Artistic Identity: Music and the Mirror

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Creative Works compile a 40% component of this exegesis

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Abstract

This exegesis investigates the nature and construct of a musician’s *Artistic Identity* as it relates to the composer/performer construct arising in improvised music practice. As a Practice-led Research project the creation of significant musical works involving the creative processes of composition and improvisation were examined alongside a phenomenological investigation into the personal experience of *Artistic Identity* as realised through the author's practice of music. Situated in the context of the ontology of *being*, the dialogue between the author's reflexive engagement with her creative processes and creative output was at the core of this investigation.

It was found that *identity* is a malleable construct that is open to reinvention and regeneration, a construct that is continually in the processes of becoming, propelled toward the future by ontological understanding of one's *self* in relation to *being*–in–the–world. Yet as an epithet *identity* was found to be apprehended specifically in relation to a given time and circumstance. Therefore it was deemed necessary to investigate the construct of the author's *Artistic Identity* in relation to its active cultivation in terms of current musical processes and outcomes.

The creative work to arise from this investigation encompassed the recording of three studio albums of original works which in turn encompassed the primary data-set by which the author examined the performed outcomes of her creative output and the audible “stamp” of her *Artistic Identity* as evidenced in the body of her works. Additional data was collected through audio and audio-visual recordings of live performances and the keeping of a journal in which the author reflected upon the phenomenon of *Artistic Identity* as it was informed through her musical practice and research into literature on the subjects of music, *identity*, the philosophy of *self* and *being*. Analysis of this data enabled the author to distinguish the elements that contribute to her *sound* as an improviser and composer – the distinctive tonal qualities and utilisation of musical materials as evident in the body of her works, the utilisation and articulation of which facilitates self-expression through the cultivation of a *personal voice*. 
It was the author's ongoing identification with the sounds she produced, as an improviser and a composer, the range of creative processes that contribute to a creative musical practice, and the energetic, aesthetic and conceptual parameters of composing, practicing, rehearsing, performing, recording and producing those works that constructed her perception of presenting an *Artistic Identity*. The author found that her *Artistic Identity* was constructed through an ongoing engagement with the processes of developing a personally meaningful musical vocabulary and mode of expression. This primarily took place through the setting of creative intentions and the projection of those intentions toward future musical activities. By situating her *personal voice* as an improviser within the context of performing original compositions the author was able to frame her inherent abilities, tendencies and capacities for sonic manipulation and isolate the specific inter-relationships between creative processes and performed sound. It was the identification with these distinguishing characteristics and inter-relationships that presented as constructing, over an extended period of time, the author's *Artistic Identity*. 
Declaration

I hereby certify that this exegesis comprises only my original work toward the degree of PhD in Contemporary Music. Due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used. This dissertation, which comprises 60% of my exegesis is fewer than 55,000 words in length, exclusive of figures, bibliography and appendices.

Belinda Woods
17/07/2016
Preface

This exegesis is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, Belinda Woods.

As stated in the declaration, the written component of this exegesis comprises only original work except where acknowledgments and references have been made to published literature. The written component of this exegesis accounts for 60% of the research undertaken throughout this study.

The creative component of this exegesis, which accounts for 40% of the research undertaken throughout this study comprises only original musical works composed by the Belinda Woods. Whilst additional musicians are featured on the recordings of these compositions, their contribution to the composed material is as interpreters dedicated to reproducing the works of the author. Their performances as such are not a consideration of this exegesis which focuses upon the compositions and improvisations of the author. The musicians who appear on the recordings which accompany this exegesis are not incorporated into the study or referred to throughout this exegesis except where their names were mentioned in journal entries when discussing conversations and reflections upon specific performances with particular musicians. As such, the contribution of these musicians lies only in facilitating the recording of the author’s compositions.

The author acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government through Arts Victoria for funding received in the form of a grant to contribute to the cost of producing the album La Sortie.
Acknowledgments

My sincerest thanks and appreciation is extended towards the musicians who have assisted me in performing and recording the creative works that have contributed significantly to this research project. To Mary Doumany, Timothy Pledger, Gemma Horbury, Diego Vilalta, Ali Watts, Daniel Brates and Chris Lewis: I value your personal support, the dedication you have shown toward and the inspiration you have given me in the performance of my compositions throughout my PhD candidature.

Additionally I would like to thank recording engineers Dave Nelson and Alan Nuendorf for beautifully capturing the music of ‘Saveja’ and ‘Lo-Res’ in the recording studio and for their assistance in producing the albums ‘Saveja,’ ‘Voyeur’ and ‘La Sortie.’

I would also like to extend my gratitude to my close friends and relatives for their unconditional support and encouragement and my supervisor Dr. Robert Vincs for many years of advice and wisdom. I thank you all whole-heartedly.
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Recommendations for viewing digital exegesis

For ease of access to linked audio excerpts this document is best viewed in Acrobat Reader. It is also advised, where possible, to listen to audio excerpts using your computer’s media player to avoid the excess opening of internet browser windows.
Chapter One
Introduction:

Theorist Andrew Bartlett (1995) states in his article “Cecil Taylor, Identity Energy, and the Avant-Garde African American Body,” that “questions such as identity in music become increasingly pressing and increasingly complex but are, ironically, largely absent from contemporary critical discussions of arts” (Bartlett 1995, p. 275). In this study I intend to examine the nature of a musician’s Artistic Identity especially as it relates to the composer/performer construct arising in improvised music practice.

Rajmil Fischman (1999), in his article “Global Village, Local Universe: A Statement of Identity,” categorises the elements that make up his compositional identity into the following headings: Genealogy and History, Musical Background, Heritage, Musical Aesthetics, Technology, Surrealism [Artistic Movements], Science [the advances of his time]; Fischman discusses the many facets of meanings that exist when considering the importance of defining his identity as a composer. He considers various cultural distinctions such as:

the definition of the act of composition, the social function and reach of the composer, the degree of determinacy of the work (e.g. a work for tape where the music is strongly determined as opposed to a set of verbal or graphic instructions for improvisation), authorship, etc ... we may formulate a series of queries regarding the definition of identity, as follows: How is identity defined regarding the conception of “composing”? ... the social function of the composer? ... the scope and reach of the composer's work vis-a-vis commercial reality? ... the cultural aspects of the composer's ideas and her/his palette of musical materials? (Fischman 1999, p. 54)

Fischman’s questions regarding artistic conception, social function, commercial reality and musical palette are timely, particularly in the current age where

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1 Due to the nature of this investigation, the definition of this term will be constructed throughout this exegesis.
technological advancements, mass media, the Internet and mass communication affect the methods by which one projects their Artistic Identity to the wider world. Artists are faced with concerns on a local, national and international level regarding success, recognition and breadth of publicity on a daily basis due to a cultural environment that has become, for Fischman “global and at the same time, individualistic” (Fischman 1999, p. 54). The individualism of Artistic Identity deserves consideration here as it is likely that the term Artistic Identity cannot be presented with a generic definition that applies to all. Fischman comes to the conclusion that:

The dialectic produced by the interrelation of diverse cultural traditions in this global village presents a myriad of possible combinations, each depending on a particular set of conditions. At present, then, the number of distinct identities resulting from these combinations is immensely larger than in past times, and the variety of sub-cultural – or even individual – experiences makes each of us a unique ground in which a particular creative impulse may germinate. In this view, individuals can be seen as self-contained universes within which particular cultural identities develop. (Fischman 1999, p.61)

As suggested by Fischman, there are many environmental, situational and ideological factors that could contribute to the development of an Artistic Identity. However, more importantly, he also touches upon the subject of the creative impulse. The significance of this impulse is outlined by El-Ghadban (2009) in his article “Facing the music: Rituals of belonging and recognition in contemporary Western art music,” where “the importance of artistic intentionality and the aesthetic experience of composing and listening to music” is suggested (El-Ghadban 2009, p. 146). El-Ghadban implies that the processes and experiences behind composition and the act of listening to music are not only influenced by the factors behind the cultural identity of the artist, but also the realisations of creative purpose and the development of musical works. It could therefore be said that Artistic Identity is cultivated through conscious thought and action; a dialogue between past experiences and the ideological pursuits of the present, the
conglomeration of which direct the purpose with which artists approach the practice of music.

A Musical Self-Portrait

In contemplating my identity, I form a conceptual image of myself in my mind’s eye. This image is not simply a visual projection, it is constituted by a range of beliefs, values, ideals, and intentions, affected by a range of past experiences, mental processes, and emotive factors, all contributing toward a personal interpretation of who I am and what I want to achieve. When I remember specific instances in time – events that have passed, situations that have challenged me, feelings that have re-occurred throughout my life – I visualise the experience; as snapshots, vignettes, sequentially unfolding or overlaying scenes. These visualisations do not necessarily represent instances that have actually occurred – they are imagined memories, infused with emotions and expectations; realisations of how the various experiences of life appear to me and the significance of how these experiences relate to my current existence. Via these memories and visualisations of past experiences, I reflect upon personal and artistic expressions, intentions and acts, gaining insights into my behavioural attributes, my habits and modus operandi. Throughout life I collect fragmentary memories that I use to piece together an abstract self-portrait; an experiential understanding of where I have come from and how I would like to proceed from this instant into the future.

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2 Nick Zangwill (2014) argues that music is phenomenologically affectational. He discusses in his article “Music, Metaphor, and Emotion” that the experience of emotion in music is referential rather than the effect of music stirring literal, direct emotion (Zangwill 2014, pp. 395-399). It is in this context that I use the term ‘emotive.’

3 Susanne Langer (1957) discusses that the word ‘feeling’ “must be taken ... in its broadest sense, meaning everything that can be felt, from physical sensation, pain and comfort, excitement and repose, to the most complex emotions, intellectual tensions, or the steady feeling-tones of a conscious human life” (Langer 1957, p. 15). It is in this context that I use the term ‘feeling.’
In her article “Imagining Oneself Otherwise,” Catriona Mackenzie (2000) suggests that “a variety of different kinds of representational and imagistic thinking play a central but often overlooked role in the processes of self-reflection and deliberation” (Mackenzie & Stoljar 2000, p. 125). Discussing the role imagination plays in “autonomous reflection, deliberation, and action” (Mackenzie & Stoljar 2000, p. 124), Mackenzie argues that “because of its affective force and cognitive power, imaginative mental activity is crucial to the various processes by means of which we try to sort out what we want; what matters to us; and what ideals, goals, and commitments shape our lives” (Mackenzie & Stoljar 2000, p. 125).

My research has involved a thorough examination of my Artistic Identity via a reflexive, self-reflective and analytical investigation of my musical practice, with particular focus upon the ideals, goals and commitments that contribute to and arise from creative engagement with the various processes that generate musical materials and knowledge. Whilst an immediate apprehension of my identity involves the consideration of my ‘biographical identity’ and the activities that have contributed to my sense of self ¹ as being ² a creative musician, the possibility for future action is also brought into play – the setting of intentions towards furthering my musical endeavours and developing future works; cultivating a way forward. As Mackenzie continues in her article, the process of self-reflection and representational thinking is not restricted to reconstructing and evaluating past experiences as we are also able to construct imaginings that represent our “future selves.” This mode of “future-directed” representational thinking may incorporate: anticipations of future events; the development of mechanisms to help deal with the possibility of living out confronting situations; or the devising of plans for future actions and personal development. In fact, these two methods of visualisation (past and future) unite in the respect that they instigate an arousal of emotions, the development of ideals, and feelings of personal cohesion.

¹ The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy defines self as “The elusive ‘I’ that shows an alarming tendency to disappear when we try to introspect it” (Blackburn 2008). It is this definition to which I refer.

² The Oxford Companion to Philosophy discusses that the term being “is the subject matter of ontology” (Lowe 2005). It is the ontological question of existence to which I refer throughout this exegesis, additionally incorporating ontological ‘modes’ of being.
In contemplating the development of future musical works and improvisation materials I am filled with a similar sense of musical intent. I draw upon a series of ideological motives, emotive experiences, practised techniques and modes of expression; creating a dialogue between the past, the present and the future through manifestations of self-expression, engaging with and reflecting upon life experiences. I propose that by engaging with creative processes in such a way, I have generated the feeling of personal cohesion within a breadth of musical activities, cultivating an *Artistic Identity* and a *personal voice* which is expressed through the medium of music. This sense of *identity* is contextualised by the physical relationship with the instrument I play and the various processes via which I generate musical materials. It is this inter-relationship that is the focus of this study.

**Contextualising the Research: My Creative Practice**

As a musician, I have developed a body of works and a range of materials and techniques to be utilised in improvisation, sculpting my *personal voice* through progressive realisations of *self* and through the building of knowledge and concepts of *authenticity* brought about via personal experiences of and reflections upon life. This has been a continual process of defining and re-defining, experimentation, reflexion, and contemplation which has led to the refinement of a creative practice: an intellectually, emotionally and physically interactive process that places importance on individuality and originality. This importance both

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6 Rather than referring to the elusive 'I' that is the signifier of the *self*, self-expression is a term used in reference to ontological expression. Likewise, when I reference similar hyphenated terms involving self as a prefix I refer to ontological experience of that self.

7 For the purpose of this study I define *personal voice* as: The ability to utilise a wide range of musical elements in improvisation in order to be personally expressive. Expression arises from being able to articulate this range of musical elements via an instrument in an effective way (an adequate flow of ideas, facility and control over techniques) that emulates personal experience. This experience is energetic and conceptual; representational of various modes of *being*.

8 *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* defines *authenticity* as: “The condition of significant, emotionally appropriate living” (Blackburn 2008). It is this definition to which I refer.
inspires and confronts me as it brings into question my ideals and values, the quality of my musical output, the content and methods behind my practice, the articulation and the very existence of my Artistic Identity. Why do I place importance on individuality and originality? How does my sense of identity affect and influence the way I approach my practice? And can this identity be discerned through the performance of music?

As a musician whose creative processes are directed toward the cultivation of a unique voice my Artistic Identity is regularly brought into question. As a construct it is situated in terms of my musical practice, arising from the contemplation of how I direct my creative intentions toward the development of compositional and improvisatory materials. This research examines how my Artistic Identity is personally perceived and how it is performed. Throughout my research I have asked the questions: What is my Artistic Identity? What is the agency of Artistic Identity in my creative practice of music? and, can my Artistic Identity be actively cultivated through the setting of creative intentions? My experience of Artistic Identity was examined through the development and presentation of original musical works investigating the construct of my personal voice in the context of performed musical settings. This experience begins with an engagement of self toward the practice of music.

Throughout my creative practice, notions of self have been brought into question, notions that have been influenced by my cultural environment, with a range of political, social, cultural, aesthetic, familial and philosophical factors contributing to a sense of identity which in turn informs my construct of Artistic Identity – the way in which I perceive and actively frame my existence as a creative musician. How does this self contribute to my sense of Identity? Where does this self reside and how does it relate to my musical practice? Is this self expressive or does it...

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9 See Appendix A, p. 94.

10 I refer here to Philip Auslander’s (2006) argument that “music is a primary social frame.” Discussing Erving Goffman’s Frame Analysis (Goffman 1974) Auslander states that “in order for experience to be intelligible it must, for Goffman, be perceived through a frame [of reference]. Frames are the socially defined “principles of organization which govern events” [Goffman 1974, p. 10] that individuals internalize as cognitive structures” (Auslander 2006, p. 104).
simply exist in-itself? How do the experiences of life contribute to my sense of Identity and how do I articulate these experiences through the practice of music?

These ontological questions have arisen from an investigation into the construct of my Artistic Identity via the well-established Practice-led Research methodologies.11 My initial stance, having been brought up in Western society, was based on Western philosophical thought, of which the distinction and definition of individuality and conceptions of the self are of paramount interest.12 The way I perceive my self and the elements that contribute to my sense of identity are heavily influenced by my creative capabilities, process and output. My training as a musician, especially in academic institutional settings, has brought about the concept of possessing an Artistic Identity and the desire to be distinctive in this capacity.13 This, coupled with the value that Western society places on the autonomy of artistic practice, has led me to contemplate the construct of my Artistic Identity and how this identity is framed by my musical practice.14

My initial presumption held that a reflection of the inner workings of musicians can be captured through the practice and performance of music. However, if this is the case, how are the values and beliefs, biographical context and intentions of the musician transferred through music? This question has arisen from the contemplation of my own practice as well as conversations I have had over the years with fellow musicians and music appreciators, and research of the literature which encompass notions of identity within the field of music. They are issues that are important to my perspective on self-expression, my processes of composition

11 See Chapter Two.
13 See Chapter Eight.
14 Autonomous existence does not simply exist ‘in-itself,’ it is a perception that my personal involvement in this world is of value and consequence to my very existence. To state that my musical practice is unique, that the music I create is deeply personal and expressive of my inner self as opposed to a process of organising sound purely for its own merit, is to say that it is an autonomous process for me. It is not a judgement of whether society should value my processes as being distinct from other musicians, but a statement that my personal relationship with these processes, and the insights they give to my existence are of value to me.
and improvisation, and the future development of my performance practice. Discussions on the nature, content and purpose of music within the published literature are wide ranging, with no apparently definitive answers, only myriad perspectives each as real and valid as the next to the individual in question.\textsuperscript{15} What emerges for me is that we are all unique in character with different intentions, desires and beliefs. We forge our own existence (to the best of our ability in our differing situations with political, religious and social constraints attached) and forge our individual paths, making choices and asking questions along the way. In my existence I strive to better myself, to grow in moral character, gain more knowledge of the world and my internal landscape, to follow my dreams and act on my passions. Integral to the notion of my own existential drive is the cultivation of energetic patterns toward, the generation of ideas and concepts that arise through, and the nourishment I receive from the practice of music. This practice is both a rewarding and confounding experience. It is a personal journey of exploration – of wrestling with notions of existence – and provides a process through which I gain an abstract understanding of my place in this world.

It appears as though I am not alone in this process however, with the influence of my peers contributing to my sense of \textit{identity} through concepts of similarity and difference.\textsuperscript{16} I have always been more influenced by my peers than the artists I hear on recordings and in concert halls as it is through my peers that I interact and experiment with concepts that are at play within my cultural setting. It is not only my individualistic pursuits and interests but the people around me that help define myself as a person and an artist. Working with and alongside the musicians of ‘Bohjass,’ ‘Lo-Res,’ ‘Saveja’ and ‘Bolt,’ to name a few, I am inspired by their capacity for innovation, strength of musical character and self-motivation, and grow through the musical and social interactions that take place. Indeed, I find that through the practice and performance of music, I slowly discover myself as an individual via inter-actions with like-minded musicians.\textsuperscript{17} This process of \textit{self-}

\textsuperscript{15} See the Bibliography for an extensive list of publications.

\textsuperscript{16} For a discussion of the relationship of similarity and difference to \textit{identity} constructs, look to Heidegger (1960), Rutherford (1990), and Barker (2003). See, also, Chapter Three for a discussion of ‘other.’

\textsuperscript{17} See Frith (Hall & du Gay 2011, pp. 108-125).
discovery appears to be constructed through layers of active engagement towards my practice, the realisation of musical intentions during rehearsals, the experiences gained in performance, times of reflective contemplation and the examination of the feelings that surface throughout this process. It is a cycle of experiencing and re-experiencing, the discovery of something new or what has always been, the cultivation of a new process, a new way of manipulating sound or constructing textures, or a return to old concepts and processes.

However, the reflexive process of self-analysis can be a tumultuous experience. At certain times in my career as a performing musician I have felt as if I have articulated myself perfectly, with clarity of vision and truth of character, yet at other times I do not like what I hear; I judge that I should be more inventive, spontaneous or explorative.\(^{18}\) In certain circumstances I feel as though there is a blockage of sorts that inhibits the ‘freedom of expression’ that I expect to achieve in improvisation, restricting the natural flow of ideas. When this occurs I perceptually view myself from the outside; an object to be scrutinised. I critique and judge every sound and every note that emerges. On the other hand, when I place no expectations on the performance, and particularly when I identify with its content (aesthetically, energetically, emotively), my improvisations are well formed and seem to flow unimpeded, as if I have removed the sand bags of subjectivity and let the flood waters pour out. Throughout this investigation I have strived to perceive how and when either experience is generated in order to discover the conditions that lead to notions of authentic self-expression.

An additional impetus for this study arose from the observation that at significant moments in my career I have realised that my passion for a particular musical outlet has dwindled and I have found that the music is no longer a viable mode of expression for me. These are troubling moments that arise from massive shifts in

\(^{18}\) These thoughts relate to a particular period of my musical life in which I resisted the outcomes of my own musicality. After a considerable amount of reflection and contemplation of the output of others in my field, I came to the realisation that what I was hearing were the identifiable features of my own playing and that these identifiable features could be viewed as a reflective characteristic of an Artistic Identity.
ideals and intentions and require a change in focus or direction, a re-evaluation of my own values and expectations. They are moments in which I perceive my identity is being redefined, with my path unravelling once again into the unknown to be discovered afresh. A new world opens up, another journey of discovery is instigated and my identity begins to take on a new significance. However, if I contemplate this process too much, if I pre-empt what it is I think I ‘need’ to discover, then I am left in the dark, stuck amidst the sand bags with pressure of the floodwaters against my back.

What is this tumultuous process of definition and redefinition? Why has it plagued my very existence? What benefits does it give my practice and how does it so often stifle the seed of creativity, the very thing it strives to facilitate? Is it a question of self-belief or is there some other interactive process at hand?

Perhaps it is what Wendy Richmond calls “the link between hope and vulnerability” (Richmond 2009, p. 58). When you put yourself on the line and purport to express an essential being or identity through your art, you leave yourself open to scrutiny and, as it is so often said, you are your own worst critic. But is this simply a phenomenon of the artist or could this questioning of existence and the relevance of one’s pursuits be a general concern for the wider populous? Martin Heidegger (1960) suggests that the conundrum is prevalent to the whole questioning of existence. In his Essays in Metaphysics: Identity and Difference he states:

Our whole existence is challenged everywhere – now as in play, now urgently; now as if set upon, now as if pushed – to plan and calculate everything. What does this challenge mean? Is it merely the product of man’s self-generated mood? Or are we actually concerned with Existence itself in the sense that it makes a claim upon us with respect to its schematization and calculability? If such were the case, would not Being itself be then subject to the challenge of having Existence appear within the purview of calculability? Such is, indeed, the case. More than that. To the extent that Being is challenged, Man is likewise challenged, that is to say, Man is “framed” so he will safeguard the Existence which concerns
him as the very substance of his planning and calculating, and thus pursue this task into the immeasurable. (Heidegger 1960, pp. 25-26)

Heidegger suggests here that Man has a desire to control and contain life so that questions challenging his very existence will not turn his life upside down. If Man is able to contain his existence by planning and calculating, defining and compartmentalising, his existence will become stable and justified. Perhaps my desire to define myself in terms of \textit{identity} arises from this claim that existence imposes upon my definition of \textit{self}, making me pre-empt and try to control my creative output. If on the other hand I just let myself ‘be,’ perhaps my existence would not have a claim on my actions. Either way, this places my research of \textit{Artistic Identity} once again within the realm of ontology; an investigation of how I go about \textit{being} a musician.

In a journal entry dated February 5, 2011 I discuss my interest in the concept of Artistic stating that:

Ultimately I am plagued with the questions surrounding my relevance as an artist. Is this a private pursuit or is there any significance to the wider community? Although I am a musical being and I have chosen to live my life and direct my goals towards professionalism in my field, is there any importance in my pursuits or am I simply being self-indulgent? (Appendix A, pp. 3-4)

The desire to define my \textit{identity} appears to stem from questioning the significance of my musical activities to the broader community, particularly as I state:

There seems to be a need to connect with and feel valued by society at large, or at least by the musical community in which I operate. At times (over the last 15-18 years) I have felt isolated in my individualism (meaning myself as a unique being), of no worth to the world and the cultural climate. At other times I have felt on top of the world, integral to the development of the musical language of my time and of the culture of Melbourne. (Appendix A, p. 4)
Zygmunt Bauman articulates this questioning of belonging in his paper *From Pilgrim to Tourist*, published in the book *Questions of Cultural Identity*, edited by Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay. He proposes that:

One thinks of *identity* whenever one is not sure of where one belongs; that is, one is not sure how to place oneself among the evident variety of behavioural styles and patterns, and how to make sure that people around would accept this placement as right and proper, so that both sides would know how to go on in each other’s presence. ‘*Identity*’ is a name given to the escape sought from that uncertainty. Hence ‘*identity*’, though ostensibly a noun, behaves like a verb, albeit a strange one to be sure: it appears only in the future tense. Though all too often hypostasized as an attribute of a material entity, *identity* has the ontological status of a project and a postulate. (Hall & du Gay 2011, p. 19)

This suggests that my desire to investigate my artistic *identity* has arisen from experiencing a lack of belonging to a specific musical community and as a consequence my concept of *identity* is postulated as integral to the process of defining my musical activities and generating a source of creative motivation. This is echoed in a journal entry dated February 25, 2011 where I speculate that “perhaps my concern about personal and *Artistic Identity* [arose] from a feeling of disconnectedness with any particular social/artistic group” (Appendix A, p. 18) and returned again on June 18, 2011 as a question regarding the authenticity of my musical pursuits. In this journal entry I discuss that:

The question of *identity* came about through a feeling (many years ago) that I wasn’t being ‘true’ to myself. I realised that I did not believe in the direction I was heading, that I no longer felt an affinity with the people I was associating with ... as my compositional and improvisational output was different. I had been trying to be more like ‘them,’ or rather, I was reprimanding myself for not being more like them, and in the process undermining my natural instincts, my true voice, and the value of my musicianship. ... This led me to re-assess who I was, musically, but it also brings about a question of my *self-identity*. If I was not being true to myself, what is this *self* to which I should be true? (Appendix A, p. 91)
As the breadth of my musical engagements (as an improviser, composer and interpreter) enables my involvement in yet fractures my activities across many subsets of the musical community, experiences of displacement occur leaving me wondering to which subsets I belong and what value I bring to these communities. In questioning “my intentions, thoughts, beliefs and desires, my actions, my musical voice …” (Appendix A, p. 4) I projected these qualities onto a concept of identity in the hope that I would find my valued place in the musical community through cultivating specific creative attributes that would help define my creative practice. What I discovered was that ultimately it is what I do that defines my sense of identity.

It is what you do that makes you who you are. Yes I have a history, I have done such and such, achieved such and such, haven’t completed such and such, said such and such, but these things matter less and less as I pass through life. It is what I am currently doing, in the process of, working towards, dream of doing etc. that makes me who I am, to me at least. … [It is what I do that generates] my feeling of purposiveness, the cultivation of life experiences, the growing ideologies that define my existence. (Appendix A, p. 102)

In this way the construct of identity is a process of becoming; a projection of a future self that can be cultivated through action. Bauman suggests that this striving for the future has the tendency to remove one from the present, the only instance in which one can be active, in order to distance oneself from feelings of uncertainty about belonging. I would rather position myself in line with Jean-Luc Nancy (2006) who argues that the “present of presence is not in time but ahead of time” (Nancy 2006, p. 192), a presence in which dreaming of becoming – the empathy for a future self or Mackenzie’s “Imagining Oneself Otherwise” (Mackenzie & Stoljar 2000, pp. 124-149) – has the ability to spur on action, to generate intent and galvanise momentum for creative exploration. Ultimately, the significance of my music lies in the relevance and meaning it injects into my existence and the continued generation of musical material. This could be described as the inspiriting of future actions as echoed on June 18, 2011 (Appendix A, p. 92) and
October 20, 2011 (Appendix A, p. 131), or the harnessing of the ‘feeling’ of desire – the main focus of a journal entry dated March 23, 2011 in which I wrote; 

this ‘feeling’, this longing, this process of discovery through musical exploration comes from a single desire. It is the ‘go-feeling’, the driving force behind my very existence, the one that makes me work, makes me happy, drives me insane or simply lets me be. ... Desire is a great motivationalist. It is something we cannot ignore, an incessant prod that keeps the cogs in motion. I also realise that this ‘feeling’ is not of something lacking, but of my general state of being. It is one major part of my internal identity. It is a ‘feeling’ that I never want to part with. (Appendix A, p. 43)

Desire and motivation are the key terms here. The desire to create music is ever present, but unlike what is suggested above, it does not lead to motivation on its own accord. Desire needs to be harnessed and directed with intention, it needs definitive ideas and a specific focus to stoke its fire and generate the necessary motivation to drive me forward and any feeling of doubt or fear can lead to times of procrastination and an experience of stasis within my creative self. In order to maintain a productive, sustainable creative existence that honours my desire to create musical sound and propels the forces of motivation that enables the development of future processes, I realised I must embrace, and through this exegesis recognise and distinguish, the musical devices I have utilised throughout my practice which have ultimately led, and continues to lead, to the development of my personal voice and the refinement of technique.

This engagement with creative processes and the setting of intentions toward generating musical constructs that facilitate the expression of my personal voice could be viewed as the active component of cultivating an Artistic Identity. This active cultivation takes place primarily as a forwardly mobile projection of creative intention towards generating new materials and new works, a process that builds upon prior activities and knowledge to aid the progression and development of inherent abilities and creative attributes that I strongly identify with. This research
investigates the possibility that my *Artistic Identity* is actively constructed through this process.

**Framing my Experience of Artistic Identity**

I propose that to live artistically (or be an artist) is to respond creatively to and comment upon life and the situations that are presented throughout life whether this be intellectually/rationally, emotively or physically/energetically. Whilst the presentation of this response is abstracted through the medium with which the response is being facilitated, it is driven by an internal force by which I have the opportunity to project my experiential understand of *being*-in-the-world.\(^{19}\) As the form of the work takes shape the work begins to exist in-itself, however, the impetus that generates personal response instigates the construction of the work – the setting-to of intentions toward expressing inner experience and understandings. However, there is more significance to *being* an artist than simply responding creatively.

As Mike Nock suggested in an interview with John Shand in 2007, quoted in the 2009 publication *The Australian Accent*; “being an artist is bringing a sense of integrity to what you do. Trying to realise a vision. An artist is a commitment to an ideal, and following it through, and living your life like that” (Shand 2009, p. 54). To be an artist is a way of life, a commitment to and deep engagement with creatively *being* and growing.\(^{20}\) It is a force that drives an ongoing plight to become a better musician, refining a *sound*\(^{21}\) or style of music, extending and refining

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\(^{19}\) I liken this description to Anthony Giddens (1991) discussion of ‘creativity;’ “the capability to act or think innovatively in relation to pre-established modes of activity” (Giddens 1991, p. 41).

\(^{20}\) Ned Markosian (2010) posits that “[t]o ‘be’ an artist constitutes an active involvement with an artform. If you have no output then you have no artistic identity. It is the ‘being’ that is in question to this concept of ‘identity’ as it is an existence that has a past but more importantly, a present and a future” (Campbell et al. 2010, p. 135).

\(^{21}\) For the purpose of this research I define *sound* (indicated by the use of italics) as the distinctive tonal qualities and utilisation of musical materials evident in my compositions and improvisations.
technique, deepening intellectual, aesthetic and energetic connections with the music I create or the musicians with whom I perform. Artistic Identity could therefore be viewed as the personal identification with the way of life that is being a musician and the processes involved in the generation of musical sound. It was through this proposition that the examination of my Artistic Identity was instigated.

As I have discussed throughout this Chapter, it is this dialogue between the individual and the contemplation of their actions and output that is at the core of this investigation. It is situated in the context of the ontology of being, as it is through the understanding of my own existence and the nature of being that I engage with the creative processes of improvisation and composition.

In Chapter Two I outline my methodology for investigating the construct of my Artistic Identity, situating the examination within the context of generating musical works. Chapter Three discusses the literature surrounding notions of identity, cultural identity, Artistic Identity and the ontology of being in order to further outline the foundation upon which this examination was established. In Chapter Four I discuss the creative outcomes of the research, outlining my approach to recording the musical works that contributed to the primary dataset by which my Artistic Identity has been examined. In Chapter Five I analyse the creative processes that lead to the generation of new musical works via an analysis of my secondary dataset (live recordings and a written journal). Chapter Six examines my compositional sound via an analysis of recordings and scores of my works. Chapter Seven examines my sound as an improviser via an analysis of my improvisations contained within the creative works that constitute my primary dataset. Chapter Eight discusses the possibility of utilising my personal voice to generate meaning; via the notion of self-expression and the instigation of musical interaction via a community of practitioners. To conclude this exegesis Chapter Nine discusses the results of my investigation via my creative processes in relation to the questions

This use of the word is different to that of sound (without italics) which is the auditory impression of vibration.
that emerged throughout this Chapter and the insights gained through my review of the literature as found in Chapter Three.
Chapter Two

Methodology:

This investigation primarily took the form of Practice-led Research in which the processes of creative action and critical reflection were examined in order to obtain a qualitative assessment of “issues and ideas ... revealed through the process of reflexive and reflective inquiry” (Smith & Dean 2009, p. 42). Instigated by an examination of the experience and construct of my *Artistic Identity*, I have sought to understand from where inspiration for creativity arises and how this influences my *sense of self* in relation to society. As it is primarily through my musical practice that I engage with creatively *being-in-the-world* and construct my *Artistic Identity*, this practice presented as the logical foundation for my research. Examining the creative processes of composing and improvising and how I combine these two aspects of my creative output, my intention was to investigate how I actively construct my *Artistic Identity* through, and how considerations of my *Artistic Identity* inform my practice of music. As Graeme Sullivan (2009) states in *Making Space: The Purpose and Place of Practice-led Research*;

> human understanding arises from a process of inquiry that involves creative action and critical reflection. There is an inherently transformative quality to the way we engage in art practice and this dynamic aspect is a unique quality of the changing systems of inquiry evident in the studio experience. The artist intuitively adopts the dual roles of the researcher and the researched, and the process changes both perspectives because creative and critical inquiry is a reflexive process. (Smith & Dean 2009, p. 51)

Through a reflexive examination of my musical practice I have investigated: how I go about *being* a musician by observing my creative processes; how I experience myself *being* a musician by reflecting upon personal responses to creative processes and interactions, and; how I present myself as a musician by observing the act of performance and analysing my creative output. As a musician who is predominantly an improviser and secondarily a composer, I have also examined
the materials I utilise in the creative processes of improvising and composing in order to discover if I have a personal voice via which my Artistic Identity is performed. By investigating the processes and materials that shape my musical understanding my aim was to uncover the distinguishing features of my Artistic Identity and establish how this identity is informed via the knowledge that constitutes my musical practice. As stated by Barbara Bolt (2007):

> The concept of material thinking offers us a way of considering the relations that take place within the very process or tissue of making. In this conception, the materials are not just passive objects to be used instrumentally by the artist, but rather, the materials and processes of production have their own intelligence that come into play in interaction with the artist’s creative intelligence. (Barrett and Bolt 2007, pp. 29-30)

Following Bolt, the musical materials and processes that formulate my knowledge of the practice of music are considered as the data via which I have been able to research the construct of my Artistic Identity, with aspects of my creative processes and the use of materials providing insight toward the active component of cultivating an identity (as was discussed in Chapter One and will further be examined in Chapter Three). This active cultivation takes place primarily as a forwardly mobile projection of creative intention toward generating new materials and new works, a process that builds upon prior activities and knowledge to aid the progression and development of inherent abilities and creative attributes. As such I focused my investigation on the processes that generated the preparation and performance of new compositions and the formal documentation, via studio recordings, of the works that define my previous compositional output.

I have researched the construct of my Artistic Identity via the examination of my practice, performance, composition and improvisational processes. Research into my practice took place between February 2011 and May 2015 and was undertaken primarily as part-time research over an extended period as: “Processes involving both thought and action unfold in time. Substantial achievement is the result of the blossoming of ideas, the selective success and further evolution of some of these and the dying away or editing out of others” (Smith & Dean 2009, p. 93). Therefore,
in order to generate an adequate time-frame for the study of my Artistic Identity I deemed it necessary to allow ample opportunity for the development of meaningful creative outcomes.

Documentation of practical research has taken the form of audio recordings of practice sessions, live and studio performances, scores of compositions (including sketches of ideas and developing works), and a journal, in which I reflected upon performances, practice methodologies, compositional processes and interactions with other artists as well as insights gained and issues that arose through my practice. This journal also drew upon the literature as I reflected upon the views of published writers in relation to my practice, instigating a cyclical process which integrated the current body of knowledge that lies in the fields of music, visual arts, philosophy, psychology, sociology, and the science of neurological processes with my own creative realisations. Drawing conclusions with regard to these creative realisations through processes of reflection and reflexion, revelations into the nature of my professional field were examined.

Field of Reference

My research was grounded in the philosophy of the Victorian College of the Arts ‘Improvisation Course’ of which I was an undergraduate student from 1995-1997. I have tested Rosalind McMillan’s (1996) PhD thesis “A terrible honesty:’ the development of a personal voice in musical improvisation” which examines the possibilities and process of cultivating a personal voice through an examination of the VCA ‘Improvisation course’ and the philosophy behind its implementation during the nineteen nineties, focusing on her method of analysing the musical parameters through which individual musicians are able to convey musical expression. Whilst McMillan researched the design of the course and the experiences and development of specific students within the course, focusing on the development of a personal voice, I have taken the study one step further – to analyse, from the first person perspective, the experience of my Artistic Identity which I propose is cultivated through the development of a personal voice and a
long-term engagement with the process of generating personally distinctive musical materials. Throughout my exegesis I test McMillan’s theories against my creative outcomes whilst also threading the discussion back into my theory of the construct of Artistic Identity.

Whilst I have adopted the role of researcher, my construct of Artistic Identity is understood experientially and thus, this Practice-led research project was simultaneously undertaken as a phenomenological investigation in which I examined the experiential factors that were involved in being a musician. As J.J. Kockelmans (1967) describes,

I am aware of the world which is spread out in space endlessly and which evolves endlessly in time. That I am aware of this world means first of all, that I discover it immediately, intuitively, that I experience it. Through sight, touch, hearing, according to the various modes of sense perception. (Kockelmans 1967, p. 21).

Therefore, the question of being directly relates to the individual, whose consciousness governs the processes by which the self is apprehended, comprehended, distinguished and evaluated. A qualitative Heuristic approach to researching my creative practice was therefore required to examine my habits, ideals and intentions with conscious attention, in order to perceive the underlying factors that contribute to my sense of identity formation. My research has required me to detach myself from habitual thought processes and personally adopted theories in order to evaluate the workings of my own creative practice. As William

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Kockelmans, here, speaks of Husserl's phenomenology which places knowledge in the realm of ontology. Husserl states in his 1965 paper Phenomenology and the crisis of philosophy, that “if knowledge theory will nevertheless investigate the problems of the relationship between consciousness and being, it can have before its eyes only being as the correlate of consciousness, as something “intended” after the manner of consciousness: as perceived, remembered, expected, represented pictorially, imagined, identified, distinguished, believed, opined, evaluated, etc. It is clear, then, that the investigation must be directed toward a scientific essential knowledge of consciousness, toward that which consciousness itself “is” according to its essence in all its distinguishable forms” (Husserl 1965, p. 89).
James (1981) describes in *The Principles of Psychology Volume 1* “habit diminishes the conscious attention with which our acts are performed” (James 1981, p. 119), resulting in the narrowing of perceptual resources required for phenomenological investigations. Research into existing theories on *identity* was therefore required to re-examine my initial presumptions regarding the construct of my *Artistic Identity*.

Alongside an investigation into my practice I have researched existing discussions and theories on *identity* such as those found in the publications: Stuart Hall’s *Questions of Cultural Identity* (1996), Heidegger’s *Essays in Metaphysics: Identity and Difference* (1960) and *Being in Time* (1962), Shoemaker & Swinburne’s *Personal Identity* (1984), Hume’s *Treatise of Human Nature* (2003), Kim Atkin’s *Self and Subjectivity* (2005), Madan Sarup’s *Identity, Culture and the Postmodern World* (1996), amongst others.

The majority of discussions and theories I encountered were developed by philosophers, psychologists and sociologists in regard to personal and cultural *identity* as I found little published research focused upon musicians or written by musicians investigating their own *Artistic Identity*. Additionally, research into the temperament or psychology of musicians only touches on aspects of *identity* in regard to ethnographic and cultural circumstance or *identity* politics, and rarely investigates the complexity of factors in which musicians engage with notions of *self* and the construct of *Artistic Identity*. I have also found that a musicians *Artistic Identity* is often assumed or simply stated as being distinctive rather that articulated specifically. Through my research I intend to instigate a dialogue on how an *Artistic Identity* is constructed in relation to the materials which shape and contextualise its realisation. My contribution to the body of knowledge therefore lies in establishing one possible framework by which an investigation into the construct of *Artistic Identity* can be approached. My intent throughout my research was to discover how *Artistic Identity* is experienced from the first person perspective by researching my creative processes and outcomes. I was not concerned with factors such as ethnicity, gender and the like, factors which contribute to my *Personal Identity*. My research focus was upon the ways in which I
interact with musical sound and the meaning generated by this interaction, as it is through this interaction between self and musical sound that I propose my Artistic Identity is constructed.

Given that this study depends on phenomenological research protocols, I found it necessary to limit the literature review to research materials that seemed directly relevant to the particular nature of this study. As such, rather than providing an extensive examination and analysis of the breadth of literature concerning identity I have limited the literature review to theories and discussions that relate to my research into my experience of Artistic Identity and the direct implications this experience asserts upon my musical practice.

Problems Encountered – Establishing an Effective Methodology

The methodology of framing a Practice-led Research project as discussed above was established only after some difficulty in regards to establishing a productive means by which to observe my creative processes. As Estelle Barrett (2007) discusses;

Since the researcher’s relationship to the object of study (material or mental) is of central concern in practice-based methodologies, they are in accord with Bourdieu’s notion of reflexivity. As a result of this reflexive process, methodologies in artistic research are necessarily emergent and subject to repeated adjustment, rather than remaining fixed throughout the process of enquiry. (Barrett and Bolt 2007, p. 6)

I initially intended to research the construct and experience of my Artistic Identity through observing myself during live performances. Whilst the processes that generate material for the live performances contributed to data collection (as described at the beginning of this Chapter), my major presentation of creative works via which an analysis could take shape, was to involve live performance primarily, with no intention initially set to undertake studio recordings. However, I observed in the first twelve months of my investigation that reflexive thought
applied whilst in the act of generating musical ideas, in this case during performance, can disrupt the creative impulse – that an overly self-conscious perception during the various stages of developing and performing musical materials altered the natural flow of inspiration. During the initial stages of my research I observed that it is difficult to study the creative impulse in real-time without affecting the outcome, and to do so – through a dominantly analytical mode – reduced the viability of the research process. I was therefore required to adjust my methodology in order to develop a specific methodology that would allow me to investigate the features of my musical output without compromising the processes that generate content.

As early on as February 13, 2011 I contemplated in a journal entry “whether defining an identity is counter intuitive, or disruptive [to] the flow of expression” (Appendix A, p. 10). This was written in response to a conversation I had had with my brother-in-law, a lay Zen Monk, who had been present during a performance on February 9, 2011 and mentioned that he witnessed a moment whilst I was improvising in which, “after a big build-up of energy and momentum he felt that I lost myself to the music, lost my self in the music, and that it brought a tear to his eye” (Appendix A, p. 10). In regard to the practice of meditation, he spoke of the aim to lose the self and quieten the mind in order to see things as they really are, unaltered through conscious contemplation – similarly, he wondered, would this not be the goal of the musician/improviser? My journal entry continues:

I would say, in my current perspective, that in performance, yes, one must let go of the ego, the reflective, analytical ‘self’ in order to enter into what some would describe as ‘flow,’ others would describe as ‘[transcendence],’ or even just ‘riding the moment.’ If I am thinking about my playing too much, or trying to dictate the momentum with too much intent, I never reach that moment of elation where the experience of the music takes over. ... too much brain activity can stifle the unravelling of the moment. (Appendix A, pp. 10-11)

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Similar observations were made over the next four months during which I continued to observe my self and the construct of my Artistic Identity through a range of performance settings. I began to question whether I could describe the music I produce as my own – as belonging to me – and whether I produce music or give myself over to a music that is autonomous. On June 1, 2011, contemplating a performance approach inspired by Daoist philosophy I asked

Does ... music exist in its own right, separate from any ownership, as a gateway between self and the world at large? Do I give myself over to this process or do I harness my emotions and intentions and own the music I produce? ... Daoist philosophy [says] ... that you can never understand the self through the intellect, rationalisation and the search for [meaningful] existence, that you will only find enlightenment by becoming ‘one’ with the world. Well, this seemed to be at play tonight ... I made steps tonight towards dissolving my ego, I listened to the music in another way, hearing its completeness rather that finding my place in it. (Appendix A, p. 81)

By letting go of the conscious attention I had brought over the previous months towards observing my identity whilst performing music I was able to return to a state in which I engaged with music on its own terms, hearing it for what it was, not for who I was. Indeed, what developed throughout my journal in the first year of research, indicative of this journal entry, was a questioning of my methodology of observing my Artistic Identity as it is portrayed through music. A conflict of perspective had arisen through my dual role as the observer and the observed – a conflict that needed to be rectified in order for true insight to be gained toward the construct of my Artistic Identity. Just over one year into my research, on February 17, 2012 I discussed the outcomes of the previous year and the change in methodology that ultimately led to the development of the ‘witness’ (see below) stating that as my research progressed over the course of the previous year I had become “self-conscious in most of my performances, as well as in practice,” questioning, “Am I actually not conscious enough of the music itself? Am I thinking too much and not listening enough?” (Appendix A, p. 154).
Instead of concentrating on the music, listening and responding intuitively and creatively, I had been observing my output analytically and often judgementally which resulted in a feeling of being removed from the experience; perceptually watching over my own shoulder or mentally discussing my improvisatory choices whilst I was performing. From this notion, that I could not adequately examine my creative output whilst in the mode of performance, my research turned toward examining the ways in which I prepare material for performance – through practice, ensemble rehearsals, and arranging my compositions for recording. In this way, the value of investigating my Artistic Identity was placed upon the creative processes that generate performance outcomes – as my journal entry of February 13, 2011 alluded to:

I think it is important to contemplate my Artistic Identity outside of performance in order to become ‘one’ with the music that flows from me [in performance]. If I don't know what I want to achieve, or don’t know what I am trying to express in the first place, my improvisations would sound hollow, directionless and meaningless. (Appendix, p. 11)

The value of examining my Artistic Identity therefore lies in the generation of creative processes and the meaning this brings to the music. If I know what I want to achieve and how I can achieve it I am able to lay the foundations upon which spontaneous creative output will be engendered through performance. This change in perspective instigated a “need” to record my performances in order to analyse my creative output\(^\text{24}\) without altering what I play through subjectifying myself whilst performing. On March 20, 2012 I wrote in my journal:

The world of music is not a world of truths, honesty, individuation, identity and the like – it is a world of myth, told through the ages, elaborated upon, modernised, deconstructed, reconstructed, sometimes represented. ... It is a myth told not in words, but suggested by stimulation. We become not ourselves in the presence of music, but imagine ourselves otherwise through the stirring of emotions, memories, desires, inspired musings of times to come – future

\(^{24}\) See Chapter Four.
happenings that may or may not arise ... lifted from the everyday, the mundane, into a world of ‘as if’ happenings, a world of ‘as if’ landscapes and characters. For me, in my own practice, my mythical world has been built through the community of musicians that I perform with. We have shared understandings of the way our stories are told, and have indeed all contributed to the content. We are the characters in these myths – built and cultivated through our individual [practice], inter-relating through our performance and rehearsal [practises] – a story that has not yet fully developed ... the ending unknown. ... I must now start a new journey – one that drops the notion of identity ... Since looking at identity I have struggle[d] with my practice. Instead of going about my usual way I have been blocked by the notion that I am forging an identity ... I do not know what to play, where to start – second guessing my methods and processes. This is obviously an unproductive pursuit and needs to be abandoned – I must [lose] my subjectivity and examine my processes for what they are ‘in-themselves.’ (Appendix A, pp. 158-160)

Rather than examining my Artistic Identity in the midst of performance and studio practice, altering the outcomes, it became evident that a new methodology of observing my creative processes was required. I subsequently decided to record my works and performances, via studio and live settings. This provided a platform via which I could adequately analyse my creative output ‘after the fact’ of the active generation of material through performance, practice and compositional processes. This enabled me to be, think and act creatively without my processes being significantly altered through direct reflexive thought. The major creative works to be presented through my research then became the recording of three studio albums, with additional data collection taking the form of the audio recording of live performances and practice sessions, plus a continuation of the keeping of my journal. As the keeping of this journal incorporated reflection upon my creative processes, I was additionally required to develop a mode of observation in order to reflect on my creative output effectively, again aiming to reduce reflexive thought whilst directly involved in directing creative processes.
The methodology that I subsequently developed for this purpose was taken from a Buddhist philosophy, introduced to me and cultivated through my Yoga practice, which conceives the presence of a neutral mind called the ‘witness’. The ‘witness’ observes without judgement or mediation, does not infer meaning onto any thought or phenomenon – it simply notices and lets experience be as-it-is in its own right. As Donna Farhi (2004) discusses, “[b]ecause of the neutrality of the witness, observation has the possibility of extending beyond our habitual thought patterns” (Farhi 2004, pp. 87-88). She discusses that “[w]hen we’re witnessing from this neutral, nonpresumptive place, the “me” is absent – the me being whatever collection of things I have stockpiled to make up my identity (which itself is created through another subset of assumptions)” (Farhi 2004, pp. 177; italics added). This is certainly not Donna Haraway’s “Modest Witness” – as “seeing; attesting; standing publicly accountable for, and psychically vulnerable to, one’s visions and representations” (Haraway, 1997, p. 267) which I liken to my initial model of observation. To witness without judgement, referencing modes of thought, or evaluating processes is to see within and observe without justification, self-assertion, or labelling of any kind. Hence I have not endeavoured to describe or define my creative output in terms of musical styles, have not aligned myself with any singular musical ‘camp,’ or included a discussion of the biographical setting that constitutes my musical training, cultural background, influences and the like; rather focusing on the immediacy of creatively being, defined by my actions as discussed throughout this exegesis.

Through the cultivation of my ‘witness’ I have observed various modes of perception that occur throughout my musical processes, with the aim to document the various stages in the development of creative materials: in the practice room; in performance; through studio composition; through the various modes of the recording process. Additionally, through an examination of Rosalind McMillan’s (1996) thesis, I have analysed: the distinctive features of my sound as a composer and improviser; the ways in which personal expression is perceived to be imparted

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25 See Appendix A, p. 217.

26 This term can be likened to the practice of ‘mindfulness’ (Hanh 1987) or the practice of ‘selflessness’ as described by the Dalai Lama of Tibet (Dalai Lama XIV, 1995, p. 215-217).
and; considered the importance of developing productive relationships with like-minded musicians. Combining these two methods of examining my creative processes and output, I have been able to extensively examine the construct of my *Artistic Identity*, the features of which will be the discussion of this exegesis.
Chapter Three

Literature Review:

As foreshadowed in the Methodology Chapter, I found it necessary to limit my literature review to those materials that emerged as being directly relevant to my experience of identity within the practice of music. For each publication cited here there are a wealth of publications (as evident in the Bibliography) that did not become part of this study and are hence, not referenced. In taking this approach my intention in presenting the literature review in this way was to provide a sense of boundary around this study where the literature review may be understood as a lens through which I am articulating aspects of Artistic Identity that will critically contextualise the creative work/data that forms the core of this study. Within the discussion, an examination of my perceptions in regard to the experience of identity therefore pertinently contributes to the framing of Artistic Identity within my practice of music, particularly (as discussed in Chapters One and Two) as the context of my examination of the experience of Artistic Identity lies in the ontology of being.

The Ontology of being

This investigation into the construct of Artistic Identity begins with an examination of the conscious self, a self that is perceived, via interaction with other selves, as individual and unique. This living and breathing self is defined by the features of a physical body which behaves and interacts with other physical bodies with observable characteristic traits, arising from a complex inter-relation of genetic, genetic, genetic.

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27 Rajmil Fischman (1999) discusses his view the “each individual as a local universe resulting from a complex system of beliefs and experiential processes, who acts and interacts with respect to other-sometimes parallel, sometimes converging, sometimes diverging-universes” (Fischman 1999, p. 61).

social, cultural and neurological influences, which are united through internal processes of sensory comprehension.  

It has been argued that only the individual is able to comprehend the true nature of their own personal being as, from the outside, individuals can only be observed with regard to outward expression through behaviour and the use of language. The ontology of being, however, is understood from the inside where experiences are accumulated, processed and retained, where thought process, actions and intentions are generated through the unique conglomeration of these experiences. As Shoemaker & Swinburne (1984) propose; 

personal identity is something evidenced but not constituted by, bodily continuity and memory similarity. ... It is something of which we are often aware without our knowledge of it depending on our knowledge of anything more ultimate. In that sense the continuing of a person is a datum of experience; and if it were not, we could have little knowledge of the world” (Shoemaker & Swinburne 1984, pp. 42). 

However, this does not suggest that we understand ourselves, our thoughts or our actions. We merely experience our selves, our thoughts, and our actions as unique beings from a unique perspective.

The words identity, self, and being have been used prolifically throughout philosophical literature and to some degree inter-relate. Therefore, before I continue I would like to clarify my understanding and use of these terms. Being is the state of consciously living. It is spoken in terms of the prefix I am. It is an active state of engagement. The self, on the other hand is the ‘I,’ the object of consciousness. The self is, in essence, the energetic interaction of subatomic

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30 I argue in favour of this point in my Journal (Appendix A, p. 15).
31 An in depth analysis of this argument can be found in Keith Maslin's *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Mind* (2007).
32 The ontology of being is discussed at length in Heidegger’s *Being and Time* (1962) and Hegel’s *Philosophy of Spirit* (1994). It is this ontology to which I refer.
particles which are contained in the human body. I perceive my self most clearly when my mind is still, when I bring no conscious awareness of my biographical history, my current situation or physical stance, or my intentionality in terms of the future. I perceive my self only in the instance of ‘now’, which usually only lasts a moment whence my mind situates itself once again in the context of being.

Identity, on the other hand is precisely the conscious awareness of biographical experience, current situational, physical and emotional states, and the intentions, desires and projections of the future. Identity is contextual and therefore always in a state of flux. It is an evolving perception of the self as it interacts with the state of being in the process of living, the cultivation and continuity of experiences that relate to the self throughout time. When I say I did something, I am speaking of a remembered event, a biographical signpost that is recalled to consciousness. When I say I will do something, I refer to my intentions which I could act upon or not. I am, I did, I will, I can, I do, all relate to identity in the way that the self engages with the notion of being.

Deriving from the Latin root idem meaning ‘sameness’ or ‘continuity,’ (Weekley 1921, p. 744) identity is defined in The Oxford English Dictionary as “the quality or condition of being the same in substance, composition, nature, properties, or in particular qualities under consideration; absolute or essential sameness; oneness” (“Identity.” In Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed. 1989). The Macquarie Concise Dictionary likewise defines identity as: “the condition of being oneself or itself, and not another;” the “condition, character, or distinguishing features of person or things” or; “the state or fact of remaining the same one as under varying aspects or conditions” (“Identity.” In Macquarie Concise Dictionary, 3rd ed. 2004).

These definitions suggest that identity is a static or fixed state. It is a definition of numerical identity, being one and the same person that I was when I started playing the Flute at the age of ten. However, I align my thinking with that of

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34 See Appendix A, pp. 55-57 for a discussion of this experience.
35 See Barker 2003, p. 222.
Anthony Giddens (1991), Stuart Hall, and Simon Frith; a line of thinking which postulates identity as a process of becoming, affectual of personal circumstances, the experiences gathered throughout life and the reflexive thought that is brought to daily affairs and social interactions (to name but a few influencing factors). It is a conception of who I am only at any given moment; a conglomeration of experiences and sensations that have led me to the current point in time. I cannot predict exactly what I will think, sense, or do tomorrow, next week or in the years to come as I fundamentally do not know and can only imagine the experiences that will arise in the future. It is the continuity of phenomena and the correlative continuity of emotive responses and processes of cognition that regulate our concept of identity. Giacomo Gambino (1996) suggests in his article “Nietzsche and the Greeks: Identity, Politics, and Tragedy” that in Ancient Greece, identity was represented by the Delphic injunction to “Know thyself.” He discusses that:

What is present and nearest to oneself – one’s identity – is never quite self-evident. Indeed, the Greeks understood it as a fundamental mystery that bids man to embark on a quest without the assurance of reaching a final destination. Nietzsche quotes Heraclitus who described the Delphic oracle as that which ‘tells nothing and conceals nothing but merely points the way.’ (Gambino 1996, pp. 420-421)

The consideration of one’s identity therefore relates to a relationship between personal experience and the constant state of being, although this state of being and the forces that drive us forward to an unknown destination may be a mystery. My experiences as a musician have led to the desire for future experiences as a musician. I can propose, plan or strive to better myself or my skills, to gain more knowledge or experience a new performance opportunity, to compose music for a particular future event, to study with someone new or to live in another cultural climate. However, the path is not set and there are many variables and obstacles that life presents along the way. My intentions merely provide a map; sometimes merely a sketch, sometimes elaborately laid out with safeguards and alternate

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routes allowed for. I navigate my way through life, appraising and re-appraising my circumstance, setting goals and attempting to further my career and musical output. However, I do not know where life will take me, what I will grow to value, or who I will be in the future. I can only know myself in terms of what I desire and what I hope to achieve at any point in time and this relates to my experiences of the past and the knowledge I have of the construct of my own identity.\textsuperscript{38} Indeed as Sydney Shoemaker and Richard Swinburne (1984) propose in their book Personal Identity, “all that a person needs to be a person are certain mental capacities – for having conscious experiences (e.g., thoughts or sensations) and performing intentional actions” (Shoemaker & Swinburne 1984, p. 26-27).

Painter, video and computer animator Teresa Wennberg, in her 1999 article “The Growing Brain, the Shrinking Ego: Self and Identity Redefined in the New Media Age,” investigates the concept of being, asking the questions; who am I, and what is the “I”? She holds a post-modern perspective, suggesting that;

\[\text{the "I" is a long string of experiences – a great number of different apprehensions following one another with inconceivable speed, constantly changing and constantly in motion ... impressions appear and mix with each other into an endless multitude of positions. We have no underlying "personality" behind these moods that come and go – we are movement. (Wennberg 1999, p. 376)}\]

Although such a conception of the “I” is fragmentary, it is through the motion of change and the knowledge built through the processes of life that I am able to reflect, process, digest, and comprehend the bombardment of sensual and

\textsuperscript{38} Catriona Mackenzie (2000) describes this as ‘previsagement’ in “Imagining Oneself Otherwise.” She states that “experiential memory reveals the extent to which our present is shaped by the influence of the past, previsagement is a manifestation of self-concern, that is, of our concern for our own futures. As with experiential memory, in centered previsagement I identify unselfconsciously with the protagonist or subject of the representation; I can only centrally previsage my future from my own point of view. ... [as an] affective force ... previsagement is a manifestation or mode of self-concern” (Mackenzie & Stoljar 2000, pp. 131-132).
intellectual information that I experience every day. Apprehension of the self is an ongoing process, a construct of coordinated comprehension built upon a foundation of past experience and self-knowledge. It is this self-reflecting mechanism that allows me to assert my identity through the unique process of self-definition.

Reflection and Intentionality

Kim Atkins (2005) calls the above described personal coordinating mechanism ‘self-interpretation.’ Discussing the philosophy of Heidegger in his book *Self and Subjectivity*, he states that:

For Heidegger, without the basic ability to self-interpret I cannot become anyone. A self-interpretation is achieved when one forms an understanding of oneself that is historical, that is, in which there is a chronological and conceptual continuity of one’s past, present, and future. Borrowing from Dilthey, Heidegger calls this Zusammenhang des Lebens, or the “connectedness of life.” I take responsibility for the meaning of my life when I take responsibility for the connectedness of my life. For Heidegger, one must become a kind of author of one’s life, and every activity one undertakes earns its significance in the context of one’s self-interpretations—a view echoed in narrative accounts of identity. (Atkins 2005, p. 115)

Self-interpretation is essentially a mechanism of reflection upon the continuity, significance and development of my own existence. This existence is contemplated with regard to my thoughts, actions and beliefs, yet also in light of the ‘other’ with whom I interact. It is a process of becoming: through the examination of sensory perceptions and experiences; experimentation with and digestion of concepts; the establishment of value systems; and by negotiating a way forward through life—integrating and assimilating all facets of conscious attention to the state of being. In this way I am continually constructing my own identity via self-evaluation and the quest for self-betterment. Heidegger’s Dasein speaks of the significance of
existence and ambitions of extraordinariness, set into action with the task of self-determination. In his introduction to *Being and Time* (1962) he defines Dasein as;

an entity which does not just occur among other entities. Rather it is ontically distinguished by the fact that, in its very Being, that Being is an issue for it. But in that case, this is a constitutive state of Dasein’s Being, and this implies that Dasein, in its Being, has a relationship towards that Being – a relationship which itself is one of Being. And this means further that there is some way in which Dasein understands itself in its Being, and that to some degree it does so explicitly. It is peculiar to this entity that with and through its Being, this Being is disclosed to it. Understanding of Being is itself a definite characteristic of Dasein’s Being. Dasein is ontically distinctive in that it is ontological. (Heidegger 1962, p. 32)

Hence, the “meaning of one’s existence, one’s life as a whole ... can only be our own self-activity as we each take up the inquiry into our own being” (Atkins 2005, p. 114). This self-activity is distinguished by active engagement in the present. This present is not an unfolding of a string of apprehensions (as Wennberg suggests), that passes in a series of rapidly progressing instants, but the persistence of an instance through time. In this respect I take my experiences of the past with me through life as an ontological understanding of who I am and what my existence means to me. I do not take on these experiences as luggage or as the clothing that dresses up my existence with definable traits, rather, they contribute to the momentum that inspirits my current actions, and shapes my modes of thought, propelled by intentions for the future. “As potentiality, one’s existence is a question, the question of what to be, and this is necessarily a personal question: what am I going to make of myself?” (Atkins 2005, p. 114).

Engaged in active reflection, self-interpretation and self-evaluation, I not only look to my thought processes and memories of past experience, but also aspire toward the enhancement of my inherent capabilities, recognised through ontological experience and an empathy toward the cultivation of a future self. Brought about

through projections of desire, this future promises the potential of self-betterment, professional development, personal achievement, and further recognition of my abilities as a creative musician. However, this future holds no significance if it were not for past achievements, experiences, recognition of personal attributes and the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of desires. My very being is at question, past, present, and future.

Indeed, to ‘be’ is to exist in time. Therefore, this process of self-determination through the ontology of being, as perceived through Heidegger’s “conceptual continuity,” or, to borrow a turn of phrase from Ned Markosian, the “episodic characterisation” of the persistence of experienced instances. As Markosian suggests, our personal identity is defined by the episodes or instances which have persisted through the course of our lives, the episodes that have cultivated the features of our selves through time. I liken this description to that of Kant’s (1881), expressed in his Critique of Pure Reason. Here, Kant defines time as;

the real form of our internal intuition. Time therefore has subjective reality with regard to internal experience: that is, I really have the representation of time and of my determinations in it. Time therefore is really to be considered, not as an object, but as the representation of myself as an object. If either I myself or any other being could see me without this condition of sensibility, then these self-same determinations which we now represent to ourselves as changes, would give us a kind of knowledge in which the representation of time, and therefore of change also, would have no place. There remains therefore the empirical reality of time only, as the condition of all our experience, while absolute reality cannot, according to what has just been shown, be conceded to it. Time is nothing but the form of our own internal intuition. (Kant 1881, pp. 32-33)

Although Kant’s argument is situated in the context of defining time, his insights about the determination of time through experience is pertinent to the development of this discussion of identity. Following Kant’s thinking, the construct

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of identity is situated in respect to time, as time is the object through which we intuit the changes and conditions of our experiences, and it is these experiences that help define ourselves as individuals. Knowledge of my own existence is gained through experiences which are situated in the context of time. As time passes, and my experiences become memories, my concept of identity forms, cultivated through the experiences that time presents as a culmination of events and perceptions to the point of the immediate now.

Who I was when I was ten years of age when I chose to learn the Flute is not who I am now, even though I am one and the same person numerically speaking. What attracted me to the Flute then is not what attracts me to it now. What I play and how I play now has no place in the identity of the person that existed then. I have a history with my instrument, a history that has contributed to the construction of my identity as a musician, now. Back ‘then,’ I was a girl who played the Flute, now I am a Flautist with a concept of sound, technique, phrasing, composition and improvisation. Yes, I felt nervous before performing when I was young, just as I do now, however, my current ability to comprehend the feeling of nervousness helps me to cope with, and even value such a confronting feeling. Additionally, although I remember feeling nervous before a performance at the age of ten, I do not remember what it felt like, just that it happened. When I look to the past I remember events but not what it was like to ‘be’ at that time, only what it is like to be ‘me’ now and how that experience contributes to my current understanding of self. However, the relationship between my self as I am now, and who I was ‘then,’ does hold an importance to my sense of being. I cannot deny my past, as a sense of the past contributes to the intuition of experience and the formation of my identity.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{41} Mark Hinchliff (2007) in his paper 'The Identity of the Past’ holds a similar viewpoint, stating that “the past differs from the possible in three fundamental ways: its structure is not irreducibly general; its times are ordered; and it is independent of the present. Past individuals thus have properties in the present, and have those properties independently of the behaviour of the present individuals” (Campbell et al. 2010, p. 107).
Subsequently, the remembering of sequential events goes beyond the realm of memory. Reflection upon the past propels the self into the realm of cognition through ontological understanding. Drawing conclusions about a particular string of events that allude to, or mean something in particular, I construct the potentiality of my future through a process of reconciling the fragmentary experiences of the past. Heidegger (1962) speaks of this phenomenon, once again in terms of Dasein.

In its factual Being, any Dasein is as it always was, and it is ‘what’ it already was. It is its past, whether explicitly or not. And this is so not only in that its past is, as it were, pushing itself along “behind” it, and that Dasein possesses what is past as a property which is still present-at-hand and which sometimes has after-effects upon it: Dasein “is” its past in the way of its Being, which, to put it roughly, ‘historizes’ out of its future...Its own past – and this always means the past of its ‘generation’ - is not something which follows along after Dasein, but something which already goes ahead of it. (Heidegger 1962, p. 41)

The recognition of ability and the potential for the enhancement of this ability arises from personal experience, however, it is my personal projection toward the future that generates the force of life, propelling me to act in preparation for imagined future experiences. This ‘intentionality’ towards future actions is a generation of being, the striving for purpose and the continued cultivation of identity. Intentionality is not a given however, and I use the word projection for a reason. To look at myself in the mirror is an act of reflexion, even though we call the image a reflection, and if I took what I perceived in the mirror to be an adequate representation of who I am I would restrict the enhancement of my future through passive acceptance of how things are. However, to examine myself in terms of past, present and future is to engage in active reflection and in this way I can regenerate my identity in terms of what it is I want to achieve. This is an intentional pursuit, one that reconstructs the notion of identity through the creation of goals, working towards an enactment of dreams, and the creation of value systems.
Madan Sarup (1996), in *Identity, Culture and the Postmodern World* argues that “any study of identity must be localised in space and time. We apprehend identity not in the abstract but always in relation to a given place and time” (Sarup 1996, p. 15). Whilst I experience time as a continual process of becoming, propelled toward the future by ontological understanding, I apprehend my identity with regard to specific periods of my life, usually in relation to a specific locale or range of activities which present as signposts on the continuum of life experience. Therefore a study of my *Artistic Identity*, as an active construct, is best localised within my current activities and contextualised in regard to my intentions toward future musical endeavours. However, Sarup cautions the observer stating that “the study of identity must be based on something called ‘evidence’ and we must be aware of our methods of perception. Is an objective perception of identity possible? Is any observer bound to create something of what s/he observes?” (Sarup 1996, p. 15; italics added). I add the question; is it my intentions that form my concept of identity by asserting their volition upon my very existence? This is the basis from which my investigation of *Artistic Identity* has taken place; through an examination of intentions toward the processes of generating musical materials and the setting of goals for future creative development (recognition and enhancement of ability), established in real-time activities that were documented in order to generate ‘evidence’ through which to examine the construct of *Artistic Identity*. These real-time activities were undertaken in a performed context, framed within social settings and it could therefore be said that, whilst principally a construct that concerns being and the intentionality toward being, identity and the concern for being arises from the causative of belonging (Heidegger 1960, p. 30); framed through an identification with others (Hetherington 1998, p. 15). These considerations situate the construct of *Artistic Identity* within the cultural landscape.

**Cultural Identity**

Linguist Chris Barker (2003) purports that the construct of identity is both personal and social, discussing that “[s]ubjectivity and identity are contingent
culturally specific productions. What it means to be a person is social and cultural ‘all the way down.’ That is, identities are wholly social constructions and cannot ‘exist’ outside of cultural representations” (Barker 2003, p. 220; italics added). Well renowned cultural theorist and sociologist Stuart Hall (2011) also suggests that identity is a conceptual experience of self and its integration with society (Hall & du Gay 2011, p. 287), and that it is the “process of identification, through which we project ourselves into our cultural identities” (Hall et al. 1992, p. 277). In his introduction to the publication Questions of Cultural Identity Hall (2011) states that “identification is constructed on the back of a recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation” (Hall & du Gay 2011, p. 2). Identifying with others, particular ideals or modes of expression is a process through which meaning is inferred upon life, providing significance to actions and a sense of belonging within society. It is the inter-relationship between this ‘other’ and ourselves that provides an active link between internal and social experience, a relationship in which our actions are given weight through recognition by external forces.

Thus, rather than speaking of identity as a finished thing, we should speak of identification, and see it as an on-going process. Identity arises, not so much from the fullness of identity which is already inside us as individuals, but from a lack of wholeness which is ‘filled’ from outside us, by the ways we imagine ourselves to be seen by others. (Hall et al. 1992, p. 287; italics added)

Catriona Mackenzie (2000) holds a similar perspective suggesting that;

given the connection between an agent's sense of self-worth and social recognition, there is a strong incentive for agents to identify with those cultural representations of their identities that seem to afford greater social recognition and to incorporate these representations into their self-conceptions and their imaginative projections. (Mackenzie & Stoljar 2000, p. 144)
Following Hall and Mackenzie, to ‘be’ a musician is to interact with and present musical sound with and for other individuals; to explore the correlations between what is and what is not identifiable to my ontology of being. This is gauged through the processes of reflection and intentionality (as discussed above) in which I reflect upon my actions of the past, current interactions with ‘others’ and the manipulation of musical sound, setting intentions toward future goals and aspirations. The realisation of these goals and aspirations is reliant on the disclosure of these intentions in socially performed settings, both through the act of performance and in developing productive relationships with like-minded individuals who support and frame my projections of musical intent. Through shared ideologies and identification with particular creative processes, musical genres, styles and emotive intensities, alliances are formed and the platform for meaningful exploration of being through sound is established. It is a performed exploration in which abstract expression, cultivated in real-time, manifests as sound, open to be received and affected by any ‘other’ present to the act. Through this mode of communication (albeit via the abstract medium of music), my intentions toward cultivating musical constructs which were once only imagined are made ‘whole’ – an expression of self framed by the very constructs by which I propose my Artistic Identity to be constituted.

Simon Frith (2011) discusses this construct in his article “Music and Identity,” published in Questions of Cultural Identity, stating that the “experience of identity describes both a social process, a form of interaction, and an aesthetic process” (Hall & du Gay 2011, p. 110). “Music constructs our sense of identity through the direct experiences it offers of the body, time and sociability, experiences which enable us to lace ourselves in imaginative cultural narratives” (Hall & du Gay 2011, p. 124). It is on this basis that I construct my definition of Artistic Identity.

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42 Shapiro, in his paper “Hegel’s Dialectic of Artistic Meaning,” published in The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism in 1976 states a view that “[t]he artist is a self-conscious being, no longer content with a life which would consist only of instinctual and social routines. He will be most true to himself when he attempts to manifest or express his self-consciousness” (Shapiro, 1976 p. 25).
Toward a Definition of Artistic Identity

A number of published authors, such as Frith (in Hall & du Gay 2011), MacDonald et al. (2002), Negus (1996) and Meadows (2003), refer to ‘musical identity’ or discuss the role of music in forming identities. Simon Frith aligns his thinking with that of Stuart Hall when he situates the experience of identity in relation to musical constructs. He argues firstly that;

*identity* is mobile, a process not a thing, a becoming not a being; second, that our experience of music - of music making and music listening - is best understood as an experience of this self-in-process. Music, like *identity*, is both performance and story, describes the social in the individual and the individual in the social, the mind in the body and the body in the mind; *identity*, like music, is a matter of both ethics and aesthetics. (Hall & du Gay 2011, p. 109; italics added)

Following Frith, the performance of music is a mode of communication and interaction on a range of social, intellectual, physical and aesthetic parameters, and it is via the creative exploration of music within these parameters that I construct the narrative that constitutes my experience of Artistic Identity. The communication of ideas that arise from these social, intellectual, physical and aesthetic parameters through the medium of music enables me to articulate these very aspects of self, particularly when identification with the musical materials is strong and the opportunity for inducing expressive content is amply present. Therefore, it could be said that through musical interactions I articulate and construct my Artistic Identity.

Keith Negus (1996) also follows the thinking of Stuart Hall when he discusses in *Popular Music in Theory* that “cultural identities are not fixed in any essential way but are actively created through particular communication processes, social

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43 The ethics that Frith discusses is comparable to my concept of the ideals generated through musical interaction; and in the case of this exegesis, the ideal that musicians can cultivate a personal voice through which to express or perform their Artistic Identity. This concept is raised in Chapter Four and discussed further in Chapter Eight.
practises, and 'articulations' within specific circumstances" (Negus 1996, p. 100). Taking a non-essentialist stance he states that \textit{identity} is a phenomenon constructed “out of and across the processes whereby people are connected together and through music” (Negus 1996, p. 133). Negus argues, from the perspective of popular culture, that whilst \textit{identity} is an articulated phenomenon constructed via cultural identification within particular musical forms or styles, there is no “necessary link between someone’s social labels … and a particular type of music” (Negus 1996, p. 135). Eddie Meadows (2003) on the other hand stipulates that a musician's \textit{identity} specifically resides in the use of materials that directly link that musician to a particular genre. Meadows argues that “[i]n the treatment of musical syntax and its uses and functions, articulation … enables us to identify and analyse individual approaches, musical language, elements or traits, and uses and functions that combine to form musical \textit{identity}” (Meadows 2003, p. xxvii; italics added). Hence, in the context of his discussion, to identify as being a Bebop musician is to use a specific set of materials, codes and symbols that have arisen from a particular socio-cultural construct.

However, it appears as though Meadows utilises two different frames of referencing \textit{identity}: cultural circumstances in regard to “the juncture where the sociocultural, the ideological, and the musical collided to produce musical \textit{identity}” (Meadows 2003, p. 338; italics added) and; personal musical \textit{identity} in which one must look to the “conceptualization, uses, and functions that characterize the articulations of a specific artist that, in turn, comprise his or her \textit{identity}” (Meadows 2003, p. 215; italics added). The \textit{identity} I am defining relates to the personal musical \textit{identity} which I term \textit{Artistic Identity}. Although my past actions, ideological considerations and cultural setting provide a context in which to situate my \textit{Artistic Identity}, it is rather my articulation of concepts and musical materials that characterises my attributes in performance.\footnote{See Chapter Seven.}

Gabriele Guercio (2006) discusses that in \textit{The Lives}, 1568 edition, painter and historian Giorgio Vasari also divided the contemplation of an artist’s \textit{identity} into two entities:
the biographical identity and the artistic identity of the artist. The former defines the artists in the factual domain: who he is, his personality, whereabouts, and so forth. The latter captures the meaning of what he does, his characteristic forms, themes, and style. (Guercio 2006, p. 27; italics added)

It is the meaningful assertion of Artistic Identity that is pertinent to this investigation. Whilst my biographical identity informs my historical sense of Artistic Identity, it is the examination of what I do musically and the materials that I utilise in order to achieve self-expression that actively constructs my sense of Artistic Identity as I intentionally proceed into the future.45

Whilst MacDonald et al. (2002), in their publication Musical Identities, provide a significant contribution toward the discussion on what constitutes ‘musical identity,’ their research involves a study of the factors that constitute the construct of “identities in music” and “music in identities” through childhood development and hence their findings lie outside the context of this investigation. Frith, Negus and Meadows all stipulate that musical identity is communicated, whether by ‘story’ or metaphor, musical syntax or social processes, and each discusses the processes via which musical communication is formed, informed and imparted. Yet their discussions are focused on broad social projections or generic distinctions (such as genre based distinctions) and are formed from the perspective of external observations, without undertaking a direct study of or referencing specific experiences of those observed. Their publications are placed within the disciplines of musicology or music psychology and are not Practice-led or focused on individual experiences. Guercio’s discussion of Artistic Identity is framed within the context of monographers of the visual arts, however, he provides a succinct definition (quoted below) within which I have been able to frame my investigation into my Artistic Identity as a composer and improvising musician. This research therefore establishes the groundwork for a detailed examination of the construct of Artistic Identity within the field of music, from the direct experiences of the musician.

45 See Chapter Eight.
I have discussed throughout this Chapter that as an experiential construct *Artistic Identity* is informed through the inter-relationship between the creative processes and interactions that occur between the artist and their cultural setting. In its simplest outward realisation *Artistic Identity* could be viewed, as Guercio posits, as the “stamp of the artist” discernible in their body of works (Guercio 2006, p. 29) – the recognisable attributes of the artist’s creative output. As a musician, my *Artistic Identity* therefore resides in the sounds I create – the way I develop and communicate abstract ideas toward the formation of musical constructs – and my interactions with other musicians (performed or social). It becomes apparent that my *sound* (as an aesthetic, physical and energetic sonic construct), is the audible stamp of my *Artistic Identity* – the performed aspect of self that provides a direct link between the energetic impulse that animates my creative existence, and the audible features of my playing or compositional output. The construct of my *Artistic Identity* therefore lies in the process of cultivating my *sound* as a Flautist, an improviser and a composer.\(^{46}\)

As an improviser this *sound* is constituted as the tone I produce on my instrument, the musical devices and materials I utilise in improvisation, the energetic factors that contribute to the generation of tone and direct materials, and the way I articulate musical ideas; bringing all these elements together. As a composer this *sound* is constituted as the specific mood or evocative content of my compositions, the intervallic content, the melodic and harmonic structures that are presented and the energetic factors that inspire and direct the construction of the compositions. My *sound* as a composer and improviser will be respectively examined in Chapters Six and Seven. However, I will begin, in Chapters Four and Five, with an examination of the process that generated the materials/data used to distinguish the characteristics of this *sound*.

\(^{46}\) Miya Masaoka discusses the relationship between *sound* and *identity* in her article “Notes from a Trans-Cultural Diary” stating that “[i]n the world of jazz and improvised music, musicians are concerned with attaining their own sound, symbolizing attainment of a personhood, an identity … having your sound [is] like having your voice, allowing for an assertion of spiritual maturity, of personal history and experiences” (Zorn 2000, pp. 156-157).
Chapter Four

Creative Outcomes:

Throughout my research, the primary definition that I have tested is that my 
*Artistic Identity* is the “stamp of [me.] the artist” discernible in the body of my 
works (Guercio 2006, p. 29). As an improvising and composing musician this body 
of works is constituted as the performance of original musical works directed 
toward the facilitation of improvisation. I constitute this artistic “stamp” as my 
personal *sound*, discernible in two contexts: as an improviser and as a composer. 

*My sound* is distinct from my *personal voice* in that my *sound* is the distinctive 
utilisation of musical materials whilst my *personal voice* relates to the ability to be 
personally expressive via the utilisation of specific materials and the manipulation 
of the tonal properties produced through my instrument. It is the expressive 
nature of my *personal voice* and the distinctive audible characteristics of my *sound* 
that is of concern throughout this exegesis. It is their inter-relationship that 
appears to constitute the construct of my *Artistic Identity*.

McMillan (1996) suggests that one of the primary factors for the development of a 
*personal voice* in musical improvisation is to perform original music. Whilst 
musical influences play a major role in the formation of this *personal voice* 
McMillan proposes that in order to develop the network of musical elements and 
instrumental characteristics that distinguishes a musician’s personal vocabulary, 
the musician must take the risk to develop and perform original material rather 
than replicate the works, *sound* or characteristics of other instrumentalists and/or 
specific genres of music (McMillan 1996, pp. 44-47). I discussed in Chapter One 
that I categorise my *personal voice*, as a composer and an improviser, as defying 
genre specificity, although I can detect certain aspects of my musical training in the 
music I produce. Following McMillan, my performance of original music then 
provides the opportunity to frame my *personal voice* as an improviser and 
therefore presents itself as the principal setting for authentic self-expression. As 
such, I have investigated the construct of my *Artistic Identity*, informed by my 
relationship to musical sounds, in its primary setting: the performance of original
music. McMillan also suggests that to improvise as a soloist is an additional avenue for the development of a *personal voice* (McMillan 1996, p. 56). Whilst solo and free-form improvisation constituted a small percentage of my performance experience during my research I was restricted from the development of this aspect of my creative output as the intention to incorporate an extensive development of extended techniques for such performance settings was hampered by physical issues (specifically the strain on tendons and soft tissue in my hands and arms). As a result I was unable to incorporate a study of my *personal voice* in the context of this setting, instead focusing on the performance and development of original compositions.

Contextualising my Creative Output

My investigation into the construct of my *personal voice* and its relationship to my *sound* as an outward manifestation of my *Artistic Identity* instigated the recording of three studio albums over three years, solely featuring original compositions. By recording and producing original works, all of which were developed toward the facilitation of improvisation, I was able to examine the content and presentation of my musical output as a composer and improviser, the scope of which I expected would constitute the presentation of my *Artistic Identity*. The recording of works compiled on the first two albums was instigated by the creative intention to document my biographical compositional output, as to date I had not adequately recorded my works. I had been actively developing and performing original compositions over a number of years in two ensemble settings and wanted to document, through the production of focused studio recordings, the works that have shaped and defined my *sound* as a composer and improviser. The third album was recorded as a methodological approach of documenting the entire creative process from generating musical content through studio practice and composing works, to developing, performing, reworking, recording and producing those works. In this way I was able to examine my presentation and experience of *Artistic Identity* throughout an entire cycle of creative development.
In addition to the studio recording of original works I undertook hundreds of professional live performances, many of which were documented; sonically through audio and audio-visual recordings, and/or reflectively via the keeping of my journal. Whilst live performances provided valuable insight toward the perception and construct of my *Artistic Identity*, the outcomes and experiences gained through live performance are considered, for the purpose of this investigation, as part of the development phase of preparing works for the production of studio recordings rather than a prominent creative outcome. Throughout the discussion of my compositional and improvisatory *sound*, I therefore utilise, wherever possible, studio recorded examples over live recorded examples as I regard my studio recordings to be my primary audio data.

The documentation of my creative output via studio recordings as an augmentation of live performances became my primary audio data as my aim was to investigate the complex array of musical activities involved in cultivating and maintaining a professional musical practice. Whilst the live performance platform provided extensive opportunity for developing works and improvisatory material, the production of studio recordings allowed me to consider my creative intentions on a broader scale, enabling me to realise my *Artistic Identity* as a complex construct resulting from the engagement with a range of musical processes, all contributing to the portrayal of creative intentions toward the performance of original musical works. As the processes involved in composition and developing works for studio recordings were integral to the cultivation of my *sound* as a composer and improviser, these activities are of paramount interest to an investigation of *Artistic Identity* which, I argue, is constructed via the long-term engagement with my musical practice as the agency for creative self-expression. Through the process of recording my compositions and subsequently producing and releasing three studio albums I was able to instigate the creation of an ongoing body of work that would significantly contribute to the continuum and documentation of the time-line of my career. In this way it became possible to present my experience of music and realisation of creative *self* to society at large, as well as creating the possibility to observe, from the perspective of an onlooker, the distinguishing attributes that make my *personal voice* distinctive.
Being able to examine my creative output outside of live performance, via audio recordings and reflective journal entries was integral to the process of examining my creative output as it became apparent that to examine my output whilst directly involved in these processes was to directly alter what I played or how I composed. To examine my creative output ‘after the fact’ was to leave my creative processes unfettered by my research, allowing me to recognise the distinctive qualities of my personal voice across the entirety of my creative output during this time.

The distinctive qualities of my sound as a composer were brought to my attention in the second week of research when an audience member who was present at a ‘Lo-Res’ performance observed a melodic thread that ran throughout my compositions. As a journal entry dated February 10, 2011 discusses, Daniel Brates (who later joined the ensemble and is the featured Drummer on the albums Voyeur and La Sortie) approached me after the performance saying that he perceived;

a melody that ran from song to song throughout the 120min set. He was convinced that this was a deliberate intention, that I had sculpted the set in order to convey an over-riding theme. ... [It is apparent, judging by this observation] that my compositions hold together as a unit, or a story. There was quite some history in that set, with songs that I’d written from 1995-2010. If the ‘melody’ of my compositions runs strong and consistently over this period of time, there must be factors that make it so, there must be identifying features that link the songs together, a sound that I am drawn to, that I cultivate to make my own. So what is this sound? What harmonic and melodic structures am I drawn to? What makes them distinct? (Appendix A, p. 8)

I will elaborate on the specifics of my compositional sound in Chapter Six, however, the importance of this quote lies in the fact that a unifying thread to my compositional sound has been witnessed, that there are audibly recognisable features to my compositional output. The feedback thus received helped assert the possibility that my Artistic Identity is indeed an audibly recognisable construct. Additionally, my compositional output is a major contributing aspect of my
personal voice, the voice that performs my Artistic Identity. Therefore, I deemed it necessary to further develop my compositional sound, a sound that is reliant on a working relationship with the musicians who perform my compositions and contribute to the generation of an ensemble sound through the enhancement of the identifiable thread that unifies my compositional output. Throughout the following Chapter I will discuss the creative works that were produced through my examination of my personal voice as a composer and an improviser.

Establishing a Recorded Biography of Compositions

As I discussed in the introduction to this Chapter, the first year of my creative output was dedicated to establishing a recorded biography of compositions in order to ground my investigation of Artistic Identity within the historical setting that constitutes the development of my personal voice. The first two albums, recorded within my first year of research, featured the two ensembles which represented the contextual settings in which I identified my compositional output to reside. The first of these was a Flute and Harp duo which I named ‘Saveja.’ Saveja is a street slang term that means “well dressed,” a term I considered indicative of my small chamber ensemble works which I felt needed to be presented with a refined performance aesthetic. The works presented on this album encompassed the majority of my compositional output produced in the years leading up to and during the first six months of my research, and was therefore deemed to be a poignant representation of the direction my music was heading. My compositional focus had been on developing ways of scoring which require the ensemble to move between modules of composed fragments utilising improvisation (specifically “The Divide Pt. III”), yet I also incorporated works with more functional compositional methods (such as “Fortunata”).

47 See Chapter Eight.
48 Appendix F, Page 10.
49 Appendix F, Page 13.
With the exception of “Pardalote,” which was written in 2000, the works presented on the album *Saveja* (Appendix G) were composed between 2008 and 2011, and were scored specifically for myself and Mary Doumany and the instrumentation of Flute and Harp with a contemporary classical sound in mind. Throughout my performance practice I had rarely presented these compositions, although I found them to be some of my most artistically satisfying work to that date. I decided to present these works in my first commercial release in order to provide my regular audience members with an insight into a sound world that was strikingly different to my usual setting – a side to my musicality that many had not heard before. In this way I hoped to forge a new image of myself to my audience – one that exposed the breadth of my creative output to include the incorporation of contemporary classical techniques. Considering this creative and professional choice in retrospect, by presenting this aspect of my identity through an inaugural album release I made a profound statement about my cultural heritage and the background that shaped my development as a performing musician. Presenting myself primarily as a classically trained improviser/composer and then, through the release of a second album as an improviser/composer of Jazz influenced works, I aimed (albeit subconsciously) to stake my position as a versatile, well trained and explorative musician.

The self-titled album *Saveja* was recorded in two sittings: July 4 and September 16, 2011 at Baker Street Studios, Burwood with engineer Allan Nuendorf. The intent was to produce ‘live,’ ‘authentic’ single take recordings which captured the ‘human’ elements of the musicians, incorporating the sounds of the attack of Mary’s fingers on the strings of the Harp and my own breath sounds. Aiming to create a sonically intimate setting each instrument was recorded with close microphone techniques in order to accurately capture the acoustic timbre, resonance and subtleties of tone production, with the addition of a pair of stereo room microphones to enhance the presence and ambience of the duo by capturing our dynamic ensemble interaction within the acoustic properties of the room. This resulted in the creation of a warm, responsive environment into which the listener is drawn, giving the impression, as noted by Richard Fields in a radio interview on 3CR on April 27, 2011 of being present in the room with us.
Three aspects of our recorded performance are notable to this investigation: our respective individual sound was captured both through microphone techniques and the creative space provided by the compositional framework; we played empathetically toward generating an effective ensemble sound and; the recording process itself allowed us to explore the material in a creative yet focused manner in which the character of each composition was retained. We had ample time to involve ourselves in cultivating the mood of each piece, also discussing how we could approach each ‘take’ to develop both the material and our individual sound palette to enhance the overall performance. In doing this we presented each composition in a contemplative way, sculpting artistically satisfying renditions of each composition. Recalling the experience at the time of recording I felt as if I was immersed in the music – that my focus was drawn into the sound world we were creating rather than regarding physical or mental application and that the music that flowed from me was emotionally and creatively charged. Moments of intellectual judgement and reflection were minimal, allowing for a sense of freedom and ‘true’ expression. The experience was transcendent at times in which I abandoned notions of my physical relationship to the production of musical sound, ideological pursuits and rationalisation of meanings, leaving a playful, wilful exploration and a sense of being taken over by the music within.

After the successful recording and release of the album Saveja, the next meaningful outcome produced through my intention to complete the process of documenting my biographical compositional output (before turning to the generation of new compositions and improvisatory materials) arose through the production of a second studio album.

The second album was recorded with ‘Lo-Res,’ a six piece chamber jazz ensemble originally formed in 2010. ‘Lo-Res’ is an abbreviation of low resolution, a term

50 The value of which will be discussed below under the heading Initial Analysis of Recordings.
51 See Chapter Six.
52 See Chapter Eight.
53 See Appendix A, p. 115.
54 See Chapter Nine.
usually used in digital media contexts. My choice of this name relates to the sound world that I wanted to create which is not clean and refined (as per ‘Saveja’), but gritty and textured – I wanted to create an ensemble sound that experiments with timbral and textural devices, generated by and evidenced through the sum of its parts (the ensemble members). In this way each member of the ensemble, through various modes of improvisatory engagement, actively sculpts the works according to their own creative abilities. The works that were recorded for the album titled Voyeur (Appendix H) were composed between 1995 and 2011 and hence represented an extended biography of my compositional output. As well as including the works I had written specifically for ‘Lo-Res,’ (specifically “Forget Me Not” and “Cut Lunch”) I arranged a number of works from my biographical compositional output that best suited the aesthetic of the ensemble sound I intended to create. The title of the album Voyeur is the name of one of the works recorded. The word appeared quite indicative of my conscious focus through the research process, which was to observe my creative processes without affecting the outcomes – to witness what takes place from the perspective of an onlooker.

The album was recorded on September 29, 2011 at Soundpark Studios, Northcote with engineer Dave Nelson. As was the case with Saveja, the aim of this recording was to present each work as a ‘live’ performance, with all musicians playing together in the same room, no overdubbed solos and the minimal addition of extra horns (recorded in a separate sitting) to enhance the ‘big’ sound, developing the timbral complexity of particular compositions. Playing together in the same room allowed us to communicate visually and respond as an ensemble unit to the music as it unfolded, creating the feeling of a dynamic, spontaneous performance. Again, all instruments and amplifiers were recorded with close microphone techniques with the addition of a pair of stereo room microphones to capture the ambiance of the room. Ten compositions were recorded in total with the album designed to celebrate a diverse range of musical material composed over a large period of time – a biographical documentation of my compositional output. Via recording both Voyeur and Saveja I was provided with an extensive array of musical material which enabled me to analyse my personal voice as a composer and an improviser.55

55 See Chapters Six and Seven.
Initial Analysis of Recordings

As a researcher the process of producing the albums *Saveja* and *Voyeur* allowed me to document two significant performance events that I could analyse after the fact. In this way I was able to immerse myself as a performer in the immediacy of performance in both settings and leave the analysis of the outcome to a separate state of consciousness after the fact. I was able to focus on the momentum generated by the energetic aspects of music – “To be impelled toward motion and not be the motor” (Klee 1953, p. 54). In this way I argue that I have provided a creative platform for the facilitation of authentic self-expression (as performer) and developed a methodology (as researcher) for the realisation and examination of the audible features of my *Artistic Identity*, unaltered by the process of analysing content whilst in the throws of performance.

Analysing the recordings of *Saveja* and *Voyeur* my intent was to uncover the network of musical elements and instrumental characteristics that distinguishes my personal vocabulary (McMillan 1996, p. 69). What I discovered was that whilst my *personal voice* as an improviser appeared to present itself consistently, the entirety of my compositional output was disjunct. Across the board my compositions to date contained many varying stylistic attributes. There is some consistency towards my harmonic language, and works from different periods of my practice present strikingly similar content, yet each album of works presented on *Saveja* and *Voyeur* traverses a large swathe of musical landscapes, none of which are particularly stylistically compatible. Up until the three years preceding this investigation my compositional output had been sporadic, with only a handful of works arising from different periods of time, and each period presenting differing stylistic attributes. This is evident particularly on the album *Voyeur* which presented works composed over a seventeen year period, and can be heard in the following examples: Evangelist, I Said Only Once, Forget Me Not, Cut Lunch, and Voyeur.

56 For an extensive analysis see Chapter Seven.
57 For an extensive analysis see Chapter Six.
58 Appendix C, Track 1.
What I discovered is that what holds the compositions together in these recordings is not the works themselves, but the ensemble that performs the works – the combination of the individual sound of individual musicians generating an ensemble sound achieved through interweaving, intermingling and balancing the combination of our individual sounds. This appears to be achieved whilst maintaining the autonomy of each composition which I suggest can only result through the empathy my fellow musicians have toward realising my creative vision. The limits of my research, being an examination of my relationship to my own creative output, does not allow me to investigate this proposal any further, however, the relationship I have toward the musicians who help create the sound world that is the ensemble ‘Lo-Res,’ the musicians who situate the performance of my personal voice in the setting it strives to create, is a significant experience that contributes to my sense of Artistic Identity.

As I discussed in Chapter Three, identity is a conceptual experience of self in relation to society, I cannot contemplate its construct without referring to my experiences with ‘other’ people. It became apparent that my relationship to the musicians with whom I perform and for whom I compose attributes to a prominent experiential aspect of my Artistic Identity as it is via engagement with these musicians that I am able to situate my personal voice in a truly authentic setting63 – within the context of my own compositional output. Additionally, through the musicians of ‘Lo-Res’ and ‘Saveja’ my works are brought to life, experimented with, developed, refined, celebrated and brought to the public. Yet it became apparent that when performing with these ensembles my focus is not on showcasing my personal voice alone, but celebrating that of each of the ensemble members.

The ideological view that we, as musicians, each have a personal voice through which we express and realise our Artistic Identities is a view I adopted from a young age, a view that seemed to be mirrored through my undergraduate studies

59 Appendix C, Track 2.
60 Appendix C, Track 3.
61 Appendix C, Track 4.
62 Appendix C, Track 5.
63 See Chapter Eight.
at the VCA from 1995-1997.\textsuperscript{64} Over the years it is a view that I continue to hold and have endeavoured to develop with a wide circle of musicians: improvisers and composers. As an interpreter I work with the composer (when they are present as a performer or solely in directing capacities) and my fellow musicians to develop the particular sound world of that composer, whilst contributing elements of my personal sound (at least that of tone and timbre) to that sound world. This contribution varies depending on the material being presented, but is possible if only due to the energetic and sonorous properties that connect me to the sounds I produce. By interacting timbrally, spectrally and energetically with other members of the ensemble we create an ensemble sound that is empathetic to the vision of the composer whilst maintaining a personal connection to the sounds that are sculpted.\textsuperscript{65}

As a composer and ensemble leader I hope to create a similar experience for the musicians I play with, discussing that through the performance of my works I hope that each musician is provided adequate space to situate their sound and personal voice. To enable this whilst ensuring that my creative vision for the compositions themselves is realised, I strive to lead the ensemble in a way that develops shared musical and energetic understandings. This is specifically in regard to stylistic approaches, energetic intensities, balancing volume and spectral considerations and developing certain textural densities.

The creative outcome of developing a new set of works arose as being integral to the establishment of such a framework, as creatively we exist in relation to and in support of each other and to write specifically for the ensemble and ensemble members is to celebrate their individuality and the relationships that form the social and musical constructs of our collaboration. In this respect, my research became a process of defining my personal voice in relation to the people who support and help construct this definition of me as without their creative input the

\textsuperscript{64} This view was highly influenced by the pedagogy of Brian Brown who was the head of the Improvisation Department at the time. See Chapter Eight for a more in depth description of the influence of this ideology upon my creative practice of music.

\textsuperscript{65} See Appendix B, p. 74.
music would not stimulate and inspire me to inter-act. It is this inter-action that defines me as a social, creative being. Whilst celebrating my personal voice through the development and performance of original works, I chose to equally celebrate that of the musicians of ‘Lo-Res,’ composing a series of works, each designed to bring to prominence individual members of the ensemble. This was achieved through presenting them as soloists as well as situating their prominence through the development of compositional elements such as melodic, rhythmic or spectral dominance.

The development of these works and the third studio album that was subsequently recorded was focused on showcasing the ensemble and my compositional sound over my sound as an improviser and as a result only two works feature myself as the soloist. This was perhaps due to the decision, roughly twelve months into my research, to put aside my active investigation of Artistic Identity and to simply be a creative musician and develop works without the contemplation of identity. I cannot examine the outcome of whether the personal voice of each musician in ‘Lo-Res’ was presented through this process as the limitations of my research are such that I am focusing on the presentation of my own personal voice, yet what emerged from my investigation that I can discuss is that as a performing musician I engage profoundly with music and fellow performers when I identify strongly with its content and emotive force. It is through this engagement and active involvement with a community of practitioners who work within the same aesthetic and ideological realm that I feel at home – as an active participant. If I do not involve myself in this community of practitioners then I do not feel authentic in my creative existence.

When I play music that I do not aesthetically or culturally identify with, I feel as though I am wearing a mask of sorts or put on a persona that does not resonate with my mode of being. I would prefer to put myself out there, on the line for all to see than to put on an act and be someone I am not. This experience presents itself

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66 See Chapter One.
67 See Appendix B, pp. 86-87.
68 See Auslander 2006.
as being the expression of my *Artistic Identity*; the authentic presentation of my *personal voice* via the performance of music. The process of developing original works was instigated by this very idea with my creative intentions focused on building upon the agency of and actively cultivating the construct of my *Artistic Identity* through the development and refinement of creative processes. The production of recordings that reflected the authentic presentation of my *personal voice* was seen as the ultimate method of presenting my creative intentions so as to assure that an adequate representation of my works would require engagement with a wide range of creative processes and a refining of my intentions toward directing both the ensemble members and engineers who recorded and helped produce my works.

Previous to this investigation I had not released or professionally produced any recordings. This was initially due to a belief that the cultural value of music lies in hearing and experiencing it performed in live settings, but also due to the fact that I had not been happy with the representation of my work through two previous attempts to record my compositions – hence these previous recordings did not adequately represent my creative intentions. Additionally, without adequate recordings of my compositions I did not feel as though I could move forward towards the generation of new works and felt bound by the perception that I needed to keep these works alive through performance. Towards the end of the first six months of my research I became aware of the importance of producing an adequate recorded representation of my work as a composer and improvising Flautist in order to establish a benchmark from which the generation of new intentions could be engendered, as well as creating a tangible product through which I could reference my *sound* and the realisation of creative intent; the implications of which also extended toward a broader contextualisation that recording my works was a way to establish myself in the field of music as an active and hence valuable contributor to the musical community.

Without tangible representations of my creative works I found at this time that I could not let the works go – I felt a need to continue performing them in order to keep them alive. After I recorded these works to an adequate level of satisfaction I
realised that the result of this attachment to my biography of works somewhat restricted me from composing new works. Without developing my older works to their full potential, mirroring my internal sense of how they should be realised and presented, there was no definitive representation of my biographical output. Despite my creative intentions being directed towards the future production and release of these recordings, I was suspended in the evaluation of who I was in regard to adequately presenting my previous compositional output. In order to move forward I needed to lay my old compositions down to rest, to wipe the slate clean and return to the process of composition with fresh ideas. Indeed, fresh ideas were inspired by the process of producing the albums, in particular the ‘Lo-Res’ album *Voyeur*, as through the process of mixing the recordings I was able to cultivate the ensemble *sound* I had been striving to create through the development of the works as ensemble leader and composer. As I produced the recordings I was able to re-create the *sound* world I envisaged for each of my compositions, which originated at the time of conception and was now being realised through the process of mixing and mastering the recordings. The ability to cultivate this *sound* world through the process of recording and producing my works meant that I was able to effectively present an aural representation of my internal creative processes – the presentation of my *Artistic Identity*. This inspired the process of developing new works towards the recording of a third studio album, again with the ensemble ‘Lo-Res.’

Development and Presentation of New Works

Over a period of eighteen months, from May 2012 to November 2013, I composed seven new works specifically for the members of ‘Lo-Res’ with the instrumentation of Flute, Saxophone, Trumpet, Guitar, Bass and Drum kit. My creative intent was for each work to feature a particular member of ‘Lo-Res’ – to honour the musicians who contribute to the performed realisation of my compositions. Although the results were not as clearly defined as I originally intended, each work contained an improvisatory form that featured a particular instrumentalist (except in the case of “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company,” in which the blending of multiple
instrumentalists, improvising simultaneously was intended). I also composed specific passages to feature particular instrumentalists. In this way I did not compose a single work for a single instrumentalist alone, but celebrated each instrumentalist in the context I deemed best suited their *personal voice* within the context of each composition.

In developing these works I primarily utilised my experimentation with melodic and rhythmic patterns, and the development of new scales⁶⁹ achieved through my studio practice. Such an example can be seen in my compositional sketch for “Saveja.”⁷⁰ This practice was exploratory and improvisatory, building melodic constructs that often informed ambiguous, unresolved harmonic progressions. This is an aspect of my compositional *sound*⁷¹ that presented, through the analysis of my compositional biography, as being a distinctive quality that I wanted to actively enhance and develop through my studio practice and compositional processes. However, alongside my use of ambiguous harmonic and melodic structures, such as in “There’s a Tiger on the Run,”⁷² I embraced the use of more conventional harmonic tools in order to provide moments of grounding to the compositions, as is evident in the chord progression of “23 Heads on a Highway” (Figure 4.1), and the D and solo section of “The Elevator” (Figure 4.2).

**Figure 4.1 – Chord Progression of “23 Heads on a Highway.”**

![Chord Progression](image)

⁶⁹ See Appendix A, pp. 179, 188 & 221-222 (particularly the reference to the ‘intro’ and ‘bridge.’ See also Chapter Five for a discussion on the development of original scales through studio practice.

⁷⁰ Appendix A, Page 226.

⁷¹ For an in depth discussion of my compositional *sound*, see Chapter Six.

⁷² Appendix C, Track 6.
Noting my tendency (over twenty years of composing) to avoid harmonic progressions and melodic structures that are indicative or reminiscent of progressions and structures I have heard before, I consciously decided not to discard such passages when composing works, rather to be inspired to build upon them in a manner that felt authentic to my creative expression. I realised that to be referential is not to plagiarise or be unoriginal, but to acknowledge that musical influences exist and are a part of my musical vocabulary. I therefore ran with any idea that presented itself with ample creative and energetic momentum. As I will discuss in Chapter Five, it is this creative and energetic momentum that presented through my research as being significant to the generation of inspired compositional material.

The majority of compositions were developed over an extensive period of time in both rehearsal and live performance settings (all except “There’s a Tiger on the Run” which was completed in November 2013, just over a month before the end of the development stage of my research). In this development stage the ensemble members gained a familiarity with both the material and the energetic implications of the compositions themselves as directed by my verbal communication of creative intentions and through the opportunity for experimentation during live performance situations. Together we sculpted the works and our ensemble sound towards the goal of producing a studio album. Throughout this process I began to perform two of the works on C Melody Saxophone and hence introduced a second instrument to my research via which I could explore the presentation of my personal voice as an improviser. An analysis of the materials I use in my improvisations involving both instruments (Flute and Saxophone) will be made in
Chapter Seven in conjunction with a discussion of the improvisations contained on the albums *Saveja* and *Voyeur*.

The album that featured these seven compositions was recorded on December 14 and 15, 2013 at Soundpark Studio, Northcote with engineer Dave Nelson. The recording process was similar to the previous albums in terms of microphone techniques and the intention to record the band as a whole, simulating a live performance setting. Although the band performed 'live,' mostly single take performances of the works, I wanted to create a transition between “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company” and “La Sortie” that subsequently required the Bass player to change from Contra-Bass to Electric Bass and back. As this is not possible in a live setting we recorded the work in three segments which were brought together in post-production. I also wanted to include an additional Guitar part on the second of these works in order to enhance its evocative content and add additional woodwind parts to the first in order to create a richer timbre within the polyphonic melodic construct. As a result a few overdubs were required to achieve the compositional complexity I envisaged through studio recording.

The album was produced (mixed and mastered) between March 12 and April 16, 2014 with the assistance of engineer Dave Nelson. Similar to the experience of producing *Voyeur*, the process of producing this new album was reminiscent of the process of composing the works that the album contains, during which considerations of balancing instrumental parts was integral to generating the desired compositional effect. Additionally, I was again brought to consider and sculpt the *sound* world I had envisaged in the compositional and developmental phase of preparing the works, as ‘dry’ mixes of recordings provides only an insinuation of the ensemble and compositional *sound*, the cultivation of which now lay in my hands as the producer. The production stage of the recording process was therefore a vital component to the active cultivation of my *personal voice* (particularly as a composer/producer) as it was through this process that I had the ability, with a deliberate and conscious intent, to personally construct and

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73 See Appendix B, p. 102.
manipulate the musical content the recordings contained to the point where the works amply represent my internal concept of the how they should sound.

I named the album, and the final work of the album “La-Sortie” (Appendix I) which can literally be translated as “The Exit.” However, the term is also used in the context of describing the act of departing on a journey and it is in this context that I have adopted the term. This simultaneously represents the journey embarked upon through my research into the construct of my Artistic Identity, and my creative intentions toward the sculpting of musical content. Through the performance of original works I hoped that we, the ensemble, could take our audience on a journey – one that is not prescribed, but is open to the influence of personal experience. The development of the works presented on “La-Sortie” was substantially influenced by this very idea, however, the only experience I could draw from was my own.

Engaging with Creative Intentions and Outcomes

As I will discuss in detail in Chapter Eight, I engage with the various creative processes involved in the development and performance of music as a mode of self-expression. I do not argue that I express anything specifically through the performance of music, but I do argue that when I play music I am able to express abstract ideas and am impelled by emotive forces that are drawn from life experiences and contribute to the musical and sonorous intensities that I generate as an improviser and composer. By engaging with the practice of music in this way, I generate meaningful connections between my sense of self and the music I create, providing me with a sense of imparting or placing something of my self into the music. This is not a literal placement or impartation of self but a sense of identifying emotively, intellectually and experientially with the sounds I generate and respond to. It is the response that guides the experiential self to generate connections or recollections of experienced emotions and the like. Similarly, I propose that each listener brings their own life experiences to the listening
experience, providing the opportunity to engage with musical sound on a range of emotive and intellectual levels as a personal, not prescribed response.

This response of connecting personal experience with musical content is not restricted to the act of performance alone. Whilst performance allows me to engage with other individuals (ensemble or audience members), sounds (musical and extra-musical) and the performance space (atmosphere, refraction of sound etc), providing a social and highly interactive environment, the process of composition and studio practice provides a more introverted engagement with musical sound and sonorities, an engagement that provides great insight towards personal qualities that are involved in the generation and manipulation of musical content. In this way, my engagement with the practice of music and the creative output that results therefore somewhat reflects who I am as a person; my rational processes, emotional tendencies and temperament, all of which inform the way in which I actively set-to-work generating musical content. In the context of my current research it appears as though I am methodical, organised and quite controlling of my processes, however, I react to my circumstances readily with a wide range of emotions, all of which effects my application of musical materials and the processes behind the development and refinement of tone, composition of works, generation of improvisatory material, building of harmonic knowledge etcetera. The ways in which I engage with these creative processes (intellectually, emotively and aesthetically) emulates my mode of being at specific times and it could therefore be said that these intellectual, emotive and aesthetic aspects of my personality inherently contribute to the ambience, structure and complexity of the music I create.

Compositionally I have developed highly intricate works that are contained within the formal construction of musical elements. I leave little room for conceptual, free form improvisation instead tending to create strict guidelines for the interpretation of my works; even though I express the desire to allow the personal voice of my ensemble members to be heard and to contribute to the generation of the ensemble sound. Whilst I produce scores for each player to follow accurately it appears that through the rehearsal and performance settings of the development
phase I lead the ensemble in a way that allows each individual to develop compositional aspects of the works in a personal way, contributing their individual sound to the performance of the works whilst maintaining compositional autonomy. In this way I have enabled the link between me, the composer, and my musical works to be held in prominence with a strong sense of personal identification with the music that has been performed throughout my research. As the consideration of my compositional voice was integral to this research it is possible that the processes involved in the generation of musical content was informed by my research topic of Artistic Identity. It is possible that if I was not researching the construct of my Artistic Identity I may have incorporated more open musical forms, or performed more free form improvised music in varying ensemble settings. However, this is speculation and I can only examine the results of my research which help to uncover the agency of my current construct of Artistic Identity.

My analysis of this research thus far has presented that the complex integration of the complete range of creative processes that contributes to the generation and presentation of original works is the agency of my Artistic Identity; the setting-to-work of intentions of self-expression through the development and presentation of my compositions. The development of material, firstly through studio practice and the composition of works, then alongside my ensemble members through rehearsals and live performances leading to the major creative outcome of recording original compositions presents itself as the agency for generating musical content. The phenomenon of identifying intellectually, emotively and aesthetically with the content of and processes that enable inspired realisations of my works is reliant on the personal connection with which I engage with musical processes. This identification generated the sensation of being personally connected with my musical output which suggests that my construct of Artistic Identity is built through the generation of meaningful musical content that reflects my mode of being.

As a result, the recordings of compositions produced as a result of my research appear to be the most controlled setting in which my Artistic Identity is portrayed
as I ultimately directed all steps of the development and production phases of generating musical content, presented as my creative output. It is therefore possible that I have cultivated my *Artistic Identity* through the process of directing and cultivating the setting of my *personal voice* – a proposition I will examine further in the following Chapter in which I review the various stages that made up the 'complete creative cycle' that constituted the development and production of *La Sortie*. I will then move, in Chapter Six, to analyse my compositional *sound*, primarily via *La Sortie* yet also referencing my compositional biography presented on *Saveja* and *Voyeur*, and in Chapter Seven, to analyse my *sound* as an improviser via the examination of my improvisations presented on all three studio albums. Via this examination of processes and outcomes my aim is to discover whether my *Artistic Identity* is actively constructed via, or is simply a bi-product of my creative processes.
Chapter Five

Creative Processes:

As stipulated in Chapter Three, *Artistic Identity* is viewed, for the purposes of this research, as the "stamp of the artist that can be discerned in the body of [her] works." (Guercio 2006, p. 29). As a musician this stamp is discernible as the musical sounds I generate via the instrument on which I perform and the compositions I create. Chapter Two positioned my research in the context of the development of a *personal voice* (McMillan 1996) via which I proposed to examine the possibility of self-expression via the performance of music. I suggest that the creative processes by which this *personal voice* is cultivated informs my sense of *Artistic Identity* as they are experienced as specific modes of *being* a creative musician. In Chapter Four I outlined the creative outcomes of my research into the construct of my *Artistic Identity* as a composer and improvising musician. The recording of three studio albums provided me with the primary data to analyse both my *sound* as a composer and an improviser, yet the secondary data obtained from the keeping of a journal and the recording of live performances also allowed me to examine the creative processes involved in the generation of musical content, namely compositional processes, studio practice, the development of works through rehearsal and live performance, and the production of these works via studio recording techniques. These processes will be the focus of this Chapter, beginning with the composition of new works which instigated the start of a new cycle of creative development.

Composition of works

The formal stage of composing new works for ‘Lo-Res’ began in May 2012 and continued until November 2013, although the first work to be composed originated as a rough sketch dating back to May 9, 2011. The month of May 2012 was a productive period of composition with the development of three works, “23

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See Chapters Six and Seven.
Heads on a Highway,” “The Sisters of Mercy” and “Synthetic Strings.” All three works were based upon short repeated phrases or riffs, the use of which simulates cyclical movement, a prominent feature of my compositional output at this time.75

The next two works, initially developed in July 2012, began as works for quartet (Flute, Guitar, Bass, Drums), and were then expanded for the full ‘Lo-Res’ sextet with the addition of Saxophone and Trumpet parts, completed in November 2012. These two works, “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company” and “The Elevator” were based on the exploration of metrical frameworks in which considerations of pulse subdivision laid the foundation of the works. Time signature changes and alterations in ‘feel’ are a prominent feature of these two works, however, the generation of melodic content, which was my main compositional focus, was based upon short repetitive phrases which resulted from the establishment of re-occurring metrical patterns.

The sixth composition was sketched out in December 2012 and fully realised in May 2013. As my intention was to develop a suite of works which present continuity of stylistic and musical content, this work was intentionally constructed to reference two specific previous compositions – “The Sisters of Mercy” and “The Elevator.” As a result I referenced specific elements in the composition of these works; the form of the first and the pedal-point of the introduction of the second.

The final work to be composed during this period had its initial inception in April 2013, yet was only completed in November 2013. As the time frame indicates, this composition took considerable time to develop into a fully formed composition. This work contains numerous compositional elements that tie together the six other works composed during this period, primarily by laying down a foundation of cyclical melodies or riffs but also through the generation of poly-phonic melodic parts and the exploration of metrical parameters. I will now examine the inspirational force that initiated their conception.

75 See Chapter Six.
Examining my journal entries relating to compositional processes, the inspiration for compositional ideas appear to arise from two sources: the first being the generation of material that arose from practising or exploring ideas on my instruments; the second originating from musical fragments that arose in my mind’s ear whilst I was physically ‘on the move’ – whether by foot, on bicycle or in the car. Whilst each composition was actively sculpted and refined in the studio, the inception of the majority of compositions arose from either of these two sources. The necessary condition for either source of inspiration was being physically healthy and mentally balanced in that my emotive response to life circumstances was positive – that a positive outlook led, during this stage of my research, to musical inspiration. I will begin by examining the situational context in which inspiration arose from playing my instruments, with a focus on the impetus that instigated the compositional process.

Inspiration arose from my studio practice when, whilst improvising, I felt my output was efficacious and was focused on and felt energised by the exploration of specific musical materials. During this documented period of composition ideas appear to have arisen from the practice of particular scales, or modes – an exploration of material contextualised in particular tonal centres. In these cases my ideas came together relatively quickly and I was able to sketch out a fair amount of material whilst the inspiration ‘carried me along.’ There is a particular energetic state which arose when inspiration hit, a state which honed my conscious attention to the manifestation of sound and the generation of form in a particular way that was all-consuming yet open to the presence of possibility. This state taps into emotive experience, activates aesthetic considerations and literally generates a ‘force’ within me to consolidate the aural data into a cohesive form. As my focus was centered upon distilling the experience of inspiration and inserting it into the construction of a musical composition, there was a sense of

77 See Appendix B, p. 57.
78 See Appendix B, p. 48.
79 See Appendix A, pp. 179, 188, 191.
80 See Appendix A, pp. 53, 155.
81 See Appendix B, pp. 88-89.
decisiveness and energetic propulsion in the process; the harnessing of creative forces that impelled me to preserve what had been discovered through my practice. In notating my works I felt I was able to preserve the sentiment and affectual quality of my inspired conscious and energetic state within the sketch that resulted, which subsequently aided the development of the inspired ideas into a fully formed composition. This primarily took one or two more sittings to eventuate, however (as I will discuss in more detail below), in the case of “There’s a Tiger on the Run” the sittings were more numerous. “23 Heads on a Highway” and “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company” are two compositions that were inspired from practising the Flute. In both cases it was the emergence of a Bass line that instigated the exploration of musical materials.

Whilst I gained inspiration from the practice of my instruments, I also gained sources of inspiration when I was physically active in outdoor settings – whether I was walking or riding my bicycle, I observed my surrounding environment and musical ideas emerged as imagined sounds. Two such works are “The Sisters of Mercy” and “Synthetic Strings.”

The ideas that emerged for these two works were both rhythmic and melodic and were generally quite short inasmuch as they were instigated by a fragment of an idea which I then took to the studio and developed. Sometimes my ideas dissipated or were hard to elaborate upon, yet if I was able to notate and preserve them I was generally able to flesh them out into a fully formed composition. At times this process unfolded quite easily with various parts or sections presenting themselves without contemplation, yet at other times I spent a great deal more time experimenting, arranging and editing materials, sculpting forms, or suddenly adding parts when I was struck by new inspiration.

Therefore, whilst inspired ideas arose from my subconscious the works were actively developed through conscious manipulation of material. In these cases I was drawn to particular melodic and harmonic constructs which I actively set into the work, whilst other constructs did not aesthetically resonate within me and as

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82 See Appendix A, p. 87.
such were discarded.\footnote{See Appendix A, pp. 188-189.} In this way the compositional process was reliant on additional inspiration gained whilst I was engaged with the process of composition in its own right. Whether the initial inspiration was gained during my studio practice or when I was ‘on the move,’ the works did not develop unless I was presented with an equally inspirational idea when elaborating on previously notated sketches whilst in the studio. If my energy patterns of the day did not match those of the material I wanted to develop, or if the momentum of the compositional process was lost due to the lack of ample inspiration I had little success in developing a work.\footnote{See Appendix B, pp. 45 & 91.} however, if I was conceptually aligned with the material, keeping it in my consciousness (singing the material to myself in my head) I could hold onto the energetic state the material implied and the work developed quite naturally.\footnote{See Appendix A, pp. 188 & 228} The process of composition therefore ultimately cultivates not only the stylistic, rhythmic and harmonic content of the work but the energetic qualities that are imbedded in the inspired material.\footnote{See Appendix A, p. 87.}

In addition to being inspired whilst I was practising or ‘on the move,’ three works were inspired as a result of intentionally looking for compositional ideas. At these times the process began with the sensation that I was searching for material, that the process was not organic and energetically inspired, but that the material was more intellectually and deliberately generated. “La Sortie” eventuated from an exploration of a compositional process which began with the generation of a form, “The Elevator” originated from an exploration of intervals from a major 7\#11 chord devised on the Guitar (Figure 5.1) and “There’s a Tiger on the Run” originated from the exploration of metrical patterns on the piano, using a minor 9\#11 chord as a tonal centre as evidenced in the Bass and Guitar (Figure 5.2).
The process of composition was substantially more involved in the first two of these works with both involving the generation of a complex form, perhaps arising from a compositional process in which ideas were cultivated more intellectually rather than the previously mentioned works which were more intuitively, energetically or emotively influenced. The third of these works, “La Sortie,” was originally composed for a competition which involved writing a soundtrack for a short film and so the inspiration came from a visual source in which changes of musical events had to arrive at dictated points corresponding to the film. What eventuated was a work quite different from the other six, however, in referencing previous compositions in my development of this work I was able to start from a personalised place – an aspect of the compositional process that gave the work a sense of meaning. It appears that the meaning behind all my works (sonic constructs that generate personally emotive responses) is of primary importance when I engage with the process of composition, a sense of meaning which generates intent toward the sculpting of materials the works contain. This sense of meaning cannot be expressed in literal terms and as such are abstract in connotation; however, I experience meaning via powerful energetic and emotive connection to the works I produce.87

87 See Appendix A, pp. 191-193.
The works composed within the timeframe of my research presented as being emotively and energetically authentic and meaningful to my mode of creative expression. However, the sculpting of materials and the meaning this generates goes beyond the processes involved in composition, to those involved in my studio practice and the development of materials for improvisation. As my practice is geared towards developing materials for performance outcomes I do not compose music for any other context other than the ensembles I perform with, and in the majority of cases my compositions involve a significant amount of improvisation. As a performer my development of musical content begins with the practice of my instruments and the affiliation I have with its sonorous constructs.

Development Process:

Studio Practice

The documentation of my practice methodologies began, through the keeping of a journal (Appendix B), on February 9, 2013 and continued until March 18, 2014. Although my journal entries relating to my practice methodologies provide some insight toward my creative processes, this was not diligently documented (as creative focus does not always allow for the addition of rational observation) and therefore did not provide adequate data for an extensive examination of how the practice of specific materials relates to performance of this material or the incorporation of this material into compositions. In hindsight, a thorough documentation of my practice methodologies from the very beginning of my research would have been appropriate; however, the indication of the importance of documenting this aspect of my creative processes did not become apparent until 2014. One major hindrance to the examination of my studio practice lay in the fact that I experienced significant physical complaints during the entire course of my research (first evidenced on July 17, 2011) which reduced the time I was able to spend practising my instruments. As a result I was unable to undertake extensive studio practice, particularly in respect to the exploration of a range of techniques which I creatively intended to develop over the course of my investigation;

88 See Appendix A, p. 104.
specifically those involving alternative fingerings (multi-phonics, quarter-tones, muted tones), the fine digital movement between which instigated the majority of symptoms of repetitive strain.\textsuperscript{89}

Regardless, I was able to analyse the materials developed through studio practice during the above specified period in addition to the experiential knowledge of what I have actively practised in the past, against the audible results contained in the improvisations captured on live and studio recordings to uncover a range of correlations between practised and performed materials. I have identified that my studio practice is the initial setting in which I develop musical materials, experiment with musical parameters, develop an affiliation with my instrument and consolidate musical knowledge gained through performance experience and previous educational activities. Whilst in performance I articulate these aspects of musicality, it is via studio practice and the expertise gained through the development of specific musical devices and materials that I am able to articulate, in performance, the various elements that combine to create musical sound. It is therefore in studio practice that I build the foundation of and construct the specific features which constitute my sound.

Throughout my research my studio practice was focused on developing a range of musical materials, devices and techniques as evidenced in my journal.\textsuperscript{90} Whilst the majority of my practice appears to have been focused on the development and refinement of tone, embouchure flexibility, sound projection and breath-control (influencing registral and timbral outcomes as well as control over specific techniques), I also practised specific compositions (original and other via professional engagement as an interpreter), worked on the development of technique (including tuning, the attack of notes and finger work), and the facilitation and usage of melodic and harmonic devices through the practice of scales, arpeggios, intervallic and melodic patterns, improvising over specific chord progressions, and free improvisation. The majority of my practice was undertaken on the Flute and Saxophone, regularly alternating between: developing control

\textsuperscript{89} See Appendix A, pp. 104 & 134 and Appendix B, pp. 45-46 & 93, 105.

\textsuperscript{90} See Appendix B, pp. 1-107.
over tone, timbre, techniques and the like through focus on specific exercises and; allowing ‘freedom’ for exploration and spontaneity through improvisation and allowing my energetic patterns of the day to lead my development of musical ideas and intensities.\footnote{See Appendix B, p. 78.}

Tone development was explored in every practice session, primarily by working on specific tone exercises such as: long tones; harmonics; the attack, sustain and decay of tones; and the addition of vibrato, various ‘air’ sounds and effects.\footnote{See Appendix B, pp. 7, 11, 22-23, 46, 60-61, 63, 65, 68-70 & 77.} There was a prominent focus on embouchure, muscular support of the air stream and the other physical aspects of tone production.\footnote{See Appendix B, pp. 7-8, 52-53 & 69.} It is also apparent that even whilst working on technique, harmonic devices, improvisation and the like my focus was regularly drawn towards refining my tone and developing awareness toward the physical effort of controlling sound production throughout my ‘performance’ of the materials I was practising.\footnote{See Appendix B, pp. 4, 8, 12, 14, 36, 59, 68-70 & 73-75.} In this respect my primary focus throughout my studio practice was upon my personal relationship to the production of musical sound; an energetic and sonic relationship between me, my instrument, musical ideas and the sounds I generated. I would describe this as engaging with the ‘higher’ aspects of musical performance – not just the nuts and bolts of materials, but the various ways in which I execute and energetically manipulate those materials in respect to variations in dynamics, timbre, sonorous intensities and the like, as well as the consideration of phrasing, stylistic approach and the generation of form or projection of a ‘through line.’ It is evident that my relationship to the generation of musical sound was profoundly energetic. I therefore related to the production of musical sound on a physical as well as intellectual level\footnote{Understanding the physics of the instrument, music theory, generating and implementing musical ideas, etcetera.} as implicit understanding of both the energetic parameters and energetic impetus that generates that sound and manipulates expressive materials is required for optimal performance outcomes.
Therefore, as I worked through specific technical exercises I engaged myself physically in order to produce the correct notes, move between registers, maintain or manipulate volume, tonal properties and other such expressive devises. Specific intervallic leaps require specific variations in breath manipulation; namely velocity and air pressure (achieved via muscular ‘support’ and embouchure manipulation) – and therefore as I practised specific intervallic material and patterns I also practised the technique of sound production. During my practice I strove to generate a level of efficacy between my energetic output and the sounds I created. I described this in my journal as generating a feeling of effortlessness in which I no longer consciously focused on the physicality of sound production but “sail[ed] across registers in a relaxed way, feeling no element of pushing, forcing [or] striving.” Adequate control over the energetic demands of the instrument therefore facilitates ease of musical expression and it is through my practice that I obtain this efficacy.

This efficacy not only relates to the generation of tone but also incorporates the implementation of appropriate harmonic and melodic materials in improvisation and in order to develop my skills in this aspect of my playing I practised a range of harmonic and melodic exercises as well as improvisation over specific chord progressions. The majority of technical exercises practised throughout this documented period of studio practice were various excerpts from Nicholas Slonimsky’s *Thesaurus of Scales and Melodic Patterns*, David Baker’s *Modern Concepts in Jazz Improvisation* and Oliver Nelson’s *Patterns for Improvisation*. The purpose of practising these exercises was primarily to develop technical fluency across the entire range of the instrument in all keys and tonalities by focusing on specific fingering patterns. I also hoped that practice of this material would introduce new harmonic and melodic materials to my vocabulary with the knowledge that over time practised materials often resurface in improvisations.

During this period of my research I was becoming aware of my habitual use of

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96 See Appendix B, p. 48.
97 See Appendix B, pp. 16, 24, 29, 47, 62 & 77.
specific materials in my performed improvisations and wanted to extend my musical vocabulary by introducing new melodic material.99

However, as McMillan observed (McMillan 1996, pp. 44-47), an important aspect of developing a personal voice lies in the generation of original materials, not to reproduce material devised by others. To this end I also generated my own melodic patterns100 which primarily involved the diminished scale, modes of the harmonic minor scale and an exploration of major 6ths. I also set about developing my own scales and ways of traversing the melodic contours that these created via the varied structures of these atypical, predominantly six-note scales as is evidenced in the following sketches (Figures 5.3 and 5.4).

Figure 5.3 – Example 1: Original scale and related patterns developed for practice.

99 This was first observed on October 24, 2011; Appendix A, p. 132 and again on March 11, 2013; Appendix B, p. 20. Unfortunately I did not document the specifics of which materials I found to be used habitually; this would have provided great insight towards my developing awareness of the application of materials. See Chapter Seven for an examination of habitual or sub-conscious use of specific materials.

100 See Appendix B, pp. 3, 9, 11, 15, 20, 29 & 65.
Specific materials developed whilst practising my instruments can be found in recordings of live performance (such as intervallic patterns) and in my compositional output (such as the use of original scales) insinuating that to develop material in the practice room facilitates the use of this material in improvisation and composition by providing familiarity with content, adding the materials to my sound palette – the material at my disposal to be used in the context of musical works. However, material developed over the last twenty years plays a more prominent part in my improvisations suggesting that my palette of sounds has been built over many years, rendering the material as readily accessible in improvisation. As a result of many years of developing material through studio practice I have been able to construct a musical vocabulary which I utilise throughout my improvisations. This vocabulary has been cultivated over an extensive period and cannot be attributed to being obtained solely within the timeframe of my research, however, this vocabulary has been ‘practised’ in the

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101 The addition of the enharmonically repeated note holds its implications in negotiating tunings for the Harp in a six note scale, yet I enjoyed the sound of utilising the A sharp and B flat in my development of patterns.

102 This will be discussed in more detail in Chapters Seven and Six respectively.

103 See Appendix A, p. 231.
studio; manipulated, de-constructed, re-constructed and articulated in performance. This aspect of my personal voice will be examined more thoroughly in Chapter Seven.

I will now undertake a brief analysis of the creative processes of rehearsing and performing.

Development Process:
Rehearsing and Performing

The most significant outcome arising from these activities was rehearsing and performing with an ensemble that has stable members. This enabled the development of an ensemble sound, achieved by celebrating each member of the ensemble whilst also developing the attributes of my compositional output.\textsuperscript{104} The ensemble worked toward cultivating the atmosphere and style that was insinuated within each score, uniting in intent towards a common goal; to realise my works in formed sound. This realisation takes into account not only the stylistic attributes but the energetic impetus that generates musical form by sculpting dynamics, balancing instrumental parts, building intensities, the attack of notes etcetera. Whilst this is negotiated in real-time in performance, in rehearsals we were able to negotiate performance intentions as an ensemble. When generating the scores of my compositions I intentionally did not dictate specifics in terms of dynamic relationships and the attack of notes as I wanted to develop this aspect of my works in rehearsals – listening to the ways in which people interpret the score and developing (particularly sectional) ways of uniting in approach. This required the ensemble members to interact with one another and the higher aspects of music in a way that matured over time. The intent here was that the ensemble sound generated through this process would be a culmination of each of our individual sounds, coalescing with that of other ensemble members as well as that of the composition itself. In this way I hoped the ensemble could develop its own distinctive qualities in addition to those contained in the score.

\textsuperscript{104} See Appendix B, p. 38.
In the month leading up to recording these works I organised a month-long residency at a local bar so that the ensemble could gain as much live performance experience of the compositions as logistically possible. During this period of development (November 6-27, 2013) it appeared as though the band focused on re-producing each composition in the best light possible with less experimentation and more ‘accurate’ interpretation of the works in-built attributes. The band played more succinctly, with a tighter, much more controlled overall sense of ensemble sound and purpose in these later performances; balancing instrumental parts, shaping the overall structure and building improvisations together.\textsuperscript{105} It is audibly decipherable, by listening to the entire recorded documentation of live performances, that as the development of the works progressed the ensemble obviously came to understand the form, style and timbral quality insinuated within the composition. Additionally, with understanding came fluency, the establishment of a ‘through-line’ which holds the performance of the works together, giving the performances direction and focus. It is interesting to note that in my journal on June 20, 2013 I talk about wanting to begin discussions about recording with the ensemble in order to generate heightened focus towards the public performance of the works.\textsuperscript{106}

In response to analysing the results of live performances a few arrangement and orchestration details changed over the course of the development phase of these compositions. These include: performing “The Elevator” on C Melody Saxophone rather than Flute; performing “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company” on Alto Flute rather than the C Melody Saxophone; deciding to orchestrate “Synthetic Strings” for C Melody Saxophone, Alto Saxophone and Trumpet as opposed to Flute, Tenor Saxophone and Trumpet; deciding which compositions suited Contra or Electric Bass; deciding to segue “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company” with “La Sortie” and; extending the form of “The Elevator” to include an additional D Section after the solo.

\textsuperscript{105} This was gauged by how well the works were played according to my internal sense of how they should energetically, timbrally and dynamically sound.

\textsuperscript{106} See Appendix B, pp. 71-72.
Throughout the process of rehearsing and performing I was also able to decide, for the purpose of the forthcoming recording, which ensemble member suited which song as a soloist. In live performances I provided the opportunity for each musician to experiment with their improvisations on each song, developing content and adequate energetic familiarity with the demands of each work. As I intended to showcase one soloist per composition it was important to gauge which soloist performed the strongest on each work, allowing for the most dynamic improvisation possible. As I had previously never recorded a solo on the Saxophone I was particularly interested in showcasing myself as an improviser on two works, firstly as a Flautist on “There’s a Tiger on the Run,” the solo section of which had been constructed in a way that would allow for extensive exploration of chords that demanded the use of original scales, (following the development of these scales in practice) and secondly as a Saxophonist on “The Elevator,” the solo section of which I disliked performing on the Flute but felt suited my sound on the Saxophone.

Production Process:
Recording and Mixing La Sortie

Although performance was a major part of the recording process my discussion here is rather in regard to my process as a producer. As the composer and producer of the recordings, a focused approach toward the process of recording was integral to obtaining the best results possible for the album La Sortie. I considered factors such as: having the music well prepared (through rehearsals and ample performance opportunities); organising who would solo on each work and; allowing for ample opportunity for each ensemble member to become comfortable in the physical and aural space – being happy with their tone, their headphone mix, being able to make eye contact with each other and other such concerns. Even the catering was managed in a way as to provide healthy fresh food for optimal performance. By working with an engineer who is both familiar with the music and with whom I had a long-standing professional relationship was the other integral factor in planning the recording. I decided to work with the same
engineer for all stages of the production process including recording, mixing and mastering as I saw the role of the engineer as being another member of the ensemble, working toward a common goal of capturing the music in the best possible way. Part of this process was to record the music as per a live performance, with all members of the ensemble playing together in the same room with very few overdubs. In this way my considerations in mixing were focused on shaping the overall ensemble sound, rather than editing and splicing the recording together, in order to present the album as authentically to the live performance context as possible.

As discussed in Chapter Four, the process of producing the album brought me to a similar creative state as witnessed in the compositional phase of this research, however, in this instance I was able to actively sculpt the sound world rather than just imagine how this world would sound. The resulting feeling was one of being inextricably linked to the sounds I was manipulating, as if they were once again being generated by my own creative intent, but now were being fully realised as audible sound rather than the generation of a score. I experienced this sensation as moving deeper into the works I had created; an emotively and energetically charged deep response that touched me profoundly. The music was both internalised experientially and aurally externalised leaving me with the feeling of being inextricably physically part of what was taking shape in production.

In producing the album my considerations were drawn toward how I could present my music in the most succinct, authentic way; how I could amply re-create my internal sonic landscape, presenting it to society as a product of my creative existence. Via the processes of producing the album La Sortie and releasing it through a public performance it became strongly apparent that what I was presenting was a representation of who I was as a creative being at that point in my life – an aural symbolic representation of my creative processes. By actively

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107 See Chapter Four.
108 See Appendix B, pp. 102-103.
110 See Appendix B, p. 116.
developing and producing the album La Sortie I generated an enriching experience that spoke to my very existence. On March 23, 2014 I wrote in my journal

“I AM a musician, an improvisor, a composer, an interpreter, a teacher, a gardener, an active outdoorsy type, a thinker. All these elements contribute to my sense of identity and contemplating this identity ... situates me in this life, in my actions – gives me intentionality, authenticity, enlightenment” (Appendix B, p. 110).

By my actions, throughout my research, I effectively became the creative musician I strove to be, providing me with a sense of identity which was in part generated by the music I creatively produced. As my actions were shaped by the creation of musical sound, it became clear that I had a personal connection to the sounds I created during this time. This connection was primarily energetic; tapping into the very force that impelled me to create and generate musical sound. Indeed the most re-occurring observation that has arisen throughout this chapter is in regard to the energetic demands and responses I associate with creative processes, whether they relate to playing an instrument, composing works or producing recordings. Perhaps it is this energetic response that personalises my relationship with the cultivation of musical sound, generating the perception of conceptual attachment to, and self-expression via energetic interaction with the sounds I produce (as a performer or in composition).

Throughout this chapter I have discussed the creative processes involved in developing compositions and improvisatory material for the purpose of producing a studio album with the ensemble ‘Lo-Res.’ Beginning with the process of composing, then discussing practice methodologies, live performance practises and production processes, I have analysed the specific outcomes as evident in my journal and in live recordings to examine the experiences gained through a broad range of creative processes. I have suggested that via my creative activities I cultivate my sense of identity, becoming the person my actions define me to be. As these actions are embedded in the generation of audible sound I will now utilise the studio recordings of all three albums produced in the course of my research to examine the audible features of my musical output to discover the distinguishing
features of my *sound* as a composer and an improviser in regard to defining my *Artistic Identity* as Guercio’s “stamp of the artist” discernible in the body of my works (Guercio 2006, p. 29), with a view to discerning how my energetic state contributes to this *sound*. 
Chapter Six

Analysis of Compositional Sound:

My research suggests that the audible stamp of my Artistic Identity as a composer and improviser can be found in the constructs that form the content of my compositions and improvisations. As outlined in Chapter Five, these constructs are derived from an engagement with the generation of materials via a range of physical, conceptual, aesthetic, intellectual and emotive considerations. Engaging with creative processes in this way provides a means by which the meaningful production of musical sound can occur, and for me, this is experienced as an energetic response; a force that propels me to generate and create musical sound. Via the medium of music and years of experimenting with and developing the materials and processes that form compositions and improvisations, I have become the musician I am today; an active performer and recording artist. Throughout this career I have worked toward cultivating a personal voice via which I propose I am able to express myself, albeit it via an abstract form. It is the harnessing of energetic forces instigated through the generation of musical constructs that instigates this notion of self-expression.

As McMillan asserts, the prospect of cultivating a personal voice is reliant on the development of appropriate skills to facilitate self-expression and stylistic independence (McMillan 1996 pp. 56-66). She also asserts that the development of original composition is a major contributing factor to the development of this personal voice, stating that “when people have control over their own material and can choose the type of structure which facilitates their own improvisational flow, the possibility of a personal voice developing is greatly enhanced” (McMillan 1996, p. 64; italics added). Following McMillan it could be said that to compose original works enables the determination of my own direction and the facilitation of my own improvisatory voice via the construction of works that highlight my strengths as an improviser. Secondarily, by choosing to play alongside like-minded musicians – musicians who will best support my creative vision – I am able to instigate the realisation of creative intentions by engendering appropriate performance
aesthetics. Thus, via the musicians with whom I perform, I am able to create music that I energetically, aesthetically and intellectually align with, enabling the notion of identifying with its content as primarily being personally generated and secondarily facilitating the performance of my personal voice; the outward manifestation of my Artistic Identity.

Through years of refining compositional processes and developing stylistically individual material, influenced but not derivative of external sources, I have cultivated a compositional sound. This Chapter examines my compositional sound via an examination of the distinctive features of my compositional output which I utilise in performance as a vehicle for improvisation to discover how I establish a framework for the performance of my Artistic Identity. I will then examine, in the following Chapter, the distinctive features of my sound as an improviser, a sound that is framed by original compositions.

Recording twenty-one of my compositions dating from 1995-2014 provided me with a platform via which I could critically examine the distinctive features of my compositional output, the sound of which I propose constructs my Artistic Identity as a composer. I discovered that there are a number of compositional features evident in my recorded catalogue of works which stand out as being distinctive, namely: contrapuntal melodies; motivic development; the cyclical characteristics of melodic lines; the ‘angularity’ of melodic lines and; the utilisation of metrical frameworks. I have chosen to examine these particular features over others that may be identified as I find their affectual quality as being personally representational of particular modes of being or indicative of creative considerations.

As this research focuses on my experience of being a create musician, my intent is to disclose the relationship between the audible features of my compositional sound and the processes that generate these features. Rather than a musicological analysis the following discussion is therefore limited to an examination of my personal relationship to the compositional techniques I employ and the audible features of my works as presented throughout this research. As a result, the
features I will discuss below provide meaning towards the generation of content, connecting me personally with the audible constructs I generate. The recognition of this affectual content has been gained through examining my performance experiences and the creative decisions made during the process of composition, as evidenced in my journals. Throughout the following discussion I will reference audio examples to highlight the audible features evidenced in my primary recorded dataset as found on the albums *Saveja*, *Voyeur* and *La Sortie*.

Contrauntal Melodies:

The most distinctive feature of my compositional output dating from 2009-2013 is the use of three to five part melodic lines, which are primarily constructed over a modal pad. The utilisation of the three part horn section of ‘Lo-Res’ was the impetus behind developing my contrapuntal melodic approach to composition through which I aimed to generate a number of interweaving parts, each of which could stand alone as a functioning melody. Primary examples include: “Ophelia’s Dance;“111” "Forget Me Not;"112” “Cut Lunch;“113” “23 Heads on a Highway;“114” “The Sisters of Mercy;“115” “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company“116” and; “There’s a Tiger on the Run.“117” Other works of this period are less distinctive in such contrapuntal melodic construction, however, elements also occur in: “Synthetic Strings;“118” “The Elevator;“119” “La Sortie.“120”

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111 Appendix C, Track 7; Appendix F, Page 29.
112 Appendix C, Track 8; Appendix F, Page 18.
113 Appendix C, Track 9; Appendix F, Page 36.
114 Appendix C, Track 10; Appendix F, Page 65.
115 Appendix C, Track 11; Appendix F, Page 53.
116 Appendix C, Track 12; Appendix F, Page 81.
117 Appendix C, Track 13; Appendix F, Page 40.
118 Appendix C, Track 14; Appendix F, Page 60.
119 Appendix C, Track 15; Appendix F, Page 69.
120 Appendix C, Track 16; Appendix F, Page 87.
It is evident that my generation of supportive melodic lines (Harp, Bass and Guitar) has been an aspect of my compositional output prior to and outside my composition of works composed specifically for ‘Lo-Res,’ and is perhaps an early indication of my interest in generating contrapuntal melodic constructs. Such examples are: the Bass and main melody of "Longth and the Slodge;\(^{121}\) the main two melodies of “Evangelist;\(^{122}\) (originally composed for Flute and Bass but presented in ‘Lo-Res’ as Flute, Saxophone and Trumpet); the Guitar and Bass lines of “I Said Only Once\(^{123}\) and “Voyeur;\(^{124}\) the original Bass and melodic line in “Pardalote” as heard on the album Saveja;\(^{125}\) the Bass/Harp and Flute melodies of “The Divide Pt. II \(^{126}\) and; the Harp and Flute melodies of “The Undisclosed Question.\(^{127}\)

Additionally, in developing “Pardalote” for the ensemble ‘Lo-Res’ in 2012, I composed a new section involving contrapuntal melodic lines to incorporate the addition of Trumpet and Saxophone, ultimately extending the composition in order to enhance the evocative mood of the work.\(^{128}\)

In constructing contrapuntal melodies I examined features of the primary melodic line, considering the ways in which I could enhance or compliment energetic and evocative elements as generated by melodic contour, phrase structure, rhythmic, metrical and intervallic content. Contrapuntal melodies predominantly compliment the primary line; following, interweaving with or mirroring the melodic contour, and reiterate the rhythmic, metrical and intervallic content. However, contrapuntal melodies were additionally developed in order to create a contrasting melody with its own set of musical parameters (such as those of “Longth and the Slodge,” “Voyeur” and the Trumpet melodies of “The Goodnight

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\(^{121}\) Appendix C, Track 17; Appendix F, Page 21.
\(^{122}\) Appendix C, Track 18; Appendix F, Page 33.
\(^{123}\) Appendix C, Track 19; Appendix F, Page 26.
\(^{124}\) Appendix C, Track 20; Appendix F, Page 22.
\(^{125}\) Appendix C, Track 21; Appendix F, Page 5.
\(^{126}\) Appendix C, Track 22; Appendix F, Page 10.
\(^{127}\) Appendix C, Track 23; Appendix F, Page 1.
\(^{128}\) Appendix C, Track 24; Appendix F, Page 34.
Pharmaceutical Company” and “The Sisters of Mercy”). Whilst melodic contour was the primary focus of generating contrapuntal lines, my choices were additionally made in relation to harmonic considerations with compositional decisions significantly driven by the intent to incorporate harmonic interest through the incorporation of parallel, similar, contrary or oblique motion – filling out the vertical spectrum through the consideration of voice leading and the generation of tension and release via the movement between chord extensions and chord tones. Whilst resolution points occur frequently throughout individual melodies, these points rarely coincide with all instrumental parts, with one or more melodies moving off toward the development of the next phrase. This generates an overall impression of constant movement toward a final closing cadence which itself may not (and rarely does) resolve. The regular movement between dissonance and consonance combined with the interweaving nature of contrapuntal melodies is a distinctive audible feature of my compositional sound.

This entire process of constructing contrapuntal melodies is reminiscent of the way in which I have developed chord progressions for compositions, a process I refer to as ‘taking a line for a walk.’

Harmonic Development: Taking a Line for a Walk

As I wrote in my journal on February 11, 2011 ”My fascination with voice leading has been the strongest motivation behind my development of chord structures, a process through which each voice of the chord has a role in developing the progressions that arise” (Appendix A, p. 9). This is a melodic ‘voice leading’ approach which predominantly utilised the Piano as a composition tool. During this approach I would play a series of notes simultaneously, listening to the individual voices within the chord, with each suggesting how it would melodically like to move. The chords and their particular voicings arose from these movements which I would initially sketch out using notation alone, leaving the spelling of chords (utilising symbols) until the progression had been completed. This leading by individual voices of a chord is reliant on the overall relationship between the
three or four voices and the series of chords that resulted, however, the progression was fundamentally a by-product of this intuitive method of construction over considerations of functionality and traditional modes of generating harmonic movement. This process of constructing chordal movements via the cultivation of melodic flow reminds me of Paul Klee’s depiction of generating motion between points – “An active line on a walk, moving freely, without goal. A walk for a walk’s sake. The mobility agent is a point [or in this case a note], shifting its position forward [through a melodic progression]” (Klee 1953, p. 16) – an inductive rather than deductive approach to generating form. I would take my melodies inherent in the chord structure ‘on a walk’ and let them dictate where they wanted to go – “To be impelled toward motion and not to be the motor” (Klee 1953, p. 54).

The reference to Paul Klee’s notion of ‘taking a line for a walk’ is not intended to assert that his approach was an influential factor to the process of composition, as I was not introduced to Klee’s expression until many years after this compositional process had been generated. However, I do at this point in time see a correlation between my methods and the process that he outlined in his Pedagogical Sketchbook (Klee 1953). This method of developing a chord structure via taking each voice in the chord for a ‘walk’ generates unresolved harmonic cadence points which enhances the suggestion of constant motion as eluded to in my discussion of contrapuntal melodies, a compositional sound that is indicative to works such as: “Etchings;129” Poly;130 “Evangelist;131” and “The Divide Pt. II132” as well as the opening sections of: “Forget Me Not;133” “The Elevator;134” and “There’s a Tiger on the Run.135”

129 Appendix C, Track 25; Appendix F, Page 39.
130 Appendix C, Track 26; Appendix F, Page 39.
131 Appendix C, Track 27; Appendix F, Page 33.
132 Appendix C, Track 28; Appendix F, Page 6.
133 Appendix C, Track 29; Appendix F, Page 18.
134 Appendix C, Track 30; Appendix F, Page 69.
135 Appendix C, Track 31; Appendix F, Page 40.
Motivic Development:

The second most striking aspect of my compositional output is the way in which I utilise motivic development, with all twenty-one works exhibiting an array of such techniques. This was primarily an outcome of generating melodic material, but was also a product of developing metrical constructs (see the section on Metrical Frameworks below).

The most obvious use of motifs can be found in my riff based compositions such as: “Longth and the Slodge;” 136 “Voyeur;” 137 “I Said Only Once;” 138 “Synthetic Strings” 139 and the improvisation section of “Pardalote” 140 as well as the Bass lines of numerous other compositions including: “23 Heads on a Highway;” 141 “Ophelia’s Dance;” 142 “Cut Lunch” 143 and; “There’s a Tiger on the Run,” 144 in which repetition of a simple melodic Bass line and Guitar riff underlies the entire composition.


136 Appendix C, Track 32; Appendix F, Page 21.
137 Appendix C, Track 33; Appendix F, Page 22.
138 Appendix C, Track 34; Appendix F, Page 26.
139 Appendix C, Track 35; Appendix F, Page 60.
140 Appendix C, Track 36; Appendix F, Page 5.
141 Appendix C, Track 37; Appendix F, Page 65.
142 Appendix C, Track 38; Appendix F, Page 29.
143 Appendix C, Track 39; Appendix F, Page 36.
144 Appendix C, Track 40; Appendix F, Page 40.
145 Appendix C, Track 41; Appendix F, Page 81.
146 Appendix C, Track 42; Appendix F, Page 29.
147 Appendix C, Track 43; Appendix F, Page 53.
148 Appendix C, Track 44; Appendix F, Page 36.
Elevator” (C Section) and; “There’s a Tiger on the Run” (sections A2, B2 and ‘theme’), again where repetition aids the establishment of a clear motif.

This type of motivic development primarily generates a cyclic motion (a distinctive element of my compositional output I will discuss below), however, motivic development is also evident in non-cyclic melodic activity in: “The Divide Pt. III” (composed modules 1, 2 and 3); the lead-in and anticipation notes that begin the majority of phrases in “Fortunata” and “Voyeur”; the contrapuntal melodic lines of “Evangelist” “Forget Me Not” and “Cut Lunch” in which specific rhythmic patterns are featured in each of the horn lines at different moments and; in works in which a clear gestural motive (both rhythmic and intervallic) drove the construction of single melodic lines as is evident in "I Said only Once" “Etchings” and “Poly”

On a broader level, there are strong thematic elements evident across a range of different compositions which could be viewed as a form of motivic development. For example, the Bass line of “Longth and the Slodge,” (figure 6.1) composed in 1997, presents a theme which I distinguish in a number of other works written between 2011-2013.

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149 Appendix C, Track 45; Appendix F, Page 69.
150 Appendix C, Track 46; Appendix F, Page 40.
151 Appendix C, Track 47; Appendix F, Page 10.
152 Appendix C, Track 48; Appendix F, Page 13.
153 Appendix C, Track 49; Appendix F, Page 22.
154 Appendix C, Track 50; Appendix F, Page 33.
155 Appendix C, Track 51; Appendix F, Page 18.
156 Appendix C, Track 52; Appendix F, Page 36.
157 Appendix C, Track 53; Appendix F, Page 26.
158 Appendix C, Track 54; Appendix F, Page 39.
159 Appendix C, Track 55; Appendix F, Page 39.
This theme is strikingly similar in structure, intervallic and rhythmic content to the Bass lines of “There’s a Tiger on the Run” (figure 6.2), “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company” (Figure 6.3), “Cut Lunch” (Figure 6.4) and “Synthetic Strings” (Figure 6.5).

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160 Appendix C, Track 56; Appendix F, Page 21.
161 Appendix C, Track 57; Appendix F, Page 40.
162 Appendix C, Track 58; Appendix F, Page 81.
163 Appendix C, Track 59; Appendix F, Page 36.
164 Appendix C, Track 60; Appendix F, Page 60.
The melodic contours of this material is also similar to that of the melodic lines of “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company” (Figure 6.6) and “The Sisters of Mercy” (Figure 6.7) the contour of which rise and fall in a similar fashion over the duration of phrases.

Figure 6.6 – Melodic lines of “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company. $^{165}$

Figure 6.7 – Melodic lines of “The Sisters of Mercy. $^{166}$

With five of these six examples written in a relatively short period of time it is evident that the use of thematic material is a distinctive characteristic of my recent compositional output, one that was applied sub-consciously as I did not intentionally inter-relate the material of these compositions, yet the content of

$^{165}$ Appendix C, Track 61; Appendix F, Page 81.

$^{166}$ Appendix C, Track 62; Appendix F, Page 53.
these phrases generated momentum for the process of composition. It seems that I have been drawn to particular melodic and rhythmic constructs which I have regularly utilised in the development of compositions within this period of research, suggesting that the inspiration for composition has arisen from an interest to emulate a specific mode of being. However, an examination of an additional phase of composition would be required to confirm this theory.

Regardless, it is clear that I have regularly incorporated specific themes and a range of motifs into a high proportion of my compositional output. In addition to this I detect particular energetic emulations that are generated via my use of this material; specifically, a cyclic motion that I liken to environmental patterns.

Cyclic motion:

As mentioned above, motivic development which utilised extensive repetition also aided the generation a cyclic movement, another sub-consciously driven yet distinctive aspect of my compositional output. Although this aspect of my compositional output is reminiscent of minimalism, I see a more personal connection to my generation of cyclic activity; that this is generative of my perspective on life. Although I live in the inner suburbs of Melbourne I live quite close to the natural environment. I have a productive garden, growing my own food, observing the seasonal changes; birds and insects come and go, plants grow, flower, seed and die off. I also consider my practice as being ephemeral; the phases of composition, performance and practice feature at differing periods of time. Likewise, I perceive the stages of and routines in life as ephemeral or cyclical activity, and perhaps this takes effect in the music I compose.

Motivic development and the repetitions generated through this development is the predominant aspect that insinuates the cyclical nature of the materials I utilised in composition, particularly in works composed during the course of this research. However, the majority of phrasing and form generation was also distinctively cyclical. My generation of structural form occurred organically
throughout the majority of my compositional processes arising from the generation of material in which aspects of this form, such as the shape of phrases, duration, intensity and the like was dependant on energetic considerations (the impetus generated by the idea led the development of form rather than me implementing a pre-conceived form).  

Yet it must be said that my approach to composition has been highly influenced by traditional and contemporary jazz forms in which a composed melody or ‘head,’ complete with chordal accompaniment scored as a ‘lead sheet,’ is played at the start and end of a work with an improvisation in the middle. This type of form is cyclic as the reiteration of the ‘head’ at the end of the performance brings the work back to reference the beginning of the form, usually after cycling through the chord structure of the improvisation a number of times. Although I haven’t strictly followed this type of form across my compositional output, the majority of my compositions (performed by ‘Lo-Res’ in particular) have involved the performance of a ‘head’ at the beginning and end of the work with an improvisation section in the middle.

Beyond these implications, I detect within the ‘higher’ structurally cyclic form that the majority of phrase constructions (those which were not based on the repetition of motifs) are also evidently cyclic. In order to highlight this cyclic activity I will look to a number of select compositions. “23 Heads on a Highway” presents its cyclic movement firstly as a small, frequently recurring module played by the Bass (Figure 6.8).

Figure 6.8 – Bass cycle from “23 Heads on a Highway.”  

167 Gavin Bryars discusses a similar compositional process in his article “Ornithology for the Birds,” stating that “I let the form compose itself ... without any sense of formal planning or preconception, only being led by the consequence of each musical gesture” (Zorn 2010, p. 31).

168 Appendix C, Track 63.
This was overlayed with an eight bar phrase played by the horn section (segmented into two, two bar phrases and one four bar phrase in the Trumpet and Saxophone parts) (Figure 6.9).

Figure 6.9 – Melody cycle from “23 Heads on a Highway. 169”

This is then overlayed with an eight bar phrase played by the Guitar (Figure 6.10).

Figure 6.10 – Guitar melody from “23 Heads on a Highway. 170”

This phrase returns again, slightly altered, after the B section (bringing the ‘head’ to a close), this time played by the Trumpet (Figure 6.11).

169 Appendix C, Track 64.
170 Appendix C, Track 65.
All melodic lines rise and fall over the duration of their respective eight bar phrases. I liken this particular generation of cyclic form to tidal movements (rising and falling, progressing and receding or an expansion and contraction). In “The Divide Pt. II” I again established a small, frequently recurring module, played by the Harp. The alternation between two chords during this section generates a motion of rocking back and forth, again reminiscent of tidal movement. Over the top of this short cyclic movement, a single melodic line presents a series of short phrases each with a gentle rising and falling motion. As the work continues into the B Section a larger cycle is formed via the repetition of a series of eight chords, again overlaid with rising and falling phrases, although this time the phrases are more angular in characteristic.

These two works are but two examples of the cyclic motion of my phrasing characteristics, others include the undulating phrases found in the melodic phrases of: “There’s a Tiger on the Run” (‘theme’); “The Sisters of Mercy; “The Elevator; “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company; “Etchings;
“Poly180” and; “Ophelia’s Dance,181” as well as being present, although less prominent a feature, in “Fortunata182” and “The Divide Pt. III.183”

Whilst cyclic phrasing is a feature of many of my compositions, another predominant melodic feature, as indicated above, stands out as being a distinctive characteristic of my compositional *sound*. I refer here to the ‘angularity’ of many of my melodic phrases.

‘Angularity:’

The ‘angularity’ of my compositional output was suggested by a colleague and is not a term I would personally have attributed to my compositional output, however, as it has been recognised I will examine the implications of what I perceive ‘angular’ musical content to be. I use the term ‘angular’ here to describe the wider intervallic fluctuations which are prominent in a number of my compositions; primarily found amongst smaller passages and repeated motifs, but also found in many Bass/Guitar riffs. I also use the term ‘angular’ here to reference the jarring nature of specific melodic contours, or the harmonic relationship between certain chord voicings (as performed by the Guitar and bass, or melodic instruments). ‘Angular’ melodic content is evident in fourteen of twenty-three compositions with ‘angular’ lines particularly evident in nine early works: “I Said Only Once;184” “The Divide Pt. II;185” “The Divide Pt. III;186” “Cut Lunch;187” “Etchings;188” “Evangelist;189” “Length and the Slodge190” and; Through the Cracks” (Module One).191

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180 Appendix C, Track 75; Appendix F, Page 39.
181 Appendix C, Track 76; Appendix F, Page 29.
182 Appendix C, Track 77; Appendix F, Page 13.
183 Appendix C, Track 78; Appendix F, Page 10.
184 Appendix D, Track 1; Appendix F, Page 26.
185 Appendix D, Track 2; Appendix F, Page 6.
186 Appendix D, Track 3; Appendix F, Page 10.
187 Appendix D, Track 4; Appendix F, Page 36.
188 Appendix D, Track 5; Appendix F, Page 39.
'Angular' lines are less a feature of, yet can also be distinguished in six of my recent compositions: the 'theme' of: "There's a Tiger on the Run;" the three main melodies of "The Sisters of Mercy;" the Bass/Guitar riff of "Synthetic Strings;" the Guitar melody of "23 Heads on a Highway;" the introduction and theme of "The Elevator" and; the three main melodies of "The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company.

This suggests that I have consistently incorporated 'angular' melodic lines into my compositions and that this could indeed be a prominent feature of my compositional output.

The tonal aspect that gives the majority of my works their 'angular' character is the way in which I utilise large intervals of fourths and above; particularly imperfect fourths and fifths, sixths (predominantly minor), sevenths (predominantly major) and ninths (including sharp nines and flat nines). These are not only used melodically but are also present within harmonic structures such as the Major 7 #11 chords of "The Elevator" (C Section) and the Minor 9 #11 chords of "There's a Tiger on the Run." These intervals, particularly when used melodically, establish distinct gestural propulsions that present to my ears in a range of affectual ways (depending on the contextual mood of the work), for example; an energetically ecstatic force, a sinister force, or an element of buoyancy – an object that does not sink, but when submerged under water effortlessly pops back up to the surface.

The thematic content evident in the Bass lines of “Longth and the Slodge,” “There’s a Tiger on the Run,” “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company,” “Synthetic Strings”

189 Appendix D, Track 6; Appendix F, Page 33.
190 Appendix D, Track 7; Appendix F, Page 21.
191 Appendix D, Track 8; Appendix F, Page 14.
192 Appendix D, Track 9; Appendix F, Page 40.
193 Appendix D, Track 10; Appendix F, Page 53.
194 Appendix D, Track 11; Appendix F, Page 60.
195 Appendix D, Track 12; Appendix F, Page 65.
196 Appendix D, Track 13; Appendix F, Page 69.
197 Appendix D, Track 14; Appendix F, Page 81.
and “Cut Lunch” (discussed above) all feature wide intervallic passages, each of which establishes a certain mood: a sense of mystery is created by the rising Major 7 of “Longth and the Slodge” and the rising major 7 (via the minor 3rd) and falling major 6ths of “There’s a Tiger on the Run;” a sweeping openness is created by the series of perfect 5ths in the Bass line of “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company” alongside the series of perfect 5ths evident in the Flute lines (a prominent feature amongst the major 6ths 7ths, 9ths and Perfect 11ths); the rising augmented 5th and falling 10ths of the “Synthetic Strings” Bass riff emulates a cheeky ecstaticism, enhanced by the rhythmic pizzicato effect; and the perfect 5ths, augmented 4th, minor and major 9ths and major 6ths of “Cut Lunch” the combination of which generates, with each phrase, a questioning, contemplative mood.

Whilst the melody of “I Said Only Once” is ecstatic, almost celebratory, “The Divide” uses large intervallic leaps to break up undulating linear phrases to create an unsettling effect. The larger intervals featured in the Flute and Bass parts of “Cut Lunch” also generate an unsettling effect, yet provide a sharp contrast to the smooth melodic content of the Saxophone and Trumpet parts which are orchestrated within the centre of the tonal spectrum, the contrapuntal effect of which unites to create a pondering atmosphere that is both cold and strangely comforting. The large intervallic leaps present in the ‘theme’ of “The Elevator” are buoyant and sinister, whilst the buoyant contrapuntal melodies of “The Sisters of Mercy” bubble along like fast moving but turbulent stream. “The

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198 Appendix D, Track 15; Appendix F, Page 21.
199 Appendix D, Track 16; Appendix F, Page 40.
200 Appendix D, Track 17; Appendix F, Page 81.
201 Appendix D, Track 18; Appendix F, Page 81.
202 Appendix D, Track 19; Appendix F, Page 60.
203 Appendix D, Track 20; Appendix F, Page 36.
204 Appendix D, Track 21; Appendix F, Page 26.
205 Appendix D, Track 22; Appendix F, Page 24.
206 Appendix D, Track 23; Appendix F, Page 36.
207 Appendix D, Track 24; Appendix F, Page 69.
208 Appendix D, Track 25; Appendix F, Page 53.
Divide Pt. III” presents its ‘angular,’ rocking intervallic changes amongst a setting of sparse, ‘call and response’ contrapuntal melodic lines. In this case the use of ‘angular’ intervals is more minimal, yet they are placed in a way that contributes to the generation of intensity, heightened by their exposed setting.

“Evangelist” does not contain many of these ‘angular’ intervals, however, the rhythmic aspect of rocking intervallic jumps, beginning in the Trumpet part (originally written for Bass) and echoed in the upper lines provides a humble ‘angularity’ which is regularly softened by the use of smaller intervals and contrapuntal rhythms. “Etchings” also contains few examples of the above mentioned ‘angular’ melodic intervals, aside from the tri-tones present in final four bars, yet again the rhythmic nature of the melody generates an initial feeling of ‘angularity,’ emphasised by ‘angular’ chord voicings, orchestrated on the recording as Trumpet and Saxophone harmonies.

Whilst a notable amount of melodic material is ‘angular’ in content it was often performed legato, particularly in compositions such as “The Sisters of Mercy,” “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company,” “23 Heads on a Highway,” “There’s a Tiger on the Run” and “Cut Lunch.” In these cases the wider intervallic movements are softened by the choice not to articulate the notes strongly, but to generate a more contemplative mood. On the other hand, ‘angularity’ is sometimes enhanced by the use of unusual metrical frameworks, in compositions such as: “The Elevator” (Bridge), “There’s a Tiger on the Run” (Theme), “Cut Lunch” and “I Said Only Once,” however, these

209 Appendix D, Track 26; Appendix F, Page 10.
210 Appendix D, Track 27; Appendix F, Page 33.
211 Appendix D, Track 28; Appendix F, Page 39.
212 Appendix D, Track 29; Appendix F, Page 53.
213 Appendix D, Track 30; Appendix F, Page 81.
214 Appendix D, Track 31; Appendix F, Page 65.
215 Appendix D, Track 32; Appendix F, Page 40.
216 Appendix D, Track 33; Appendix F, Page 36.
217 Appendix D, Track 34; Appendix F, Page 69.
218 Appendix D, Track 35; Appendix F, Page 40.
metrical frameworks are again performed with a gentility in which metrical ‘angularity’ is not enhanced.

The juxtaposition of rhythmic features which cut through the overarching contemplative mood of “Cut Lunch” and “There’s a Tiger on the Run” highlights a notable metric theme that runs through a number of works, namely the movement between groupings of two and three quavers, a strongly thematic feature of my compositional output.

Metrical frameworks:

The utilisation of metrical frameworks arose from both intentional and subconscious applications, although subconscious applications stand out as being the most predominant mode of forming metrical frameworks. Recurring metrical groupings, both within unusual and common time signatures is a strong thematic feature of my compositional output from 2011-2013 with six of nine works featuring metrical implications beyond the indication of a time signature alone. As only two other works to date involve such metrical frameworks it appears that this is becoming a distinctive feature of my current compositional sound. The most predominant groupings involve specific patterns of two and three quavers, evident in four of these nine works.

“There’s a Tiger on the Run” primarily involves the metrical subdivision of seventeen quavers, scored as an alternation between 5/4 and 7/8, but metrically felt as a 3,2,2,3,2,2 pattern of quavers in the Bass and a 2,3,2,3,2,2,3 pattern of quavers in the Guitar,\(^221\) (Figure 6.12) whilst the improvisation section moves into 7/4 with a metrical subdivision of a 3,2,2,3,2,2 pattern of quavers\(^222\) (Figure 6.13).

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\(^{219}\) Appendix D, Track 36; Appendix F, Page 36.

\(^{220}\) Appendix D, Track 37; Appendix F, Page 26.

\(^{221}\) Appendix D, Track 38.

\(^{222}\) Appendix D, Track 39.
Figure 6.12 – Metric subdivisions of “There's a Tiger on the Run” main compositional section.

Figure 6.13 – Metric subdivisions of “There's a Tiger on the Run” improvisation section.

“The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company” primarily involves a time signature of 5/4, metrically subdivided in a 3,3,2,2 pattern of quavers (Figure 6.14) yet the improvisation section moves into a seventeen quaver cycle of a 3,2,3,2,2 pattern (Figure 6.15) which is reminiscent of, but not identical to “There's a Tiger on the Run.”

Figure 6.14 – Metric subdivisions of “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company” main compositional section.

Figure 6.15 – Metric subdivisions of “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company” improvisation section.

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223 Appendix D, Track 40.
224 Appendix D, Track 41.
“Longth and the Slodge” is a work scored in 7/4 which features a 3,3,3,2,3 pattern of quavers in the opening section, 225 (Figure 6.16) a 3,2,2,3,2,2 pattern of quavers in the Bass underscoring a 2,2,3,2,2,3 melodic pattern in the bridge and first improvisation section226 (Figure 6.17) and a 4,4,3,3 pattern of quavers in the second improvisation section227 (Figure 6.18).

Figure 6.16 – Metric subdivisions of “Longth and the Slodge” opening section.

![Figure 6.16](image)

Figure 6.17 – Metric subdivisions of “Longth and the Slodge” bridge and first improvisation section.

![Figure 6.17](image)

Figure 6.18 – Metric subdivisions of “Longth and the Slodge.”

![Figure 6.18](image)

The Bass line of “Cut Lunch,” also reminiscent of “There’s a Tiger on the Run,” features a thirteen quaver cycle scored as an alternation between 7/8 and 3/4 which is metrically subdivided in a 2,2,3,2,2,2 pattern of quavers228 (Figure 6.19).

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225 Appendix D, Track 42.
226 Appendix D, Track 43.
227 Appendix D, Track 44.
228 Appendix D, Track 45.
My use of metrical frameworks moves beyond groupings of two and three quavers, utilising a broad range of durational subdivisions. “The Sisters of Mercy” was scored in the common time signature of 4/4, yet primarily utilises a 3,3,2,4,4 pattern of quavers throughout the ‘head’,\(^\text{229}\) (Figure 6.19) then moves, in the improvisation section to a 4,4,4,2 then a 3,3,3,2,3 pattern of quavers scored in 7/4\(^\text{230}\) (Figure 6.20).

“The Elevator” also features a time signature movement between 4/4 and 7/4, and whilst the majority of the 4/4 sections are structured around crotched beats, the introduction features the Bass and Drums laying out a cyclic pad of 4,6,3,3 semi-quavers\(^\text{231}\) (Figure 6.21) and the 7/4 section is based around a metrical subdivision of a pattern of 6,5,5,3,3,3 semi-quavers\(^\text{232}\) (Figure 6.22).

\(^\text{229}\) Appendix D, Track 46.

\(^\text{230}\) Appendix D, Track 47.

\(^\text{231}\) Appendix D, Track 48.

\(^\text{232}\) Appendix D, Track 49.
“I Said Only Once” was constructed around a metrical framework that was scored in 6/4, subdivided into a pattern of 7,7,6,4 semi-quavers for the Bass and a pattern of 3,4,4,3,6,4 semi-quavers for the Guitar[233](Figure 6.24).

These metrical frameworks were primarily un-intentionally formed, resulting from the establishment of a groove through which to ground each work. However, as stated in Chapter Five, “The Elevator” and “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company” were both composed with the intention of experimenting with metrical implications. In contrast, the compositions composed specifically for the ensemble ‘Saveja’ are typically far less metrically constructed, with three intentionally sculpted without a pulse, or a meter. “Through the Cracks,” “The Divide Pt. III” and “The Undisclosed Question,” all composed between 2008-2011, significantly diverge in style from the rest of my compositional output. These works were scored with no indication of time signature, and although note durations were specified in the score, the intention set for performance was to establish an

233 Appendix D, Track 50.
atmosphere that did not establish a consistent pulse; hence, to be performed *rubato*.

My Compositional *Sound*

The metric, melodic and harmonic implications of the six distinguishing features of my compositional *sound*, as discussed above, are recurring features of my compositional output, particularly of compositions written between 2011-2013. Although I can find evidence of all six features across the majority of works dating back to 1995, the predominant works highlighted in this examination are those presented on the album *La Sortie*; works composed within the time-frame of this investigation. This suggests that to develop a set of works in a defined period of time is to develop a consistency of compositional output and present an identifiable compositional *sound*. Indeed, evaluating the works written specifically for the ensemble ‘Lo-Res’ (from *Voyeur* and *La Sortie*) – the majority of my compositional output from 2010-2013 – I note there is cohesion to my compositional output in terms of content, stylistic and energetic properties. As is evident in the examples presented above I have compositionally developed cohesion between my works particularly those recorded on the album *La Sortie*, specifically via the melodic and contrapuntal constructs and metrical framework of the compositions.

Whilst, for the purpose of the above analysis, I isolated and discussed six distinguishing features of my compositional output, the analysis itself made apparent that these characteristics are not independent of one-another. There is therefore evidence that the inter-relationship of these characteristics – the ways they are combined and interact during the process of composition – ultimately defines my compositional *sound*. In “The Sisters of Mercy” for example, ‘angular’ intervallic material within the melodic motif was established as a cyclic feature through phrase construction as well as through its use of repetition. This material was then developed into a series of contrapuntal melodies through the exploration of harmonic parameters. These elements combine to generate a distinctive *sound*
which is comparable to a number of other works composed for the album *La-Sortie*. One of these works is “The Goodnight Pharmaceutical Company” which again utilises the cyclic repetition of ‘angular’ intervallic material – a primary motif which was utilised in the development of contrapuntal melodies. Additionally, the metric patterns of these two works were integral to the development of motivic material and the generation of cyclic motion.

The melodic contour of the contrapuntal melodies of “23 Heads on a Highway,” “La Sortie” and “Synthetic Strings” are not ‘angular,’ in that they generally rise and fall in a more undulating fashion. However, the harmonic relationship between the contrapuntal melodies could at times be perceived as ‘angular’ due to the use of close voicings and harmonic dissonance. The cyclic motion of these melodies, produced through phrase construction, is established over a longer period of time than the aforementioned works in a way that is comparable to the Bass, Flute, Saxophone and Trumpet melodies of “There’s a Tiger on the Run.” In this later work, however, a smaller cyclic feature is generated by the guitar motif which is repeated throughout the work. The metrical patterns contained in all parts of “There’s a Tiger on the Run” were additionally integral to the development of melodic and harmonic material.

Additional comparisons of the six distinguishing characteristic of my compositional output can be made in relation to all the works presented in this exegesis. Therefore, it becomes apparent that it is the combination of these compositional elements that generates my compositional *sound* as evidenced throughout the majority of works produced throughout my research. Whilst further analysis of the inter-relationship between distinguishing features of my compositional output would provide a musicological insight in regard to the audible features of my compositional *sound*, this research is concerned with my mode of *being* a creative musician. Therefore, my analytical focus resides upon the creative and psychophysical relationship I have with the music I create and the processes that contribute to the realisation of this music.
Comparing the similarities between compositions composed from 2011-2013 and the compositional processes that informed and shaped these works (as discussed in Chapter Six), it seems there are particular sonic constructs that engage me whilst I compose, as these constructs have been incorporated into many of my works. I stipulate that this is due to the way I energetically respond to the stimulation of certain sounds – timbres, intervals, rhythmic patterns and polyphonic interaction. If the sounds invigorate me or touch me emotively, I identify with them and want to bring them into a work. Similarly, when I perform works that contain materials that invigorate creative responses, my improvisations emerged as ‘inspired’ engagement with the materials at hand. This is an energetic engagement that has the ability to transform or reveal aspects of my self or my psyche;\(^{234}\) that impels me to respond on an emotive, intellectual, aesthetic or physical level. This energetic response is integral to my experience of self within the context of being a musician, particularly as a Flautist. Therefore, by creating musical constructs through which I am able to engage with the act of improvisation as a Flautist (and secondarily a Saxophonist) is to speak directly to my mode of being, and facilitate the experience of self-expression.

On the other hand, if I do not identify energetically or aesthetically with the music I perform, I do not engage with the act of improvising on the same level.\(^{235}\) When performing works that do not engage me energetically and aesthetically, I experience the act of performance and improvisation as being somewhat superficial, stimulating the feeling of lacking a personal connection to sounds I produce. Although I may utilise similar materials to those I use when improvising in the context of my own compositions, the experience of being self-expressive is not necessarily present; there is a blockage of sorts that does not allow for free-flowing energetic propulsion. This phenomenon will be examined more in Chapter Eight, however, for now it is important to note that indeed, as suggested by McMillan (McMillan 1997, pp. 56-66), the generation of original compositions, the

\(^{234}\) Carl Jung (1967) speaks of the psyche in his book *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, stating that “We are a psychic process which we do not control, or only partly direct.” (Jung 1967, p. 17). It is this via this perspective that I use the term psyche.

\(^{235}\) See Appendix B, pp. 86-88.
materials of which I identify with, provides a vehicle for self-expression and the continued cultivation of my personal voice.

Throughout this Chapter I have discussed a number of distinctive features that I have found to be poignantly representational of my compositional sound, namely: contrapuntal melodies; motivic development; the cyclical characteristics of melodic lines; the ‘angularity’ of melodic lines and; the utilisation of metrical frameworks. This sound, as discussed in Chapter Four, could be perceived as the expression of my personal voice as a composer – a construct derived through creative processes that combine to generate distinctively audible characteristics evident in my compositional output. This compositional sound is one aspect of my Artistic Identity – the compositional features discernible in the body of my works (Guercio 2006, p. 29). My examination of these features, which have appeared in my works as a subconsciously applied process of generating musical content now provide me with concrete methods for the future exploration of musical materials with the view to enhance and further develop the distinguishing features of my compositional output. To do this presents as a way of engaging with musical processes on a deep level, developing my personal voice as a composer; honing in on the processes that infers meaning onto my practice and presents the opportunity for future self-expression. However, my composition sound is but one aspect of my Artistic Identity. I will now examine my sound as an improviser within the context of performing original music.

236 Gerry Hemingway makes a similar statement in his article “Awake at the Wheel” via the observation that “composers have certain preferences with harmonic color and intervallic choices and these tend to earmark their work” stating that “[t]his could suggest that the colors we gravitate towards reflect some encoded identity” (Zorn 2000, p. 271).

237 See Chapter Eight.
Chapter Seven

Analysis of Improvisatory Sound:

My research situates the analysis of my sound as an improviser within the context of the performance of original musical compositions designed to facilitate improvisation. As McMillan posits, the development of original music through which to express my personal voice as an improviser enables me to highlight and capitalise upon my strengths as an improviser, structuring works which facilitate my own improvisational flow (McMillan 1996, p. 64). Chapter Six examined my compositional sound; the distinctive features of my compositional output which frames and contributes to the facilitation of my personal voice as an improviser. I have proposed throughout my research that these two modes of creative engagement – composition and improvisation – construct my sense of Artistic Identity as via the sonic presentation of my personal voice I am able to be self-expressive; an authentic presentation of creative processes via music. This Chapter investigates the distinctive features of my sound as an improviser to assess whether, via the performance of original compositions, I am indeed able to facilitate self-expression.

McMillan outlines a “network of musical characteristics for identifying a personal voice in musical improvisation” (McMillan 1996, p. 69). She begins by distinguishing between two sets of criteria: ‘Instrumental Characteristics’ and ‘Musical Elements,’ each of which are broken down into a number of sub-categories leading to a list of specific musical elements that could be used to distinguish, by one who is familiar with, an improvisers identity. Throughout this Chapter I will examine the construct of my sound as an improviser in consideration of this criteria to examine whether I incorporate a distinctive array of musical characteristics into my improvisations and whether this generates a recognisable sound; the performed expression of my personal voice. As this list is quite extensive, with the categorisation of some of the elements overlapping in contextual application, I will provide a general over-view of the elements that I find
distinctive in my own improvisations rather than trying to cover an exhaustive list of potential indicators.

The following analysis of my sound as an improviser continues the discussion of what it means to be a creative musician, structured as an exploration of the ecology of self. Therefore, the following analysis will focus on the relationship between the creative processes of developing an improvisatory vocabulary through studio practice and the performed outcomes as evidenced through my recorded dataset.

Musical Characteristics

Examining my recorded dataset it is evident that I frequently incorporate a number of specific materials and techniques in my improvisations that present as musical characteristics. I can identify that the majority of the materials and techniques have been developed over many years of practice and are a result of both conscious and sub-conscious application (see examples below). There were a number of other practiced materials and techniques that I expected to encounter equally as frequently as the ones itemised below, particularly in my improvisations on the Flute, however, as insufficient examples were found they could not be presented as regularly incorporated musical characteristics of my improvisations within composed musical settings. They are, rather, a feature of improvisations over free-form contexts, the performance of which was not incorporated into this study.

The examples presented throughout this following section are musical characteristics I regularly utilised in my improvisations and have become apparent via an analysis of recorded improvisations contained on the three albums recorded during this research. The following examples have been extracted from improvisations recorded on the albums Saveja, Voyeur and La Sortie as a method of examining my regular use of materials and techniques. They are re-constituted in the format of showcasing the use of specific materials and techniques contextualised in their original setting, i.e. itemised by composition. The order of
presentation arises from the consideration of McMillan’s network of musical characteristics (McMillan 1996, p. 69), beginning with the instrumental characteristics of tone.

Instrumental Characteristics: Tone

The most distinctive element of my sound as an improviser is that it is presented via an instrument. I predominantly perform on the Flute and it is true to say that the Flute holds its own distinctive sonorities, however, as a Flautist I relate to my instrument in a physical as well as aural capacity, producing a tone that is unique to me. This tone has been developed and refined over many years and is individual precisely because it is generated by me. Although the tone I generate is indicative of the tone of the Flute, even possibly the tone of the particular model of Flute, the same instrument does not produce the same tone when it is played by anyone else as I have my own unique resonant properties and energetic affiliation with the instrument that contributes to the generation of tone.

When I work on my tone I strive to produce a full bodied, reverberant sonority that is rich and complex in that I incorporate a range of harmonics rather than generating a pure tone. This tone is a base tone from which I have actively developed a range of subtle and divergent variations resulting from manipulations to the airstream, all of which is controlled by my physical body. This could also be said of my tone on the Saxophone, however, I have not spent as many years working on my tone on this instrument and would say that this tone is still developing. Whilst I hear evidence of success in relation to producing a full bodied tone on the Flute, hearing my improvisations on the C Melody Saxophone I hear a ‘smoky’ tone; a particular tonal quality that I aurally perceive the instrument to hold in its own right and enjoy emulating. Regardless of the likelihood that my tone is reminiscent of the instruments that I play, the characteristics of my tone on both instruments hold personal qualities that I will now examine. Following McMillan’s network of musical characteristics, variations in my tone incorporate the use of the following techniques:
Vibrato

I have found in each recorded improvisation from *Saveja*, *Voyeur* and *La Sortie* a number of examples that are indicative of the ways in which I utilise and manipulate vibrato. It appears as though I habitually add a fast, narrow vibrato to the majority of sustained notes on the Flute within fast or slow moving passages, as evidenced in the entire improvised “Fortunata,” as well as in other improvisations such as “Forget Me Not,” “I Said Only Once,” “Poly,” “The Divide,” and “There’s a Tiger on the Run.” In other works I intentionally manipulate the addition of, speed and width of my vibrato to create a variation in texture to sustained notes, often with the result of adding tension and intensity to the surrounding material as evidenced in “Cut Lunch,” “Through the Cracks,” “The Divide Pt. III,” “The Divide Pt. II” and “Pardalote.” This intentional use of vibrato is also quite apparent in my Saxophone playing, the use of which is frequently adopted during long notes in “The Elevator.” It is evident that this is predominantly a stylistic choice, however, as my vibrato becomes more animated the higher I play, I suggest that my use of vibrato in this case is due to the fact that I was not yet happy with the tone I produced in the upper register of this instrument, using vibrato to mask unwieldy tones.

Colouration

Breath sounds/manipulations: These are a particular feature of my Flute improvisations that are utilised consciously to add texture and intensity to phrases

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238 Appendix D, Track 51.
239 Appendix D, Track 52.
240 Appendix D, Track 53.
241 Appendix D, Track 54.
242 Appendix D, Track 55.
243 Appendix D, Track 56.
244 Appendix D, Track 57.
245 Appendix D, Track 58.
246 Appendix D, Track 59.
247 Appendix D, Track 60.
248 Appendix D, Track 61.
249 Appendix D, Track 62.
or to dissipate a pure tone on long notes. Breath sounds are utilised in compositions in which I strive to generate a depth of tonal colour: “Through the Cracks,” “Pardalote,” “The Divide Pt. II,” “Cut Lunch” and “I Said Only Once.” I can also detect a similar effect that I utilise on the Saxophone, evident at the beginning and end of my improvisation on “The Elevator” in which my tone is less focused and decays with the incorporation of air sounds through the reed.

Muted and quarter tones: The majority of these are consciously utilised in a variety of ways including: the cultivation of an eerie atmosphere in which quarter tones are used as a textural device to alter the sonority of notes by muting or stifling their resonance as heard in “The Divide Pt. III” or as a way of generating slides and “feedback” effects as heard in “Through the Cracks” and “I Said Only Once.” It is a technique that I utilise on the Flute only.

Flutter-tonguing: This technique is also specific to my improvisations on the Flute. It is used as a textural device, mostly upon single notes or short groups of notes, however, is also used in extended passages to develop an intensity of frequency spectrum. This technique is usually added consciously and can be found in the following examples: “I Said Only Once,” “Pardalote,” “Poly,” “Fortunata,” “Forget Me Not,” “Cut Lunch,” “The Divide P. II” and “There’s a Tiger on the Run.”

250 Appendix D, Track 63.
251 Appendix D, Track 64.
252 Appendix D, Track 65.
253 Appendix D, Track 66.
254 Appendix D, Track 67.
255 Appendix D, Track 68.
256 Appendix D, Track 69.
257 Appendix D, Track 70.
258 Appendix D, Track 71.
259 Appendix D, Track 72.
260 Appendix D, Track 73.
261 Appendix D, Track 74.
262 Appendix D, Track 75.
Double-tonguing: This technique is an articulation device specific to my improvisations on the Flute. It differs from the below reference to the ‘Repetition of notes’ which are otherwise defined as being ‘single’ tongued. It is a device that adds texture to a phrase or a pulse to single notes and at times is reminiscent of a nervous ‘tick.’ It is another habitual device that is used both consciously and subconsciously. Examples are evident in: “I Said Only Once,” “Pardalote,” “Cut Lunch,” “Through the Cracks” and “There’s a Tiger on the Run.”

Touch

McMillan’s use of the word ‘touch’ is what I would describe as ‘attack,’ specifically the articulation of notes. There are numerous ways in which I articulate the beginnings of notes, which appear to be consistent whether I am playing the Flute or the Saxophone. Predominantly my attack of notes is crisp and focused, becoming particularly strong and well defined when outlining particular rhythmic passages. Additionally, I utilise a number of other articulation techniques including the aforementioned incorporation of ‘Flutter-tonguing,’ ‘Double-tonguing’ and ‘Breath sounds.’ These are used when improvising on the Flute specifically, with the intention of adding texture to notes and phrases which I primarily view as colouration devices, however, also alter the way I articulate notes and passages. I find that the regular alternation between these various articulations create a specific effect that is identifiable to my Flute playing in particular.

Although my attack of notes on the Alto Flute is generally less...
defined, particularly in the lower register in which a crisp start to notes is more difficult to obtain, I can detect that my approach to defining the beginnings of notes is similar on both Concert and Alto Flutes. My Articulation on the Saxophone is gentler overall, although I articulate rhythmic passages with a stronger attack, similar to that of the Flute as described above.

McMillan also highlights Intonation, Envelop/Decay and Dynamics as identifiable aspects of tone. As these aspects are used in a relatively consistent way throughout my improvisations I will discuss them in general terms. My intonation is relatively precise in regards to producing tones of equal temperament (this is more apparent on the Flute over which I have substantially more control), although I tend to play slightly sharp overall. I would call this playing ‘on top’ of the pitch which generates a feeling of being uplifted and alert. In terms of Envelop/Decay I tend to hold notes quite stably, except when I utilise Vibrato (a prominent feature of my Saxophone improvisations), Breath sounds, Flutter-tonguing or Double-tonguing (utilised in my Flute improvisations). These techniques incorporate a variation to the texture of my phrases or the decay of notes without dropping in pitch or dynamic. Thus, a consistency in pitch and dynamic is obtained whether my tone is clear, or diffused by the use of specific techniques.

My use of dynamics also tend to be quite stable overall, performing between mezzo forte and forte throughout the majority of my improvisations, except for those of “The Divide Pt. III,” “Pardalote” and “Cut Lunch,” the harmonic, spectral and dynamic density of which are quite sparse and open suggesting that in these contexts I am more able to develop my improvisations dynamically as I do not feel the need to dynamically compete with the rest of the ensemble or step up to the energetic demands of the works as they are designed to be performed quite sensitively.

275 Appendix D, Track 88.
276 Appendix D, Track 89.
277 Appendix D, Track 90.
It also appears as though I generally shape my improvisations in a way that the volume decreases toward the end, aiding the feeling of resolution. Although I occasionally begin my improvisations quietly and build in dynamics and intensity toward one or more climax points I frequently begin my improvisations at mezzo forte or forte in order to start with a feeling of energetic elevation or intensity. Thus, it appears as though my intentions in improvisation is to maintain a particular level of energetic involvement and intensity throughout, the particular characteristics of which are dependent upon the evocative flavour of each work. This is made clear when assessing the general consistency of dynamic as well as the flow of my phrase shaping, a characteristic I will discuss below.

Instrumental Characteristics: Technique

McMillan categorises Technique in terms of Flow, Facility and Control. Again, it appears as though these attributes apply consistently across the majority of my improvisations in the recordings contained on Saveja, Voyeur and La Sortie. I will therefore not be providing specific examples but discuss their relevance in general terms. In the context of performing improvisations within the body of a composition (as opposed to free-form improvisation) I typically play with a consistent flow. My use of silence is quite minimal in the recorded dataset, except in “The Divide Pt. III,” the intent of which was to shape silence with sound. I regularly utilise the entire range of the instrument in my improvisations which, along with the consistency of performed musical sound, generates a fluid motion occasionally broken with the introduction of rhythmic patterns or the addition of textural articulation devices.

My ideas seem to flow from one to the next with logical phrasing progressions, the performance of which is produced accurately with minimal examples of stumbles, split notes or miss-articulations. Ideas are performed with ease and technical precision, particularly on the Flute, however, I detect when listening to my improvisation on the C Melody Saxophone in “The Elevator” that I am performing at the limits of my capabilities, both in terms of facility and control over tone
production. It could therefore be said that my facility on the Flute is high and that my control over the incorporation of techniques on this instrument is also evident, however, my facility and control over sound production on the Saxophone is still developing. As my experience performing on the Saxophone is minimal to date it is therefore evident that in order to perform at my optimal on this instrument – to articulate my ideas succinctly and produce more variation in regard to tone and timbre – I would need to undertake many more years of practice.

In examining my technique on the Flute and Saxophone I have incorporated a discussion of features that McMillan has itemised under 'Musical Elements' in addition to those of 'Instrumental Characteristics.' I therefore suggest that a discussion of technique cannot be extracted from that of the utilisation of melodic, rhythmic and harmonic devices except to say that over many years of practising the Flute I have generated ample control and facility with which I am able to generate the flow of musical ideas and incorporate the many techniques I have at my disposal on this particular instrument. As a result of my regular use of specific 'Musical Elements' I have also generated a particular musical vocabulary that aids the projection of my personal voice, and interestingly this appears to cross over into my improvisations on the Saxophone, as evidenced in the numerous live recordings of my improvisations on Saxophone, despite my developing facility and control over this instrument. I will now examine the 'Musical Elements' that contribute to this musical vocabulary.

McMillan outlines three sub-categories under the general criteria of Musical Elements: Melody, Rhythm and Harmony. The melodic features of my improvisations hold the most distinguishing characteristics and so I will be providing specific examples that outline the distinctive attributes I have identified.

Musical Elements: Melody

The most distinctive aspects of the melodic features of my improvisations are presented within phrase structures, within which the selection of notes
contributes to the overarching form of phrase construction rather than providing individual colourations of harmonic content. Indicators include my use of ornaments, repetitions of notes and phrases and the undulating passages that are a significant feature arising from my tendency to create flowing phrases, utilising the entire range of my instrument.

Contour and Phrase Shaping

Undulating passages: These are possibly the most distinctive aspect of my improvisations, occurring in all twelve of my recorded improvisations. Undulations occur in passages of various lengths and can contain one or more phrases. This is an extensive feature throughout my improvisation in “There’s a Tiger on the Run” and is also evident in “The Divide,” “Forget Me Not,” “Poly,” “The Divide Pt. II,” “I Said Only Once,” “Fortunata,” “Pardalote,” “Cut Lunch,” “The Divide Pt. III,” “Through the Cracks” and “The Elevator.”

Repetition of short phrases and sequences of notes: These often involve slight alterations to the original phrase or sequence (note selection or rhythmical alterations), may be texturally enhanced with alterations to attack or the addition of specific articulations or ornaments, and vary in length and numbers of repetitions. Repetitions such as these are usually manipulated subconsciously. Numerous examples can be found in the following excerpts: “There’s a Tiger on the Run,” “The Divide,” “Forget Me Not,” “Poly,” “The Divide Pt. II,” “I Said Only Once,” “Fortunata,” “Pardalote,” “Cut Lunch,” “The Divide Pt. III,” “Through the Cracks” and “The Elevator.”

278 Appendix E, Track 1.
279 Appendix E, Track 2.
280 Appendix E, Track 3.
281 Appendix E, Track 4.
282 Appendix E, Track 5.
283 Appendix E, Track 6.
284 Appendix E, Track 7.
285 Appendix E, Track 8.
286 Appendix E, Track 9.
287 Appendix E, Track 10.
288 Appendix E, Track 11.
289 Appendix E, Track 12.
Repeated Notes: These are utilised both consciously and subconsciously to
contrast or break up flowing passages: creating structural tension points or
moments of stasis within the improvisation; altering the velocity of a phrase;
or indenting phrases like the skipping of a rock on the surface of water. Repetitions
occur in various numbers and often utilise, as a textural device, alterations in
articulation. I repeat single notes or emphasise various notes within a phrase:
“There’s a Tiger on the Run,” “I Said Only Once,” “Poly,” “Cut Lunch,” “Fortunata,”
“Forget Me Not,” “The Divide,” and “The Elevator.”

Groups of Three notes: These are primarily a repetition of a series of notes,
however, may also be developed melodically or harmonically as evidenced in “Cut
Lunch,” “Pardalote,” “Forget Me Not” and “The Divide Pt. III.”

290 Appendix E, Track 13.
291 Appendix E, Track 14.
292 Appendix E, Track 15.
293 Appendix E, Track 16.
294 Appendix E, Track 17.
295 Appendix E, Track 18.
296 Appendix E, Track 19.
297 Appendix E, Track 20.
298 Appendix E, Track 21.
299 Appendix E, Track 22.
300 Appendix E, Track 23.
301 Appendix E, Track 24.
302 Appendix E, Track 25.
303 Appendix E, Track 26.
304 Appendix E, Track 27.
305 Appendix E, Track 28.
306 Appendix E, Track 29.
307 Appendix E, Track 30.
308 Appendix E, Track 31.
309 Appendix E, Track 32.
My utilisation of ‘Groups of Three notes’ are also evident in general phrase construction as found in “I Said Only Once,\textsuperscript{310}” “The Divide Pt. II,\textsuperscript{311}” “The Elevator\textsuperscript{312}” and “There’s A Tiger on the Run.\textsuperscript{313}” Where they are utilised in extended passages they appear as a conscious, yet habitual method of generating tension, possibly as a way of regenerating momentum for the manipulation of melodic materials.

Ornaments: I have found examples of ornaments in ten of my improvisations. These are generally unconsciously utilised and, in the case of my use of single grace notes, are a feature of my improvisations that I do not particularly like. They appear to be used habitually and without conscious manipulation. Single grace notes simulating a bend up or down to a note are the most frequently occurring ornament, however, mordents and trills are also frequently prevalent throughout my Flute improvisations. Evidence of ornaments can be found in nine of my Flute improvisations: “Forget Me Not,\textsuperscript{314}” “The Divide\textsuperscript{315}” and “Pardalote;\textsuperscript{316}” and are most frequently utilised in “Poly,\textsuperscript{317}” “There’s A Tiger on the Run,\textsuperscript{318}” “Cut Lunch,\textsuperscript{319}” “Fortunata,\textsuperscript{320}” “I Said only Once\textsuperscript{321}” and The Divide Pt. II.\textsuperscript{322} On the Saxophone my most utilised ornament is a chromatic run up to or down from a note, although use of a single grace note is also evident as found in “The Elevator.\textsuperscript{323}” The two recorded improvisations in which I do not use ornaments are the ones in which extended techniques are utilised.

\textsuperscript{310} Appendix E, Track 33.
\textsuperscript{311} Appendix E, Track 34.
\textsuperscript{312} Appendix E, Track 35.
\textsuperscript{313} Appendix E, Track 36.
\textsuperscript{314} Appendix E, Track 37.
\textsuperscript{315} Appendix E, Track 38.
\textsuperscript{316} Appendix E, Track 39.
\textsuperscript{317} Appendix E, Track 40.
\textsuperscript{318} Appendix E, Track 41.
\textsuperscript{319} Appendix E, Track 42.
\textsuperscript{320} Appendix E, Track 43.
\textsuperscript{321} Appendix E, Track 44.
\textsuperscript{322} Appendix E, Track 45.
\textsuperscript{323} Appendix E, Track 46.
As I perform on melodic instruments the majority of distinguishing features I have discovered in my improvisations relate to McMillan's Melodic 'Musical Elements' such as the contour and shaping of phrases and note selection as I have discussed above. In addition to these features are the intervallic relationships that are evident within phrases and the range of the instrument that I utilise. As discussed in the above section on Technique, I utilise the entire range of my instrument in improvisations, performing fluently across registers. One notable aspect of this feature is that I predominantly utilise small intervallic movements within my phrase structures which aids the perceptions of effortlessly floating up and down the range of the instrument. Although wider intervals are present, small intervallic passages stand out as being a distinctive feature of my improvisations, particularly on the Flute. I would describe this style of performance as modal, an aspect that relates to McMillan’s harmonic devices.

Musical Elements: Harmony

When improvising I predominantly play modally, choosing to highlight the colouration of particular chords rather than applying specific harmonic concepts such as chord substitutions, patterns based on set scales or harmonic patterns that define particular genres, as these can often lead to the sense of playing cliché improvisations due to a lack of personal connection with the material. This is primarily due to the fact that many of my works operate in a modal context, but I would also say that I choose not to reference other genres. In compositions that incorporate chord changes that are not modally derived I outline the progressions strongly, keeping within the tonality that each dictates. In these ways I rarely play dissonantly or against composed harmonic structures although I occasionally use chromaticism.

Additionally, the works I compose that do involve complex chord progressions are quite individual in that I do not incorporate conventional progressions and forms into my compositional frameworks and hence could be classified as being generative of new harmonic language. It is in this context that I would assert that
the harmonic characteristics of my personal voice are evident: within the harmonic progressions I incorporate into my compositions.

Whilst I have been generally aware of the presence and utilisation of the majority of features outlined in the Chapter so far, a particular rhythmic device distinguishable in a large proportion of my improvisations (on the Flute in particular) was not consciously perceived until I examined the audible features of my sound via McMillan’s network of musical characteristics. This feature is therefore not utilised consciously in performance, has not been ‘rehearsed’ through studio practice and as such is not a subconscious application of a familiar concept. However, it appears to arise from the intent to break up the flowing melodic lines utilised predominantly throughout my improvisations.

Musical Elements: Rhythm

Whilst my phrases are generally shaped as flowing, modally derived passages, it is evident that I incorporate variations in rhythmic impetus within my phrases. Primarily, my phrasing features a-rhythmic passages that drift or cross over the beat. This is particularly evident in “There’s a Tiger on the Run,\textsuperscript{324} yet also evident in a number of other improvisations.\textsuperscript{325} Additionally my use of repeated notes, phrases or series of notes as presented above as phrasing devices, establishes a rhythmic impetus within these phrases. As such, the most prominent distinguishing rhythmic characteristics of my improvisations is the movement between passages that cross or flow over the beat and distinctive rhythmic passages or repeated phrases that provide a signpost of sorts to latch on to. Examples are evident in: “I Said Only Once,\textsuperscript{326} “Fortunata\textsuperscript{327} and “Forget Me Not.\textsuperscript{328} Rather than utilising regular rhythmic patterns, these passages often

\textsuperscript{324} Appendix E, Track 47.  
\textsuperscript{325} Appendix E, Track 48.  
\textsuperscript{326} Appendix E, Track 49.  
\textsuperscript{327} Appendix E, Track 50.  
\textsuperscript{328} Appendix E, Track 51.
move unpredictably\(^{329}\) or I intentionally manipulate the speed of passages to insinuate a stretching of time; speeding up,\(^{330}\) slowing down,\(^{331}\) or a contraction/expansion.\(^{332}\)

Many of the above examples of ‘Groups of Three Note’ passages are additional examples of rhythmic phrasing that is distinctive in my improvisations, as the emphasis I place on particular notes within the passage creates a rapid pulse within the turbulent structure of the phrase.\(^{333}\) This establishment of a pulse is used sporadically in my improvisations yet in groovier works I tend to play more consistently within the metrical framework of the composition. Although this could be described as rhythmic playing, I never play repetitive rhythms, skipping across the surface rather than locking in with the rhythm section.\(^{334}\)

There is evidence of more consistent rhythmic features in my improvisations from *La Sortie* such as the use of triplet passages in “The Elevator"\(^{335}\) and “There’s a Tiger on the Run,"\(^{336}\) and the numerous ‘five over two’ passages in “The Elevator."\(^{337}\) Perhaps my utilisation of rhythmic features are becoming stronger as my personal voice develops, however, a more extensive examination would be required to substantiate this proposal.

Discussion

Listening to the entirety of my recorded music catalogue in respect to the above mentioned materials and techniques I have discovered that the energetic

\(^{329}\) Appendix E, Track 52.

\(^{330}\) Appendix E, Track 53.

\(^{331}\) Appendix E, Track 54.

\(^{332}\) Appendix E, Track 55.

\(^{333}\) Appendix E, Track 56.

\(^{334}\) Appendix E, Track 57.

\(^{335}\) Appendix E, Track 58.

\(^{336}\) Appendix E, Track 59.

\(^{337}\) Appendix E, Track 60.
properties of particular works instigate variations in rapidity of succession and the amalgamation/crossing over of musical devices. When I improvise through works with a prominent feeling of expanse and tranquillity, or when I improvise without compositional frameworks or preconceived ideas of form development I evolve my ideas over a longer period of time, utilising only a few 'Musical Elements,' or sometimes only hinting at the use of specific devices (I may flutter-tongue only one or two notes for example, rather than large sections), focusing rather on melodic development. This is particularly evident throughout the Saveja recordings (Appendix G) in which I display or develop only a handful of musical characteristics in any one improvisation. However, in highly energised or evocative works such as "I Said Only Once" and "Cut Lunch," my use of the above mentioned characteristics occur frequently and I often utilise more than one technical or musical device at any one time, or move between devices in quick succession. It appears that this is driven by a heightened level of intensity generated by the works themselves, and especially in the context of performing with 'Lo-Res,' the aesthetic nature of which has been developed to create a 'big' energised sound world with a full sonic spectrum. My improvisation on "I Said Only Once" contains every musical element outlined above, and the only elements not present in my "Cut Lunch" improvisation are muted and/or quarter tones. Both these improvisations are dense with the above discussed materials and techniques.

Being 'energised' performances I can confidently stipulate that in performing these improvisations I was utterly immersed in the sound world that was being created, that I was not fully aware of myself (as a performer) and what I was playing (as being indicative of my personal expression), rather I was riding on the energetic forces generated by intense engagement with my fellow performers. This suggests that my utilisation of the above materials in the context of these situations is completely subconscious and habitual, resulting in the construction of an audible set of materials that I articulate to create, alongside other factors, a

338 Appendix E, Track 61.
339 Appendix E, Track 62.
340 See Fred Frith in Zorn 2010, pp. 129-132 for a discussion on perceptions in regard to engaging with the act of improvisation.
recognisable overall sound. It is a product of engaging with and being inspired by my fellow performers and generates a feeling of authenticity; of being self-expressive. Whilst my utilisation of many musical devices is sub-conscious, I identify with the sounds I produce on an aesthetic, conceptual and energetic level and hence perceive that my Artistic Identity is being projected through the performance of music. This identification with the sounds I produce is a product of years of personal creative exploration both in studio practice and live performance settings.

The majority of technical devices I presented here were actively developed in the practice room over an extended period of time of ten to fifteen years, however, when I perform I do not necessarily consciously add or articulate them specifically. They often emerge from my subconscious where the processing of what I have developed in the past is being applied to the sounds I am personally creating or reacting to in the moment. My focus in performance is primarily upon harnessing the momentum that directs and constructs musical form, manipulating energetic intensities that are a product of the ensemble and the situational context of the performance setting. Although my manipulation of musical parameters is relatively subconscious and energetically driven, the ability to articulate and form musical ideas into a coherent, free flowing improvisation is derived from extensive experimentation throughout my practice regime. My ability to control and manipulate materials and techniques is due to the number of hours I have spent developing parameters of usage in my studio practice so that I attain a physical familiarity with the material with which I choose to work. Therefore, it is the conscious choice to develop specific materials, techniques and devices in practice that constitutes the active cultivation of my sound. If my sound is the audible stamp of my Artistic Identity, performed through subconscious application, it seems that I actively cultivate this Artistic Identity by acting on intentions set towards the development of materials in the practice room.

During the same period of time these recordings were made, there were a range of additional materials and devices that I had been actively developing in the practice
room yet they were not predominantly utilised in the improvisations presented on the entire range recordings but used sparingly in the *Saveja* improvisations. I refer here to my extended use of multi-phonics, oscillations between tones and the lengthly application of muted and quarter-tones. These were initially implemented in my development of the compositions presented on the album *Saveja*, and have since become a prominent feature of my current improvisatory vocabulary in the context of free-form improvised performances. They were not regularly utilised in these recordings yet surfaced in performances from 2013-2015. Additionally, my use of identifiable patterns practised throughout my documented practice of 2013-2014 (Chapter Five) have begun to arise in improvisations (live and studio performances) from 2014-2015, as evident in "There's a Tiger on the Run" and numerous live recordings; February 21, 2013, October 9, 2013 and November 6, 2013. As such, it is apparent that I actively develop a range of materials and devices during my studio practice and via intensive development processes these devices find their way into my improvisations. In this way I cultivate my personal voice and my sound through the empathic drive for future creative realisations.

**My Sound as an Improviser:**

As the various samples provided above indicate, my improvisations are recognisable through the musical materials I utilise and the way in which I articulate these materials in improvisation, yet improvisation is but one contributing factor to a construct that I call my *sound*. Jumping forward a number of years to a journal entry dated September 22, 2014

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341 See Appendix A, p. 104.
342 Appendix E, Track 63.
343 Appendix E, Track 64.
344 Appendix E, Track 65.
345 Appendix E, Track 66.
346 Appendix E, Track 67.
347 Appendix E, Track 68.
348 Appendix E, Track 69.
I recall a verbal exchange that I had with a colleague a few weeks ago. I was giving a lesson at NMIT and was playing “Syrinx” by Debussy, demonstrating how I would approach interpreting the score. There was a knock at the door and Tom [Fryer] came in saying (something along the lines of) “I heard Syrinx, in fact I heard you playing Syrinx, I recognised your sound” (Appendix B, p. 145).

Whether I am improvising or interpreting composed works or composed sections of works I appear to articulate myself in a unique way that is identifiable. As evidenced above, the main aspect of my playing that makes me identifiable is my sound. This sound could be described as a combination of the tone I produce, the energetic factors that contribute to the generation of sound and the way in which I articulate my ideas – the way I bring this wide range of sound sets together to create musical form. As stipulated in Chapter Five, a large amount of my practice time is focused on the development of my tone as I believe this to be the most important aspect of sound production. Without a depth of tone and a unique sound that incorporates flexibility, variation and complexity, I have no sonic core with which to work. By developing a tone that resonates strongly with my aesthetic preferences and energetic patterns I am able to place something of myself into the music I play – a unique tone that, although difficult to describe beyond abstract terms is distinctively my own. These tonal properties, combined with the manipulation of an extended array of materials and techniques I incorporate into my improvisations and the interpolation of energetic patterns that contribute to the generation of tone are all constitutive elements that comprise my sound as an improvising musician. It is a complex mingling and interweaving of musical elements that is unique to my style of performance and mode of expression – an articulation of self within musical parameters.

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349 This sentiment is echoed by Adam Rudolf who states in his article “Music and Mysticism, Rhythm and Form” that “[g]reat improvisers are recognized in one note. They play their instrument as an amplifier of their inner voice. … With creative action, the inner auditory vision is expressed as a unique human story through the development of musical language” (Zorn 2010, p. 334).

350 In describing my sound as ‘unique,’ I speak of that fact that I do not work on producing a sound based on that of any other Flautist or Saxophonist.
Ultimately it is the way I engage with and articulate myself through my main instrument, the Flute, that makes me identifiable as a performer, however, at times I question whether I have expressed myself through the Flute, or whether the Flute (and the music that has shaped my background) has dictated the way in which I express myself. When I perform it is predominantly on the Flute. The thousands of hours I have spent playing this particular instrument has influenced the way I perform and the materials that I have developed as an improviser as there are specific sound sets and limitations built in to the instrument which shape the overall output. As I wrote in my journal:

What I explore is a depth of character, but how much do the limitations of the instrument and on the other side of the coin, the effects that go hand in hand with the instrument, its natural abilities, tendencies and capacities for sonic manipulation, how much does the character of the instrument effect what I play, what my musical voice is? Well a lot. [Many] [i]mprovising Flautists tend to use the same devices. It is the language that is a unifying feature, the language that is at our disposal. The same language can be used to express different points of view. What I am expressing with my use of [tremolos] is most probably different to the next performer. The emotive element behind its use also differs depending on the context it is used in. Sometimes it is a joyous dance, other times it expresses sorrow or [aggravation]. It is simply a device, and one can only use the tools of the trade ... So in a way, the Flute dictates my Artistic Identity in respect to the available tones, sonorities, technical devices etc, yet I still hold the steering wheel. I express my own desires, hopes, intentions, feelings, history and being. It is through the instrument that these expressions arise and mastery over (or should I say with) the instrument provides the means. (Appendix A, pp. 21-22)

As the discussion of musical examples above indicates, and as outlined in this particular journal excerpt, I have developed a range of musical devices that enhance my individuality as a Flautist, incorporating many unconventional sounds and techniques, however, these sounds and techniques can be produced, developed and manipulated by anyone who plays the Flute. How much of my sense
of *Artistic Identity* is dictated by the instrument I play? “Do I sound like me or the instrument?” (Appendix A, p. 23).

One example I can extract from my journal describes a specific ‘effect’ that I utilise in improvisation.\(^3\) “Although I like to imitate certain effects that Guitarists use, [what I play] will always sound like a Flute and listeners may have [no] notion of what effect I am trying to simulate” (Appendix A, p. 23). What I experience when I am playing these “effects” is the gestural nature of the musical material and the idea that I am transporting myself into another *sound* world – a projection of sorts, or an intermingling of sonorities that unite me with the Guitarist or other members of the ensemble. Although the tone of the instrument informs me that it is a Flute that I am listening to/playing, I experience the playing of the gesture as an expression of a concept, not of the instrument. Being able to play in such a way I feel transported or liberated from the instrument (a perceptual shift which ultimately facilitates abstract expression), even though I acknowledge that “there is definitely something about one’s *identity* that is formed through the playing of the instrument” (Appendix A, p. 23) as the materials that I have developed and are at my disposal as a Flautist are reliant on the instrument that produces the sound. Although these materials are specific to the instrument I play I am, at the very least, able to inject my *sound* into the music and have developed an affinity with the instrument that enables a personification of energetic forces that contribute to the generation of sounds, musical momentum and ultimately the projection of experience, sensation and intensities.\(^4\) It is this projection that allows personal expression to take place. Hence it is me producing sound through the Flute rather than the Flute dictating what I play and how I play it. They are *sounds*, indicative of the person behind the instrument as I have actively developed and embodied the sounds and materials that I incorporate into the music I play.

I identify experientially with the musical materials I produce. This experience is made up of a range of creative activities including, but not limited to: the practice of my instrument(s); the composition of musical works; directing an ensemble; the

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\(^3\) Appendix E, Track 70.

\(^4\) See Grosz, 2008.
performance of music as an improviser; the production of recordings. All of these activities contribute to my sense of Artistic Identity. As the activities of composition and improvisation unite in the performance and recording of original music, the music I have produced throughout my research situates my personal voice in its most authentic setting. It is via the experience of the entire process of developing and incorporating specific musical content toward spontaneous musical creations that I identify with the material I play and therefore perceive that I have an Artistic Identity that is presented through the performance of music. Yet perhaps the most significant finding that arose from this investigation into my experience of my Artistic Identity is that I discovered my sound, as the complex construct of a range of tonal, timbral and energetic factors as well as the articulation of materials and devices, is experienced from the first person perspective (the producer of musical sound) as an embodied process in conjunction with auditory sensation.

The physical aspect of playing an instrument and performing on that instrument emerged as being the most poignant experiential aspect of my Artistic Identity, that the energetic impulse as an instrumentalist is a projection of self towards the immediate generation of musical sound. I realised that my audible sound is only the outward manifestation of this experience of Artistic Identity – that it is the energetic experience of engaging the self toward articulations of musical sound that I am able to construct an experiential understanding of my creative processes. Just as my generation of compositional ideas is stimulated by an energetic affiliation with the articulation of particular musical materials, so too is my generation of sound as a Flautist. It is the energetic impetus that instigates engagement with musical sound. It appears then that this energetic affiliation with the sounds I produce provides meaning to my practice of music, as it engenders personal identification with my practice on an experiential level.

I have argued that the performance of original music facilitates the expression of my personal voice through the generation of musical forms that best highlight my strengths as an improviser, creating a sound world that resonates with my various modes of being. Additionally I have argued that the materials and tonal aspects of my playing as evidenced through all the musical examples provided above
contribute to my mode of expression by providing impetus, direction, content and inspiration. They are also attributes that make my playing distinguishable and alone could be viewed as Guercio’s “stamp of the artist” discernible in the body of my works (Guercio 2006, p. 29). These attributes have been actively cultivated throughout an extensive musical practice that is geared towards developing a 

*personal voice* through improvisation and composition. However, it appears that my energetic affiliation with the sounds I produce provides a profound connection between experiential understanding and musical constructs. I will examine, in Chapter Eight, how experiential understanding is conveyed via the performance of music and how my musical practice constructs my sense of *Artistic Identity*. 
Chapter Eight
Self-Expression and Meaning in Creative Musical Practice:

This research has made evident that my identification with my sound and the material I generate as a composer and improviser, instigates engagement with the processes of generating musical sounds and constructs on an experiential level that resonates with my various modes of being. Engagement with my sound is resonant with my experience of self on a creative, physical and energetic level and therefore lies beyond purely musicological considerations. This psychophysical connection to the production of musical sound has been developed extensively over a creative, professional practice that spans twenty years and it appears as though it is this ongoing identification with my creative output that establishes my sense of Artistic Identity. I have argued that the performance of original music frames my personal voice by highlighting my attributes as an improviser, constructing a sound world that engenders deep personal responses. This provides an experiential connection with the performance of original music via aesthetic, conceptual and energetic engagement with myriad processes that contribute to the generation of musical constructs. These findings have been made apparent through an examination of my creative processes that encompass the practice of my instrument, the generation of improvisational devices, the composition of original musical works that involve significant opportunity for improvisation, the live performance and recording of these works.

I have additionally argued that through the cultivation of my personal voice I am able to be self-expressive. However, beyond examining the network of musical characteristics that simultaneously connect me experientially with the musical sounds I produce and make my compositions and improvisations identifiable, I have not extrapolated on how the perception of self-expression is generated through the performance of music and the meaning that is inferred upon my practice via this notion of self-expression. This Chapter will examine how experiential understanding is conveyed via the performance of music and how reflecting upon my practice of music constructs my sense of Artistic Identity,
beginning with a discussion on the community of practitioners who help define this *identity*. I will return to the examination of the written dataset of my journals to construct my argument.

The Influence of my Colleagues and the Ideals We Generate

My relationship with other musicians, our influence upon each other and the growth that occurs as a community via shared experience arises in the first few pages of my journal (Appendix A) as the most influential and valued aspect of my musical practice. As a musician I do not work in isolation, even though the majority of my practice entails developing methodologies and materials in solitude. The ideals that direct my creative processes have evolved alongside the relationships I have cultivated with fellow musicians and therefore cannot be separated from their contextual setting of community. In a journal entry dated June 24, 2011, I endeavoured to explore my ideologies, with one significant ideology arising from the discussion. As I have outlined in previous chapters, as an improviser I place significant value on the individuality of my *personal voice*.

This is my musical autonomy, a feature of Western thinking through philosophical thought and the theories of social science that seems to have found a place in my psyche, whether I was aware of this social & political influence or not.

In some respects I think this may have come through the educational system whereby most of the work one does is individual, whereby one is encouraged to [pursue] personal goals, is judged on personal achievement and is ultimately driven to find a career in one discipline – a consolidating feature of social expectations. (Appendix A, p. 94)

The educational system through which I have traversed from primary school, to secondary, tertiary and post-graduate studies is based on a system of assessing individual development and achievements and as my experience informs me, is geared towards the outcome of engaging with the world as a professional in a chosen field. This system of thought, for better or worse, has implanted a notion of
autonomous existence in my psyche, the experience of which could be viewed as the beginning of my search for authenticity through creative expression. In particular during my studies at the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) and the processes of creative exploration that emerged from engaging with lecturers and peers at the VCA, I have constructed the ideal that through the practice of music, and the processes of composition and improvisation specifically, I am able to cultivate a *personal voice*. The pedagogical emphasis throughout my undergraduate years at the VCA was on developing materials that enhance and stimulate my abilities in an individualistic capacity, as I noted on 24th June 2011. The entry discusses that;

> there is definitely a VCA [improvisation] culture that exists in Melbourne, one that is recognised from without as well as within the community. Here, we were encouraged to develop an individual voice within improvisational & compositional contexts first and foremost. The people around [me] also [exhumed] this ideology of autonomy. (Appendix A, pp. 96)

My musical and philosophical interactions with staff and students at the VCA during my undergraduate years were specifically integral to generating the ideal of engendering creative significance through the cultivation of my *sound*.353 The value I place on my *sound* also extends towards that of my colleagues and within my current activities as a composer and ensemble leader I value the contribution of each ensemble member’s *sound* to the generation of meaningful musical interaction. As a composer I value the *sound* of my compositional voice,354 and as an improviser I value the *sound* of my improvisational voice.355 Yet whilst I work towards maintaining an overall compositional *sound* through the performance of my works I also endeavour to allow space for the *sound* of each ensemble member to be present. In this way we coalesce our individual *sounds* to “create an ensemble *sound*, to work as a team, to be together, in unity, energetically, rhythmically,

353 See McMillan 1996.
354 See Chapter Five.
355 See Chapter Six.
conceptually, timbrally” (Appendix A, p. 94). Indeed, as I described on February 3, 2011, it is;

the identity of ... other artists that I am drawn to and playing in an environment that allows for personal expression from all participants is the ideal circumstance. I believe the voice of every artist can be maintained throughout all musical ventures no matter [whose] music is being performed. As a band leader ... my intention and desire is to maintain a level of artistic freedom for all musicians. Even though we may be playing music or improvising over musical forms written and arranged by me, the musicians should have the space and time to develop their own musicality within the [parameters] of the work. The ensemble sound should, whilst being unified, be made up of the sound of each individual artist who interprets the music in their own fashion whilst giving integrity to the composition itself. In this way we grow together, cultivating a shared identity/understanding. (Appendix A, pp. 2-3)

This ideal, that as individuals we can remain autonomy, exploring musical sound in our unique ways whilst maintaining an ensemble sound that honours any individual compositional voice, has been generated by the values of the community and embraced by myself and my colleagues. It is an ideal that is integral to a community of practitioners who have influenced my creative practice, generated by the idea that we are all distinct individuals with something unique to contribute to the community. Perhaps it comes with the territory of being an improvising musician, but I choose to be involved in musical settings in which all contributors are engaged in the process of creating works together. This could entail: the creation of a particular sound world (developing a specific set of tonal qualities that enhance the compositional material, or contribute to the generation of an ensemble sound); the generation of musical form through improvisatory devices (within a composition or without the inclusion of composition); the generation of varying levels of musical intensity (shaping the music with dynamic, timbral and textural variations) and; composing works with the view to involving specific performers (if not energetic qualities). The music that I have composed in recent
years is specific to the ensembles in which I play and hence I compose with particular people in mind. I compose to their strengths and endeavour to provide them with room for personal expression. Discussing a performance with the band ‘Lo-Res’ on August 10, 2011, I talk about the importance of an ensemble playing as a unit and the integrity each member brings to this situation.

It is so important to have the right players, people who are individually dynamic, expressive, unique players, yet work on a level that unifies us as a whole. Is this identity through difference & similarity? I am me as I play in a certain way. I write music in a certain way and lead a band in a certain way. Diego plays in a certain way, and whilst he is interpreting my music I can hear his sound, his expression, his individuality. Yet he plays the tunes, not the guitar for the guitars sake, and in this way we are one through the music. (Appendix A, p. 113)

Meaningful musical interaction generates an internal sense of identity via the cultivation of distinguishing audible features that both unite and hold me apart from my colleagues. I am identifiable as an individual with a unique sound and mode of articulation, and as Guercio suggests, this alone could be viewed as my Artistic Identity, the “stamp of the artist” discernible in the body of my works (Guercio 2006, p. 29), yet the relevance of my individualistic pursuits as a musician, as questioned on day three of my investigation and highlighted in Chapter One, is brought into significance during my interactions with colleagues. Together we generate meaning via the cultivation of specific processes of social interaction including; philosophical discussion, the development of material in rehearsals, energetic modes of performance which are emotively and musically supportive, and the development of specific recording processes designed for specific outcomes. In this way we unite in intention as well as sonically and energetically. It is the combined cultivation of artistic processes that generates a sense of belonging to a specific community – the element of identity that situates my individuality in the context of the ‘other’ – a group of like-minded individuals in which our similarities and differences are celebrated in the performance of

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356 See Appendix A, pp. 3-4.
357 See Chapter Three.
music. Profoundly, the act of performing music enables me to share the immediacy of musical experience, interacting on a level that engages me physically, emotively and energetically with my fellow performers. In performance (on stage or whilst recording) we put into action the culmination of the history of our relationships (musical and personal) realised through the music we share.

The importance of interaction to the cultivation of my *Artistic Identity* was discussed in my journal on April 14, 2011 in which I ask:

What do we gain through performance? What happens in public that doesn’t happen in private? The first thing that comes to mind is interaction. Interaction between other musicians & interaction with the audience. This is what makes us performing musicians, the desire to perform to exhibit ourselves through interaction. We are social creatures and in some respects we are defined by our social situations. I guess this is what philosophers call the ‘other.’ It is only through the ‘other’ that we know ourselves. …

I try out my concepts of *identity* in social situations. I try things on for size, adopt them or discard them. I discover new things which I take away and contemplate: adopt or discard. It is a constant process and all the while we create ourselves. Of course there are underlying features which we cannot do away with. … But we are also filled with desires, dreams, hope, will and this is what [propels] us forward. (Appendix A, pp. 49-51)

I suggest here that the performative aspects of *self* substantially contribute to my construct of *identity* as it is via social interaction that I experiment with various modes of *being* and communicating, interacting in specific ways that constitute an authentic representation of who I am and what I believe in as an artist. Engaging with others helps me better understand myself as I strive to clearly articulate my thoughts, feelings and ideas. Specifically through music and the generation of processes for the purpose of rehearsing and performing original works alongside ‘others,’ I also strive to clearly articulate my intentions with regard to my ideas toward developing particular aspects of compositional material such as: how I
would like particular sections to be approached in terms of groove, the attack of notes, the use of effects or ‘clean’ sounds, blending of instrumental timbre, etcetera; how I would sculpt the energetic form of a work through the use of dynamics, quality of tone, variations in texture, etcetera; how I would prefer the harmonic material to be approached in terms of creating angles, gentle contours or in terms of utilising specific voicing techniques etcetera and; the harnessing of particular energetic qualities that emulate particular moods. All these aspects of sonic sculpting generate specific qualities and develop specific sets of musical materials that contribute to the compositional sound of any one work, or the overarching sound of my compositional style. Again, this could be viewed as Guercio’s “stamp of the artist” (Guercio 2006, p. 29), another distinguishing feature of my Artistic Identity – this time through my compositional output.

Whilst sculpting musical sound, whether as a composer, improviser or interpreter, I am present to the possibilities of cultivating specific sound sets that evoke particular characteristics within the music – present in such a way that I can change my course of action at any moment depending on what is going on around me, or within my physical, mental, emotional being. Particularly in the act of performance, this presence is integral to the vitality of the music that is produced, and integral to the continued vitality of my musical practice. Through the experience of presence toward and the momentum generated by the performance of music I project qualities of a self that do not exist until performed musical interaction takes place. In performance I not only experiment with the musical materials that shape my musical understandings but project an element of self that cannot be realised alone in the practice room. Performance demands a level of commitment to the immediacy of the moment, a commitment that is not required in any other musical activity due to the nature of beholding the overall form of the performance whilst experiencing the process of construction – being present to the unravelling of moments whilst maintaining a connection to what has passed and the direction one is moving in. In this way the act of performance, particularly whilst improvising, is experienced as Nancy’s “presence” within a time that is not experienced as temporal but as timeless358 – an opening up or revealing of content.

as it relates to the whole. In this way I experience myself in its timeless presence and continual process of 'becoming,' while interacting with the 'others' who enable this projection of self to occur.

The value of musical interaction as a means by which I define my creative practice is realised in performance during which I embrace possibility and become the musician I have strived to cultivate throughout my private practice. Engaging with the act of creating music I have become a musician, a composer and an improviser, and through the continued acts of practising, performing, composing and recording music I exist as a musician and forge my Artistic Identity. The influence of teachers and peers, the ideals that form through these relationships, the instruments I utilise to realise my intentions and the devices I have developed during my musical training and professional outcomes have not only shaped the person I am today, but also shape the way I move forward – the ideas that generate future compositions and practice methods and project myself into future performance settings. Via my community and the generation of shared musical processes I have also cultivated my sense of belonging, a place to situate my construct of Artistic Identity by way of meaningful interaction. Through active involvement in the community, establishing a productive, sustainable creative existence that honors my desire to create musical sound and propels the forces of motivation that enables the development of future processes, I cultivate my internal sense of Artistic Identity.

It is this internal sense of Artistic Identity that bestows meaning onto my practice – an identity that is experienced in terms of its community setting (engagement with the ‘other’), alongside its ‘ideal’ creative individuality (obtained through a strong sense of self) that not only values what has been created, but is propelled to continue to create – to self-perpetuate and continue existing as this creative individual.

Reflection upon my performance practice, such as that which has taken place throughout this Practice-led Research, allows for self-development and the further cultivation of my personal voice by engendering an understanding of how myriad
creative processes contribute towards the setting of intentions for the generation of future works and material. Throughout my research I have reflected upon the audible and philosophical outcomes arising from my musical practice which has provided an insight towards my personal relationship with the generation of musical content. This has taken place predominantly through the performance of music with like-minded individuals whom, via the establishment of productive creative relationships, have helped sculpt my compositional ideas into interactive sonic parameters over which I can improvise. This engagement with the generation and sculpting of musical sound in performance is an un-veiling of sorts (the Greek ‘Alethea’) in which aspects of my self are brought into play, disclosing my energetic modes of being, my emotive and conceptual capacity. Likewise, the process of constructing musical forms through composition unveils my energetic, emotive and conceptual understandings – aspects of my self that may otherwise lay hidden.

A Musical ‘Alethea’

In a journal entry dated February 5, 2011 I stated that “I am a musical being” which suggests that I explore my being through music – that the act of being musical is an integral aspect of my concept of self. This implies that the practice of music has the potential to engage me on an existential level, that my knowledge of self is situated within the context of music and that my explorations of musical sound equate to an epistemology of self. If this is the case, then my explorations of musical sound, as an articulation of experience equates to a means of communication and my practice of music could be viewed as a mode of performativity – a way in which I explore my sense of identity. The proposition that the performance of improvised music provides an avenue for the expression of meaning was discussed on May 2, 2011.

361 See Nicholas 2013.
We interact with our environment through space and time. It's a relational existence. When we communicate through speech, we form sounds, linked together in a way that makes the utterances cohesive and [meaningful]. A single utterance of a vowel or consonant does not make speech a language ... it is the way we organise the sounds, the way we string them together that make[s] speech a language. But it is not the words and sentences that convey meaning. It is ourselves. When we speak we convey an idea that is [meaningful] to us. (Appendix A, pp. 64-65)

Meaning is therefore generated by intent, and words are used to articulate the content of this meaning. It is the intent behind the words that enables the articulation to take shape, and sentences are constructed in order to adequately express the underlying experience that is being conveyed. The reactions of others allow me to gauge whether meaning has been conveyed and over the course of life I have unconsciously strived to improve my expression using words in order to adequately convey the meaning behind my words. Similarly, as my journal entry continues, musical interaction and experimentations with musical sound provide a means by which I am able to experiment with the impartation of meaning.

There are common sounds, formal constructions and the like that we use or hear within music. These common elements are used to impart meaning, a meaning that can be intentionally constructed or sub-consciously driven. This meaning may, or may not, be received in the same manner [as it is intended], but this does not necessarily matter. As individuals we create the meaning that is relevant to our own lives. We hear what we want to hear, imagine what we want to imagine, create to the best of our abilities [a] way to impart our ontological understandings but ultimately, experience from our own perspective [-] a private world, cultivated and honoured, held on to like the valuable entity it is. Music does express meaning. It may be individualistic meaning, but it is [meaningful] (Appendix A, p. 66).
I do not argue here that music is a language, rather it presents the opportunity to be perceived as an articulation of meaningful expression; an expression which is abstract and ambiguous, an expression that is felt, often without the inclusion of language in relation, and understood ontologically. Through the construction of musical form I am able to convey meaning by injecting meaning into the music I play. This is achieved by engaging with the act of performing on a level that goes beyond the consideration of purely musical elements such as notes, phrasing, dynamics and articulation as they stand in their own right, but extends to what surrounds, is inside and between the notes; the tone of the instrument and; the interaction that takes place between myself, my instrument, my fellow musicians, the sound spectrum, audience members, physical and temporal space. By engaging with the energetic forces that generate and are generated by musical sound I engage with my existential self which refracts in relation to the music as it is produced. This brings to mind the expression ‘to be moved’ or ‘touched’ by music – expressions that imply that meaning has been conveyed. From the perspective of being an audience member I can verify that music has the ability to stir up emotions, memories and ideas and for me these experiences create meaningful connections that I take with me into the various activities that make up my personal and professional existence. As a performer memories and ideas (beyond the musical) are rarely stirred in the act of performing music as my focus is such that I cannot reflect upon the broader aspects of life, however, as I have discussed

364 Lydia Goehr (1998) in her book Quest for Voice discusses the view that “music means something, not just because it is a well-formed symbolic language, but because when human beings engage with this language they express something about themselves as human beings” (Goehr 1998, p. 1). Coming from Schopenhauer she states that “Music is a universal language not because its meaning is available to everyone regardless of cultural difference. It is universal because it is a language that mirrors the Will without mediation” (Goehr 1998, p. 21).
365 See Harvey 1999, p. 29-33.
367 My use of the term ‘refract’ or ‘refraction’ throughout this exegesis is as a metaphorical expression of an experience that, as Susanne Langer (1957) describes, “resists projection into the discursive form of language” (Langer 1957 p. 23). As a result I have utilised metaphor in order to communicate my experience of self in relation to the music I perform. This concept will be discussed further in Chapter Nine.
throughout this exegesis, energetic intensities derived from and generated by personal experience are often present and are integral to my sense of musical authenticity, as I involve my *self* in the act of creating music.\textsuperscript{368} I propose that I am able to convey energetic intensities and experiential understanding through music, primarily due to the relationship I have with my instrument.

Physicality of Producing Musical Sound:

The act of producing sound on the Flute and Saxophone is predominantly physical. Although I apply intellectual understanding of the principles of music to the construction of musical ideas, these ideas would not be realised in sound unless I physically engage with my instrument. As a musician that utilises breath to induce sound, this physical exertion becomes all the more apparent as the whole body becomes actively involved in the direction of energy towards the generation and manipulation of sonic materials. In addition to the complexities of producing sound (including the refinement of tone and the manipulation of timbral variations), internal energetic forces are mustered and directed towards the construct of musical form and the manipulation of the dynamic forces of music through the external instrument which holds its own tonal properties and limitations. In order to generate and control the sounds that emerge I have developed a physical connection with the Flute in particular, understanding how specific sounds and tonal qualities can be generated and how they can be manipulated. This requires fluctuations in energetic involvement with the production of sound – all generated from within – and in order to be able to articulate musical ideas succinctly utilizing the expressive qualities of musical timbre, dynamics and articulation, my physical connection to the Flute has been highly developed.

\textsuperscript{368} Jean-Luc Nancy (2006) describes this involvement of *self* in *Multiple Arts* stating that “What we call “art” or “artistic practice” means first and foremost the setting to work of an experiential matter. Before being a matter of “aesthetic judgment,” of beauty, of the sublime, or simply of form and sensibility, it is a matter of experience: art articulates experience” (Nancy 2006, p. 208).
The energetic forces involved in the creation of sound include the instigation of actions such as blowing air, supporting the airstream, forming an embouchure and moving my fingers, all of which are controlled and manipulated to alter dynamics, pitch, register and the speed and contour of phrases. In addition, the projection of emotive energy derived from life experience which resides in my physical being as a residue\textsuperscript{369} can be accessed and channelled into the sound world to project a mood and control the affectivity of musical content.\textsuperscript{370} This residue of emotive energy is constituted as an embodiment of experience which allows me to project my self into the music I create, again via the movement of energetic forces through the instrument.

The physicality of producing musical sounds via the Flute or Saxophone is the strongest connection between me and the music I produce. In order to play at my optimal I must be physically healthy as well as feeling energetically balanced with the demands of my instrument. This energetic force, which is built and projected from me into the music and then feeds back from the music to me, is received as phenomenological affectation which impels emotive and conceptual forces toward the production of musical sound. Music therefore provides me with the means via which to express myself through ontological understandings of energetic and intellectual patterns – an aesthetic metaphor of sorts through which musical sound becomes an “expression of the inner, the communication of intentions and desires, the search for an understanding of the self” (Appendix A, p. 42).

On 26\textsuperscript{th} April 2011 I remark:

My Artistic Identity is immediately connected with my body. My fingers, my lips, my lungs, my muscles...my whole body is [involved] in the act of expression, connecting with my emotions, rationalisations, thoughts, beliefs, dreams, desires, imagination etc. I am one being. My pores [ooze] the essential oils of my complete structure which unites past, present and future in vital force. I am my music, my music is me. I

\textsuperscript{369} See Braidotti 2006, p. 165 and Harvey 1999, p. 31.

\textsuperscript{370} See Appendix A, pp. 124-125.
cannot separate the two, just as I cannot separate mind, body and soul.
(Appendix A p. 59)

During the performance of music my energetic being is engaged, initially by the physical act of playing an instrument, secondarily by engaging with my surrounding environment and any interactive entity that is present, but more significantly through the invocation of emotive content which I have assimilated from experiences gained in life. The resulting emotive forces are experienced as energetic patterns which are generated temporally and feed into the sounds I produce. It is the manipulation of these energetic patterns that lead to the sensation of conveying self-expression through musical exploration.

On a technical level, when I practice my main focus is upon the energetic demands required to produce specific sounds, timbres, dynamic properties and the like. I have spent time developing the use of harmonic devices and other musical resources, however, the majority of my time is spent working with the physical aspects of producing sound through the medium of the instrument, including: the development of technique; breath control; manipulation of airways and embouchure; managing internal support of the air stream; the development of specific articulations (affecting attack and duration of single or series of notes); manipulating variations in timbre; manipulating variations in velocity; etc. All these elements demand variations in energetic input and in turn generate variations of energetic output and it is through the development of an affinity with the instrument that these two energetic forces become balanced, leading to a feeling of efficacy in the absence of friction, blockages and other physical limitations between me and the instrument.

This feeling of efficacy occurs when I am energetically balanced with the instrument; not under or overly exerting myself through the production of sound; not restricting the airflow in any way. Being relaxed and unhindered physically allows for a feeling of 'effortlessness' in which I can produce sounds without needless exertion, or the wasting of energy through overexertion or striving too

371 See Chapter Five.
hard (physically or creatively).\textsuperscript{372} When the energy that I input into the instrument equals that of the output of sound created I am able to move my focus away from the physicality of sound production, connecting with my internal energetic and emotive forces. It is here that a facilitation of expression occurs in which I lose my sense of the physicality, generating a freedom of sorts and the feeling of being “at one with” my instrument (Appendix A, p. 20).

The energetic aspects of my performances are particularly evident in my improvisations where the emotive aspects of creative expression come to the fore. It is in the act of improvisation that I am most able to experiment with the energetic forces that contribute to and arise from music. Furthermore, by performing (and improvising within) original compositions I have been able to situate my \textit{personal voice} within the energetic and conceptual constructs that inspire me to be creative – the energetic and conceptual impetus that instigated the process of composition. I engage with these works on a profound level as I identify with the emotive, aesthetic and conceptual content – the constructs that resonate with my various modes of \textit{being}. This generates the sensation of authenticity toward my entire musical output, as presented throughout this research, as I personally relate to the energetic intensities and evocative elements present in the works. This, combined with the affiliation I have with my instrument and my audible \textit{sound} as an improviser, leads to an identification with the musical content as captured on the albums \textit{Saveja}, \textit{Voyeur} and \textit{La Sortie}. It appears then that my \textit{Artistic Identity} is constructed by an ongoing identification with my creative processes, my \textit{sound} and the emulation of various energetic states I associate with \textit{being} via the composition and performance of original works that facilitate improvisation.

As discussed earlier in this Chapter, this could not be achieved without my fellow musicians, the people who helped sculpt my works and support me as an improviser. They are my community of ‘others’ who frame my creative existence and mirror my performance intentions through commonly held ideals: that we each have a \textit{personal voice} which facilitates individual self-expression through the

\textsuperscript{372} See Appendix B, p. 48.
performance of music and; that this can be achieved whilst supporting each other and cultivating an ensemble sound. This is an authentic yet empathetic construct that honours the self whilst celebrating others.

Thus, McMillan’s thesis, that improvisers can cultivate a personal voice through the generation of distinguishable ‘Music Characteristics,’ enhanced through the creation of original compositions and developing performing relationships with like-minded musicians appears to have been affirmed. Composing for and performing works with the musicians of ‘Lo-Res’ and ‘Saveja,’ I have not only developed my sound as a composer and improviser, but celebrated the community of artists who enable the realisation of this sound through shared performance experiences. My addition to this argument is that, alongside the development of my personal voice I have cultivated an Artistic Identity; an internally perceived construct, arising from many years of developing a range of creative processes that define me as the improviser and composer my sound discloses. This is a performed construct as although I develop materials and concepts privately, in the studio, it is via the setting forth of performance intentions, the generation of social cohesion via these performed acts and the identification with the music I produce that I am able to project this identity, assess its authenticity and establish goals for the future generation of creative works.

Whilst these findings are directly pertinent to my experience as a composer and improvising musician, this research has the potential to instigate a discussion with, and provide insight for, other practitioners in respect to considering personal connections with the higher aspects of musical performance. Particularly in regard to topics such as: what energetic forces shape performed musical content; how is the notion of self-expression perceived through the practice of music; how is the performance of music experienced and with whom is this experience shared? Other flautists and wind instrument players may find experiential parallels in terms of the physicality of producing and manipulating tone and the physical and energetic relationship one has simultaneously with one’s instrument and performed materials. However, myriad perspectives may also be offered through further research into the experiences of being a practicing creative musician. One
question of particular relevance to this ongoing discussion of *Artistic Identity* is; how do other instrumentalists consider their relationship to their instrument, the production of tone and the development of a *sound*? It would be interesting to discover if other musicians share my relationship to the generation of *sound* as a psychophysical experience and discover if other practitioners also conceive that an identification with one’s *sound* engenders the experience of having an *Artistic Identity*.

Composers will also likely be able to engage in further conversation about: the influence of energetic and conceptual parameters upon the process of composition; the considerations one makes toward composing for specific musicians; the dialogue that is created with specific musicians via ongoing engagement with shared performance practices and; the experience of framing one’s *personal voice* in the performance of original music. Ultimately, there is scope for extensive research into creative musical practice and the experience of *Artistic Identity*, however, research would need to be undertaken by a wide range of music practitioners in order to uncover the possible range of experiences and perspectives from within a large global community of diverse musical practices. As I will discuss in Chapter Nine, this research presents one possible methodology for investigating a musician’s *Artistic Identity*. 
Chapter Nine

Conclusion:

This exegesis is the culmination of an extensive study into the construct of my *Artistic Identity* as a composer and improvising musician. As discussed in Chapter One, the construct of *identity* was postulated as a process of ‘becoming’ in relation to *being*-in-the-world, a projection of and empathy for a future *self*, a construct that is cultivated through reflexion and action toward this *being*-in-the-world. Thus, this research was contextualised in the ontology of *being* within a creative practice of music that places importance on self-expression and the cultivation of a *personal voice* through which was proposed the phenomenological affectation of expression can be imparted. Therefore my research focused upon the creative processes that generate musical content via which my *personal voice* is actively cultivated. As discussed in Chapter Two, this investigation primarily took the form of Practice-led Research; reflecting upon, setting intentions toward and generating creative outcomes via my musical practice, however, also involved a phenomenological investigation of the construct of *Artistic Identity*.

The construct of *identity* via which this investigation was established was informed by an extensive body of literature that encompassed the fields of music, philosophy, sociology, psychology, neurology and the arts. Chapter Three presented a discussion of published literature, necessarily limited to a review of discussions that emerged as being directly related to my experience of *identity* within the practice of music. I proposed that a study of *identity* must be localised “in relation to a given space and time” (Sarup 1996, p. 15), yet additionally comprehended in regard to the momentum generated by past experiences and intentions projected toward future activities. In this context my *Artistic Identity* was posited as a phenomenon that concerns *being* and the intentionality toward

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373 Anthony Giddens (1991) states that: “To *be*, for the human individual, is to have ontological awareness” (Giddens 1991, p. 48).

374 See Heidegger 1962, p. 41.
being, constructed via myriad musical activities and experiences that have propelled me through my career as a performing musician. As a result my Artistic Identity was examined in relation to musical processes and activities informed by past experiences yet guided by intentionality set toward future musical endeavours. These creative processes and outcomes provided a direct means by which I was able to examine the performative aspect of identity. This Artistic Identity was constituted as the development of my sound (the distinctive utilisation of musical materials), the creative processes via which I have cultivated my personal voice as a composing and improvising musician, and the specific musical characteristics utilised in articulating this personal voice making evident my concern for being; the facilitation of self-expression via the use of musical materials and concepts.

In Chapter Four I examined the creative outcomes of my research: the recording of original compositions which were developed toward the facilitation of improvisation, and the subsequent production of three studio albums. Whilst the intention to record my works was primarily an artistic choice regarding the mode of presentation, these outcomes documented my creative output in a format that allowed me to observe and analyse my performance outcomes ‘after the fact’ of the active generation of material through performance, practice and compositional processes.

Chapter Five examined the creative processes involved in the generation and development of material specifically for the production of the album La Sortie. Examining the range of creative processes via which new artistic works were conceived, developed and produced, my aim was to observe the active cultivation of my Artistic Identity directly in relation to the activities that construct this experience of identity within the field of musical performance. I proposed that by framing my personal voice within the performance of original music and the

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378 See Chapter Two.
development of musical constructs that both highlight my attributes as an improviser and significantly engages me in the act of performance, I facilitate the possibility for enabling self-expression through the performance of music.

An analysis of my recorded data set led to the examination, in Chapters Six and Seven, of my sound respectively as a composer and an improviser, the specific distinguishing characteristics of which I proposed I utilise in self-expression via my personal voice and the musical constructs I create. My methodology of analysing my sound arose from Rosalind McMillan’s “network of musical characteristics for identifying a personal voice in musical improvisation” (McMillan 1996, p. 69). Whilst the personal voice of the improviser was the focus of McMillan’s thesis, my focus was on the examination of sound as ‘the distinctive utilisation of musical materials as evident in my compositions and improvisations’ which facilitates personal expression via my personal voice.

In Chapter Eight I discussed the personal and physical relationship I have with the generation of my sound and the meaning that this relationship infers upon my practice. I suggested that I ontologically engage with the generation of musical materials when the emotive, aesthetic and conceptual constructs of the works resonate with my various modes of being. I argued that this identification generates the perception of authentic self-expression through the medium of music, leading to the perception of having an Artistic Identity. Additionally, Chapter Eight discussed the ideals and relationships that are formed through interactions with my community of practitioners. By re-contextualising my creative output within the cultural setting in which meaningful social interaction takes place, I proposed that my creative existence is framed and mirrored by the ‘others’ who support and inform my creative intentions.379 I additionally argued that it is with this community of colleagues that ideals are generated, celebrated and performed, establishing a sense of meaning and belonging within a wider cultural setting.

379 Adam Rudolph holds a similar perspective on the dialogue between improvising musicians stating in his article “Music and Mysticism, Rhythm and Form” that improvising “is the mirror that reflects both group and individual states at the moment of creation, bringing us together in our most human being” (Zorn 2010, p. 328).
Overview of Phenomenological Research Development

As evidenced in my journal (Appendix A), when this investigation began I contextualized my Artistic Identity in relation to the musical activities that had informed my knowledge of and shaped my experiences within the field of music. I considered my educational, cultural and familial settings, the instruments on which I performed and the musical styles and genres of which I had experience learning and performing.\textsuperscript{380} However, within the first few months of research my perception of the construct of my Artistic Identity began to shift as I contemplated the meaning of being a musician\textsuperscript{381} and what it means to ‘become’ a musician via the notion of self-expression and the articulation of musical materials.\textsuperscript{382} This suggests that the meaning behind my actions played a more significant role in my construct of Artistic Identity than the historical setting of my musical activities.

When I began my investigation I also considered identity to engender a “unity of experience” (Appendix A, p. 68) across a range of activities. However, as I continued to investigate my construct of Artistic Identity, I found that identity as an experienced phenomenon was an elusive construct that could not be witnessed in any one moment.\textsuperscript{383} It comprised a multitude of experiences – past, present and future – realised through developing conscious correlations between embodied experience, the values I place on my own existence and mode of being, and an empathy for a future self – the way I intend to proceed into the future.\textsuperscript{384} Attempting to comprehend the construct of my identity as a unity of being, a constant presence through time, I was presented with a multiplicity of sensations experienced simultaneously, yet never in the entirety of its complex scope. I realised that I am constantly changing, developing, contemplating, re-assessing, striving forward, all the while presenting myself at any one moment as a complete

\textsuperscript{380} See Appendix A, pp. 1-3 & 12-13.
\textsuperscript{381} See Appendix A, pp. 64-66 & 69-70.
\textsuperscript{382} See Appendix A, pp. 132-133.
\textsuperscript{383} See Appendix A, p. 133.
\textsuperscript{384} See Appendix A, p. 131.
entity.\textsuperscript{385} *Identity* was therefore a conceptual unification of experience relating to my sense of *being*, situated in the context of ‘becoming.’\textsuperscript{386} Although elusive, I experienced this conceptual unification in the multiplicity of sensations that combine to present a sense of *self* and therefore experienced it from within its construct.\textsuperscript{387} *Identity*, as an active, forwardly mobile projection of *self* into the world, realised through the process of discovering how I can contribute to society in a pro-active capacity therefore plays out as a performative aspect of *self*.\textsuperscript{388} I perceived the presentation of my *Artistic Identity* as a perceptual unification of fractured sensation, particularly as my professional activities were dispersed across many musical communities, involved many styles of music and modes of performance.\textsuperscript{389}

On November 16, 2011 I likened *identity* to a glacier, writing in my journal that the observer can perceive the surface appearance of an *identity*, yet;

there is a depth, a mass underneath this surface that is hidden – a force that is unimaginable by any who observe it. Its nature may be recognisable, yet it is still unpredictable [in its rate of change and the force behind its movement]. It has existed in its duration through time as one and the same, yet it slowly changes in substance, form, appearance and size – seemingly stable for large periods of time it is slowly transforming carrying with it [elements] of its surroundings,\textsuperscript{390} forever

\textsuperscript{385} Stuart Hall (2011) discusses the Post-modern perspective that “identities are never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions. They are subject to a radical historicization, and are constantly in the process of change and transformation” (Hall et al. 2011, p. 4).


\textsuperscript{387} This process could be described as ‘apperception’ (psychology) “the process by which the qualities of an object, situation, etc., perceived by an individual are correlated with his/her preexisting knowledge” (“Apperception.” In Concise Medical Dictionary. 2010).

\textsuperscript{388} For an in depth discussion on Performativity see Schechner 2006.

\textsuperscript{389} See Chapter One.

\textsuperscript{390} This and the following references relate to a glaciers affectation of land mass such as sculpting or carving away the land and the transportation and depositing of materials as described on the
moving forward through its temporal existence it may leave aspects behind, take others on board, carve out a path and leave the remnants in its wake. The surrounding environment shows evidence of history and the glacier itself owns a biographical narrative, yet throughout time it maintains its forward momentum. Gathering up the drive from other elements of the environment to fuel its progress, it is transformation within recognizable form. (Appendix A, pp. 140-141)

This entry highlights my experiential understanding of identity as my perception of its construct began to form through my Practice-led Research and establishes the lens through which this investigation examined the construct of my Artistic Identity. It was the underlying force of intent insinuated in this analogy that struck me as being significant to my experience of identity within the field of music; the momentum generated by past activities and the forging of a path through the setting of creative intentions toward future performance outcomes. It is primarily the active engagement with being and projecting this being toward the imagined future that constructs my Artistic Identity as an experienced phenomenon. Whilst my knowledge of self is informed by previous experience, active reflection upon the past is governed by a forwardly projected concern for being\(^{391}\) related to my potentiality\(^{392}\) as a composing and performing musician.

I asked in Chapter Three in light of Madan Sarup (1996), is it our intentions that form our concept of identity by asserting their volition upon our very existence?

By choosing to research my Artistic Identity via the performance of original works, setting the intention to document my biographical compositional output and then embarking upon the composition of new works in which to situate my personal voice as an improviser, I effectively affirmed my Artistic Identity as a composer, ensemble leader and performer of original music. If I had chosen to research my personal voice as an improviser alone I may have set the intention to perform in


\(^{391}\) See Heidegger 1962, p. 41.

\(^{392}\) See Atkins 2005, p. 114.
unstructured improvisatory settings, alongside a broad cross-section of musicians in order to investigate my use of materials in a variety of contextual settings and the various ways in which musical inter-action takes place. This would likely have altered the outcomes of my research." Therefore it could be said that by setting the intention to develop my compositional output and consider the framing of my Artistic Identity within the performance of original compositions I have constructed my identity as an improvising musician who’s personal voice is framed by the performance of original compositions. Additionally, by setting the intention to develop my skills and personal voice via a secondary instrument – the C Melody Saxophone – I have also constructed my identity as a multi-instrumentalist. Finally, by choosing to perform my compositions with and situate my personal voice amongst a small group of colleagues I forged a sense of belonging to a community of like-minded creative musicians, affirming the ideal of facilitating autonomous self-expression within the context of constructing and refining an ensemble and compositional sound.

As established in Chapter Three and discussed in relation to my practice in Chapter Eight, it is via ‘others’ – the community of musicians with whom I perform and inter-act – that my Artistic Identity is framed and informed, via perceptions of ‘similarity and difference." Additionally, the ideals we generate, our modes of performance and the musical language we establish as a community generates meaning behind the performance of music as it is through this inter-action that a dialogue is established between my self and the ‘other' leading to the impartation of ontological expression as an artist."395

393 This investigation of my Artistic Identity has necessarily been limited to a study framed by an examination of outcomes generated via the performance of original composition. Further research into my musical practice would be required in order to gain broader insight towards the construct of my Artistic Identity which is additionally framed by performances as an improviser in ‘free’ structured contexts and as an interpreter of other composer’s works.

394 See Heidegger (1960), Rutherford (1990), and Barker (2003).

395 Goehr (1998) discusses this as "the view that music means something, not just because it is a well-formed symbolic language, but because when human beings engage with this language they express something about themselves as human beings" (Goehr, 1998, p. 1).
I also established in Chapter Three and discussed in relation to my practice in Chapter Eight that intentionality toward a creative practice of music additionally generates meaning as it is whilst I establish goals for future musical happenings that I reflect upon my abilities and the potential for enhancing, framing or developing those abilities. By articulating this intentionality through the generation of musical works and improvisatory content I situate my works in the ontological knowledge of my own history, engaging as a psycho-physical being in the production of musical sound. It is this knowledge gained from being in the world and the empathy for cultivating my future self through the practice of music that I situate myself within and forge the path via which my sense of Artistic Identity is informed.

I have chosen to become a musician who performs original musical works through active engagement in this field, resulting from creative and energetic drive throughout my adult life to play and perform original music. I have harnessed the impulses that propel me to be a creative musician and as a product of many years of personal and academic research into the field of music performance, I have cultivated an Artistic Identity. This Artistic Identity has been reflexively constructed through the development of a performance practice that is active within a community of like-minded individuals (the musicians with whom I perform), a practice that honours my creative output and establishes goals for future development.

The active ingredient in this construct is the way I engage with the energetic impulse that drives me to be a musician – what choices I make and what influences these choices. As I have discussed throughout this exegesis, I engage with a range of physical, conceptual, sonic and aesthetic parameters toward the organisation of musical sounds. Whilst this is achieved without necessarily consciously referencing my concept of Artistic Identity, my identification with the use of materials in regard to these parameters ultimately informs my sense of Artistic

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396 My journal regularly reflects upon my potentiality. Specific references can be found in Appendix B, pp. 142-146.

Identity. This takes place, not as an abstract unification of a multiplicity of sensations associated with the various processes of engaging with and developing musical content (as I initially proposed), but as a refraction of self\textsuperscript{398} in relation to the various modes of engaging with music. In this way the experience of my Artistic Identity is not stable and consistent but is relational to specific modes of creatively being. I am existentially affected by the music I have created and through the act of composition and performance, even listening to and producing my recordings, I grow, build creative and energetic momentum, respond emotively and intellectually by actively cultivating a personally aesthetically pleasing organisation of sound.\textsuperscript{399}

My connection to the various processes of developing musical content as being identifiable to the expression of my Artistic Identity is made possible through the various ways in which perceptions of self refract when engaging with these musical parameters. Through that refraction I perceive whether I identify with the musical content, or not, depending on how smooth the perceptual transition is between states of conceiving and producing musical content. When performing this also relates to how I identify with the ensemble sound, how inspired I am by the performance setting, and how authentically I contribute to the process.\textsuperscript{400}

Moving away from the performance of original music which has been the focus of this exegesis, if I do not identify with the music I am playing, as an interpreter and/or an improviser, I experience the music and my place within the construction of that sound world as a perceptual obstacle, my relationship to which I have to negotiate. At times I find I can navigate my way around the obstacle and still feel my personal voice has some presence, yet at other times the obstacle is impassable and I cannot perceptually assimilate with the parameters of its construct.

\textsuperscript{398} As specified in Chapter Eight, my use of the terms ‘refract’ and ‘refraction’ in relation to the experience of self when performing music is a metaphorical expression.

\textsuperscript{399} For a discussion on the growth of the self see Csikszentmihalyi 2008 p. 41.

\textsuperscript{400} I discuss this phenomenon as ‘faciality’ (from Deleuze & Guattari 1987, pp. 167-191) or putting on a facade versus ‘authenticity’ in my journal Appendix A, pp. 106-108 & 204-205. See also Appendix B, pp. 31-32 for references to ‘authenticity.’
The audible sounds that emanate from me provide a mirroring of sorts via which I am able to perceive whether I am hearing an adequate representation of my sound within and whether my personal voice is being facilitated by specific performance settings. In certain circumstances I may not energetically or aesthetically connect with the style of music or performance setting, however, I strongly identify with music that I create, whether as an improviser or a composer. Particularly when performing my own music, I live the creation of my works over and over again through each performance and therefore emotively and intellectually resonate with their realisation. This resonance is so profound that through the performance of this music, alongside like-minded musicians, I am actually able to lose my sense of self and identity. I merge with the music energetically and no longer have concerns of how effectively I am presenting my sound or what my creative intentions are as I simply exist in the moment. This moment is made up of the energetic residue of past experience (constituted through my studio practice and past performances), and is propelled towards the construction of musical form through the manipulation of musical and energetic intensities as they arise and transform. I experience the real-time performance of music and my sense of self as being simultaneously a product of past and present interactions, propelled toward future realisations – timeless.

Throughout my research I discovered that my most profound performance experiences are those toward which I lose my sense of self, identity and perception of time – when I focus on the performance of music and the sound world that is created, when I lose the sense of physically being involved in the generation of sound and the music simply flows, I perform at my optimal. Yet in order to lose my sense of self and simply 'be,' engaged with the act of playing music, I must be highly involved in the process of performing, connected in such a way that I

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401 See Dominic Abrams An introduction to the social identity approach (Abrams and Hogg 1990, pp. 91-98).
403 See Appendix A, p. 214 and Appendix B, pp. 87-88 & 138-139.
405 See Nancy 2006, p. 208.
perceive no conceptual boundaries or obstacles to traverse. Again, this occurs when I play music that I most identify with,

\[407\] which suggests that the value I place upon this music generates uncompromised energetic impulse; that the energetic impulse arises from my ontological self.

As discussed in Chapter Eight, the physicality of generating sound as a woodwind performer in combination with the channelling of emotive energy and conceptual forces into the sounds I create allows me to project an energetic understanding of self into the music. Thus, when I energetically and conceptually identify with the musical content I perform it could be said that I project my knowledge of being into the sound world, perceptually merging with the energetic impulse to generate and form musical sound. When performing my own compositions this identification becomes strongly apparent.

I am able to place something of my self into the music when a balance between my energetic and emotive input, my conceptual ideas, my sonic output and the inspiration (energetic or conceptual) gained from fellow musicians is present.\[408\] This sensation allows me to feel connected to the music, provides me with the notion that I am expressing my musical ideas genuinely and articulately, and suggests that there is meaning to be conveyed and perceived through the act of performing music. All these factors contribute to a sense of identifying with the music, the process behind its generation and the materials I sculpt. I identify with the music I perform when: I aesthetically appreciate the content, construct, sound sets and performance processes; I feel that I am able to be expressive through my articulation of music ideas; when there is a place in the music for my personal sound and; when I feel energetically aligned with the realised sound world.

Additionally, the integration of musical knowledge to the energetic process of sound production is integral to the notion of projecting my self into the music as without a discerning connection to musical ideas and the processes of creative development, sound production conveys no meaning due to a lack of intent.

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\[407\] See Appendix B, p. 87.

\[408\] See Chapter Eight.
towards the sounds I am producing. The facilitator of this abstract meaning is
the affinity I have developed with my instruments (predominantly evident in
relation to the Flute). In particular the development of technique and facility
enables me to articulate my ideas succinctly. It is the sensation of being
articulate that injects meaning into what I play through the conceptual connection
I have with the sounds I produce (the act of which also enables me to interact with
other musicians). What begins as thought, energy and intent towards the creation
of music becomes sound via the instrument – sound as processed aurally and as
physical vibration, sound that may also resonate on an emotive level in which a
deep connection to the music becomes apparent. My ability to utilise a range of
expressive devices is integral to the articulation of a complex array of conceptual,
energetic and emotively embodied understandings that in turn brings about the
sensation of putting something of my self into the music I create. However, it is not
only my internal responses which generate meaningful performance outcomes – I
must also be able to respond to the music as it occurs on the outside, interacting
with the forces that music generates through its realization. Interaction between
my physical self, my instrument and other interactive beings (musicians or
audience) is integral to the experience of profundity as I would otherwise be
playing music in a void unto my own. If I extend my performance intentions
outward toward the realization of music, my fellow musicians, the performance
space and my audience, I instigate meaningful interaction in the milieu where
sound and the personal significance it generates refracts.

Anthony Giddens (1991) discusses that identity is a reflexive project of self and a
projection of that self into the future (Giddens 1991, p. 5). Rather than being a

409 Meaning in music is abstract as it holds no direct reference to expression. Gisele Brelet (1958)
discusses this phenomenon stating that “[m]usic cannot express feelings in their precise nuances,
but its form, because they are temporal, and express the very forms of our inner duration, arouse in
us “pure” emotions which are related only to themselves, and cannot put a distance between us and
them” (Langer 1958, p.119).

410 See Appendix A, p. 22.

411 Kevin Hetherington (1998) discusses expressions of identity through performance stating that
“[w]e cannot speak of expressive identities without recognising that we are also talking about an
embodied identity that expresses itself through a performing body” (Hetherington 1998, p. 155).
tangible entity or thing, *identity* is a mode of thinking about ourselves in relation to ‘others.’ As discussed in Chapter Three, Stuart Hall (1992) holds a similar viewpoint: rather than identity being a finished product we “project ourselves into our cultural identities” (Hall et al. 1992, p. 277) through identification with ‘others’ and conceptual representations of self. Therefore, it is the identification with my *sound*, my creative processes and those generated alongside ‘other’ musicians that provides a field of reference by which my sense of *Artistic Identity* is constructed, as was discussed in Chapter Eight. This takes place via perceptions of self refracting in relation to my identification with the array of creative activities that constitutes a musical practice.

Due to this refraction of self, if considered in isolation my *Artistic Identity* presents as a multiplicity of fractured sensation as was suggested in Chapter One. However, if considered in relation to my *sound* and the impartation of self-expression via my *personal voice* and intentionality toward cultivating my future self as a creative musician, the experiential vignettes generated by the refracted self in relation to perceptions of authentic musical experience coalesce in ontological understanding which is then projected toward an imagined future.412 If simply viewed as Guercio’s “stamp of the artist” discernible in the body of my works (Guercio 2006, p. 29), my *Artistic Identity* becomes a static set of characteristics and musical traits that hold no direct significance to me as a creative musician. It is my identification with the processes via which these characteristics are generated and the *sound* of the improvised and composed works I create that holds meaning. This meaning is transferred through an ongoing creative exploration of musical sound in relation to ‘others’ and is therefore a dynamic construct rather than a mere “stamp” of creativity.

Tracing the etymology of ‘identification,’ the suffix ‘ification’ suggests a process of ‘becoming;’ an inter-active dynamic process or practical agency, derived from the Latin ‘*ficus*’ meaning ‘making’ (“-*fic.*” In *Macquarie Dictionary*. 6th ed. 2013). Therefore, rather than simply being the ‘same’ as suggested by ‘*idem* of identity,’413

412 See Catriona Mackenzie’s “Imagining Oneself Otherwise” (Mackenzie & Stoljar 2000, p. 126).
413 See Chapter Three.
identification provides an active relationality with something or some ‘other.’ The identification I have with my sound and the musical sounds I produce is therefore imperative to my sense of Artistic Identity, one that is mediated through the cultivation of a personal voice via which the facilitation of self-expression is made possible. Additionally, my identification with the musicians of ‘Lo-Res’ and ‘Saveja’ has “filled” my sense of Artistic Identity from the outside (Hall et al. 1992, p. 287), providing cultural significance for my autonomous creative existence.

Arising from the identification with creative processes and my sound as an improviser and a composer, Artistic Identity is a cultivated phenomenon relational to an active engagement with creatively being. It is the projection of energetic and experiential factors that combine to provide me with a sense of who I am and how I envisage my personal growth as a musician in relation to my cultural and biographical setting. It is experienced as a psycho-physical refraction of self as I engage with the processes of constructing musical sound. As a construct of my past and current actions combined with the directive qualities of cultivating my future self, my Artistic Identity can also be reinvented through action and intentionality and is therefore a malleable construct that is open to possibility. The construct of Artistic Identity therefore lies in the active generation of musical materials towards continued cultivation of a personal voice as the instigator of musical processes. Yet in performance it is necessary to disrobe my sense of self and identity in order to perform at my optimal, tapping in to the energetic impulse that engages my creativity. Indeed, my experience of Artistic Identity, projected through the identification with my sound and modes of creatively being, is primarily energetic yet it is also influenced by conceptual, aesthetic and sonic inspiration. It is through engagement with these parameters that I cultivate my sound, the audible manifestation of my personal voice, and project my Artistic Identity realised via the various modes of refraction which present me the opportunity to experience whether my engagement in the construction and performance of music is authentic.

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414 See Chapter Three.
415 See Appendix A, pp. 141-142.
Recommendations for future research

This research outlines one possible methodology for investigating a musician’s Artistic Identity. Whilst for the purpose of current research I have investigated my Artistic Identity within the performance of original compositions, this decision was led by my practice of music and specific creative intentions set toward the development of my current musical focus. If I was to undertake further research into this field I would examine my Artistic Identity in the contextual setting of free improvised music, or investigate the social construct of Artistic Identity within an extended community of practitioners. Here, the methodology of such studies would need reconsideration as my creative processes as well as aesthetic and conceptual considerations vary significantly depending on the creative activities undertaken.

Additionally, this research has investigated the creative practice and phenomenological experiences of a single musician and it is suggested that further research would need to be undertaken by a broad range of practitioners within the field of music in order to comprehensively examine the nature and construct of a musician’s Artistic Identity, specifically as it relates to the composer/performer construct arising in improvised music practice as was the primary outcome of this research.
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