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**MUSICIAN, FRIEND AND MUSE:**  
an ethnographic exploration of emerging  
practices of musicians devising co-creative  
musicking with elderly people



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a dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Guildhall School of Music & Drama

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*I first had to recover from the authentic story,  
to let it go, before I could rediscover it in my own way.*

Stefan Hertmans, *War and Turpentine*

*Ik moest eerst genezen van het authentieke verhaal,  
het loslaten, om het op mijn manier terug te kunnen vinden.*

Stefan Hertmans, *Oorlog en terpentijn*

## **ABSTRACT**

In leaving the more traditional territories of the concert performance for broader societal contexts, professional musicians increasingly devise music in closer collaboration with their audience rather than present it on a stage. Although the interest for such forms of devising co-creative musicking within the (elderly) health care sector is growing, the work can be considered relatively new. In terms of research, multiple studies have sought to understand the impact of such work on musicians and participants, however little is known about what underpins the musicians' actions in these settings. With this study, I sought to address this gap by investigating professional musicians' emerging practices when devising co-creative musicking with elderly people.

Three broad concepts were used as a theoretical background to the study: Theory of Practice, co-creative musicking, and Praxialism. Firstly, I used Theory of Practice to help understand the nature of emerging practices in a wider context of change in the field of music and habitus of musicians and participants. Theory of Practice enabled me to consider a practice as “a routinized type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, ‘things’ and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion, and motivational knowledge” (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 249). Secondly, I drew the knowledge from co-creative musicking, which is a concept I gathered from two existing concepts: co-creation and musicking. Musicking (Small, 1998), which considers music as something we do (including any mode of engagement with music), provided a holistic and inclusive way of looking at participation in music-making. The co-creation paradigm encompasses a view on enterprise that consists of bringing together parties to jointly create an outcome that is meaningful to all (Pralhad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2014). The concept served as a lens to specify the jointness of the musicking and challenge issues of power in the engagement of participants in the creative-productive process. Thirdly, Praxialism considers musicking as an activity that encompasses “musical doers, musical doing, something done and contexts in which the former take place” (Elliott, 1995). Praxialism sets out a vision on music that goes beyond the musical work and includes the meanings and values of those involved (Silverman, Davis & Elliott, 2014). The concept allowed me to examine the work and emerging relationships as a result of devising co-creative musicking from an ethical perspective.

Given the subject's relative newness and rather unexplored status, I examined existing work empirically through an ethnographic approach (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Four cases were selected where data was gathered through episodic interviewing (Flick, 2009) and participant observation. Elements of a constructivist Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2014) were used for performing an abductive analysis. The analysis included initial coding, focused coding,

the use of sensitizing concepts (Blumer 1969 in Hammersley, 2013) and memoing. I wrote a thick description (Geertz, 1973) for each case portraying the work from my personal experience. The descriptions are included in the dissertation as one separate chapter and foreshadow the exposition of the analysis in a next chapter.

In-depth study of the *creative-productive processes* of the cases showed the involvement of multiple co-creative elements, such as a dialogical interaction between musicians and audience. However, participants' contributions were often adopted implicitly, through the musicians interpreting behaviour and situations. This created a particular power dynamic and challenges as to what extent the negotiation can be considered co-creative. The implicitness of 'making use' of another person's behaviour with the other not (always) being aware of this also triggered an ethical perspective, especially because some of the cases involved participants that were vulnerable.

The imbalance in power made me examine the relationship that emerges between musicians and participants. As a result of a closer contact in the co-creative negotiation, I witnessed a contact of a highly personal, sometimes intimate, nature. I recognized elements of two types of connections. One type could be called 'humanistic', as a friendship in which there is reciprocal care and interest for the other. The other could be seen as 'functional', which means that the relationship is used as a resource for providing input for the creative musicking process. From this angle, I have compared the relationship with that of a relationship of an artist with a muse.

After having examined the co-creative and relational sides of the interaction in the four cases, I tuned in to the musicians' contribution to these processes and relationships. I discovered that their devising in practice consisted of a continuous double balancing act on two axes: one axis considers the other and oneself as its two ends. Another axis concerns the preparedness and unpredictability at its ends. Situated at the intersection of the two axes are the musicians' intentionality, which is fed by their intentions, values and ethics.

The implicitness of the co-creation, the two-sided relationship, the potential vulnerability of participants, and the musicians' freedom in navigating and negotiation, together, make the devising of co-creative musicking with elderly people an activity that involves ethical challenges that are centred around a tension between prioritizing doing good for the other, associated with a eudaimonic intention, and prioritizing values of the musical art form, resembling a musicianist intention. The results therefore call for a musicianship that involves acting reflectively from an ethical perspective.



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Figure 1. Dynamics constellation of musicians' considerations when devising co-creative musicking with elderly people. p. xx

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London and Groningen, March 2019

## **AUTHOR'S DECLARATION**

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## **Chapter 1.**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

#### **a challenging social-musical situation for the classically-trained musician**

##### **1.1 Intro: an example, a reflection, a biography**

###### **1.1.1 A musical encounter with Ms Vries**

*When cellist Rik, after greeting Ms Vries lying in the hospital bed with her grandson sitting next to her, starts telling her that the musicians will play ‘Angels’ by Robbie Williams and that they “have rehearsed really hard, especially for you,” the anticipation from everyone in the room, including the other musicians Jonas and Marijn, care professionals and myself, is palpable. These musicians seldomly take requests, as they normally improvise or play repertoire from a prepared set, arranged and rehearsed well before starting the week on the ward. Today is an exception. For Ms Vries and her grandson, ‘Angels’ was ‘their’ song, and when the nurses had made clear the day before that Ms Vries was rapidly deteriorating that she would leave the ward any moment now to go home to die, the urgency to play the song in her room became very real. The arrangement for cello, flute, and bass clarinet was finalized the night before.*

*The musicians start the song statically and continue with a steady pace. While playing they look at the patient and her grandson. He, in his late twenties, looks at his grandmother while a stream of tears starts pouring down his cheeks. He bends his head. His sneakers lie next to the wall, as if he just stepped out of them without making any effort to put them out of the way. Ms Vries, although noticeably ill, is peacefully absorbing the events. Has she come to terms with what is going to happen? Slowly the big melody fills the room. At the second verse, Jonas leads on the clarinet and the other musicians support vocally, giving the rendition of the song a fragile brilliance. The eyes of doctor-in-training Carola start to glimmer with tears and soon she cannot hold them back. For the last chorus, the bass clarinet plays some beautiful arpeggios.*

*There is no silence after the final note. Ms Vries immediately starts talking when the musicians are still playing the end of the song: “Utterly beautiful. Utterly beautiful,” she says, as if wanting to save others from feeling awkward. She wants to applaud; the grandson gently removes the blanket so that her hands are free to clap.*

*When the musicians let their instruments rest, it becomes clear that they are highly affected by what happened in front of them. Clarinetist Jonas turns his face to the wall, uncomfortably; his eyes are red and filled with tears. Marijn says hesitatingly that it was very special to play for them. Ms Vries thanks the musicians a couple of times. Rik tells that it was wonderful to arrange this song, as it can now be added to the repertoire. Marijn adds that she also thinks it is a beautiful song, and “thanks to you we can now also play it.” Ms Vries expresses multiple times that she is grateful to the musicians, again her voice is clear, sounding quite formal. The grandson does not say a word.*

*The musicians leave the room. In the corridor, Marijn starts to cry and says she has to go to the bathroom. She hands over her flute. Jonas also hands over his instrument and goes after Marijn.*

*Rik, Carola and I stay behind and remain silent. What just happened needs processing. A while later the three of us start talking. I ask Carola whether Ms Vries is aware of what she is facing. Carola says she is, and says that Ms Vries has accepted it: “in so many cases, it is the people around the patient that are not ‘there’ yet in their thinking; they often have a more difficult time than the patient.” Carola then tells as a health care professional, in time, one gets used to situations like these, “how strange this may sound.” Later I think back on this with the knowledge that she was crying in the room. Was ‘one gets used to it’ just some soothing rhetoric?*

*Rik tells Carola and me that he would like to play this song tomorrow morning at the ward’s care professionals’ coffee break. Soon, Marijn and Jonas return and preparations for visiting the next room begin.*

The situation described above demonstrates an example of what *devising* music making activities may entail, and demonstrates big differences to what is known about *presenting* musical works on stage. Although such devising approaches are not necessarily associated only with elderly people dying, this dissertation seeks to understand such devising from the classically-trained musician’s point of view in contexts in which elderly people are present.

Although it was played for Ms Vries and her grandson, the song left something behind in all of those who were there. The room was full of strangers of people who did not know one another, but that did not prevent the moment being extremely intimate. Seeing the musicians deeply affected by the situation, in retrospect I was impressed by their ability to cope, keep on playing, and finishing the song. “Crying along wouldn’t have helped the situation,” one of them said aptly afterwards. The musicians acted within a for them challenging situation. On the one hand, they tried to maintain the situation’s intimacy and naturalness. On the other hand, they acted as presenting musicians, which meant delivering music in this situation, as beautiful as possible and as appropriate to the particular setting as possible. Although they can be seen as

opposites, the two are strongly interconnected: to be able to manage these forces, that is to balance between both social-emotional and musical-artistic sides, requires specific strategies of *devising* beyond *presenting*.

This dissertation is an exploration of what classically-trained musicians do in devising musicking (Small, 1998) with elderly people across a variety of contexts in the United Kingdom and The Netherlands. Although exact numbers are missing, the increase of scientific attention to musicking with the elderly suggests that the volume of such practice is increasing (Dabback & Smith, 2012; Lally, 2009; Hartogh & Wickel, 2009; Creech et al., 2013a; Perkins & Williamon, 2014; Laes, 2015; Gembris, 2012; Van der Wal-Huisman et al., 2018). More importantly for this study, also the nature of the approaches used is changing, appearing to become more co-creative (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2014) forms of musicking. Instead of presentational, novel approaches tend to be dialogical, tailor-made, and person-centred; also responsibilities are shifting as “horizontal governing and co-decision making have become a trend, especially in managing smaller scale independent art organisations and institutions” (IETM/Shishkova, 2018, p. 5). Although this has not been studied extensively, it seems apparent that the relationship that musicians build with their audience differs from the typical presentational setting and may potentially affect the creative-productive process of making music. For classically-trained musicians, which the three musicians in the story above are, such audience relationship is completely new with challenges they are often not prepared for.

In the situation with Ms Vries, multiple aspects of such challenges seem to interact. Firstly, what the musicians played and how they played was outside their comfort zone. They played a well-known popular tune by a popular artist, a step beyond what a classically-trained musician is used to doing. But for the trio here, playing the tune was even more challenging, as normally they do not play requests and the arrangement had to be produced and rehearsed in no time. Secondly, what made the situation demanding was the highly emotional charge of the actual social setting. The hospitalized elderly lady was dying, and was accompanied by her grandson who seemed under the influence of this circumstance. Moreover, there was the slowly growing connection between the musicians and Ms Vries that emerged throughout their meetings. The musicians were close to their ‘audience’, both physically and psychologically, compared to their regular, more distanced, performance for an anonymous crowd. The situation’s general emotional undertone and the musicians’ close involvement within the situation can be seen as threat to the success of the initiative. From a classically-trained point of view, where unpredictable factors are avoided and where minimizing personal contact with the audience

during performance is common (O'Neill & Sloboda, 2017), this situation, thus, puts the musicians on their toes in multiple ways.

This brings to mind a question that resonated throughout doing this study: What is the point of such an initiative? Or, more pertinent: What are the musicians there for? A sense of human goodwill and zeal may drive them to do this work, of wanting to serve the patient and her grandson, and be meaningful to them in these difficult times (Hallam et al., 2016). Yet, the situation itself felt rather formal, and was set up in a more performative way compared to the more relaxed, interactive, and highly person-centred devising that characterised the previous visits to Ms Vries. The construction of the social situation of the final performance as a kind of 'concert' therefore seems to contradict the work's original incentives. I am intrigued by how the musicians, in spite of this contradiction, brought into existence such a performative situation and were able to facilitate such an emotionally charged moment nonetheless.

The above illustrates the complexity of situations and underlying processes that musicians encounter, engage with and facilitate in musicking closely with elderly people in a particular social context. It asks for a better understanding of the tasks and responsibilities that musicians take on. What musicians do – their 'doings', or their 'emerging practices' – in the moment of such complex situation of co-creative musicking with elderly people, however, has not been extensively studied critically. Given the potential vulnerability that musicians may encounter, in the other as well as in themselves, an understanding of 'doings' seems essential also from an ethical perspective. This study aims to address this gap of knowledge by presenting a deeper understanding of what devising co-creative musicking with the elderly entails from the musicians' point of view.

### 1.1.2 Outline of the study

This dissertation is an ethnographic enquiry into musicians' emerging practices when devising co-creative musicking with elderly people. The text is structured in the form of six chapters. In the current Chapter 1, I will continue with an exposition of my personal-biographical motives and attitudes towards the subject of this study. After this, I will present a rationale from the fields of music and health care for carrying out this study in the remainder of the chapter. The chapter concludes with the formulation of the central research question, subquestions and aims of this study.

In Chapter 2, I will present the conceptual framework that serves as the theoretical background of this study. It includes a section on Theory of Practice, which is the philosophical-



ontological tradition that this study adheres to, and sections on co-creative musicking and Praxialism, which are the subject-specific lenses I chose to build the conceptual framework on and which are largely informed by community music literature.

In Chapter 3, I will describe the research design and methodology of the study. It starts with a description of the general ethnographic approach used, and continues with a fleshed-out chronology of the steps taken in the empirical data collection and data analysis. The chapter concludes with bringing to the surface the reflexive stance that I developed throughout the research process.

In Chapter 4, I will present ‘thick descriptions’ of the four existing cases that I studied in-depth. The text presents the empirical material in order of study, reported through my researcher-lens.

In Chapter 5, I will discuss the results of the analysis of the empirical data. The first three subchapters correspond to the three subquestions. The chapter first delves into the two interactional processes of implicit co-creation and building new musician-audience relationships. It then continues with a discussion of the considerations that musicians take into account when devising the process. The chapter concludes with a proposition of ethical-reflective practitionership.

Finally, in Chapter 6, I will put the findings in a broader perspective and present conclusions and recommendations for further research.

### 1.1.3 Musical biography and position in the field

In this study my role as ethnographer involved participation in real-life situations, as the excerpt of my field notes of the visit to Ms Vries demonstrates. This personal participation has inevitably made my personality and biography influence the study throughout. For that reason I wrote this dissertation from a first-person perspective, and for that reason personal perspectives will come back also in the subsequent chapters. Worth mentioning here is Chapter 2, where I introduce the choice for Theory of Practice as the ontological tradition that this study adheres to; and Chapter 3, where I elaborate on the methodological approaches used as well as their problems and advantages to the subjective perspectives that I bring to the subject.

Although refraining from auto-ethnographic purposes and approaches, this study attempts to produce also a picture of my personal experiences. Given this subjective perspective from which this narrative is told, continuous reflexivity across all stages of the research process is essential (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). I will therefore in the next paragraphs expand on what I consider three key aspects of my biography and world view that coloured and necessarily acted as a frame of reference to understanding the reality that I came to observe and describe

throughout this dissertation. I will return to reflexivity again explicitly when expanding on research methodology in Chapter 3.

A first key moment dates back to the adolescent me, but is rooted way before that time. Consuming music was a normal part of life since my early childhood, but it was my highly engaged flute teacher that took me behind the scenes and, teaching me some of the craft of playing (classical) music, let me experience how music is produced. Through the 15 years of weekly one-hour instrumental lessons after school time at the municipal music school<sup>1</sup>, our pedagogical relationship grew into a warm-hearted and effective collaboration. She was directive and she was the one choosing the pieces. I, as a pupil followed and complied unreflectively to her requests. My playing skills improved, and my learning became more mature by the end. Nevertheless, I felt highly dependent on her feedback and leadership, even when I quit the lessons. Now, years later and with the benefit of hindsight and experience, I would like to look at this relationship as a typical expression of a dominant form of western music making and music learning that has strong roots in the tradition of classical music and in which musical expertise secures a leading role in musical dyads.

It was quite a different experience, then, when as an adolescent I started to spend my summer vacation co-leading children camps for Crefi<sup>2</sup>, a Flemish non-profit organisation for family welfare. The camps offer art-related activities such as wood sculpturing and street theatre through creative and play-based approaches. The Crefi camps, and the preparatory and coaching activities to team members in its margins, endorsed a culture about art and learning quite different from what I was used to in the one-to-one instrumental lessons. The organisation's vision included aspects of self-expression, collaboration and exploration of the art forms in all its aspects. Freedom was provided in the encouraging of making new material, whereas the one-to-one lessons with my flute teacher were solely focused on the reproduction and presentation of existing repertoire. Coaching, peer learning, learning in group, and self-directed learning were the dominant forms of pedagogical approaches.

Although I learned an enormous amount and gained high levels of satisfaction and achievement through the relationship with the flute teacher, the Crefi culture and community felt liberating at that point in my life. Here it was not the transmission of art's and learning's traditions that was the starting point, it were the individuals within the groups and who they were becoming. Although it seems as if the two contexts could not be more different, the two learning environments of the instrumental lessons and the camps, both outside school activities, gave me positive life-changing moments.

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<sup>1</sup> Stedelijk Conservatorium Mechelen, see [conservatorium.mechelen.be](http://conservatorium.mechelen.be).

<sup>2</sup> The organisation is now called 'Jonge Helden' ('Young Heroes'), see [www.jongehelden.be](http://www.jongehelden.be).

<sup>2</sup> The organisation is now called 'Jonge Helden' ('Young Heroes'), see [www.jongehelden.be](http://www.jongehelden.be).

What I take from these biographical episodes is that musical (learning) environments can strongly differ in their approaches to music-making as well as in their approaches to facilitating the (pedagogical) relationships in the social situation. The creative camps allowed a lot of freedom, which allowed me to mend an environment specifically to my intentions and me as a person. Contrasting forms of musical (learning) environments can co-exist and their contrast can engender meaningful values within one person. For example, the camps taught me to enjoy the processes happening in the practice room more, and to focus less on peaking at performances and exams. Also, I take from these experiences that the (working) relationships with others, and the power that others exercise within relationships, strongly affect not only the (musical) outcome, but also the sense of agency with regards to producing outcomes.

What seems to lie beneath this personal rationale is an appropriation of music as something that people do; that it is something that can include all kinds of forms of behaviour. This is also how I approach the subject of the study here. Helping to understand what it is I am trying to uncover in the chosen setting of doing music, I will use later David Elliott's four 'interlocking dimensions' of musicking<sup>3</sup>: "musical doers or "agents" (music makers and listeners of any kind), musical doing (music making of all kinds, and listening), something done (musical products, including compositions, improvisations and arrangements), and the contexts – artistic, historical, social, cultural, educational, ethical, political and so forth – in which musicking, listening, and the products of these take place" (Elliott, 1995, pp. 39-45). In this study, I chose to study a type of musicking in which the 'doers' are elderly people, professional musicians and potentially other participants such as family members, carers or volunteers. Although the exact contexts were not set out in advance, I intended to choose health and community contexts involving elderly people. Elliott's dimensions of 'musical doing' and its result, 'something done', are the areas that this study explores in the first place. I narrow these dimensions down to co-creative forms of musicking, in which different parties jointly create a mutually valuable outcome (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004).

As a central concept underpinning this study that considers music as doing, however, I chose for musicking as it is understood by Christopher Small, which has been defined as "[...] any mode of engagement with music, encompassing, of course, the full range of modes of actual music making and performance in real-time music fields but also other forms of musicking, such as listening, dancing, discussing music with friends, online musical interaction, and writing about music, among countless other forms of musical engagement" (Reily & Brucher, 2018, p. 13).

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<sup>3</sup> Note the different spelling (-k). Musicking by Small, which is one of the central concepts that this study relies on, considers musicking an all inclusive act that explores, affirms and celebrates who we are in relationship to others (Small, 1998) and that helps us understand the specific ways in which participants relate to musical sounds within a particular societal context (Odendaal et al., 2010). Elliott's understanding of musicking in *Music Matters* (1995) stays with the doing of music performance (1995, p. 40) and considers therefore the producing and enjoying of musical goals (Odendaal et al., 2010)

Small extends this even more broadly, by including for example to ticketing, sound engineering and cleaning personnel as bearing responsibility: “all [are] contributing to the nature of the event that is a musical performance” (Small, 1998, p. 9). To Small, what is, then, *really* going on when musicking, is that it “establishes in the place where it is happening a set of relationships, and it is in those relationships that the meaning of the action lies” (Small, 1998, p. 13). Such inclusive approach to music making, as something that ‘explores, affirms and celebrates’ (Small, 1998) relationships, seemed to be a fitting concept to study the emergence of person- and relationship-centred approaches central in the work studied here.

Musicking and co-creation, which I will flesh out further in a conceptual way in Chapter 2, are the two main concepts of this study. They were considered appropriate tools in theorising musician-participant interactions for the type of work studied here. When recalling the two musical learning moments that I described earlier, my interest in musical-artistic creation, and its fostering relationships and interpersonal dynamics beneath becomes clear. Musicking and co-creation, each from their own angle, consider this tension also. This suggests that there lies implicit biographical motivation beneath the choice of concepts as well.

Although the early biographical experiences were fundamental in intensifying and determining my relationship with and thinking about music, it were later experiences that influenced my somewhat ‘grey’ position within the field of professional music today. After a failed audition for a BA in flute at the Brussels conservatoire, and the prospect of building a musician’s pathway, it was through a small research and teaching job at the conservatoire in Groningen that I *did* enter the world of higher music education, which forms a second key biographical episode. It was probably my degrees in musicology and music psychology that got me in, but it is the lack of a ‘real’ music degree that makes me feel in limbo on a daily basis as to whether I am an insider or an outsider at the conservatoire. “I like that you are my research methods coach because you are not a musician”, a student once uttered to me in a coaching session. It perfectly captures how I sometimes feel valued for what I am not and tolerated for what I am. The underlying attitude behind this sentence reminds of a discourse prevailing in predominantly western classical music’s inherited dominant form of music making and music learning which entails a ‘we, musician’ versus ‘you, non-musicians’ (Nettl, 1995) where power is predominantly distributed on the basis of musical expertise (Perkins, 2013).

It is this meritocratically coloured culture of power that the kind of musicking that is studied here is trying to disentangle itself from. Mostly outside of the conservatoire I have experienced musicians approaching people *not* on the basis of their expertise or specialism in music, but on the basis of who they are, who they want to be and what they imagine, musically, in that given moment. It is also there mainly that I have seen musicians not merely reproducing

existing repertoire through existing formats, but creating (new) music and (new) formats in collaboration with their audience. It are such person-centred and open-ended approaches to music-making that include the wealth of musical significance carried by non-conservatoirees that attract me and which I hope will win ground in the professional field of music.

Finally, as a third biographical key moment, in the three years preceding the formal start of this doctoral study, I was part of qualitative research projects into musicians' practice of music and healthy ageing with a particular focus on the elderly. During this time I was involved in studies into instrumental lessons with older learners and creative workshops in care and nursing homes for the elderly, including people with dementia. It was experiencing the interaction between musicians and participants first-hand that brought me to wanting to carry out this study. Often I noticed frustration on the musicians' side: they could not always create what they had envisaged. I saw several strategies utilized to improve the situation: from adjusting approaches and materials to simply accepting, and seeing compromising as a failure.

One specific experience stayed with me and could in retrospect be considered a strong impulse for the start of this study. After I had just witnessed a creative workshop session in a care home in which new pieces were composed using small percussion instruments, I spoke to a few elderly participants, who said they liked the process of making the pieces and displayed a strong sense of ownership towards the final performance. I was surprised about these responses, as in practice, from what I had seen initially, the participants did not contribute much to the process. The workshop leader shared my observation, and had said to feel frustrated about the lack of input from the participants' side. I was intrigued by the sense of inclusion that had taken place on the side of the participants and that the musician did not experience as such. I wanted to gain insights into what happened there in order to help the musician in question so he could gain more confidence and develop his work further.

Although this study springs from and is coloured by personal inclinations and experiences, I observe wider societal trends, or 'movements', around me that perhaps put a stronger weight behind the rationale of this study. Firstly, there is a growing group of musicians that acts from an engaged focus to carry out and create art *with* audiences. I will explain this movement in subchapter 1.2. Secondly, there is a tendency to re-insert a more human aspect within care, particularly in elderly care which is under pressure. The arts, particularly music, are increasingly seen as being able to play a vital role in this rehumanization. I will expand on this in subchapter 1.3. Thirdly, at the intersection of the previously mentioned trends, a field of music in health is developing, which I will introduce in subchapter 1.4. In subchapter 1.5, I will expand on the overlaps of this growing field of music and health with other fields, and the confusion that these overlaps create when defining the practitionership of each.

I see these movements emerging in the geographical contexts that I frequent most, which are The Netherlands, my country of residence; the United Kingdom, my country of study that I visit frequently and in which I already had an active network in the field of co-creative musicking with elderly people before the formal start of this doctoral study; and Belgium, my country of birth. This dissertation predominantly focuses on the Dutch and UK contexts; which are the contexts where the empirical part of the study took place and which I spent most of my time in.

## **1.2 The participatory turn: A rise of professional music making outside the concert hall**

Many would not think of Ms Vries' hospital room as a place for music initially, nor as a place for which professional musicians primarily learned to play. Traditionally, professional musicians, those that earned an expert status in music performance through experience and/or education in our societies, and particularly classical musicians<sup>4</sup> (which is the kind of musician that is mostly represented in this study), operate mainly on the concert stage and in the tuition studio. In these (demarcated) places, the conventions of what people do and how they behave are predefined (Turino, 2008). In the tuition studio, musicians, both alone or in pedagogical relationships, practise and prepare for performance by learning and teaching their instrumental craft. On stage they perform programmed and prepared music. Opposite the stage, commonly on a lower level, stands an audience, a group of people that joins the situation to witness and undergo what the musicians do. The role of the audience, therefore, is equally pre-determined (Burland & Pitts, 2014). The longstanding tradition of the stage performance and instrumental lesson in Western culture makes that the situations are safe, predictable and culturally acquired by those taking part. Musical relationships within this culturally dominant form of music making are traditionally domineered by those that are experts or specialists in music. Those relationships are dyadic in the sense that professional musicians, as experts, have the upper hand over audiences, and participants find their position in the hierarchy according to their expertise (Davies, 2004). Music institutions and their services are imbued with a particular meritocratic balance of power, with the conservatoire as an ultimate expression and preserver of these hierarchies (Perkins, 2013).

A number of musicians educated through the classical tradition, however, are moving away from these traditional formats and power dynamics, in search of expanding their musicianship beyond the walls of the concert hall and music academies. Professional musicians can nowadays be found basically anywhere; in schools, prisons, businesses, refugee camps and health care contexts. Although I consider any musical context also as inherently social, these contexts are first and foremost characterised by their position and function in society in general. A piano and a stage are not the standard facilities to be found in these contexts; rather, these places function as environments sometimes distant from what the professional field of music is about. The result of this widening landscape of places where musicians operate is that traditional demarcations of the professional field of music are blurring.

But not only the contexts where music emerges seem to differentiate, what seems more fundamentally breaking away from the traditional paradigm is that musicians' intentions and

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<sup>4</sup> 'Classical' is meant here in the performance and learning traditions of Western classical music.

the nature of their approaches to create music seem to increasingly drift away from the canonical concert format. This has been observed as the ‘participatory’ (IETM/Tomka, 2016) or ‘social’ turn (Bishop, 2006) within the arts, and means that musicians are driven by an intention directed towards the other, but also that the creative-productive process itself becomes more participatory and social. This involves forms of musicking where musicians are conceiving, implementing and experiencing music in dialogue with their audience (IETM/Shishkova, 2018) and often involves the creation of new and improvised music alongside the performance of existing repertoire. In the field of practice, participatory modes of music-making are sometimes designated ‘co-creative’, meaning participants are involved at the root of the activity. As a result of these musicians’ movement to new contexts and devising new approaches in interaction with people, a ‘new’ practice is arising that goes beyond mere ‘moving the stage’.

Through his concept of musicking, Small (1998) reminds us that a potential of music making is not only about changing place and approach, but that it can also reorganize human relationships. The shift in the nature of their work as described elicits a different professional pathway for classically-trained musicians and presents them new challenges. As a result of leaving the concert hall (whose musician-audience relationships Small considers disconnected, hierarchical and musician-dominated), instead of addressing anonymous audiences, musicians will ‘come close’, and build personal relationships with people. This involves a mental change of doing something *for* someone into *with* someone and it entails new kinds of interactions and relationships of which the nature and purpose is not known yet in advance. It is here that Small’s ideas can become significant, as it suggests that musicking that is developed in close connection with its people in its physical and cultural space allows relationships to be explored, affirmed or celebrated (Small, 1998; Odendaal et al., 2010). To people that are vulnerable in contemporary society, such person and relationship-oriented approach can be highly meaningful.

In such cases, standard norms and ‘rules of the game’ cannot apply, and are perhaps not allowed, any longer. Musicians, thus, fundamentally are required to rethink their doings when establishing new practices in for them new contexts. This, in turn, may affect their musicianship as a whole, as “participatory artistic practices offer compelling responses to questions about what kind of person it is good to be, and how individual actions may relate to the greater social good” (Bowman, 2016, p. 76). Shifting towards new contexts, new audiences and new approaches, perhaps confronts the musicians with a new ‘me.’ I will expand on and theorize about the relationship between musician and audience further in the conceptual framework in Chapter 2.



### **1.3 Healthy ageing and value based health care**

Not only is the field of music in constant flux, the field of elderly health care and wellbeing is undergoing major changes too. As an outsider having experienced a few care and learning contexts through music projects in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, which are also contexts that this study focuses on, I try to stay up-to-date through mainstream media about the political and societal developments in the field in both countries and the role that the arts take up within these. A few aspects formed my thinking that the tensions currently dominating (elderly) health care, wellbeing and learning of elderly people in both countries are complex and sometimes contradictory. I will elaborate these in the rest of this section.

Too often the oldest members of society are seen as the group that ‘suffers’ health-wise. While I acknowledge the difficulties that arise out of ageing processes, I wish to affiliate with paradigms that, instead of defining deficits and ill-being, seek to emphasise people’s health and wellbeing through easy as well as difficult qualities. In the last two decades, there has been increasing attention for ageing populations in western societies, striving to improve the situation in which elderly people live as well as exploring the extension of a healthy life. This is often referred to as *healthy* (HANN, 2004) or *active* (WHO, 2002) *ageing*: “the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age” (WHO, 2002, 12). Healthy ageing could be seen as an extension to the concept of lifelong learning that considers learning a lifetime process (Jarvis, 2006), and which has been adopted into policies worldwide in an attempt to stimulate ongoing personal and professional development<sup>5</sup>.

Apart from notions of improving the general wellbeing and quality of life of elderly people, also the institutionalised care for the elderly is undergoing transformation. From a political perspective, a key moment of change took place in The Netherlands in 2013 at the yearly presentation of the government budget, where the Dutch King announced the participatory society<sup>6</sup> was to replace the welfare state.<sup>7</sup> What followed were multiple measures that transfer institutionally organised care responsibilities to the immediate environment of the person in need of care. The ‘Longer at home’<sup>8</sup> programme, for example, of the Dutch ministries of Public Health, Wellbeing and Sports implements measures to enable elderly people to live at home longer. Although this may sound as something that potentially fosters self-determination and

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<sup>5</sup> See for example the European Union’s Lifelong Learning Programme [https://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/about-education-policies\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/about-education-policies_en)

<sup>6</sup> In Dutch: *participatiesamenleving*

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/dutch-king-willem-alexander-declares-the-end-of-the-welfare-state-8822421.html>

<sup>8</sup> In Dutch: Langer Thuis; [www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/zorg-en-ondersteuning-thuis/documenten/rapporten/2018/06/15/programma-langer-thuis](http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/zorg-en-ondersteuning-thuis/documenten/rapporten/2018/06/15/programma-langer-thuis)

self-management of the elderly, if we consider that 90% of the persons diagnosed with dementia live in their own home in The Netherlands (The, 2017)<sup>9</sup>, and that this will only increase with programmes such as ‘Longer at home’, tensions already existing within families as well as in the care-at-home sector will likely increase. In some circles it is accepted that the participatory society will demand even more fatiguing efforts from the elderly and their direct entourage (Mezzo, 2014), which may potentially lead to task exhaustion and neglect of mental and social wellbeing of those most in need of care, as well as a general tendency of the dehumanisation of care for the ageing. All these tendencies contribute to neglecting the basic humanizing emotional needs that people have as they age, especially in the case of living with dementia (Kitwood, 1997). The care sector is seemingly losing its sense of humanity, which may not only have an impact on the wellbeing of the person in need of care, but also on the caregiver.<sup>10</sup>

At the same time, I see a counter-reaction arising in current health care governance, one that wishes to re-humanize the sector where it has increasingly lost its human sense. Alongside and as a result of cost-effective measures straining (elderly) care, the health care sector is developing pockets of such rehumanization. Although working in the United States, with his inspiring ‘Being Mortal’ (2014), surgeon Atul Gawande addresses the critical point of asking the question what kind of life the care-receiver actually wants to live after treatment:

“People have concerns besides simply prolonging their lives. Surveys of patients with terminal illness find that their top priorities include, in addition to avoiding suffering, being with family, having the touch of others, being mentally aware, and not becoming a burden to others” (Gawande 2010, p. 155).

The priorities that Gawande lists here compose a picture of end-of-life needs of being in conscious contact with others not at the expense of others. The listening to the needs of the patient and acting on the basis of the relationship with a patient that Gawande practices here is also a starting point of person-centred care (Kitwood, 1997) and theory of presence (Bart & Vosman, 2015) that entail a shifting perspective to the person, away from mere focus on treating a disease.

Value based healthcare, as another recently emerging movement within the health care sector, also reconsiders the purpose and approaches towards care and cure. It does that from the notion that the efforts of evidence-based decision-making, quality improvement and cost reduction of the last decades were necessary but not sufficient to narrow the gap between

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<sup>9</sup> This number does not even include those not diagnosed but experiencing first symptoms of the disease, which is thought to form a large group of people.

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.theguardian.com/society/2019/feb/07/job-doctor-todays-nhs-draining-humanity?CMP=fb\\_gu&fbclid=IwAR2Z2WKTmy0aQJqUudCv32TB-1b1Wne10PHrWIMomDEFXsSnonms6lMaI0k](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2019/feb/07/job-doctor-todays-nhs-draining-humanity?CMP=fb_gu&fbclid=IwAR2Z2WKTmy0aQJqUudCv32TB-1b1Wne10PHrWIMomDEFXsSnonms6lMaI0k)

demands and resources in health services (Gray, 2017). The Dutch ministry of Public Health, Wellbeing and Sports has adopted value based healthcare as an aspect in its strategic policy of curative care (Ministerie van VWS, 2017, 2018). Value based healthcare entails a paradigm shift from a focus on curing merely the disease ('take out the tumour and we're done') to a much more holistic vision that takes into account the patient's medical history, actual health status and socio-economical factors (Biesma, 2018). As a result, it may well be that patients will choose not to opt for an invasive treatment if that entails a great loss in terms of quality of life or time of life prognosis. It is expected that shifting to a value based governance of health care takes time and patience to implement, but is thought to pay off through better quality of care, lower costs, higher satisfaction of care professionals and more patient ownership in the decision-making process (Biesma, 2018).

#### **1.4 Music and wellbeing at a later age**

The arts are often seen as a means to counterbalance dehumanization of elderly care and to stimulate the wellbeing and lifelong learning of older adults, as the growing amount of initiatives<sup>11</sup> and increasingly convincing voice of centres of expertise (Movisie, 2017; Kunstfactor, 2009; Cutler, 2009; LKCA, 2018) suggests.

Interestingly, the potential of the arts for wellbeing is also gaining recognition by the governmental bodies that implemented the austerity measures themselves. Special attention has gone to ‘healthy’ or ‘active ageing,’ a “process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age” (WHO, 2002, 12). In the last decade the Dutch national (government-supported) knowledge centre for culture participation and amateur arts (LKCA) has been organising several professional development, networking and research activities themed around culture participation of elderly on a yearly basis. In 2014-2016 a European network of funders for the elderly and ministries of welfare of The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and the United Kingdom ran the Long Live Arts programme. The parties also signed a manifesto that aimed to incorporate culture participation and enlarge the framework for elderly culture participation through their national policies of arts and culture, health and welfare as well as encouraged other European decision-makers to do so.<sup>12</sup> An accompanying funding scheme helped to support local initiatives to organise activities for the elderly. Although the movement seems to percolate also concrete decision-making, such as the adoption of the arts in the Dutch ‘Delta plan dementia’<sup>13</sup> and the idea to enable doctors to prescribe arts activities in the UK (Bungay & Clift, 2010; Brown, 2017), helping to solidify the arts within elderly care, for artists and musicians to be fully operational in health care institutions on a structural basis, the journey seems long still.

The growing focus on elderly in music is understood in different ways. In music pedagogy, the elderly have been described as a group requiring particular pedagogical approaches, as they exhibit learning characteristics that distinguish them from other age groups (Hartogh & Wickel, 2008; Dons et al., 2012). Outside of pedagogical contexts, such as in community contexts, music is sometimes seen as a tool to exactly facilitate positive and creative ageing (Laes, 2015; Creech, 2018). Others see music as a phenomenon that can influence elders’ health in a medicalized sense (Clift, 2012).

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<sup>11</sup> For a long list of initiatives operational in 2014-2015, see Appendix I.

<sup>12</sup> [www.longlivearts.eu](http://www.longlivearts.eu)

<sup>13</sup> [www.lkca.nl/vrije-tijd/kunst-en-zorg/publicaties/startnotitie-kunst-en-dementie?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=LKCA-18-06-27&utm\\_content=kunst-en-cultuur&utm\\_term=pub-kunst-dementie&utm\\_source=nieuwsbrief](http://www.lkca.nl/vrije-tijd/kunst-en-zorg/publicaties/startnotitie-kunst-en-dementie?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=LKCA-18-06-27&utm_content=kunst-en-cultuur&utm_term=pub-kunst-dementie&utm_source=nieuwsbrief)

In general, there exists a consensus that music and participating in music has a positive effect on the wellbeing of elderly people. An increasing number of studies have sought to understand the effects of music on elderly people's lives and their underpinning mechanisms both through qualitative (see for example Hays & Minichiello, 2005) and quantitative methodologies (see for example Gembris, 2008 and 2012; Evans, 2002). Positive effects can especially be seen when the music activity is led by professional musicians,<sup>14</sup> which takes the form of activities such as community choirs, instrumental lessons or community music activities (Coffman & Levy, 1997; Hillman, 2002; Dabback, 2008; Mental Health Foundation, 2011; Dabback & Smith, 2012; Lally, 2009; Creech et al., 2013a; Creech et al., 2013b; Creech et al., 2013c; Creech et al., 2014; Perkins & Williamon, 2014; Laes, 2015; Van der Wal-Huisman et al., 2018). The literature radiates optimism; rarely a potential negative (side) effect of musical engagement for elderly people is mentioned. The evidence, therefore, needs to be approached carefully. Wakeling and Clark (2015), for example, point out that the ill-defined concept of 'wellbeing' has evoked a multiplicity of approaches to study the phenomenon, but that all these (including eudaimonic approaches which will gain more significance later in this dissertation) have their limitations for example in understanding older people's experiences of participatory arts.

Not only is critical distance required, also evidence just proving that music works does not evaluate or improve the practice. Wakeling and Clark (2015) provide an extension to the prevailing 'instrumental' accounts of health and wellbeing by studying processes and transformations taking place within participatory arts settings for older people. Their phenomenological study of the experiential qualities highlighted how the work "provoked potent connections between real and imagined pasts, presents and futures among participants" (p. 12). Juxtaposing these results with the 'instrumentalist' outcomes of measuring wellbeing suggests that perhaps we do not fully understand yet what it is (about music) that elicits these outcomes, nor what can we do to help the elderly in these situations.

In addition, Daykin (2012) challenges the obsession with music's positive outcomes on wellbeing outcomes, and signals that the effects of elderly people's participation in music should be approached carefully:

"[T]hese forms of practice may also have the negative or unintended consequence of increasing social inequalities rather than reducing them. Participation, as well as leading to

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<sup>14</sup> It seems important to acknowledge that, distant from professional musicians' movement of 'bringing' music into society, music already has a prominent place in our individual and communal lives, be that through social activities offline and online, or through individual listening. An increasing amount of evidence suggests that such musical engagements have a positive effect on our wellbeing (MacDonald et al., 2012). People are able to self-regulate their wellbeing through music (Saarikallio, 2011), thus, each person, not a professional musician, is the expert of his or her own individual music practice.

health-enhancing social capital, can be potentially damaging for health. Projects that fail to recognize these aspects risk disengagement, frustration, and disappointment.” (Daykin, 2012, 68 referring to Bolam et al. 2006)

Daykin here may be pointing out a much-needed awareness for potential vulnerabilities of elderly, and the ethical considerations that frailty entails. Frailty is commonly accepted “as a state of vulnerability regarding the future occurrence of poor health outcomes, such as mortality, hospitalization, institutionalization, chronic conditions, and/or loss of function in one or more domains (ie, the physical, psychological, cognitive, and social domains)” (Peters et al., 2012, p. 546). In musicking situations, frailty may put burdens on participation, for example because of physical constraints or communicational difficulties. The literature’s prevailing voice seems to too easily overlook a holistic and longer-term impact of the interaction between musician and participants. The process and experience of music interventions for wellbeing, especially what that entails from musicians, in contrast to its effects and impacts, are largely neglected in the literature. Although the need to justify the arts through quantitative outcomes is still urgent; a better understanding of “the rich and complex processes at the heart of such participatory work” (Wakeling, 2014) is needed. In spite of the recent attempts into understanding the (qualitative) nature of participatory processes for participants (Lally, 2009) and facilitators (Preti & Welch, 2013; Wakeling, 2014; Hallam et al., 2016), in-depth study into the nature of the interaction between musicians and participants from the musicians’ perspective is limited.

I have clarified that both the fields of professional music making and the field of (elderly) health care are undergoing changes at the same time. Professional music making sees more music-making in contexts outside the concert hall and novel ways of making music are practiced. Musicians show an intention to musick more directed to and involving the other. The field of health care is experiencing a counterreaction of wanting to rehumanize its procedures and patient experiences. The two fields increasingly find each other at the intersection of these tendencies that consists of facilitating humanization through the arts and is known under the term ‘music and health care’, an already established area of research and practice (MacDonald, Kreutz and Mitchell, 2012). What I find to be critically lacking within this newly emerging area, however, is knowledge about the processes and experiences of participants and critical distance to both the existing (positive) evidence and practice.

## **1.5 The professional musician devising musicking with the elderly**

The field of music and health relates to as well as distinguishes itself from other sub-branches of music such as music therapy (Wigram, Pederson & Bonde, 2002), community music (Higgins, 2012; Veblen et al., 2013), community music therapy (Pavlicevic & Ansdell, 2004; Stige et al., 2010; Ansdell & DeNora, 2012), health musicking (Bonde, 2011; Stige, 2012), music learning within health care<sup>15</sup>, and everyday uses of music leading to enhanced wellbeing and/or health (Saarikallio, 2010; Gembris, 2012). The multitude of terms suggests already that the field is fractured and that often a distinction between branches is hard to make (Ruud, 2012; Petersson & Nyström 2011a, 2011b). In mapping the contours of this study, it is important to highlight its relationship to the other fields mentioned, particularly the well-established neighbouring fields of music therapy and community music. Although often confusing also, it seems that distinctions between the fields could be understood through the differing role, responsibilities and competences of the ‘facilitator’ (i.e. musician, music therapist, community musician etc.).

The focus taken here is performing musicians who, driven by an intention directed at the other, expand their work to specific societal contexts. With a background in performance, musicians act from an artistic starting point first and foremost, meaning that the celebration of music forms the heart of the social and individual processes that may follow. This is in contrast to a prevailing movement in arts therapies, where the arts are employed to treat a condition and to achieve measurable improvement (Cowl & Gaugler, 2014). The musicians mentioned in this study act as musicians, not as therapists or any other care professionals, nor do they work towards therapeutic goals, use care plans or act from an ‘interventionist’ role (Bellass et al., 2018). This does not alter the fact that there may be ‘therapeutic potential’ (Preti & Welch, 2013) or ‘potential therapeutic effect’ (Dons et al., 2017) as a result of participation. As in any musical experience, music may have an effect on its consumer, which may be considered ‘healing’, ‘empowering’ or ‘soothing’.

Although it is not the purpose of this study to describe the learning nor the competences (which I consider an umbrella involving knowledge, skills and attitudes) needed when devising musicking with elderly people, what is already known in terms of competences may inform the areas of the practice that are considered important.

What seems generally agreed to is that ‘new’ types of engagements with ‘new’ audiences such as the work studied here require a particular leadership and competences beyond mere instrumental skills (Renshaw, 2010). The knowledge on what that leadership and those competences exactly entail in a particular situation, however, is unclear and diffuse. Hallam and

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<sup>15</sup> Such as the UK-based initiative ‘Medicine Unboxed’ that aims to inspire debate in medicine through the arts, see [medicineunboxed.org](http://medicineunboxed.org).

colleagues identified “that what might be described as the personal qualities of the facilitator are often more important than the content of what is engaged with” (Duay & Bryan, 2008; Hickson & Housley, 1997; Villar et al., 2010 in Hallam et al. 2016, p. 23). This raises questions about the learning and development, or ‘training’ of musicians, and whether that is possible or necessary. In the same study by Hallam et al. (2016) into (UK-based) facilitators of community music-making with older learners, the musical and pedagogical qualifications of the studied facilitators differed greatly. Five of the 14 facilitators held a teaching or leadership degree. All reported to play more than one instrument and showed great musical versatility. Not all held a degree in music, some held no higher education degree at all. None held a degree related to working with elderly. Evidence shows, however, that training may help facilitating the versatile skills that are identified in relation to musicking with the elderly (Ibid.).

Ruud, representing an overlap between community music with music therapy, defined the ‘health musician’ as the operator in music settings more targeting the wellbeing of people: a mix of musician, therapist, community musician and music educator (Ruud 2012, p. 95). Greaves and Farbus (2006), following their study into the effects of interactive musical engagements with elderly people, argue that the effectiveness of an intervention grows with an individualized approach and support by mentors that actively aid the promotion of wellbeing.

Even though the literature seems to suggest that it is vital to acknowledge that working with elderly people involves particular competences (Creech et al., 2013), a discourse on what this new role exactly entails is emerging, but seems to take various directions. Hallam et al. (2016) identified specific challenges that facilitators experience in maintaining engagement and inclusive practice, in differentiation across participants, in managing participants, choosing and adapting musical repertoire, practical preparation, resources and accommodation, recruitment of staff and group size. Preti & Welch (2013) observe, however, that “despite the degree of unpredictability associated with the hospital setting, musicians carried out their interventions on the basis of the consolidated framework that they had elaborated during their years of practice in hospitals” (p. 13).

The studies mentioned seem to have focused predominantly on the *knowledge* and *skills* side of musicians’ competences. What seems less well understood are the *attitudes* involved, and situational and contextual implementations of musicians’ underlying motives and intentions for getting into this work, as well as the risks to it. Even with the best intentions of wanting to do good, there seems to exist a risk of patronizing and evangelization (Woolhead et al. 2006; Regelski, 2012). Musicians may be confronted with views that are fundamentally different from their own. For example, it may well be that the belief of music’s healing power is perhaps not shared by everyone, nor that certain approaches are suitable for all. In case of severe frailty where such disagreement cannot be expressed, for example in the later stages of dementia where verbal communication is not anymore possible, it is essential that musicians are receptive to



other views. Musicians may not assume that participants are satisfied with just anything they receive. It seems paramount that musicians are able to see and acknowledge the person, and get a sense of the scope of the impact that their work can have.

Wakeling (2014) sought to understand the principles and approaches in the field of older people's arts participation as articulated by practitioners themselves (p. 190). Empathy and reflective practice proved key in the 'judging in the moment' and 'reading the group'. Musicians' approaches in the moment, however, could also be informed by who they are as persons, with belief and value systems of their own. Preti & Welch (2013), in their study into professional identities and motivations of musicians playing in healthcare settings, observe that the 'musician in hospitals' is "a highly motivated musician, wanting to perform in a variety of settings, often for strongly moral reasons, occasionally because of spiritual, moral or religious ones" (p. 13). The authors point out that a morality underpins musicians' incentives and actions. What this exactly entails and the extent to which this is put into practice in co-creative musicking with vulnerable elderly people, however, is unclear.

Although they are not the core fields on which this study is building, community music and music therapy help to clarify the function that musicians may have in health contexts. The community music movement has established a vast amount of knowledge and practice about what working in community contexts entails. The musicking studied here is not necessarily community-based. This does not mean, however, that some of the tools and approaches that the musicians use in the work studied here resemble some of those that are common practice in music therapy and community music. Bartleet & Higgins (2018) observe that (community) music facilitators possess a shared set of values, beliefs and ethical commitments that underpin a strong focus on quality, both in terms of process and outcomes. Bowman (2016) agrees with this by saying that "technical skills, competencies, and proficiencies are clearly important, whether these serve the practice's internal goods or are devoted instead to the pursuit of external goods like money and status depends on practitioners' *virtues of character*" (p. 72). He also emphasises musicians' authenticity, which entails engaging in actions "intelligently, responsibly, and in light of desired or apposite consequences" (p. 73).

Knowledge about devising new forms of musicking in (elderly) health care is gaining more substance, especially through the additional perspectives given by its neighbouring fields. Nevertheless, the field is in its infancy and the understanding to date, particularly the attitudes, intentions and motives underpinning the musicianship, are limited, fractured and not examined critically.

## **1.6 Research question and aims of this study**

This study seeks to better understand classically-trained musicians' emerging practices when devising co-creative musicking with elderly people. I am interested in what underpins their doings with regards to the music they make and the relationships they build. Practices are understood as routinized doings in the moment. As the field is in development, I consider the practices as 'emerging'. I will expand on this from a theoretical point of view in the conceptual framework in Chapter 2.

An enquiry into these practices is relevant for musicians. Elderly people, which I consider as those in third or fourth life phase, roughly from 65 years onwards<sup>16</sup>, is a group worthwhile to look into for two reasons. Firstly, growing older entails the unstoppable process of ageing. Regular forms of communication and participation are therefore not self-evident (WHO, 2018); for example in the case of people living with dementia. This challenges conservatoire culture traditions (Nettl, 1995), and requires classically-trained musicians to rethink their doings, to look for tailor-made solutions and develop new approaches flexibly and creatively. This study targets contexts predominantly involving elderly people, but potentially (some of the) outcomes may also be transferrable to other contexts and societal groups<sup>17</sup>.

Secondly, elderly people as a demographic group are expected to grow exponentially in the coming years (WHO, 2018). Demographic statistics forecast that those aged 65 or over will account for almost one third of Europe's population by 2060, whereas in 2010 this was less than a fifth (European Commission, 2014). Those aged 80 or above are expected to almost triple between 2010 and 2060 (European Commission, 2014). Also, in general, our societies are increasingly focused on living healthily and prolonging the healthy years (WHO/Europe, 2018). This suggests potential growth for musical ventures involving elderly people, making this an economically interesting field for musicians. Within health care settings, this growth already happening. Musicians with experience and expertise in this area will be needed, demanding specialised pathways of professional development.<sup>18</sup> By holding up a mirror to the current

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<sup>16</sup> Definitions of the elderly, older adults or seniors seem sometimes as diverse as the group itself. In Western countries, the age of 65 and older is often used to demarcate the group of people that is meant.

<sup>17</sup> The practitioners of participatory arts work with older people consulted in Wakeling (2014) stressed "that many of their approaches would be the same working with any age group [...] [h]owever, the practitioners also highlighted particular dimensions [...] that demanded different emphases" (p. 194).

<sup>18</sup> Opportunities for higher professional education in the field of music focusing on work involving elderly seems limited. On the one hand there are examples of non-formal coaching schemes in the field of practice. Wigmore Hall's Music for Life programme in the UK, for example, has bi-yearly development days for practitioners that aim to foster sustainable progress of musical as well as interpersonal competences (Whitaker, 2014). Also the French Musique et Santé offers training to its musicians through intensive trainings and internships for both musicians and care staff involved in their live music interventions on a variety of hospital wards (Bouteloup, 2010). On the other hand there are the formalized higher educational programmes for (future) professional musicians of the universities, conservatoires and academies where people turn to when aspiring to a professional career in music. Traditionally, these institutes were seen as schooling systems where young musicians are *trained* to become professional

developments, I hope this study will lay a foundation for a grounded and reflective contribution to these developments.

The aim of this study is to, in response to the problem sketched earlier, develop a middle-range theory that integrates theory and empirical evidence (Merton, 1957), based on the following central research question:

*What are emerging practices of classically-trained musicians when they devise co-creative musicking with elderly people?*

On the basis of the biographical, societal, demographic and subject-specific backgrounds and tendencies that I have described in subchapters 1.1 through 1.5, I will address the main research question by seeking answers to the following subquestions:

- 1 What dimensions of co-creation emerge in musicking with elderly people in different contexts?
- 2 How can co-creative relationships between classically-trained musicians and elderly audiences be characterised?
- 3 What considerations underpin classically-trained musicians' decision-making when devising co-creative musicking with elderly people?

The first question aims to, through a lens of co-creation, develop a deeper understanding of the formats and creative-productive processes that are being developed and implemented in musicking programmes with elderly people. Delving deeper within the musicking situation, the second question aims to characterize the relationship between musician and elderly participants that seems to emerge, with a particular focus on ethics. The third question, shifting lens from the situation to the musicians, zooms in on the musicians' contribution to what emerged through the answers to questions one and two. The question aims to highlight the considerations that underpin musicians' decision-making.

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musicians, with performing being esteemed higher than anything else. In the last few decades, the higher music educational institutes seek to facilitate change and be more responsive to their surroundings (Odam & Bannan, 2005, Jørgensen, 2009). The changing pathways of musicians, who nowadays tend to build portfolio careers in which they not only aspire to perform but equally and sometimes parallelly devise tailor-made musical (learning) environments to various groups of people (Smilde, 2009), makes this reconsideration relevant. Aiming to prepare musicians for a career and having to adapt to societal changes, conservatoires and academies, are required to recognise and incorporate these new professional pathways into their programmes.

With the formulation of the research questions all seems to be in place to delve deeper into what is already written and known about devising co-creative musicking with elderly people from a theoretical-conceptual point of view. This will be addressed in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 2.**

### **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:**

#### **a basis for understanding co-creative musicking**

In this chapter I will present the theoretical concepts that pollinated and underpin the knowledge conveyed in this dissertation, which are Theory of Practice, co-creation and Praxialism. The constellation of concepts has been formed throughout the study. The framework, hence, in its current form, could be considered a result of the study in itself. Theoretical concepts have played a role right from the beginning throughout the journey. I have undertaken in this study in the form of ‘sensitizing concepts’, which gave “a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances[,] [...] prescriptions of what to see, [and] directions along which to look” (Blumer, 1969, p. 148). Such a development of a theoretical-conceptual framework suits a Grounded Theory approach, which has been used in this study to analyse the data. I will explain more on the relationship between theory, empiricism and reflection in Chapter 3 in which I will expand on the methodology used in this study.

Some concepts that I used along the journey did not make it into this final version. Worth mentioning are ‘inclusion,’ which was the concept I initially started the entire study with, and ‘meaningfulness,’ which was a central concept at the start of the data collection. ‘Empowerment’ and ‘belonging’ also took up a significant position during the empirical phase. As I gradually discovered that these concepts designate (perceived) effects of an action or interaction within a person and that this study rather seeks to underpin the musicians’ emerging practices than its effects, I abandoned these concepts. Since this discovery, the set of concepts remained relatively constant.

The framework is composed of three broad central concepts that correspond to the three subchapters of this Chapter 2. Firstly, Theory of Practice, which could be considered the philosophical-ontological holding frame that positions the study into the field of social sciences, will be presented in subchapter 2.1. Here I will use the theoretical thinking tools of Bourdieu, which enable me to display a vista on the field of music as one in constant flux where the individual habitus of the professional musician carries the agency to put broader tendencies into motion. The other two central concepts are tied to the professional musician’s changing habitus of devising music rather than presenting it on stage, which is the starting point of this study. Central in this tendency is a changing relationship between musician and audience, which I will illuminate through a creative-productive (artistic) perspective and a social-relational perspective.

Firstly, the creative-productive perspective considers the emergence of the artistic process and product as a dialogical venture between musician and audience. For this I will use ideas related to co-creation, which I will describe in subchapter 2.2. Secondly, the social-relational perspective consists of a shift from addressing an anonymous crowd to an increasingly individualized and contextualised contact with ‘known’ people. I will support and problematize this perspective through relying on ideas of the concept of Praxialism in subchapter 2.3. Praxialism advocates music’s value through its active social praxis (Regelski, 2016) that encompasses simultaneously action, thought and emotion, rather than an ‘aesthetic’ or ‘contemplative’ valuing of music as the fixed result of action and reflection.

## **2.1 Theory of Practice**

Earlier I have outlined my perception of the field of professional music, in which I observe a group of professional musicians that devises new forms of musicking with elderly people. This tendency takes place against a backdrop of more general tendencies in the professional music field that include breaking with the taken-for-grantedness of western (classical) music performance (see for example Baker, 2014; Turino, 2008) and the professional role of (classical) musicians (see for example Renshaw, 2010; Smilde, Page & Alheit, 2014). I thus approach the musicianship studied here as something that is *newly* emerging from and within a set of traditions and norms of the professional field of music that is dominated by a conservatoire culture (Nettl, 1995).

Beyond the generic change that takes place, the changing musicianship studied here seems to entail a newness that is new *all the time*. Its dialogical, tailor-made and person-centred intentionality requires an appropriation of each social situation as contingent and unique. This is what I consider the arts to be in particular, something I recognize in the following definition of *arts practices* by Bowman:

“[I]ntentional, cooperative modes of action devoted to the attainment of ends whose priority and means of attainment are not set in stone and therefore require continuous monitoring and adjustment. What constitutes the nerve of a given practice, then, is inescapably subject to critical scrutiny and debate, and the resultant dynamic tensions are crucial to its vitality as a practice” (Bowman, 2016, p. 71).

Bowman observes a ‘continuous monitoring and adjustment’ suggesting an inherent ‘liquidity’<sup>19</sup> to situations. Accepting reality’s liquidity per definition, is a fundamental starting point of the theoretical lens of *Theories of Social Practice*, or, ‘theory of practice’ or ‘practice theory’. A recently emerging clustering of social theories within sociology, theory of practice focuses “on the question of precisely *how* different participants – people, bodies, things, and artefacts such as techniques, language, and images – relate to and interact with one another in performing a practice within a particular sociomaterial arrangement” (Alkemeyer et al., 2017, p. 205).

### 2.1.1 ‘Emerging practices’

A theory of practice considers the performance of a practice as something that is “generated by correspondingly disposed participants, who in turn enable one another through the performance of their shared practice” (Alkemeyer et al., 2017, p. 205). Alkemeyer illuminates the situated co-construction and liquidity of a ‘practice’<sup>20</sup>, by which he basically acknowledges the uniqueness of each situation. Although this may seem a fitting starting point to the seemingly adaptive and contingent practices of musicians in co-creative musicking settings, theory of practice, however, considers that practices are not complete ‘unguided missiles’, but rather alike. Each *practice* can be recognized through the presence of certain ingredients that Reckwitz circumscribes as:

“a routinized type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnect to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, ‘things’ and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion, and motivational knowledge” (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 249).

Reckwitz points out the interconnectedness and holism of elements that each social practice contains. Also, he identifies ingredients, not their final appearance. The situated appearance of the elements is seen as open-ended and may fluctuate according to the type and specificity of a situation. Reckwitz’ use of the word ‘routinized’ may in this sense mislead, but in fact refers to the intrinsic qualities that constitute a situation, giving way to contingency for the contextual application of these elements. My aim of gaining a better understanding of musicians’ doings when musicking with the elderly and its underpinning new musicianship, thus seems to be about understanding Reckwitz’ *ingredients* in musicking with elderly people that get sculptured by the contingency of a real-time situation of devising.

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<sup>19</sup> Term borrowed from Bauman’s concept of ‘liquid modernity’ (2000).

<sup>20</sup> The use of the term practice here should not be confused with its predominant use in the field of music, as in the professional work, projects or programmes that musicians devise and carry out.

However, as I consider the field of co-creative musicking with elderly people as a field in an experimental and exploratory phase, a shared body of knowledge and understanding is forming as we speak. Reckwitz' elements of the 'practice' of co-creative musicking with the elderly are, 'in establishment' or 'under construction'. What I aim to understand, thus, are the current, *emerging* types of behaviour or practices, which, within the frame of a full-grown field of professional practice, may potentially lead to routinized forms in Reckwitzian sense. What seems important for the emergence of the practices is the reflectivity of the practitioner, both in-action and on-action (Schön, 1983 and 2008).

The liquidity of practice, however, raises questions about the possibility to 'grasp' reality from a theory of practice perspective of research. With taking constant flux and contingency as a starting point, it seems impossible and paradoxical to attempt to gain a better understanding of the emerging practices. Aiming to grasp practices by 'fixating' them in writing, therefore, seems exactly contradicting their ever-changingness. My intention lies somewhere in between: although I wish to emphasize that I do not see the practices as static in the way that principles or rules can be, I intend that the picture that emerges from this study contains both a snapshot of the current realm as well as a forecast of the patterns and tendencies that the practices of the field convey in a larger time frame.

### 2.1.2 A Bourdieusian perspective on musician-audience relationships

The shifts of musicianship that I observe in the field of music seem to seamlessly correspond to the framework set out by Pierre Bourdieu through his theoretical 'thinking tools'. I will use the work of Pierre Bourdieu, seen as one of practice theory's forebearers and main figures of its early period, here to conceptualise the larger dynamics of the field of study. In the remainder of this subchapter I will outline the main tools that I use from his work. I will return to them and will 'practice' them in the course of analysis in Chapter 5 and the discussion of the findings in Chapter 6.

I start with what are probably the two most cited of Bourdieu's tools: field and habitus. *Field* considers the "objective structural relations" (Grenfell, 2008, p. 4) within a particular social space and which I here designate as the forms of professional music making. Dominant within this field are the conventions borrowed from a western classical music performance and education tradition, which could be summarized as 'conservatoire culture' (Nettl, 1995). *Habitus* is seen as the individual subjectivity of the participants of the field, which I consider foremost as the musicians and their audience, but also producers, programmers, agencies, concert venues etc. The field of music, as any field, Bourdieu says, is competitive; individuals within the field use various strategies "to maintain or to improve their situation" (Thomson, 2008, p. 69). Central to



the competition is the accumulation of *capitals* (Bourdieu, 1986): economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital. To the field of music, it is expertise in music that grants a higher ranking on the (meritocratic) hierarchy from a conservatoire culture perspective.

Beyond field and habitus, Bourdieu has identified mechanisms that explain how field and habitus interrelate and interact. The taken-for-grantedness and power structures that I set out as prevailing within the *field*, is what Bourdieu calls the field's *doxa* (Bourdieu, 1989). When speaking about doxa here, I refer to the kind of musical decision-making from the perspective of the classical tradition that operates within known boundaries. Musicians rely upon a shared set of codes when communicating amongst themselves as well as with their audience. It has been argued that the conservatoire, as “a world largely autonomous of the pressures and realities of the music world outside of the Ivory Tower” (Regelski, 2012, p. 22) acts as a force thriving on and maintaining the doxa of the field (Smilde, 2009; Perkins, 2013).

The construction of this doxa as well as the objectivity engrained in it, takes shape through the habitus. Change in the habitus, then, happens through constant response to new experiences (Bourdieu, 1989). Through such change on individual level, the doxa is able to slowly transform. In turn, a change in the doxa will also elicit change on the level of habitus, as a change in field necessitates a change in habitus, and the other way around (Grenfell, 2008). The “modified and modifiable *habitus* [...] feeds back into the subsequent structuring of the field itself in a continuing and continuous process of change” (Hardy, 2008, p. 132). Bourdieu explains the cause of change between habitus and doxa through a ‘disruption’ or ‘mismatch’ in the relationship between field and habitus, or a ‘breakdown’ in the habitus (Hardy, 2008), a process or mechanism that Bourdieu calls *hysteresis* (Bourdieu, 2000).

I see that the type of musicianship that I discuss here is potentially able to contribute to facilitating such transformation of the field of music's doxa. As said, it does that through the initiation of new approaches to music-making and musical relationships, and by acting less dependent on existing infrastructures and institutions.

In light of the social situations studied here, which I consider, as said, an *ever-changing* type of situation, it are the individuals' preconscious capabilities (Alkemeyer et al., 2017) that enable its innovative nature, and thus enable change in habitus. Such capabilities have been described as ‘embodied cognition’ (Leman, 2008) or ‘tacit knowing’ (Polányi, 1966). Bourdieu uses the term *practical sense* (Bourdieu, 1990) to describe “an intuitive ‘feel’, as dexterity, or as a sense of direction” that manifests itself “outwardly in competent answers and practical tricks that participants use to react instantaneously to situational challenges they see themselves to be confronted with” (Alkemeyer et al., 2017, p. 205). Practical sense together with habitus are characterized by “a certain fuzziness and unsteadiness which require from their participants

capabilities such as intuition, tact, timing and improvisation” (Ibid., p. 205). What practical sense can fall back onto beyond this ‘logic of practice’ is the individual’s learned everyday experiences consolidated in the habitus (Bourdieu, 1990), which is influenced by the social practices themselves. What constitutes the practical sense are “dispositions of perception, cognition, interpretation, judgment, and acting” (Alkemeyer et al., 2017, p. 209). The co-existence of the habitus and practical sense, thus, makes the individual not only structured (through the habitus), but also structuring (through the practical sense) towards social processes, and therefore carries a “potentially transformative, creative, and inventive force” (Alkemeyer et al., 2017, p. 208). Tradition and structure, on the one hand, and creativity and innovation, on the other, are, in other words, seen as interrelated and co-dependent.

### 2.1.3 Extending Bourdieu’s thinking tools

The thinking system of field, habitus, doxa, hysteresis and practical sense seems highly applicable as well as useful to obtain a theoretical grip on the work of musicians studied here. Attempting to enact Bourdieu’s tools within musicking situations with elderly people on a theoretical level, however, elicits four dilemmas that seem to complicate its understanding.

1. Within a co-creative musicking situation, it is, for example, not only the musicians employing their practical sense and falling back onto their habitus, equally participants act as agents. Given the power structures that are there from the outset, and the dominant role that musicians occupy due to their ‘expert’ musical capital, however it is perceived as difficult, or at least unusual, to ascertain their (equal) participation. Looking at the situation of the performance of Angels to patient Ms Vries and her grandson and the participation of carers within that situation, it seems that the traditional dyadic power between musician and audience that I described as a meritocratic hierarchy, cannot be upheld anymore. Forms of horizontal governing (IETM/Shishkova, 2018) seem to gain terrain, and also social and institutional power seems to be involved here. Although Bourdieu’s concept of *capital* may provide answers to the positioning of individuals within a field, it does not help to understand the exchange of capital within a situation of hysteresis, nor the vertical let alone horizontal power dynamics at play.

2. In practice, the habitus, as a “bundle of learned routines and the realm of possibilities in a given situation” (Alkemeyer et al., 2017), may also act as a limiting force, especially in the case of innovative intentions that are observed in the type of work studied here. The old habitus can ‘seduce’ musicians to fall back into their routines. Also, the multitude of new possibilities within a situation may distract the collaboration, especially when the nature of the newly-initiated work has an improvisatory nature already.

3. Furthermore, when professional musicians instigate a new practice in a new context of (elderly) health care, they are confronted with the doxa of another field. What I observe in the situation with Ms Vries is that the disempowered position of Ms Vries as patient in the situation earlier described and the overpowering position of the health care professional that prevail in a usual hospital situation (that is, without musicians there), do not seem to withstand the presence of the musicians anymore. Although Bourdieu says that inter-field connections are competitive also, meaning that some fields are dominant and others subordinate, he also says that drawing up a universal theory is impossible due to the specificity of interrelationships within the field (Thomson, 2008). What is more, the present study lies at the intersection of multiple fields, with the fields of music and health care as the core fields and music therapy and community music as most prominent subordinate fields. As the field of co-creative musicking with elderly people is new territory anyhow, it is hard to determine the exact interrelations with the neighbouring fields, let alone put a finger on their power dyads.

4. Finally, beyond the theoretical understanding of the mechanisms within Bourdieu's field, what resonates strongly with me when observing the new musicianship underpinning the work here is that it claims in itself a right that it may facilitate change. I wonder what gives this right. The doxa of the field of professional music is characterised by multiple forms of musicianship which all have their right of existence. My work environment at the conservatoire reminds me that to some, the doxa is accepted as it is and no change is desired, and it is their equal right to do so. I wonder how such differing views can be validated in their own right without becoming a 'survival of the fittest.'

Then, as a (reflexive) final note on the notion of *change* in the field, I wish to champion as well as put a critical note to the necessity of the change. Having myself experienced various forms of music education that altogether cover a coloured mix of formal and non-formal learning, seeing effective and ineffective learning and abuse of power relationships within conservatoires, and having witnessed the positive effects that appropriate musicking can bring to people in society, convinces me that some change is needed. I consider the co-creative musicking studied here not only as a positive form of social activity for society, but also as a worthwhile site of musical learning in addition to other existing learning environments. Nevertheless, I am also aware of the value of not participating, and not *having* to participate. Tomka righteously questions the current obsession with participation within the field of the arts by asking 'whether it is really that bad to contemplate a piece of art without obviously 'participating' in it' (IETM/Shishkova, 2018).

Also, I do acknowledge the 'danger of the 'all-knowing Other'' (Bartleet & Higgins 2018, p. 2-3) in the facilitation of change, of 'interrupting' and the demonstrations of power associated with that, which demand ethical alertness from the 'all-knowing' group. Bartleet and Higgins,

when describing the transformation that Community Music has gone through in the past decades, also recognize this risk:

“With a heart towards co-authorship, collaborative group work, and a belief in the creative potential of all sections of the community, those who work in, and advocate for, community music often attempt to transform attitudes, behaviours, and values towards music-making through their practice” (Bartleet & Higgins 2018, p. 3).

Let this be a reminder that the ‘new’ musicianship that is discussed here, holds a risk of bringing “evangelical zeal” (Regelski, 2012, p. 22) into the field, and, thus, becoming, the new dominant fixed habitus of the field.

## **2.2 Co-creative musicking**

Earlier I have introduced Christopher Small's broad concept of musicking as a fitting concept to the kind of musical involvement that is studied here. I will narrow this down to specific forms of musicking in which music is *devised with* rather than *presented to* an audience. Those that devise in the cases studied are usually professional musicians, predominantly those that underwent higher education in the tradition of western classical music. As devisers they take a leading role towards the elderly who take part as participants or 'audience.' Devising requires a specific contact<sup>21</sup> between musicians and participants. Before expanding on this contact through the lens of co-creation in paragraph 2.2.2, I will examine the contact between musician and audience as it emerges when musicians perform on stage.

### 2.2.1 The archetypal musician-audience connection

A peek into a typical musical performance at a concert hall would initially make one believe that the connection between musicians and audience is a single dyad in which the musician exerts an active and dominant position, and the audience a passive and submissive one. In his thick description of a symphony concert performance, Small (1998) vividly exemplifies this unambiguous and divided relationship "in which the autonomy and privacy of the individual is treasured" (p. 43). He depicts the audience experience of the concert as a solitary sharing with strangers, without opportunity for audience and orchestra "to become anything else" (p. 42). He continues that "[a]lso accepted more or less without question is that these relationships should be authoritarian and hierarchical" (p. 68).

Particularly in western classical music culture, the role of audiences in the performance of music has been described as rather limited, as:

"since the nineteenth century [audiences] have often been considered a distraction, required to remain silent until the very end of even a multi-movement work; witness the embarrassment and disdain of those in the know when a rogue audience member claps out of turn" (Ford & Sloboda, 2013, p. 29).

Interaction, which could be considered all exchange and reciprocity that takes place between musicians and audience, thus, remains limited. From the musician's perspective, therefore, minimizing the contact with the audience is not considered abnormal.

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<sup>21</sup> In theory, these encounters may take place in virtual spaces. In practice, however, no instance of such virtual encounters have been found. I therefore focus this meet up to take place physically.

Delving deeper in what is exactly exchanged, the concert situation could be seen as a much more ‘joint’ situation. A musical performance is a situation where “information flows in both directions between performers and audience, and the kind of information that is transmitted and picked up can substantially affect participants’ musical experience” (O’Neill & Sloboda, 2017, p. 327). Gabrielsson posits that that information exchange consists of:

“on the one hand, the visual impressions of the musicians’ playing and commitment [that may] mean a lot for the listener’s experience; on the other, the musicians are affected by what they see and notice of the listeners’ reactions. Positive reactions by the listeners inspire the musicians to (even) greater commitment, which in turn spurs the listeners to (even) greater response, and so on. One narrator expressed it as being like ‘playing ping-pong with the audience, you get the ball back all the time; if they get really going, we get going even more’” (Gabrielsson, 2011, p. 249).

Whereas an initial glance at a silently listening crowd would suggest idleness, implicit processes seem involved that ‘activates’ the audience to an important partner in bringing the performance into existence. Both parties, musicians and audience, thus, seem indispensable for the performative situation to take flight and it seems apt to speak about a ‘shared process’ that exceeds musical structure and involves emotions and body (Trost & Vuillemier, 2013). Trost and Vuillemier remind us that the process is multi-layered, suggesting that speaking of a single connection is perhaps too simplistic. O’Neill and Sloboda (2017) corroborate this and identify that “some of these connections are explicit and overt; others are subtle and intangible” (p. 322).

With the aim to increase the quality of the listener’s or concertgoer’s experience, thus optimize the ‘ping-pong’, musicians will employ communicative strategies. Although the primary strategies are musical, musicians will also employ visual techniques to explicitly communicate with the audience (Davidson, 2012). Another area that allows such communication is the compilation of the performance programme, where musicians are programming to a varying degree *for* their audience, or *with their audience in mind*. In this process, musicians are confronted with the fragility of the shared space when deliberating whether to introduce a new element or piece. Musicians are careful to stretch but not rupture the success of the shared experience (O’Neill & Sloboda, 2017).

The interaction thus far portrayed is anonymous, as the musicians would not *know* the members of the audience necessarily, as if an ‘invisible wall’ stands between them. Personal contact and getting to know each other outside the performance between performer and audience, and thus eliciting a sense of familiarity and “apparent intimacy” (Pitts & Spencer, 2008, p. 233) are, however, thought to contribute to audience experience positively. Similarly, O’Neill and Sloboda suggest that musicians “could enhance audience experience by balancing

the unfamiliar with the familiar, and by addressing potential audience discomfort arising from the unfamiliar” (2017, p. 326). Gaining and responding to feedback from the audience before, during breaks or afterwards in the foyer is thought to contribute to familiarity and “can lead to real friendship, as well as to validation for artists” (O’Neill & Sloboda, 2017, p. 335). To the audience, the momentum of ‘being there’ and experiencing something ‘special’ or ‘authentic’ are increasingly important features when experiencing live performing (Radbourne, Johanson & Glow, 2014). It seems therefore self-evident that “the successful musician of the twenty-first century will arguably be the one who welcomes and encourages a closer and more personal engagement with the people they are performing to” (Dobson & Sloboda, 2014, p. 171). Nonetheless, when considering those attending classical music concerts, Becker (2001) “identifies the predominant subjectivity of the western classical audience as ‘an individual with a strong sense of separateness, of uniqueness from all other persons, whose emotion and feelings are felt to be known in their entirety and complexity only to him- or herself, whose physical and psychic privacy is treasured’” (Becker, 2001, p. 141 in O’Neill & Sloboda, 2017, p. 332). The separateness and ‘culture of non-interaction’ that Becker talks about may exactly prevent an audience member from coming into contact with the performer beyond the concert situation.

Although literature about the role of the audience within the dynamics of traditional forms of musical performance is limited, considering what *is* systematically observed about the relationship between musician and audience in the traditional concert setting, the relationship seems to be largely built around and ‘serve’ “the great investment of artistic development, practice and skill on the part of the producers” (Radbourne, Johanson & Glow, 2014, p.55) only. In other words, the relationship is one of celebrating musicianship and musical expertise in the first place. The audience’s influence on artistic processes, thus, is thought limited to validating, be that before or after the performance through applause and verbal feedback, or real-time during the performance in the form of immediate reactions. It therefore seems evident that when music is devised instead of presented, i.e. when members of the audience take on other responsibilities beyond mere validation, the relationship will take quite a different shape. Musicians will be involved with breaking down the ‘invisible wall’ between themselves and the audience.

### 2.2.2 Co-creation within the arts

The devising of music, instead of performing it on stage, implies a different interpersonal contact, and thus approach and format, through which the artistic-musical product comes into being. As a lens to such approaches, I chose for *co-creation*. Co-creation as a concept or thinking paradigm originates from economic sciences where it has been theorized as a strategy in which

different parties are brought together (i.e. company and client) that jointly create an outcome that is valuable and meaningful to all (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). This definition, that includes terms such as ‘jointly’ and ‘outcome’ parallelly, instantly suggests that co-creation encompasses aspects of both social as well as productive nature. Furthermore, co-creation is said to exceed cooperation, as the situation fosters one joint meaningful outcome, not one in which two parties can still aim for separate goals. Using the metaphor of mixing the colours blue and yellow, co-creation “represents a transformation on both the blue and the yellow sides: the blue turns green, as does the yellow. But the green still has blue and yellow side capacities inside of it” (Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2014, p. 16). Co-creation emerges through devising ‘moments of interaction’, which are built on so-called DART-principles: Dialogue, Access, Risk-benefits assessment and Transparency (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2014).

In contrast to the apparent ubiquitous use of the term in the field, co-creation has entered systematic study of the arts only modestly and recently (Matarasso, 2017). A compelling narrative is contributed by museum director Nina Simon, who lists three reasons for adopting a co-creative rationale for her curative work in her book ‘The Participatory Museum’ (2010, as in Matarasso, 2017):

- To give voice and be responsive to the needs and interests of local community members;
- To provide a place for community engagement and dialogue;
- To help participants develop skills that will support their own individual and community goals.

The wide scope of the three reasons together shows that co-creative strategies not only affect those that were directly involved, but that they also impact the community in which they are embedded.

Zeilig, West and Van der Byl Williams’ (2018, p. 138) translation of ‘co-creativity’<sup>22</sup> to the arts emphasize such focus on the sharedness of the process by articulating the absence of a single author or outcome as well as its inclusivity, reciprocity, and relationality. The authors further refer to Sennett (2012) to portray that these notions are put into practice by relying ‘on dialogic and empathic approaches’ in contrast to ‘dialectic encounters, which tend to lead to closure’ (Zeilig, West & Van der Byl Williams, 2018, p. 138).

What instantly strikes when juxtaposing the interpretations of co-creation by the ‘arts authors’ with that of its root understanding from economic sciences is its emphasis not only on the ‘jointness’ and ‘togetherness’ of the production, but also on social engagement. DART-principles ‘dialogue’ and ‘access’ may suggest an openness in the interaction including equal

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<sup>22</sup> It is unclear what difference the authors observe between co-creativity and co-creation, and what made them choose co-creativity in this sentence. From the perspective of my study I do not make a distinction between them.



hierarchies and ceding power, but they may be interpreted in a strictly technical manner; potentially fostering asocial forms of anonymity and competitiveness. Such dynamics stand in great contrast to the arts definitions' emphasis on social aspects such as inclusion and empowerment through the use of words such as 'shared', 'inclusive', 'reciprocal', 'dialogic' and 'empathic' in the case of Zeilig, West and Van der Byl Williams. Furthermore Nina Simon's three-point rationale aptly reveals that these terms give expression to an underlying intention that is strongly *person-centred*<sup>23</sup>.

Such socially-driven and person-centred engagement is also apparent from community music, which has been portrayed as an 'act of hospitality' (Higgins, 2008, 2012). Also Higgins' definition of facilitation demonstrates a concern for processes of 'the other' and the group: "a process that enables participants' creative energy to flow, develop, and grow through pathways specific to individuals and the groups in which they are working" (Higgins, 2012, p. 148). Musicians employ strategies often through creative workshop<sup>24</sup> elements that are 'tailor-made' and that eventually "enable people to find self-expression through musical means" (Bartleet & Higgins 2018, p. 3). Later, in chapter 2.3 when discussing Praxialism, I will go into more detail as to what that socially-driven and person-centred intentionality looks like in the field of music and health care for the elderly. For now it seems enough to deduce that there appears to exist tacit consensus that co-creative artists act from a socially-engaged and person-centred stance *by default*.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Borrowed from health care practice (Kitwood, 1997), person-centredness is understood as a mode of delivering music *for* the other, the audience, and where possible *with* the other.

<sup>24</sup> The creative music workshop (Gregory, 2004; Higgins, 2008, 2012) is a widespread example of a format employed for co-creative interactions between musicians and audiences. It is an archetypal form of a collaborative music making activity; a democratic site for experimentation, creativity and group work around music (Gregory, 2004; 2005; Dons et al. 2014), commonly used in community music (Higgins, 2008; 2012). The literature seems to agree that a workshop is "most often associated within educational settings as a site for experimentation, creativity and group work" (Aston and Paynter, 1970; Paynter, 1982, 1992; Self, 1976; Schafer, 1975, 1976, 1992 in Higgins 2012 p. 144) and that it is "a productive space" (Sennett 2009, p. 54). A music workshop "can be an ideal site through which one can create a deterritorialized space to foster and harness human desires for musicking" (Higgins 2012, p. 144). Deterritorialized in this sense meaning: "a space that is freed from the spatial and temporal domain" (Higgins, 2012, p. 144). "In creative music workshops the group participants work together in creating a musical product. Because creative music workshops are improvisational, people can express themselves creatively. This leads to a sense of shared ownership and responsibility both in the process and in the final product. [...] At the heart of any collaborative process is a sense of partnership where 'leaders' and 'participants' share equal status, developing teamwork, respect and mutual support. [...] There is little doubt that participatory activities that involve shared values and meaning lead to higher levels of achievement and an improved sense of personal worth" (Dons et al. 2014, p. 10 referring to Gregory, 2005).

<sup>25</sup> Before going into critical examination of this stance in paragraph 2.2.3, it seems important to mention that I would like to think that co-creative artistic practices also have a right of existence without a socially engaged or person-centred stance. If these exist, I would like to acknowledge those artists as this would point out a more diversified creative landscape where co-creation equally contributes in 'bubbles' where one least expects it. It is however my experience of practice as well as observation in community music literature that the field seems indeed largely biased and (perhaps partly) driven by an inclination to 'do good' to the other.

### 2.2.3 Problematizing person-centred co-creation

So far I have pointed out that the traditional musician-audience relationship as we know it from performative settings probably cannot subsist in a musicking situation where a professional musician devises instead of presents. Also, I have concluded from the literature with support of some experiences in practice that musicians, when engaging in such devising, likely act from a socially-engaged and person-centred intention. Such an intention, however, raises ethical problems, especially when working with vulnerable people.

In a blogpost, and therefore perhaps slightly speculative, Francois Matarasso (2017)<sup>26</sup> compares the formats of three co-creatively flavoured arts projects led by professional artists. He analyses the formats and draws out a specific ‘degree of relationship’ in each. A first example consists of a work by photographer Spencer Tunick in which undressed participants are photographed. Matarasso observes that “rules are set by the artist (producer)” and, although non-professional random people become part of the artwork, “taking part (consuming) means conforming to them.” Matarasso questions whether this can be called co-creation, as in this format, the relationships are “binary and unidirectional”, and the artist acts, perhaps unsurprisingly, not at all person-centred. Matarasso’s second example consists of a theatre production in which professional artists work with non-professional actors including school-age girls. During the working process, the artist company “recognizes that each girl who participates brings her own physical presence and personality to the piece.” Although directing the piece, the artists incorporate individual contributions of participants, which Matarasso describes as “co-creation within some clear boundaries”. There is an authority (i.e. the professional artist), but no “authoritative text” in a Romantic sense. A third example is ‘Bed’, a living piece of art in a public space that emerged “slowly out of conversations, workshops, sharing of memories, testing with audiences and further development.” Here, the piece is considered by Matarasso as “genuinely collectively shaped through the interaction of many people, none of whom knew what it was going to be before it existed”, which, to me feels as one of the essential elements that co-creative processes feature. Matarasso labels this example as “certainly co-creative”, where “any person in the group may have authority and a decisive influence over the creative process” and “the artist has a specialist role, but not a dominant one.”

One of the ideas that Matarasso seems to introduce, even though he does not make it explicit, is that the degree of relationship helps to define co-creation within arts and that it is a tool to devise co-creation in practice. He presents the way power is shared and ceded as one of

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<sup>26</sup> All direct quotations in this paragraph are taken from Matarasso’s blogpost. The blogpost does not use page numbers, so referencing the quotations would only include the year of publication, making the references seemingly redundant. For the sake of readability I have omitted the references.

the determinants of this degree of relationship. However, what he means by degree of relationship is not explained, or how it relates to the success of the co-creation.

Nor does Matarasso specify how power exactly functions within the emerging relationship and co-creation. He speaks about a redistribution of power in co-creative processes. He claims that “artist[s] intending to co-create [...] [have] to find ways to disperse the power associated with their skill, knowledge, experience and position.” Musicians aiming to devise co-creation therefore have to tactically cede power, commit to empowering others and foster ‘horizontal co-decision making’ (IETM/Shishkova, 2018). Presuming that artists indeed act with a directedness to the other, which I discussed in the previous section, it seems essential to examine the influence of such intentions on the dynamics of power, especially in working with vulnerable people. What the discourse urgently lacks is a better understanding of the dynamics of power in the newly emerging musician-audience relationships, and, perhaps more critically, musicians’ *practice* of redistributing power in their devising and exactly *who* redistributes.

A redistribution of power within musician-audience relationships, however, can hold risks. From a horizontal governing perspective, leading and facilitating could be considered “being “alongside” people and is not necessarily about purposely directing the activity” (Zeilig, West & Van der Byl Williams, 2018, p. 140). In such approach, everyone is seen as having ““equally useful” things to offer” (Ibid.). What makes co-creative leadership more complicated, however, is that flexibility and unpredictability can be exploited, and that ‘horizontality’ is hard to achieve in practice, especially in cases involving vulnerable people.

Letting go of fixed roles, “treating every individual as someone with a say in value creation, and recognizing that others’ perspectives on interactions, outcomes, and value may not necessarily coincide with one’s own” (Ramaswamy & Ozcan 2014, p. 28), is common practice in co-creation. This entails acknowledging the other as full co-creator, rather than user, client or audience, which “moves beyond to the ‘agential’ role in the value creation process” (Ibid., p. 285) and involves “ecosystems of capabilities”, to “enable and support individuated value creation”, to connect with the quality of actual experiences of engagements’, to use “rapid experiential learning, insights and knowledge” and to, eventually, “expand wealth-welfare-wellbeing” (Ibid., p. 283). In the arts, Matarasso talks about finding “the ways to disperse the power associated with their skill, knowledge, experience and position” and the “willingness to cede power, even if the art that results is less good in their view than it might have been” (2017). In music, this may mean that the division between the roles of audience and performer may blur, resembling a truly participatory practice where “no formal artist-audience distinctions, only participants and potential participants” (Turino 2016, p. 302). Although sounding promising, it makes me think that leading such a seemingly democratic system entails risks and is

liable to foster misinterpretation and miscommunication. In a case of being ‘less morally sound’ or egocentric, not all kinds of musicianship may be able to handle such slippery slope.

But scrutinizing power dynamics in co-creative leadership also seems urgent on the microlevel of facilitation. In this sense I particularly think about strategies such as the ‘gift theory’, which considers that an at first seemingly altruistic intention perhaps covers a deeper intention of the giver, as ‘a gift is never truly free’. Through a ‘hospitable action’, or “an invitation: the making of time for another and the invitation to be included” (Higgins, 2012, p. 138), the receiver, in this case a participant, is inclined to reciprocate, to ‘give back’ or to respond. In this way, an interaction is born that can be built on. Higgins (2008, 2012) observes this in community music activities as a strategy of musicians to trigger participation. From a gift theory perspective, however, the question whether the other *wants* to participate, and how, in other words, whether someone is ready and willing to accept a gift, is important. In situations with people with severe dementia, for example, cognitive impairment may complicate this all-important signal of reciprocity.

Thus, what I observe from the perspective of co-creation in the literature calls for leadership to reach a deeper level and to mobilize one’s own morality. In the next chapter, I will introduce praxialism as a philosophical perspective that addresses such deeper, ethical levels within the field of music.

### **2.3 Praxialism**

In the exploration of concepts underpinning this study, so far, I have pointed out that one of the elements that characterize a musicking approach in which professional musicians devise rather than present comprises of a shift in making contact with the audience. I have also put forward the question how the degree or quality of that contact acts as a determining factor of the rigour to which co-creation is practiced. And finally, I have contended that when musicians' motives for co-creating are socially-engaged or person-centred, moral grounds are triggered. Ethics, which is the broader term that I will continue to use in this study, became increasingly important as I progressed with the empirical data collection. At first it were my own activities as a researcher that triggered ethical reflections. I will portray this ethical side to the research journey in Chapter 3. Later, that reflection expanded to considerations about the ethics of the musicking initiatives and the musicians' actions. Its significance grew into becoming one of the key concepts from which I tried to grasp the subject of study.

Within the philosophy of professional music, ethics remains a relatively new and undiscovered phenomenon. Within the performative tradition where musician-audience contact on average remains relatively limited and implicit, ethical and moral responsibilities seem predominantly confined to issues about legal ownership and purchase (Warren, 2014). An area of music where ethics has been discussed more broadly and extensively, however, is that of music education – not surprisingly an area where close, often one-to-one relationships remain key (Gaunt, 2008). The increasing attention to ethical considerations within professional artist relationships surged with the recent #metoo movement, which revealed the magnitude of harassments and assaults happening within professional arts communities.<sup>27</sup>

Relatively recently within music education, the music philosophical stance of 'Praxialism' has emerged that considers an orientation on music as a holism that includes, beyond the music itself, those that are producing as well as receiving music. With such holistic view, Praxialism addresses ethical issues such as the intention of the teacher and the role of the teacher within the pedagogical relationship. In addressing the above-mentioned 'moral grounds' within the power dynamics of musicking with elderly people, Praxialism proved a worthwhile source of inspiration. I will use praxialism here as a lens to co-creative musicking with the elderly with the purpose to bring to awareness and to examine its ethical grounds and dilemmas. That is to say, by adopting Praxialism here as one of the key concepts on which this study is built, I do not intend to endorse all ideas emanating from Praxialism. In practice, the backbone of this subchapter consists of ideas that are borrowed from Praxialism, in addition I will enrich it with ideas not necessarily belonging to Praxialism.

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<sup>27</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Me\\_Too\\_movement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Me_Too_movement)

Praxialism sets out a practitioner's philosophy of music that appropriates music as a holistic practice involving doing, thinking and feeling. The philosophy gained significance in the 1990's through David Elliott's *Music matters: A new philosophy for music education* (1995) and the writings of Thomas Regelski, amongst others. Their disagreement with the, that time, prevailing 'aesthetic' view in music and music education, which beholds that musical knowledge is to be achieved through intellectual and contemplative engagement with the musical work only, formed a central starting point of the movement. Praxialists commit to a holistic view instead that sees music not as a thing but as something that is done, and thus it "adopt[s] a concept of music and musical values that includes, but goes beyond, works" (Silverman, Davis & Elliott, 2014, p. 57). It involves "musical doers, musical doing, something done and contexts in which the former take place" (Elliott, 1995) and is to be "valued properly when we understand it intellectually, engage in it actively, and reflect on our experiences thoughtfully" (Hodges, 2016, p 201), thus comprising a constellation of processes of mind, body and heart. This holism of Praxialism resonates with me, and I can see how my early biographical experiences at the camps, which I talked about in the introduction, seem to justify this resonance.

The ripples of a praxial view on music education have been expanding as well as criticized, for example for not adopting the aesthetic concept in the praxial framework (Westerlund, 2003). In spite of the criticism, and although praxialism has mainly focused on the study of music education, its relevance for related fields such as community music has been undeniable (for example Elliott & Silverman, 2014; Veblen et al., 2013). This seems equally so for the co-creative types of musicking studied here. Given its view on music as something that can contribute to a multiplicity of facets of life and wellbeing, I consider it a fitting starting point for getting a deeper understanding of musicians' devising of co-creative musicking.

Although it is my intention to approach the devising of co-creative musicking with elderly people as a holistic venture, and I see Praxialism matching this, in the remainder of this subchapter I will nevertheless break down the concept of praxialism into four associated subconcepts. By translating each of Elliott's four dimensions – 'something done', 'doers', 'context' and 'doing' – through a perspective of musicians' 'practices' in musicking with elderly people, which is what this study is after, I drew up the following four corresponding subconcepts: 'doers' became '*personhood*', 'something done' became '*intentionality*', 'context' became '*situatedness*', and 'doing' became '*ethics*'. The fourth, ethics, or 'doing', is the central theme that permeates through and connects the other three dimensions, and will therefore be addressed first. This makes sense within this study as 'doing' corresponds to musicians' 'practices' within musicking situations with elderly people, which is what this study addresses.

### 2.2.1 Ethics

Ethics becomes instantly important in the new personal contact and the relationship with musicking others that musicians engage in when devising new forms of musicking. The example of Ms Vries at the start of this dissertation shows that the contact that musicians engage in can obtain a highly intimate and fragile character. Whenever such a close gathering of people convenes around music, ethical considerations are involved (Lines, 2018).

Such considerations may already start right at the conception of an initiative, for example by asking participants to take part and involve them in decision-making:

“Asking for participant’s consent to be involved and specifying its terms and conditions were identified as the foundation of any ethical participatory art practice. Participants should be informed about the goals and activities they will engage with. They should have the right to disagree with the rules, to influence the decision-making and to withdraw their consent at any time they decide” (IETM/Shishkova, 2018, p. 3).

Shishkova points out the need to involve and maximally inform participants, but at the same time it could be questioned to what extent that is possible in a participatory setting where goals and activities are developed exactly jointly. From a co-creative perspective, musical meaning is to be negotiated within the social community, and influenced by shared and personal experiences, and this negotiation and influencing takes place in response to others. What is more, this negotiation works in two ways, as how we view decision-making affects the ways we musick, which affects the way we relate to other people.

In general, ethics involve making choices about what one considers ‘right’ and ‘wrong’, ‘good’ and ‘bad’, and involves “deliberations of values such as goodness, rightness, honesty, and justice that in turn help us to see connections between types of action and practices and considerations of what constitutes good or bad behaviour” (Haynes, 1999 in Lines, 2018, p. 385). A musician participating in a musicking situation with elderly people, thus, through devising, will be confronted with such deliberations. Such deliberations are influenced by morality, which I see as (following Warren’s (2014) adoption of Bergo’s (2008) reading of Levinas) guidelines that are imposed, such as “rationalist self-legislation and freedom (deontology), the calculation of happiness (utilitarianism), or the cultivation of virtue (virtue ethics)” (Bergo, 2008) in Warren, 2014, p. 3). Such sets of rules are part of societies, but should rest on deeper ethical responsibilities (Warren, 2014).

Considering the multiple examples of music used for facilitating destructive behaviour (Brown & Volgsten, 2006), the virtuous musicking that praxialists endorse through prescribing

music and music education as an action ideal serving ‘eudaimonia’, or human flourishing, cannot always be ascertained in practice. “Musical activity is not inherently good: It may be good or bad, and is often both at once” (Bowman in Regelski & Gates, 2009, p. 6). As much as ethics is, thus, paramount to co-creative musicking, it is as much a subject complex and slippery.

Ethics in a praxialist view of music concerns the kinds of considerations “where ‘right results’ are judged specifically in terms of the people served or affected. The ‘rightness’ of results thus varies according to the situated needs in question” (Regelski, 2005, p. 16) and “can only be decided in light of the particulars of a unique, human situation” (Bowman in Regelski & Gates 2009, p. 5), that is, in the situation itself. Such ‘situational ethic’ requires “the capacity to reconstruct the means and ends [...] into a constant *re-organization* of values for the good or the growth of oneself and others” (Allsup & Westerlund 2012, p. 126). This suggests that the ‘professional ethic’ of musicians in co-creative musicking situations with elderly people, beyond the professional-deontological (for example expressed in guidelines such as ‘to do no harm’), should include a flexibility where “[r]esults are judged in terms of the beneficial difference made for those served, not in abstract *a priori*, metaphysical, or strictly technical terms” (Regelski, 2005, p. 19).

Also Bowman (2016) points at an ethical praxis that is situated:

“To act ethically [...] involves acting rightly in a situation where rightness cannot be stipulated in advance, fully determined aside from the particulars of the situation at hand, or decided without asking what kind of person it is important to be, why, and how.” (p. 69)

Bowman points out the exact impossibility of prescribing ethical ways of conduct. He continues: “Under such circumstances, one’s most reliable ethical resources are one’s character or personal integrity.” Instead of being guided by obligations or the rightness of results, in such ‘virtue ethics’ it are the resources that “are personal, more immediately accessible, and better attuned to the particularity of ethical problems” (Ibid., p. 68) that help us make ethical judgements. This involves “more than logic and reason, drawing deeply upon emotion, relationships, values, perceptions, attitudes, interests, expectations, and more” (Ibid., p. 69) and could be related to intuition and the ‘practical sense’ of Bourdieu (1990), in which individuals continuously practice and adapt their habitus within the immediacy and improvisation of a social situation.

Considering that ‘right results’ should serve *all* people involved, musicians are not only expected to practice a situational ethic to ‘the other’, also to themselves. It seems not only important to be active in maintaining other people’s dignity, but also the musician’s own through respect for the other as well as self-respect (Woolhead et al. 2006). Oneself could be seen as ‘yet another



participant', which requires including oneself, but also, and more problematically, dealing with one's own leadership in an ethical manner.

The musician's ethical consideration of the self also comes into play when facilitating the production of artistic work with others. In a co-creative, dialogic artistic process, this can get complicated as co-creation's equality of contributors seems in discrepancy with the naturally expert role of the musicians who devise the co-creation. From Matarasso's blogpost, I learned that guiding a group of people towards co-creation entails ceding power tactically. Ceding power in an ethically responsible way, that takes into account 'the other' as well as oneself (as participant and as leader), seems complicated. A dilemma central in a musical decision-making process seems to be: do I choose the 'good' of the other or what I think is musically appropriate here?

This dilemma reminds of what Regelski (2012) has coined in music educational praxis as 'musicianism': "a tendency to place *musical* choices and values before or above *educational* options and values" (p. 21). Taken to an extreme, musicianism may be seen in music education in the use of "rote, authoritarian, fear tactics, and other coercive means to insure high quality performances" (Ibid.). From such musicianism-angle, the musicking examined here seems not so much about educational options and values that come under threat but rather about aspects of wellbeing.

### 2.3.2 Personhood: ethics of the contact with the other

In trying to understand the 'emerging practices' of musicians in devising music in close connection with elderly people and the relationship that emerges out of this process, it seems evident that an important part of that understanding involves the other. From a praxialist orientation, music is thought to express 'personhood', which is seen as 'the status of being human' and the recognition of being human:

"Our intrapersonal and interpersonal experiences of music making, listening, feeling, knowing, teaching, learning – everything we can possibly do, desire, feel, think etc. – trace back to the fundamental issue of what it means to be the kind of being that possesses, undergoes, enacts, and "performs" his or her personhood." (Elliott & Silverman, 2014, p. 62)

How personhood comes into being, according to praxialists, is through that doing, and is "anchored in and emerge[s] from an underlying set of "personhood processes" that are unified, dynamic, and responsive to our individual environments" (Elliott & Silverman, 2014, p. 63). These processes include and combine "a functioning human brain, in a living human body,

interacting with complex physical, social, and cultural environments, in an on-going flow of experiences “ (Johnson, 2006, p.47).

Praxialist literature mainly focuses on music educational contexts, resulting in the focus of a music teacher’s perspective on the personhood of a music learner. In co-creative musicking however it seems important to consider personhood of all involved, including that of the devising musician.

A holistic view where the mind and the body are considered within their context and are fully functional and engage in musical processes, however, cannot always be taken for granted in co-creative musicking with elderly people. Aiming to work “truly inclusively with any group of people is fraught with difficulty, perhaps particularly in terms of validating the contribution of each individual and the complexity of power relationships” (Zeilig, West & Van der Byl Williams, 2018, p. 142). Especially in the case of geriatric syndromes (WHO, 2018), where cognitive, physical, psychological or social decline, and often a combination of these (Steverink et al., 2001) may hinder participation and validation of personhood. Musicians will be required to optimize and tailor the activity to such changing needs and abilities (Dons et al. 2014; Dons, 2014b).

Malfunctioning of personhood processes, however, does not mean that personhood is absent or irrelevant. It is exactly in situations where regular communication and participation are not self-evident that music is thought to contribute. In *Music for life* by Wigmore Hall Learning, musicians use musical improvisation to facilitate contact with and amongst people with dementia and their carers, which entails

“a variety of approaches that seek to ‘tune in’ to the group in order to create music that authentically reflects the group and its constituent members, with musicians drawing upon a body of shared repertoire – approaches, discourses, concepts – developed through a history of mutual engagement and negotiation within this shared enterprise.” (Smilde et al. 2014, p. 27)

When such approach gets a strong person-centred emphasis, which means that the ‘appliedness’ is about reaching people through responding to “the smallest verbal and non-verbal signals” (ibid., p. 3), person-centred music making can elicit positive signs of wellbeing for elderly with dementia (Dons et al., 2014) and hospitalized surgical patients (Dons et al., 2017). What is more, in case of people with dementia, through such music making a reconnection to the ‘hidden’ personhood, or the person ‘behind the dementia’ that can still be called upon, can emerge (Smilde et al., 2014), in spite of cognitive decline and personality changes.

That it is a musician facilitating the re-emergence of personhood through music, is not only a remarkable means of doing so, it is also in line with another aspect of personhood, which is that personhood is always “a co-construction between self and others; it’s not an isolated, internal thing” (Elliott & Silverman 2014 article, p. 63). Co-construction means that one’s personhood is always partly ‘as seen through the eyes of the other’. In the case of person-centred music making, this ‘seen’ involves all senses and serves the translation of personhood into sound, and involves ethics. What is more, as I pointed out that within co-creative musicking the musicians’ personhood is an equally participating factor, this means that person-centred music making “deals with expressing one’s inner self, it is connected to one’s identity as a person and as a musician” (Smilde, 2016, p. 315). Consequently, this also involved the ethics towards oneself.

### 2.3.3 Intentionality: ethics of the initiative

“[Praxial orientations] insist that genuinely musical doings are *intentional* – that they are mindful of musical results” (Bowman in Regelski & Gates 2009, p. 6). In the previous subchapter 2.2 under co-creation within the arts, I have examined the intentionality that borders on social work, inclusion, empowerment and activism (IETM/Shishkova, 2018), so I recognize this praxialist claim from a co-creative perspective. Praxialism, however, takes this intentionality one step further by stipulating the artistry’s intentionality direct to the other as a broad one that could include a wide but focused array of perspectives (Elliott, Silverman & Bowman, 2016). This includes the assertion that being an artist is being citizen first and foremost: “a member of a political community who, in virtue of that membership, enjoys certain rights and is expected to perform certain duties” (Bowman, 2016, p. 61). Bowman, thus, suggests rather rigidly that artists and musicians need to show awareness of their political rights and duties, or even better: of what their function in society should be.

Elsewhere, Bowman writes that “[p]raxis-oriented music action [...] is mindful of the differences it makes in the lives of those who engage in it” (Bowman in Regelski & Gates, 2009, p. 6). Not only, he seems to say, should the actions be politically-driven, they should also aim to make a difference to the other. This idea seems in line with a widely discussed phenomenon within Praxialism, which, although acknowledging and endorsing the view that music has numerous values, claims that intentionality is by definition determined by an inclination for a greater attainment of eudaimonia. From a praxialist perspective, eudaimonia, or flourishing “centred on meaning, virtuous action and self-realization” (Ascenso et al., 2017, p. 67 referring to Ryan & Deci, 2001), ultimately is the objective to achieve through musicking (Elliott & Silverman, 2014). What is more, the authors explain how this should be achieved: “*central to the*

*concept of praxis is careful and caring thinking-and-doing for people's fulfilment and flourishing – musical, cognitive-emotional-bodily, social, cultural, ethical, and educational fulfilment and flourishing*” (Elliott & Silverman, 2014, p. 68, emphasis in original). The ‘careful’ and ‘caring’ that is proposed may seem self-evident at first. How this is meant to translate to practical settings, however, is difficult to specify and could be contested. There could be multiple ways and degrees of acting carefully and caring as a musician towards the others.<sup>28</sup>

Virtuous acting from political citizenship and eudaimonia according to Praxialism spark questions about the responsibilities that musicians are expected to take. Doing good may become problematic when it is for the benefit of the flourishing of another person, as it involves a judgement of what is right or wrong on behalf of the other. Especially in non-committed relationships where members are considered free and self-determining persons, intending to do good to the other raises issues about what gives one the right to decide what is good for the other. The presence of a eudaimonic intention, therefore, colours the relationship instantly and triggers ethical considerations.

Also, looking back on the context in which we found Ms Vries at the beginning of this dissertation, doing good seems a relative concept that is hard to define what it may mean exactly in a musicking context. Putting into practice a eudaimonic intention could potentially be seen as inappropriate. Moreover, considering examples of music being used for facilitating destructive behaviour (Brown & Volgsten, 2006), such virtuous musicking cannot always be ascertained in practice and also can be subject to attaining the opposite effect, or to misuse. Also Bowman relativises this by saying “[m]usical activity is not inherently good: It may be good or bad, and is often both at once” (Bowman in Regelski & Gates 2009, p. 6). As much as ethical thinking is, thus, paramount to co-creative musicking, it is as much a subject complex and slippery at the same time.

Praxialism’s interpretation of intentionality does, nonetheless, generate thoughts about the potentially directive influence that a practitioner’s personal intention brings to a co-creative musicking process. In a study into the characteristics, motivations and challenges of facilitators of community music-making with elderly people, Hallam et al. (2016) found that musicians are driven by a range of reasons to take on their role as facilitator in work with older people. Although extrinsic reasons such as the ethos of the organisation, the team, opportunities for professional development, working conditions and pay play a role, mostly intrinsic reasons move and keep musicians in this field. Intrinsic reasons include the joy they get as a reward of doing the work and gaining professional experience, but also the opportunity to ‘give something back.’

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<sup>28</sup> Also, from a research perspective, the use of eudaimonic approaches of measuring the impact of participatory arts has been criticized for its focus on meaning and self-realisation, and degree to which one is ‘fully functioning’ (Wakeling & Clark, 2015).

One of the musicians in the study said she “wanted to do something worthwhile” (p. 24).<sup>29</sup> Further on in the study the perceived benefits of working with elderly people were examined. Facilitators mentioned that the rewards of seeing other’s development and enjoyment as well as personal fulfilment and development were key in continuing with this work. In line with this were Preti & Welch’s (2013) findings of their exploration of the motivations of musicians performing in healthcare settings. They discovered a multitude of morally-coloured eudaimonic reasons of why musicians work in these, such as wanting to ‘do good’ or making a positive impact on people’s lives. A few of their respondents spoke about their motivations in religious terms.

Next to research findings, also a quick scan of existing practices show ‘other-directed’ underlying motives. *Musique et Santé*, that offers live music interventions to patients and staff at hospital wards, for example, writes on their website that the musician is there for “humanisation.” *Music for Life* by Wigmore Hall Learning, an innovative creative music workshop practice for people with dementia and their carers, is not as outspoken, although it does mention in its mission that it aims to enhance quality of life, implying that at least some of the underlying motives are indeed oriented to the other.

What appears to be overlooked in the literature are the intentions from participants. In co-creatively-led ventures, where musicians interact with participants and potentially intend to share, the intentions on the side of the ‘other’ are noticeably ignored. Following the principles of a co-creation paradigm, a co-creative initiative includes the intentions of all involved, not only those that originally started up the initiative. Although the perspective of this thesis is on the musicians’ and not on participants, this absence has important implications for the co-creation and how it is being devised. It confronts practitioners with the question of how to deal with the others’ intentionality that is not known, and stands in the way of genuine success in the co-creation process.

#### 2.3.4 Situatedness: ethics of the moment

So far I have illustrated that musicians’ co-creative musicking with elderly people, as we know it from the literature, is somewhat in line with praxialist ideas on intentionality and personhood. What seems to weave through both concepts, and what seems to act as a third significant core notion that is also associated with praxialism, is the situatedness of musicians’ conduct. Bowman sees that the relationship between its intention and end is “not rule governed, but a consensual,

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<sup>29</sup> This reminds of the intentions of the related field of Music Therapy. With seemingly overlapping intentions between the two fields, Preti and Welch’s (2013) found, using Hoyle’s (1990) criteria that define a profession, that musicians in healthcare settings show, however, the characteristics of a separate professional group.

intersubjective affair where what contributes right or authentic action [...] is subject to critical scrutiny and continual refinement” (Bowman, 2016, p. 71). Action, thus, is seen as something that emanates in dialogue within a given situation:

“Every instance of action (praxis) is seen as a new and unique situation (or solution), no matter how similar it might only seem to past occasions. Thus, an instance of praxis always creates new results that are uniquely satisfactory because present needs are unique and can never be properly served simply by replicating habits of the past. Such effectiveness, however, is not an all-or-nothing matter: effectiveness or goodness in human affairs is always complicated equivocal, and relative to the tangible needs, criteria, and constraints of the moment.” (Regelski & Gates, 2009, p. viii)

Regelski and Gates state that such a ‘situational’ approach entails uniqueness, and claim that, although, the ‘past’ informs, it is context and instantness that serve current and future action first. “[A]ction habits must be balanced by the *mindful habit* of changing and revisiting habits in light of ever-emerging and ever-changing ends-in-view” (Bowman in Regelski & Gates, 2009, p. 6). In other words, a balancing act seems to exist between action habits and mindful habits in the moment.

Bowman reminds us of an ethical side to contingent approaches: “cooperative modes of action that take their guidance from specifically *ethical* considerations” (Bowman 2016, p. 70). Bowman specifically suggests a virtuous form of action, which “is optimally responsive to the unique demands of the situation at hand and guided by the constellations of factors that compose one’s character” (p. 70). Such virtuous action seems important, from the perspective of contingency to one’s individuality, but equally difficult to get a handle on, as musicians may be required to use their own morality to ‘judge’ the other’s character.

In sum, this framework consists of three main theoretical concepts. The first concept is Theory of Practice, which provides an ontological view on the subject of study. It allows me to look at musicking with elderly people as a professional activity of musicians in a holistic way. Through using the thinking tools of Bourdieu, musicking with the elderly could be positioned within the field of professional music as something new and therefore challenging. Practice Theory also paves the way for an empirical investigation of the study within its natural habitat and through holistic research approaches. The second concept is co-creative musicking. Co-creation entails the joint creation of mutually valuable outcomes. Although highly promising in what it can mean for musicking situations with vulnerable people, the concept has been theorized within the arts only in a limited way. Documentation on applications of co-creation in settings involving vulnerable people is limited. Given the imbalance of power that comes naturally in vulnerable

contexts, attentiveness towards the devising of co-creation is important. The third concept is praxialism, which is a music philosophy providing a particular ethical lens to the subject of study. Although I question the applicability of its eudaimonic view on situations with co-creative musicking with elderly people, the praxialist perspective is thought to elicit exactly the much-needed discussion on ethics emerging within such situations. I have sharpened the ethical lens through personhood, intentionality and situatedness, which I see as three areas where such a critical view could be worthwhile.

Now I have put the theoretical grounds on which I will build the rest of this study into perspective. In Chapter 3 I will expand on the methodological choices that were made to facilitate data collection and data analysis.

## **Chapter 3.**

### **METHODOLOGY:**

#### **Ethnography and Grounded Theory**

Given the relatively unexplored nature of the subject under study here, a qualitative interpretive social sciences approach was developed following the traditions of ethnography (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Natural and real-life settings were explored through observation and interviews. The study aimed to develop a middle-range theory (Merton, 1968) that is constructed by going back and forth between the empirical data and theory. The analysis followed principles of a constructivist Grounded Theory approach (Charmaz, 2014).

#### **3.4 Ethnography**

In retrospect, considering the background of this study in Chapter 1, the starting point for this study was unclear and open-ended. As I outlined in Chapter 1, I had an interest in a specific subject, even had some experience as a concrete stimulus and knew that there was something pressing for me to dig up, but I did not yet know what I was looking for. This feeling of foreshadowing problems (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007 referring to Malinowski, 1922) as a result of spending time in a field, is typically ethnographic. As time passed, my initial interest grew into a strong focus by iterating the development of a set of questions, the collection of data and the study of existing literature. Unintentionally, this earlier period created the legacy for what eventually resulted in an ethnographic approach for the entirety of the current study.

Because the exploration travels from one real-life situation to another, the exploration may resemble a case studies approach. It is however the journeying to and from cases, in dialogue with the theoretical background in the form of sensitizing concepts, that drove the knowledge development that eventually aims to claim something about all cases. The cases, therefore, are studied ethnographically, not in the tradition of a case studies approach (Crowe et al., 2011).

##### *Case sampling*

I started out searching for cases for this study with a geographical scope which was logistically feasible so it included the Benelux countries, the United Kingdom and North-West Germany. I found the potential cases through my existing network and prior involvement in the field, and through searching on the Internet. I compiled a long list of over 40 cases including any project



or programme in which musicians work with elderly people; and the audiences or participants were to include primarily elderly people that could be considered vulnerable (see Appendix I).

Partially through a priori determinants and partially through theoretical sampling (Flick, 2009) on the go, I narrowed down the list, based on emerging criteria. Given the focus on professional practice, I looked for cases in which the musical leaders had completed professional music education or an equivalent. All cases needed to comprise of an approach to live music making different from those prevailing in the concert hall and tuition studio; simply moving the stage to a new context did not suffice. Furthermore, I sought for variety in forms of vulnerabilities, with an emphasis on physical, cognitive, and social forms of vulnerability, and in length of existence of the practices. In this way I hoped to capture the routines that could stand the ravages of time as well as those that trailblaze or perhaps did not sustain for whatever reasons. Also practical constraints had to be taken into account: the data collection needed to take place within the time frame set by the study. Because of a wish to start with fresh material, I disregarded cases that I had been involved with prior to this study. This, however, does not alter the fact that the cases that I studied prior to the study have been fundamental in starting out with the drawing up of my conceptual framework, and remained a latent benchmark throughout.

Eventually I made a selection of four cases that displayed an exceptional value with regard to their approach to musicking: The Presidents by a large Dutch orchestra, Simon's session under the flag of a UK arts charity, Music at the open house for people with dementia and their partners, and Music at the ward. Three of the practices are situated in the Netherlands, my country of residence, the fourth one, is located in the UK, the country in which I study towards my degree and that I frequently visited.

The Presidents was a programme that aimed to bring into existence a learning orchestra for elderly people. It was carried out by a large professional symphonic orchestra based in a big city in The Netherlands. I came across the programme when scanning a portfolio of funded projects by the Long Live Art programme.<sup>30</sup> Intrigued by the practice's intention to target socially excluded elderly people and its combination with the creative-collaborative format of the taster workshops, I went to observe one creative workshop session and held an episodic interview with the two workshop leaders in the winter of 2015-2016. Several aspects about The Presidents workshop triggered my thinking and two made me decide to include it. Firstly, as one of the big professional orchestras in The Netherlands, the orchestra inherits a tradition of staying within the boundaries of orchestral platforms and operating on the 'higher rank' within the arts sector. With The Presidents and other initiatives, the orchestra seems to expand its function and move into closer encounters with its (potential) audience. Secondly, I was

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<sup>30</sup> Lang Leve Kunst, a programme financially supporting cultural projects for elderly people between 2013-2016. See: [www.langlevekunst.nl](http://www.langlevekunst.nl).

interested in the workshop leaders. As facilitating a small group of elderly people in social isolation seemed quite far from their identity as orchestral musicians, I wanted to find out more about their movement towards this work and its influence on their leadership and, needless to say, decision-making.

The second case consisted of music sessions by an arts charity that take place in several community homes across a rural county in central UK. I got to know First Taste through Rose Brown-Clark, former programme manager and currently responsible for development, monitoring and external affairs of the charity at a conference in 2011. I was impressed by the length of service of the work and the seemingly limited resources on which the organisation seems to run. I was welcome to observe a session and speak to the workshop leader in the community house of a village in the spring of 2015. The straightforwardness of the person-centred approach he used as well as his less classically-oriented professional path in comparison to the other three cases made me include it.

Through my work at the conservatoire, I got involved in researching the process of a project called Music at the open house, in which a group of musicians created music for and with participants of a walk-in house for people with dementia and their partners. My attraction to the project's short-term existence of three months altogether as well as the stretch of the creative process over this period made me include it as the third case. This project took place in the autumn of 2015.

Through a similar route I got involved in 'Music at the ward', a newly established music initiative, which became the fourth and final case to be included in this study. Music at the ward takes the shape of projects in which a trio of musicians spends a week on a hospital ward to play improvisations and existing repertoire for patients and staff in a person-centred way. The innovative approach and challenging context made me include Music at the ward in this study. Music at the ward was established in the winter of 2015. The data collection for my study took place in the autumn of 2016.

### **3.4 Data collection**

I explored the existing music practices ethnographically through observation and interviews. Through these methods I gained an insider's view and thus was hoping to be able to understand their meaning-making from their perspective.

#### *Participant observation, field notes and observational reports*

My main source of data was observing, witnessing first-hand what went on. That meant that I visited work on site and took part to the extent that was possible and considered appropriate. In case 1, I was advised to take part as a regular participant, whereas in case 2, although welcome to mingle with people before and afterwards, I was shooed to the side during the actual music making. In cases 3 and 4 I was part of the research and development team, thus somewhat more of a participant than observer. In case 4 apart from being an observer I also acted as a mediator in charge of facilitating communication between the musicians and people on the ward (patients as well as staff). This does not mean that I felt my presence more legitimate there than in the other three cases. Never was I a musician or a central participant<sup>31</sup>; in all four cases I experienced both moments of feeling more of an insider and moments of feeling more of an outsider. Travelling across these two positions has enriched my perspective on the subject.

The participant observation fed into the production of field notes (Emerson et al., 1995, 2011) in a small notebook after and, where possible, during the visit. I initially started out in case 1 with writing about everything I saw. Gradually the writing focus went to the interaction between musicians and participants, and the leading musicians' actions, communication and decision-making. Obviously, my attention followed the dynamics of the interaction, for the majority of the observation, which meant that some individuals foregrounded in the data more than others.

The notes then served as a reference for the digital writing-up of an observational report after the visit. This meant writing down what I observed as well as my experience based on mentally revisiting the entire session. I was careful to recall and write about every detail possible and to create a picture that would do justice to all participants in the situation. For examples of notebook writings and digital reports, see Appendices A and B.

The data collection of cases 3 and 4 took on a path of their own. In case 3, I witnessed plenty of sessions. To avoid overproduction of data I let the writing's degree of detail depend on how important in the moment I felt the session was. Mostly the newness of an aspect of an event would raise its importance. Also, moments in which special feelings arose, either by myself or

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<sup>31</sup> 'Central' as opposed to 'legitimate peripheral' participation, which I borrow from Lave & Wenger's thinking tools connected to Communities of Practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

observed in others, would instigate more elaborate writing. Some of the field notes I instantly jotted down on my computer without revisiting it later in a full report. In case 4, I observed three projects and decided to use only one of them eventually.

In case 4, while writing the observational report I listened to a play back of an audio recording of the entire visit. This supporting material was produced in the frame of the practice development of Music at the ward, not for this study in the first place. Because the material was available and proved to enhance my ability to relive the experiences and to defamiliarize from the events, I decided to and was allowed to use it also for this study<sup>32</sup>. As such a recording seemed to add a factual extract from reality than only relying on self-written notes and memory, the use of this recording has likely strengthened the findings.

The reports varied in length. For cases 1 and 2, one observational report was produced per practice, consisting of approximately 5000 words each. The total set of field notes and reports in case 3 consisted of over 37.000 words. The final case resulted in a report for each of the seven project days, in total encompassing 42.000 words.

#### *Interviews and transcriptions*

To gain insight into the musicians' experiences of the events and their explanations of their motives, I conducted interviews with the leading musician(s) after the session. When there were more than one leading musician, I spoke with more than one. In case 1, I spoke with the two leading musicians in one interview. In case 3 I spoke with the artistic leader individually twice, and conducted two focus group sessions with the rest of the musician team. As there was shared leadership in case 4 there was not one outspoken leader. This led me to speak with two of the three musicians.

All conversations combined an episodic approach (Flick, 2007, 2009) with a narrative approach to interviewing (Alheit, 1993). Episodic interviewing is a form of interviewing that "facilitates the presentation of experiences in a general, comparative form and at the same time it ensures that those situations and episodes are told in their specificity" (Flick, 2009, p. 186). Although semi-structured through three narrative phases of opening question, narration and follow-up (Alheit, 1993), the largest part of the conversation was reserved for asking the interviewee to re-narrate situations. Each interview started with a generative question to get the interviewee in the storytelling mode:

*I want to ask you first about the session that I attended. Could you explain me how you try to, or manage to, engage elderly participants for taking part during that session? Please give details. Everything is of interest to*

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<sup>32</sup> Music at the ward's research activities, including activities for this study, have received approval by the Medical-Ethical Assessment Committee (METC) of the academic hospital at which it was developed. The original application and letter of approval are available upon request.

*me that is important to you. I may ask you once you finish to repeatedly recount situations, to generate more information. But first I give the floor to you, just take your time, I will be listening.*

During the interviewee's response to this question, I would remain an active listener in the background, not interrupting. When I sensed that the interviewee came to the end of his storytelling, I probed further through non-directive questions on the things that the interviewee had said, or 'given me.' I tried to avoid 'why' questions, as this may lead to the interviewee feeling to justify. Instead, my questions would ask for elaboration, for an example or for clarifying an idea or a term used. When that also came to an end, I brought in new angles or selected items from a prepared topic list, questions that not necessarily followed up on what the interviewee had said. For examples of prepared questions and prompts see Appendix C. An excerpt of an interview can be found in Appendix D.

From a perspective of evaluating the quality of the research design, collecting data through interviews could be seen as a compromise in comparison to 'naturally occurring' conversations on site. The narratives emerging in interviews for example were dependent on my relationship with the interviewee and the practice, and my shifting position as insider and outsider. Ultimately, unnaturalness of the interview setting was, however, relative, especially in terms of how the interview data was used. In comparison to participant observations, interviews cannot be seen as a first-hand source for understanding what happened in a past occasion, but rather as social events as themselves (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). As such, interviews act as sources with properties of their own, as "interviews are occasions in which particular kinds of narratives are enacted and in which "informants" construct themselves and others as particular kinds of moral agents" (Atkinson & Coffey, 2001, p. 808). Seeing interviewing itself as an action that expresses 'ways of talking', it can be considered in the same way as the actions observed through participant observation (Atkinson & Coffey, 2001).

When producing the observational reports and interview transcriptions, important interpretive thoughts were triggered as well as conceptualisation took place. Although the rigorous analysis of the data followed after the completion of data production, I recorded such thoughts in the document as memos, and considered them part of the data.

In addition to the observational reports and the interview transcriptions, and although of lesser importance in the analysis that followed, I wrote portraits (Hackmann, 2002) of participants as an exercise in order to get closer to their experience (case 1, an excerpt of a portrait can be found as a vignette at the start of its thick description), transcriptions of focus group discussions with supporting (non-leading) musicians (case 3), and documents such as promotional documents (all cases) were studied. These additional data could be considered documents and artefacts, the third form of data in ethnography after participation and interviewing (Hammersley & Atkinson,

2007). The forms of data (participant observation, interviewing and document study) and the sources itself (the four cases) vary considerably. From a triangulatory perspective, this diversification of sources strengthened the findings.

### **3.4 Data analysis**

I used a constructivist Grounded Theory approach in the tradition of Kathy Charmaz's (2014). This 'constructivist' quality became most apparent through an unstructured adoption of existing theory (literature) and a pragmatic processing and analysis of the data (Ramalho et al., 2015). I performed structured searches for literature in RILM, PsychINFO, ERIC and CINAHL before, during and after the data collection and analysis. Often material would come my way unstructured through colleagues and supervisors, through searches I had to perform for teaching activities, through social media or by checking the newest issues of the main journals related to my subject. The literature that I had already processed influenced my thinking in the background during the data collection and analysis in the form of sensitizing concepts (Blumer 1969 in Hammersley, 2013). Often it happened that a new aspect emerged from my data, which I actively sought for in the literature, for example the concept of 'agency.' Understanding the concept more from a theoretical perspective then made me realise that what I was aiming to address was something different. Later this was adopted in the framework as 'practical sense.'

In retrospect I observe that the data analysis took shape in, roughly, three consecutive phases. Firstly, I performed initial coding (Charmaz, 2014) in Atlas.ti on the material of cases 1 and 2. I did this line-by-line, but often also in paragraphs, as some sections of the data did not contribute much to the subject of study. I ended up with codes such as 'following', 'choosing an instrument' and 'expressing distrust', and colour coded them according to the aspect of the social situation that it addressed - see a copy of my draft colour-coding scheme in Appendix E. Although coding went bottom-up, 'letting the data speak,' inevitably I must have been coloured by the literature that I had processed until then, acting as sensitizing concepts for my processing of information. After the first bulk of (nearly 300!) codes was produced, I attempted to categorize them. I also started memoing, fleshing out ideas from basic questions such as what is going on, what are people doing, and what connections can I make (Charmaz, 2014).

All these activities activated an iterative process of 'constant comparison', abstraction, and adjusting the research focus, multiple times. The direction of reasoning in this early period was mainly inductive and iterated from the data to the set of codes and back, and was influenced by the set of sensitizing concepts. Overall, this phase had a strong intuitive character, confirming the journey of searching I was on as an ethnographer.

Secondly, I embarked on the data collection of case 3, and later case 4, which I felt confident about. I conducted the initial coding of cases 3 and 4, after which I re-coded cases 1 and 2 using the new set of codes and categories. Categories that emerged were 'leadership', 'reciprocity', 'tailor-madness' and 'unpredictability.' The codes and categories were reorganised again, which elicited the development of the codes in relation to the sensitizing concepts into what felt like an increasingly solid set of underpinning concepts for the subject

studied. The code list as it existed at the end of coding Music at the ward can be found in Appendix F. In this phase I went through the pieces of data, revisiting previously coded material with the adjusted set of codes. This resulted in a more thematic, or ‘cross-checking,’ form of coding. Direction of reasoning was abductive, searching for one explanation for all cases.

Thirdly, after the coding process, I started to write so-called ‘thick descriptions’ (Geertz, 1973) of each practice “that captures the context of the act and the intentions and emotions of the characters, including the researcher” (Van der Geest, 2015, 88). In light of this study, the ‘thickness’ of the description lies in the accounts of the musicians and their take on the musical situation that were considered in the writing. Because of the practices’ diverse purposes and natures and my differing involvement with them, the narrating format varies for each. In this way, I also hope to do justice to their originality. For each of the descriptions, however, it was my intention, on the one hand, to provide an overview of the events and the setting, and on the other, to go deeper into exemplary moments with the intention to pave the way for the analysis. The choice of moments was informed by the coding, in the sense that I looked for moments that most illustrated the codes that I was to address later and to use as moments to point to in the analysis.

With these descriptions, I hope to provide a comprehensive picture of my experiences. In light of the focus of this study, seeking to understand the underpinnings of musicians’ doings, I based the story on ‘significant’ or ‘critical’ moments of decision-making. I selected those moments on the basis of the knowledge and empathy that I built up through this study. In the beginning this selecting was based more on intuition and gradually it became more explicit. When writing, I stayed close to the data and I left the coding out of the descriptions. Instead, the codes functioned as the point of reference to which the descriptions would lead. In this way, the thick descriptions form Chapter 4, and Chapter 5 presents the result of the analysis through coding. When writing the descriptions, I wanted to include a veracious flavour of the practices as they are, mixing Van Maanen’s *realist* (aiming to produce a tale from the native’s point of view) and *impressionist* (presenting the world and holding back interpretation) types of storytelling (1988). At the same time the format of the thick descriptions allowed me to include some aspects of how I personally experienced the situation, leading the way to my interpretation in the chapter afterwards.

Combining, primarily, participant observation with episodic interviewing has allowed me to both enrich my own perspective as well as gain an insider’s perspective on the subject under study. Although the two types of data were complementary, in the analysis, I did not approach them in the same way. The observations acted as the primary source of data and the interviews served as an extension to the observations. I analysed the interviews with an observer’s eye meaning that the content that interviewees talked about was not always the information that I



was looking for, which follows the 'interviewing as action' perspective that I posited earlier. I was equally interested in *how* the interviewees speak about the events. The analysis, thus, was multi-layered and included "the perspectives they imply, the discursive strategies they employ, and even the psychosocial dynamics they suggest" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 97).

### **3.4 Ethics and reflexivity**

The part that ethics played in this study grew exponentially. Not only did it become an essential part of the study's outcomes, as can be seen in its adoption in the conceptual framework and later also in the analysis, it also grew on the level of design and implementation of the study, particularly when I let my reflexivity speak during gathering and working with data.

Putting forward ethics as a core concept defining musicians' 'emerging practices' in co-creative musicking is perhaps an invitation to examine critically the ethics of my own work. What is more, the interpretive act of translating Elliott's four dimensions into the four subconcepts as I have presented them under Praxialism in section 2.3, for example the reading of 'personhood' in Elliott's 'musical doers', already constitutes a strongly morally-coloured view on the subject of study. All this necessitates interrogating my own ethical and moral stance.

I have experienced in this research journey that ethics and reflexivity were intertwined and not easily distinguishable. In this section, I will address both at once, through three paragraphs. Initially, ethical considerations in this study concentrated on the formal ethics of the data collection and handling. It concerned the purpose of developing a research design that fits the ethical standards of the institution and the field, which comprise of normative ethics of researching music in societal contexts. I will expand on this in section 3.4.1. Various encounters along the journey in the field and reflecting on them made me, however, realise that there is more to discuss in terms of ethics in the practice of doing research as well as in the practice itself. These encounters sometimes transformed my perception of the subject, and have brought me to think in a more nuanced manner, that perhaps there is no right or wrong in a given situation. This strongly affected the data collection, analysis, outcomes and eventual communication of the outcomes. I will explain this 'ethics in research practice' further in section 3.4.2. Alongside this increasing ethical awareness, another learning journey took place. Starting out with almost a fear of intervening, and thus disturbing, the events due to my presence as a researcher,<sup>33</sup> I gradually came to accept that taking part as a researcher-ethnographer comes with the job. What is more, as I continued in the coding process and became more aware of my own dispositions within the situations, I became convinced that "the fact that behaviour and attitudes are often not stable across contexts and that the researcher may influence the context becomes central to the analysis" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 17). Especially during the data collection in the last two cases, I was an active contributor and co-constructor of the situation. Whereas in the beginning I would have considered this not done, in the end it became a fundamentally insightful part of the learning. Such involvement, however, triggered, again,

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<sup>33</sup> This carefulness not to interfere even lead to describing myself as 'the researcher' in the first observational report after The Presidents, as can be seen in Appendix B.

thinking of an ethical kind. I will expand on this in section 3.4.3. For all these reasons, ethics eventually became a major area of attention in my reflexive process.

#### 3.4.1 Ethical considerations in the study's design

Starting with the formal ethics of the study itself, I developed a study design with three modes of ethical thinking in mind, which, together, form the normative ethical practice (Regelski, 2012):

- The deontology or 'norms' of social sciences and music research;
- Awareness for the consequences of actions;
- The practical virtues of the situation (not theoretical reason).

The research activities were performed in real-life settings involving people that may be vulnerable. Performing (overt) observation and interviewing, in which I look at people and register their behaviour and speech, may, to some extent, be considered invasive. This required me to consider Murphy and Dingwall's four issues of ethical theory:

*Non-maleficence* – researchers should avoid harming participants.

*Beneficence* – research on human subjects should produce some positive and identifiable benefit rather than simply be carried out for its own sake.

*Autonomy or self-determination* – research participants' values and decisions should be respected.

*Justice* – all people should be treated equally." (2001, p. 339 in Flick, 2009, 37).

Although the study does no physical harm, people might feel *watched*, which may make them feel uneasy or influence their behaviour and speech and compromise their sense of privacy. Such a risk for disturbance made me question the beneficence, or: what gives me the right to carry out this study in this way.

In order to minimize the risk for the aforementioned effects on people, I acquired informed consent of the participants in the study. The consent was voluntarily and entailed that participants could withdraw from the study any time. The interviewees all signed a consent form that marked their agreeing in taking part in the study (see Appendix H). Before signing, interviewees were asked to read an information sheet describing the research purpose, design, issues about confidentiality and anonymity, withdrawal from the study, and use and dissemination of the data (see Appendix G)<sup>34</sup>. Consent by observed participants in cases 1, 2 and 3 was obtained verbally; the leading musicians asked the question on my behalf. In case 2 and 3 people with dementia were involved. Case 4 also included participants that were vulnerable. In

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<sup>34</sup> The consent form and information sheet were derived from standardized formats issued by the Guildhall School of Music & Drama.

these cases the responsible medical personnel was involved when obtaining the consent. In case 4, my question concerning consent was part of a bigger research project's ethical procedures which included written consent for all participants and was supervised by the Medical-Ethical Assessment Committee (METC) of the hospital where the practice was developed<sup>35</sup>. All personal information and any information that may lead to the identifying of persons has been omitted or anonymized. From the outset I had the intention to, across all aspects of this study, try (and still do) to be careful about the rights I lay hold on myself and the rights that I intercept from participants by carrying out the research activities. I intended to show respect towards the integrity of people, and act honest, confidential and accountable. The study design obtained ethical approval in December 2014 by the Research Ethics Committee of the Guildhall School<sup>36</sup>.

### 3.4.2 Ethical considerations in practice

Being in the field and in personal contact with people, especially in case 4 when combining the roles of researcher and mediator, has led me to question my sense of ethical praxis. In this section, I will illustrate this using three examples that will hopefully highlight the complexity of putting theoretical notions about ethical research into practice.

Firstly, I experienced what the ethical formalities that I had put into place actually meant for me being in the field itself. I learnt that in practice much more is involved than just formalities. Asking for informed consent, for example in the cases involving people with severe dementia or very ill people, challenged me to think about the necessity of intercepting rights from participants and taking them onto myself. People's conditions made me extra sensitive in making sure that the research activities were not in any way asking people to act beyond their limits. Case 3 and 4 were developed through research activities; the musical interactions came to exist only because of the research activities. Participants, thus, took part in a kind of 'deal': receiving a musical experience in return for participating in the research. Although such a construction fostered transparency throughout the collaboration, the research may have imposed on the relationships and the behaviour to some extent. In case 2, the asking for informed consent from the participants felt, in retrospect, somewhat out-of-place. The atmosphere in the space with the elderly and care team doing their routines was easy-going and natural. Asking formally to be part of that moment and spelling out that I am there to observe may have caused infringing on easy-goingness and naturalness. People may have felt 'watched' after this conversation. This made me realise that there is a trade-off between sticking to the

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<sup>35</sup> The application for approval and letter of approval by the METC are available for request.

<sup>36</sup> The original application for approval and letter of approval by the committee are available for request.

formalities of asking for consent and building relationships on the basis of trust. I sense that the former does not necessarily always enrich the outcomes of the study, but can potentially bias a setting. It also taught me that such formalities ideally take place in advance to avoid pollution in the moment itself.

Secondly, the coinciding role of researcher and mediator in case 4 elicited particular ethical tensions. In these two roles, I was both a colleague in the team of the (developing) practice and a researcher that aimed to research the developed knowledge. These two roles that I had clash conceptually, as I wish to both co-construct as a mediator and observe and simply 'register' as an ethnographer – even though within ethnography simply registering is considered impossible (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). The mediator role, however, justified my presence more than my researcher role; as intrusion was something I struggled with in the previous cases. Beyond the roles of mediator and researcher, I also felt I was a listener. Although I was never the one the musicians made music *for*, I did experience the situation also as a receiver. Then, finally, I also felt a human being, without any professional role. Especially in moments when I was emotionally affected by the music and the events happening in front of me, I came to realise that I cannot exclude this human side from the situation. The fact that “[...] social researchers are part of the social world they study” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 14) puts a complicated strain on the researcher. In many ways, the 'human' role became my main resource from which I drew for this study, especially when writing up my field notes or interpreting observations. At the same time it was also my main obstacle, in the sense that the 'fight' with familiarity was real (Delamont & Atkinson 1995 in Hammersley & Atkinson 2007). Interpreting the situation with Ms Vries, for example, whose events as well as emotions stayed with me for several weeks after the situation had ended, was very difficult. The emotions helped me to empathise with the actors on site, especially with the musicians, but they also stood in the way in defamiliarizing and pursuing a critical view towards the musicians' decisions.

Thirdly, in terms of confidentiality, I was sometimes torn between what is appropriate when building relationships with people on site. This was especially the case when leaving the field afterwards. Although I feel that with everyone I met, both gatekeepers and informants, I had a good rapport, I had a fear of misrepresenting people. I also felt that my claim of 'acting confidential throughout', which I made at the outset of the study, was misleading. Publishing about the behaviour of someone else is not a pure confidential act. I felt a need to be modest in presenting my interpretation, and found myself spending a lot of time pondering what was an appropriate way of representing someone. Gaining confidence in telling 'my story' and simultaneously 'doing justice to participants in analysing data' (Flick, 2009), therefore, took time and triggered my own reflexivity multiple times. I came to think that there must be a need for addressing the issues I address here, in my own 'coloured' way. Although I never intended this

study to be about myself, my personal values, my belief system and my morals inevitably influenced it.

### 3.4.3 Fluctuating between inside and outside

Some of the issues discussed in 3.4.4 are directly linked to what is extensively recognized and discussed in ethnography: the positions of insider and outsider in relation to the subject studied. Earlier I introduced the four practices and the differing positions I took within them to collect my data. Although the advantages of being an outsider (Angrosino, 2007) and of being an insider (Karp 1980; Pettinger 2005 in Hammersley & Atkinson 2007) have respectively been acknowledged elsewhere, for me it felt that the variety of positions that I was able to take, from complete insider and convincingly ‘passing’ as a legitimate participant to newcomer or outsider that allowed for a rich collection of data. I also mentioned that I often felt both insider and outsider, which allowed familiarity and strangeness to emerge at the same time. But not always did I feel that I benefitted from my position as insider or outsider. When entering case 1 and 2, for example, I visited as a complete outsider and was able to learn from distance what was going on. Rereading my observational report, I realise now that a part of me was occupied with evaluating the work of the musicians. I would reflect on how things could be improved or how it could be done differently, which was less about trying to understand what was really going on. This bias stood in my way for a while and it took me many reflexive readings of the material to distance myself, and silence that voice within me.

In cases 3 and 4, my position was more that of an insider, which caused me to develop some blind spots. Looking back on the data collection in the open house project, for example, I realise now with the benefit of hindsight that I was not able to fully grasp the emergence of the internal turbulence within the musician team in my data. The artistic leader as well as some musicians now and then spoke to me about their frustration, but I was not able to, in critical moments, create the right conditions for the musicians to speak out, nor was I always there when these critical moments took place. There was also my desire to keep track of the actual process with the participants of the open house as my study focuses on the relationship between musicians and participants, and not on what happens between musicians, even though the two are interconnected. I felt that I should not let myself be distracted by the internal issues of the musicians. Thus, the picture of the project that I present in the thick description in the following chapter, is for that reason strongly leaning on *my* experience of the project, rather than that of the musicians’.

Also in Music at the ward, I encountered difficulties in my role of being an insider, of being too close to the events, and therefore becoming involved too much. This could potentially

harm the integrity in research terms of both the participants as well as myself as a researcher. Equally, when acting as a mediator between musicians and patients, I felt partly responsible for the sometimes intense emotions and changes that the music elicited. Even after some aftercare and having stayed a while longer until the patient calmed down, I felt often uncomfortable by having to leave a patient behind in the room after ‘having caused’ that person to transfer to a different state of mind. Also, I was so moved sometimes that my emotions took over and that I needed a time-out from my responsibilities as a researcher to recover.

Looking back on the journey with an ethical ethnographer’s eye, I learnt about the complexity of simultaneously acting in an appropriate way for both the research and its participants. Although I fully endorse the use of protocols and the necessity of ethical committees, I learned that ethics are hard to regulate and capture in standardized procedures. Estimations and decisions are best made in the midst of real contact and contexts. At the same time, in this lies also the greatest risk, as balancing conduct and making appropriate decisions becomes reliant on one’s personal values and morals, and this is, thus, a very slippery practice. Thinking back on the conceptual framework in Chapter 2, it involves perhaps appropriate navigation between personhood, intentionality and situatedness of the given situation. Since the ethics of the study’s design and ethics of the study’s subject became intertwined in the research journey, this point could be considered a precursor to what will follow about situational ethics of musicians devising co-creative musicking with elderly people later in this dissertation.

At this point in Chapter 3, I feel I have sufficiently laid out the tapestry of rationale, background, theoretical, and methodological starting points in order to move on to the empirical side of this study. In the Chapter 4, I will present the thick descriptions that I wrote from the data collection at the four practices studied.

## **Chapter 4.**

### **THICK DESCRIPTIONS:**

#### **four cases of musicians at work**

In this chapter, I will depict the four existing cases that together form the empirical basis of this study. The texts are produced from the data, primarily the observational reports and interview transcriptions. In chronological order (order of study), this chapter presents a Geertzian ‘thick’ description of each case separately, in which I portray my own experiences, perceptions and interpretations. The descriptions are, thus, a first analytical-interpretive step away from the data. The concepts of the theoretical framework have not played a role in the writing up of these descriptions. They did, however, strongly influenced my focus and interpretation, as well as the sampling of within-case moments for the descriptions. That the descriptions also include the voices of the musicians (through the interviews) gives them the ‘thickness’ and makes them into much more than summaries or reports. The texts are anonymized to the extent that that was possible. For each of the cases, personal information and any information that may lead to identifying participating people or institutions has been omitted or were substituted with pseudonyms.

#### **4.1 Entering a space where nothing is fixed: The Presidents**

*She approaches the circle of chairs holding the neck of the double bass with both hands and the bow pinched in between. She pulls aside one seat and places herself as the connecting link. She stands upright, then holds the bass neck in her left hand and the bow in her right. She inspects the instrument, top to bottom and back, as if nodding. Then she embraces the instrument with a natural elegance like two friends reuniting after a decade of being out of touch. She brings the bow to the strings and tries to produce a sound by moving the bow from the left to the right and vice versa. Her eyes are fixated on a spot right above the bow where the hair strokes the strings. She seems to want to play a sustained tone on one string. She struggles, touching many strings at the same time. She starts over, and over again. Eventually, from her repetitive, almost-compulsive trying, a powerful and persistent sound levitates. This success seems to incite the attention of others around. She responds to them by asking if anyone knows about the rather small size of the instrument; she doubts whether it is a cello or a bass. People do not know the answer, she continues exploring.*

In this excerpt of a portrait, we meet Ineke, a recently retired lady, taking part in a creative music workshop run by a large and well-known Dutch professional symphonic orchestra located in a larger Dutch city. In the workshop’s first half an hour, participants freely browsed and



tested orchestral instruments. Ineke had just discovered a double bass on the floor behind a table with instruments and started to explore it.

The creative music workshop took place as a taster activity as part of The Presidents, a programme that aims to form a learning orchestra made up of elderly people living in social isolation, the assumption being that this group of people normally would not engage in instrumental learning or playing. The orchestral setting was thought to facilitate a sense of companionship and a way to escape their possible isolation. With the aim of recruiting members for the learning orchestra and letting people experience what it is like to play an instrument, the orchestra set up a series of creative workshops about orchestral instruments and ensemble playing in several residential neighbourhoods of the city. When asking what motivated the choice for a creative workshop format during an interview with the two workshop leaders, musician Fleur explained:

“When we were designing the introduction programme I was thinking about what do we need to offer and how do we get them to taste what will be offered later. Trying out instruments was easy and could be brought into the programme in many ways. [...] But how do you get people to experience the fun of playing together, in case they can’t do anything with an instrument? The format of the creative workshop seemed most suitable to accommodate that.”

The musicians explained in the session and confirmed later during the interview that the outline of the session was copied from prior work with children in schools: “Of course we did this format many times, but with kids. So that helps, so you feel very comfortable with it.” When I asked whether anything was changed to this plan in order to meet the specific needs of the older target group, Geike revealed that one thing got changed:

“A new part was inserted in the session which consists of participants singing their favourite tune. [...] I thought, like, OK, they must know a lot about music. That is of course the difference in comparison to kids, that they carry a lot of baggage. They know songs or parts of music. If they can relate to that then they can be used again later on, when they make music themselves.”

Geike seems to want to emphasize that the situation of the participants at the outset of the project is more advanced than that of the participants in their previous work, and although that the material and knowledge that participants will bring to the session is unknown, she had strong expectations about it. Fleur seems to continue along Geike’s train of thought and thinks about the implications for her position as leader of the session: “a workshop with elderly people is like

entering a space where nothing is fixed.” The higher expectations makes Fleur excited, about what the participants will bring to the session and what this will require from her as a leader, that cannot be predicted.

The taster workshops took place in the autumn of 2014. The learning orchestra eventually took off in Spring 2015 with sectional and plenary rehearsals and additional instrumental lessons for beginning to advanced instrumentalists. Although The Presidents appeared to be a success, as of 2017 the orchestra ceased the programme due to the fact that they were unable to reach elderly in social isolation sufficiently. In January 2019, however, I found out that The Presidents, as a learning orchestra, continued independently without the support of the professional symphonic orchestra.

### Participants’ arrival

The workshop I went to see was the second one as part of The Presidents and was led by Fleur and Geike, two female professional wind instrument players (bassoon and oboe) and permanent members of the orchestra. Fleur was also coordinating The Presidents programme.

Participants were recruited through the distribution of flyers in places which many elderly people supposedly frequented. The flyer said that they were looking for ‘Music lovers that do not only want to listen’ and it explained that the programme offered one-off preparatory activities such as taster workshops, visits to chamber and orchestral performances and rehearsals, musical dinners, instrumental lessons, group rehearsals, performances and opportunities to play together with professional musicians.

*When entering the neighbourhood I notice many opportunities close-by for an active, healthy and connected lifestyle, such as a golf course. The area is quiet and looks well-kept. The workshop’s venue is a church in a northern district of the city, which also functions as a multi-purpose community centre. When I enter the bright space where the workshop will take place, I encounter two ladies, the only participants that have arrived thus far, standing by the door. I estimate their age around 75 years old. Whilst the participants seem to be waiting for a signal to enter the room, the workshop leaders are unpacking instruments further in the room. One of them approaches. We shake hands and she invites us to come in.*

Later on in the session I learnt that the majority of participants do not live in this district . The distance that some participants travelled to reach the session surprised me; people seemed so keen to take part in the session that they are willing to travel across town by public transport or car, or walk.

Around twelve people had signed up for the session, but ultimately 20 participants show up, of which four male. Most were in the first ten years of retirement and looked energetic and

healthy. One elderly couple had brought along their grandson who was of primary school age. None had ever met any of the other participants, except for those that came together. So, the group was newly formed and consisted of mainly elderly people.

At the session, I was introduced as a researcher to the group, and I got to explain briefly the purpose of my visit. As participant-observer, I attended the workshop as a peripheral participant; I took part in circle activities, but did not join in breakout exercises. Staying out of some parts of the session allowed me to take more of an observing role and jot down notes in a notebook.

### Preparing and setting up the workshop

The taster workshop consisted of common workshop components:<sup>37</sup> an opening and introduction of the musicians, a first explorative activity, a round of introductions of all the participants, warm-up exercises, a breakout group activity, a plenary sharing of results and feedback by the musicians, and a conversation closing the session.

*Once all participants have taken their place in the circle comprised of chairs, the session starts by Fleur welcoming everyone, explaining The Presidents programme, and introducing the purpose of today's workshop:*

*F: "Today's session has two goals. Firstly, we are going to choose an instrument, or try out a couple, whatever you like; and secondly, we will play and create some music together in small groups."*

*No participant responds. Fleur continues talking.*

Through Fleur's explanation of the goals, the workshop leaders' intentions and approach to the collaboration was *announced* to participants. The tone was uniformly decisive: Fleur's verb usage in both sentences ('has', 'we are going to choose [...] or try out', 'we will play and create') comes across as conclusive. I consider 'announcing' as an instructive and one-way mode of conveying putting the recipient in a 'receiving' and 'following' position. With this choice of mode, Fleur seemed to have set the tone and mode for the rest of the session.

Later on in the interview, the musicians and I reflected on this. I asked them to what extent did the musicians feel that the session was a collaboration. Fleur answered: "This has two sides: in essence they politely did what we asked them to do, but what we asked them to do had to be invented by them." Geike said: "Yes, we didn't sing or tap anything out for them, it all came from them." Geike and Fleur's answer seems to be about setting boundaries, and creating freedom through setting boundaries, which is a creative strategy that I have heard about before. The workshop leaders seemed to have read my question as an invitation to talk about what

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<sup>37</sup> See Gregory, 2005.

happened in the workshop. It suggests that they considered collaboration as something that takes place within the format of the workshop, not *about*. I wonder, however, whether the development and negotiation of the workshop's format could have been a fruitful basis for collaboration and creativity too.

*Before moving on to the activity, the workshop leaders continue by introducing themselves with their instruments. The musicians explain that both instruments are played with a reed, and that Fleur's reed is the biggest. The explaining consists of explaining facts alternating this with asking questions. For example, they ask participants to name other instrument groups – such as the string and percussion instrument groups. Fleur says that she is not fully aware of prior knowledge of people, so she urges people to just ask questions whenever they feel they need to. “For instance,” she adds, “I can imagine not all of you know this instrument, the bassoon, or have ever seen it before.” People silently indicate they have heard about a bassoon before. One male participant responds openly by saying “I know the instrument of course, but maybe I haven't seen it up close.” Fleur and Geike then prepare themselves for playing something. It turns out they have not agreed on a piece to play in advance. The leaders openly discuss what to play and then decide to improvise. Geike suggests Fleur to play a bass line; Geike then plays a well-known classical melody on top of this. The participants listen carefully; a handful applauds at the end.*

The dialogue between the workshop leaders and the participants as I described it in my observational report, depicts the musicians in a role of providing information, and dominating the situation. As part of the introduction, the musicians chose to introduce themselves. At first, they focused on their instruments: some facts are explained and evoked through questions; and their situation within the orchestra and relation to other instrument groups is made clear. Through the dialogue, the workshop leaders probed participants' prior knowledge. When talking and looking at the bassoon, the musicians discovered that their estimation of the prior knowledge of participants is inaccurate. Nevertheless, the musicians continued to carry out their plan, and the decisive tone that Fleur exhibited earlier continued.

Then, the musicians moved on to playing their instruments. Surprisingly, unlike the steering of the session up until this point, the musicians confessed not to have prepared anything. They openly negotiated what to play, in front of the participants. The sudden confession of unpreparedness somewhat turned around the dynamic present up to this point: the musicians changed their decisive and programmatic talking to a form of talk that is much less so. However, the situation may have eventually sparked a similar effect on participants. Although not invited to take part in the negotiation, participants witnessed the negotiation. They are given a glimpse of what it means to be a professional musician; they experience first-hand the easiness with which Fleur and Geike can switch and focus on repertoire, and how gallantly they tune into each other in the moment to make it a convincing performance. Not only are they given a first-

row seat to experience the musicians in action up close, witnessing the negotiation also provided a peek into what happens backstage. Given the decisiveness and goal-oriented leadership that the musicians had demonstrated up until this point, the suddenness of negotiating in front of the participants created a momentum with heightened attention, putting the spotlight on their musicianship and professionalism, as if emphasizing their expertise and expert role in this setting, and raising anticipation for what is to follow in the session.

### Playing at the 'playground'

After the applause, Fleur then took the lead again and introduced the first activity to the participants. In the moment of instruction, many things seemed to happen in a short period of time. I wrote down the instruction in my observational report:

*Fleur says: "I invite you to take a look at all the instruments (motions with her arm behind her to the instrument tables in the other part of the room), try them out and return with one of them to your seat . There are string instruments, wind instruments, and we have the percussion instruments here in the middle. (Pause) However, these percussion instruments here are maybe not the most exciting ones, the orchestral instruments are over there. Just take your time to explore and find a place in the space where you feel comfortable. Geike and myself will walk around to help you should you need it. Let's meet again here in the circle, in 20 minutes."*

When Fleur introduced the instruments, she talked about the two groups of instruments – the orchestral ones and the percussion – in a different way. Initially, her mind seemed to focus only on the orchestral instruments. Then, when she mentioned the percussion instruments, she judged them as 'maybe not the most interesting.' Her disdain struck me instantly, and thematized the distinction between orchestral playing and other playing.

When Fleur is done talking, Geike, as a way of kicking off the activity, filled in: "*The playground is open!*" Geike's use of the word *playground* seems to be a fitting metaphor to the activity that is about to take place and reminds me of the creative strategy mentioned earlier of enabling freedom through setting boundaries. As in a school playground, the workshop leaders designated boundaries within which the participants are free to go; they handed over the leadership to the participants to freely explore the instruments on their own. The participants were given space to make decisions themselves and the workshop leaders acted as coaches, or supervisors overseeing the playground. In practice, Geike and Fleur walked around during the activity and helped with holding instruments and producing sound, and encouraged people. The coaching role was a role within a role: the role as instructors of the activity stipulated that the musicians had ultimate control over the exercise. The musicians had opened the playground, so they carried the power to close it anytime. That the musicians did not mention the format of the

session as having a potential level of collaboration struck me again: the playground activity nurtured independent but equally constrained work by the participants through providing structure or boundaries.

In the interview, Geike made clear that it was important that people needed to “feel good” about their instrument, that participants should not feel restricted in the workshop:

“Safety is important, especially during the exploring of the instruments, as this may affect the further participation in the session and that of others. If someone feels very good about their instrument, and it is the engine of the group, then that can have a positive effect on other people.”

The purpose of creating safety within the exercise resembles the approach of setting boundaries. However, I see it as though the musicians did not reflect on the power they have when setting these boundaries altogether; boundaries can serve as creating safety, but can also elicit an experience of feeling controlled.

Back in the moment when Fleur gave the instruction, I observed that:

*Geike [...] starts packing up her instrument. At a certain point when Fleur pauses, Geike says: “I’m afraid I can not let you play on my instrument [oboe] because I have to play on it at the weekend with the orchestra and I can’t afford having it broken at this point”. She locks up her instrument case and stows it under her seat. Fleur responds and says that everyone is welcome to try out hers [bassoon], “as I don’t have to play in the orchestra next week”.*

When Geike told that she does not want people to play on her instrument because she does not want to take the risk of having it broken, I was surprised about the fact that Geike said this out loud, and, in this way, made a point out of it. Fleur’s way of responding endorsed Geike’s ‘rule’, as she does not have to play in the orchestra, and therefore people *can* play on her bassoon. The musicians, backing each other up, seemed to emphasize their role as musicians and leaders of the session again.

## Participants introducing themselves

*Once the group is in the circle again, the workshop leaders suggest to do a round of introductions by saying their name and singing their favourite tune. The person sitting on Geike's left sings the tune of Sorcerer's Apprentice. Geike cuts off the singing after a couple of lines by holding up her hands and saying 'stop'. She asks Fleur to play it on the bassoon. Then the next participant introduces herself.*

To cut off the flow of the singing and to ask Fleur to play the tune on the bassoon felt as taking away magic from the participant's moment.

*Participants mention a varied selection of mostly classical music, ranging from Mozart, Bruch to operatic pieces by Puccini.*

The musicians told me afterwards how it surprised them. Geike said: "They just started to sing symphonies, like Beethoven, Tchaikovsky... I recall that someone even sung something that I had to play in the orchestra that same evening [...]. I was really positively surprised!" Fleur adds: "We didn't know people's musical background. Whether they were into classical music, or that participants thought 'well let's give this a try.' I did not have any expectations in this regard." When talking about the implementation of the workshop later on in the interview, Geike looked back on the entire session:

"I think [the entire session] went quite like we had in mind. Of course you never know what will come up, for example with the [introductions] round with musical examples. But then, you just go with what happens on that moment."

The quotes give insight into the tension between on the one hand, preparing the session and delivering the session according to plan, and, on the other hand, not having any clue about the participants, being open to surprises, being in the moment. The two seem to co-exist. Even though at the beginning, we learnt that the musicians expected the participants to bring a lot more background to the session than the kids they used to work with, Fleur said that they did not have any expectations about the musical background of the people. What remains unclear, though, is whether that surprise was intentional, and whether the musicians were prepared to be surprised.

*Not all participants can think of a tune, nor do they all sing a tune in the group; those, instead, mention that they like music and listen to it. Some people sing along with each other's tunes. Eventually the round reaches*

*Fleur and Geike. Fleur tells what she is into nowadays, and Geike admits that she cannot think of a tune to share. They do not sing a tune themselves.*

#### Triggering something that serves as a catalyst

As instructed by the two leaders, the group then performed a few typical warm-up workshop exercises before moving on to the next element of the session: collaborative composing in breakout groups. Participants were asked to form groups and create a piece out of rhythmical patterns. There was a constraint to the collaboration: participants may not converse during creation. Fleur divided the groups, and suggested gathering again in the circle in five minutes. People grabbed their instruments, or took a new instrument, and moved away with their group members to corners of the workshop space. Although taking the exercise seriously, participants seemed to exchange some words here and there. Fleur and Geike hopped from group to group, observing and giving tips here and there, verbally and non-verbally.

In contrast to the playground setup of the exploring of instruments, this activity was instructed through explicitly defining the activity goals. Again, participants had a degree of freedom but were expected to reach a goal. Did the goal act as restriction, as in the playground? An apparently random condition was then added: no verbal communication. In practice the condition proved hard to comply with. The workshop leaders did not stick to the condition themselves, nor did they enforce the rule within the groups.

In the interview, the dynamics within the breakout groups was mentioned. Geike explains:

“[In a session that was not observed], there was one gentleman and he said in the beginning ‘I won’t stay long’ and he kept on saying ‘I will be leaving soon.’ But he stayed for the entire workshop, he even helped wrapping up the instruments. Of course that is really great. But he had a specific [breakout] group, they really responded well to each other and they encouraged each other; in fact not needing us in what they did. That is my ideal way of teaching, that you can trigger something that develops itself.”

Through the description of this example, Geike explained her ‘ideal way of teaching’ that is a situation that involves not needing her in the activity. She described her own task in this situation as ‘triggering something that develops itself.’ The two statements appear to contradict on a ‘triggerer’ or, in her words, teacher: first that role is absent (not needed), then it is present (someone is there to trigger something). Again, the description reminds of the playground and a goal-oriented activity with constraints.

Then all groups came together again and results were shared. Fleur led the plenary part and gave feedback to each group after they performed their piece. She pointed out when certain



rhythmic patterns were in fact the same. She picked up on the person that seemed to emerge as the leader of the group, and on those who seemed to have taken more of a supportive role. She also made tailor-made suggestions to diversify the rhythms; making them more “colourful.” Her feedback was structured, every group got responses on the same themes, so it was clearly thought out beforehand. She eventually thanked each group and congratulated them by saying ‘well done.’

Fleur instructed the groups to do the exercise again, although this time discussion was allowed. She requested to work on the sound colouration and to develop layers in the rhythms, as “that makes it a bit more exciting.” New constraints were added: she instructed the groups to develop a beginning and an end, and suggested agreeing on cues that will mark the piece to all players. As before, participants went with their groups into the corners of the room and Fleur and Geike walked from group to group to give feedback. Finally, all groups came together again and presented their work. This time the feedback was not as extensive as before, time seemed to be running out. Fleur announced the end of the exercise and invited everyone to take a seat again in the circle.

*Fleur briefly summarizes the next steps in The Presidents programme, and explains the registration process. [...] Then a female participant asks: “What do you want from us with your project, actually?”*

As this is the first question that shows a reflective stance on the participants’ side towards the enterprise, its timing was remarkable. This, likely first, moment of reciprocity, emphasizes the participants’ compliant and submissive behaviour throughout the session up till now.

*[In response,] Fleur repeats again the purpose of The Presidents, and continues to explain the lessons that will eventually lead to forming the learning orchestra. Another female participant comments: “So we won’t be playing in this setting, like today, anymore? What a pity.”*

To participants, the work in the taster session proved meaningful already; to the orchestra, the session functioned as a stepping stone towards the learning orchestra. In the interview, Fleur said she was surprised to hear this question: “I found it funny that such group feeling rose so quickly, [...] I was positively surprised that apparently the connection was made so quickly.”

Fleur and Geike then thanked everyone for participating and invited people to stay longer if they would like to try out the instruments. Six people actually stayed for a little while.

*Participants start leaving, eventually also those that tried out some more instruments. The space is starting to become silent again. Fleur and Geike pack the instruments back in their cases and make their way out of the church.*

#### **4.2 We're all the same, we're all together: Simon's session at an elderly day care centre**

*Simon digs up something again from the stuff behind him, apparently he brought a whole set of hats, which he introduces as Easter hats. He, as usual, gives the hats to the three female carers to give them to the participants. But, instead of distributing them, the carers put them on, themselves. They seem to enjoy it and giggle amongst each other. Simon notices this and starts to hand out hats to the participants himself. Everyone gets a hat, from wedding hats, male and female, to summer hats and scarves. "Don't tell my wife that I've stolen her hat collection!" he says. While participants and carers help each other with getting on the hats properly, Simon and Peter start singing 'Where did you get that hat?' – a comic song with an uplifting melody. The participants and carers immediately clap and sing along enthusiastically; even the sleeping man has his eyes open and sings along. Everyone knows the lyrics by heart. "Rose, you must take a picture!" says Simon pointing at the hatted participants whilst strumming the last chords of the song.*

This excerpt was taken from my observational report of a music session curated by a charity whose primary mission is providing educational arts activities for frail people across a rural midland English county. The session was run by guitarist and retired music teacher Simon with the support from accordionist Peter. Participants of the session were carers and participants from a day care group in a small village. The programme of 'stimulative sessions' is running for over 18 years, consisting of workshop sessions in a variety of disciplines such as arts and crafts, photography, pottery, literature, drama, poetry, gardening and music. In 2015, the year I went to observe, 82 sessions took place. The sessions usually take place all year round on a monthly basis and are one-off sessions rather than workshops in a series. Many of the centres have a longstanding agreement with the charity, so participants and workshop leaders have known each other for a long time, sometimes longer than ten years. This makes that the connection between the facilitators, participants and staff transcends the stand-alone character of the sessions.

The charity presents itself as an organisation facilitating 'lifelong learning,' as it strongly believes that elderly people have a need to learn, even if they are frail to some degree, and that learning enhances people's sense of wellbeing. Besides offering activities to elderly people, the charity also started to focus on the training of care professionals. Almost a decade ago, the charity initiated the training of care staff focusing on the engagement of staff in the creative sessions and these sessions took place alongside its existing sessions.

*Rose and her husband Richard pick me up at the nearest airport and drive me to their home where I will stay for three nights. Rose explains the charity's most recent success: a music-making collaboration between a residential home and a school. Rose talks about this proudly and mentions how much the staff 'needs' it: "The*

*carers usually receive very little training and have misunderstandings of dementia. [...] But, don't get me wrong, they have a great heart."*

#### A stimulative music session at a day care in the local community centre

The next day Rose and I go to observe a session at a day care centre in the village's community centre. The people that attend the day care, *members*, as they are called, live in villages nearby and are around 80-90 years old. The carer in charge that day explained to me the motives of members to join the day care: "The majority lives by themselves and come to the centre to have a day out. Others have a mild form of dementia and come to relief their spouse for a couple of hours of the care and attention."

Generally, members arrive around 9.45am, have lunch around 12.30pm, start an activity around 1.30pm and go home around 3.30pm, either on their own or by the centre's bus service. Once a month this activity is a session held by the charity, today a music session led by workshop leader Simon Parker on guitar and assisted by Peter on accordion. While I was speaking to a lady next to me, Simon and Peter entered the room.

*Simon and Peter greet the group and immediately start unpacking some of their boxes and bags. Suddenly things happen fast. The table where members were sitting is taken away, and members, now participants, are positioned in a half circle. I quickly introduce myself and exchange some words with Simon. He and Peter move on to tuning the guitar and setting up their music stand and papers. I grab a chair and move towards the exit where I join Rose and remain seated for the rest of the session.*

The actions came across as a ritual: everything happened smoothly and quietly; I remember not much was being said at this time. Everyone seemed to know their role, and flawlessly things interlocked purposefully to get the session started.

*The first thing Simon does once the group is settled, is explaining about the new strings of his guitar. He strums them loud and clear, sounding quite country. Peter and Simon start to sing and play 'You are my honey, honeysuckle' by Cat Stevens. Initially they sing standing behind the music stand and later move around the semi-circle closer to the participants. When the song is over, Simon introduces Peter and they play another famous song. People clap at the end. "Hands up if you knew this one," says Simon. Some hands appear. "Did you learn it at school? Or church?" One participant responds: "My children would've learned it." Simon says: "I feel like a pop star."*

What strikes me after these first songs is that Simon uses a lot of jokes and is laughing continuously. He is fully focused on the group and the group is fully focused on him. The carers,

sitting next to the participants in the half circle, take part in the same way as the members. The situation reminds of a concert and the setup emphasizes this.

*“Have you got the Spring in your feet? I don’t know if you’ve noticed, but today we have a theme again. What do you think, what is it?” Simon teases the group and finally concludes the riddle by announcing that the theme is “Spring; and a bit of Easter, because we will not meet again before.”*

In a conversation he and I have the day after, Simon tells that the idea of using a theme came up around ten years ago. The songs and poems, “and the odd joke that I might remember” are laced together into a programme. In this way, the planning “was taken to a next level.” Many themes have proven to work well, such as the rivers theme, Olympic games, or harvest.

*Simon then takes out an object from the bags and boxes behind him and Peter. The object looks at first like a shiny tablecloth or a flag. Members are silent, not fully getting the point, I think. He asks the staff to help him opening the cloth, which appears to be a kind of foil out of a silvery, spacy-looking material, and to hold it like a blanket. He then instructs them to slowly shake it up and down once and then letting it go, like a balloon floating on air. The carers do this a few times. The members are watching, still silent. Simon then asks people to pass it around, having people feel the foil. At that point he and Peter set in another song, again with a folksy sound. The song contains an a-capella part, where nearly all participants join in singing.*

I started to get an idea of what is meant by ‘stimulative’ workshops: many senses were called upon, sound as the most obvious, vision and also touch as the example of the foil illustrates.

*Then follows the song ‘Tulips from Amsterdam’, for which he points at me and claims that I must recognize the scenery of this song. Three ladies are instantly responsive when Simon asks who sang this song. Again everyone joins in singing loudly.*

At this point, it dawned on me that the entire session will take shape as a chain of songs that are sung by everyone with Simon in the lead, accompanied by the guitar and accordion, and presented and *entertained* by Simon. Everyone knew the lyrics by heart of most of the songs. It also became clear to me that Simon’s talking and storytelling aims at reminiscence, triggering memories of participants’ past, and encouraging people to share those memories through storytelling. Although reminiscence seems to be purposefully facilitated by Simon through talking, he emphasises the importance of the music itself as also eliciting memories: “I think the music brings back the memory probably more than anything else, a particular song, reminds them of a particular situation. Often it’s school, and songs that people heard when they were much younger.”

*The joking ceases when Simon hands out chime bars and sticks and points at the mallet part of the stick “which is much better this time.” “You may remember from last time, it sounded too hard? Well, this time they have rubber heads, so it should sound much better.” The carers hand out the instruments. He instructs participants on how to use the instrument, by singing ‘Frère Jacques’ demonstrating the hitting in the middle of the chime bar, and lets members play the beat. He then says that everyone is welcome to play along with the next song, ‘Springtime in the Rockies.’ “At some point in the song I will ask you to play loud: when Peter and I are with our backs to you, then it’s our turn and you all be silent.” When halfway through the song, Simon and Peter neatly emphasize this idea during playing through their body language. However, none, except for one, of the participants seem to notice and just tap along the beat as they sing and move rhythmically on their chairs, singing along in full. The sleeping gentleman opens his eyes, blows his nose, then closes his eyes again.*

Simon involved members and carers in playing on percussion instruments. He drew attention to the production of sound through explaining the functional choices of mallets and instructed participants to play a certain tune, which had a role in the next song. Learning, particularly musical learning, is strongly represented in the charity’s vision, which I got to know already through Rose. The stimulation of learning, however, seemed to stop after the instruction, as Simon did not monitor the actual playing. During the performance of the song, participants did not keep to the instructions and just tapped along.

In the interview, Simon explained that he reads about dementia. He brought his latest discovery to show me a graph that represents a developmental model for people at different stages in their dementia. While pointing at it, Simon tells that:

“[t]he model suggests that in early to middle dementia, which is the level that many of [the] participants [at the session] are diagnosed with, music, dance, drama, stories and reminiscence are appropriate. Some of the members are in the middle to late dementia level, for which the model suggests movement, massage, soft toys or dolls, and multisensory stimulation. I see these two level descriptions as a ground for my approach.”

Thus, when planning the session, Simon first decided about a theme. He then selected songs, props, musical and movement exercises, and, potentially, jokes connected to the theme. He developed a programme, in which he seeks for a multisensory experience. The building of the programme is informed by his background knowledge and reading into dementia as well as his expertise as a music teacher and musician. Towards the end of our conversation, Simon shows me the setlist of the session I went to observe.

## Simon's special moment

*Simon then asks the group some questions about a song, about its title, artist and origin of the song. One gentleman responds each time, decidedly, and correctly. And Simon each time validates that by going out to shake the man's hand. When walking back to his position, Simon loudly speaks to the carers to give him an extra biscuit for tea next time, again jokingly.*

“[...] He has done this before, you almost think he is asleep [...] and then all of a sudden you ask a question and from the side comes the answer straight away, as if saying: ‘don’t forget me’ ‘I know what you are talking about.’ I felt that was just very funny. And when he answered, was it the third time? – and I said ‘oh, and one extra biscuit at tea time’ and then the next one and then I ran out of ideas so I said ‘I think you better have a cup of tea then a biscuit.’ I shook his hand at the end.”

*Richard, observing these events, finds this bantering scene between Simon and the gentleman rather funny and laughs out loud, rather loud actually. In a split second he shifts his attention and goes on cleaning his glasses with a tissue.*

When I ask Simon the day after what stood out in the session for him, the first moment to pop into his mind was the contact with Richard, “the gentleman who laughed”:

“He wanders a lot. But, because I know he has a musical background in church music, and although he has got quite serious dementia over very simple things, I feel he understands the broader picture of why I’m there. Although, he may have forgotten who I was. [...] I felt in my heart that he actually got it, [...] that he actually did know why it was really funny.”

Simon recalls how he laughed each time when there was something funny. Richard had spoken to him afterwards and had told him that what he remembered the most was how funny it was:

“You know, these little jokes on the side, for him it was really amusing. I felt that I had actually broken through something that he had, and that was really special. It wasn’t just the love of music, it was the love of being with people and what we call in England the banter, the chatter and the comments you make.”

According to Simon, the humour has a function: it fosters a connection with Richard. He said that it was not just the music that was able ‘to break through something,’ with which he probably referred to Richard’s dementia. Simon also assumed that the gentleman enjoyed being

surrounded by people. When having dementia, pursuing a social life is not easy. According to Simon, the session is able to give that. The session, therefore, was able to normalize a situation of the gentleman that is everything but normal due to the dementia, at least for a moment.

Simon also saw a development in Richard's engagement in the session since the last time:

“The first time he was there, which was the last occasion, I wasn't quite sure how he was coping with it. [...] I [was] told he's musical, but he was far more confident yesterday, far more confident. He was smiling [...] most of the time as though there was something inside him that said 'I've been here before and this is a nice occasion and I can feel happy and confident.’”

Earlier, when finishing 'Springtime in the Rockies', Simon had asked Richard if he enjoyed his harmony. Simon explains in the interview the background of asking that question:

“I asked if he enjoyed my harmony because I knew he would know what I was talking about. And [...] next time when he will be there [...] I will probably play something of a more classical nature, something on the guitar, or maybe referring to a hymn or something from a church setting and put that into the programme. Especially for him.”

At the previous session, Richard had taken part for the first time. Simon had then learnt that Richard used to sing in a church choir. Also at the last occasion, Richard had been surprised that he enjoyed some of the rock 'n' roll pieces, as he had said never to listen to that kind of music.

Simon appears to have thought extensively about what the music and the session in general may do for Richard. He wants to validate Richard, give him a sense of inclusion and make him feel at ease in the session. We learn that, in compiling the session's programme, Simon takes his experiences with Richard into account; he is planning to put in a piece especially for him at the next session. Simon's decision-making is based on his experience with, or almost on behalf of, the participants. The programme, therefore, seems to be co-curated with the participants.

In addition to keeping Richard in mind when planning the session, Simon also keeps focusing on him during performing in the session, as asking about the harmony illustrates. So, not only does the prior planning involve individual participants, also the delivery of the session and the shaping of the moment is influenced by them.

## Beyond musicianship

*I chat with those remaining in the seats: I ask what they enjoyed about the session. Members said they “especially like the singing, the fact that we can sing together.” Someone says, “I just like coming here, by way of having something to do.” One gentleman says, “I like watching Simon, he is fun to be with.” The community bus arrives in the parking lot, and the members that take the bus start to move out.*

“Going out at the very end, the lady who had her toes taken off wandered out with the sticks and everybody said ‘come on there are you alright,’ and she knew that it was funny; there was a funny side to the fact that she couldn’t walk very quickly. Yet underneath it all there was a sadness because she knows she is not able to walk like she used to. But everybody is so respectful of her; the lady that picks her up in the bus, the carer and myself we were able to share in her difficulty of walking.”

So, not only in the musical performance (e.g. the harmony for Richard), the programming (e.g. a piece with a classical nature for Richard), but also in the personal contact in the moment does Simon, as can be noticed in an observation and one of his quotations above, finds exchange between him and members important personally. In the interview, Simon gives some examples:

“The lady who’d had the stroke [told me] about the fact that she was going to have an injection in the near future. I was able to say ‘oh you’ll have to let me know next time how that got on.’ I love it when they share something personal with me. Just for a moment, and that was another lovely moment. It was not the music, just that she shared that with me and engaged me in a very short conversation.”

[...]

“[W]hen an individual expresses something or tells you that they’ve enjoyed it or makes a funny comment those are my favourite moments.”

I found it remarkable that Simon designates the individual contacts with people as ‘favourite moments’ since those have no direct link to the character of the session, which is music. He also talks in a very detailed way about little moments in the margins of the music-making that he considered significant. He shows interest for people in the first place; music is sometimes put in second place. Simon seems to find the personal contact extremely important. In these moments, which take place out of the spotlights of the session, Simon seems to want to connect with the participants as human beings, from person to person. Also, when Simon and I talked about the



carers and the story of the hats, which I started this description with, he mentioned: “The care staff are wonderful in the care centres, they really are. That [was] so wonderful that they just put [the hats] on themselves. We’re all the same, we’re all together.” With this statement, Simon suggests similarity and equality in the session, between the members, carers and musicians. Thus, not only do we see through Richard’s example that Simon bases his decisions on his involvement with participants, his involvement with members seems to go beyond his task as a musician, his involvement is as a fellow human being.

*Eventually, when all members have left, the carers stow away the tables and chairs and turn off lights. Rose and I help them and when the carer in charge locks the main entrance, our ways part and Rose and I take off.*

### **4.3 We are more than just performers and just audience: Music at the open house**

*When Chloe and Emily's voices reverb in the room, people are looking extra focussed. You cannot not respond. I see the backs of Riesje and Jan, a couple visiting the open house nearly every day, and I read from his body language that he recognizes what's being said in the lyrics: he nods when he hears the part about picking up crumbs from the floor, and he nods at the passage about the shuffled books of the bookshelf. Emily sits right next to participant Anita, in the inner circle. I look at the gentleman that used to play the trumpet. He stretches out his neck so he can see everything that Chloe does when she walks around in the open space demarcated by a circle of chairs, and seeks contact with the other musicians and the audience. A smile appears on his face when the beautiful melody resolves. The room is packed with people. The musicians are coming close, literally. [...] Artistic leader William stands by the side, rather than sitting down. He looks at his musicians. He makes notes. [...] The musicians are bowing, it's the end. Merel brings in a bunch of colourful roses. To the surprise of many in the room, the musicians hand out the roses to the participants.*

These impressions were taken from field notes of the final performance of 'Music at the open house', a project at an open house for people with dementia and their partners. The performance concluded a period of several months in which a group of musicians collaborated with participants of the house. In the theatrical performance depicted, existing musical repertoire was blended with newly created pieces, which were written and composed by the musicians based on their experiences at the house. The 'beautiful melody' that Chloe sings, for example, was composed by one of the musicians, and the lyrics were written by another one.

The open or 'walk-in' house is aimed at people with dementia and their partners living at home. The house is located in a suburban area of one of The Netherlands' major cities. People are free to come and join activities, and find companionship with those going through similar life issues. Usually one planned activity takes place before lunch, such as drawing or gardening, and one after. Preparing and having lunch together is also part of the programme. The house can be a place to do a meaningful activity together, or it may relieve a partner of the care for a person with dementia for a few hours.

An official diagnosis is not required to participate in the house's activities. The philosophy of the house strongly holds onto people's independence and self-determination, even in the later stages of dementia. Participants themselves run the house with the support of a group of volunteers and one professional coordinator. Empowerment and opening up possibilities to participants are the main objectives of the house. Rather than the disease, it is retaining quality of life that is central in the house's mission.

The initiative for collaborating with the nearby conservatoire was taken by the house. Inspired by the importance of music as a tool for communication for people with dementia, it was the intention of both partners to develop musical activities for and with the participants of

the house. Key words in the partnership that emerged were gaining understanding, contributing to quality of life, improving communication, meaningfulness, empowerment, self-determination and participation.

William, singer and opera maker with an international reputation in community projects and previously involved in projects of the conservatoire, was appointed as artistic leader. William developed a plan in partnership with the house. Seven students and recently graduated alumni of the conservatoire, supervised by himself, would create a cycle of songs from scratch. Being and participating at the house would serve as inspiration for the writing and composing process. In each stage of this creative process, a few core participants of the house were going to act as co-creators. It was important from the start that the texts were crafted in a way that were recognizable for the house's participants. The project intended to empower all involved through artistic activities: the people with dementia, their carers and partners, the volunteers and the musicians. It wanted to give meaning and contribute to acceptance of those having the disease. In order to achieve the project objectives, weekly sessions at the conservatoire and regular visits to the house were to take place over a period of three months. Collectivity and equality were meant to characterise the working relationship. Collective reflection on the process was important. Ultimately, the project would conclude with two performances, one at the open house and one at the conservatoire. After finishing the project, the performance was taken to other contexts as well: once it was performed at a national meeting of dementia service providers and at a festival for the elderly.

The vignette at the start of this description gives a taste of what one such performance turned out to be. Both performances were considered a success; everyone who witnessed the musicians delivering the original songs was impressed. Insiders said to recognize themselves in the lyrics and music, and by that *felt* recognized. This became apparent also from participants' nodding and smiling in the excerpt above. Outsiders said that the performance gave a new, artistic perspective to the theme of living with dementia. Also the values of the project, such as the equality and reciprocity that emerged between the musicians and the participants of the house, were expressed, most visibly through the circular setup of the space in which musicians, participants and other visitors were mixed as an audience and were sitting on the same level. The handing out of the of roses to the participants, which was a premeditated act of open house coordinator Merel and the musicians, is another strong expression of that reciprocal relationship.

### Conception of the format

I became part of the project when the contours of the format were already set. The development of these contours was made in Spring 2015 and took about half a year, longer than the three-

month period in which the project actually took place. In this preparatory phase, artistic leader William, as he told me halfway the three months, took part in the house activities on several occasions, as a seemingly regular visitor. “Only the coordinator and some volunteers knew about my role, and the intention to develop a project around music. This is how I work always, all the time,” William ensures me.

Once, William sat next to participant Harry during lunch:

“I felt instantly connected to Harry. He is my age, his children still live at home. One eats at the open house, just like everyone else. And you eat with the same tempo as everyone else. Harry said to me: don’t look at me while I eat. [...] I asked him how many children do you have, and he said I don’t remember.”

By participating in the house as a regular, William was able to build connections with people and tried to understand their life. Through this moment with Harry, William obtained a first-hand sense of Harry’s life world, of the daily reality of having dementia.

William entered the open house covertly, keeping his identity as a musician and artistic leader disguised. He believes that this approach allows him to build genuine personal connections and attain an insider’s perspective. If this had been done in another way, perhaps, Harry would not have been so open, nor would William have experienced the difficulties of a simple thing as having lunch first-hand.

William, concerned about the impression he might have on the group, was careful when entering the context of the house; he held back his identity as a musician. This seems quite a radical decision and points out William’s awareness of the potential impact of his musician persona. The disguise at the same time raises ethical questions for me. Although envisioned with the best intentions, concealing his self questions his honesty towards participants. It seems questionable to me especially because some of the participants experience cognitive decline. With this act, William appears to subordinate transparency for the success of the project and it is remarkable that the artistic leader, in aiming for genuine connections with people in context, is willing to put his own genuineness at risk.

In the interview William explains the different ways in which his experiences during these visits informed the development of the project. Once, William took part in a workshop in which people with dementia discuss and express their thoughts. He recalls:

“I heard there that quite early on in the disease, people with dementia are not able to write anymore. I immediately felt that we have to write down stories, to capture them. I had this vision that there is this recording with songs, about them and with them, which they and

their partners or family members, could listen back to when they have a difficult moment, to give solace. In this way it could have a long-lasting effect. ... Again, my reference was Harry. [...] He said that he was often angry with his wife that he has dementia, whereas before it was always big love. That is completely gone. Now, when that lady can see or listen back to a piece of text or music of him. ... That would mean a lot, I think.”

William explains how one important pillar of the project format, the writing of lyrics to the songs that are inspired by the open house participants, originated. By empathizing with the participants he tries to sense what would be meaningful to them, as if dreaming what things could be. William seems to work backwards, by seeking what needs to be in place to make such result possible. A moment with, again, Harry acts as a point of reference. His experience with real individuals therefore not only helps in getting a better understanding of the context, it also acts as a concrete point of reference for his creative development. William expects that such an approach increases the tailor-madeness and eventually meaningfulness of the art he makes for people. Later he summarizes this approach as: “We [musicians] are an outlet, we can translate your doubts, despair, hope, visions together with you to something that is unclear. I see myself as a sort of conduit. That, is working socially.”

His intention of creating meaningful experiences for people with dementia and their partners that last for a longer period and that people can ‘listen back to,’ however, will not be entirely achieved due to practical constraints. The outcome of the project will take the shape of a performance, not of a recording, which will have a momentary quality rather than the lasting one that was William’s original intention. Although the rough plan felt ready at this point in time, in carrying out the activities, the plan got changed.

In developing the plan, William was informed also by the steering team of the open house, consisting of coordinator Merel, volunteer Babs and another volunteer responsible for fundraising. Wishes and preferences were discussed in meetings, and, step-by-step, William developed a plan that seems to meet the needs and wishes of both parties. However, it was not only the input from the meetings with these individuals that helped William in carving out the plan. On his second visit, William was able to take part in one of the regular music activities that take place at the house: listening, dancing and singing along with YouTube clips. In that moment, William saw the potential of extending the activity by handing out little percussion instruments that he found in the room. Volunteer Babs leading the session, at that moment the only person in the room that knew about his role as a potential leader of an upcoming music project, approached him and said: “like this, you strap people.” William took the volunteer’s statement as a message that “an interactive format, reminiscent to those pictures where you see

people sitting on their knees next to people with a tambourine in their hands, is not what we are going to do.”

William interpreted the volunteer’s action as a message of demarcating boundaries, he thought he crossed the line there. I was intrigued by this incident and William’s explanation. Firstly, because the kinds of circle activities that William alludes to in his statement are often seen as liberating and facilitating equality and empowerment, certainly by its insiders. To the house, as we can deduct from the volunteer’s response, such activities are everything but liberating and empowering. Following William’s perspective, the incident suggests that the open house wants to distance itself from services where such music circle activities prevail (such as day care and nursing homes).

The second reason of my interest is a different (potential) interpretation of the volunteer’s response. After the interview with William, I came to think that, rather than a message about the nature of the activity, the volunteer’s response to William may also have been a message towards William himself, that *he* should not constrain people, in other words: that he should not interfere with the volunteer’s activity. He was a guest in the situation, albeit undercover as professional musician, and that means he is foremost expected to comply to the leadership of the volunteer – an amateur musician. From this perspective, the action would not be about the house’s position in relation to other care services, but about leadership of the open house in this project. It shows that William’s leadership, probably naturally accepted in his natural habitat, is not taken for granted in this for him new context. What seems to collide in this incident, then, is the power of being the host and the power of being the expert. It is unclear to me whether William himself has thought about any of this as an explanation for the incident.

Simultaneously to his visits to the open house, William started to scout students and alumni to take part. After conversations with teachers at the conservatoire, a group of five music students and two alumni were found who were keen to take part. The students were Fara (BMus flute), Chloe (BMus voice), Diane (MMus piano), Birgit (MMus violin) and Rob (BMus composition), and the alumni were Emily (voice) and Ruben (cello and composition). In the second half of the project period, Diane was replaced by alumna Gabrielle (piano).

#### First meetings and writing lyrics

After a kick-off that included a visit at the house after opening times and meeting the coordinator and a volunteer in September 2015, their weekly rehearsal sessions started at the conservatoire. A few weeks into the project, the musicians visited the open house in pairs. I joined cellist Ruben and singer Chloe.

*After a moment of chatting involving coffee and tea at the large table, and a game of shuffleboard with everyone, I see Merel whispering to Ruben and Chloe that now would be a good time for music. Suddenly, there is a silence in the group and all eyes are focused on the musicians as they unpack the cello and find a good place to stand. Ruben starts: “Do you want me to start playing or would you like me to tell something first?” The answer of the group is unclear, so he starts with a bit of both. He talks about himself and his fascination for music, he then plays a piece and talks about the music and his instrument. Participants spontaneously ask him: why this instrument? How long have you been playing it? When and why did you choose to make this your profession?*

Looking at the interactions in this excerpt of my field notes, the exchange of initiative and leadership is remarkable. It is Merel, as coordinator of the house, who gives the signal to start the music: she hands over the lead to the musicians. Ruben accepts the lead, but immediately questions it. He involves the participants in deciding what he should do: start playing or talking. By asking this question before playing a single note, he seems to set up a sense of reciprocity. He creates a space where anyone can speak up and influence the events. When the participants do not give him much instruction, Ruben interprets it as a sign that he may decide for himself.

From this example in which Merel gives the initial signal to start, we see that the house’s leadership, which became apparent already in the preparatory phase through the incident between William and the music volunteer, continues to exist also in the implementation of the project. Ruben seems to understand this and acknowledges it by giving back the lead as soon as he received it from Merel. Not only was the project’s conception a joint effort, also in carrying out the plan, both parties take responsibility and leadership; the collaboration gets shaped as a reciprocal relationship, both parties give and receive. In a group conversation, Ruben explains that realising the reciprocal nature was a key moment in his participation as a musician in this project:

“I was really a bit shocked that I didn’t think about it in another way, that William, one of the first things he said was: “so let’s not talk about what you can give them but what they can give to you.” And I was really surprised; that is a good question. Because it should be a two-way thing.”

Later on he adds that this reciprocity had a quality of equality:

“[W]e’re on the same level, we are creating a piece together, we are contributing and they are contributing with what they have to say and together we make something. [...] [T]he contact is much more intense, the experience is much more close than just being an audience, than being a performer.”

Building the relationship in a reciprocal and equal way seems crucial for the project to succeed, as that allows musicians to gain a genuine contact and thus get genuine inspiration. Giving this space for participants to contribute in the moment, is therefore crucial to the project's success; the musicians are dependent on the open house participants' input.

Ruben's approach used in this first visit, to negotiate with participants in the moment about the continuation of the situation, allows anything to happen. How contradictory that may sound, Ruben is *prepared* for the *unpredictable*. Given the clear objective of the project and the partnership, this unpredictability is surprising.

Inspired by the meetings at the house, the musicians then started to write texts individually that later served as lyrics for the songs. At the same time the composer and the cellist-composer started working on developing the first musical ideas. The artistic leader took more of a coaching role during this phase and gave artistic direction to both lyrics and music.

*When I visit a working session of the musicians, I find them sitting at tables, reading and commenting each other's texts. Flutist Fara's text is on, she explains that one of the sources of inspiration was a chat with participant Guusje. As feedback, William advises to identify even more with Guusje, to get under her skin and write from there. Fara, however, says that she tries more to get back into the moment, to get back into the mutuality of the conversation. Guusje had talked about the fact that her son does not come to visit her anymore, to which Fara had responded by telling about the difficult bond she has with her mother. Fara explains: "I wanted to give her something by telling something about myself."*

In their approach to produce texts, the musicians first seek intimate contact with the participants. This, then, serves as inspiration for writing. Fara's example shows how such inspiration can emerge from a moment with a participant outside of the music making, in a conversation about family connections. Guusje shared a seemingly personal piece of information, which suggests that Fara and Guusje had a meaningful conversation in spite of the fact that they had just met for the first time that day. Fara decides to reciprocate Guusje's openness. Although the intention of the visit was, technically speaking, to obtain inspiration for writing, Fara decides to share something about herself as well. Fara, therefore, seeks personal connection with the participants and uses her personality, rather than her instrument, to make that connection happen. Not only does bringing in one's personality happen in the moments of chatting outside of the music. Ruben, earlier, when introducing himself with his cello, also took a personal-biographical angle by talking about his fascination for music and keeping the conversation close to himself.



### The musicians' internal work process

William's role prescribed leading the collaboration on behalf of the musician team as well as leading the team of musicians. The project partners gave William the freedom to decide how to give shape to that leadership. Given the values of collectivity and equality that were intended to grow at the heart of the collaboration, it was expected that the musicians would adopt strategies of collaboration that reflected these values too.

As the project weeks progress, however, tensions of leadership crept in the musician team. At the beginning, William had encouraged the musicians to take responsibility and set individual goals within the project. Initially he showed awareness for group dynamics and purposefully responds to it, to seemingly bring out the best out of each participating musician. For example, after a first rehearsal, William comments to violinist Birgit:

*“You showed today you are a natural leader. Ruben didn't really play yet during your story, so you made an extension of your storytelling and looked at him so he started to play and got to add something to the part. You wanted equality there and made that happen with just simple steps. But you did it. Great.”*

In this way responsibilities were up for discussion and decisions were therefore expected to appear in a much more joint manner.

Although using coaching and facilitating strategies in the sessions, William increasingly practices a domineering leadership style with authority and charisma. This determined, or better: constrained, the decision-making and participation in decision-making.

*William explains how he sees the final performance. He announces to be working on having choir members sing together with one or two of the pieces, to give it more body. Perhaps one of the pieces could return now and then, for example Fara's piece.*

In this situation I witnessed William 'explaining' and 'announcing'; ways of communication that do not leave much room for reciprocity. The subjects that he explains and announces, though, are elements of the final products, so are important to the musicians. William is aware of this leadership style and the impact it has on the musicians, as he tells in the interview:

“I have to be careful. I notice, for example, that Birgit absolutely cannot stand my authority. She is bothered by it, I can really tell. So I have to be careful who can take that, otherwise they immediately see it as an attack.”

Interestingly, at a later point in the interview, he comments:

“We have to just do it, and wait and see all the time. I find that there is too much control in the hands of the leader. It can really be more wild and dangerous. It needs that. The people in this project are adults, not children.”

Thus, when asked to comment on his leadership, the story appears incoherent, even contradictory. William seems to combine several strategies of leadership simultaneously, and does not seem to be aware of this himself.

From what I observed, responsibilities were rarely openly discussed and the importance of the individual goals seemed to wane during the process. One student-musician told me that she felt her role was becoming increasingly instrumental, as she felt paralyzed in the strictness of the leadership. She tells:

*“I am disappointed in the way the group works, that everybody has their role. I expected to work more together on the music making, I would have loved that. Now there are two composers, and they are the only ones in charge of the music. Everything depends on them, like yesterday: it was very much about what Ruben thought the piece should sound like, whereas I would love to discuss more what do we as a group want it to sound like.”*

As a result, friction and frustration emerged tacitly amongst the musicians. This also included the artistic leader, as he expressed to me personally at various points in time, for example before one of the working sessions:

*“I am frustrated. I was thinking on the train on the way here what a mess this will be today. Some students are absolutely not dedicated to this project. I am also annoyed by their behaviour ‘It’s 1 o’clock, I have to go.’ There is no commitment. [...] There is this wall that I cannot get through.”*

Juxtaposing the, on the one hand, upliftedness surrounding the performances and the contact between the musicians and participants at the open house, with, on the other hand, the leadership issues emerging within the group of musicians, confusion arises; the values of both processes do not seem to match.

#### Sharing work-in-progress

One afternoon halfway through the project, Birgit, Ruben, Fara and William go to the open house to share some of the work-in-progress with the participants.

*Upon arrival, I see that the lounge room is packed with people, all seats are occupied. Positioned in a half circle of chairs, the space reminds me of a concert setup, with the other half circle's space cleared for the musicians as a stage.*

The musicians take the setting as it is, although William expresses to me afterwards that this is perhaps not the setup he would have created. Again, the musicians adapt to the house's share in the project leadership and acknowledge their decision to set up the room. The 'presentational' setup is remarkable given the participatory nature of the relationship between the musicians and the house. A presentational setup is, on the other hand, not a surprise, given the prevalence of such setups in our Western societies. Perhaps that is exactly what the house wants to gain from the project: acting 'normal,' like everyone else in society. I find this longing for normality fitting here in the house. Unlike other services for elderly people, the house radiates positivity and quality of life: people dress up nicely to come to the house, the house is furnished in a contemporary fashion with high-quality materials and equipment. Then, when musicians come, a concertative setting feels good as it reminds everyone of 'normal' citizen behaviour. The incident about the circle activities with William and the music volunteer confirms this.

*William stands in front of the group and leads the meeting. He explains that the musicians and composers are working hard on the pieces, that some of the texts are ready and that there is some music already, but that they need the input of the participants of the open house for that. [...] Fara is the first one to read out her text. [...] When Fara afterwards explains what inspired her to write the text, she acknowledges Guusje. "And you," after which she points at a gentleman, "how you spoke about your grandson." "And you," she points at another gentleman and looks him straight in the eye, "how you talked about playing the trumpet in the orchestra and being an orchestra member."*

Sharing work-in-progress with an audience is unusual for musicians; what happens off-stage or behind the scenes is not for the public eye. It therefore takes a lot of courage to present work in front of them. Especially when the musicians move on to playing the musical material that is, in their eyes, unfinished:

*After reading another text, some of the music is being played. One of the pieces is a tango, "because I heard there are some tango-lovers in the house and because I like tango a lot myself," says Ruben. After William explains how the performance will end, he asks what people have to say about it. The conversation immediately takes the direction of people explaining their thoughts about the texts and what they elicited. Jan says: "The texts really are the open house." A lady says: "I recognize a lot about my husband (sitting next to her), how he behaves and what he gets confronted with."*

In spite of the unusualness of sharing and the unfinishedness of the material, participants seem to value the act of the musicians. As if foreshadowing the emotions elicited by the final performances, participants express the recognition they feel when listening to the music and even more, probably because of the directness of words, when hearing the texts. As a result of the sharing, participants of the open house extend their participation in the process, which had started by them forming the inspiration. William allows people to give their response. For the musicians, to gain feedback at this intermediate stage, and receive feedback that happened to be positive, resulted in confidence, as Fara explains in the group discussion later: “For me, it was quite comforting that they already liked it so much and that we could be kind of proud of ourselves with what we’ve already done.”

The feedback strengthened the musicians to continue to work in the direction they had taken, they got the indication that this is an appropriate way to tailor the pieces and, in this way, facilitate meaningful experiences. Another thing emerges in the conversation after the meeting:

*[O]ne of the volunteers asks how the musicians experience the project at this point in time: “It is one thing that we are satisfied as house, but does it bring also something to you as musicians?”*

With their positive feedback and openness, the open house participants seem to add another layer to the reciprocal character of the relationship. They want to encourage the musicians and seem to find it important that also the musicians experience the project as something meaningful. Again, this situation confirms a culture of reciprocity in which an open dialogue is the norm. What is talked about is not just the (musical) outcomes, but also their impact. The conversation goes back to the original purpose and intention of both partners, and as such it opens up a dialogue on the fundamental level of the collaboration itself.

#### **4.4 Me, being in control, and bonding with the musicians: Music at the ward**

*The musicians are visiting patient Mr Grit. They have just played an improvisation inspired by Grit's description of a landscape. As a farmer missing his cattle, he took the musicians through a narrative description of his estate, which the musicians translated into a beautiful soundscape. Cellist Rik suggests playing one more piece. He turns towards the nurses at the entrance and asks them for input for an improvisation, by probing: "What do you wish for Mr Grit?" One of them answers: "that he may go home soon, and a good recovery." The musicians prepare to, again, translate the idea into sound and a harmonic start of the piece then follows. Mr Grit looks so vulnerable especially when you know he has been here for days since his surgery and because the nurses are having a hard time connecting with him. Slowly, his eyes become watery. Once the last tones are played, a silence fills the room. Mr Grit is emotional, and says almost inaudibly: "this has touched me, thank you." Also the nurse seems touched by the moment. Tears pour down her cheeks and she says: "I thought it was so beautiful because I saw Mr Grit enjoying the music so much."*

This musical moment in Mr Grit's room was taken from a pilot project of 'Music at the ward', an artistically-led music initiative of small-scale music interventions for and with patients and staff at hospital wards. The musicians facilitating the moments use what they call 'person-centred music making', which means that their playing, repertoire-based and improvised music, is informed by and targeted to the situation, by conversations and interactions with participants in the moment. The work was initiated and developed by a research group of a Dutch university of applied sciences in collaboration with a department of surgery of a Dutch academic hospital.

The work was conceived when two musicians with experience in this field were asked to carry out two exploratory pre-pilots. Based on these experiences, the format and its ideal team were drafted, consisting of three musicians and a mediator visiting a ward on seven consecutive days for an hour of music. The musicians are accompanied by a mediator, who supports the musicians by acting as a contact for the care team and by going into patient rooms first to ask whether patients want music. After the pre-pilots, a plan for developing the work was set out that included six pilot projects in which the plan was tested and developed from 2016 to 2017. Alongside the development of this work in practice, a training<sup>38</sup> was initiated for musicians aspiring to work in this field.

##### Intentions and rationale

The practice assumes that being part of music making and being in contact with musicians may help patients to cope with the difficulties of being in hospital. Taking part in Music at the ward is thought to potentially contribute to patients' wellbeing through various mechanisms such as

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<sup>38</sup> From January 2019, the training is an elective module of the Master of Music at the university of applied sciences.

distraction, reminding them of the positive and beautiful sides of life, and potentially eliciting an artistic experience with others. However, the practice does not have an explicit therapeutic goal. The musicians are not trained as therapists, nor do they work with care plans, nor does the music deliberately seek out after effects on people's health.

The musical interventions are seen as a complimentary service in addition to regular hospital care. Although the practice does not have a therapeutic purpose, the musical interventions may trigger therapeutic effects on patients and staff's wellbeing. To the hospital, these side effects are important, and, based on a systematic review of existing literature and promising pilot measurements (publication in preparation), the hospital aims to gather significantly positive physiological and cognitive-psychological effects of the musical interventions on patients' post-operative recovery. The emphasis on social aspects is also important to the hospital, as it is exploring new forms of person-centred care and strives to enhance the wellbeing of care professionals, particularly nurses. Members of staff are therefore encouraged to take part in the music-making situations. For example in the vignette at the start of this description, a nurse was invited by the musicians to give a piece to a patient.

The musicians' gain in Music at the ward is "establishing a deep contact with someone" during "a significant life event." That "gives me a clear function as a musician," says Rik. Also, seeing "direct responses" from the audience gives "confirmation", which clarinetist Jonas needs and would like to experience in the same way when performing on stage. Rik describes the core of the practice as "ideally sharing an artistic experience, together." Within that, the musicians say to strive "for the highest artistic quality"; which means "the music has to fit the context but we [musicians] also have to be happy with it," as Music at the ward-musician Jonas puts it in an interview. Artistically high-quality performance, therefore, means appropriate and well-informed in connection to the place and to the people with whom the performance takes place, but also has to satisfy the musicians themselves.<sup>39</sup> Compromising between the patients' and their own needs simultaneously is important, "we are not jukeboxes entertaining the patients," says Rik, nor "[can] an improvisation be completely free so that it becomes obscure, complex and only enjoyable to us," says Jonas. And this can take place in any piece played, "I cannot think of anything that is not important for my artistic needs," says Jonas.

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<sup>39</sup> The tailor-made nature of Music at the ward's person-centred music making may imply that any music can eventually be played. To a large extent this is the case, as nearly all decisions are negotiated in the moment of interaction between the musicians and participants: about the musical approach, the actual music and the interpretation of the music. However, some factors seem to implicitly restrict the musical palette prior to the project's start. Firstly, the choice of musicians narrows down the type of music: each instrument has a particular – thus: limited – range, colouration and power. The fact that generally the musicians of Music at the ward have a background in classical music and a career track merging classical music with other genres in various parts of society and through various formats, also confines the music's scope. Secondly, cultural and institutional contexts determine the type of music that is evoked. This concerns also spatial restrictions: amplified instruments and large instruments such as piano or drums would not allow the movement from room to room which is crucial in the way Music at the ward is carried out.

### Setting the ground for an unusual situation

The first work of Music at the ward that I observed was the first pilot in September 2016. I followed cellist Rik, violinist Kirsi, clarinettist Jonas and mediator Beatrijs on their seven days at the ward of Traumatology of the hospital. During these days I got familiar with the format and approach of Music at the ward. I learnt for example that before moving on to playing in patient rooms, the musicians chatted with the staff during their coffee break and played some music for them. This was followed by a briefing with the coordinating nurse of that day to receive up-to-date information about the patients. Then, mapped out by the mediator, the musicians visited all 10-12 rooms (out of 16) that had requested music. Once all those rooms were visited, the team met up again with the coordinating nurse for a debriefing about their experiences. A morning of music making in the rooms takes about 75 minutes. This format was repeated daily.

Before any music gets played in a patient room, the mediator goes in first. Almost as a ritual, she would ask whether the patient wants music, and if yes, whether the timing is convenient. Whether the patient wants music is usually known already, as the nurses have inquired that already before the musicians have arrived. The question, then, functions more as a way of making contact. As the days progress, it often becomes clear that a person is so much into the music that the question is not asked anymore. It is then obvious that the musicians are welcome to come in and play. However, even in these cases the mediator will still check in, even if just peeking in, to see if the patient seems ready. If there are two or more patients in the room and not all wish to have music, the musical visit is moved to a separate guest room. At several points patients are given the opportunity to have their say about whether the interaction will take place and, if so, when. This attention to the patient's voice seems important, and by asking the question whether music is wanted, the mediator also seems to want to nurture a culture which is dialogical.

As an observer during this first pilot project, I stayed mostly in the background to minimise the feeling of intrusion for the patient and the musicians. In the two pilots that followed I acted as a mediator; in that case I was the one to make that first contact. No matter how welcoming the patients and staff were, no matter how often we had met a patient already and no matter my role as observer or mediator, I always felt hesitant entering a patient room. I felt as entering a highly private space, which raised awareness of my act of entering. I came to think that my hesitation also stemmed from the inequality that exists by definition between the patients and anyone else entering their room. A visitor can freely come and go, patients are not always able to leave. The fact that patients temporarily occupy this anonymous and guarded space and that they are dependent and in a vulnerable condition, makes me feel uncomfortable. Patients are not feeling well, would rather not be there and, being in the hospital, cannot live their life as they want. What is more, they are being cared *for*. The patient is in a naturally

disempowered position, turning the patient's room into a workspace arena where a variety of professionals randomly come and go to perform their tasks.

Music at the ward seems to radically break with this etiquette. The dialogical nature brought in by the mediator's first question, is the first step in that direction. When Music at the ward-musicians are waiting to enter with their instruments, the one larger than the other, I am able to resolve the hesitation. I experience excitement. At the point of making the initial contact, I felt each time that something beautiful and meaningful could emerge. My mediation at that point consisted of preparing the ground for the music making, preparing the patients and staff for "stepping out of their worlds for a while," as Rik put it once, "to a place without pressure of time or priorities." I try to turn the situation into something new, to a music-making situation, "where the roles do not count anymore," as Rik continues to explain, as "dropping roles feels good for everyone, it feels human. A human interaction where you can acknowledge each other. A place where there is no instrument, disease or title to hide behind." A connection with a participant can eventually become a highly personal, almost intimate, experience. Sometimes this intimate, deep level is present in the first impression, when seeing the illness and vulnerability of a patient. In such case, unnecessary pretence is stripped away and makes room for an instant humanness. Not only is this situation unusual because of the nature of the context itself, the movement of musicians to approach their audience so closely and intimately is unusual too.

#### Transforming the situation through music: the room and Mrs Uilenburcht

During my first project as a mediator, flautist Merijn, clarinetist Jonas, cellist Rik, observer Kirsi and myself get to spend time with a variety of patients and staff at the hospital's ward for abdominal surgery. One of them is Mrs Uilenburcht, an elderly patient lying alone in a four-patient room. When I ask her the first day if she wants music, I can hardly hear her response. She looks frail. It turns out she said no, although she had told the nurse earlier to be keen to take part in the measurement study around Music at the ward, which entails taking part in the music. A nurse intervenes and, timidly she seems to increasingly rediscover her excitement for the music. The musicians play a jazzy improvisation inspired by the autumn colours, and Mrs Uilenburcht seems to enjoy the music. After playing, Merijn approaches her and explains that, "we are here the whole week. If you like it and you have the energy for it, then we are happy to come again and play for you." Mrs Uilenburcht answers: "energy, that's the point." During an improvisation and a piece of repertoire on the second day, Mrs Uilenburcht is fully fixated on Merijn playing. Merijn again approaches Mrs Uilenburcht for a brief after-chat: "Again, if you feel you have the energy, we are happy to come tomorrow." Mrs Uilenburcht expresses her concern: "I don't know if I will have the energy." Merijn answers: "That's why we ask each



time.” A lovely connection seems to emerge between them. Later in the debrief, Merijn says she feels that too.

I am reminded of this moment later in an interview with Jonas, when I ask him about connecting personally with patients. He emphasises the importance of connecting “in your own way. Especially when improvising your *true* self will be exposed anyway, [...] who you are is part of how you play.” When I ask what he feels about this at the moment of entering the room, he says confidently that “I am a musician when we enter, but with me in it. Our personalities are not that important initially. I don’t feel that we take a lot of space in that moment. As soon as we play or the contact is made, then our personalities become part of the game.” Rik corroborates this as he says: “we come in as musicians in the first place, that is certain. It needs that, to then break through the invisible wall and become human-to-human.”

On the third day, we hear through the coordinating nurse that Mrs Uilenburcht would like to have music. However, a new lady is lying in the room and is anxious about her upcoming surgery. She is not so much up for interaction but is ok in tolerating the music in the background. When I peek in the room as a mediator, I see that both ladies are lying under their blankets, quietly. To my surprise there is a third patient; a lady whom we met the day before in another room. “I liked it yesterday”, she says to me, “but I’m a little tired today, and I know that the lady next to me does not want the music, so I would like to stay out if that is ok. But, please, play for her,” as she gestures to Mrs Uilenburcht. I seek eye contact with Mrs Uilenburcht; she, timid and frail, but up for the music. I move over to the third lady who nods at me. Then I return to the musicians in the corridor and tell them that the situation seems set.

*The musicians discuss amongst themselves to let Merijn go in first, as she seemed to connect with Mrs Uilenburcht very well yesterday and the day before. They decide she will improvise. Afterwards, another piece may follow, but they decide to leave that up to the moment. Merijn goes in alone, nods at the two other ladies, takes a stool and sits down next to Mrs Uilenburcht’s bed. Mrs Uilenburcht can see Merijn very well. A nurse joins them at the table in the middle of the room, later another member of staff will sit next to her. Merijn shows her regular flute and her bass flute to Mrs Uilenburcht and asks her to choose one for an improvisation. Mrs Uilenburcht cannot choose. Merijn offers that she could start with the bass flute and that she will perhaps switch to the other halfway through the piece. Mrs Uilenburcht is ok with that. Merijn will not switch flutes at it turns out. She starts to play and looks Mrs Uilenburcht straight in the eye. The eye contact remains like that for the rest of the piece, uninterrupted. Later on Merijn commented on that: “[The eye contact] was super intense, but it was not uncomfortable.” I witness the interaction from the little kitchen in the doorway. I see that the anxious lady has her eyes open and looks in the direction of the music. Mrs Uilenburcht and Merijn are obviously enjoying their moment together; they could be grandmother and granddaughter. After a few minutes, rather long if you think about the intimacy between them, Jonas and Rik walk in the room, playing. This was not agreed upon beforehand. While playing, Jonas goes to greet the patient that we met yesterday in*

*another room; she responds with a twinkle. Jonas and Rik's sounds blends in and softly brings the music to an end. Silence. The three start an Iranian tune, a calm piece with a beautiful nostalgic melody. The anxious lady is not being ignored, on the contrary. When the musicians see that tears pour down her cheeks, a nurse standing next to me moves over to her. Although a light applause follows at the end of the piece, the silence is poignant. Each of the three ladies eventually engaged, in their own way, in the calmness of the music making. Jonas moves instantly to the anxious lady. Rik catches up with the lady from the other room yesterday. And Merijn speaks with Mrs Uilenburcht. "[Mrs Uilenburcht] told me [in that moment] that she has never experienced this, that this was very special to her and that she will never forget it," Merijn says afterwards, and she continues: "it was also special for me. This was a completely new experience, it was so personal." In spite of the many people in the room, patients, staff, musicians and observers, the experience felt highly intimate. The music was soft, not much was being said.*

When comparing the situation at the start when I entered and sought consent for the visit with the situation at the point of leaving the room, the atmosphere in the room has changed. Mrs Uilenburcht, who had asked for the music, had said to have experienced something new that she will never forget. Also, the two ladies that had indicated not to want to have the music made for them, got increasingly engaged, one of them was even moved to tears. Starting from a silent and not-wanting-to-disturb intention, the situation normalizes, with seemingly-normal interactions at the end. Interaction and participation were nurtured and it was the musical visit that catalysed it.

I notice a variety of decision-making approaches that eventually elicited that transformation of the social situation. Firstly, I as mediator scan the situation for consent of the participants. Verbally and non-verbally I get signals that the musicians are welcome, although there are constraints with regards to patient involvement: two participants do not want the music to be 'for them.' The act of scanning and receiving cues is one of negotiation: everyone in the room has a right to say whether the music will take place or not. I as a mediator am facilitating that negotiation. The musicians then draw up a rough plan, which is another negotiation. Merijn enters first and pursues the first part of the plan, which is improvising for Mrs Uilenburcht. The two care staff members remain seated and stay passive for the entire visit. Merijn asks Mrs Uilenburcht to decide what instrument to play, but has to make the decision herself as Mrs Uilenburcht cannot seem to make up her mind. Merijn offers a solution, and the patient consents. Then the improvisation follows, which is person-centred to Mrs Uilenburcht. The only input serving Merijn is her experience of sitting close to and having eye contact with Mrs Uilenburcht. She interprets that information of what she sees and feels, and translates it into music. A few minutes into the improvisation, Jonas and Rik enter, an impulsive decision by the two that deviates from the plan. Then, a piece of repertoire is played as planned before Merijn's entrance to the room. After Jonas and Rik are present in the room, the other two

patients seem to participate increasingly in the music making, giving up their self-determined peripheral position. Attention to the two patients increases and the musicians establish more contact; this was not part of the plan either.

In the interview, Rik speaks about the practice of making plans and eventually sticking to or deviating from the plan. “Rough ideas emerge after previous interactions with patients, during intermediate rehearsals as well as during the briefs,” he says. Already at this early stage, “each member of the musician team gets to say what they think and then we try to get a consensus for that.” Right before entering the rooms, the musicians “increasingly decide about who is going to take the lead, which means that that person initially starts off the verbal interaction and keeps track with what is being played.” In the moment itself, the musicians “trust that leader, that he or she can simply make a choice to deviate from the plan, as that means that that is probably something more suitable to the participants. Even if that differs completely from what we’ve been discussing up until that point.” It often happens that someone else takes the lead. That feels naturally as it can happen “that you [as leader] missed something or that you just don’t know in the moment. In such cases there is the other team member to take it over.” It happens that “we [musicians] disagree, but then we talk about it afterwards, not in front of the patients.” For the musicians, it is therefore important to have a moment to be amongst themselves, as “in the room we cannot communicate well with each other. You are in a role; we wear our professional masks. Having hefty discussions in front of the patients is absolutely not done.” He concludes with: “it happens that we never reach consensus. [...] That is ok, as long as we are more or less on the same wavelength about the purpose of why we are there.”

The musicians try and form a plan but at the same time leave room for negotiation and impulsive decisions in the moment. Especially the two latter approaches to decision-making seem to potentially strengthen the power of the intervention, due to their closeness and correspondence with the social situation. Firstly, the negotiation before the musicians’ entrance seems important in setting up the dialogical culture and reassure the patients that theirs is the voice to determine whether the music will take place and in what form. Merijn’s question to Mrs Uilenburcht to choose an instrument extends that. Secondly, the improvisation itself translates that social atmosphere into a musical idea: the tones reflect Merijn’s experience in the close contact with Mrs Uilenburcht in that room. The improvisation follows the room, so to say. Thirdly, Jonas and Rik join in, providing support to Merijn’s playing. They help her in subtly bringing the piece to an end. Given the closeness of the interaction between Merijn and Mrs Uilenburcht, there was a risk that breaking the interaction may have felt as violating the contact. In this way, Jonas and Rik’s musical act helps to overcome a threat to the social situation. By then, the interest of the two other patients rose; they started to listen in. This gets acknowledged

by the musicians through their playing of a piece of repertoire, during which they move further into the room and exchange non-verbal communication. Their engagement increases and eventually the performance is shared by the entire room. The conversations afterwards make the sharedness of the experience explicit.

#### Ambiguity of leadership and empowerment: meeting Mr Staal (part 1)

Later that week we get to pay visits to Mr Staal, an elderly patient who underwent a liver transplant. At the first and second meetings, he had said to feel intrigued by the musicians' improvisations. Although he had said not to know much about music, he spoke about the music in an analytical way, describing how the tones went higher and faster. At one of the encounters, Mr Staal had asked for an improvisation about the onset of spring. He got the inspiration from an acquaintance's greeting card that said: 'I hope you can start to make plans for the future.' A telling gesture, as receiving a new liver is often experienced as starting a new life. It is, however, impossible to predict whether the body will eventually accept or reject the organ. The happiness surrounding the successful surgery and the prospect of living a relatively normal life again is often tempered because of this uncertainty.

The second visit ends with Mr Staal explaining how he experiences the musicians: "I feel a little tension; suddenly there are three complete strangers playing at my bedside. [...] I get a kind of attention, and that surprises me."

When Rik enters the room on the third day, he leaves his cello outside but takes a baton with him. Merijn goes in with Rik. Jonas stays outside for the first piece. I sneak in after them.

*Rik takes a stool and sits on Mr Staal's left bedside, next to a nurse who sat next to Mr Staal already. "How are you?" asks Merijn. Mr Staal has had a bad night. "As yesterday you mentioned you like the flute," says Rik, "I'd like to invite you to conduct Merijn using this baton." "Oh!"; Mr Staal responds. [...] Rik shows how it works: he moves the baton around and explains that Merijn bases the improvisation on the movements. "It's like you paint the music in the air."*

*Mr Staal looks keen to conduct; he accepts the baton. As soon as he starts to move the baton around and hears Merijn translating his movements into sound, his jaw slightly drops. The nurse is fixated on the baton, and smiles when she hears the melody follow its movements. Gradually, as the tones flow, Mr Staal's facial expression seems to turn into surprise. It is going well, the flute makes bright tones. At one point he stops the baton in the air, and Merijn mirrors it in her flute playing by holding back the sounds. "I am amazed, such fun!" Mr Staal says enthusiastically and stops the conducting: "in the beginning you are surprised but then you realize that you can actually influence it." They do it once more.*

*"Lovely!" he says. Merijn proposes that he could try with another instrument tomorrow, see how that works. Instead of replying, Mr Staal asks whether they do this often, and whether this is also an experiment [with this Mr Staal may have referred to either the explorative nature of Music at the ward at the time or the*

*effect study taking place]. The musicians answer that it is always an experiment; they do not know what they will play.*

In Music at the ward, the baton is seen as a tool to empower participants, “to give them back control by giving them control over the music making.” Musicians will improvise on the movements that a patient makes with it. In this way, the participant ‘conducts’ the musicians, taking a leading position in the music making. In the example this becomes clear at the point when Mr Staal stops moving the baton and Merijn mirrors that in her playing by stopping to play. When after the music making, Mr Staal dismisses Merijn’s question but instead brings up another subject and thus retains leadership when the musical situation blends into the social situation.

Considering the start, however, it looks to me as if it is not so much the patient that is in control, but rather the musicians. Through a few directive decisions, such as Jonas staying behind, Rik leaving his cello in the corridor and Rik becoming a co-listener by sitting next to Mr Staal, the situation seems highly pre-scripted, consciously, by the team of musicians. As a result, the situation does not leave much room for music other than the baton; Mr Staal does not have not much choice but to go along with the musicians’ intention. When the situation is constructed and directed in such way by the musicians, can this apparently empowered sense be called empowerment?

The example suggests that the musicians endorse more of a ‘pedagogical’ attitude towards Mr Staal than an empowering one, in which the musicians, as experts, decide what Mr Staal needs at that point. Deciding without patient involvement is something that happens often in the work. I remember a case where a gentleman, who had talked about his exclusive love for old rock ‘n’ roll, got a piece of Bartók the next day. In this sense, the musicians seem to want to expand the patient’s world by introducing him or her to a new musical space. Instead of choosing a piece that ‘mirrors’ the patient, a piece is offered that stands in contrast to the patient’s biography. In case of the baton-approach, however, this is unclear. It is the musicians’ intention to empower Mr Staal, but in fact the musicians appear to direct the situation powerfully.

Whether the musical situation was led by Mr Staal is also questionable. Merijn is the one to perform, that is, to *translate* the baton movements into sound. She determines the sounding result. Thinking back on a quotation by Jonas on the artistic quality of the work which I mentioned at the beginning of this description, it becomes clear that the musicians are explicitly not serving the patient. “It is more than [serving],” says Rik, “we are looking for a deeper connection with a patient.” Jonas explains that: “I want to play music ‘just for them’, regardless of what they think of the music. The fact that it is for them only creates a special feeling.” In this way, the music making moment is about gifting a special moment, not necessarily about pleasing

the patient's preference. The act of gifting is assumed to suffice. A faster movement of a baton, therefore, could be translated musically into an idea that is not about speeding up the tempo. It confirms that it is the situation that the music is made for, which includes the musicians as well as the patients and staff. It are the musicians that deliver the music on behalf of the participants as well as themselves. "We are not jukeboxes."

The person-centred approach, whether that is, for example, improvising on the basis of input by the participant, improvising on a baton, or playing a piece of a different genre in spite of knowing the patient's preference further reveals that the artistic-interpretive act beholds a judgement: the musicians judge the situation and decide what is played eventually, independently of what the patient thinks of that plan. The musician, as the one creating the sounding result, has no other choice than to accept the self-assigned leadership role. Compared to the dialogical, equal and empowering intentions of the practice, the musical approaches, therefore, are intrinsically problematic. The musicians are leaders, and will practice approaches to undermine and share their leadership to the extend that that is possible in the given situation.

#### 'Feeling' the interaction and trusting your intuition: meeting Mr Staal (part 2)

When we turn away from my observation of the situation in Mr Staal's room, and look at the musicians' take on the events, the events are put in a different perspective. In an interview after the project, Rik explained the choice for the baton-approach in Mr Staal's case:

"Gradually during the week and on that day we decided how to do it. With him we had a clear feeling of someone taking back control, we thought it was nice to, sort of, elevate that musically-allegorically with a baton. But in fact it was instantly clear that he took control anyway, even though he had said not to know anything about music. He was able to talk a lot about it. Perhaps without noticing, but he was already steering our pieces."

Rik's explanation suggests that the musician-directed and -led picture that emerged from an observer's perspective, was not experienced by the musicians in the same way. Based on their experience of being in contact with Mr Staal for a few days, the musicians felt that the baton was a response to Mr Staal's emerging leadership. In this way their directive approach seems to be more about complying to what the patient had set out. The musical approach in this way mirrored rather than contrasted the social situation.

What strikes me in the quote is that Rik talks about 'a clear feeling' as the basis on which the decision was based. As a seemingly paradoxical phrase (a feeling is everything but clear), it confuses and suggests that Rik leads the decision back to a hunch, an intuition. Jonas talks about "sensing," which "sometimes you sense well and sometimes you don't." He gives an example of a person-centred improvisation that did not go as he intended: "it did not work well, so I tried to

somehow make a good ending out of it. I then also realised that the patient's focus was more on Merijn, so I felt that she should perhaps take over more to validate that." In such situations, Rik "feels less professional and more a vulnerable person. Which is sometimes good, because in such moments you can break through that invisible wall [with the audience] and simply have a nice interaction."

Jonas also mentions that in spite of the importance of the interaction with the patients, it may well be in a certain situation that it is appropriate to decide not to focus so much on the patient, "when someone is feeling very ill, for example." "Although I am the type that loves to interact with the audience and I do it a lot, [...] they do not need contact all the time. [...] There is value in not having to be involved; in simply seeing musicians doing their thing. [...] It is then the music itself that establishes that connection."

In a similar fashion Rik had 'a feeling' about the improvisation for Mr Staal about Spring the day before. He understood that the theme of Spring "said something about the emotional state he was in. [...] You just knew that, ok, this piece will be about Spring but it is about so much more than that." Rik adds: "You knew it was important to him, without having to express that. We were there just to translate that into music." Even though Rik understood this hidden meaning through Mr Staal's talking, it was not made explicit. He just kept to his task of translating that feeling into sound. Rather than bringing the feeling to a verbal surface, he respected the patient's privacy by leaving it unspoken, but expressing it musically.

Similarly the musicians visited a lady that week who was waiting to undergo a major operation, she was there for several weeks already. "A lot went non-verbally with her, there was clearly a communication taking place on a deeper level," Rik explains. "You could see that she 'got' how [Music at the ward] works; she knew what she could ask for." Intuition, therefore, does not only play a role in sensing and translating senses into sound, it also informs the musicians about the understanding of the participants of the intentions of Music at the ward. In this way, it tells musicians about what musical approaches may suit the situation and how far their decision-making can stretch.

### Balancing decision-making roles and responsibilities: meeting Mr Staal (part 3)

The situation in Mr Staal's room continues:

*Rik asks if the three of them could play something more to him. Mr Staal responds:*

*"I have two options for you. We talked [the day before] about Queen. [...] Then, I was thinking, as we start to know each other a little bit, perhaps you could improvise a little, or play an existing piece, of something that represents a bonding, sociability. I start to get used to the whole and yeah... Is that...? Or am I asking things that...?"*

*The nurse turns her head from the musicians to Mr Staal and her facial expression shows she is surprised with his suggestion. "Sure!" the musicians respond excitedly. Rik suggests starting with the improvisation, and then moving on to Queen. He fetches his instrument and asks Jonas to join them. [...] Merijn repeats once again the idea of the improvisation to Jonas:*

*"It should be about the bonding that we have now with each other, now that we are here for the third time. So I was thinking about something harmonious."*

*Mr Staal adds:*

*"Yeah, so something between the three of you, but with me included, that is how I feel it. It is something that is gradually emerging."*

*Merijn proposes that Mr Staal could also signal during the piece to the musician that he wants to play solo, with or without baton. "Yeah, that sounds nice", he says. She continues: "Because then it is really about the relation between the four of us, then you really are part of the ensemble." Mr Staal says that he thought that the musicians would know what to do with this question. "But you may influence it, if you want to," Merijn adds.*

*The music starts statically; later warm melodies arise. Mr Staal observes the musicians, one by one. Slowly the music flows towards 'I want to break free' by Queen. The music explodes; Mr Staal is visibly impressed. He applauds in the end, "very beautiful," and compliments Jonas: "you were amazing today. I enjoyed it."*

*The musicians ask if he will be there again tomorrow, "we will check in to see how you feel." He says: "yes. I had a little bad patch again, but you managed to make me happy again, it's quite funny actually." "That's great to hear", Rik adds.*

Considering now the first interaction, the baton, with the benefit of hindsight: the ambiguity that emerged there around leadership gains clarity in the second interaction: both Mr Staal and the musicians take responsibility. In fact, in step-by-step negotiating what to play, both sides alternately determine as well as leave it to the other to decide. It kicks off with the musicians taking the initiative for a next piece, to which Mr Staal comes with a clear suggestion. His suggestion, in turn, includes a choice left to the musicians with two options to choose from. The musicians decide to combine both into one piece. Mr Staal seems happy with that and will eventually express his liking for the result. Both parties take the lead and within that a sense of shared ownership seems to emerge.



The example becomes more interesting when considering the actual subject of the improvisation part of the piece: it should express a bonding, as that is something that Mr Staal feels now since he starts to get comfortable with the musicians. With his suggestion, he puts himself forward as the fourth musician in the team. The musicians accept it, and even wish to emphasize the theme through the music, by inviting him to influence the piece through the baton or his hands. Again, this is an example of the social situation becoming intertwined with the musical approach and the music itself. Eventually Merijn adds the clause 'if you want to' to the invitation. With this clause, she leaves the decision to him to get involved (or not). Mr Staal, in this way, can fully self-determine within the co-leadership whether he wants to actively take part or not, which seems to give way to a true form of empowerment.

## **Chapter 5.**

### **ANALYSIS:**

#### **emerging practices of co-creative musicianship with elderly people**

In this chapter I will present the emerging practices that underpin musicians' devising of co-creative musicking with elderly people. By having referred to the work of Reckwitz (see Chapter 2), I see a practice as a holistic routinized type of behaviour that includes body, mental processing, objects, understanding, knowledge, emotions and motivation (2002). The practices that I discovered in the four cases and which I will present here are clusters of such holistic behaviours that each include particular combinations of Reckwitz' ingredients (2002, p. 249 and first cited in this study under 2.1.1): forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion, and motivational knowledge.

The structure of this chapter follows the order of the analysis that I have carried out after the writing of the thick descriptions. It also corresponds to the three subquestions that I have formulated at the end of Chapter 1. Firstly, in 5.1, I will describe and examine the formats that were devised and the underpinning interpersonal processes that emerged in each of the cases. I will demonstrate how the relationships between musicians and participants were inextricably connected to the co-creative format, and I will argue that they became the central nexus from which the co-creation could emerge. Then, I will comprehensively analyse these relationships in the four practices in paragraph 5.2. In 5.3, I will focus on the musicians' considerations within navigating and negotiating these processes and relationships. Finally in 5.4, the final subchapter of Chapter 5, I will argue for a need of ethical practitionership as an essential practice of musicians devising co-creative musicking with elderly people.

#### **5.1 Towards co-creation: an implicit process of negotiation**

Moving away from the data production and writing of thick descriptions, I started out with trying to understand the interactions that led to the creation of a musical or 'sounding' result for each of the cases. After an initial scan, I was confronted with a variety of formats and approaches. And although each of the four creative-productive processes was led by the musicians, they all involved participation of the audience, of individuals, to different extents.

Within each of the cases, professional musicians took up a devising role in the situation different from the role in which music is merely presented to an audience such as in a concert setting. This meant that musicians let go of traditions and norms surrounding the known formats, some of which I described in paragraph 2.2.1. This became apparent through musicians' adoption of various serendipitous aspects within the creative-productive process. The musicians in case 1 chose to use a workshop format that was extensively prepared and practiced by the musicians beforehand, but which let much space for participants to do what they wanted through the facilitation of 'playgrounds.' In case 2, the musician developed the setlist of an interactive concert of the session in advance using a specific group of people as inspiration. In case 3, new music and lyrics were created on the basis of contact with a specific group of people, which were then performed in a more traditionally prepared and executed performance. And, finally, in case 4, musicians decided in the moment when making contact with people what to play from a prepared set of (arranged) repertoire or to improvise in a person-centred way. In the four examples, decisions that in a regular (classical) concert setting would be taken in advance were taken at a later stage, sometimes postponed until the last minute. The person-centred improvisation in case 4, where music was created, i.e. 'invented' and 'executed', on the spot and informed by the people in the specific situation, was, of all four cases, probably the example of postponing musical decision-making the most.

As a consequence of this postponing of decision making, the audiences, in different ways, were given responsibilities in the decision-making quite different from the rather limited role of 'responding' and 'validating' the musicians' performance in a regular (classical) concert (see section 2.2.1). In case 1, although seemingly free to do whatever they wanted, participants complied with instructions. They acted within the boundaries of the playground as they were set by the musicians. In cases 2, 3 and 4, participants served as a source of inspiration for, respectively, the creation of a setlist, the creation of musical pieces and lyrics, and the performance of existing repertoire or the creation of improvised music. The way the inspiration was obtained in each of these three cases, however, differs. In case 2, participants were not required to provide or perform anything extra beyond regular 'being there'. In case 3, participants took part in informal moments of contact with the musicians that were a particular facilitator for inspiration. Finally, in case 4, participants interacted verbally with musicians, predominantly verbally, allowing them to contribute to the music through words. The person-centred approach also entailed that musicians use non-verbal signals as inspiration. This was explicitly the case through the baton, on which musicians based their improvisation on participants' movements with a baton.

From these first interpretations, it becomes clear that in all four cases musicians were personally involved with participants, sometimes closely. It shows that devising instantly triggers action on an interpersonal front. In the theoretical-conceptual framework, I have already

recognized a directedness to the other as a feature typical of co-creation in the arts. This ‘other’ side gets solidified in empirical cases through dialogue, in groups and often also one-to-one. In the open house in case 3, for example, the production of the song cycle was inspired by profound informal meetings between musicians and house participants. In Music at the ward, the dialogue preceding the music-making revealed the influence of patients on the musicians’ playing. Although I will examine the quality of the relationship only in the subsequent paragraph 5.2, it is clear that the devising of musicking in the cases studied here is inextricably connected to the interpersonal interactions taking place between those involved, which is something Matarasso also recognized in his blogpost on co-creation (2017). The relationship, thus, forms a central nexus within the co-creative work that is examined here.

But before going into the relationship, I would like to examine further the formats for devising that emerged in the four cases. From a co-creative perspective, which I defined earlier as the joint creation of a mutually valuable and meaningful outcome (Pralhad & Ramaswamy, 2004), the question could be asked to what extent the examples of postponing decisions and different forms of involvement of participants fit in a co-creation paradigm.

#### 5.1.1 Implicit co-creation

In The Presidents, participants were required to actively participate through playing on musical instruments. The musicians facilitated an environment of discovery using a typical creative workshop format, combining instructive exercises with room for free exploration. Within set boundaries of a playground, participants were provided freedom of expression whilst exploring instruments under the supervision of the musicians. At the day care centre in the English countryside, session leader Simon, musically supported by one other musician, led the musicking by playing guitar and singing, and delivering the session overall according to a self-made plan. Although the session had a strong performative sense and with Simon drawing all attention towards himself, the plan itself as well as the delivery of that plan, however, put participants squarely in the centre. Simon prepared and selected songs with participants in mind. This got extended into the session itself, where he engaged participants through giving singing cues, offering props and little instruments, and including conversations in-between songs. The Presidents and Simon’s work at the day care centre, each in their own way, endorsed a person-centred concept of musicking, which entailed a close engagement and concern for engagement of the participant. In the case of Simon, person-centredness was also reflected in the musical planning and delivery of the session.

From an advanced co-creative perspective as we have seen in Matarasso’s (2017) third example, however, the creation of the musical product, the sounding result, as well as the

shaping of the collaboration in *The Presidents* and Simon's session is not a joint process, and could, therefore, could perhaps be considered not co-creative. In *The Presidents*, it are participants creating and playing music – with the exception of the piece played at the beginning of the session by the workshop leaders as a way of introducing themselves. The musicians take a verbally supportive and advisory position, they do not engage musically and there exists a clear division in tasks. What is more, the musicians take a dominant role in directing this division and the participants. Co-construction, a fundamental requirement for co-creation that includes “joint problem definition and problem solving” (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004, p. 8), is absent. Participants are not encouraged and given little to no opportunity to get involved in influencing the process, and, thus, are not informed, connected, empowered, active, or aware of their ‘negotiating clout’ that characterizes co-creation (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2014).

In Simon's session that involves participants with dementia, a disease which entails symptoms of increasing loss of memory and sense of self, it could, however, be questioned to what extent influencing on the participants' side is possible and appropriate. It may lead to participants feeling confused or unable to take part. Simon facilitated and delivered the person-centred session in a sensitive way, taking into account the circumstances of each individual as much as possible. With such approach he was able to include the person, and at the same time offer enough safety and comfort. Simon, one could say, devised the session from his perspective as a musician, as well as on the participants' behalf. This leads the way to think of co-creation as a process that can partially take place on an implicit level, steered by one party, and with another party not necessarily aware of its co-creative voice.

Thinking back to the initial impulse of this entire study, where a workshop leader and myself were surprised about the sense of ownership of participants in spite of the seemingly limited input they had given during the process, a few pieces of the puzzle seemed to fall into place. The workshop leader of that session had probably practiced such an implicit process in a successful way before, but was not aware of it.

Choosing an implicit route when explicit forms of interaction are not available is supported in co-creation theory, where a shift towards negotiation between business and customer is changing the landscape of value creation (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2014), and where, as a result, businesses “will feel pressure to adopt an implicit (if not an explicit) negotiation” (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004, p. 7). Within the field of the arts and (community) music, where the literature seems to assume only participants with full cognitive awareness and participation, implicit co-creation seems not to be recognized, let alone critically examined further.

Closely examining the creative-productive process in the *Music at the open house* project, reveals that it can happen that it is not apparent whether the co-creation is implicit or explicit.

In the project, musicians wrote lyrics and composed music inspired by contact with participants at the open house. In some ways this is reminiscent of Simon's approach, where decisions are taken with participants in mind, as if on behalf of them. Here, however, the implicitness is more intricate: whether participants are aware of the project and the musicians' intentions, was not always clear. Due to the fact that in the house it is never openly revealed whether someone has dementia or in what phase of the disease, and also because the degree of memory loss in dementia can fluctuate, it was impossible to fully grasp the awareness that participants had in the moment. In case of unawareness of the project, the musicians' act of writing and composing inspired by contact with the people got an instant implicit nature. When participants were aware, i.e. when participants knew about the project and the musicians' intentions while being in contact with them, the process would have been more explicit. The specific conditions of the participants at the open house and the principle of not revealing the dementia at the house not only complicate the co-creative format, dementia also makes it impossible to grasp the co-creative nature in all certainty.

In Music at the ward, it was normal that the decision what to play and how to play was taken through musicians' verbal interaction with patients, although it also occurred that music was played without (much) verbal contact. The idea that participants served as inspiration therefore gained a more explicit character. As part of the person-centred approach, however, also non-verbal signals could serve as an inspiration for the musicians', in which case it was more implicit in the situation and perhaps the participants were not aware of it. A notable exception to this was the use of the baton, which meant explicitly obtaining non-verbal signals for music-making through patients' movements with the baton.

Summing up, the four examples present elements of co-creation to various extents, which have to do with a different timing (postponing) of decisions about the music, the various levels of involvement and responsibilities of participants, and also with how explicitly (or implicitly) the nature of the approaches are understood by participants.

### 5.1.2 Problematizing implicit negotiation

The implicit process that Simon, the musicians at the Music at the open house and (to some extent) the musicians at Music at the ward facilitated, can, however, be considered problematic from an ethical point of view. The fact that one party 'makes use' of another, 'less aware' party and makes decisions on their behalf requires tact and calls for ethical considerations instantly, especially when that other party is vulnerable. In this paragraph, I will discuss in more detail the mechanism of implicit negotiation and will highlight its problems from a co-creative-theoretical perspective.

### 5.1.2.1 A lack of transparent dialogue and access

As part of operationalizing the co-creative paradigm, theory advises to facilitate moments of interaction in which those involved act on four principles: dialogue, access, assessment of risks and benefits, and transparency (DART) (Pralhad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2014). Co-creative thinkers commit to an active dialogue, which “implies interactivity, deep engagement, and the ability and willingness to act on both sides” (Pralhad & Ramaswamy, 2004, p. 9). DART negotiation is thought to personalize experience, and, thus, increase personal meaningfulness of the activity (Pralhad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2014). When a The Presidents participant remarked that she is disappointed that the group will not meet in this setting anymore, it pointed out the meaningfulness of the session to her, whereas for the workshop leaders the session was just a stepping stone towards the ultimate purpose of creating a learning orchestra. If the musicians running the project would have picked up on her remark, and had entered into a negotiation with her, her remark, could have meant a fundamental change of the course of the project, enhancing its co-creative outcome, and thus meaningfulness potentially, for the participants.

What seems to complicate negotiation when it is practiced on an implicit level, meaning it cannot be practiced transparently and through dialogue and full access, is that it is hard – perhaps impossible – to get a sense of the other’s disposition. The empirical data shows that musicians make creative attempts to overcome this problem. Artistic leader William, for example takes part in the house as a regular participant to empathise with the culture and people of the open house. While interacting over lunch with another participant he came to sense the impact dementia can have on daily life and the strains it puts on one’s family life and responsibilities. In the end, it remained William’s *interpretation* of experiencing that other person’s disposition as an observer<sup>40</sup>. In a comparable way, Simon in case 2 talks with people about personal issues.

Such an approach, however, requires ethical reflection. Firstly, it puts up for question what gives musicians the right to ‘use’ these personal interactions for the creation of music. The act of trying to understand the others’ life world, or better: the kind interest alone that musicians show when sympathising does not give them the right to make decision on participants’ behalf. Not at any point, have I seen that explicit consent was sought for this ‘use’ by the participants.

A lack of explicit dialogue, access and transparency of implicit negotiation seems especially complicated when negotiating the conception of a joint initiative. Cognitive impairment may prevent the partnership to collectively ‘dream’ or ‘imagine’ (Green, 2002) what

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<sup>40</sup> This was my experience as a researcher too. I will expand on this in Chapter 6 when discussing the strengths and limitations of this study’s design.

the musicking could look like. The variety of purposes of the four cases studied here exactly illustrates the manifold options that the work can potentially take: Simon uses concepts such as reminiscence, stimulation, learning and professional development of care professionals; whereas The Presidents aims to facilitate creative exploration of orchestral instruments. Unlike concerts or music pedagogical settings, the intention and purpose driving the type of work studied here are often unclear and diverse at its outset. What is more, from an integral co-creative perspective, it are exactly such fundamental conceptual issues that should be negotiated within the partnership right from the start.

William provides an example of by-passing this problem when he was told by a volunteer that he ‘straps people’, and thus was made clear what *not* to do. His experiences at the house as a regular participant served as a means of informing the conception of the plan. Although not engaged in a transparent, explicit dialogue, he was able to be informed and negotiate with the other party indirectly. It is interesting to observe that William’s prior covert participation at the open house, which I commented on from an ethical point of view in the thick description on the basis of its covertness, turns out to be a resourceful way to overcome the problem of implicit negotiation.

In cases where DART-principles cannot be practiced explicitly, for instance due to cognitive impairment, the implicitness becomes even more problematic as those taking part cannot be truthfully informed about their role and rights in the negotiation. Co-creation theory speaks about the ‘negotiation clout’ of clients (Pralhad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Ramaswamy & Ozcan 2014), or: the influence that people can have in the creation of the product. In the cases studied here, particularly those including participants with dementia, making people aware of and understand this negotiation clout also with regard to the conception or intention of the practice, is problematic. When a traditional concert performance is a participant’s only frame of reference, shared responsibility and ‘horizontal governing’ can therefore be hard to grasp and, least as important, be confusing. One of the negotiating partners not being aware of the other party’s intentions suggests a disbalance in power.

#### 5.1.1.2 An out-of-balance distribution of power

In shifting to co-creation through ‘DART-led’ interaction, the strong positions of leaders of the old system are challenged (Pralhad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Within a shift towards increasingly co-creative forms of musicking, this entails the development of a ‘networked’ power structure, rather than a ‘hierarchical one’ (Matarasso, 2017). Equality and reciprocity, however, are not easily attained in the work studied here due to the imbalance of abilities between musicians and participants. Bourdieu also reminds us that different expert status and cultural-musical capital creates tensions in the dynamics of power (Grenfell, 2008). In this paragraph I will expand on



the handling of power in co-creative musicking negotiations, and I will draw a connection between the social power structures and the musical power structures.

As the case in which inequality becomes clear instantly, Music at the ward consists of healthy and musically skilled people visiting disempowered, often bed-ridden ill people and the people that care for them to musick for them. Power relationships between these three groups of people were apparent and are determined by the protocol of the hosting institution (the hospital). The ‘horizontal governing’ that increasingly characterises co-creation in the arts (IETM/Shishkova, 2018), therefore, gets compromised instantly. But what seems important in this emerging musical situation, and overlooked in the literature, is the potential overpowering effect of the musician-expert.

To level out inequality, Music at the ward employs specific tools and strategies, most noticeable through the use of a mediator who makes contact with patients first to lessen the sudden impact of the musicking. The mediator serves as a buffer in the musician-participant interaction, and encourages patients to speak out about their wish for musicking without the musicians being present in the space. The mediator role therefore seems to embody the potential for facilitating ‘DART’-moments, of dialogical, accessible, risk-benefits assessed and transparent moments that underpin co-creation. The mediator, thus, takes up an important position in facilitating and negotiating the starting point of musicking. This facilitation and negotiation, which could be considered ‘moulding’ the situation, also holds risks. Think of the first visit to Ms Uilenburcht, for example, who initially said not to want music, but with the help of one of the nurses consents to the mediator. It points out that a mediator not only protects and buffers musicians and participants, but also carries a manipulative power to facilitate a meeting that brings others to compromise on their wishes.

When successful, a Music at the ward interaction eventually negotiates a third space that pushes inexisting inequalities and intrinsic power structures to the background. Higgins described this phenomenon as becoming ‘deterritorialized’ (Higgins, 2012a). The experience of deterritorializing within the hospital setting, however, seems to be experienced in differing ways. To the care professionals, the effect of Music at the ward seems to be a form of evanescing of real-time everyday life. To the patient, musicking seems to do exactly the opposite: to bring in the everyday. The effect, then, is normalizing what is not considered normal.

Given their ‘powerful’ (although lessened through mediation) negotiation position in the social musicking situation, when it comes to music making the musicians are again the designated people to initiate, lead and deliver. The balance of power, thus, gets threatened again. Especially when the music making starts by pursuing principles of the ‘gift theory’ where participants are ‘generously gifted’ (Higgins, 2008; Higgins 2012a) a piece of music to them and participants have received this and are ‘in debt’. Such a setting may even increase the pressure and, consequently, may potentially lead to being too much to handle. I will discuss this

mechanism from the point of the relation between musicians and participants in the context of the Music at the open house project and Music at the ward in paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3.

Thus, when co-creation takes place on a (partially) implicit level, risks are involved that may deteriorate the success of the co-creation, and thus the meaningfulness for all involved. From an ethical point of view, it could be questioned in what ways such implicit negotiation is justifiable in a situation involving people that are vulnerable, for example people with dementia.

### 5.1.3 Integral and organically emerging co-creation

Thus far I have pointed out that co-creative musicking with elderly people in the examined cases takes shape through (partially) implicit negotiation. I have also examined the potential problems around this implicitness. Further it became apparent in the analysis when trying to uncover the processes leading to the creation of the sounding result, and what will be discussed in this paragraph, were the multiple stages and levels at which co-creative decision-making was practiced in the cases.

Aside from the creation of the (ultimately) sounding result in the Music at the open house project, decisions needed to be taken about the format through which writing lyrics and composing music would take place. William, as artistic leader, had intensively participated and negotiated with the steering group of the open house before the three-month period of the creative production. This participation and negotiation eventually gave rise to a collaborative format of developing pieces and a performance, but also this preceding process of participation and negotiation acted as a foundation for collective work and decision-making, i.e. co-creation. The project came into being as a partnership between musicians, and the open house in the form of a steering team and the group of participants, in which all three parties took part in an “active dialogue”, that facilitated the “co-construct[ion of] personalized experiences” (Pralhad & Ramaswamy, 2014, p. 8). Musicians, in collaboration with the people at the house, negotiated about their intentions and the purpose they wish to see emerge in the project. In Music at the open house two levels of co-creation can therefore be distinguished: a level of creation of new music and a level of collaboration that gave rise to the format for creating that new music. Co-creation in this way exceeds the borders of the creative process and outcomes. Also the wider social network in which it is embedded is approached in a co-creative way and serves a co-decision making (IETM/Shishkova, 2018). The co-creation, thus, was practiced *integrally*, i.e. on an operational as well as a creative-productive level, and was *organically emerging*, i.e. through interaction and negotiation within a partnership spread over a period of time.

In Music at the ward, I observed a similar integral co-creation. The format of musicking in Music at the ward consisted of so-called person-centred music making in which musicians make music which is informed by verbal and non-verbal interacting, *reading* participants and ‘micro-responsiveness’ (Wakeling, 2014). Such reading entails, again, an implicitness similar to what I observed at the day care centre and the open house. Whereas in Simon’s session and the Music at the open house project it was participants’ cognitive impairment, and as a result of that potential inability to fully co-create, that justified the implicitness, in Music at the ward this seems to concern patients’ pain, and need for privacy and integrity. Beyond playing (arranged) repertoire in a person-centred way, Music at the ward also employs person-centred improvisation. Such improvisation can entail the musicians asking for input by the patients, through verbal descriptions of, for example a landscape, a colour or a mood. Asking for such input seems to make the person-centredness more explicit, and more co-creative. The baton, which in the thick description is exemplified through the situation with Mr Staal, seems to take the concept of co-creation one step further, as the active dialogue and interaction take place instantly, in the moment, and, interestingly, musically. The jointness of the approaches here is unclear. In Music at the ward, the baton is seen as a tool to give patients back control and make them feel empowered. Bottom line, however, it remain the musicians that interpret the movements musically from their artistic identity, and that initiate the baton in the situation. I will expand on this mechanism when discussing musicianship in paragraph 5.3.

What distinguishes the creative and collaborative processes in the Music at the open house project and Music at the ward from the first two cases, is the musicians’ intention to work with an explicit dialogue and in collaboration with the participants, and deliberately accept that this entails unpredictability. This results in an *integral* and *organically emerging co-creation*, where both sounding results and working formats, or ‘approaches’, show a high degree of co-creation and are developed on-the-go and in-the-moment (Wakeling, 2014). This is in contrast to Simon and the musicians in The Presidents, who operate from a fixed format that was, in case of The Presidents, developed and delivered without involvement of the elderly participants. I will expand on the musicians’ perspective on this form of co-creation in paragraph 5.3.

Concluding this paragraph 5.1, I have observed co-creative elements across the four cases on both explicit and implicit levels. Explicit co-creation takes place when it takes place with openly consented participation and sharing of participants, which can be seen clearly in case 1. Implicit co-creation takes place when musicians act on behalf of participants, and where participants are not or only partly aware of their contribution to the creative process, which was recognized in case 2. In case 3 and 4, it was not always clear whether participants understood and were aware of the creative approach, which makes it impossible to categorize the cases as implicit or explicit.

I have pointed out that implicit co-creation is problematic in terms of its lack of transparency and access, and in terms of its out-of-balance power dynamics. There exists a real risk of musicians ‘using’ participants for the creation of music. I will flesh this out further in the following chapter where I will delve deeper into the relationship between musicians and participants.

Subsequently, I have identified forms of co-creation that are practiced integrally, meaning in all stages (from conception to implementation) and levels (from devising the process to devising the product), and that are organically fostered, meaning in constant dialogue with participants.

## **5.2 Friend or muse: a humanistic and functional relationship**

From the analysis of the creative-productive processes in the previous paragraph 5.1, it became clear that co-creation involves a particularly personal contact and exchange between musicians and participants. Furthermore, the analysis of the (implicit) creative-productive processes, such as the production of texts in the open house, has shown that the relationship forms a central nexus on which the co-creative musicking relies. In this chapter I will go one step further in the analysis of the data and attempt to characterise this relationship. I will argue that the relationship embodies two flavours; one that it is ‘humanistic’, which I will characterise as a friendship, and one that is ‘functional’, which I will characterise as a relationship with a muse.

### 5.2.1 The humanistic side: a close and caring friendship

When closely examining the musician-participant interaction the personal character of the contact is immediately apparent, regardless of whether the contact stays limited to one session (as in *The Presidents*), is a few days or a week (*Music at the ward*), covers in a period of a few months (*Music at the open house*) or several years (*Simon’s session*). Even in *The Presidents*, where I attended only one session, the contact occurred only throughout one occasion: musicians address participants personally and there is plenty of one-on-one contact. In the other cases, I was able to witness how the contact developed and became more profound over time, resulting in an increasingly close relationship. From a musicking perspective which sees relationships emerging in a music making situation as the place where the meaning of the action lies (Small, 1998), the closeness of these relationships is highly promising in what it can deliver to those involved.

How meaning emerges within these relationships between differs from that in the concert hall, where “the autonomy and privacy of the individual is treasured” (Ibid, p.43). In Simon’s work at the day care centre people *knew* each other, and some of the relationships existed for multiple years. This longstandingness was tangible from the quality of the contact observed, such as Simon’s exchange with a participant after the session about a private, health-related issue. Simon showed concern, and made efforts to make sure to discuss how it was going next time. The contact had an informal and caring nature. From the carers’ swift handling of the setting up the room at the start of the session, I derived that the contact between Simon and the carers also had a longer history built on trust. It was clear that in this case there was a strong fabric of relationships in place, and this was kept together through interpersonal contact fostered over years.

Community music has been said to “embody an ethic of care” (Lines, 2018, p. 392). The relationship between a community musician and participants has been characterised as a

*friendship* (Higgins, 2008, 2012a, 2012b), as *family*-like (Veblen, 2002; Lines, 2018) and even as *love-in-action* (Silverman, 2012, p. 158). What has grown between participants and Simon throughout the years in many ways is reminiscent of a friendship or a sense of kinship indeed, something “that goes beyond the utility of a functional relationship” (Higgins, 2012a, p. 162). Simon’s expressions of care for participants within the context of the session as well as the sensitive and detailed way with which he spoke about them in the interview, confirms the attention for them within the relationship.

The solidity of the network of relationships at the day care centre suggests that it did not emerge from one moment to the next, but that it needed time to develop. What I failed to record with Simon but somewhat did in the Music at the open house project, is the start and development of such relationship. Although I did not witness William’s first participations in the house, he did talk about it elaborately in the interview. What stood out was the moment with participant Harry, and how he instantly felt connected to him. When, months later, the rest of the musician team participated in the house for the first time, it was in a similar manner that they made contact with the participants: by taking part in the regular activities and having one-to-one contact with participants at the open house. Although this time the musicians’ intentions were openly revealed and their musical instruments were brought and slowly introduced, what it had in common with William’s first visit, however, were the low-key moments of meeting, chatting, listening, and taking time to get to know each other. Some conversations resulted in sharing experiences of a very personal and almost intimate nature, such as open house member Guusje and flutist Fara elaborating on their difficult relationships with her son and her mother respectively.

In Higgins’ terms, the conversation between Guusje and Fara could be called a ‘welcome’, a gesture that includes “making of time for another and the invitation to become included” (Higgins, 2012a, p. 108). Higgins describes the welcome as a hospitable act that suggests unconditionality and holds no reservations (Ibid.). Preceding the welcome, Higgins continues, it is the participant’s decision to take part, which includes a face-to-face encounter and a ‘call’, in which the participant presents itself and “is ready to make and create music and expects to do so” (Ibid., p. 156). In Music at the ward, this face-to-face encounter does not necessarily take place with the musicians themselves because the mediator takes over that part of the interaction.

It is interesting to see that in the initial contact and subsequent intimacy between Guusje and Fara, music was not an explicit factor. The instruments were in the room, but only in the background and were used much later on in the visit. The conversation, thus, could have been part of any other kind of project. This is different at The Presidents and Music at the ward where musicians introduce themselves clearly holding their instruments. Also, music is the first subject to be talked about, or the situation goes straight into playing. Given the problems

surrounding the implicitness of the co-creative process at the open house, which I identified in paragraph 5.1.2 around the lack of transparency and an out-of-balance distribution of power, the choice not to prominently position music, especially through the holding of musical instruments, in that first contact at the open house is striking. It is somewhat reminiscent of William's initial covert participation in the house and shows the project's strong emphasis on a – what I from now on call – *humanistic* side of the relationship.

In an attempt to specify this humanistic side further, I again borrow an idea from Higgins, who says that relationships in community music are infused with trust, respect and responsibility (Ibid., p. 159). This deserves, for the ethical reasons mentioned before, attention in contexts involving people with dementia and possibly severely vulnerable people such as hospitalized patients. Higgins recognises trust and respect from the 'desire to "hear" the others' "voices", and sees them as "intertwined and inseparable ideas that work when participants, or facilitators, are able to rely on the actions and decisions of each other" (Ibid., p. 159). In Music at the ward, such a desire could be seen especially when the musicians' visit is negotiated first through the mediator. On the third visit to Mrs Uilenburcht, for example, where I (as a mediator) agree with another patient in the room to tolerate the music in the background, the musicians act as guests towards the patient. Furthermore in Music at the ward, the rooms are also the work space of the health care staff, and that requires musicians to obey any critical intervention from them.

Where it was difficult to gather trust, respect and responsibility from the observations, talking to the musicians during the interviews showed more convincingly their sense of trust, respect and responsibility towards the situation. When Rik talks about the deeper meaning he felt in the contact with patient Mr Staal, he explained that the musicians did not make explicit what they sensed and inferred about his situation. Instead, the musicians left it up to Mr Staal to make that explicit. The musicians' sensed it was appropriate to respect his privacy by having distance.

Discussing trust, respect and responsibility is reminiscent of William's covert participation in the early phase of the Music at the open house project. Through not revealing his identity and intentions as artistic leader initially and thinking of how that may have affected the relationships with participants of the house, he compromised the transparency right at the start of the initiative. I can imagine that deliberately not complying to transparency could be considered unethical, certainly from a researcher's habitus (VH 2010, BSA 2017). Being transparent in situations where implicit processes are natural, is, however, complicated. The example shows the intricacies and often thin line when practicing trust, respect and responsibility on site.

In conclusion, relationships between musicians and elderly participants in co-creative musicking are personal and close. They can include aspects of mutual care, which makes them reminiscent of a friendship. This instantly triggers the notion that the interaction between musicians and participants not only serves artistic-productive purposes of feeding the co-creative musicking but equally serves ‘humanistic’ purposes. This corroborates Higgins saying that the relationship goes *beyond the utility of a functional relationship*.

The cases foster and emphasise this humanistic side of the relationship in different ways. Also, it is striking that defining the intricacies of the relationship further is difficult and perhaps impossible overall as every relationship is unique. What contributes to this is the partially implicit side of the interaction, the ever-changing character of the social situation (as any). That in a co-creative environment aspects of trust, respect and responsibility can also be the subject of negotiation (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2012), complicates it even more. I will expand on the acting and navigating within this forming relationship from the musician’s point of view later in paragraph 5.3. In the following paragraph, I will dig deeper into the functional side of the relationship.

### 5.2.2 The functional side: a muse relationship

Now that I have identified and attempted to specify the humanistic side of the musician-audience relationship as it occurs in co-creative musicking with elderly people, I revisit the co-creative musicking relationship from a functional perspective.

Earlier I mentioned the mechanism of call and welcome (Higgins, 2012a) that ignites the interaction and that makes it take off and stir reciprocal dynamics. The mechanism is thought to stimulate the experience from passivity to activity (Higgins, 2012a, p. 156), and thus engage everyone in the creation. This mechanism could be seen at work at the Music at the open house project, where low-key conversations sparked ideas in the musicians to write and create. Guusje and Fara’s conversation, therefore, was not only a humanistic gesture. The act of informal conversation was in fact also purposeful, it served the (co-)creation of the musical lyrics.

That the relationship acted as a source of inspiration for the musical creation seems to be a literal expression of Small’s observation that any musicking is an exploration, affirmation and celebration of the relationships between those involved. Through making music, “[t]hose taking part in a musical performance are in effect saying – to themselves, to one another, and to anyone else who may be watching or listening – *this is who we are*” (Small, 1998, p. 134).

Participant Jan of the open house, as if quoting Small, said even literally after hearing a lyric: *‘the texts really are the open house.’* His remark seems in line with what Small observes as the result of successful exploration, affirmation and celebration of musicking relationships, that it “makes us feel more full ourselves” (Ibid., p. 142). In addition, the verbal dialogue that Jan’s quote was



taken from, which emerged after a moment of sharing work-in-progress at the open house, Small argues, is very important for the relationship. Not only can it act as an “inexhaustible source of conversational and literary topics” (Ibid., p. 210), but it is equally able to “enrich the relationships which taking part in performances has created” (Ibid.).

Fara, in her relationship with Guusje, acted not just as a human being, also as a purposefully creating professional. Similarly in William’s case, the contact with Harry was so inspirational that it became his point of reference for the development of the project plan. It brought him agency and urgency to carry on the creative process of the project. Thus, the moment with Harry during lunch not only determined the project’s progression, it acted almost as a precondition for the project to start. In other words, William, and such the project as a whole, was dependent on Harry’s involvement. Beyond serving as a vehicle for a forming relationship between Harry and William, the conversation had a professional and pragmatic function. It was, thus, not just an ‘unconditional’ relationship as Higgins argues (Higgins, 2008, 2012a, 2012b). Instead of listening as an outsider, such as in a public performance (Small, 1998), everyone present contributes to the musicking.

The functionality and conditionality of the relationship forced me to think that, instead of resembling friendship, the relationship is reminiscent of the relationship of an artist with his *muse* as we know it from ancient times. In this relationship, the muse serves the artist as a source of inspiration, as a vehicle that, technically speaking, incepts or helps to incept the artwork or music.

Not only does this idea of the muse appear in the Music at the open house project, it also occurs in a different form in Simon letting himself be inspired by participants when compiling the session’s set list. Also in Music at the ward, the patients and staff could be seen as musicians’ muses: the ward enables the musicians to make music. The baton improvisation from this perspective becomes an explicit, almost grotesque, expression of this functional side to the relationship.

What seems to contradict the idea of the artist-muse relationship, however, is the directedness to the other that was observed earlier at the musicians’ side as well as in the literature. Such an engaged stance seems to refute artistic (self-)gain, and, rather, be exactly the opposite of being in the service of the other. When William speaks about his role in the contact with participants at the open house, he described his role as “an outlet” or “a conduit”. This idea of being functional to the other, to the participant, corroborates a saying of a musician of Music for Life, a creative workshop programme involving person-centred improvisation for people with dementia and their carers, when he described the creative-productive process as “generated by the musicians

but from the residents” (Smilde et al., 2014, p. 247). From this line of thinking, rather than the participant, it is the artist that beholds a muse-like role of instigating something within the other.

This perspective, where the musician functions as a muse to the other, leads me back to considering the intentionality on which the musicking is rooted. The person-centred music making that is practiced in Music at the ward, for example, from this perspective has a flavour of a ‘serving’ intentionality, of wanting to meet the needs of the other. When a musician functions as a muse to participants one can be reminded of Praxialism’s eudaimonia, where the musician could be considered to serve the flourishing of the other.

When considering the relationship as one of a muse-like relationship, regardless of who is the muse here, the intention of the musicking in general demands critical examination from, again, an ethical perspective. The question what the relationship serves seems particularly critical and brings me right back to what co-creation intends: *meaning to serve all involved*. Such *meanings* for the musician can be the intrinsic motivation of creating music, providing music, with the other as resource (Preti & Welch, 2013; Hallam et al., 2016), for older participants this could mean aesthetic pleasure, entertainment or kindling of social contacts (Coffman & Levy 1997, Hillman 2002, Dabback 2008, Dabback & Smith, 2012, Lally 2009, Creech et al. 2013a, Creech et al. 2013b, Creech et al. 2013c, Creech et al. 2014, Perkins & Williamon 2014, Van der Wal-Huisman et al. 2018).

None of these theoretically validated meanings and effects can, however, be taken for granted when experiencing the other in practice. In an extreme case it hypothetically mean to serve the musician’s artistic (self-)gain, which seems highly unethical in the contexts here. Or, when the relationship serves the other by creating something out of the other and *back* to the other, it seems important to question whether that is understood and agreed upon by the other. What seems certain, though, is that in the mechanism of co-creation through a functional relationship, the musician provides something that participants cannot obtain alone, just as the audience is provider of something that the musician cannot obtain alone. Beyond the relational interdependency, both parties are thus *functionally interdependent* as the relationship, in addition to humanistic processes, *serves* the purpose of creating music.

In 5.1 I have pointed out that the relationship emerging in musicking with elderly people can become personal and musicians make attempts to increase that personal side. Some examples suggest that the relationship at the same time becomes a resource in the co-creative process, that personal contact is put to use in the creation of music. This led me to consider the relationship as, in addition to being humanistic, a functionally interdependent relationship. I proposed that the relationship could best be characterised as one that blends aspects of a friendship with an

artist-muse or a participant-muse collaboration. I have pointed out that, in case of the muse relationship, it is not always distinguishable who is the muse, and who in fact is the creator.

### 5.2.3 Where the humanistic and the functional blur

I have pointed out that the interaction in co-creative musicking with elderly people can serve both humanistic and functional purposes of the relationship, giving rise to a personal, caring and sometimes intimate relationship and co-creatively produced music as their respective outcomes. The implicitness within which the negotiation and musicians' navigation (partially) takes place, however, may complicate this system. When a musician and participant interact and part of that is implicit, it may not be clear which of the two purposes is actually served, or whether both are. It would, for example, be impossible to determine whether Guusje and Fara's conversation took place in the first place to serve the relationship, the co-creation, or both.

It should be noted that such unclear and/or undecided interactions may cause confusion and should be treated carefully. For the writing of the lyrics inspired by her conversation with Guusje, Fara had access to very personal information. Technically speaking, Fara could have translated that information literally and with explicit reference to Guusje.

Beyond causing confusion and requiring attention, such 'blurring' of the humanistic and the co-creative side of the interaction may, however, also can be beneficial for the benefit of the relationship and the music. In the baton interaction in Music at the ward's thick description, for example, I pointed out the ambiguity surrounding who is in fact in control of the musicking. I argued that either Mr Staal or the musicians could be seen in control, or both. At some point, Mr Staal clearly felt empowered through his conducting and took leadership when asking for a next piece from the musicians. After what to be played next is negotiated, Marijn invites Mr Staal to keep influencing *only if he wants to*; in this way she reciprocates his empowered self-determination. The relationship, at that point, feels as an open space where all involved are aware of the freedom they have to act and to initiate. Marijn invites, but takes off pressure of *having to* by adding those five words. It is likely that the baton, as the musicians' act of outsourcing responsibility, may have elicited this freedom and horizontal interaction.

What is remarkable here, though, is that the interaction leading up to the baton improvisation was clearly directed at making the creative-productive purpose occur, that of co-creating through the baton. The effect, however, is that Mr Staal feels empowered and takes responsibility. He also expresses how 'surprised' he is and how 'fun' he finds the conducting; the interaction, thus, has affected Mr Staal. This, in the first place, appears to be a humanistic outcome rather than a creative-productive one. This would mean that the two sides of the

relationship may not only blur in practice, they also have the capacity to influence each other, through music.

The example with Mr Staal becomes even more interesting when we considering Mr Staal's request. After the improvisation, he asks the musicians for a piece about the *bonding* he feels now, after a few meetings, with the musicians. The affective effect, thus, gets reciprocated back into the creative-productive side of the relationship. Aspects of the friendship, thus, are given back by the muse to the artist-musician as inspiration.

The interpretation of Mr Staal's interaction with the musicians corroborates Matarasso's (2017) suggestion that the co-creation and the relationship are interconnected. The functionality of the relationship that I pointed out earlier is therefore not a mere support or 'inspiration' to the creation of music, from relationship to co-creation, but also works the other way around, from co-creation to (social) relationship. The example of Mr Staal further complicates the relationship between musicians and participants and shows that the one-dimensionality of considering the relationship as an artist-muse relationship, where the musician's gain is primary, is far too short-sighted. Finally, what the example points out about music's power for societal change, is that addressing the other as muse can eventually transform the relationship into more of a friendship relation. Co-creative musicking, in other words, carries the potential to transform social relationships.

But when it comes to 'transforming' what is in the social situation, from a co-creative perspective it seems necessary to also involve the participants' view on such transformation, which triggers ethical considerations. I have already flagged this at the exposition of Praxialism in the theoretical-conceptual framework, where I have argued that intentionality of the other should be considered. In Music at the ward, it was made clear by the musicians that they are not jukeboxes – what if that was exactly what people preferred? Wanting to experience a recognizable sound or format (a typical concert) seems not far-fetched, as patients may in fact long for a reminder of life outside the hospital.

#### 5.2.4 Tensions of equality

The partially functional nature of the relationship, together with the out-of-balance power dynamics of implicit co-creative negotiation that were highlighted in paragraph 5.1.2, makes the 'horizontal governing' typical for rigorous co-creation nearly impossible. Dynamics of power, and the ceding of power by the musicians as part of that, has been highlighted as an important issue in achieving co-creation (Matarasso, 2017). Small reminds us that the relationship between musician and audience carries "an infinity of nuances not necessarily expressed by visible

behaviour in the performance space” (Small, 1998, p. 196). In the four cases studied, dynamics of power existed in several forms. In this chapter I will try to disentangle these forms.

Considering the interaction mechanism of the call-welcome as Higgins (2012a) described, for example, a power hierarchy can be observed right from the start between the members of the relationship. The hierarchy puts musicians and participants in unequal positions, and the relationship, therefore, “cannot be equal” (Higgins, 2012a, p. 160). Equality is, however, important to both musicians and participants (Ibid., p. 161). Higgins also, conversely, claims by referring to the work of Alexander Nehamas (2008), “what is essential about friendships is that one does not simply treat everybody the same: friendships are inherently based on inequality since you give your friends preferential treatment over others” (Ibid., p. 163). The two groups find it important to *sense* equality and *treat* each other as equals (Woolhead et al. 2006, Bouteloup 2010), which seems exactly essential to horizontal governing.

In the four cases here, equality is indeed important. On the one hand, it seems to act as a much sought-after ideal, as a dream. Musicians will make strategic efforts to maintain a sense of equality. When William initially did not reveal his musician identity at the open house, for example, he did that not to create bias in the first contact. William knew from experience that his expert status affects the relationship. In an interview he mentions that he finds it “not done” that leaders of community projects arrive with big egos. He explains that his identity as a musician may overshadow his intention to establish genuine contact.

In paragraph 5.1.2 I already pointed out that the mediator role, for Music at the ward, plays a part in negotiating a situation that *feels* as equal as possible. Beyond this mediator-role, Music at the ward demonstrates that a more equal sense in the social situation can also be effectuated through the music itself, for example through Mr Staal’s baton situation as I have analysed in the previous chapter.

On the other hand, in contrast to the search for equality, I have also observed moments where musicians exactly did the opposite, that is: emphasize their expert-musician role, and thus, re-introduce some of the hierarchy. In *The Presidents*, the musical identities of the workshop leaders became tangible in the session in various ways. The judging tone towards the “maybe not most interesting” easy-to-play percussion instruments, for example, emphasised their own proficiency of mastering an orchestral instrument. Geike’s stowing away her own instrument emphasized the exclusivity of her instrument. Another poignant example was the open negotiation of what to play in front of participants by Geike and Fleur, through which they provided a glimpse of what it can be like to be a professional musician. The peek inside the musicians’ life world highlighted their musicianship and professionalism, by which the musicians modelled their profession to the (amateur) participants. This reminds of Small’s observation of

the symphonic concert performance where the audience is “excluded from the magic world of the musicians” (Small, 1998, p. 73). The act, seemingly improvised, elicited a seducing effect of showing the greatness of what participants are getting into now by participating in this project. With a different effect than in the concert hall, the inequality between musicians and participants with regards to proficiency in music, therefore, is played out to facilitate the relationship further.

The expert status in music that the musicians bring with themselves into the situation, is capital in a Bourdieusian sense. The inequality of capital makes the field inherently competitive. This reminds of what Higgins (2008, 2012a), by referring to Mauss, introduced in Community Music as the mechanism behind ‘the gift.’ The musicians’ expertise is revealed to participants, who may perceive this as something exclusive, as a gift. In this way, the session “becomes a springboard for positive creativity, exploration, and future happenings” (Higgins 2012a, p. 153). But, as both authors claim, a gift is never free; a gesture comes with an expectation of reciprocity. The gift, thus, might be “poison,” and a “[session] becomes a disappointment and a negative experience, making false claims and raising hopes. This type of experience might reinforce the participants’ belief in their lack of musicality” (Ibid., p. 153). Given the dual effect that the musicians’ expert positioning can elicit, it seems highly important for the musicians to be aware for signals of ‘poisonous’ participant experiences.

Whereas in *The Presidents* the musicians steadily hold on to their musician ‘expert’ identity, Simon and the musicians at *Music at the ward*, after introducing themselves as musicians, change their presentation. An even better way to describe this would be that they extend their identity as the relationship evolves. In Simon’s session, participants liked watching and listening to Simon, who self-reportedly felt like “a pop star”. At the same time, however, Simon broke away from his musician role now and then, showing interest and concern in search for an equal contact with participants beyond his musicianship. The same is true for in *Music at the ward*, where they “enter as musicians,” the musicians’ personal side was increasingly put forward in making contact with participants. In the *Music at the open house* project, on the contrary, musicians first sought contact with participants (covertly or overtly) and then moved on to introducing music into the relationship and showing their musical skills. In the latter three cases, musicians present themselves both as musician, an expert in music, as well as a human being. Both personae seem to exist side-by-side. In performances on stage, the persona of the ‘human being’ seems non-existent; this is a new aspect of the musician.

Except for *The Presidents*, I saw musicians who sought a position for themselves that is from the outset much more equal to participants but one that preserves an always available refuge to their expert status. In the *Music at the open house* this occurred through instantly connecting as fellow human beings and then continued on to expose their musicianship there; whereas in *Music at the ward* musicians presented themselves first as musicians, and gradually

approached participants on the same level. In Music at the ward, the musicians also spoke about 'going to a place where roles do not exist', but also mention the importance of their 'professional mask.' Although aiming to 'break through' the invisible wall with the audience and wanting to create human-to-human contact, they also speak about 'needing conversations backstage'. The variety of approaches seems to correspond or at least reflect this division. The baton seems, in some ways, to diffuse musical roles and responsibilities, eliciting a sense of equality and reciprocity. The playing of repertoire, however, reminds of a performance in which responsibilities are divided in a conventional way. Although coming close to the audience, there still exists a division, an invisible wall. In the situation with Ms Brand, for example, the classical concert stage, from this perspective, appears not to be that far away.

In this sense, The Presidents' approach to building relationships with participants differed from the other three cases, where the musicians are at times less expeditious in celebrating their musicianship and where it is more a case of the musicians immersing themselves in the life worlds of the participants. The musicians here relied on their privilege and seemed to not consider that each of the participants may have their own capital to share.

In conclusion, beyond serving the music through a functional side and serving an emerging relationship through a humanistic side, the musician-audience relationship in co-creative musicking can be characterised as one in which the traditional invisible wall between musicians and participants gets either broken through or reconstructed. In spite of their intentions, attempts and successes in breaking down barriers, musicians still choose to retreat in their expert shell at times. Power is therefore ceded, as was proposed in co-creative literature and which was recognized in the cases studied, but the empirical material also suggests that that may happen for strategic reasons. The musicians' leading and powerful role is confirmed: they take responsibility and they show attention to the situation. They also practice control and, in scenarios beyond the scope of the material studied here but as was seen elsewhere (Brown & Volgsten, 2006), carry a power to potentially manipulate the situation to their advantage.

Up until this point, the analysis has focused on the overall mutual interaction emerging between participants and musicians of co-creative musicking with elderly people. I have examined how the music and its formats are negotiated implicitly, and have pointed out its problems in paragraph 5.1. I have then proposed that the relationship that emerges in co-creative musicking is one that carries elements of a friendship as well as of an artist-muse collaboration. I have observed that the interaction does not always make clear to what extent they manifest themselves. This could be explained through the potentially concealed nature of the nuances of

the relationship (Small, 1998), and I have proposed that this entails both risks as well as possibilities. In the following paragraph 5.3 I will examine the considerations which musicians engage with when practicing such navigation and negotiation in devising.



### **5.3 Considerations of the navigating and negotiating musician**

In the previous two paragraphs I have examined musicians' practices of inducing creative-productive processes and formats (5.1) as well as social relationships (5.2) when devising co-creative forms of musicking with elderly people. I have pointed out the interconnectedness of the two areas and the functionality that the two sides of the musicking situation include. I have concluded that in these practices, musicians seem to be acting in a state of continuously navigating and negotiating in these practices.

Addressing the last of the three subquestions, this chapter will shift focus to the musicians, and will zoom in on the considerations underpinning such navigation and negotiation from the musicians' perspective only. In order to develop this underpinning, I have closely analysed musicians' decision-making across the creative-productive process, formats and relationships. For this I have focused on particular moments of decision-making that could be considered key and on the most tangible expressions of their navigation and negotiation. I will present the considerations in the form of two broad clusters: the prepared and the unpredictable (5.3.1) and the other and oneself (5.3.2). The chapter will conclude with an overview of these considerations (5.3.3).

#### 5.3.1 The prepared and the unpredictable

In the process of identifying moments of decision-making for further analysis, I discovered that the moments in which decisions were taken differed significantly: some decisions were taken long before entering the context; other decisions took place in the moment of interaction itself. In *The Presidents*, for example, the work format (the creative workshop) and session plan were determined in advance, on the basis of earlier experience with younger age groups. In the open house project, the format of working was developed after a longer period of contact with the people on site. The two examples show that the degree of freedom that is nurtured regarding the development and implementation of a format can differ considerably. Similarly, in the four cases the decision of what music to play was taken at different points in time. In *The Presidents*, the exact sounding of the music that was produced during the workshop was not thought out in advance. Simon, on the contrary, made a setlist, a list of songs around a particular theme ordered in a specific sequence that was already fixed before entering the session.

Simultaneously relying on preparation as well as being sensitive to what happens in the moment, or to the degree of unpredictability that is fostered, can be observed in all four cases. This section addresses the consideration of the 'when' in the situation through the fleshing out practitioner's balancing act between preparedness and unpredictability.

The co-existence of both prepared and unprepared aspects endorses what is known from the co-creation paradigm and from community music research. Higgins (2012a) has described this continuous balancing act between preparation and deciding in-the-moment as central to comfortable facilitation, as it is such process that “enables participants’ creative energy to flow, develop, and grow through pathways specific to individuals and the groups in which they are working” (p. 148). There is always an openness to “the possibility of the unexpected that comes from individuals in their interactivity with the group” (Ibid.). This seems most in line with the decision-making in The Presidents and of Simon. It is perhaps not a coincidence that these two were built on the group’s efforts, with group dynamics playing an important role. To the musicians, this entails “giving up control” (Ibid.) and devising thus becomes a “venture into the unknown” (Higgins, 2012a, p. 147).

Next to co-creation and community music, Praxialism, by contrast, seems to take a more rigorous side in the tension between preparedness and unpredictability. From Praxialism’s focus on situatedness, that postulates a dialogue within a given situation, it seems that it is the degree of unpredictability that will determine the success of a practice.

One of the The Presidents musicians described their work as “entering a space where nothing is fixed.” The musicians there were prepared to “just go with what happens in that moment”, and practiced approaches that “triggered something that serves as a catalyst itself”, which is strongly reminiscent of Higgins’ view. However, it is unclear where this flexibility lies exactly, what was the scope of that flexibility (how flexible exactly?) and whether the The Presidents session in fact felt as such an ‘unknown’ territory to the musicians, as the two were familiar with the format.

What was likely referred to by the musicians when talking about flexibility, were the moments of playing in the playground section, in which participants could explore the instruments freely and work in group. As pockets of providing a degree of freedom, these moments seem to stand in great contrast to the directive devising that the musicians otherwise practice. The playground, for participants, acts as an area of exploration with clear boundaries and accessible supervision where participants are engaged and productive. This is what Higgins recognized as providing *safety without safety*, a practice in which “[b]oundaries are marked to provide enough structural energy for the workshop to begin, but care is then taken to ensure that not too many restraints are employed that might delimit the flow or the becoming of any music making.” The workshop leaders, thus, seem to go for two extremes: either giving instructions or giving a lot of freedom. In this way, they seem to secure both their own sense of safety as well as that of the participants.

By not relinquishing control with regard to the format, the musicians themselves can control the course of the session. This lack of allowing unpredictability to occur comes across as an avoidance of situatedness. The musicians, instead, devised a clear division of roles, and do

not seem to allow much participation in the parts that they controlled themselves. The community music facilitator is meant to create “conducive opportunities through which to generate a creative music-making experience, or, as one might say, a venture into the unknown” (Higgins, 2012, p. 147). Similarly in the case of Simon, the session’s scope of flexibility seemed relatively small at first. Simon held on to his pre-scripted setlist as a backbone (Gregory, 2004), tinkering with it a little in the delivery only. The way the setlist was delivered, that is, the verbal parts of improvised interacting and bantering, however, contained much situated decision-making. The degree of situatedness from a praxialist perspective, remains, however, scarce.

The two sessions largely took shape according to their (written) plans, resulting in often instructive and, to the musicians, predictable events. Practically all decisions that can take place in advance had been taken, even those that involve aspects of playing. Only the playing itself that is fostered through the ‘boundaried’ playground, is unpredictable.

Quite different approaches to preparedness and unpredictability seem to drive the other two cases. In Music at the open house and Music at the ward musicians seem to pro-actively exploit the opportunities that both preparedness and unpredictability offer, which seems to correspond with the integrally practiced co-creation that I have identified in Chapter 5.1.

Although to a lesser extent, Music at the open house and Music at the ward also worked with a prepared set of principles and/or material. The open house’s working format was roughly shaped according to William’s experience from previous projects. It transformed as the project progressed. As for backbone material, the open house project did not prescribe the content of the music that was produced leaving much up to the input of participants and musicians. The moment in which Ruben introduces himself at the open house with a question to the participants about what *they* would like to hear, exemplifies this. In Music at the ward, each project has its set of repertoire arranged for the particular setup of instruments in that particular project. It was mostly the contact with participants and what that elicited that brought freedom into the creative process. No sheet music was used when playing at the ward. There was an implicit consensus over the rough outline of an interaction, of how a situation normally unfolds. Critical in this, seems to be the preservation of this explorative, experimental and unpredictable core as the work becomes more and more established over time.

The acceptance of the spontaneous in the latter two cases, however, appears to differ fundamentally from that in the first two cases. In cases 1 and 2, it was the situation that demanded spontaneity; and the musicians accepted that that comes with the job. In cases 3 and 4, in addition to this acceptance, the intention of acting spontaneously is part of the concept behind the work. In the Music at the open house project, the work got shaped on the go; in Music at the ward the musical situation is decided on the spot, in the hospital room. In contrast to the former two cases, unpredictability and surprise are accepted as a basis for creation. The

musicians are not busy creating ‘pockets of play’ through playgrounds but rather the entire initiative seems to act as a space of play with porous and negotiable boundaries. This reminds of what Schön described in his definition of the reflective practitioner:

“the practitioner allows himself to experience surprise, puzzlement, or confusion in a situation which he finds uncertain or unique. He reflects on the phenomenon before him, and on the prior understandings which have been implicit in his behaviour. He carries out an experiment which serves to generate both a new understanding of the phenomenon and a change in the situation” (1983, p. 68)

Apart from the situatedness and tailor-madeness to the social situation that I presume to be present in all cases, what seems to distinguish the cases, thus, is a differing level of comfort in dealing with unpredictability. The musicians here show strong reliance on their practical sense and mindfulness in making situationally appropriate decisions. This corroborates what has been identified within Praxialism as the ‘situational ethic’ forming a part of the ‘professional ethic’ (Regelski, 2005) or in creative learning as adaptivity to the social and socio-musical situation (Renshaw, 2010). Matarasso calls this ‘resonance’ (2013), where what matters “is the quality of self-awareness and critical reflection artists bring to their work: that is central to all truly honest creative practice. But when they work with others, particularly in community-based or participatory contexts, there is the further challenge of ensuring that the critical reflection, and the definition of success, is opened to all participants. [...] Whatever solutions may be found, but addressing this challenge is central both to an ethically-defensible process and to the probability of programmes achieving their goals” (Matarasso, 2013, p. 12).

But in practice, situations can become more complex, and an increase of situatedness can lead to uncomfortable or even insecure action. Even within one case or situation, and perhaps within one musician, the degree in which one is comfortable with unpredictability can change from one moment to the next. Especially in situations that are highly fragile and emotionally charged, coping with unpredictability can be simply too much, even for those with a degree of comfort with unpredictability. Thinking back to the situation of Ms Brand at the start of this dissertation, in spite of being emotionally affected, the musicians seem to hold onto something during playing, as if playing helps them cope in the moment.

Music at the ward’s example of Mr Staal, which I have extensively described in the thick description, shows the intricate constellations that the balance of preparedness versus spontaneity can have within one Music at the ward visit. In the description I have already made a distinction between the first and second half of the encounter. Especially in terms of musicians’ dealing with unpredictability, this division seems justified. The first half comes across as highly

prepared by the musicians. This can be derived from the musicians' calculative actions when entering the room: Rik leaves his cello outside and brings a baton instead, and it is agreed on in the corridor that Jonas does not enter the room at first. But then, even though the approach itself is known and planned by the musicians beforehand, what the (improvised) music will sound like is not known in advance. But improvising through the baton is not the only area that is unpredictable here. The improvisation is based on the baton, so in principle Mr Staal's movements determine the sound. What the musician does, however, is interpreting the baton movements. The sounding result is not necessarily what the patient with the baton had in mind. Although not predictable, the piece is not only reliant on the spontaneity of the baton, it is also reliant on the action repertoire of the musician, his or her backbone material. What to play the second half of the interaction, then, is negotiated on the spot between the musicians and Mr Staal. This second half is less prescribed and co-creation is not only practiced on a musical but also on a personal level. Mr Staal, for a large part, decides the approach, so the musicians have to adapt to it in the moment. Part of his choice, however, consists of a piece of repertoire, which means that the musicians can heavily rely on their preparation. Thus, within the same visit, two pieces were played in which the balance between preparedness and spontaneity, as well as the level of the social situation on which this negotiation took place, differed significantly. What can be observed with regard to the musicians' devising, is that the musicians shifted their intention or openness to spontaneity in the moment from a prescribed plan to an open negotiation. The example, therefore, shows that the degree of unpreparedness and situatedness can shift within one situation.

Music at the open house's and Music at the ward's conscious choice for a concept that is built on spontaneity and situatedness may come across as unusual in contexts where people are vulnerable and need care. From the perspective of basic life needs, recognisability and predictability support wellbeing. Structure and being in control of what can be kept in control are then important. Thus, the restoration and maintaining of these needs seems to be preferable above having these needs neglected. Facilitating an environment that propagates unpredictability, i.e. the exact opposite of these needs, may therefore seem unethical.

The navigation and negotiation that musicians engaged in when devising co-creative musicking at the open house, thus, resembled walking on a thin line and can only be judged in context. The ethics of stretching the unpredictability with elderly people also challenges the practitioner with a praxial orientation. The musicians had the intention to make situated decisions for the good of the flourishing and fulfilment of the people involved. Such eudaimonic intention in itself, however, cannot be fully ethically justified, as was already posited in the theoretical-conceptual framework. Whereas a strictly performative setup would probably provide a lot more safety for both participants and musicians, choosing an approach that leaves

it up to the moment to decide how and what will be created then seems risky. Similarly, Music at the ward seems, perhaps even more, challenging in such risky decision making given the spontaneousness of the interactions, whereas the musicians in the Music at the open house project compromise more by strongly following the participants' indications of what they would like and allow more time to contemplate decisions.

### 5.3.2 The other and oneself

Earlier I have observed that, as part of devising co-creative musicking with elderly people, musicians build friend- and muse-like personal relationships with participants. I have pointed out that fostering this relationship goes hand in hand in the dialogue with the creative-productive process: the relationship feeds the (co-)creative musicking, and, vice versa, the creation 'feeds' the relationship.

Since much of this feeding into takes place on an implicit level, only moments of decision-making actually reveal what the musicians took from the contact, or: 'the other'. The second cluster of considerations that musicians encounter in devising co-creative musicking with elderly people, and that this paragraph addresses, has to do with the 'who' and, indirectly, the 'what', with the roles and responsibilities that musicians take as well as 'grant' in the decision-making.

As part of presenting the implicit process underlying co-creative musicking with elderly people, I have shown that decisions are informed by the contact that musicians have with participants. Musicians, thus, include 'the other', or better: 'the other as seen through the eyes of the musician' in the creative-productive process. This strongly resonates with Praxialism's view of personhood as introduced in the theoretical-conceptual framework. I have explained that this 'seeing' can take place on an implicit level (for example, in Simon's session) and can take shape on various levels, even through small things. Take for example Simon's interaction to give participant Richard a sense of inclusion and validation, and make him feel at ease in the sessions. In Music at the ward, by practicing person-centred music-making, addressing the other's personhood forms a central pillar of the work. In The Presidents, such attention to the other was less foregrounded. Nevertheless, the freedom in some parts of the workshop could be seen as an invitation for participants to do what suits them, and the sporadic one-to-one contact that emerged through that could be seen as potentially providing such validation. I will show how such 'validating the other' as a practice occurs in an often more intentional yet complicated way in the other two cases.

In Music at the open house, validating the other was fostered through song lyrics in which the musicians portrayed their contact with individual participants. This reciprocal process,

which took off with a strong emphasis on the humanistic side, got extended through the creative music-making process. The result of the validation through the texts, however, could be contested when seen in the bigger picture of the project. The personal connection that started off the music making was in fact essential to the creation of music; it was a necessary step in addressing the intention to jointly create music. The contact, thus, proved to be a strong expression of the musicians' intentionality. One could even go further to argue that the purpose of the validation was to meet the musicians' agenda to create music, making the validation a form of exploitation of the relationship.

This is reminiscent of the ambivalent mechanism of the gift theory that I have pointed out earlier in this Chapter (see 5.1 and 5.2), which simultaneously carries hospitality through "complementary attributes such as empathy and care", but which gesture also "reminds us of less positive characteristics that lurk within such human transactions: these include self-interest, systems of debts, and expectations of reciprocity" (Higgins, 2012a, p. 152). The mechanism of validation described further questions the merits of the ambiguous functionality of the musician-muse relationship that feeds both creative-productive processes and the interpersonal relationship. It also calls into question the practice of musicians in Music at the ward prioritizing the importance of being genuine. In the open house, it seems to be the musicians' empathy and their modest approach in the initial contact that sparks off the project as a whole and eventually also kindles the creative process to the writing of the lyrics and the music. The contact, in retrospect, could thus be seen as largely functional. What is the status then of such functional genuineness, and how can such an approach be justified in situations with people with dementia? This profound ethical question has been addressed in community music:

"Silverman's (2012) exhortations of love-in-action, suggest that a community musician cannot 'fake' their community practice, but rather, ensure that they put into action genuine expressions of love in the interests of their loved ones. These ethical expressions remind the community musician that first and foremost their work involves a caring and loving relation with their fellow human beings, a relation that may require them to relinquish their personal agenda and follow the prompts of careful listening and loving attention" (Lines, 2018, p. 393).

Lines, interpreting Silverman, gives us a glimpse of the highly complex practice of fostering implicit functional relationships and suggests that this can be overcome by compromising through relinquishing one's own agenda.

To illustrate how such a compromise may take place in practice, I return to the visit to Mr Staal in Music at the ward. Considering the first half of the interaction in which one musician

improvises on Mr Staal's movements with a baton, the musicians showed strong direction of the social situation, initially not seeming to allow much participation or consideration for Mr Staal. However, Rik explained afterwards that the actions, including being directive, were inspired by Mr Staal and the contact that the musicians had with him before. Based on their previous encounters, the musicians had increasingly felt that he took control of their music making. As if Mr Staal's increasing control had nurtured the musicians to, in turn, act increasingly controlling in response, as if he had forced them to be directive, and thus, to compromise their otherwise dialogical approach. That the musicians' intentions and compromising were not openly spoken about with Mr Staal makes this incident difficult to grasp fully. Compromising may, thus, have involved a largely tacit reading and knowing, and this triggers ethical questions, again. Misinterpretation may occur and the implicitness of the process may lead to misuse of information.

The term 'misuse', however brings me back to thinking about the artistic nature of the work studied here. Can an artistic-interpretive act ever be called a form of misuse of information? Also, the act of compromising and presenting it as a virtue of musicianship triggers questions about the weight and essence of the artistic voice of the artist-musician. So far I have dealt with the validation of the other, but equally musicians do feel the urge to validate themselves and prioritize their own thinking and contributions above those of the other. Musicians' own thinking may also be pollinated by 'musicianism' (Regelski, 2012), which I have translated to co-creative musicking in Chapter 2 as a tendency to prioritize *musical* values before or above values of *wellbeing*. Thus, not only do musicians incorporate what is *good* for the other or oneself and what seems to validate the other or oneself, but also their expert musical judgement of what sounds well can influence this. The musicians, in this way, lead a decision-making process that include themselves as participants equal to everyone else, and at the same time validates their distinguished position as leader and expert of music.

To some of the musicians of Music at the open house, this balancing act of considering the other as well as oneself meant subordinating their own artistic needs for innovation to the greater purpose and for sustaining the connection with participants. This could be seen in the first place at the final outcome: the fairly conventional performance did not align with the innovative feel of the dialogical and co-creative outset that some had envisaged. What is surprising, then, is that from an integral and organically-emerging co-creative approach, a rather conventional performance resulted eventually. The performance seems to stand in high contrast to the person-centred and co-creative values of the process preceding it.

In Music at the ward, a similar trade-off existed around the idea of musicians as jukeboxes, as on-demand entertainers who can play anything you ask them to. The musicians'



intended person-centredness, therefore was challenged instantly: the musicians wish to act person-centred, but not *too* person-centred. This confirms the importance, and sometimes difficulty, of a negotiated shared intentionality, which I already highlighted in the second part of this chapter.

What seems to complicate the balancing act of including the other as well as oneself, is that the relationship cannot prioritize music-making all the time. There are also interpersonal habits and obligations that come with human contact and relationships. In paragraph 5.2 I have identified moments in the relationships that were reminiscent of a caring family-like friendship than of a purely artistic collaboration. In the contact with Mr Staal, the Music at the ward musicians acted discreetly and respectfully by not probing further into the personal background of the patient. It shows that the musicians reflect on issues such as trust, respect and responsibility and demonstrate that they act reflexively on the basis of their estimation and reflection of the situation. In this way, the musicians' own morality comes into play. Decision-making in co-creative musicking with vulnerable elderly therefore requires sensitivity to personal issues of the other and involves ethical deliberation. If the relationship is indeed a kind of friendship, however, the musicians may have felt entitled to take the liberty to ask further questions. A friendship comes with responsibilities, these could include a form of 'care.'

### 5.3.3 Dynamics of considerations involved in devising co-creative musicking with elderly people

To bring this subchapter 5.3 to a close, I will interconnect the considerations that musicians engage with when devising co-creative musicking with elderly people. I have explained that these considerations reflect the musicians' engagement in the more dialogical practices discussed in 5.1 and 5.2, which are the navigation and negotiation in the (co-)creative processes as well as the emerging relationship between musician and participants. I have also explained that I gained access to the considerations through key moments of decision-making, and that the considerations, thus, strictly speaking, say something about the decision-making only.

I will configure here in an attempt to bring back the holistic picture of what is understood as the Reckwitzian bundle of emerging practices of devising co-creative musicking with elderly people. I will describe the considerations in words and will use Figure 1. as a two-dimensional visual support. I should emphasize, though, that in reality I see the practice as a continuous balancing act that takes shape in time, which, as a third dimension not marked on the figure, possesses 'inherent liquidity' and thus unpredictability. The practice as a whole could be circumscribed, to quote one of The Presidents' musicians, "as entering a place where nothing is fixed." The negotiation, navigation and continuous balancing that I have observed from the

empirical data corroborates what I highlighted in Theory of Practice as the ever-changing, open-ended and contingent performance of a situation (see paragraph 2.1.1).

The two central considerations that I will take from the four existing cases deal with preparedness and unpredictability, and compromising between contributions of the other and oneself. Although I have tried to make clear that in practice these considerations take on more erratic shapes, in general I consider them as two axes as continua with two poles on each end. The cases show that the poles, however, cannot be observed in practice in their isolated form; there will always be elements of both poles present in musicians' considerations. Central in these considerations, visually marked by a positioning at the crossing of the axes, stands the musician who is driven by his intentions and acts from this intentionality in finding an appropriate balancing of the two axes.

For the first consideration, or axis, the poles are preparedness and spontaneity. The preparedness is expressed through maximizing predictability and leads to instructive-directive approaches. The other extreme is, spontaneity, and takes shape through acceptance of unpredictability and being in the moment.

For the second consideration, the poles are focus on the other and focus on the musician's personal self. The former is expressed through full hospitality and reciprocity, whereas the latter is focused solely on 'musicianship' and celebrates the autonomy of the musician-artist.

Musicians make decisions in the midst of balancing these four extremes appropriately, i.e. 'situated', to the setting and are influenced by various backgrounds and factors in the situation. First of all there is the factual background (expressed in biographies, time or space) or 'resources' as well as the values, predominantly fuelled by ethics, of the individuals, institutions and places involved. These two act as poles and are visualised through a blue frame encompassing the axes. Such balancing basically entails to develop the work co-creatively (through making it meaningful to all involved) as well as person-centred (tailoring it to the specific individuals and context). This means nurturing an environment involving aspects that are (creatively) challenging yet safe, and new yet familiar.

Finally, as a characterisation of the mode of navigation and negotiation, it should be noted that these considerations take shape through explicit and/or implicit processes, and that the work comes into full fruition through reflexive practice both in-action (in the moment) as well as on-action (afterwards), seen through Schön's concept of *The Reflective Practitioner* (1983). This not only complicates the navigation and negotiation from the musicians' side, musicians should also be aware that participants may not be aware of this ongoing balancing act.

The musicians' act of upholding this dynamic constellation of considerations in action, including navigating, negotiating and continuous balancing, seems to call upon what I have

highlighted in Bourdieu's 'practical sense' as intuition, tact, timing and improvisation (see paragraph 2.1.2). Equally Bourdieu's 'logic of practice', which was defined in the same paragraph as the individual's learned everyday experiences consolidated in the habitus, seems to be adopted in the system through the prominent place for the prepared.

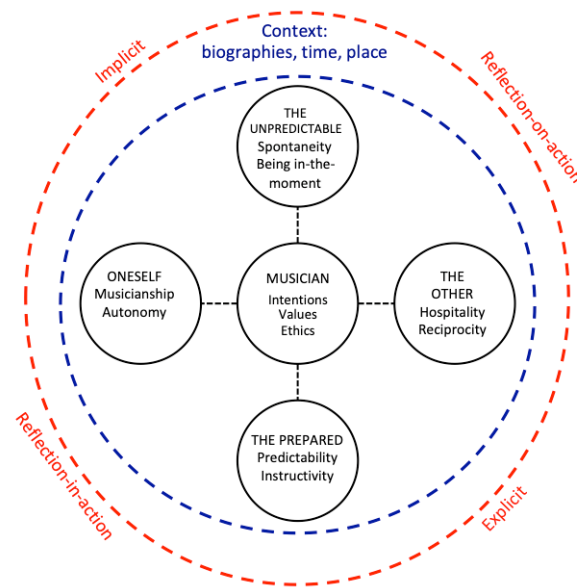


Figure 1. Dynamic constellation of musicians' considerations when devising co-creative musicking with elderly people.

#### **5.4 Between eudaimonia and musicianism: a case for ethical musicianship**

After closely reading and interpreting the creative-productive process (5.1), the relationship (5.2) and musicians' considerations (5.3) emerging in the four cases of musicking with elderly people, in this paragraph I will introduce the final point of this thesis, which is the need for ethical practitionership when devising co-creative musicking with elderly people.

From a musicking perspective, the situation studied here can be considered a performance of sound as a result of relationships within a specific social group. Small reminds us that this practice involves exploration, affirmation and celebration of the values that underpin the social group. In essence, this involves thinking about what is desirable or not; or “the concepts of what constitute right relationships” (Small, 1998, p. 183). Values and ‘rightness’ involves ethical evaluations.

The close examination of the four existing cases performed in the previous paragraphs of this chapter revealed that the musicking included inequalities in power in the relationships in both the (starting) social situation, mostly expressed through the differing roles and musical expertise that is brought to the setting. Although I have pointed out that in some ways the musicians are (inter)dependent on participants, overall, musicians are the ones that tend to have the upper hand in the situation. This imbalance of power triggered reflection on the ethics of the relationship.

The musicians chose to devise – instead of present – the musicking situation, which became clear from their deviation off the beaten path and norms that prevail in western (classical) music. Such deviation elicited opportunities to act upon this imbalance of power. In shaping the practice and relationships, the musicians in the four cases were involved in negotiating and navigating between, on the one hand, the prepared and the unpredictable, and, on the other hand, the other and oneself. At the centre of this double balancing act I positioned the musicians taking decisions. In these considerations, the musicians appeared to be driven by their own intentionality which I summarized in the following two orientations: the eudaimonic orientation, which is driven by an intention to do good to the flourishing of the other, and the musicianist orientation, which prioritizes the values of music as an art form.

##### *The risks of eudaimonic and musicianist orientations*

A eudaimonic orientation is one in which a musician seems to be driven to affect the other's intentions, wishes, tastes and possibilities, with the eventual purpose to let the other flourish, which happens through gaining meaning, virtue and self-realization (Ascenso et al., 2017 referring to Deci & Ryan, 2001). Such orientation may confront musicians with dilemmas that tickle the values and (artistic) intentions that brought them into this situation, and may require

them to, in-the-moment, prioritize, compromise and interrogate their own artistic identity and autonomy. This could be seen in the Music at the open house project, for example, where participants expressed their liking for traditional performances and musicians complying to that even though their own intentions were mostly connected to wanting to breaking with the traditions of such performances.

Striving for equality, however, also may carry a risk of becoming too much to the other. Although not observed in the cases here, the musicians' eudaimonic intentionality to do good to the other's flourishing and fulfilment may in such cases have an overruling effect and foster an opposite effect. The first interactions with Mr Staal, for example, and my examination of it, may present some premonitions for what could be tipping points where the music becomes too much.

Next to eudaimonic intentions, I have also observed clear signals of musicians practicing power from their artistic side in the cases, especially through the practice of showing musical skill (in The Presidents) and refuting participants' input, such as the 'mere' jukeboxing in Music at the ward. Such could be categorized as expressions of 'musicianism' (Regelski, 2012), where musical merits are preferred above humanistic ones.

In the approaches pictured here, the processes of 'being inspired by the other' and 'translating the other's signals into sound' are diffuse artistic acts that make it hard to distinguish who contributed what. There exists a risk of overlooking or overpowering the other's intentionality that makes co-creation where the other is 'used' as a source of inspiration potentially problematic. When that takes place on an implicit level, especially in cases with people with dementia, I have questioned to what extent such a practice is justifiable. Both eudaimonic and musicianist orientations, thus, carry risks of becoming too much.

#### *The co-existence of eudaimonic and musicianist orientations*

The two orientations of intentionality seem to emerge in all the devising of musicking observed here. Their co-existence complicates the examination and eventual understanding of what is really going on. In the situation of Mr Staal conducting one of the musicians, for example, it was unclear which of the options was in fact practiced. I experienced the situation as potentially overpowering the patient, which suggests a musicianist orientation. In an interview afterwards, however, one of the musicians explained that their actions were inspired by Mr Staal. Small already reminded us that, although audience and performers can and will give clues, "it may not be possible to answer those questions by simply observing the visible aspects of the performance" (Small, 1998, p. 7).

What seems to be the real complication of the co-existence of the two orientations and the potential invisibility of their expression in real situations, is the fact that there is a choice about

what orientation to take in what situation, and that musicians are responsible for that. The involvement of participants in such choice is unclear, which may complicate the autonomy and intentionality of the artist versus the intentionality, personhood and situatedness of the participant. The musicians' intentionality as a potentially dominant force, or better: the overlooking of the intentionality of the other, is a tendency that was observed in the (praxialist) literature already (see paragraph 2.3.1). Even in the case of Mr Staal, where the participant showed awareness and could act upon the co-creative collaboration, it could be questioned to what extent the musicians' actions were manipulative. The example shows that 'being inspired by' is a relative and slippery concept. On the one hand it may provide protection to the musicians' artistic freedom. On the other hand, it could be used to (too easily) justify any artistic action, even an action that does not make positive contributions.

What I derive from this is that, beyond the fact that musicians demonstrate willingness and tact to cede and exert power in relation to others and to the context when devising musicking with elderly people (see my interpretation of Matarasso's blog post in 2.2.3), there is also an inner compass of values, morals and intentions at work in deciding when to cede and when to exert. Thus, returning to Figure 1 and picturing musicians balancing at the heart of the two axes, the act of channelling their intentionality – regardless of whether that is eudaimonic, musicianist or both – into practical action seem to require careful ethical considerations.

Small reminds us that musicking allows empowerment to express our values, strive for ideal relationships and consequently express "*this is who we are*" (Small, 1998, p. 213), but that power in the relationships are often unclear. The analysis of the cases here, which mainly relied on observation, exactly shows the impossibility of making explicit the nuances of intention and action in an out-of-balance dynamics of power. This faces musicians devising such musicking, especially in situations with vulnerable people, with ethical challenges of what is appropriate.

Musicians' dealing with the blending of eudaimonic and musicianist orientations determines their devising. It affects the implicitness of the co-creation, the relationship, and eventually the freedom they allow themselves in navigating and negotiation. The ethical issues that were flagged with each of these aspects altogether call for a musicianship characterized by a heightened awareness, reflection and acting concerning the ethics of their work.

In this chapter I have presented the findings of the study. The aim of this study was to describe and theorize emerging (holistic) practices of musicians devising co-creative musicking. The four paragraphs each represent a progressively deepening layer of the studied situation. The first three directly correspond to the three subquestions, and the fourth could be considered the essential point that encompasses the previous three. In paragraph 5.1 I have examined the situated interaction between musicians and participants with the intention to understand the creative-productive process taking place in the musicking situations studied. Although I have recognized some elements that are typical to co-creation, I have problematized the (sometimes partially) implicit level at which that co-creation takes place. I have pointed out that co-creation can potentially contribute to the levelling out of existing inequalities in the musicking situation, but that the freedom of co-creation also is at risk of being misused.

The first analysis of the interaction in the situation also revealed a particular close relationship between musicians and participants, and that this relationship was tied to the creative-productive process and vice versa. In attempting to characterize this relationship in paragraph 5.2, I have identified a humanistic and a functional side to it. The humanistic side could be compared to a friendship that is founded on an interest and care towards the other, and a functional side that could be compared to a relationship of a muse that inspires someone else to create.

In paragraph 5.3, I have zoomed in on the contribution of the musicians that are in charge of devising the musicking situation. I have described the devising as a process of navigating and negotiating in a constellation of two axes, one that considers the personhoods of the other and oneself, and another that comprises the preparedness and unpredictability of the devising. The musicians' navigation and negotiation results in a continuous double-balancing act of these two axes.

In this double-balancing, and basically leading, act, musicians appear to be driven by their own intentionality. I see that overall, this intentionality involves two orientations, which I have seen blended in practice. The first is the eudaimonic orientation, which means that one intends to let the other flourish; the second is the musicianist, which means that one prioritizes musical values above human values. Musicians can 'choose' between the two orientations and can switch in the devising of the musicking at any given time and this choice is not always observable in the situation. Because the choices are about doing good (whether for the other, for the music, or both), ethics are involved. This made me call for an ethical form of musicianship that involves awareness and reflection upon the ethical dilemmas.

## **Chapter 6.**

# **CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

### **6.1 Conclusions**

#### 6.1.1. Towards ‘established’ practices of ethically devising co-creative musicking with elderly people

The central research question of this study is: *What are emerging practices of classically-trained musicians when they devise co-creative musicking with elderly people?* To answer this question, I formulated three subquestions. On the basis of the findings as I presented them in Chapter 5, I will draw the following conclusions to these subquestions:

Subquestion 1: *What dimensions of co-creation emerge in musicking with elderly people?*

The four cases studied in-depth showed that musicians, instead of connecting with audiences through performative ways, foster musicking through more dialogical strategies and an overall directedness towards the other. The creative-productive processes and the sounding result emerged through a process of negotiation between musicians and audience. The musical approaches consisted of a variety and sometimes combinations of musicking strategies, including performing existing repertoire, creating new material and musical improvisation. In many ways the emerging processes were reminiscent of co-creation’s DART perspective (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2014), which prescribes co-creative interaction as dialogical, accessible, risk-benefits assessed and transparent. However, the DART characteristics could not always be ascertained in practice. Instead, the negotiation often took place in part on an implicit level, and participants were not always aware of the implicit negotiation. With some of the participants experiencing physical, cognitive, social and/or psychological frailty, this implicitness may cause a lack of transparent dialogue and access, and an out-of-balance distribution of power in the interaction. Because of that, musicians actively and creatively countered these problems. In two of the four cases, it was recognized that co-creation took place integrally, which meant audiences were included in the decision-making on multiple levels in the initiative, from conception through delivering music.

Subquestion 2: *How can co-creative relationships between classically-trained musicians and elderly audiences be characterised?*



The cases studied involved a particularly close and creatively productive relationship of musicians with their (elderly) audience, or participants. The creative-productive process also showed to be in some cases dependent on the relationship between musicians and participants. Instead of a relationship built on a single dyad in which presenting and validating are the main forms of interaction, the forms of musicking studied here seemed to entail multiple networked dyads and involve a wide range of ways of interacting. I characterised the relationship as a contingent merge between, on the one hand, a friendship that is based on a humanistic intention including ideas of doing good for the other, and, on the other hand, a functional interdependent relationship that inspires the creative-productive process as we know it from the muses. Who acts as muse, as the source of inspiration that kindles the other to act, remained, however, ambiguous. At first sight the participant seemed to act as a muse to the musician to be able to create, but, studying the exchange taking place, the musician could also be seen as delivering a service to the participant. In practice, the humanistic and functional sides to the relationship blur, which may cause confusion in the overall intention of the initiative. The leading position of the musician in the initiative complicated this confusion further, and triggers ethical thinking as to how free and empowered participants in fact are in the co-creation.

Subquestion 3: *What considerations underpin classically-trained musicians' decision-making when devising co-creative musicking with elderly people?*

After having examined how the interaction between musicians and participants gave rise to particular forms of co-creative musicking (see subquestion 1) and a particular relationship between the two groups (subquestion 2), I sought to understand the musicians' contribution when devising co-creative musicking with elderly people. I described this contribution in terms of underpinning considerations. Overall, I observed flexibility, improvisation and tailor-made-ness throughout the entire (fluid) process. The continuous change and multiplicity of factors that compose the social-artistic space required musicians to navigate and negotiate the situation towards satisfying and appropriate musical processes, products and relationships. They do this by preparing as well as being receptive to the unpredictable in the moment (which I pictured as a vertical axis), by considering the other as well as their own personhood (which I pictured as a horizontal axis), and by continuously operating at the centre of double-balancing on these two axes. I observed that the musicians' actions involve a process of ceding and exerting power. Assuming that this process is unequivocally influenced by an inner compass of values, morals and intentions, I concluded that it is important to draw attention to an ethical approach in deciding when to act, that is, when to cede and when to exert power.

In addition to the answers to the three subquestions I have inferred from the drawing up of musicians' considerations that, in their navigation and negotiation, musicians are confronted

with a choice to cede or exert power to advance the musicking. In this choice, musicians have the option to act from eudaimonic perspective, which is driven by an intention to serve the other's flourishing; or the option to act from a musicianist perspective, which consist of subordinating humanistic values for artistic-musical ones. I have pointed out the need for an ethical musicianship that helps steer this choice in an appropriate direction.

### Conclusions in the light of the Theory of Practice

From a Bourdieusian perspective, the musicians' emerging practices exemplify a process of disentangling from a doxa, from existing traditions and discourses, and could therefore be considered examples of 'hysteresis'. The musicians' pioneering becomes apparent through their doubts, contradictive behaviour (William), fighting against stereotypical behaviour (the unusualness of Music at the ward), and struggle to detach from the stereotypical musician in society, for themselves as well as the audience. This corresponds to what Bourdieu calls the 'fuzziness' and 'unsteadiness' in the practical sense when a habitus is undergoing change and shows features of hysteresis, of a mismatch between habitus and field (Bourdieu, 2000; Hardy, 2008).

The fact that the work studied here originates from the intersection of two fields, further complicates the change, especially because some fields are more dominant than others (Bourdieu, 2000; Thomson, 2008). As a group (representing the field of music) entering a field that is different from their own (the field of elderly health care and wellbeing), musicians devising co-creative musicking seem to experience both struggles of power with the host institution as well as it provides them with enriching moments of mutual professional learning.

#### 6.1.2 Reflections on the conclusions

Now that the findings of the study are presented, I wish to list some final reflections that examine the findings from a broader perspective.

Firstly, I wish to bring to mind again my equal valuing of both 'traditional' and more progressive forms of musicking. Although in the description of my early biographical experiences of the instrumental lessons and creative camps I have pointed out exactly the fruitfulness of such co-existing learning environments, given the emphasis on co-creative musicking this may have shifted out of focus. From this perspective I wish to challenge the ubiquitous aspiration for participation that seems to prevail in a large part of the field of music and perhaps the arts in general nowadays (IETM/Shishkova, 2018). Participation, which is what co-creative musicking can offer, is important and provides access to music to those who may have not had access before. But, there may also exist a group of people that does not aspire

to participate in music through active engagement, but rather through listening or letting their minds wander off. In no way do I wish to praise everything that has a slight flavour of co-creation. Rather, the results of this study show the importance of consideration for the intentionality of all involved.

Secondly, I feel uncertain about the shift of paradigm as I have called it from traditional presentational forms of music towards more co-creative work studied here. Although I am confident that a shift is taking place, the extent to which it is a real change may be contested. It may well be that musicians performing exclusively on stage see their work as co-creative, and perhaps more explicitly so than the implicit co-creation that is pronounced here.

## **6.2 Limitations of the study's design**

Ethnography and connected methodological choices have been helpful to finding answers to the research problem that this study tried to address in many ways. Given the exploratory state of the field of co-creative musicking with the elderly, ethnography has allowed for a richness to emerge that likely would not have become apparent through other approaches. I consider a strength of this study being able to carry out the activities in an ethnographic way, through experiencing the work first-hand and talking with practitioners in their natural habitats. The variety of empirical data in combination with a solid theoretical framework and continuous reflexivity makes a case for a powerful triangulation, which expresses that the set of outcomes can be considered relatively reliable and valid. Nevertheless, putting the methodology into a broader paradigm of generating knowledge in a qualitative way, I also observe limitations to the methodology that may lead to questioning the reflexivity, clarity and communicative validity of the outcomes. In the remainder of this section I will highlight some particular strengths and weaknesses of the study's methodology.

### Reflections on the chosen research methods

The selection of the studied cases in itself could be contested. Practical and time constraints caused me to study only a limited number of cases from a limited geographical region; repeating the selection procedure again today and/or with unlimited possibilities may elicit different results. Also, I sought for somewhat contrasting examples within the selection criteria. The extent to which they were, in fact, contrasting, however, could be challenged.

As for the chosen method of participant-observation, being an outsider and being an insider both have their advantages and disadvantages, which I have discussed in Chapter 3 and which are normal in ethnographic research. My relationship to the four cases and its people varied and was different in each case. This meant that I had to negotiate access intensively

through gatekeepers, particularly in the first two cases. On the one hand, these differing relationships may have affected the rigour with which I was able to carry out the research activities. On the other hand, however, these different positions, in practice, meant that I was able to see the work from different angles and from this perspective I feel that the variation of positions across the empirical material has enriched the findings. Being a complete insider, for example as a musician, would potentially have elicited different results. One example is that I, when mediating for Music at the ward, was confronted with a question of a member of staff about the practice's right to exist above other services that were cut as a result of austerity measures. This incident provided a new perspective on my reflections. Without the role of mediator I would have never been able to do that.

However, these different positions, together with the differing length of time that I spent on each case, could be used to contest to what extent making notes as a participant-observer was systematically practiced. My focus in making notes was not what I would call 'standardized' across the practices, as I had differing levels of access to the events from the different positions. This especially had consequences for the extent to which I could capture contextual aspects of the work. What added to this variation in writing notes, was that as I travelled from case to case my focus narrowed and my set of sensitizing concepts changed, and thus also the 'sampling' of information that I took in – which is normal in mixing ethnographic and Grounded Theory approaches. Also, the volume of data produced in the first two cases differed greatly in comparison to the latter two. Witnessing more and over a longer period of time in the first two cases could have broadened my understanding of the work.

That this study was highly relying on participant observation data could also be considered a limitation of the study. The extent to which the processes sought after were observable through participant observation may have been limited. Small confers that specific nuances of the musicking relationship cannot be expressed visibly (1998).

Also, the specific choice for an episodic form of interviewing, in which specific events are revisited and recurrently probed, could be questioned in retrospect. Although I did not use the episodic interview stages in their strict sense but rather in the phases of the narrative interview, episodic interviews appeal to participants' episodic and semantic knowledge (Flick, 2009, p. 185), which are two types of declarative (explicit) memory. In no way does the interview trigger implicit memory, which became, eventually, an important side to the emerging practices that were described. This made me fall back more on my observations and the sensitizing concepts, and also made me aware that the interviewees may have much more 'hidden' knowledge beyond what was said in the interviews.

### Reflexivity and bias of the researcher

In addition, comments could be made about the reflexivity and bias of the researcher, me, in this dissertation. In the constructivist Grounded Theory that was practiced here, I experienced a struggle in interpreting what was shown or said as actions or sayings that express something of a deeper socio-cultural process.

Also, I experienced a struggle in de-familiarizing from the data, in taking distance from my own feelings and prejudices, which is, again, normal in ethnography (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). This was especially so in Music at the ward, where I was involved through my professional duties (as a mediator and critical friend to the practitioners) and personal involvement (I was sometimes affected emotionally). What helped ‘rinse’ my lens and take a fresh open-minded look on things, was putting aside the material for some time. Also sharing material and asking feedback from my supervisors and colleagues helped me regain the critical and distanced ‘me.’

What seems to have strengthened my reflectivity is the kind of communicative validation that I gained through discussions with practitioners, colleagues, peers, students and attendees of the conferences that I took part in. However, the critical attitude that exists within these ‘bubbles’ could be questioned at times, as music research and music practice communities, as any field and community, have blind spots. Nonetheless, given the multiple sources and materials that were used from various communities, I believe that the picture that emerges from this dissertation is somewhat recognizable for all.

### **6.3 Contribution to knowledge**

So far, most of the studies in the area of music and (elderly) health care and wellbeing have looked at the impact of music interventions on participants and musicians. In this study, the practices that musicians employ and develop to devise musicking environments have been studied. The study’s general contribution to the field consists of the highlighting of the implicit side of interactional processes, the interconnectedness of format and relationship, musicians’ underpinning considerations in the process of devising as well as specific ethical attention for musicking with vulnerable people. Taking an ethical angle to the studied phenomenon is relatively unexplored. The results of the study have pointed out multiple aspects which, however, stress the importance of such angle.

This study made me realize that *participation* and *collaboration*, two terms frequently used within research and practice, are somewhat vague terms and are require revision. Earlier I have framed participation as often seen as equalling active contribution and idle ‘receiving’ not qualifying for such a contribution. In light of the findings of this study, which has revealed an

implicit side to creative process, and in line with Small's musicking, my perception (and potentially that of others) of participation and collaboration got challenged. Although seeming to be in an 'idle' receiving mode in a situation does not necessarily mean that someone is not contributing implicitly. The cases examined here show that there is a variety of assumptions and expectations that musicians have of their audience, and that musicians adapt their actions accordingly to maximize the output. Simply 'being present' in a hospital room, for example, may potentially foster the most splendid music.

Finally, I see the results of the thread of praxialism throughout this study as a valuable contribution to the conceptual discussion as well as an attempt to operationalize the legacy that praxialism has put forward already. Although primarily centred around music education and marginally around community music, praxialism has proved useful also for the study of newly emerging musickings. Praxialism enabled me to specify that an ethical perspective on musicking with vulnerable people concentrates on aspects of intentionality, personhood and situatedness. I have pointed out my scepticism for eudaimonic orientations within musicking with vulnerable people, but eventually I saw that virtuous intentions i.e. wanting to do good to the other are essential to the cases' existence. The concept, thus, questioned my own assumptions throughout the study. From this view on eudaimonia, praxialism may potentially spark further development in the field of music and perhaps the arts in general, as it challenges the deeper intentions and definitions of musicking initiatives.

#### **6.4 Recommendations for practice and for further research**

##### Recommendations for practitioners

The study's outcomes give rise to a number of recommendations for practitioners. The documentation of the four cases, in itself, can be inspiring for practitioners. The findings furthermore suggest that the co-creative paradigm seems an exciting source for developing meaningful activities for particular groups and individuals, especially the integral co-creation that tries to maximize participants' contribution to all levels of decision-making.

What also seems a worthwhile area to further explore for practitioners is that of the specific personal, almost-intimate, creative relationships that musicians, and perhaps artists in general, may foster (sometimes tacitly) with their audience. The intricacies of the friendship and the interdependent muse relationship are forms that could be extended to different contexts. Beyond these two, other types of creative relationships could be explored further. I third relationship, for example, could be explored in which the musician is given more responsible in the care of someone and who acts in their interests without the participant's explicit knowledge. Although requiring its own ethical examination (especially from the perspective of

intentionality), such role would empower a musician to act more ethically in their artistic freedom.

When it comes to the leadership and considerations that the musicians in the four cases used, it seems important to draw attention to Figure 1 that captures the multiplicity of the aspects involved. What I wish to advise in general to practitioners is to focus on considerations involving personhood (the horizontal axis), situatedness (the vertical axis) and intentionality (located in the musician at the centre but also in the other).

On a practical level, I hope that the need for reflection on the ethical sides of the work has come across. This is true for multiple aspects of the work, but particularly for the underlying intention which I saw taking eudaimonic and musicianist orientations. This begins with the inception of the ideas, by asking oneself and the other parties involved questions regarding intentions, purpose and motivations to start the venture, particularly the question *What gives my incentive of co-creative musicking in this context the right to exist?* Also, given the potential implicit levels on which co-creative processes may take place, it seems important to be aware of the forms of communication with vulnerable people. Furthermore, in the development of a co-creative format, the study suggests that opportunities for a profound empowerment increase when people are involved in decision-making processes on all levels to a maximum extent.

The four cases turned out to encompass a rich collection of approaches, that, each in their own right, have a lot to offer. The workshop in the frame of The Presidents shows us how providing confined freedom through prepared ‘playground’ exercises can be an effective and potentially liberating way to exploring orchestral instruments for a first time in a newly composed group setting. Simon showed how the recognizable format of the concert could be tailor-made and become an interactive personal experience for regular visitors of a day care group. The approach used in the Music at the open house project, where an artistic leader tries to find out what does and what does not work on-the-go and by intervening in practice, may inspire other community artists willing to carry out dialogical formats of creative art. Finally, Music at the ward shows how the combination of prepared and unprepared music allows for accommodation in the meeting of various individuals in precarious situations. In general, Music at the open house and Music at the ward may also inspire classically-trained musicians to call on their agency for creating something new rather than reproducing what has been written before.

Looking into the future and dreaming about how I would like to see things to evolve, I also see the collaboration between musicians and health care institutions, such as hospitals and care homes as a fruitful basis for further development. A sense of mutual acceptance does not seem far away, for example in the Music at the ward case, where a shared ambition has been expressed which includes musicians becoming affiliated staff members of the hospital. Although dialogue and negotiation about power are still necessary, fostering connections between the two professional groups seems highly fruitful. It may give rise to specific forms of interprofessional

learning (Twyford & Watson, 2008; Mitchell, Parker, Giles, & White, 2010) where co-creative musicking becomes a basis for recalibrating and further developing one's professional actions, reflectivity, and morality.

#### Recommendations for arts institutions and those that subsidize them

In addition to the recommendations for practitioners, I have recommendations for those who are responsible for monitoring, reporting and evaluating projects of a co-creative nature to critically evaluate its underlying intentions. This follows from my previous point about the importance of reflection about the suitability of approaches and not wanting to praise everything that exhibits a co-creative flavour. The framework that is presented in this dissertation could be useful in the design, monitoring and evaluation of initiatives for vulnerable people with a co-creative intention. Also, I wish to encourage funding and prizing bodies to practice such critical evaluation in the process of awarding projects funding and prizes.

#### Recommendations for institutions that are involved in the education of practitioners

To those involved in any way in the education or training of (future) practitioners devising co-creative musicking with the elderly, specifically higher music education institutions, I recommend to, if not yet the case, include aspects of ethical-reflective practice in their curricula, offer learning opportunities in dialogical forms of musicking and adopt the informed and contextual development of approaches as a learning outcome in curricula. Given the worthwhile collaborations that I witnessed on site, I also recommend academies and conservatoires to explore possibilities for interprofessional learning environments at the interface between them and the health and wellbeing sector.

#### Recommendations for further research

The study's results and conclusions also have implications and recommendations for the field of research to advance the knowledge generated here. I see multiple starting points for further research in this dissertation; the following five are, however, the ones that I consider most urgent.

Firstly, what I see as most urgent is the further exploration and clarification of ethical praxis when devising co-creative musicking with elderly people. More examples are needed to generate dialogue and to help practitioners in making decisions confidently; and, evidently, to contribute to a field that is ethically sound.

Secondly, the wealth of opportunities that implicit co-creation suggests to offer deserves further examination. I feel I was able to scratch only the surface of the intricacies of this implicitness. Given the promising effects of music for the wellbeing of elderly, it seems advisable



to explore and develop co-creative musicking within these settings but also with other vulnerable groups.

Thirdly, it seems important to examine further the prevalent power dynamics of the professional musician, particularly the classically-trained musician who suits the domineering discourse of expertise in music the most. I see a need to explore musicking initiatives in which audiences initiate or take leadership of an initiative that involves professional musicians. Such an exploration could not only shed new light on strategies to influence the dynamics of power in musicking situations, it could also diversify the dominant position of the expert musician.

Fourthly, this study included four cases with four different set-ups of musician teams. It seems important to study decision-making processes and distribution of leadership further as they exist within musician teams, and whether there are particular roles that occur across different initiatives. Especially given the partially implicit nature of the negotiation with participants within co-creative musicking with elderly people, it can be beneficial to the practice to know how the team communicates and deals with this implicitness amongst themselves.

Fifthly, given that the situation studied here includes music making, and particularly the joint creation of new music, the (socio-musicological) study of the musical material and how it is being created could be a worthwhile area of knowledge to extend and support the findings of this study. Critical distance to the sounding results could help practitioners to further develop and intensify their interactional skills also on musical level.

## **6.5 A final thought**

In January 2019 I was mediating a Music at the ward project at the same ward as where I had witnessed the interaction with Ms Vries and her grandson with which I started this dissertation. Entering 'her' room again brought back the memories and fired up the emotions that I had felt back then. But the optimism and lightness filling the room that day quite quickly called me back to reality. The older male patient now lying in the bed had good prospects in making a full recovery and used his positive spirit to inspire the musicians in their improvisations. He described some of his most adventurous journeys as input for the musicians, some consisting of several months of being on the road with his motorbike all by himself. The musical visit really brightened this patient's day, and enabled him to imagine getting back on his bike and make long rides along glimmering seas, over steep mountains and through crisp forests.

Having arrived at the point of winding up this dissertation, I wish to address the musicians working or aspiring to work as devisers of co-creative musicking. It is my wish that they keep on musicking with and for people in multiple meaningful ways, such as in the cases of the male biker and of Ms Vries, and every other participant mentioned in this dissertation. I wish that they feel connected to their audience, and that they keep on being inspired by others and keep on inspiring others. I wish them a lot of friends and a lot of muses.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **A. Excerpt of notebook writing Music at the open house**

28-10-2015

Notes I wrote after seeing the Intermediate presentation of texts at the open house

In this meeting revolved around sharing texts, asking feedback from participants of the open house. Next to participants (people with dementia, their partners, acquaintances etc.), also Merel, Tom and Sabine are present. They sit in a half circle when I arrive. The students get assigned their place at the piano, that seems to become a habit.

William opens the gathering and does the talking for the rest of the time. He tells that the musicians and composers are working hard, and that there are some texts done and some music too, but that a lot needs to be done still, and that they need the help of the participants of the open house to do that. This afternoon they would like to share the programme that they have thought out for the final performance. A big part of it is describing how it will look like, because not all material is ready yet. "The musicians would like to hear your feedback, so certainly tell them what you like or whether you have other ideas."

William: So, the whole thing starts with... [sings the cha-cha-cha tune]... and the participants recognize the tune. It is probably a frequently used melody used here in the house.

Afterwards, Fara starts reciting her text. That clearly hits a nerve with many. I notice that I get emotional myself too. Especially the moment after that when Fara explains how she wrote the text: she was inspired by the stories of the people here, especially that gentleman (she points at him) and how he talked about his grandson, and about that gentleman (also points at him), about how he used to play the trumpet in the orchestra and how he loves to think back on his time of being a member of the orchestra. I find it extremely brave/courageous of Fara to fully 'give' herself for these people, she is very open and sees the confrontation. She presents herself kind and sweet, and a little bit shy. Her voice sounds loud and clear, something that has struck me before. It is clear that she evokes positive feelings from the participants. Mia, who does not say much usually, clearly says next to me: "don't you think she's doing brilliantly?" to her company next to her. Jan sits next to me and is clearly affected. His body shakes, he seems to move a lot more than normally. I also see tears in his eyes. Something seems to erupt or release in him, he also would like to share his feelings.

William facilitates the first verbal responses of people. Jan would like to say something also, in the beginning he is a little bit reserved. Later, after the third text, he will want to share more. I think that after this first text he was so affected that he simply could not speak a word at that moment.

Then it's Birgit's turn, in Dutch. That is being appreciated very much. Also she presents herself very cuddly and sweet, and apologises in advance for her probably bad pronunciation. Again her text affects people. The sentence 'Put your arms around your life' is repeated by William once again. Then Ruben recites his text.

Music has already been written to this text, that is also what I have heard today morning. Birgit and Ruben play the tango section, but without text. Ruben tells that he has chosen for tango because he had heard that there are tango lovers in the house and because he loves tango himself too.

The text and music are clearly appreciated. The participants can recognize themselves in it, it fits. The metaphor of books and book shelf (which is used in one of the text) is being recognized by a few. The group agrees that it is a beautiful way of looking at the disease. Guusje adds that it is 'her' story, that her daughter had once explained it like that, and now she also tells it in this way. Only Sabine responds to Guusje: "how beautiful it is to tell it in that way, it really helps to explain." The others keep quiet, or are astonished, or want to grant this moment to Guusje. Ruben himself does not respond either.

Then follow the texts of Emma and Chloe. The text of Emma plays with the many meanings of 'following'. One can interpret it as (cognitively) following someone when telling a story for example, it can be literal and also metaphorically following someone, standing behind another. It clearly rings a bell with the couples present today and of which the partner has dementia.

Then the narration of the provisional programme is closed.

The texts evoke a conversation about what it means to have dementia; and how people experience it. The participants think that the texts portray some aspects and experiences of the disease very well. "And the texts really are the open house", Jan says. It is interesting to notice in this conversation that dementia is so openly talked about in such a big group. "I do recognize some aspects from my husband [who sits next to her], how he behaves and what we face. He cannot remember things from yesterday, but from back in the days he does remember. It is that history book that stays, really." I am amazed that this lady can talk so openly about her husband while he is sitting next to him. That is apparently possible here. And there is attention and space, openness. Is that usually here or is it the setting with the music that enabled this?

Tom, Merel and Sabine also tell a little bit more about the intention of the collaboration from their side, how they got to it. This seems more addressing the participants than William or the musicians, because they did know what the 'question' was exactly. Now that they have seen the first results, which they liked very much, it might feel as a relief that they can be open towards the participants about their original idea. Also they are impressed by the texts, this is what they hoped for.

Tom wonders how the musicians themselves experience this projects. I find this question in this moment so open and honest. Does he want to say: it is one thing that we as open house are satisfied, but does it also give something to you as musicians? Ruben responds that he really things now in terms of a reciprocal process: everybody takes part through sharing and taking, that is what he realised in this project. Tom and Merel are happy to hear this, because it resembles the philosophy of the house too. Fara has learnt until now that it is also something about doing together. It is not just she as a flutist appearing on stage, there is a joint creation and shared responsibility. That is something she experiences as a strong positive point.

Then William sings again a story around a piece by Casals [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I\\_Am\\_a\\_Catalan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I_Am_a_Catalan) and he also sings it. He did this before at the garden party, and that clearly made an impression. Guusje remembers it very well, she made that clear last time and now again. She is grinning and sways back and forth on her chair while laughing in high tones. Then the group sings 'Wonderful World', and 'I shall

overcome', a request by the participants. William had to look up the text and the musicians improvise to it. William also tells that he is very thankful for the hospitality, and for sharing and inspiring the texts. He says to be very proud on the students, who have never written texts like this before, even though the results "are impressive." He gives extra credit to Fara, who today arrived in full panic when she realised she had forgotten her instruments and did not feel well about it, but that she did a wonderful job of reciting the text. Fara shone today, I fully agree. William also reminds everyone of the dates of the concerts, 25<sup>th</sup> in the open house and 28<sup>th</sup> at the conservatoire. Family and friends are welcome. Tom would also like to invite some politicians. Fara heeft deze middag geschitterd.

Then William closes the meeting. He announces that the musicians will come and rehearse next week at the house, that there is again an opportunity then to give feedback. Then he says goodbye and see you next week.

I have a little after chat with Riesje. Riesje makes spastic movements, talks very little and when she talks it is very difficult to understand, I remembered that from last time. I decide to engage with her in a conversation nevertheless about what the musicians have just presented. It goes slowly, and I do not understand everything she says, but I still have the feeling that I understand what she means. I have a feeling that we are just having a chit-chat. From what I understood she has enjoyed the singing a lot, and she is very impressed by the voice of William. Jan has told earlier in the group that Riesje got goose bumps last time when William sung, and that is something which she normally does not have.

I also talk with Mia and her support partner. They seemed very charmed by the idea to create something together with your audience in music. The support lady of Mia also plays the piano, and her sons also have had intensive years at the music school, but never play anymore. She finds that a real pity.

I say goodbye to my neighbours, wave at the rest of the group and walk to the working room to make some notes.

When I am writing Ruben and Birgit pass by. I quickly share the first impressions that I had with Jan, Riesje and Guusje. I also tell them that I was affected myself too by their playing. Ruben is in fact very surprised about the responses, he had not expect this positivity and intensity. He is impressed. I also ask Birgit about her impression, she says: "I feel quite emotional actually, I don't know what to think."

\_\_When I speak with her the day after about something else, she spontaneously brings back yesterday's experience, was that a postponed answer to my question?

Right after Ruben and Birgit leave, William enters the room. He talks about the bad course of the events of the group: a few students does not show involvement, and it starts to become problematic. William: "I am frustrated. I was thinking on the train on the way here what a mess this will be today. Some students are absolutely not dedicated to this project. I am also annoyed by their behaviour 'It's 1 o'clock, I have to go.' There is no commitment. And I am disturbed by the word 'leuk'. There is this wall that I cannot get through. Chloe, for example, finds writing texts ridiculous. She thinks it's bullshit, bull-shit. And a few really see this as secondary kind of work. I find this extraordinary; I work with multiple student groups at the moment and I am very emotionally charged anyway so it affects me even more. And Diane, she just disappeared. This is really dramatic. The work really lies with the students now, and the teachers of course, they do not have a clue. Those teachers have never done anything like this so they don't know what it means. Or they say 'oh wat leuk' - 'oh how nice'. I do not know how to solve this."

## **B. Excerpt of a digital report of The Presidents**

Wednesday 10 December 2014

Workshop by *xx orchestra* (XO) in the frame of their project 'The Presidents' (TP).

XO wants to initiate a community orchestra, inspired by the philosophy of 'learning orchestras' originating from the Venezuelan El Sistema. Contrary to such orchestras typically inviting children to take part, TP aims to create an orchestra consisting of primarily elderly people. As a way of recruitment and to provide a taster session to candidates, the orchestra organises creative music workshop sessions in three districts of The Hague in December 2014. From January 2015 onwards, candidates can sign up for instrumental lessons to prepare to finally join the orchestra in Spring 2015. The project is funded by the Leve Lang Kunst ('Long Live Art') programme by Foundation Sluyterman van Loo, RCOAK and the Foundation for Culture Participation.

The researcher encountered the project during browsing the Leve Lang Kunst database of awarded projects. She contacted the coordinator of education of the XO Fleur Noorddijk (who will also function as one of the workshop leaders), through mail and by phone, introducing herself and her research and asking more details on the project, about recruitment and project goals. Quite early on it seemed interesting to continue researching the sessions, thus the researcher discussed the option to come and observe a session. This idea was welcomed, and it was agreed that the researcher would come and observe a workshop session on 10 December 2014, between 14.40-16.00.



The workshop takes place in the district *xx*. [parts omitted] Entering the area for the first time on a sunny winter Wednesday, the area looks tidy and well kept. The neighbourhood is a mixture of high class detached houses, family houses in Dutch fifties (?) style and blocks of flats with approximately 10 storeys (supposedly providing a nice lookout on the sea and green parts described?).

The session takes place in an American Protestant Church, which is located right in the middle of the district. The building is near a local shopping area and visually stands out in height in comparison to other buildings in the direct vicinity. Besides hosting religious services, the venue also functions as a community house where all sorts of activities take place. A Christmas market and a crafts club meeting were just two of the upcoming activities later that week.

Entering the venue, it is the amount of daylight in a central open space that strikes as a first impression. Overall the space is decorated in modern style and looks clean. Several doors exit into the central space: lavatories, an open kitchen, some offices with windows and storage rooms. In the back is a pair of glass doors leading to the church part. In the middle of the central space, the workshop leaders have prepared a circle with chairs.



Upon entering (about ten minutes before starting time of the session), workshop leaders Fleur Noorddijk and Geike van de Wetering are busy preparing and exposing orchestral instruments on tables close to the entrance. There are yet two female participants waiting near the entrance. They end up entering at exact the same time as the researcher. Fleur interrupts the installing of instruments to greet the participants by shaking hands and do



some small talk. She then turns to the researcher for introductions. The two female participants are standing near the cloak area, their body language shows a sense of indecisiveness or pondering what to do next. They hold tight to their handbags, move around in a small area and seek the eyes of Fleur. Fleur interrupts the conversation with the researcher and points at two chairs standing behind a corner. The ladies follow Fleur's advice: sit down and now and then look at the direction of the on-going conversation. The conversation ends and Fleur returns to Geike to help out with the instruments. The researcher puts away her jacket and joins the ladies waiting. They do introductions and speak about the location ("what a light in this building") and the weather ("it's a lovely day for being outside"). The ladies turn out to be friends. In the meantime Geike has approached a table near the three talking, she is dipping reeds in a glass of water, whilst talking to Fleur who's walking further away towards the other end of the room. One of the ladies continues to explain that she is keen to learn to play percussion, the other just came to support. The conversation then is turning to many directions. We get to know that both live in xx, which is a neighbourhood in another part of the city, about six kilometers away. Overhearing voices later on throughout the session, apparently many of the participants do not live in this area. Fleur will at a certain point respond to this by saying this circumstance does not really matter.

More participants start pouring in. It is generally Fleur walking up to them introducing herself, sometimes this act being copied by Geike. In the meantime Fleur and Geike also start exposing easy-to-play percussion instruments in the circle of chairs further down the space.

Fleur speaks up in the room, saying she is surprised with the number of people showing up, she expects 12 people in total, but the group ends up being 20 people: 16 elderly participants (of which 4 male); one grandson (10 years of age) of a participating couple; two workshop leaders Fleur and Geike and the researcher. The extra participants did not sign up for the session. Fleur says that that is not a problem, everyone is welcome to take part, but for next time she would appreciate a notice so she knows what number of instruments to bring.

Once Fleur and Geike are finished installing the instruments, they hail to come and take a seat on one of the chairs in the circle. The researcher takes part in the circle as if she were a participant. This is the result of a conversation of Fleur and the researcher over the phone and prior to the session, that it would be to the comfort of the participants to take part rather than to observe outside the circle. This means that jotting down notes is hardly possible. The researcher has to register the happenings mentally, and use silent moments (such as participants working in break-out groups) to make notes.

As soon as everyone has found a seat, a silence falls over the group and everyone looks at Fleur. Fleur, on the other hand, looks out through the window and notices there are three more people on their way in: the couple with the grandson. Fleur stands up to grab some more chairs. One male participant helps her, not doubting his actions. Whilst waiting for the three to take a seat, here and there someone from the seated persons utters small talk, for instance punning the age of the grandson. Once all have found a seat, the attention sharpens and Fleur opens the session by talking.



Fleur welcomes everyone and shortly introduces Geike and herself, she announces that "the musical introduction will follow shortly" – first there are other things to announce. She acknowledges the researcher and her intentions of taking part today: "We have one person here today to observe what we are doing, that is Karolien [points at her]. Karolien is here, she does research into these kinds of creative workshops with elderly people".

Fleur continues explaining the project The Presidents very shortly: "In fact the real project starts from January ... Until then we have some induction sessions getting people to try out instruments ... From January we will organise instrumental lessons in small groups, and at some point it will come all together in an orchestra setting." Fleur continues: "Today's session has two goals: firstly we are going to choose an instrument, or try out a couple, whatever you like; and secondly we will make and create some music together in small groups."

Fleur and Geike then introduce themselves musically by playing a piece. Before playing, they demonstrate how to prepare their instruments oboe and bassoon (how to build it and to put in reeds) and shortly demonstrate the instruments and explain some characteristics. For example the workshop leaders point out that both instruments are played with a reed, but that Fleur's reed is bigger. The explaining consists of telling facts alternating with asking questions. For instance, they characterize the instrument as belonging to the wind instruments, and ask participants to name other groups of instruments – such as the string and percussion instruments. At this point Fleur makes the point that she is not fully aware of the 'knowledge' of people [she uses the word 'beginsituatie'], so she urges people to just ask questions whenever they feel. "For instance", Fleur adds, "I can imagine not all of you know this instrument, the bassoon, or have never seen it before". People silently indicate they have heard about a bassoon before. One male participant responds openly by saying "I know the instrument of course, but maybe I haven't seen it so close".

Fleur and Geike prepare for playing a short piece, "as a way of musically introducing ourselves to you". It turns out they haven't prepared or agreed on a piece to play. The leaders introduce this lack of preparation lightly, as in: casually. They openly discuss shortly and decide to improvise. Geike suggests Fleur to play a bass line, which she does. Geike then plays a melody on top of that. The participants listen carefully. An applause of 6 - 7 people round off the musical introduction. Fleur then explains what is going to happen:

"I invite you to take a look at all the instruments [motions with her arm behind her where the instruments are lying on tables], try them out and return with one of them to your place. There are string instruments, wind instruments, and we have the percussion here in the middle. [pause] However these percussion instruments here are maybe not the most exciting, the orchestra instruments are over there. Just take your time to explore and take a place in the space where you feel comfortable. Geike and myself will walk around to help if you need. Let's meet again here in, let's say, 20 minutes".

While Fleur gives the talk, Geike, sitting next to her, starts packing up her instrument. Geike says at a certain point when Fleur pauses: "I'm afraid I will not let you play on my instrument [oboe] because I have to play on it at the weekend with the orchestra and I can't afford having it broken at this point". She locks up her instrument case and stows it under her seat. Fleur responds and says that everyone is welcome to try out hers [bassoon], "as I don't have to play in the orchestra next week". Fleur then indicates that people should go and check out the instruments. As a way of 'opening the floor', Geike fills in: "the playground [speeltuín] is open!"

What follows is a question by one male participant: "Do you have a suggestion of an instrument for which you don't have to read complicated musical notation? I'm afraid I can't read notes, and if later today we have to read from a score, I think I will not be very good at it. ... So for that reason: What instrument do you recommend?" Fleur responds at first by explaining that "in an orchestra generally, even though it looks as if people have to

read many staves and which therefore may seem complicated, in fact they read only one at the time. Each instrument is assigned one. Like us, wind players for instance, we have all each our own stave ... Unless you play piano or organ, when you play two lines at the same, that's when you need to read more staves." Geike adds: "But, by the way, today we will not be working with musical notation, you don't have to worry about that."

The focus of attention shifts away from the male participant who had asked the question; some neighbouring participants start chatting to each other. Geike announces once again that "the playground is open", to which people respond by standing up and walking towards the orchestra instruments. [The researcher stays in the circle at first, to make some first notes.]



As the workshop leaders join the participants at the tables with instruments, the circle is empty. Except for the two ladies from Leidschendam. They are moving towards the easy to play percussion instruments. The lady who had announced to be mostly interested in percussion seems enthusiastic and pulls her friend with her in her actions and talk.

One female participant confidently takes one of the celli and is the first one to immediately return to her place in the circle. She keeps sitting there, trying out the instrument, for about 20 minutes until the other participants return.

[The researcher then moves to the area where the instruments are exhibited.]

Three female participants are positioned quite far away from the table, trying out playing wind instruments and a viola. They are helped by Geike and Fleur. One of the participants is holding a clarinet, Fleur instructs how to put the fingers on the holes. While wandering around slowly, another is trying to produce a sound from a flute's head joint. The lady trying out the viola, tall and red curly hair, looks confident holding the instrument.

Approximately four male and two female participants are browsing the trumpet (2x), horn (2x), oboe (1x), flute (1x), bassoon (Fleur's instrument - 1x) and clarinet (1x). Seeking a spot where they feel comfortable, they are trying to produce a sound. Now and then they put back their instrument on the table, and try another one. Even though the experimenting goes individually, now and then some participants interact and seek out together how to produce a sound or put the fingers. None of the people interacting directly swaps instruments.

Most of the instruments look worn and at a first glance the instruments look not well taken care of. The silver on one of the oboes is hardly recognizable as silver. One of the horns has an uneven patina and is covered with fingerprints. When taking a new instrument, one gentleman takes out a tissue from his pocket and wipes the mouth piece of a trumpet before bringing it to his mouth. He does that again when swapping for the horn. The researcher first tries the horn by playing a couple of tones and seeking how to hold the instrument. She moves to the direction of one other player but no eye contact is established.

She returns to the table with the intention to swap the horn for a violin, which is lying there untouched. Simultaneously, a lady [red jumper] moves to the table as well and picks up the double bass lying on the floor next to the table. A couple of seconds later, the lady reaches out to the bow of the violin, picks it up, looks at the researcher and says with not much intonation: "there is no bow with this bass so I will use this one. Is that possible you think?" The researcher nods: "I guess?"

The researcher slowly moves away from the table and after an interaction with a lady trying out the clarinet, returns to the circle area.



### **C. Examples of prepared questions and prompts Music at the ward**

#### Opening question:

*Could you tell me about your highlights of the session? Please give details. Everything is of interest to me that is important to you. I may ask you once you finished to repeatedly recount situations, to generate more information, but first the floor is yours, I will be listening.*

#### Follow-up questions and prompts:

What is important to you?

What were you most proud of?

What made you take part in this project? What was your intention?

How do you build up contact with patients? Or specifically: With [that particular patient]?

How do you make decisions? What do you decide about?

What made you decide do it in [that] way?

What is important for you in making contact? Or: With [that particular patient]?

What options do you feel you can choose from? Or: With [that particular patient]?

What, in your view, seems to work well in making contact? Or: With [that particular patient]?

How was [this musical interaction] for you as a musician?

How do you know something has worked?

How would you call this way of working?

What will you take on to the next Music at the ward project?

#### **D. Excerpt interview transcription Simon Parker**

Interview Simon Parker

Date of transcription: 28 March 2015

I speak with Simon Parker the day after having observed a music session he led. We meet in the house of Simon's colleague Rose, at whose house I stay during my stay.

Before the interview takes off, and what has therefore not been recorded, is the signing of a form in which Simon gives ethical consent to the use of the recorded and transcribed interview for my research.

Simon came with his wife Lucy to Rose and Richard's house. Simon and I are sitting opposite at the dining table for the interview. During the interview, Lucy and Rose are chatting in the lounge seats, which are just a couple of meters away. I can hear that Rose is commenting on our conversation and she narrates much of what I have been saying or doing in the last days to Lucy. I have not included Rose's commentary into this transcription, even though her speech is audible on the recording, and may have influenced Simon's talk. At one point Rose and Lucy will join our conversation as conversation partners, in this case I have included their speech in the transcription.



(The recording starts, while I am in the middle of explaining the use of it)

KD: And I'm going to make some notes as well... (pause) So what I like to do today is basically look back on the session that I was pleased to witness yesterday, and anything else you might want to share, so I'm interested in other sessions, other examples. But as I was there yesterday it could be useful to start referring to yesterday's session.

SP: Right...

KD: As you may know, my research is about collaborative music making with elderly people, any kind of working with elderly people and music. My focus is on including these people, how to engage them in your work. That is the focus. My interest goes to anything that you want to share; it's what is important to you that's important to me. (pause) This as a kind of general thought. (pause) Then. Today I'd like to ask questions to which you, please feel free, to share anything you want. (pause) I'd like to start with a very open question, actually... So, yesterday, the session, there was a lot of information for me as I am not familiar with the practice as such. We talked a lot with Rose in the past few days about how you work and everything, but your work in the session itself that was new to me. If you would need to pick one moment that was very significant or very representative for how you work, what moment would that be?

SP: There were quite a few yesterday, because, one of the clients, I've only met him once, the gentleman who laughed and who sat with one of the caring people, he wanders a lot. But because I know he has a musical background, and although he has got quite serious dementia over very simple things, I feel he understands the broader picture of why I'm there, although he may have forgotten who I was. And when he laughed, each time when there was something funny and then spoke to me afterwards that that's what he remembered the most, how funny it was, I felt in my heart that he actually got it. Do you know what I mean? That he actually did know why it was really funny? You know, these little jokes on the side. I think that was something he knew, not that he should laugh, but he really wanted to laugh, because for him it was really amusing. And I felt that I had actually broken through to something that he had and that was really special. And it wasn't just the love of music, it was, I think it was the love of being with people and what we call

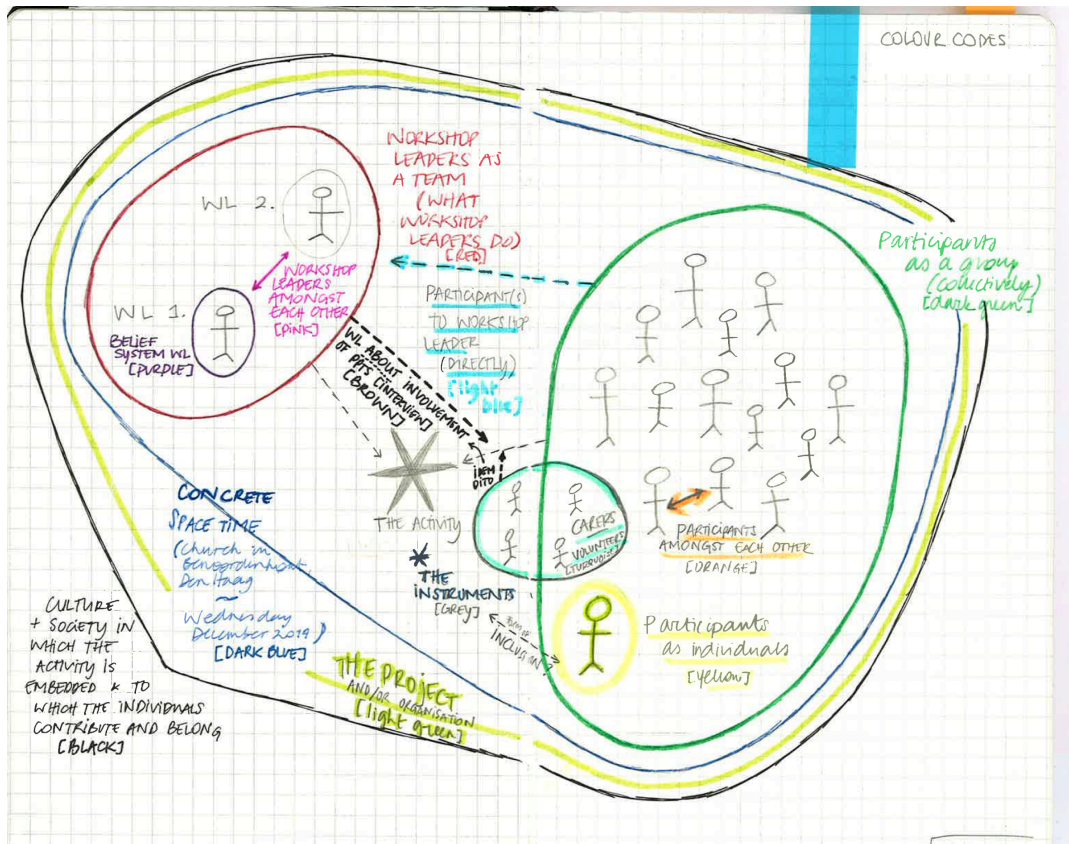
in England the banter, the chatter, and the comments that you make. So that was probably my special moment, when he laughed and everybody else then laughed, because they realised it was funny. I mean they realised it was funny for themselves, but I think they laughed a bit more than usual because he was leading them. And I felt he understood it, that was my point. There were one or two. I think the lady who'd had the stroke, and commented that, she was straight in front of me, about the fact that she was going to have an injection in the near future, and she wanted to tell me that, and I was able to say 'oh you'll have to let me know next time how that got on'. I love it when they share something personal with me. Just for a moment, and that was another lovely moment, it was not the music, just that she shared that with me and engaged me in a very short conversation.

04:35

Going out at the very end, the lady who I think has lost her toes, or had her toes taken off, wandered out with the sticks and everybody said come on there are you alright, and she knew that it was funny; there was a funny side to the fact that she couldn't walk very quickly, and yet underneath it all there was quite a sadness because she knows she is not able to walk like she used to. But everybody is so respectful of her; the lady that picks her up in the bus, the carer, myself and we were able to share in her difficulty of walking. But maybe something special for her that we were concerned for her, but there was a lighter side to it as well.

(pause)

**E. Draft colour scheme The Presidents**





**F. Code list Music at the ward**

	A	C	D	E	F
1	<b>Code</b>	<b>Code Group 1</b>	<b>Code Group 2</b>		
2	Agency	Unpredictability	Other		
3	Artistry	Unpredictability			
4	Being in the moment	Unpredictability			
5	Co-creation	Other			
6	Directivity	Leadership			
7	Equality	Reciprocity			
8	Ethics	Other			
9	Exploration	Other			
10	Facilitation	Other	Leadership		
11	Flexibility	Unpredictability			
12	Inclusion	Reciprocity			
13	Innovation	Tailor-madeness			
14	Instruments	Other			
15	Integrity	Tailor-madeness			
16	Intentionality	Tailor-madeness			
17	Interdependence	Reciprocity			
18	Intuition	Unpredictability			
19	Musicianship	Leadership			
20	Negotiation	Reciprocity	Other		
21	Personhood	Tailor-madeness			
22	Power & control	Leadership			
23	Reciprocity	Reciprocity			
24	Respect	Other	Tailor-madeness		
25	Shared leadership	Leadership			
26	Shared responsibility	Leadership			
27	Situatedness				
28	Space	Other			
29	Support	Reciprocity			
30	Tailor-madeness	Tailor-madeness			
31	Time	Other			
32	Unpredictability	Unpredictability			
33					
34					
35					

## G. Information sheet for seeking ethical consent

### Information sheet for participants



**Title of project: Leading to Engage**

**Study approved by School Research Ethics Committee: December 2014**

I would like to invite you to participate in this doctoral research project. You should only participate if you want to; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

#### Aim of the research

Leading to Engage is a research project that aims to unravel the interactive nature in which musical leaders and elderly participants in a collaborative music making setting together contribute to and experience a sense of inclusion. Inclusion signifies group members feel connected and can identify with the collective music making process and product of the activity. We would like to know more about this phenomenon and its circumstances. It is important to get a better understanding on this subject as it may inform future musical leaders to improve their effectiveness when carrying out this increasingly prevalent and important work.

#### How the research will be carried out

The empirical data collection of Leading to Engage consists of:

1. Observing music making sessions with elderly people. This involves the researcher (me) viewing sessions without participating in the session.  
→ *As a session participant or stakeholder of an activity during which this research activity is carried out, you will experience minor to no difference compared to a regular session. Potentially I will have small conversations with some participants before and after the session in order to get a sense of their experience and feelings about the session. During the session the researcher may jot down notes in a small notebook.*
2. Interviewing musical leaders of the collaborative music session observed, on a separate occasion. The interview will take about 1-2 hours.  
→ *As an interview participant, you will be inquired about your professional practice. The session that I have observed, serves as a*

*starting point of the conversation. Interviews will be recorded on audio for transcribing purposes, subject to your permission. During the interview the researcher may jot down notes in a small notebook.*

#### **Securing anonymity and confidentiality**

All information seen and given through the research activities will be handled with respect for the integrity of the participating individuals in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

In case of written accounts:

- Names will be shaded;
- Any information that may lead to identifying a person will be omitted.

Raw written data will be stored in digital format for a minimum of 5 years on the researcher's personal drive. No other person can access the data without permission of the principal researcher.

#### **Research data and uses of dissemination**

The research activities serve the collection of research data. In some cases the data may also be used for disseminating the research results: small excerpts of the written accounts may be used for the final thesis dissertation or for dissemination purposes. These excerpts for dissemination will be selected carefully in collaboration with the supervisors, with respect and integrity towards the individuals and their activities.

It is up to you to decide whether to take part or not. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

If this study has harmed you in any way you can contact the Guildhall School of Music & Drama using the details below for further advice and information:

Dr. Helena Gaunt  
Guildhall School of Music & Drama  
Silk Street  
Barbican  
London EC2Y 8DT

Thank you for considering taking part in this research. If you are willing to participate in the study you can fill out the attached consent form. If you have any more questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Karolien Dons  
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Guildhall School of Music & Drama  
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+31 6 57 38 32 55  
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H. Format of consent form

## Research Participant Consent



**Concerning: observation session and expert interview with musician**

**Title of project: Leading to Engage**

**Study approved by School Research Ethics Committee: December 2014**

*Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research. The person organising the research must explain the project to you and you should have read any accompanying information sheet before you complete this form.*

- If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to participate. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.
- I understand that if I decide at any time during the research that I no longer wish to participate in this project, I can notify the researcher involved and withdraw from it immediately without giving any reason. Furthermore, I understand that I will be able to withdraw my data up to the point of submission of dissertation.
- I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information will be treated in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.
- The information I have provided will be published as a report. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained and it will not be possible to identify me in the written accounts.
- I agree that the research team may use my data for future research and understand that any such use of identifiable data would be reviewed and approved by a research ethics committee. (In such cases, as with this project, data would not be identifiable in any report).

**(please continue on back side)**

**Participant's Statement:**

I \_\_\_\_\_  
*(full name, please print)*

**agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in the project. I have read both the notes written above and the Information Sheet about the project, and understand what the research involves.**

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Guardian signature (where relevant):**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## I. Long list of potential cases

		<i>Organisation</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Country</i>
1	Music for Life	Wigmore Hall Learning	London	UK
2	First Taste			UK
3	Musica - an hour of interactive music fun			UK
4	ACDC (Arts, Crafts, Dignity in Care)	Superact	South-West	UK
5	Creative workshops CityProms	CityProms	Friesland	NL
6	Music and Dementia workshops	CityProms	Friesland	NL
7	Music and Dementia workshops	Collaboration Royal Conservatoire The Hague	The Hague	NL
8	High-profile artists' residencies in care homes	MagicMe	London	UK
9	Concerts for people with dementia	Elizabeth von Leliwa		GER
10	Raise your voice	Glyndebourne	Brighton area	UK
11	Live Music Now UK		Multiple	UK
12	Applied improvisation next to bed	Zorgspectrum het Zand	Zwolle	NL
13	Music with care-dependent elderly	Stichting Erato Muzikaal Contact	Horst (Limburg)	NL
14	Interactive concert with puppets	Alibe Muziek ism De Vliegende Koffer		NL
15	Interactive singing programme	Rudolf Goedhart		NL
16	Singing programme of the 40-50-60-70'ies		Zwolle	NL
17	interactive music programme people with dementia		Nijmegen	NL
18	Music in Mind / Musability		Liverpool/Manchester	UK
19	Connaught Opera		Greater London	UK
20	Turtle Song: composing own songs or working with professional musicians	English Touring Opera in collaboration RCM & Turtle Key Arts	London	UK
21	The Golden Oldies Charitable Trust: sing-along 50s and 60s music led by a session leader		Bath	UK
22	Music On Call sessions: larger scale creative music projects	The Hallé Orchestra	Manchester	UK

23	Musical Memories	Live Music Now Ireland	Ireland	UK
24	The London Mozart Players: concerts with anecdotes and introductions in relaxed atmosphere		Croydon + greater London	UK
25	The Semitones Music Group: volunteer musicians giving concerts		Newcastle	UK
26	Silver Song Club / Sing For Your Life	Initiated by Sidney De Haan Research Centre (Canterbury Christchurch)	Canterbury, South East, South West, Thames Valley etc.	UK
27	Interactive concerts to older people in supported accommodation	Sinfonia 21	London	UK
28	Concerts for the elderly	Spitalfields Music	London	UK
29	Silver Programme	The Sage Gateshead	Gateshead (North-East England)	UK
30	Eindeloos Musiceren	Musiater	Zevenaar (bij Arnhem)	NL
31	Workshops in verzorgingshuizen	Residentie Orkest	Den Haag	NL
32	Musicadans	Stichting Musicadans	Amsterdam	NL
33	(several)	Care&Culture	Bodegraven	NL
34	Music workshops for the elderly	Thebe de Clossenborgh	Breda	NL
35	Project 1870: young and old musicians for a band	Glimlach Producties	Zwolle	NL
36	Grijze Koppen Orkest [Grey Heads Orchestra]	Fort van de Verbeelding	Utrecht en Eindhoven	NL
37	Music Moving Concerts	Jacqueline du Pre Music Building	Oxford	UK
38	Several projects and residencies at hospitals and elderly care homes	OPUS music CIC		UK
39	Interactive music making in hospitals (not particularly elderly)	LIME Music & Health	Manchester	UK
40	Muziek & Dementia	Ensemble LUDWIG	Amsterdam	NL
41	Music at the open house			NL
42	Music at the ward			NL
43	Florence Atelier Muziek	Florence	The Hague	NL