MUSICAL SETTING CREATION FOR A YEATS POEM: AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHY WITH THE PROPELLER MODEL APPROACH[1]

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ABSTRACT

Researchers and artists alike have their own unique challenges when it comes to engaging with their craft for the purposes of producing a final product. Both occupations hold their own respective identities when it comes to the labour of their work whilst holding other cultural and linguistic identities. This retrospective autoethnography completed in the third-person narrative aims to explore the experience of creating a musical setting in terms of cultural importance and identity dynamics between artist and researcher. The research attempts to convey how the Propeller Model Approach (PMA) can serve as a theoretical framework by deductively providing emotive codes for the memories analyzed. The researcher's experiences of creating a musical setting for the WB Yeat's poem "The Song of Wandering Aengus" are recalled in the context of a Canadian Irish recording artist. The secondary literature explores human creativity, philosophy of music and other autoethnographies in conjunction with the four thematic areas of PMA. The results from the research inform of a departure from an intellect-centric view on creativity and provide insight into the music making process.

Keywords: *arts-based research; autoethnography; musical setting; propeller model approach; Yeats;*

1. AUTOETHNOGRAPHY FOR MUSIC CREATION

Music is fundamental to human evolution and is linked to communication in the forms of attention calling and self-expansion (Schulkin, 2014, p. 1). Music creation assists in the contemplation of identity and one's place in the world (Noone, 2021, p. 104). For this autoethnography, it is the experience of the creation of a song adapted to a poem as a musical setting that is explored. The musical and cultural identities of the researcher are reflected upon along with the parameters and environment in which the research and the music creation process were conducted. An autoethnography of this process does not necessarily need to strive for questions on identity, as such research can investigate the relations between agency and structure or even focus on performance (Harrison, 2014, p. 1). Due to the privacy of the subjective experience of music creation, it can be difficult to consider which

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[1] The poster version of this project was presented at the conference *New Perspectives on Irish Cultures: Celebrating a Diverse Field* September 5-6, 2024 organized by the University of Limerick and the Irish Humanities Alliance.

approaches of research will be the most efficient and effective in terms of investigating the meaning and purpose of creative activity. By incorporating a musical setting to a Yeats poem as its case study: "The Song of Wandering Aengus" (hereafter: TSOWA), the autoethnography reveals some of the layers of significance that the creation of such an artform poses and will be shown to assist in revealing the researcher's personal, creative, and cultural dimensions.

To provide context, it is worth noting that if one of the researcher's original songs were chosen for this study, the results would have differed in terms of scope and focus. As for the people other than the researcher mentioned in the narrative of the autoethnography, they were treated as participants who provided informed consent (Sparkes, 2024, p. 117).

The arts-based lens of the research stressed the overlap between artist and researcher by focusing on artistic production and subjectivities, leading to thick participatory insights (Harrison, 2014, p. 4). This research involved a form of story-telling that was recollected from the researcher-practitioner's (hereafter: RP) unfolding story of the musical creation process for the setting. The story not only belongs to RP as researcher but is edited and expanded upon as a single person (Sparkes, 2024, p. 112). Conducting retrospective autoethnography allowed RP to create a single-authored self-narrative to utilize a personal story to serve as the data retrieved. This data highlighted the linkages between RP, other individuals, and the contextual environment through an analysis of autobiography and retrospective observations derived from memories (Tripathi et al, 2022, 1155).

The commencement of an autoethnography can be a difficult process due to its potential non-linearity and the struggle for structure in the creation of a personal narrative. To address these issues, RP adhered to the themes of the Propeller Model Approach® (hereafter: PMA)[2] to guide the literature reviewed and assist in organizing the themes derived from RP's experiences. PMA's four conceptual areas were adapted to the autoethnography's goals of exploring the experiences of RP in the musical setting creation process. PMA aimed to serve as a tool for autoethnography by adapting to the process of music creation. The four original PMA themes or hypostases were linked to relevant terms for the sake of adaptation to the demands of the research. These will be provided in the order: *intellect = analysis*, *intuition = consensus*, *instinct = impetus* and *innocence = basis*.[3]

These adapted themes served to assist in the deductive detection of codes in the language retrieved from RP's memory logs in relation to the experience of creating the musical setting. This conceptual framework felt useful in structuring the research and highlighting important aspects of the musical setting creation experience through a deductive thematic analysis. Each of the four themes will include secondary research to gain perspective on the music creation process that will include psycho-philosophical concepts exploring human creativity, aesthetics, and other relevant autoethnographies. The primary research will explore RP's personal experience of creating the musical setting and RP's identity as a researcher and musical recording artist of Irish and Canadian extractions.

2. BACKGROUND

The commencement of the story for the creation of the musical setting of TSOWA was at the 2006 Yeats International Summer School in Sligo where RP was an attendee. At

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[2] The PMA was first introduced in the monograph *Living With(in) Your Ends: An Approach to a Novel Life* (2023) and in the article "A Qualitative Analysis of the Client's Experience of the Propeller Model Approach to Counselling Therapy", in DBS Business Review, Vol. 5, (2023).
[3] See Figure 1.

this conference there was academic and artistic content presented on the works of poet William Butler Yeats (1865 – 1939). Whilst in attendance, RP purchased a book of collected poems by Yeats recommended by fellow attendee and singer-songwriter Tirill Mohn of the music label FairyMusic from Norway. From this book, RP's Father would later inform their favourite poem was "The Song of Wandering Aengus." In the summer of 2024, RP became aware of the fact that the poem was of the Aisling tradition which carries Irish mythological themes with origins dating back to the 17th Century (Britannica, 2016).

The theme of wandering found in the poem relates to other concepts such as the dandy, rover, knight errant, and the troubadour, aligning with RP's interest in travel. RP for example took their 'Grand Tour'[4] in 2004, moving to Madrid in 2006 and memorized TSOWA during this time. Having the poem memorized allowed RP to apply it easily to guitar chords and eventually transform it into a song to be sung. At the Yeats School in 2006, Professor Rajeev S. Pathke, Director of the Humanities Division at Yale-NUS, provided inspiring words for RP's relationship with the guitar as an instrument assisting in the creation of the musical setting. They informed how the guitar was a mnemonic device which helped in understanding how the application of the Yeats poem to the guitar for the musical setting could assist in and reinforce memorization.

Unbeknown to RP at the time of creating the first drafts of the musical setting, other artists had already created musical settings for the poem. The musical setting by RP was produced by Richard Wallace (A Serious Happening) and independently released under the name: Kev Michael Stevenson on the album *Saudadity* in 2024. It was performed publicly at Quay Bookshop in Limerick on October 30, 2024 as a form of promotion for the musical setting for the night-time economy event: "5 Great Songs and the Poems that Inspired Them." The creation of the setting can be characterized as serving an homage to not only the poem, Yeats, and RP's Father, but to a more transcendent concept of Irish identity. Due to RP not choosing this identity, interpreting aspects of Irish culture such as poetry reading, music, and in this case combining the two into a musical setting, felt like a way to engage in culture in a meaningful way.

Autoethnography adheres to the 'meaningingfulness' of artistic activities by respecting the authenticity of the experience from the researcher. RP was attracted to autoethnography due to the many facets of their identity such as tri-culturalism (North American, Irish, and Ibero-American), life as a parent, researcher, teacher, and therapist or even life as a painter of abstract art and singer-songwriter on guitar. Autoethnography can be helpful for understanding how reflexive engagement and theory can assist in identifying meaning from one's own stories as autobiographies (O'Connell, 2017, p. 299). The therapeutic benefit of conducting such personal research is not only helpful for oneself, but can be understood through verisimilitude. Others who may live a similar life or experience similar creative experiences might see how autoethnography is apt for such relatability by acknowledging emotions and subjectivity (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2010, p. 274).

We can state that autoethnography involves a performance that can serve as a vehicle for deriving freedom from contexts such as cultural, personal, and professional identities to allow for both dialogical retrospection on self as 'other' and to allow for one's identities to interact (Spry, 2001, p. 708). This autoethnography will be shown to have allowed for the scrutiny, reflection, publication, and reworking of RP's self-understanding, creating space for verisimilitude's thick descriptions of experience. It also aims to allow

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[4] See https://www.rmg.co.uk/stories/topics/what-was-grand-tour.

readers of the research to grasp phenomenologically 'what it is like' to be a member of the musical recording industry as someone with Irish and Canadian heritages.

3. METHOD & METHODOLOGY

The memory reflections for the research date from July 2006 to November 2024 and were examined in conjunction with recording the musical setting for the poem. Recording sessions occurred between RP's residence in Limerick, Ireland and the producer's residence in Burlington, Ontario. Recording was completed July 10th, 2024 being commercially released November 08th, 2024. PMA's themes served as the deductive code book to extract relevant data from memory reflections. Such deductive thematic analysis was theoretically based by grounding itself in the pre-existing theory of PMA's framework.

This was done to structure the data and hypothesize on RP's experiences in relation to this theoretical frame (Naeem, 2023, p. 9). The approach highlighted emotional-based themes reflected in transformative phenomena known as self-claimed epiphanies found in the experience of creating the musical setting; phenomena characterized as moments that contain a meaningful impact on RP's life (Ellis, Adams, Bochner, 2010, p. 275). The five points on autoethnography below emphasized by Butz (2009) summarize the methods that were adhered to in the research.

- Deductive Coding derived from the Propeller Model Approach
- Retrospective Memory Consolidation
- Emic and Etic points of view
- Verisimilitude reinforced for potential readers of the work
- Systematic & Analytical

(Butz, p. 1664)

The autoethnography examined data derived from memories activated throughout the process of the musical setting's creation and recording. Deductive codes from the themes of PMA were applied to the memory entries providing a confessional-emotive style of story (Chang, 2008). Investigation in this manner was conducted through a retrospective autoethnographic approach which permitted RP to use their single-authored self-narrative to serve as the data to be interrogated. This involved inspecting their autobiography and personal observations to give their experience a 'voice' (Tripathi et al, 2022, p. 1155). Although RP could have conducted the retrospective autoethnography at any point after which they had created the musical setting, it was within the time frame of recording, producing, and releasing the musical setting to the public that was considered paramount to the experience. Through this process, the musical setting received a new identity in the artform of a recorded piece of music. Although retrospective autoethnographies involve the risk of bias due to limitations on researcher reflection resulting from individualistic selectivity and participant attitude change, the approach offered the benefits of independent engagement in research which prevented other researcher contamination and in turn allowed for flexibility (Tripathi et al, 2022, p. 1157).
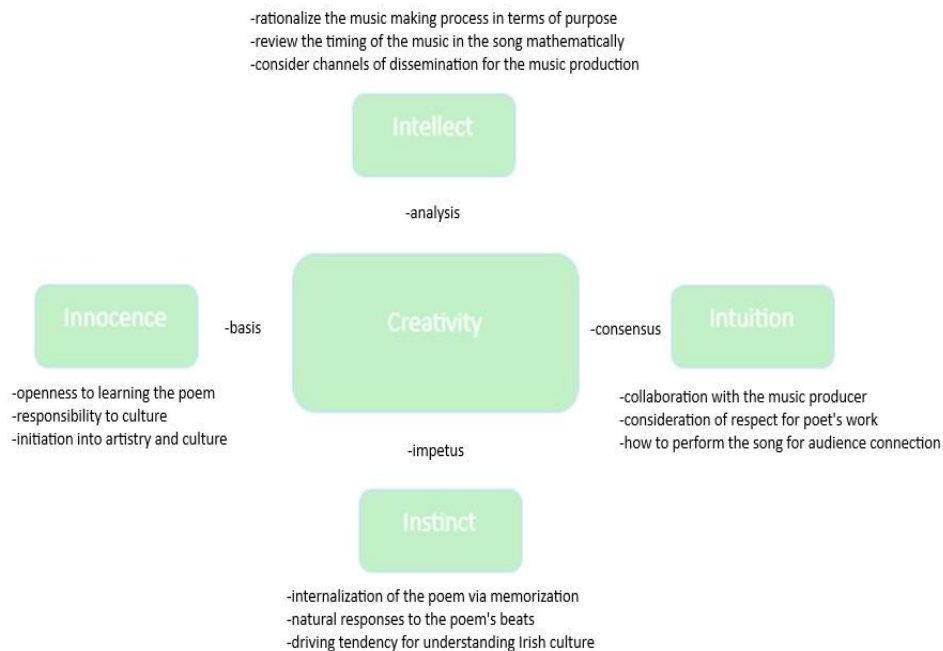
4. CREATING A MUSICAL SETTING

Creativity can be accepted as involving cognitive problem solving and the elaboration of new ideas through independent thinking where inner motivations are important (Rimas, 2024, p. 173). Music involves information processing through form, beat, melody, and harmony, with the musical experience itself involving affect and intellect (Shulkin, 2014, p. 4). One issue raised from the literature reviewed in this autoethnography is the prevalence

of intelligence being categorized as creativity's main faculty. Results that are intellectual, for example, are often framed to emerge from information that receives new forms, allowing for the process of self-reference, recollection of autobiography, creative thought, and mind-wandering (Holm-Hadulla, 2013, p. 294). RP's autoethnography departs from such an intellect-centric view on creativity and aligns more with the notion that it involves an emergence from conditions based on openness to cultural experience and the need to pursue meaning and harmony of expression (Rimas, 2024, p. 174). This autoethnography highlights other faculties of the human condition within the experience of music creation through PMA's emphasis on other areas of the human being. Intellect does not monopolize the music making process, rather the conceptual importance of *intuition*, *instinct*, and *innocence* are considered on par with *intelligence* for understanding the human experience of creativity.

5. APPLICATION OF THE PROPELLER MODEL APPROACH

The purpose of PMA is to increase awareness of identity through consideration of one's orientation to the present moment or lack thereof. Recognition of where we might identify our current state of being between PMA's four conceptual areas is conducted. For this autoethnography PMA was adapted to investigate its themes in relation to the music making process. PMA in Figure 1 below is followed by a reflection on each of the themes of the four areas in conjunction with the experience of musical setting creation. The codes derived from the reflections linked with their respective thematic areas on PMA:

-rationalize the music making process in terms of purpose
-review the timing of the music in the song mathematically
-consider channels of dissemination for the music production

Intellect

-analysis

Innocence -basis **Creativity** -consensus **Intuition**

-openness to learning the poem
-responsibility to culture
-initiation into artistry and culture

-impetus

-collaboration with the music producer
-consideration of respect for poet's work
-how to perform the song for audience connection

Instinct

-internalization of the poem via memorization
-natural responses to the poem's beats
-driving tendency for understanding Irish culture

Figure 1 - Propeller Model Approach adapted to music creation

Intellectual Analysis

The process of creativity can be understood to derive from new neural networks being formed to provide information stored in the brain with new patterns while time and space provide skill learning and development (Holm-Hadulla, 2013, p. 295). The superliminal area in PMA represents intellect and can be associated with analysis in the creative process of music creation. Intellect is important with respect to music by manifesting norms that evaluate musical phenomena such as thoughts becoming musical intonations through intellectualization (Rimas, 2024, p. 215). Creativity can depart from such pure intellectualization as it also requires interpersonal, intrapersonal, linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic, logical-mathematical, and musical faculties (Holm-Hadulla, 2013, p. 295). The semantics of intellect therefore encounters problematics when it is explored in conjunction with creative processes. Other interpretations of intelligence can range from crystalline intelligence to fluid intelligence, with the former requiring the latter for creativity since fluidity involves both thinking that is convergent (concentrated and goal-directed) and divergent (associative and directionless) (Holm-Hadulla, 2013, p. 295). These issues of semantics provide PMA with relevance for understanding other human faculties in the creative process other than intellect, however, this section will focus on intellect as analysis to adhere to PMA's thematic direction.

In terms of analysis, the historical research on TSOWA was relevant for RP's approach to the setting within the Aisling tradition. Intellectualizing on the technical aspects of the creation and production was also a form of analysis to ensure awareness of potential administrative and legal implications. WB Yeats, for example, was credited as the lyricist of the musical setting for the commercial release of the setting, along with the production credit given to the producer.

As for the textual content itself, if TSOWA had not been intellectually memorized before the application of guitar chords by RP, then the process of analyzing musical attributes like the beats and timbre of the setting would have been more relevant. The philosopher Aristoxenus made an important distinction for this analysis between the singing and the speaking voice, with the latter described as a continuous movement across the space of pitch and the former as intervallic movement (Ravasio, 2023). Such analytical differentiation is important for considering the difference between reading a poem and transforming it into a script to be sung. In the 18th Century, Thomas Moore was recognized as an artist and composer who excelled at this transformative skill. Theo Dorgan highlights: "every poet learns that it's far from easy to write words that adapt well to music…Moore is the biggest example we have of how to do it, but very few people have mastered that skill (Thomas Moore: Bard na hÉireann, 2024)."

Music can be taken as a metaphor for the patterns of sound that provide a poem with intonation and shape separated from its semantics. Art songs and musical settings derived from artists like Schubert, Brahms, Schumann and Wolf were created by reading poems 'out loud' prior to setting them to music (Rodgers, 2017, p. 319). Reflecting on such mastery of text to song, RP considered it difficult to rate, quantify or qualify if the musical setting they created was 'true' to the poem. The creation of musical settings does not currently have specific training or guidelines to follow, which allowed RP to explore their own interpretation of the poem. One stanza from the poem for example was removed for musical coherence: "And walk among long dappled grass". This removal was not done in an analytical manner, rather it was the natural outcome of the musical setting creation. The line

was omitted unintentionally during practice over time, highlighting the potential subliminal input in the creative process that through retrospective analysis we can identify.

The omission raises the problem of assimilation, where we consider music being 'swallowed up' by the words of a poem. It could be argued that the poem is no longer a poetic text after it is changed into song via a musical setting (Rodgers, 2017, p. 316). This philosophical issue can be traced back to the analogy of "The Ship of Theseus" where we can question if a boat that has received completely new parts over time is still the same boat. It can also be expanded with ideas from electronic music, as Trevor Wishart considers that syllables and syntax can be abstracted from a poem to create new harmonies and sounds that might lose the semantics of the words, creating new ways of interpreting or experiencing them (Wishart, 2025). Whichever the case, it is important that the creative practitioner for a musical setting discovers the autonomous timing properly accorded to the musical piece and poetic text within their 'inner ear' and raise it to an ideal (Rimas, 2024, p. 215).

Questions can arise with the sort of creativity involved in musical setting creation, such as whether poetry keeps its body when incorporated into a musical song. Considering the pure poetic features of a poem as holding a presence within the musical setting whilst pushing against the setting itself, is a notion that comes to the fore (Rodgers, 2017, p. 319). Reading or singing from text to music provokes debate by questioning if the music relates directly to the semantics of a poetic text, whereas any reading from music to text will result in a possible denial of a poem's autonomy. There is therefore an aesthetical issue of words being consumed by or assimilated into the music and/or *vice versa*, leading to the idea that musical settings can be interpreted as having the possibility of possessing the text rather than involve an interaction or incorporation with it (Rodgers, 2017, p. 316). We can ponder on how the setting would have materialized if the guitar chords were different and therefore applied in a different way to the text. This would have impacted how the poem was sung by RP and provokes ideas on whether vocals and musical elements are meant to conform to emotional states described by the musical piece's lyrical content (Plato, 1969, Book 3). Deciding on making these technical decisions for the creation of a musical setting was an intellectual task that required analysis on music creation and how it can be categorized. Intellect allowed for the understanding of the music's logic and latent immanent spiritual meanings (Rimas, 2024, p. 213). Artistic intellect can thus be argued as the ability to engage with the musical setting's essence, read, hear its language in text, and think musically via the creation of the intonations incorporated (Rimas, 2024, p. 231).

The analytical categorization of TSOWA can involve placing it under the label of monody as its musical branch. In the book of *Dodecachordon* from 1547 A.D., Heinrich Glarean considered that composers who set single melodic lines to text (i.e. monody), such as the Greek, Roman and early Christian composers from the past, are superior to polyphonic composers, as the former demands creative improvisation and invention whereas the latter borrows melodic lines to conduct an intellectual task through memory (Ravasio, 2023). PMA respects the fact that the musical setting creation was not a mere intellectual task. The setting was monodic by involving an expressive immediacy that aims to arouse emotions from the prosaics derived from the impassioned speech of the lyrics; a characteristic considered lost in the music of the Middle Ages when polyphonic music returned to popularity (Ravasio, 2023). Monody's eventual rebirth can be attributed to the Camerata movement of the late 1500s when music aimed again to arouse emotion, which led to the reawakening of the Greek classical notion that musical expression resembles human feeling (Ravasio, 2023). Such intellectual reflection on these classifications of the musical setting allowed RP to consider

the terminology required to create the setting as an academic exercise in addition to an artistic one. PMA would view polyphonic music creation as not limited to the intellect as Glarean mentioned above, however, it is of interest to consider that monodic music creation could be said to involve the different areas of PMA to a greater extent than polyphonic musical creation that can be argued to be based more on analytical memory and intellect.

How to engage in creativity can lead to contrasts or parsimonies between the different areas of PMA. Bartleet highlights this 'conceptual fog' in their autoethnography on the experience of being a musical conductor, noting with regards to their audience: "I try to show them how I want to interpret this work as much as I can with my body, but my mind never stops thinking about how things could be improved. Much like the process of score study, this feels like a deeply intellectual process rather than an embodied one (Bartleet, p. 723)." It is apparent that Bartleet could have been conditioned throughout their professional studies to approach musical scores in an intellect-centric manner, which they clearly have recognized is not necessarily productive when it comes to musical performance. PMA assisted RP in re-evaluating their orientation to their different human faculties beyond intellect. This will now be shown as we move in a clockwise fashion to the transliminal area of the PMA. Here we will explore consensus in the creative process of the musical setting.

Consensual Intuition

Scientists can hold the belief that when analysis is unable to decompose a scientific proposition, truth becomes revelatory in a nonanalytical sense through intuition and aesthetics (Reber, Schwarz, & Winkielman, 2008, p. 377). Intellect reorganizes artistic material needed to create whereas intuition involves the dissipation of rational attitudes that are preconceived (Rimas, 2024, p. 39). We can understand intellect as involving discursive and rational knowledge through inferences and concepts whereas intuition can be understood as a sympathy resulting from a merging with a reality interpreted as an organic whole rather than elemental parts already known in consciousness (Lossky & Tremblay, 2024, p. 6). Various interpretations of intuition can be understood historically as per the below:

- Aristotle and Driesch's insight into knowledge's ultimate principles
- Descartes' intuitive apprehension of primordial truths
- the soul's creativity and activity in Fichte and Schelling
- the irrational non-discourse in Bergson

(Lossky & Tremblay, 2024, p. 8)

Music is an ideal represented through intuition, musical thought, feelings, and conversions of ideas into sound (Rimas, 2024, p. 218). It is mostly communicative, social, expressive, orienting toward others to give humanity the communication of emotion through expression that reveals the human capacity of prediction which relies on the same systems as music (e.g. rituals place us with others) (Schulkin, 2014, p. 2). Creating a musical setting might have involved the analytics of deciding which poem to select for example, however, intuition involves consensus in terms of how others might hear the musical setting, how the potential producers or engineers are going to respond to the 'blueprint' of the setting, and if justice is being provided to the poetic work of art.

The powers of reflective analytical thought can be considered predominant in research that involves making decisions and solving problems; however, there is an increase in studies that claim intuition can outperform such analytical reflection. The alternation between rational reflection and intuition for example might be able to explain performance taking place at an expert level (Pohjannoro, 2016, p. 208). Jacobi's notion of intuition aligns well with PMA's, in that it considers the human being as able to transcend the limits of

individuality via consciousness and have an immediate understanding of an "extraneous individual being (Lossky & Tremblay, 2024, p. 6)." Transcendence can take place through moments of intuitive action that lead to improvisation that allows oneself to change views on one's identity and the world (Noone, 2021, p. 108). It allowed RP to consider the labour of the music producer as another person involved in the creative process of the musical setting. Such consideration of others motivated RP to follow artistic standards and respect the content of the poem to reach potential consensus amongst listeners of the setting.

The overlap of the areas of PMA as seen above as a sort of 'conceptual fog', is relatable to transcendence on an inter-personal and intra-personal level. Porcello viewed that to be a participant ethnographer of music creation it is necessary to find a 'golden mix' of subject positions during the research process as self-consciousness but also consciousness of others is important (Harrison, 2014, p. 15). Such 'fog' is also apparent within information processing where we can have a dual model consisting of intuition and reflection. The former is autonomous, fast, and with the capacity to handle large quantities of information through long-term memory coupled with situation-specific perceptions, whereas the latter is characterized as serial, slow, and depending on working memory (Pohjannoro, 2016, p. 209). When music composition takes place, the composer involves intuitive compositional actions that are experimental, imaginative, restructuring, and incubational whereas reflection involves reasoning that is rule-based, alternative-seeking, and involving analytic views of music; metacognitive actions such as evaluation and musical goal setting require intuition and consensus, while reflection is linked solely to operational planning that depends on analysis (Pohjannoro, 2016, p. 209).

Due to intellectualization often assimilating the role of intuition and/or vice-versa, one of the merits of PMA is its attempt at offering a clear separation between these concepts and the other areas on PMA. In the creation of art songs for example, Rodgers notes that for Cone, it can be considered that there are three personas that operate: poetic-vocal, instrumental, and a third musical persona containing the first two (Rodgers, 2017, p. 316). Analytical rational reflection and intuition are not often studied in tandem and are rarely included in music composition research or artistic contexts, thus intuition's link with performance and music learning is rarely explored with reflective thinking (Pohjannoro, 2016, p. 208). This gap in research allowed PMA to have relevance in researching music creation through this autoethnography.

In Harrison's autoethnography on underground rap music creation, we can shift our thinking on the role of memory in music creation, highlighting intuition and instinct over intellect. In relation to recording rap music, he stated: "I was reading from a rhyme book, the whole verse felt like an off-the top-of-the-head freestyle. Subconsciously, I presume, my intuitive recognition of the syllabic density of the written text, in relation to its crucial positioning in the structure of the verse, compelled me to make my improvisational revision (Harrison, 2014, p. 22)." Harrison thus describes a creative experience phenomenologically placed between the subliminal and the transliminal areas of PMA, where their interaction led to an improvisation. Improvisation's role in RP's musical setting creation played a part in terms of how the poem was sung for the recording whilst keeping in mind the Irish and Canadian vocal accents apparent in the song. Although improvisation can be argued to designate the central creativity area of the PMA diagram, for Harrison it appears to include a 'foggy' area between two different conceptual areas on PMA. For RP, the accent of the vocals related more to the subliminal impetus area whereas getting the opinion of another person on what vocal accents they might hear related to the intuitive consensual area.

Within the process of music creation, the concepts of incubation (insight and recall), imagination, and reasoning depend on rules which become apparent when information lacks task-driven cues (e.g. unfinished musical passages or procedural situations too complex for working memory), resulting in intuition being depended upon for goal-driven cues for knowledge consolidation (Pohjannoro, 2016, p. 218). Transliminal consensus is important in terms of relationships between artists and content, but also with the other people with whom one collaborates. Bartleet highlights that the link between professional relationships and musical meaning is important, as they provide music with meaning, yet in her training and experience they were not mentioned in musical conduction textbooks or coursework (Bartleet, 2009, pp. 720-722). In addition to such human relationships, RP also felt the need to respect the content being portrayed in the musical setting due to the poem being written by a famous poet whilst adhering to the notion that consoling potential listeners of the music should be an objective of any musical artist. Implicit learning can be a way to characterize intuition in terms of creativity. Within decision making, we can claim that a music composer's implicit learning reaches a critical point to become even more fluent as the creative learning processes intermingle to generate rational intuition (Pohjannoro, 2016, pp. 224-225). Intuition then is not just concerned with the perceptions of objects, as non-sensory mental contemplation can be understood as an intellectual intuition that contemplates ideas (Lossky & Tremblay, 2024, p. 5). The conflation between intellect and intuition is apparent here, however this could be a case of considering a potential overlapped area on the PMA diagram between intellect and intuition. The notion of implicit learning provides an explanation for the gap between the intuition of composers and their rational and logical decision-making processes (Pohjannoro, 2016, pp. 224-225). RP's autoethnography incorporated a sense of 'mongrelity' in terms of reviewing the boundaries of their identity which allowed for the discovery of new ways to compose though a linkage between existence and tacit knowledge (Noone, 2021, p. 105). Intuition respects the notion that psychic phenomena are emotionally rather than rationally based as we can have an 'intellectual intuition' that signifies actions that are discerned without evidence; however, intuition can conflate with instinct in this sense as well, as the cause of creative acts that are hidden in the subconscious can be claimed to derive from accumulated experiences (Rimas, 2024, p. 39).

For Bergson, intuitive and rational knowledge are different, in that intuition involves knowledge via wholes whereas rationality deals with parts (Lossky & Tremblay, 2024, p. 7). Intuition can also be considered based on both the senses and extra-sensory data (Rimas, 2024, p. 21). The musical profession of conduction for example need not rely solely on the analysis of scores and musical ideas, but also on the extra-sensory relationships that are often built through the music making process (Bartleet, 2009, p. 729). Consensus is important for musical artists who need to have an inner life from where they can extract the prenatal images of their works to empathetically activate the moving parts of their imagination; a life which gives support to inspiration, motivation, intuition, and the inclinations to create in accordance with aesthetic norms (Rimas, 2024, p. 176). Consensual intuition assisted RP in recognizing the importance of alterity in the creative process, as RP did not consider the project of creating the setting as done in isolation.

The music maker's decisions can be explained through experiential knowledge of their own compositional processes. This can result in consideration of the concept of rational intuition being gained by situation specificity and problem solving, while intuition gained through implicit learning grounded in automatic knowledge can be considered subliminal intuition (Pohjannoro, 2016, pp. 224-225). The conceptual blurring between the areas of

PMA can be noticed here, however, the role of PMA is to provide clarity between these concepts. For RP, the autoethnography viewed intuition as important for not only understanding the relationships between their own identities and the poetic content being set to music, but also the producer and the technical systems used for music production (e.g. software, microphones, and acoustics). Rather than merge the four areas of PMA for the autoethnography, which is typical when one engages with its diagram, RP found it more useful to keep the concepts separate and equal rather than combine them or change them into adjectives as found in the secondary literature (e.g. rational intuition).

Subliminal Impetus

One of the most important concepts related to instinct when it comes to the music making process is incubation mentioned above. Incubation involves unconscious brooding which enters what can be characterized as an idle mood analogous to a 'gut feeling' that engages in activities other than music creation to lead to new musical ideas (Pohjannoro, 2016, p. 232). Incubation highlights the rising of experiences fixed in the subconscious to consciousness, with latent thinking being the result of artistic experience formed through the process of rational reflection, creativity, and studies in aesthetics (Rimas, 2024, p. 217). Autoethnographers should include phenomenology when conducting their research in conjunction with such latent thinking, as experiencing anything phenomenologically is to experience consciously that which we would experience normally through relying only on the automatic nature of our skills (Rimas, 2024, p. 241).

RP engaged with the research through a phenomenological suspension that transcended intellectual cognitive understanding and aimed to engage with somatic and emotional knowledge of motives (Sparkes, 2024, p. 125). This can be taken as a process that is somewhat impossible to completely attain due to unconscious and unknowable motivations we might hold. These unknowns can be linked to the internal impulses that drive us toward creativity, where in this case, poetic text served as one of the causes of creative action (Rimas, 2024, pp. 175-176). TSOWA's beat, feet, and formulation became subliminal after memorization and these features aimed to match with the arrangement of guitar chords applied to the poem. RP found that such experimentation related to motivations, as what based their tendency to express the musical setting was taken as an appetitive urge and need for satisfaction (Schulkin, 2024, p. 1). PMA assisted RP in understanding the subliminal area as one that involved drives for survival that were not necessarily biological, but rather in terms of culture, art, and music. Creating a unique musical setting felt more like an innovative experience of RP's cultures to assist in their preservation rather than taking on a traditionalist approach which would have adhered to a particular format, scale, or formation strictly carried from the past.

Preliminal Basis

Innocence can be understood as a concept related to 'the child' which involves a world without evil (Levine, 1991). Childhood, in the modern sense, can be considered constructed to involve a normality determined by its proximity to an ideal innocence. Innocence's position as a concept has throughout history provided the function of being the principle used to judge abnormal and normal behaviour, with the latter being framed as cultivated towards a natural essence and the former being linked to corruption (Duschinsky, 2013, p. 764). The transformation of TSOWA to a song can be said to have involved an element of corruption in terms of assimilation mentioned above, however, the process of memorization can also be considered to involve a sense of innocence being lost by the artist practitioner. Responsibility emerged for RP in terms of holding the information of TSOWA

and performing it, which was to be done in conjunction with the potential expressive mission of the poem itself. The debate between Rousseau and Rameau on musical expression highlights this conflict between music's source of expression being melody or harmony, with the latter undermining resemblances between expressive behaviour and melodic contours; however, both sides of this debate value the expression found in music when set to text as involving a conceptual debate between empiricism and rationalism (Ravasio, 2023). RP felt that the musical setting creation provoked questions on the notion of memorization and performance in relation to the preliminal area as well as the subliminal area of PMA. Memorization has the potential to be interpreted as a 'loss of innocence' due to new information being retained which leads to a change, but also by involving responsibility. The former can be seen in the sense that after memorizing information, the mind as a *tabula rasa* is no longer considered such a clean slate, whereas for the latter, the innocence of oneself can be considered lost in the sense of contamination from responsibly holding onto new information.

The empirical and rational debate is important for understanding the basic preliminal area. Empiricism can hold the idea that when human beings learn something new, such as a skill or poem, they lose a sense of innocence, whereas rationalism could be argued to support less of an affiliation with the concept of innocence due to holding the notion that human beings are born with certain capacities that they do not necessarily gain or lose. Caccini for example would be critical of musical settings that skew the poems that are being set to music, as such skewing can be interpreted as the poem losing its sense of purity or innocence. The creators of the music are not providing any other aesthetic enjoyment to the text than the harmony, so if the words of the poem are not understood in their semantical context then they are unable to 'move' readers of the text; hence Plato and Zarlino both claimed that harmony and melody should complement the text to which the music adapts (Kania, 2024). This could be why Plato also valued speaking over writing, where in 'Phaedrus' we see Socrates stating: "I cannot help feeling, Phaedrus, that writing is unfortunately like painting; for the creations of the painter have the attitude of life, and yet if you ask them a question, they preserve a solemn silence. And the same may be said of speeches. You would imagine that they had intelligence, but if you want to know anything and put a question to one of them, the speaker always gives one unvarying answer. And when they have been once written down they are tumbled about anywhere among those who may or may not understand them, and know not to whom they should reply, to whom not (Plato, 2025)."

In terms of RP's identity, the preliminal area is of importance due to the dichotomy between the notion of the born versus learned identity. The musical setting creation assisted in solidifying RP's Irish identity by serving as an act of passage. The North American experience of Irish offspring, however, often questions the borderline indoctrination of children who are born of one or both parents from a different culture in another country (i.e. second or third-culture children). Irishness being quite a common experience in North America thus leaves open questions on the empirically learned and the rationally born identity. The preliminal area therefore has an interesting relationship with thresholds and limits, not necessarily more so than the other areas, however it recognizes how procedures that involve entities becoming something else is worth investigating.

The role of preliminal basis for the music creation process examines the motivations to create. Although external motivations can often be much easier to identify, such as the music producer of the setting serving as an influence to engage in the production and creation of the music. In this case, the preliminal area held importance in terms of relationship and

responsibility, as the online sharing of the music documents for collaboration triggered responses between the producer and RP. When RP received a new updated music file for the musical setting, this prompted RP to act and commence new work on the musical setting but also review the content. Openness was therefore important for the basis of the musical setting creation in terms of the feedback between the producer and RP. Accepting criticism gave time and space for the potential directions the setting could have taken as work progressed.

CONCLUSION

The areas in PMA share polar oppositional relationships between each other, with similarities between extremes becoming apparent (e.g. the extreme transliminal area leads to allodoxaphobia which can relate to the extreme preliminal notion of responsibility for others). This autoethnography demonstrated the potential overlaps or blending between the areas of PMA in conjunction with the music creation process while showing how PMA can distinguish between its concepts more clearly to prevent conceptual 'fog'. The research provided an insight into the creative process of musical setting creation without ignoring the identities of RP. The therapeutic purpose of PMA, that of orienting oneself to the present moment, proved relevant in its relationship to the concept of creativity.

PMA contributed to the countering of an intellect-centric approach to autoethnography and music creation by emphasizing other human traits such as empathy, motivation, and responsibility, rather than just analytical inquisition. This assisted in de-centring RP throughout the retrospective autoethnography. Such re-orientation was warranted due to the high risk of possible bias in reflections, the selectivity of past events, and the proclivity for potential change of attitude; however, such retrospection overcame logistical challenges, limits to in-person synchronicity and the contamination of risks from other researchers (Tripathi et al, 2022, p. 1157). Working more with the producer, for example, on the research element to this project, could have increased researcher contamination, but contrastingly could have added more collaboration on the retrospective autoethnography to assist in decreasing the single individual influence on RP's experience (Tripathi et al, 2022, p. 1155). Autoethnography of autoethnography (meta-autoethnography) was also a conceptual stream apparent throughout the research which added to the subjective experience and highlighted the philosophical issue of intellectual centrism. Intellect can be argued to be imperative for research in general, as this autoethnography for example could not have been completed without the intellectual analysis on PMA engagement, however, PMA demonstrated that for this research and other research in general, it should not always dominate.

Resulting from the experience of the musical setting creation, RP was inspired to create a musical setting for Canadian poet Charles Sangster and a recording of an *a cappella* version of TSOWA. In terms of PMA's conceptual challenges provoked from the autoethnography, there are considerations of how PMA could interpret musical performance concepts such as: *raga* and *riyaz* found in the Indian music tradition. PMA's limitations did not prevent its versatility as a model for social research as it provided structure and coherence, but also orientation and perception. The term *perichoresis* also became relevant throughout the research as a concept related to the therapeutic benefits of movement, dancing, and propelling. This provokes interest into its symbolism and relevance throughout human history as an inspirational concept not only for theological or philosophical knowledge, but also for practical healthy life experience.

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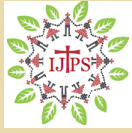
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