researchers, the line-manager declaration must be signed by Director of Music or Director of Drama as appropriate

3. Declaration by the senior manager of a participating organisation (where applicable)

I have read the application, and it is appropriate for this research to be conducted in this department. I give my consent for the application to be forwarded to the ethics committee.

Name (please print):			
Signature:		Organisation:	
Date:		Designation:	

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Information sheet (chamber partners)

Information Sheet for Participants

Title of project: Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical con through improvisation

Study approved by School Research Ethics Committee:

_____

I would like to invite you to participate in this doctorate research project. You should only participate if you want to; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

Aims of the research

This concert is part of an artistic doctorate project, which includes the artistic development in learning the art of classical improvisation and creative performance and using those elements to connect with concert audiences. The research is designed to understand better the experience of an audience member in a concert that includes classical improvisation. You have been approached/recruited because of your specific instrument and affiliation to the improvisation pedagogy of Prof. Dolan. If you decide to participate in the research, it will include rehearsing and performing a concert program of repertoire and improvisation, giving consent to being filmed in rehearsals and concert(s) and the voluntary opportunity to reflect on the experience in an interview within a few days after the concert. The amount and duration of rehearsals will be decided together as a group, according to standard professional practice. Similarly, group input will be applied to other working circumstances and decision-making (for example, if a member falls ill and must withdraw before the concert).

All information, data and recordings will be treated in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 2018. Interviews will be recorded and recordings deleted upon transcription. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet and be asked to sign a consent form. A copy of both will be given to you to keep. Though the names of participants will be omitted from research, complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed, i.e. you might be identifiable in research by a small number of people. You can choose to have your face blurred in any video excerpts. You will be provided with a copy of the publication of this research.

It is up to you to decide whether to take part or not. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

If this study has harmed you in any way you can contact the Guildhall School of Music & Drama using the details below for further advice and information:
Research Department / Dr. Alex Mermikides
Researcher contact information: Pauliina.haustein@stu.gsmd.ac.uk

Consent form (chamber partners)

Research Participant Consent

Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation

Study approved by School Research Ethics Committee:

_____

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 please ask the researcher before you decide whether to participate. You will be given copies of this Consent Form and the Information Sheet to keep and refer to at any time.

- I consent to the researcher video-recording, storing and analysing recordings of the improvisation ensemble **rehearsals** in which I take part. I understand that this footage will be part of a research and made available to supervisors, examiners or GSMD staff affiliated with the research. I understand that I can ask the researcher to stop recording or to delete specific sections of footage immediately without giving any reason, up until two months after recording has taken place.

- I consent to the researcher video-recording, storing and analysing recordings of the improvisation ensemble **performances** in which I take part. I understand that this footage will be part of a thesis submission and made available to supervisors, examiners, GSMD staff and others affiliated with the research. I understand that I can ask the researcher to delete specific sections of footage immediately without giving any reason, up until two months after recording has taken place.

- I understand that the video and audio footage of **performances** including musical improvisations in this research project will be submitted in the researcher's doctoral thesis and may be published or presented in conferences. I understand that I can choose to receive a copy of any papers or theses containing my contributions

- 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 researcher and withdraw from it immediately without giving any reason. I understand that I may withdraw my data from the project up until two months after each recorded rehearsal or performance, or two months after participating in video or audio recall sessions.

- I consent to the processing of my personal information and video or audio footage for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information and recordings will be treated in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 2018.

- I understand that complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed, i.e. I might be identifiable in research by a small number of people. I understand that my name will be omitted from research and I may choose to have my face blurred in any **performance** video excerpts presented.

- I agree that the researcher may use my data for future research and understand that any such use of identifiable data would be reviewed and approved by a research ethics committee. (In such cases, as with this project, complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed, but you may elect to have your name omitted from research and your face blurred in any video excerpts presented).

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.

Please tick the boxes below if appropriate:

☐ **I want my face to be blurred in any performance video excerpts publicly presented**

☐ **I want to receive copies of papers, presentations and thesis containing my contributions**

Email:_____

Signed:

_____

Date: _____

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Interview consent form (chamber partners)

Research Participant Consent for Interviews (chamber partners)

Title of project
Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation

I have read the **Information Sheet for Participants** and understand that if I choose to take part in this research my interview data will be anonymized and it will not be possible for me to withdraw my data after the write-up of the thesis has been submitted (08/2021)

☐ **I want to receive copies of papers, presentations and thesis containing my contributions**

Email: _____

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:

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Interview questions (chamber partners)

(Please state your name and consent to this interview and the use of data, which will be anonymized, in my research project.)

Please tell me in your own words about this experience.

Why did you initially agree to come to the project? What expectations did you have, and were they met?

Was there something during the course of rehearsals and preparation that surprised you?

Did you find something particularly challenging?

Did you find something particularly rewarding?

What was your experience of the performance like?

How did you experience the audience, particularly the energy of the audience? Was it as you expected?

How would you describe your own engagement during the performance? For example, the direction of your focus or awareness during the concert?

Did something unexpected happen during the concert? How was it resolved and did it continue to effect the performance?

Is there anything else you would like to say?

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Ethical approval

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
GUILDHALL SCHOOL OF MUSIC & DRAMA

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

PAULIINA HAUSTEIN
RESEARCH
Guildhall School

10TH DECEMBER 2019

Dear PAULIINA,

Re: Research Ethics Application

Thank you for submitting your research ethics application, entitled *Love at first sound: engaging with Western classical concert audiences through improvisation (audience research)* which has now been reviewed by the Research Ethics Committee.

I am pleased to confirm that the Committee are satisfied with the research proposal submitted and that **full ethical approval has been granted** for your project.

Please note that you should report any untoward events or unforeseen ethical problems arising from the execution of your project to the Research Ethics Committee within a week of any occurrence. Any feedback which you provide to the participants of the project should be forwarded to the Ethics Committee.

Should you have any queries relating to this letter, please get in touch.

We wish you every success with your project.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Bell,
Doctoral Research Coordinator

cc. Ethics Chair, or supervisor for student applications