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Fantasia on a Theme of Purpose: Using a Music-Guided Scribble Technique to Support Meaning-Making in Older Adult Retiree Musicians

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Fantasia on a Theme of Purpose:

Using a Music-Guided Scribble Technique to Support Meaning-Making in

Older Adult Retiree Musicians

By

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Abstract

Within the population of older adults, overall well-being corresponds with the ability to self-actualize and seek meaning, but age-related changes combined with ageism and isolation can negatively impact this capacity to maintain a sense of purpose, especially following retirement. It may be that retired musicians are especially vulnerable to this experience later in life due to a loss of the primary method of creative engagement and community that is facilitated by musical performance in a group setting. Integrating phenomenological and ethnographic approaches, this study utilized a qualitative design to understand how music-guided art-making incorporating the scribble technique could support a sense of purpose among older adult retiree musicians. In an art-based intervention that collected art and interview data, participants responded to self-selected music with a variety of fluid and resistive drawing materials categorized as Media Dimension Variables (MDV). Data analysis was executed in conjunction with theories of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and the Expressive Therapies Continuum (ETC). Results obtained via thematic analysis suggested that the intervention facilitated access to creative intentionality in support of a sense of purpose. The process of self-selecting music that was rich with personal significance provided an optimal frame of reference in a novel art experiential that engaged individual strengths, values, and expertise. Responding to music in real-time with a kinesthetically-focused drawing technique presented a non-threatening approach to visual composition; the spontaneity in this process also offered opportunities for self-discovery and contact with the present moment.

Keywords: qualitative, older adults, music, art therapy, scribble technique, ACT, ETC, MDV.

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Researching "a sense of purpose" led me to realize my own intrinsic motivation, in an ironically meta pursuit of enlightenment. As such, I became acutely aware of the core impulse to search for meaning in the world and make sense of what can seem at times to be an endless presentation of abstraction, distraction, chaos, tragedy, absurdity, and banality—besides all that may be innately comprehensible and eminently satisfying. I must first thank all five participants for inspiring me beyond what was witnessed in session, in one of the most meaningful experiences in my life to see theories of the expressive therapies in action. Our mutual curiosity of the human condition aligned, each of you showed me a different path for discovery and achieving coherence. Your stories are as personally enduring for me as I *hope* I was able to justifiably commemorate in writing, here.

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Designing and executing the study was cultivated from values instilled by my family. Thank you to my boyfriend for believing in me—consuming as it was to be immersed in this experience for a full year came at no small expense to spending time together. A sense of creativity rooted in early exposure to the arts and sciences was nurtured by my parents, and grew into fruition with the culmination of this project. I credit you both in co-developing my implementation strategy, as my first honorary participants in the trial run of the intervention—your ethos permeated every part of this experience even when you were not directly involved in these ways. To my sister, whose understanding grounded me in a sea of pressures, I attribute my capacity to persevere. In final recognition, I dedicate this work to my late aunt and grandparents, who I know would have been just as proud of me now as they always made a point to tell me in life.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Within the population of older adults, overall well-being corresponds with the ability to self-actualize and seek meaning (Ivtzan et al., 2013; Kaufman, 2023; Pavlova & Lühr, 2023; Roepke et al., 2014; Ryff & Singer, 2008; Ryff, 2013), but age-related changes combined with ageism and isolation can negatively impact this capacity to maintain a sense of purpose, especially following retirement (Blawert & Wurm, 2021; Kennedy, 2022; Kim et al., 2019a; Kim et al., 2022; Merten et al., 2022; Willroth et al. 2021). It may be that retired musicians are especially vulnerable to this experience later in life due to a loss of the primary method of creative engagement and community that is facilitated by musical performance in a group setting (Cohen & Ginsborg, 2021; Conroy & Oleary-Kelly; 2014; Lavallee & Robinson, 2007).

To get a better idea of the issues faced by this population, it is necessary to look at the broader societal context of aging while prefacing this discussion with a reframing of language historically used to describe people representing later age demographics. At the outset, moving away from chronologically-oriented perspectives is an important focus of gerontological research in an effort to deconstruct problematic perceptions of aging, especially the tendency to homogenize even segments of age groups within this population. In accordance with the publication by Linland et al. (2017) on behalf of the FrameWorks Institute, Trucil et al. (2021) describe the rationale for adopting modifications to the American Medical Association Style Guide for writing about older adults. Words like "(the) aged, elder(s), (the) elderly, and seniors" will not be used because "such terms connote discrimination and certain negative stereotypes that may undercut research-based recommendations for better serving our needs as we age" (Trucil et al., 2021, p. 1386). If these terms appear in the writing of the present publication, they

are only permitted in quotations of sources from the literature and not without explicit effort to limit their usage outright. Resisting terminology that reduces the personhood of individuals is made in an effort to advance empowering narratives—thus, person-centered language is prioritized, and the term "older adult(s)" is broadly applied, but not without acknowledging a level of imprecision that even this phrase may convey as people aged 60 and older represent a vastly heterogenous group (Lowsky et al., 2014; Van Ours, 2022). Above all, ethical use of the language surrounding identity implores a cultural shift to incorporate the expert perspective of relevant stakeholders (Lindland et al., 2017).

According to the 2018 U.S. Census Bureau, the population of older adults over age 65 is "projected to nearly double in size in coming decades, from 49 million today to 95 million people in 2060," meaning that nearly a quarter of Americans by then will be retirement age beginning at 65 years-old (Vespa, pp. 1-2). Closely resembling global projections, these estimates are often used for predicting the dependency ratios expected to impact the labor market, economy, healthcare system, and federal programs including future financial obligations (Selected Results of the 2019 UN World Population Projections, 2019; Clements et al., 2018). Entangled within these forecasts are ageist myths that an aging population will only become a burden on society following retirement (Applewhite, 2016).

Considering these numbers, a major concern would be to assess how well the systems and supports currently in place are able to meet the needs of individuals aged 60 and older. While this inquiry encompasses a wide breadth of complex and nuanced intersecting factors, one look into the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on older adults in assisted living and beyond this context reveals a startling picture of neglect and suffering (Kim & Naylor, 2022).

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the loneliness and social isolation in high prevalence among older adults have been identified as significant public health risks associated with poor physical and mental health outcomes (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2020). These risk factors can be bidirectional, as "depressive and anxiety disorders can lead to social withdrawal and loneliness, and reciprocally, social isolation, and loneliness can also lead to clinically significant depression and anxiety" (Donovan, 2020, p. 1235). Additionally, the experience of social invisibility in later stages of life is amplified by the intersections of race, class, and sex (Williams, 2007). As shifting demographics within the aging population are predicted to increase in diversity with overall growth, it seems possible that social invisibility of older adults could become a worsening reality for individuals who have already faced marginalization. Preparedness for the future care of people in this age segment of the population warrants further consideration of all available support options and therapeutic services to mitigate what could become a tragedy of human suffering on a tremendous scale for one of our most vulnerable groups.

Older adults represent a growing population that often experiences social isolation and invisibility due to a number of circumstances. Among these, ageist attitudes partly explain a tendency to dismiss the potential of people aged 60 and older. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), ageism refers to stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination on the basis of age (2021). Examining the experiences of older adults in retirement is one way to obtain a better understanding of the ways that ageism could impact the ability to maintain a sense of purpose.

Ageism in the United States

From a socio-political perspective of ageism and retirement, Estes and Dicarlo (2019) trace the concept of intergenerational conflict back to 1986 in the United States when "state

penalties existed prior to that time to prevent people from working past certain ages" and mandatory retirement was "severely curtailed through an amendment to the 1967 Age Discrimination in Employment Act" (p. 32). Internalized ageism would also impact a decision towards entering retirement especially if an attitude of health pessimism predominated an individual's experience, as this was found to be "related to a lower preferred retirement age" in a longitudinal study of aging according to Horst (2019, p. 35).

Widely recognized as an expert on ageism, author Ashton Applewhite proclaims how "older Americans are damned if we work and damned if we don't" in her manifesto against ageism (2016, p. 143). This sentiment captures the point of tension surrounding the decision to retire that older adults might be facing from both internal and external forces. In a capitalistic society that worships the grind of employment, Derek Thompson describes in *The Atlantic* how a culture of "workism is making Americans miserable," further defining it as the "belief that work is not only necessary to economic production, but also the centerpiece of one's identity and life's purpose" (2019, p. 2). If these beliefs accurately reflect the experiences of older adults, perhaps through the intersection of ageism and workism a sense of purpose may be eroded even further during the age of retirement with the added pressure to remain economically productive. The case could be even worse for performing musicians whose creativity and identity are often tightly intertwined, to the point that transitioning out of an artistic career leads to psychological stress and grief (Connell, 2020; Hennekam, 2016).

Culture of "Workism"

Internally, the ability to self-actualize and find meaning corresponds with the upper tier of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and represents the culmination of psychological well-being. In an effort to conceptualize Bandura's Social Learning theory within Maslow's seminal theory on

motivation, Ordun and Akün (2017) describe the relationship between self-efficacy and self-actualization as one in which "self-efficacy will foster well-being, personal and career development like self-actualization" (p. 2). While a culture of workism would pose concern for the potential impact that it may have on perpetuating ageist attitudes, there could be no denial that work participation at its most basic conception is capable of facilitating self-efficacy and self-actualization that are marked by a sense of purpose. For all of the various reasons that a person would decide to return to the workforce following retirement, the options that are available can be vastly limited, to the extent that years of valuable experience might be squandered by an employer merely trying to fill a part-time position. That being said, it would appear that returning to work at later stages of life could actually become counterproductive to maintaining a sense of purpose for some individuals. As long as the design persists without as many meaningful occupational opportunities for older adults to realize a sense of purpose regardless of retirement status, there will always be a need to support this experience in other ways.

A portrait of post-retirement outcomes cannot be easily extracted and generalized even from countless empirical studies aimed at understanding the impacts on mental health, cognitive skills, and mortality. Van Ours (2022) provides an overview of recent research involving the three aforementioned factors, ultimately concluding that "mental health improves, cognitive skills deteriorate and mortality is not affected," while citing a "substantial effect heterogeneity […] in terms of personal characteristics, type of job, institutional arrangements, and whether retiring was voluntary or mandatory" (p. 375). The short answer is that it always depends, and for performing musicians who often work as independent contractors in the gig economy, retirement planning and execution might be an entirely different process yielding unique

outcomes that would be reflected in the various states of well-being—this research seeks understanding of such experiences.

Qualities of Older Adult Musicians

Broadly encompassing a wide range of occupations, the term "musician(s)" will represent specifically those individuals engaged in performance of music. Musicians may ultimately decide to enter retirement due to age-related changes that affect the physical and psychological demands of playing a musical instrument (Kenny et al., 2018). Common conditions faced by orchestral musicians will typically present as performance-related musculoskeletal pain and injuries that often reveal themselves early on from "prolonged repetitive work with little rest" (Kenny & Ackerman, 2017, p. 5). While the population of older adults in general already have a higher incidence of degenerative conditions, "musicians need to be realistic about the limits of their aging bodies, pay attention to its signs, and engage in post-performance planning to avoid feelings of devastation if they find that they can no longer continue to play at an elite level" (Kenny & Ackerman, 2017, pp. 12-13). Managing expectations and practicing self-care in these ways would likely be even more critical for aging singers whose instrument resides within their bodies; this may be especially true for singers entering menopause due to changes in the vocal fold muscles and fundamental frequency (Connell, 2020; Elliot, 2017). During the transitional period to retirement, such a dramatic shift from vital sources of community and creative engagement could leave musicians who retire from performance especially vulnerable to a loss of a sense of purpose.

Art Therapy

Fortunately, art therapy offers a range of experiences that can support a sense of purpose for older adults. The American Art Therapy Association (2017) defines its practice as "an

integrative mental health and human services profession that enriches the lives of individuals, families, and communities through active art-making, creative process, applied psychological theory, and human experience within a psychotherapeutic relationship". As a non-verbal means for articulating inner experience across dimensions of mind, body and spirit, art therapy can also produce a tangible visual record of the therapeutic process (Hanes, 2001).

From his interviews with American artists in their 70s and 80s, Jonathan Santlofer ascertains "this idea of the constant struggle and reevaluation inherent in the creative process is one that all of the artists agree has kept them purposeful" (1993). Art therapy approaches would also facilitate this purposeful process by offering more inclusive options for individuals who lack the capacity or prefer not to work or volunteer following retirement. If engaging in creative practice "allows older adults to reimagine who they are in the world and establish a new sense of purpose" (Partridge, 2019, p. 71), it seems likely that this therapeutic modality might be particularly well-suited for older adult individuals who have spent their careers in the performing arts.

According to Partridge (2019), the majority of the literature that is available focuses on diseases that are common in later life, with less attention paid to research of "the positive aspects of aging or the lived experiences of older adults" (p. 17). Arts-based interventions have been shown to support the well-being of individuals in ways that highlight these positive aspects, particularly the unique developmental task in which older adults might experience gerotranscendence—a process reflected by "growth and reconciliation with the cosmic coherence of self and interpersonal experiences" (Jeffers, 2020, p. 79). Through this process, "a person can create the capacity to continue to be motivated towards growth and self-actualization" (Stephenson, 2013, p. 157).

In a study of a community art therapy program that was designed to promote health and well-being in later stages of life, Stephenson (2013) discusses how a sense of purpose was activated during the art-making process among older adults, such that "creative thinking fostered their motivation and fueled their sense of purpose" (p. 156). As a vehicle for life review, Ravid-Horesh (2004) utilized art therapy in a single case study to gain a better understanding of the ways that ego-integrity might be enhanced through this therapeutic modality. The findings revealed how the art therapy process with the participant facilitated "an opportunity to experience a sense of purpose by sharing her lifetime memories with a supportive witness, and thereby to revalidate them" (p. 317). The work of both Stephenson (2013) and Ravid-Horesh (2004) describes the potential that art therapy possesses as a means for supporting a sense of purpose among older adults.

ACT in Combination with a Person-Centered Approach

Facilitating the research session with participants will apply an Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) framework drawing on the relationship that exists between valued living and a sense of purpose. In the treatment of emotional distress, ACT targets psychological inflexibility as the primary factor that is characteristic of psychopathology (Petkus & Wetherell, 2013). Considered a third-wave cognitive behavioral approach, early studies in the use of ACT among older adults with depression and anxiety-related conditions have been successful, but more research is needed (Davison et al., 2017; Petkus & Wetherell, 2013; Roberts & Sedley, 2016). Ramsey-Wade (2015) explains how "ACT structures its work around the values and value-related goals that clients identify, thereby ensuring that […] the work travels in the direction of what brings clients meaning and purpose in life" (p. 260).

Additionally, a Person-Centered approach would be aligned with a qualitative design that values the subjective experience of the individual as it considers participants to be "experts on their own inner experience" (Corey, 2016, p. 171). The researcher will also attend to participants' basic needs according to Maslow's hierarchy in an effort to support the creativity that Rogers (1954) believed to be essential in the process of self-actualization.

Research Topic

In an effort to identify arts-based therapeutic interventions that could support a sense of purpose among older adult retiree musicians, the researcher proposes a qualitative ethnographic phenomenological investigation of the experience of music-guided art-making that incorporates use of the scribble technique. Within this design, interviewing techniques will be applied to understand how retired musicians think about their experiences, how consciousness is experienced and how this reflects their social reality, following an arts-based intervention. A combination of structured and unstructured questions would attempt to gather personal insight from participants before and after the creative process is completed. It is anticipated that this methodology will reveal the extent to which the use of the scribble technique guided by self-selected music is capable of eliciting a sense of purpose among older adult retiree musicians; more emphasis is placed on understanding *how* the process of meaning-making occurs than gauging exactly *whether or not* a "sense of purpose" is supported, as no standardized form of measurement for this construct will be applied.

Operational definitions of a sense of purpose are derived from sources in the literature that conceptualize this construct within the context of eudemonic well-being. As Ryff and Singer (2008) describe, purpose in life is captured by a sense of directedness or intentionality, the ability to find or create meaning, live authentically, engage with a reflective stance, and achieve

emotional integration, with an emphasis on the importance of beliefs. Several extensions are made, such that values can emerge from beliefs through commitment and self-efficacy (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002), and self-efficacy can foster self-actualization (Ordun & Akün, 2017). The act of making meaning is associated with a sense of purpose, and the two concepts are often used interchangeably (Kosine et al., 2008).

Conclusion

This research study addresses the question of how music-guided art-making incorporating the use of the scribble technique can support a sense of purpose among older adult retiree musicians. Specifically, the student researcher hypothesizes that the process of self-selecting music for participants with rich histories in the musical performing arts will imbue meaning throughout the art-making experience, thereby facilitating a sense of purpose. Anticipating that this task will prove to be intriguing, enjoyable, and practical for the participant, perhaps the art-based intervention could become a reliable self-care resource to be utilized within this specific population. Because musical selections can be revisited over time, there is potential for the art product to serve as a tangible record and a measure of cognitive performance, perhaps with implications for use of this intervention among individuals engaged in memory care services.

It is hoped that the scribble technique will "reduce inhibitions and liberate spontaneous imagery from the subconscious," and serve to empower individuals "to overcome apprehension toward the image-making process" (Hanes, 1995, p. 111). If participants have entered retirement due to age-related changes including any musculoskeletal pains or injuries, performance-related or otherwise, it is possible that these same conditions could serve as barriers within the art-based intervention. That being said, offering alternative solutions and a wide selection of tools that

encourage adaptive behaviors will be necessary so long as these align with the safety and

comfort level of the participant.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Cultural Factors of Aging

According to the WHO (2021b), the population of older adults are defined as individuals aged 60 or older, but within this group, there is a great deal of diversity with regard to the experiences surrounding the cultural factors of aging. That being said, moving away from purely chronologically oriented perspectives is an important focus of gerontological research in an effort to deconstruct problematic perceptions of aging, especially the tendency to homogenize even segments of age groups within this population. To reflect the cultural contexts of aging more accurately will also require a brief discussion of intersectionality. With as much attention paid to this ideal within the literature, perhaps one thing that is cross-culturally representative of the population of older adults is the concept of successful aging, which will be challenged and expanded upon within this review.

More than Just Numbers

Categorization is a natural tendency of humans that "serves to make both our physical and personal world more simple and manageable" (Kogan, 1979, p. 365). However, the use of chronological age "to delineate the subject matter of gerontology has been a core contradiction since at least as far back as the 19th century" (Fletcher, 2021, p. 483). During the COVID-19 pandemic, this controversy reemerged as the British Society of Gerontology criticized the government for "ignoring individual differences" when health officials advised a quarantine of all adults aged 70 years and older regardless of medical conditions (Fletcher, 2021, p. 479). While this case may be more representative of the "irresolvable tensions" between the government employing "pragmatic discrimination based on epidemiological evidence" and select officials in the field of gerontology advocating against seemingly ageist policies according to

Fletcher (2021), it encompasses an important series of broad cultural intersections concerning the experience of aging (p. 479). Outside of these specific contexts, as descriptive statistics rely on categories of age, it is believed that there is "too much human diversity to be of analytic use," and even that "the preponderant use of chronological age in social analyses actually impedes gerontological advancement" (Fletcher, 2021, p. 484)

If categorized in terms of decades, the experience of a 60-70 year-old may be vastly different from that of an 80-90 year-old, meaning that, while the same two people could be living in a residential care community, there would likely be a great deal of aged heterogeneity both within and between the age groups themselves. Lowsky et al. (2014) support this claim in an effort to characterize the degree to which health outcomes vary within age groups, concluding that "chronological age is not a relevant marker for understanding, measuring, or experiencing healthy aging" for a large segment of the older population (p. 640).

Aging and Intersectionality

Beyond multigenerational differences, all of the intersections of identity matter when considering the cultural factors of aging. First coined by Crenshaw (1989), the concept of intersectionality considers the ways that multiple identities intersect, such that a person who identifies with any combination of non-dominant cultural classifications is more likely to experience compounding layers of adversity due to discrimination within their social context— the idea being that overlapping vulnerabilities create unique challenges. Holman and Walker (2021) advocate for a collaboration between intersectionality and the life course perspective to achieve new insights into cultural factors of aging and "to understand that ageing is unequal with respect to a number of intersecting axes of inequality which operate simultaneously and often in combination" (p. 252). In a study investigating how race, ethnicity and gender define age-

trajectories of disability, Warner and Brown (2011) also support an intersectionality approach

with the goal of providing "a more detailed understanding of the social stratification of health

and age-related changes in health" (p. 1247). In cultural contexts that hold successful aging as an

ideal, Gibbons (2016) applies an intersectional analysis to illustrate how "the rhetoric of

successful aging has contributed to the system of compulsory youthfulness, in which old and

disabled people are made invisible, invalidated, and oppressed due to their failure to reach the

unattainable ideal of remaining youthful and able-bodied/able-minded until their death" (p. 11).

Aging Successfully

Credited with first defining successful aging, Rowe and Kahn (1997) characterize this

ideal as one reflected by "low probability of disease and disease-related disability, high cognitive

and physical functional capacity, and active engagement with life" (p. 433). In the effort towards

conceptualizing this process in new ways that promote inclusivity through empowered

perspectives, Gibbons (2016) advocates for individuals to resist the dominant discourses by

entering old age with a different point of view that allows successful aging "because of

disability, rather than in spite of disability" (p. 14).

Without consensus on neither a definition nor a method of measurement, Ferri et al.

(2009) emphasize "the need that successful aging be defined as multi-dimensional, incorporate

the perspective of older adults, and be thought of as a continuous rather than dichotomous

construct" (p. 380). Based on a systematic review of lay perspectives across thirteen countries,

Reich et al. (2020) reported that "older adults most commonly referred to themes of social

engagement and positive attitude in their own lay definitions of successful aging," in addition to

themes of independence and physical health (p. 455). With all of these approaches aimed at

conceptualizing successful aging, the idea of empowering the most relevant stakeholder in the

process of redefining this ideal, perhaps most importantly, "can also begin a conversation about setting goals for treatment and assist in developing interventions that help patient's achieve success according to their own definition of the term" (Ferri et al., 2009, p. 387).

Retirement

Often intertwined within discourses of successful aging, retirement is typically celebrated as an accomplishment, but a variety of influences factor into the decision to enter this phase of life. If viewed objectively, crossing into retirement can be evidence that an individual has spent enough years working to set aside the resources necessary for living comfortably after exiting the workforce. When the choice is involuntary, it can be a significant source of distress for older adults "associated with both physical disability and poorer mental health," especially if few supports exist in dimensions of financial and social resources (Gallo et al. 2000, p. 136). Newman (2019) explains the modern phenomenon of an increasing "grey labor force," arguing that "declining retirement benefits, coupled with increasing longevity, have set the stage for the growth of this segment of the labor market" (p. 35).

As a primary obstacle to retirement, the obligation to delay this transition due to financial insecurity would seem to negatively impact overall health and well-being—key within these assumptions is a diminished sense of control (Calvo et al. 2009). In a mixed methods study exploring the importance of choice in retirement, Quine et al. (2007) confirmed that "choice was a strong, consistent predictor of several health and well-being outcomes" (p. 173). This idea is corroborated by König et al. (2019), who found that "higher retirement ages among lower educated individuals are related to worse health, which suggests that they might continue working despite poor health" (p. 485). The authors elaborate that this is likely due to having "less options to retire early due to insufficient pension income" (König et al., 2019, p. 485).

Support for delayed retirement is dependent on the subjective experience of the individual, as older adults who report lower quality employment tend to favor earlier retirement when compared to individuals in more rewarding careers who advocate for later retirement (König et al., 2019). Expanding on this argument, König et al. (2019) claim that "retirement from strenuous, low quality jobs seems to lead to an improvement of physical health while the opposite might be true for high quality jobs and those with high job satisfaction" (pp. 478-479). These sentiments are echoed by Litwin et al. (2009) who identify that "older and more educated respondents and those more confident in their present workplace were also more likely to support delayed retirement" (p. 245).

While predictions of distress due to involuntary retirement are empirically validated, even the experience of voluntary or early retirement can introduce challenges relating to a loss in a sense of purpose and identity. Bordia et al. (2020) make the point that cherished past roles can become "sticky," making the transition of retirement difficult, and "the resulting sense of psychological loss can have a negative impact on well-being" (p. 447). According to Haslam et al. (2019), "when a person's social group memberships change in the course of retirement—as is common when a professional group or work team is lost as a result of leaving the workforce—then so does their sense of who they are after the transition, and so do the resources they can draw on to help them adjust to this transition" (p. 97). When few resources exist to support this process, it would make sense that some individuals might also employ maladaptive coping mechanisms in post-retirement life with a loss of social connectedness and community. As one example, Emiliussen et al. (2017) linked both a loss in a sense of identity and meaning in life following early retirement to very late onset alcohol use disorder in a small sample of 12 Danish older adults.

Ageism

To fully realize the breadth of cultural factors surrounding the experience of aging, the topic of ageism warrants particular focus if just for the ways that it has been shown to harm the overall health of older adults and even contribute to mental decline. As one of the most invisible forms of discrimination, ageism may be best understood as prejudice against our future selves that manifests both externally and internally. The mechanism of these two processes is an important topic in the literature, as well as the ways that its effects can be positive, negative, subtle, or explicit. Instances of ageism may be more prevalent or obvious in certain contexts, varying also among cultural attitudes and the ways that these are expressed.

External Forces

Of all the forms of discrimination that can take shape in society, ageism may be one of the more insidious operatives for the ways that it evades our attention and scrutiny. Ayalon and Tesch-Römer (2018) explain that, "because age-related stereotypes are embedded in our lives, we disregard them and hardly notice their effects" (p.3). With endurance, ageism permeates as many domains of daily life through anti-aging products and marketing (Lewis et al., 2011), messages from the media (Bailey, 2010), policies and practices surrounding retirement (McDonald, 2013), and the various arenas of debate where intergenerational conflict transpires. It should be no surprise that ageism is also amplified in digital spaces that limit the participation of older adults (Rosales & Fernández-Ardèvol, 2020) and perpetuate ageist messaging through memes and meme factories (Lee & Hoh, 2021). Everyday experiences of ageism often play out in public spaces, healthcare, housing, and employment settings, and are defined by Allen et al. (2022) as "brief verbal, nonverbal, and environmental indignities that convey hostility, a lack of value, or narrow stereotypes of older adults" (p. 147). In an effort to assess the nature of these

"more minor, but still potentially harmful, forms of ageism," Allen et al. (2022) characterize everyday experiences of ageism as a multidimensional construct comprised of ageist messages, ageism in interpersonal interactions, and internalized ageism (p. 147).

Internalized Ageism

A great deal of empirical evidence exists within the literature to support a significant association between ageism and poor health outcomes (Hu et al., 2021). Internalized ageism is defined by Gendron et al. (2016) as "a form of ingroup discrimination in which older adults marginalize and discriminate against other older people," as a result of stereotyping that is directed inward and outside of awareness (p. 998). Levy (2009) reiterates that "at the point that age stereotypes are directed at oneself in old age, they can be classified as self-perceptions of aging" (p. 332).

To expand on this mechanism, Levy (2009) argues that "stereotypes are embodied when their assimilation from the surrounding culture leads to self-definitions that, in turn, influence functioning and health" (Levy, 2009, p. 332). Sun and Smith (2017) demonstrate Levy's (2009) stereotype embodiment theory in action by assessing healthcare-seeking behaviors among older adults, revealing that "more negative aging self-perceptions were associated with a higher likelihood of health care delay and more perceived barriers to care" (p. 216). Wurm and Schäfer (2022) went further in a study of self-perceptions of aging (SPA) and determined that "gain-related perceptions of aging outweigh other psychological concepts when it comes to the prediction of mortality" (p. 650). In other words, it is more impactful on mortality outcomes to promote SPA that recognize the gains of old age than to focus on reducing those self-perceptions that focus on the experience of loss (Wurm & Schäfer, 2022). Blawert and Wurm (2020) identify the prioritization of personal values as a meaningful predictor of whether SPA are gain or loss-

related; the authors conclude by emphasizing "the role of self-transcendence values as a probable facilitating factor in successful adaption to age-related changes that may be reflected in more gain-related and less loss-related SPA in the domains of ongoing development and social losses" (p. 263).

Mental and Physical Health of Older Adults

It makes sense that there would be a great deal of emphasis within the literature focusing on the negative effects of aging if both mental and physical health of older adults are viewed as important predictors of the disease susceptibility and frailty that inform levels of care (Fulop et al., 2010). Within these discourses, longevity increases are often framed in catastrophizing contexts when they ought to be celebrated as a reflection of our advancement of the species (Robine, 2021). Let it not be mistaken that the social isolation and invisibility that occur in old age incur a significant impact on both dimensions of health for individuals (LaBorde & Williams, 2022). A common assumption is that subjective well-being sharply declines in old age, and while this may be true for the effects of declining health and bereavement, there is evidence amid a strongly contested debate to support the U-shaped curve of happiness that can be attributed to wisdom acquired over the lifetime (Bartram, 2022; Blanchflower, 2021). Ultimately, to ignore the positive outcomes of aging does a disservice that undermines strength-based treatment approaches of older adults (Orsulic-Jeras et al., 2003; Rajeev, 2020).

Social Isolation and Invisibility

After COVID-19 sent the world into a widespread lockdown, Donovan and Blazer (2020) identified social isolation and loneliness as a "special burden for older adults" during the pandemic (p. 1241). D'cruz and Banerjee (2020) referred to the subsequent marginalization of people over the age of 60 as an invisible human rights crisis—one in which "social distancing

and self-isolation [had] worsened the pre-existing loneliness and social isolation in older adults" (p. 3). When health and government officials mandated stay-at-home orders, individuals living in residential and long-term care facilities were restricted from interacting with friends and family members outside of these communities due to age-related vulnerabilities to the coronavirus disease. While a great deal of the general population can maintain some form of social connection via digital platforms and devices, "reliance on technology solutions places a higher burden on those who lack access, such as older adults who are socioeconomically disadvantaged or those with cognitive impairment or sensory impairments" (Donovan & Blazer, 2020, p 1241).

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of reduced social relationships on health outcomes revealed that people over the age of 60 "with less social participation, less frequent social contact and more feelings of loneliness have an increased risk to develop dementia" (Kuiper et al., 2015). In a review of 15-years of literature examining social isolation among older adults, Nicholson (2012) recognized "an overabundance of evidence demonstrating numerous negative health outcomes and potential risk factors related to social isolation" (p. 137). Of these publications, Iliffe et al. (2007) identified the risk of social isolation to be "associated with older age, education up to 16 years only, depressed mood and impaired memory, perceived fair or poor health, perceived need for help with both basic and instrumental activities of daily living, diminishing functional ability and fear of falling" (p. 281). Leigh-Hunt et al. (2017) conducted a systematic overview of the public health consequences of social-isolation and loneliness and found "consistent evidence linking social isolation and loneliness to worse cardiovascular and mental health outcomes" (p. 158)

Well-Being

As a dynamic and multidimensional construct, well-being can encompass psychological, emotional, social, and physical aspects of wellness, but even this definition is vastly narrowed. In research, well-being is often described in terms of quality of life and life satisfaction, and it can also be viewed objectively or subjectively (King et al., 2014). According to King et al. (2014) "subjective components of well-being are represented in an individual's thoughts and feelings about one's life and circumstances, and the level of satisfaction with specific dimensions" (p. 683). Researchers will measure subjective well-being based on psychological responses, "such as life satisfaction, autonomy, mastery, social connectedness, and personal security" (King et al., 2014, p. 683).

With as many domains encapsulated by well-being, the impact of social isolation reverberates across several dimensions. As one example, emotional well-being would likely be constrained by feelings of loneliness, and social well-being might be reduced through the loss of interpersonal contact—together, both domains can influence psychological and cognitive well-being. Among aging adults, Merten et al. (2020) found that "higher psychological well-being was associated with better function in multiple sensorineural and cognitive functions" (p. 535). To better address health needs, Davitt et al. (2016) advocates for a more holistic perspective that recognizes the interdependence of all areas of well-being in the care of older adults. Using a mixed-methods approach, Greaves and Farbus (2006) observed the effects of creative and social activity on the health and well-being of individuals who were socially isolated later in life; the resulting quantitative and qualitative data indicated "that the health status of elderly socially isolated people taking part in creative and social activities with individualized mentor support improved meaningfully over time" (p. 140).

Qualities of Older Adult Musicians

Comparisons of musicians and nonmusicians are a popular topic of research, offering insights from a variety of disciplines. While there appear to be a handful of studies that identify shared personal characteristics of musicians, only a small amount of research is devoted exclusively to understanding the qualities of older adult performers relating to their vocal or instrumental practice. This review will highlight the few studies available that discuss potential protective factors as well as any limitations faced by musicians over the age of 60 in the later stages of their careers. In the literature, thought provoking parallels are made between athletes and musical performers. With an emphasis on neurobiological differences, genetic and physiological markers of musicianship are identified that may offer advantages in several domains. It is also an area of interest to investigate the neurocognitive profiles between musicians and the ways that these differ depending on what instrument is played (Tervaniemi, 2009). While no current research has assessed the shared values of musicians, many of these can be inferred from the available literature and studies that investigate character strengths.

Protective Factors

It has long been advocated that early exposure to music supports brain development in infancy (Sa de Almeida et al., 2020) and childhood (Fernandez, 2018; Kraus & Strait, 2016), and so, perhaps it comes as no surprise that individuals who remain committed to musical practice throughout the lifetime also benefit from certain advantages (Catterall & Rauscher, 2008). Among these factors, Zendel and Alain (2012) suggested that "being a musician may contribute to better hearing in old age by delaying some of the age-related changes in central auditory processing" (p. 415). Based on the results of a study comparing lifelong musicians and nonmusicians, Zendel and Alain (2012) defend that "lifelong musicianship mitigates age-related decline on cognitive tasks directly related to musical performance, in addition to mitigating

cognitive decline on tasks peripherally related to musical performance" (p. 416). In a large cross-sectional study investigating musical activity across the lifespan, Böttcher et al. (2022) offered a wide range of supportive evidence that participation in musical activity would serve as a protective factor in later stages of life. It is worth noting that the participants who reported musical activity "were characterized by a high-reserve profile, including higher education, SES, crystallized intelligence, and more frequent participation in physical activity," with respect to the fact that these variables are also associated with better health outcomes in old age (Böttcher, 2022, p. 11). In other words, it appears that the protective factors afforded by lifelong musicianship may also be reflected in the various privileges that facilitate access and promote success within the profession.

Parallels between Musicians and Athletes

While there is a seeming abundance of cognitive benefits available in the lifelong pursuit of musical practice, physical health of musicians is often characterized by an increase in performance-related musculoskeletal disorders (PRMD) (Kenny et al., 2018), much in the way that athletes accumulate injuries from repetitive movement and straining over time (Baadjou et al., 2015). Vastamäki et al. (2020) compared the prevalence of physical pain among professional musicians with the general population and found that "orchestra musicians reported more pain in the back and upper extremity than other working people" (p. 507). When athletes and musicians are forced into early retirement due to injury or otherwise, the resulting impact on a sense of identity for both groups of individuals can be devastating to well-being (Cohen & Ginsborg, 2021; Conroy & Oleary-Kelly; 2014; Lavallee & Robinson, 2007). Núñez et al. (2020) examined the relationship between anxiety and performance by comparing these experiences among

athletes and musicians, with results indicating higher levels of somatic anxiety experienced by musicians.

A Sense of Purpose

Among the psychological factors that support health and well-being in old age, a sense of purpose and meaning in life are important resources for a number of coping processes. Specifically, the areas of goal setting and fulfillment, self-regulation, growth and adaptation, and defense against aging-related losses are identified within the literature. For these strategies to be effective, theoretical perspectives emphasize the need for individuals to maintain a close connection with personal values. To more accurately capture a sense of purpose as a construct will require some discussion on the function of personal values and meaning-making in this context. These topics are also relevant for an ACT-based treatment approach that links valued living to a sense of purpose.

Health Outcomes

Based on numerous studies, it is well documented that a sense of purpose in old age is strongly associated with health and well-being (Roepke et al., 2014), with evidence that it can reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease (Kim et al., 2019b), mortality, sleep problems, depression, loneliness (Kim et al., 2022), and cognitive failures (Sutin et al., 2023). A sense of purpose can even predict better physical health later in life according to Willroth et al. (2021). Within this study, the authors also found that "older adults in worse health are at greater risk for declines in sense of purpose," suggesting a vicious cycle (Willroth et al. 2021, p. 5). Nakamura et al. (2022) assessed data from 13,771 participants in the Health and Retirement Study to determine behavior antecedents that would predict increased purpose and identified that volunteering, time with friends, and physical activity would be important interventions for

supporting health outcomes via a sense of purpose. Based on their findings, Nakamura et al. (2022) arrive at the conclusion that "institutions, laws, and norms have failed to adapt to the reality of older adults, undermining our rapidly aging population's ability to maintain purpose" (p. 7). Shiba et al. (2021) confirmed that a sense of purpose served as a protective factor across the spectrum of socioeconomic status, but not without acknowledging the "modest evidence that the associations between higher purpose and lower mortality were stronger among individuals with high education, income, and wealth" (p. 53).

Resources for Coping

According to Van Tongeren et al. (2018), a capacity for self-regulation is related to a sense of purpose in the ways that it can support meaning-making. For this process to be effective, Van Tongeren et al. (2018) explain that "people must have the strength to reaffirm a meaning following threat or feelings of meaninglessness by enacting specific reaffirmation behaviors, many of which require self-regulation to achieve coherence, significance, and purpose" (p. 103). From another point of view, a sense of purpose can support the mechanism of self-regulation as a source of motivation in the effort to set and maintain goals, suggesting a bidirectional relationship. In terms of motivational factors, autonomous goals that are informed by core personal values can support goal progress "by allowing individuals to exert more effort, experience less conflict, and feel a greater sense of readiness to change their behaviour" (Koestner, 2008, p. 60). Another way of looking at this would be to understand the relationship between a sense of purpose and goal fulfillment as one that is guided by personal values.

Art Therapy with Older Adults

Among the wealth of treatment benefits endowed within art therapy, it is especially well-suited to support the qualities of autonomy and self-efficacy that are valuable for older adults. To

expand on this capacity, achieving a sense of purpose is fostered through an art-based practice

that encourages meaning-making while drawing on the inherent strengths and personal values of

the individual. Art therapy is uniquely capable of facilitating both intrapersonal exploration and

social engagement that can reconnect people in this age demographic with a larger sense of

community. In these ways, art-making processes are ideal interventions that can mitigate the

experiences of social isolation and invisibility that are so detrimental to the health of older adults.

The literature also reflects significant reductions in symptoms of depression when art-making is

used as an intervention within this population. As a non-verbal method of therapeutic

collaboration, older adults affected by the physically and cognitively-limiting diseases of later

life have an opportunity to reclaim a sense of agency and communicate their internal experience

through art-based action. Especially concerning the experience of ageism and other marginalized

intersecting identities, art therapy can provide a sense of empowerment in the face of harmful

stereotyping, stigma, and discrimination.

Art Therapy for Meaning-Making

Of the interventions highlighted within the literature, art-based experientials that

encourage meaning-making through life review have been effective for supporting a sense of

purpose among older adults. Ravid-Horesh (2004) describes how "the art therapy process

enabled a progression from depictions of decline and emptiness to a more wholesome view of

life," one in which a sense of purpose was achieved by sharing a "lifetime memories with a

supportive witness" (p. 317). In cases where the experience of depression results in a loss of

meaning, "the therapeutic aspect of the life review seems to be that of resurrection in memory of

past experiences and conflicts that can lead to reassessment, identification of solutions, and

potential for improved coherence and sense of integrity for the individual" (Ilali et al., 2018, p.

149). Following an art therapy intervention that invited participants to engage in life-review through drawing, Ilali et al. (2018) observed a decrease in depression symptoms and explained that "life review therapy might decrease severity of depression among elderly women and provide a way to honor the range of experiences and memories" (p. 151).

The Scribble Technique

In terms of the specific arts-based intervention proposed within this research, there appears to be a gap in the literature involving studies that employ the scribble technique exclusively in populations of older adults. Attention will be paid to what few sources do exist as well as the limited available literature that focuses on scribbling and related interventions in other populations. It will be valuable to synthesize a review of these insights by examining how scribbling can be understood within the framework of the Expressive Arts Therapies Continuum (ETC). Providing the historical context for the use of the scribble technique will draw upon its initial application within the field of art therapy by Florence Cane sometime between the late 19th and mid-20th century. Within this discussion, it will also be necessary to include a brief description of the use of projective drawing techniques in art therapy and psychological assessment, for which a scribble technique is implicated.

History and Development

Despite how commonly projective drawing assessments are used in clinical contexts, there remain to be significant issues of reliability and validity namely due to the subjective nature of the interpretation of imagery (Behkit, 2002; McNiff, 1998). Scribbling tasks show up in at least two formal art-based psychological assessments including the Levick Emotional and Cognitive Art Therapy Assessment (LECATA) and the Ulman Personality Assessment Procedure (UPAP). As a projective technique, Elkisch (1951) defines the task of scribbling as

one that produces an amorphous image from involuntary or unconscious expressive movements, onto which a participant could project personal meaning much in the way that a Rorschach inkblot might elicit the imagination. While these techniques might pose problems for psychometric evaluation, projective drawing assessments persist as valuable tools in art therapy for providing "increased understanding of a client's developmental level, emotional status, and psychological framework" (Betts, 2006, p. 426).

Recognized for developing the scribble technique, Florence Cane (1983) underscores this creative task with training of the kinesthetic sense as a form of perception. Specifically, she viewed rhythmic drawing and the scribble technique as optimal exercises for aligning the mind and the body—a necessary process that would free the imagination and remove barriers to the discovery of meaning. In Cane's (1983) definition, a "scribble is a kind of play with a freely flowing continuous line," one that is made "without plan or design, and occurs as a result of easy movement of the arm" (p. 56). Central to this process is allowing the hand to make an unconscious rhythmic pattern, which can be supported by closing the eyes or using the non-dominant hand to guide the scribble. Afterwards, the participant is invited to contemplate the image; a natural impulse to identify forms within abstracted visual content guides the final creative task of developing this design. According to Cane (1983), "the objects seen by older people very often reveal deep inner problems, conflicts, or aspirations" (p. 57).

Scribbling in Clinical Contexts

Citing the work of Florence Cane, Hanes (1995) acknowledges the historical application of the scribble technique as one employed by art therapists "to reduce inhibitions and liberate spontaneous imagery from the subconscious," noting how it may serve to empower individuals "to overcome apprehension toward the image-making process" (p. 111). In a study with adults in

an acute inpatient psychiatric hospital, Hanes (1995) provides case examples that illustrate the power of the scribble technique to help clients bypass "intense feelings of artistic inadequacy" (p. 115). Much in the way that Cane (1983) encourages rhythmic drawing as a precursor to art-making, Magniant (2004) supports a kinesthetic "loosening-up exercise" prior to engaging the scribble technique as a means for encouraging spontaneity in art therapy with older adults. Providing further validation for these insights, it appears that a scribble technique would not only be beneficial as a non-threatening kinesthetic experience but also for investigating imagination, eliciting meaningful memories, and promoting psychological well-being (Darewych et al., 2018; Darewych and Bowers, 2018).

In clinical contexts, scribbling may be strategically utilized for stimulating the neural pathways involved in the experience of trauma. Tripp (2007) combines Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) with a bilateral scribble process to "purposefully engage both hemispheres of the brain and multiple sensory systems," ultimately allowing for new connections to be made (p. 178). Chapman (2014) first prescribes a scribble task in a sequential series of drawings as part of the Chapman Art Therapy Treatment Intervention (CATTI) for acute traumatic episodes in her work with children. Integral to activating the right-hemisphere of the brain where traumatic memories are stored, the sensory and kinesthetic experience of scribbling is believed to stimulate the awareness of internal sensations, the formulation of internal images, and the release of defensive and anxious energy through body movement and rhythm (Chapman, 2014, pp. 25-26).

Scribbling with Purpose

Lusebrink (2014) expands on this task, providing the neurological context behind the process of imagery formation initiated by kinesthetic movement. Scribbling involves activity in

the sensorimotor cortices which then "may be elaborated into a formation of images with the help of the projections of implicit neural patterns activated in the association cortices" (Lusebrink, 2014, p. 89). This process speaks to the capacity that scribble drawings possess as a means for stimulating the imagination through the natural impulse to identify patterns within abstracted images. Hinz (2020) credits Lusebrink with developing the ETC, and explains how "the emergent function of the Kinesthetic component is the appearance of form or emotion, leading the client to the Perceptual/Affective level" (p. 46). The emergent functions for each component of the ETC implicate a potential pathway to the Creative level and is seen to be representative of the optimal functioning in which "clients experience a more integrated sense of self" (Hinz, 2020, p. 7).

Here, the writings of Hanes (1995), Magniant (2004), Lusebrink (2014) and Hinz (2020) support the use of the scribble technique as a stimulus for the imagination at a foundational level that is accessible even for individuals who might be unfamiliar with or apprehensive towards the art-making process. Often used interchangeably, the act of making meaning is associated with a sense of purpose (Kosine et al., 2008), which could provide further validation for the scribble technique as it draws upon the capacity of the areas of the brain that make sense of abstracted visual content. Not only is a sense of purpose being activated in the process of sharing and being witnessed that Ravid-Horesh (2004) references, but it may be that the inherent qualities of the scribble technique will drive this same experience for older adults as well. By self-selecting the music that will guide the art-making process, perhaps participants will feel an increased sense of purpose, especially as retired musicians who may have a more intimate understanding of musical pieces from a lifetime of performance.

Music Therapy

Much in the way that music often accompanies meditation practice, it is common for art-making spaces to be paired with music presentation. However, the process of music therapy is much more involved than merely playing music in the background, just as art therapy tailors each experiential to the individual in treatment. As with visual arts-based approaches, music therapy also provides a pathway of communication for individuals who may struggle with traditional forms of therapy that rely solely on verbal expression; to optimize this experience, a variety of approaches are utilized in treatment, whether by improvisation, re-creative, compositional, or listening to music (American Music Therapy Association, 2022; Bruscia, 2014). For the purpose of this research, only a limited discussion of music therapy processes will be necessary to provide context for when music and art-based interventions are applied simultaneously in treatment. That being said, receptive experiences including musical presentation will be the primary focus of attention in a review of the available literature, as these align the most with the proposed methodology in this research.

Overlapping Modalities

In their rationale for music therapy, Heiderscheit and Jackson (2018) begin by identifying qualities of music, such as rhythm, melody, and harmony, which are also witnessed in the interacting systems of the body. Placing a great deal of emphasis on the holistic nature of these phenomena, the authors maintain "how music is inherently an experience in human wholeness and thereby a naturally therapeutic medium" (Heiderscheit & Jackson, 2018, p. 8). In similar terms, Sheridan (2002) describes scribbling as both a universal impulse that mirrors the rhythmic patterns in the central nervous system as they might appear on paper, and as a language demonstrating "the complex, embedded action of thought destined to be organized by marks" (p. 120). Expanding on the isomorphic qualities within these two modalities, any musical

composition will also consist of individual phrases, in both the technical sense and as messages that communicate vitality affect (Smeijsters, 2012). In the same way that art therapy broadens the avenue of self-expression, "the communication of common human experience through the sound of music is far less limiting than communication through the use of language" (Heiderscheit & Jackson, 2018, p. 9).

Each therapeutic viewpoint also resonates with the position that Dissanayake (2017) contends in her argument for an evolutionary origin of the arts, such that our ancestors were so naturally inclined to create art out of a necessity that it would fulfill certain needs for survival. Among these, a sense of belongingness is critical as social creatures—"we must share that which we find meaningful and beautiful in order to connect with others" (Heiderscheit & Jackson, 2018, p. 8). Considered the father of music therapy, Everett Thayer Gaston presented eight considerations of man and music in 1960, which Heiderscheidt and Jackson (2018) summarize as follows: (1) all mankind has a need for aesthetic expression and experience, (2) the cultural matrix determines the mode of expression, (3) music and religion are integrally related, (4) music is communication, (5) music is structured reality, (6) music is derived from the tender emotions, (7) music is a source of gratification, and (8) the potency of music is greatest in the group. Backos (2017) and Dissanayake (2017) might agree that these considerations could just as well inform the underlying tenets of art therapy and its theoretical foundations.

Four Main Methods

As an experiential form of therapy, practitioners rely on the level of individual experience with music as the primary methodology informing treatment. To implement music therapy, each method of engagement has its own therapeutic benefits and applications that involve a different set of sensorimotor behaviors, perceptual and cognitive skills, emotional tenor, and interpersonal

processes (Bruscia, 2014). For the same reasons that an art therapist would be mindful in the selection of an art-based intervention, a music therapist carefully considers whether to invite participants to engage in improvisation, re-creative, compositional, or receptive experiences in music, and which variation within these four main methods is appropriate to offer in treatment. Emphasis will be placed on receptive methods of engagement in the context of the proposed research as long as participants will be listening to music as the subject of art-making.

Falling under the category of receptive experience, the Bonny method of Guided Imagery and Music (GIM) has been effective in a variety of medical populations "for ameliorating symptoms and improving quality of life" (McKinney, 2018, p. 77). Emerging from humanistic approaches, GIM was designed to "facilitate transformational and transpersonal experiences by listening to classical music and experiencing spontaneous imagery in an altered state of consciousness" (Beck, 2019, p. 45). While this intervention is not always paired with art-making, therapists will often invite participants to explore imagery by engaging in a drawing task following the receptive experience of the music, which more commonly includes the creation of a mandala—"the symbolic journey is then linked to reality in terms of the client's own needs and circumstances" (Jerling, 2020, p. 373). As an adaptation to GIM, the Music, Drawing and Narrative (MDN) experiential asks clients to draw while listening to music and write a story for the drawings afterwards (Booth, 2005).

Hanke (2018) uses drawing as a method for discovering the content of musical works and revealing hidden aspects of personality among music therapy students aged 23-50 years-old. The receptive music therapy session referred in this study is defined as an exercise in which the participants engage in an art-making activity that is being guided by music rather than producing the music themselves (Hanke, 2018). While the work of Hanke (2018) more closely resembles

the intervention proposed within this paper, there are significant concerns about the lack of attention to methodology in this study that cannot be dismissed. That being said, it is at least somewhat promising to find that curiosity of this specific arts-based approach exists, and it certainly confirms a need for further research.

Music as a subject of art-making falls under the category of receptive experience and has been used in populations of children, but there do not appear to be many studies involving this task in later stages of development. Southcott (2015) applied this intervention in a study of children aged 9-11 years-old who were enrolled in music classes, and found that the majority of the students' drawings "show children immersed in or surrounded by music that reflect the importance of active music making and the range of images illustrates the varied personal meanings that music holds" (p. 88). It is worth clarifying that these participants were only creating drawings relating to their general experience of music, rather than drawing in response to hearing music in real time

Formally, musical presentation (MP) is described by Bensimon and Gilboa (2010) as a process that "can develop, clarify and ultimately increase a person's sense of purpose in life as well as self-consciousness, thus facilitating greater well-being," when used in the context of group therapy (p. 177). As a receptive method, MP invites group members to "introduce themselves via sounds or musical pieces," which have "special meaning and importance to [the] presenter," essentially serving as "a musical autobiography" (Bensimon & Gilboa, 2010, p. 172). If a performing in the sense of the four main modes "includes rendering, reproducing, realizing, or interpreting any part or all of an existing musical work," perhaps the therapeutic benefits of this method would also be facilitated through MP (Bruscia, 2014, p. 104). More accurately, the task proposed in this methodology would best be described as a receptive process that includes

projective drawing to music in which "the client draws while listening to music" (Bruscia, 2014, p. 109).

In a study of 52 participants, comprised of 26 students and 26 individuals with substance use disorders, the researchers divided each subgroup into a control group that did not receive the MP intervention and an experimental group that did receive the intervention. The Purpose in Life test (PIL) was used to measure the effectiveness of treatment and revealed "that MP enhanced participants' sense of purpose in life for both samples" (Bensimon & Gilboa, 2010, p. 176). Given the small sample size, the authors acknowledge a limitation on statistical generalizability while defending it as "characteristic of clinical intervention studies in general" (Bensimon & Gilboa, 2010, p. 177).

If each modality is uniquely positioned to capture and convey those thoughts and emotions that language alone cannot do justice to articulate, it would seem to be even more advantageous in session to offer both art and music therapy simultaneously if these approaches used together could cast a wider net to human experience. With a great deal of overlap, both art and music-based approaches should blend harmoniously on the stage of therapeutic experience, but it may be that some individuals might find it difficult to manage as much sensory stimulation all at once. For these reasons, the researcher proposes a more non-threatening art-based task of scribbling to reduce the risk of fatigue and frustration.

ACT

Under the umbrella of behavioral treatment approaches, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) was first established by Stephen Hayes in 1982 with origins in mindfulness and Relational Frame Theory (RFT). ACT differs from traditional theoretical orientations in this domain by emphasizing the acceptance of thoughts and feelings as products of the human

condition rather than eliminating these experiences as a primary focus of treatment. ACT

maintains that psychological inflexibility is the root cause of suffering in psychopathology and

offers six essential concepts organized within the hexaflex model for addressing various forms of

distress. Among these, (1) cognitive defusion, (2) acceptance, (3) contact with the present

moment, (4) self-as-context, (5) values, and (6) committed action represent core processes in

therapy. In theory, experiential avoidance is seen to be the driving component underlying

psychological inflexibility.

       Within the literature, ACT is empirically validated in the treatment of a variety of

conditions and populations, with perhaps the most evidence of symptom reduction in depression

and anxiety-related disorders. When ACT is combined with art therapy approaches, the intrinsic

process of art-making resonates with the principle of committed action, thus facilitating a sense

of purpose which can also be supported by incorporating values. In the population of older

adults, ACT has been researched among individuals who experience chronic pain, depression,

anxiety, and suicidal ideation with promising results. As of yet, it appears that only one study has

researched the effectiveness of ACT in the treatment of musicians who experience performance

anxiety. Based on the success with treating chronic pain in other populations, ACT would also

seem to be a useful approach for musicians who suffer from Playing-Related Musculoskeletal

Disorders (PRMD). Other mindfulness-based practices have been shown to be valuable for

students of music and voice as well as performing professionals, which could extend to the

rationale for utilizing ACT within this population.

Valued Living and Behavior

       In a discussion of musicians' performance-related values, Juncos and de Paiva e Pona

(2018) provide several examples, including "connecting with the audience, being more

emotionally expressive while performing, or, conversely, staying focused on proper technique"
(p. 8). When using ACT as a clinical anxiety treatment and performance enhancement program
within this population, Juncos and de Paiva e Pona (2018) highlight the importance of "the
collaboration between client and performance psychologist to develop value-consistent
[behaviors] to be used during performances, that may also make ACT more personally
meaningful for the musician" (p. 8). It may be that role of values in ACT works for musicians in
this context through a more adaptive and efficient strategy that demands "less mental energy by
defusing from anxious thoughts and switching focus onto engaging in their chosen, valued
behaviors" (Juncos & de Paiva e Pona, 2018, p. 10). In another study that utilized ACT for the
treatment of music performance anxiety (MPA) in singers, "students reported an increased
confidence in their performance skills, which they attributed to focusing more energy on valued
action during performances and less energy on attempting to control MPA symptoms" (p. 9).
From a point of neuroscience, it is believed that ACT treatments may free more cognitive
resources than cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), "likely due to shifting attention away from
monitoring one's anxiety symptoms to further engagement in task-related behavior" (Juncos &
de Paiva e Pona, 2018, p. 10).

ETC

As a foundational theory in art therapy, the Expressive Therapies Continuum (ETC)
represents a useful framework for assessing individual functioning and for aligning art processes
and media with the particular needs and goals of treatment. An important theoretical subset
within the ETC paradigm is the concept of Media Dimension Variables (MDV), which describe
the ways that specific art materials are typically experienced and categorized within the creative
process. Conceived in 1978 by Sandra Kagin and Vija Lusebrink, the ETC is grounded in well-

established theories of human development, information processing, and neuroscience. Based on the available literature, it appears that further research and empirical support is needed for the ETC as a construct itself. The challenge of operationalizing this theoretical framework seems to be primarily due to the complex nature of interacting components. Despite this limitation, the ETC is often referenced in art-based research in defense of various methodologies, suggesting an enduring interest in the field to incorporate the ETC as a guide into art therapy and art-based research. For this reason, the focus will be narrowed to those peer-reviewed studies that substantiate methodological designs with insights from the ETC.

Where Credit is Due

Lusebrink (2014) considers Florence Cane to be the "grandmother of the expressive therapies continuum," comparing her movement, emotion, and thought functions to the kinesthetic, affective, and cognitive dimensions of the ETC (p. 17). According to Lusebrink (2014), Cane described a sequence that is similar to the developmental hierarchy of the ETC in the belief that movement would lead to feeling, and thus, "imbue the artwork with more meaning" (p.17). The kinesthetic movement of the scribble technique that Cane developed conveys this process, especially when participants derive meaning by identifying forms within abstracted content.

Structure

The model of the ETC consists of four levels that represent an ascending developmental hierarchy, including the (1) kinesthetic/sensory, (2) perceptual/affective, (3) cognitive/symbolic, and the (4) creative level. According to Lusebrink (2010), the first three levels of the ETC "reflect different functions and structures in the brain that process visual and affective information" (p. 168). Within this schematic, the creative level at the top center of the hierarchy

represents the integration of right and left-brain processes that are optimal for therapeutic

functioning. Snir and Regev (2013) clarify that the creative level "can be present at any of the

previous levels and may involve a synthesis of all the other levels" (p. 94). Each of the remaining

three levels is viewed as an individual continuum where kinesthetic, perceptual, and cognitive

components reflect left-hemisphere brain functions, and their corresponding complements at the

opposite end of the spectrum indicate right-hemisphere brain functions, referring to sensory,

affective, and symbolic processes (Hinz, 2020). In practice, "assessment of the formal elements

in an artwork can help a therapist determine how a client is processing information via the

different levels of the ETC," thereby articulating the present level of functioning (Lusebrink,

2010, p. 168).

MDV

Graves-Alcorn and Kagin (2017) delineate three generalized variables, including

"structure, task complexity, and media properties" (p. 9). All of the possible combinations of

these variables within art interventions can be classified in six dimensions denoting (1) high or

(2) low complexity, (3) structured or (4) unstructured, and (5) fluid or (6) resistive media

(Graves-Alcorn & Kagin, 2017). The ability of the art therapist to identify these properties and

align their characteristic effects with treatment needs and goals is a core responsibility of

facilitating art therapy.

Whether a task is high or low complexity is defined by the number of steps involved to

complete the project, with one or two steps indicating low complexity and three or more for high

complexity tasks (Graves-Alcorn & Green, 2014). According to Graves-Alcorn and Kagin

(2017), "media whose properties were soft, aqueous, malleable, and easy to manipulate, such as

finger paint, soft clay, or polymer acrylics, were in the fluid range," while resistive materials

were defined as "hard, brittle, slightly pliable to nonmalleable, and difficult to manipulate, such as hard or highly grogged clay, metal, wood, poster boards, heavier papers, or pencils" (p.10). Differentiating between structured and unstructured tasks is determined by the confines of instruction, meaning that structured tasks "leave little, if any, choice in the results of manipulating the materials," while unstructured tasks were more open-ended, "left up to the individual, and the instructions were simple" (Graves-Alcorn & Green, 2014, p. 5).

Referring to the concept of isomorphism, Wood (2013) writes that "art can reflect things that are unbalancing a life, and do so better than words can, and it can, crucially, provide a means of repairing or getting balance back" (p. vii). Franklin (2010) echoes the idea that "with isomorphism, there is a similarity in organization between inner emotional states and their expression in outer visual structures of art" (p. 163). According to Graves-Alcorn and Green (2014), "if isomorphism takes place and the individual becomes attuned to the media, with a clear understanding of the structure, then some emotional response should be elicited" (p. 10). From a standpoint of neuroscience, Lobb (2016) offers a simplified definition "that isomorphism means that when we are aware of something, something equivalent is happening in our central nervous system," which ostensibly stands in alignment with the theories of the ETC (p.43). While isomorphism is frequently consigned to theories of Gestalt psychology, altogether these ideas appear to suggest the isomorphic potential within qualities of art materials themselves, which would seem to provide further validation for the application of MDV in art therapy.

Towards a Methodology

With the view that both MDV and art processes located within the ETC bear as much significance on therapeutic experiences and outcomes, it makes sense for these concepts to emerge as a methodological rationale in art-based research. Snir et al. (2017) examined the

possible relationships between attachment avoidance and anxiety via responses to art materials, citing MDV in a review of the literature to support their hypotheses. The findings revealed "significant negative correlations between attachment avoidance and responses to working with oil pastels, gouache paint, and finger paint: the higher the score on avoidance, the more negative the feelings about the material" (Snir et al., 2017, p. 24).

In a similar study, Haeyen and Hinz (2020) contextualize attachment patterns within the ETC, offering the prediction that securely attached individuals would "have relatively easy access to their emotions," and would flexibly negotiate the right-brain components that correspond with sensory, affective, and symbolic processing (p. 3). By contrast, insecure-avoidant attached adults "tend to use deactivating emotion regulation strategies," and would therefore "rely on the overuse of cognitive and perceptual components of the ETC because these activities can contain or reduce emotion" (Haeyen & Hinz, 2020, p.3).

In one study that tested Lusebrink's (2010) hypothesis that expression at different levels of the ETC would be supported by different patterns of functional brain activation, Griffith and Bingman (2020) achieved results that supported their prediction that "cognitive drawing, operationalized by internally cued drawing stimuli or objective drawing content, would be associated with activation of the prefrontal and cingulate cortices" (p. 1). While their second hypothesis was unsubstantiated, Griffith and Bingman (2020) arrived at a revised hypothesis for future research that "artistic expression at different ETC levels is associated with differences in regional brain origin and directionality of processing, as well as activation of large brain networks" (p. 7). In an effort to contextualize art therapy in the field of neuroscience, as the ETC was intended, the researchers offer a final appeal: "when art therapists are more aware of underlying brain processes during art making with different stimuli or different content, they are

also better equipped to select effective art media and directives, potentially promoting the

restorative potential of neural plasticity for their clients" (Griffith & Bingman, 2020, p. 8).

Chapter 3: Methodology

Research Questions

This research study addressed the question of how music-guided art-making incorporating the use of the scribble technique could support a sense of purpose among older adult retiree musicians. Specifically, the researcher hypothesized that the process of self-selecting music for participants with rich histories in the musical performing arts would imbue meaning throughout the art-making experience, thereby facilitating a sense of purpose. Within this hypothesis, it was predicted that self-selection of music and corresponding discussion would elicit an effect that was comparable with the sharing and witnessing of memories that occur in life review, thus supporting the experience of meaning-making. The researcher also anticipated the benefits of an ACT approach that emphasizes valued living and behavior to be conveyed in the music self-selection process. In accordance with the ETC, it was predicted that the kinesthetic basis for the scribble technique would prove to be valuable and an accessible entry point for this population—one in which the creative level of functioning would be achieved via the identification of forms within abstracted content and reflected by feelings of wholeness, satisfaction, closure, and/or joy.

Exploratory Questions

Additional exploratory questions were aimed towards understanding (1) the ways in which older adult musicians experienced a loss of a sense purpose in retirement including any perceptions relating to musicianship as an identity, (2) whether or not and, if so, how this related to internalized ageism or ageist practices in the industry or otherwise, (3) additional barriers that limited the capacity to achieve a sense of purpose, (4) available resources that were drawn upon in an effort to cope with these experiences, (5) any personal values that corresponded with a

sense of purpose and meaning-making for the individual, as well as (6) any insights reflecting whether or not and, if so, how meaning-making was attainable through the art experiential.

Population and Sample

The population of older adult retiree musicians represents a heterogenous group that could report experiences of ageism and age-related physical and mental health challenges relating to loss, including the loss of a sense of purpose that might accompany the transition to retirement. This could be especially true for musicians whose identity might often be tied to their creative employment. As performers in a competitive industry, musicians operate under intense pressure, obligated by the demands of honoring time constraints and technical standards that require many hours of practice and rehearsal. Rates of anxiety and depression typically could be higher among musicians, including music performance anxiety (MPA). Older adult musicians might enter retirement due to age-related changes and performance-related musculoskeletal disorders (PRMD) that could be painful and limit both mobility and participation in a range of activities.

Depending on the type of music that is played and the various organizations in which musicians participate, demographic characteristics could reflect a fair amount of diversity. The size of any group of performing musicians could vary depending on the demand of the music that was being performed. For classically trained musicians, both socioeconomic status and education could be higher in this population as these might be common entry points to performing professionally beyond individual skill level.

Qualitative phenomenological research designs tend to involve a smaller set of participants, and so, the maximum number of individuals for this study was limited to 15-20 participants.

Gaining access to this population was aided by the knowledge and experience that the researcher possessed from previous work within the performing arts community. When participation was authorized, soliciting the musician's union representing the greater San Francisco Bay Area was one method of inquiry from which sampling was achieved using a combined approach that applied purposeful sampling through convenience and snowballing. In addition to this strategy, both digital and paper fliers were provided to various performing arts organizations and theaters for distribution by mail, email, and face-to-face contact.

Criteria for selection required individuals (1) to be aged 60 or older, (2) fully retired or in the process of contemplating retirement, (3) whose capacity to sing or play music both professionally and in private might have been impacted by an injury, disability, and/or age-related changes, (4) who might have reported feelings of loss relating to a sense of purpose, meaningful experiences, and/or the capacity for meaning-making (5) with at least two decades of professional experience in vocal or instrumental music performance, with no specification in terms of the genres of music performed.

Individuals who met all criteria were invited to participate virtually via Zoom videoconferencing over the course of one 75 minute session that could be extended up to 30 additional minutes if necessary. When it served the best interests and personal preferences of three out of the five participants, an in-person format was adapted, but only when it could be reasonably accommodated by both the participant and the researcher. All correspondence related to planning was conducted virtually over the internet, email, and phone. Documentation of consent forms were received either in-person or virtually. In-person interaction occurred with delivery of research materials for the first individual participating over Zoom, and there was no

in-person interaction for the second individual participating over Zoom who had personally sourced the research materials.

Participant Consent Process

Participation in research was secured via documentation of informed consent, consent for artwork, consent for video and audio recording, a demographic questionnaire, letter of participation, and a debriefing statement. Informed consent included details of the purpose and background, procedures, risks, benefits, confidentiality, alternatives, costs, compensation, and a statement describing where questions related to participation in the research could be directed. Consent for artwork informed participants how art would be used in the art therapy research project, how confidentiality would be protected, and how artwork would be stored. Within the consent for video and audio recording, participants were informed how the content of recordings would be used in the art therapy research project, how confidentiality would be protected, and how recordings would be stored.

Location

Because this age segment of the population stood at a higher risk of serious illness brought on by infection of SARS-CoV-2 per the recommendations of state and national health officials in California and the CDC, the option to participate in research conducted by virtual means was provided over Zoom from a private location of the individual's choosing. Exceptions were made when it served the best interests and personal preferences of three out of the five participants to participate in-person, but only when it could also be reasonably accommodated by both the participant and the researcher.

Confidentiality

Because participant data was not anonymous, confidentiality of both raw and computerized data was protected by storing signed informed consent forms separately from participants' data, numerically coding informed consent forms to match each participants' data, and keeping a separate log to ensure confidentiality, while maintaining accurate records of obtained informed consent. Raw physical data and records were secured in a locked container, while digital computerized data and records were secured by password protected folders and encryption of files.

Research Design

In terms of methodology, qualitative research was designed to capture the depth of people's subjective experiences, the meaning making process of the participants, and the depth of meaning. Within this design, an integration of phenomenological and ethnographic approaches applied interviewing techniques to investigate how retired musicians thought about their experiences, how consciousness was experienced and how this reflected their social reality, following an arts-based intervention. In addition to the art, a combination of structured and unstructured questions attempted to gather personal insight from participants after the creative process was completed. It was anticipated that insight gleaned through demographic questionnaires, interviews, and ethnography would thicken a description of the social life of this population. Through participatory observation, the researcher engaged directly with the participants by facilitating an art-based activity, interviewing, and recording systematic observations.

It was necessary to obtain demographic data of the participants along with a variety of field notes. To determine if enough participatory criteria were met, demographic questions attempted to ascertain a level of generalizability by collecting details relating to performance

history, assessing the contexts surrounding retirement and whether barriers impacting the capacity to participate were experienced; targeting this information also served the purposes of tailoring the session to the participant and informing data analysis.

The bulk of the data was sourced during the interview through participant art and unstructured, semi-structured, and highly structured inductive lines of inquiry. Collecting data on these experiences involved recording the interviews over Zoom video conference call and manually coding and analyzing the qualitative content of these sessions for interpretation and evaluation. A grounded theory approach was then repeated until the saturation point was reached.

Procedures

IRB approval, included in Appendix A, was granted before commencing all aspects of the study; informed consent to participate, share art data, and be recorded were obtained by all participants prior to the main intervention.

Participants were recruited via word-of-mouth and flier, which included an email address and a link to a Google form demographics questionnaire. Participants initiated contact either by emailing the address listed on the flier, through networked correspondence via word-of-mouth, following the URL link, or scanning the QR code using the camera app on a cell phone. Upon accessing the demographics questionnaire, individuals were asked to provide an email address and were informed to expect a greeting letter along with consent forms only if they met the criteria to participate in the study.

The first five questions of the demographics questionnaire served as a screening tool for the researcher to determine if individuals met the eligibility criteria to participate in the study. When criteria were confirmed, individuals received a greeting letter along with links for

obtaining documentation of (1) informed consent, (2) consent for artwork, (3) consent for video and audio recording, and (4) a debriefing statement when the session was concluded. While these items were processed, individuals were contacted for scheduling. At a designated date and time agreed upon between the individual and the researcher, two participants met virtually over Zoom video conference and three individuals met in-person at their home residence. For the first participant who met virtually, materials were hand-delivered ahead of the session at a time coordinated between the participant and the researcher. Materials were personally sourced by the second individual who met over Zoom, as this was the most reasonable and mutually beneficial option that could be accommodated for both the researcher and the participant.

Prior to meeting, participants were asked to consider several pieces of music no more than 25 minutes in length individually, that could be streamed online, and that had some degree of personal significance as a theme. The participants submitted these selections in advance for the researcher to make preparations for the session. The researcher checked for the music selections on the Spotify streaming service and confirmed availability with the participants. Of these selections, individuals chose two to five songs and/or movements to be incorporated into the research session. In two sessions, the researcher asked the individuals to decide on specific versions when different recordings of the same songs were available. Because the lengths of songs could vary greatly, participants were informed of the probability that shorter selections might end up being repeated. Participants were informed that they had the option to enlist the assistance of another individual, family member, or caregiver to support and facilitate participation in the research process, if desired.

In session, the researcher followed a script of instructions in which participants were asked to set aside approximately 75 minutes of their time to complete the following tasks: (1) 15

minutes for introduction and setting up the space with the materials provided, including taping down the larger sheet of paper to a flat stable surface and arranging drawing media for easy access, (2) 5 minutes for preparation of music, (3) 5-10 minutes of the kinesthetic warm-up phase exercise using a bilateral scribble, (4) 5-10 minutes of the first phase of scribbling to the self-selected music that included time for reflective distancing, (5) 10-15 minutes to develop the scribble drawing in the second phase, and (6) the remaining time, or at least 20 minutes, for processing the experience via structured interview together with informal lines of inquiry.

In addition to answering verbally, participants had the option of providing their responses to the structured interview questions on a paper or a digital survey copy. If individuals required more time for this process, the researcher extended the session as needed for up to 30 minutes, or proposed that written responses could be completed outside of the research session on the participants' terms within a 2-week time period for submission.

Once the research session had been concluded, participants were instructed or received in-person assistance to return the physical artworks along with the art materials to the storage receptacle in which they were received, excluding circumstances where digital photo documentation was the only reasonable option and the materials were personally sourced. For the three individuals who participated in person, the researcher collected all materials on site at the conclusion of the sessions. For the two participants who met virtually, the researcher coordinated a designated pick-up time and date with the first participant, and coordinated with the second individual to obtain digital photo documentation of the artworks. All individuals were reminded to refer to the debriefing materials if any questions, concerns, or comments had surfaced following participation in the research session.

Measures, Assessments, and Interventions

This study did not make use of an existing measure or assessment to be used towards data collection and analysis. Rather, the researcher devised an original set of questions as part of a structured interview that was conducted immediately following the art-making portion of the intervention. Of the questions listed in the structured interview, all were asked directly for participants to be able to respond in their own words out loud. The following preliminary questions served as the primary point of inquiry:

(1) What visual elements in the drawing (i.e. line, shape, color, texture, etc.) do you find correspond the most with specific moments, qualities, or themes in the music, if any?

(2) What is the personal significance of the music that you chose? Did it influence your drawing in any way?

(3) In what ways does this experience align with your personal values, if any?

(4) How do you feel about your experience today? Was it meaningful for you?

(5) How does this compare with the personal fulfillment that you felt when you were performing professionally?

According to both Tripp (2007) and Chapman (2014), the bilateral scribble would involve using both hands simultaneously to create continuous lines on a surface for the purpose of activating both hemispheres of the brain. Individuals were encouraged to explore this warm-up phase for 5-10 minutes using a range of motions, speed, and varying pressure, employing each of the four drawing media on a large piece of paper that could be taped onto a flat stable surface. In this study, the bilateral scribble was also intended as a non-threatening kinesthetic exercise where participants could familiarize themselves with the art media prior to engaging in the main scribble technique intervention. Individuals were informed of the relaxation benefits of focusing attention on their breathing at this time, and were invited to control the breath by

inhaling through the nose for several seconds, holding this briefly, and exhaling through the mouth, repeating the cycle for the duration of the bilateral scribble.

Once the participants were ready to move forward, the first phase of the main intervention asked individuals to spend as much or as little time scribbling using a continuous line in a freeform manner on medium-sized pieces of paper, completed within a 5-10 minute period that included time afterwards for reflective distancing. Participants used three pieces of paper for this process and would later choose one to develop that had captured their inspiration. Additionally, the researcher offered the suggestion that participants could avoid looking directly at the scribble as they were drawing, in order to avoid the temptation of producing deliberate identifiable forms. In cases where participants chose to complete the drawing with their eyes closed, it was recommended that the paper should be taped to the table.

The self-selected music began playing and served as a queue for the participant to begin the scribble. When necessary, the music continued in a loop if more time was needed for individuals to complete the three drawings and find a stopping point, or until the 25-minute limit had been reached. The researcher offered gentle verbal reminders to help participants remain oriented to the passing of time by announcing when 5 minutes were left for completing the drawing and adding finishing touches. After the three drawings were completed, it was clarified that one would be used for the second and final phase of the main intervention in which participants were asked to transform the scribble into another image by developing any forms or ideas that were identified during the reflective distancing phase.

Materials

Two sizes of paper and a variety of restrictive drawing materials were provided to each participant, with the exception of the first participant who received a slightly different ratio of

paper sizes. Larger-sized paper was used for the bilateral scribble, and medium-sized paper was used for the scribble technique. Painter's tape was used to secure the paper surface for the bilateral scribble, and could also be used for the main scribble drawing. Among the drawing materials, oil pastels, chalk pastels, colored pencils, and markers were available, in addition to several adaptive ergonomic tools that could support the drawing process if chronic pain or other difficulties with mobility were experienced. In terms of adaptive tools, chairs, seat cushions, neck pillows, wrist support cushions, and ergonomic drawing utensil grips were made available. Materials were provided to all participants with the exception of the second virtual participant who personally sourced the art materials.

From the point of technology, the research session itself took place over Zoom videoconferencing for two participants, which meant that both the researcher and the participants required a stable internet connection for this to occur. A tripod and a portable desk lamp with a phone clamp attachment were provided if participants preferred to use their cell phones when using Zoom services. Correspondence and documentation of consent were conducted using Google Gmail services and Google Forms, and music was streamed over Spotify, which also required a stable internet connection. The researcher used her personal vehicle to drop off or hand-deliver materials.

To best ensure health and safety precautions, and in light of the COVID-19 pandemic especially, art materials and adaptive tools were sanitized between uses with 99% isopropyl alcohol or Clorox wipes if they could not be sanitized in a washing machine. For in-person sessions as well as while dropping off or hand-delivering materials, hand sanitizer was used and the researcher proposed to wear an N95 mask if this was preferred by the participants.

Data Collection Methods

Data collection was achieved via demographic questionnaire, structured interview, informal lines of inquiry, and participant art. Video and audio data were collected through a recording of the session over Zoom and/or the personal laptop of the researcher when the session was conducted in person. Online surveys and private digital platforms for uploading images were also utilized for data collection. Participants were also instructed or received in-person assistance returning their art along with the materials provided during the research session, especially if a higher resolution digital photo of the art could not be obtained. To ensure the security of the participants' art upon return, the researcher coordinated a designated pick-up time and date with individuals when it was necessary. Structured interview questions and informal lines of inquiry were designed and curated to capture content referring to the experience of a sense of purpose, meaning-making, and feelings of self-efficacy.

Data Analysis

With a primary focus of the content of responses that participants provided in explanation of their art and art process, thematic analysis searched for common phrases, ideas, and words that could relate to how a sense of purpose, meaning-making, and feelings of self-efficacy were experienced in this population. Five open-ended structured interview questions were designed to stimulate a thought process in which participants could find or create meaning. Data was analyzed in relation to the responses that participants provided in the demographics questionnaire to evaluate the descriptive alignment of core themes, especially concerning personal definitions of a sense of purpose. The researcher also viewed the data through the lens of the Expressive Therapies Continuum (ETC) in an attempt to discern how participants engaged with art media. The first two questions in the structured interview invited participants to draw connections between their artistic intentions and how these might have corresponded with the personal

significance of the music. The content of responses specifically relating to personal values were contextualized within an Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) framework. All five open-ended questions targeted aspects of intention, values, significance, or meaning to capture the presence and nature of personal values.

Operational definitions of a sense of purpose were derived from sources in the literature that conceptualized this construct within the context of eudemonic well-being. As Ryff and Singer (2008) described, purpose in life is captured by a sense of directedness or intentionality, the ability to find or create meaning, live authentically, engage with a reflective stance, and achieve emotional integration, with an emphasis on the importance of beliefs. Several extensions are made, such that values can emerge from beliefs through commitment and self-efficacy (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002), and self-efficacy can foster self-actualization (Ordun & Akün, 2017)

In order to capture phenomenological and ethnographic data, a modified thematic analysis blended standard categorization and thematic analysis of transcript content with modified thematic methods applied to art and observational notes, as it was described by as described by Percy et al. (2015) and Leavy (2017). The coding process was extensive, recursive, and combined several coding approaches through inductive and deductive lenses. Deductive points of view were informed by operational definitions of a sense of purpose that were substantiated in the literature, theories of ACT, the ETC, and Media Dimension Variables (MDV), and from descriptions pertaining to how participants experienced a sense of purpose that were collected in the demographic questionnaire.

All five transcripts were sequentially read together in four passes for initial immersion, and a hybridized coding strategy was then performed in two succeeding passes: the first pass captured descriptive, structural, and values codes; the second pass of line-by-line coding was

performed according to a grounded theory approach that resourced and refined codes from the

first pass. During interpretation, codes were viewed for patterns based on memo notes, and

compared across categories, concepts, and themes, based on recommendations by Leavy (2017).

Additionally, further confidence was developed via triangulation that incorporated sources from

ACT, the ETC, and MDV. Eventually, the themes that emerged were integrated across all

sources and forms of data to arrive at a composite thematic picture of the culture and inner

experiences of the participants, as it was suggested by Percy et al. (2015).

Risks and Benefits

For musicians who might experience chronic pain or difficulties with mobility due to

age-related changes and performance-related musculoskeletal disorders (PRMD), the risk

remained that some individuals could experience varying degrees of physical discomfort. To

address this, the researcher first asked participants to describe the movements that should be

limited or avoided to reduce the risk of discomfort or injury occurring if chronic pain or PRMD

were listed in the demographic questionnaire. At this point, the researcher offered adaptive tools

or alternative approaches that could be accommodated to best ensure the comfort and safety of

participants. For this purpose, chairs, seat cushions, neck pillows, wrist support cushions, and

ergonomic drawing utensil grips were made available when it was necessary or could be

reasonably accommodated. In the case that an incident would have occurred, participants had the

option of listing an emergency contact along with any relevant preferred medical contact

numbers in their documentation of consent.

Additionally, participants could experience emotional discomfort in the form of

frustration, fatigue, or boredom during the art-making process. The task of drawing could leave

participants feeling frustrated when the image does not meet desired expectations, especially for

individuals who might have less experience with art-making and drawing tools, or who face limitations in dexterity. Frustration could also be experienced if the timing of music selections activated a sense of pressure or performance anxiety in participants. This could be especially true for retired musicians who had previously performed under strict time constraints in coordination with musical tempo. In other words, it seemed possible that performing in the context of music-guided art-making could evoke similar feelings of performance anxiety that might also have been experienced when musicians and singers were performing professionally. In order to minimize this risk, the researcher chose the task of scribbling specifically for the fact that it was viewed as a more non-threatening approach to art-making. It could have alleviated feelings of pressure if participants completed the initial scribble without viewing the paper as the drawing was occurring, to avoid any attachment or feelings of inhibition that could arise in an effort to preserve the image. Additionally, encouraging multiple scribble drawings could have provided more options from which participants would possibly find inspiration to develop into the final drawing.

For individuals who report a loss of a sense of purpose, corollaries to this experience might include feelings of depression and anxiety which also tend to be higher in populations of professional musicians. That being said, emotional discomfort in these symptom domains could be activated for a variety of reasons, including both novel experiences and familiar processes that could stimulate painful memories, thoughts, feelings, and sensations. The researcher was mindful to approach these incidents with the utmost sensitivity and respect for the dignity of individuals by reassuring that no consequences would arise from participants who chose to withdraw from the study for any reason, as it was established within the informed consent document. In a debriefing statement, the researcher provided information and resources to all participants as an

assurance in the event that counseling services could be beneficial; the debriefing form also included phone and email contacts for follow-up correspondence, including answering questions about the study, or if participants wanted to view the results of the study upon publication.

From a more practical and logistical standpoint, unexpected challenges relating to technology could also be a source of distress. For these reasons, the researcher provided as much in-person assistance, communication, and reassurance as needed for participants to feel supported. For in-person sessions as well as when materials were hand-delivered or picked up, the researcher honored the health and safety guidelines established during the COVID-19 pandemic that included social-distancing, basic sanitation practices recommended in all California counties at the time, and masking when it was preferred by the participants.

Art therapy is designed to provide alternative avenues for expression, healing, and processing of human experiences that traditional methods of therapy alone may not be able to facilitate. In the context of this study, the researcher believed that the field of art therapy would benefit from results that could clarify the effectiveness of music-guided art-making within a population that was already deeply invested in the performing arts—if musicians faced challenges or were unable to creatively express themselves in the ways that they were most familiar, music-guided art-making could be a reliable solution for regaining a sense of purpose and self-efficacy that are so vital for supporting overall well-being in old age.

Participating in research in itself might be enough to support a sense of purpose, according to the Hawthorne effect. For older adults who experience social isolation and loneliness, art-based research could provide an opportunity to feel connected both on an intimate level between individuals, and perhaps, also, to something greater in the sense of community, society, or humanity as a whole in the effort towards scientific advancement.

The therapeutic benefits of creative engagement are broad-reaching and accessible through a variety of means. As an added advantage, private art-making in practice could provide a therapeutic release without the direct guidance of an art therapist, thus supporting the independence and agency of individuals in their own treatment.

Protection of Human Participants

The integrity of all research resided within practices that prioritized the safety of human subjects and ethical standards. Prior to participating in the research session, individuals had reviewed and signed an informed consent document to participate in research, a consent for artwork, and a consent for video and audio recording; a debriefing form with additional resources was provided after the session was completed. Commencement of this research study was only initiated once the Institutional Review Board of Dominican University of California gave approval according to the letter seen in Appendix A. The student researcher honored the ethical guidelines of the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists in order to ensure protection of participants.

Chapter 4: Data and Results

Introduction

In this study, five participants voluntarily engaged with self-selected music using a variety of resistive art media while performing the scribble technique as it was first described by Florence Cane (1983). A structured interview along with spontaneous unstructured lines of inquiry were applied to gather qualitative data about experiences of meaning-making throughout the art-based intervention. IRB approval was granted before commencing all aspects of the study, and informed consent to participate, share art data, and be recorded were obtained by all participants prior to the main intervention.

Following a restatement of the research questions and hypotheses, the results of data analysis will be presented beginning with a review of demographic and survey data collected during the recruitment process, overall key findings and themes derived from transcripts, and individual vignettes describing each of the five participant sessions including the art that was produced. Pseudonyms have been assigned to protect the identities of the participants, with each name selected by the researcher based on its common etymology in an effort to honor the themes that emerged from each individual during the session. The pseudonyms and their etymologies will first be explained in each of the five participant vignettes, and will appear later in the section discussing overall themes. Photographs of all art completed during the intervention will be included in the section describing individual participant vignettes.

Restatement of Research Questions and Hypotheses

The purpose of this study was to research the ways that music-guided art-making could support a sense of purpose within the population of older adult retiree musicians and singers. The researcher hypothesized that the process of self-selecting music for participants with rich

histories in the musical performing arts would imbue meaning throughout the art-making experience, thereby facilitating a sense of purpose. Within this hypothesis, it was predicted that self-selection of music and corresponding discussion would elicit an effect that would be comparable with the sharing and witnessing of memories that occur in life review, thus supporting the experience of meaning-making. The researcher also anticipated the benefits of an ACT approach that emphasizes valued living and behavior to be conveyed in the music self-selection process. In accordance with the ETC, it was predicted that the kinesthetic basis for the scribble technique would prove to be valuable and an accessible entry point for this population—one in which the creative level of functioning would be achieved via the identification of forms within abstracted content and reflected by feelings of wholeness, satisfaction, closure, and/or joy.

Operational definitions of a sense of purpose were derived from sources in the literature that conceptualized this construct within the context of eudemonic well-being. As Ryff and Singer (2008) described, purpose in life is captured by a sense of directedness or intentionality, the ability to find or create meaning, live authentically, engage with a reflective stance, and achieve emotional integration, with an emphasis on the importance of beliefs. Several extensions are made, such that values can emerge from beliefs through commitment and self-efficacy (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002), and self-efficacy can foster self-actualization (Ordun & Akün, 2017). The act of making meaning is associated with a sense of purpose, and the two concepts are often used interchangeably (Kosine et al., 2008).

Participant Demographics and Questionnaire Responses

Demographic data was collected from self-reported responses that were recorded using a Google form application. While demographic data and responses to survey questions were submitted voluntarily by 12 participants, one of the individuals requested to have their

submissions removed and six participants were unavailable to complete the remaining procedures of the study.

From the sample of five participants that completed all procedures in the study, informed consent was obtained prior to the research session. A total of 15 survey questions asked participants to share information pertaining to the following categories and topics: (1) email contact, (2) age, (3) gender, (4) ethnic background, (5) geographic location, (6) retirement status, (7) number of years dedicated to musical practice, (8) whether musical practice was characterized by experience with musical instruments and/or vocal practice, (9) what instruments participants played if applicable, (10) the various contexts in which participants shared their music, (11) the genres of music representing the professional experience of the participants, (12) factors impacting the capacity to participate musically, (13) factors impacting a sense of purpose, (14) whether or not factors impacting the capacity to participate musically played a role in the decision to retire, and (15) how participants would describe all of the ways that a sense of purpose was experienced. Questions 1-7 were categorized as basic demographic information, 8-11 gathered details of musical experience, and 12-15 investigated barriers and factors relating to a sense of purpose.

While the sample size for this study was quite small, targeted a very specific demographic, and communities of musicians in the Bay Area also tend to be interconnected and familiar, some details will therefore be excluded from the results in an effort to provide additional protection of participants' identities. Several survey responses were amended by the researcher following the interview session after some answers to survey questions were clarified with participants.

Basic Demographic Information

The ages of the five participants ranged from 65-81 years-old, with a mean age of 74.8 years-old and a median age of 76 years-old. Three individuals (60%) were female and two (40%) were male, while all five (100%) participants described their racial or ethnic background as "White." Responses detailing the geographic areas in which participants reside will be excluded from the results in an effort to protect identifying information, but all five (100%) participants have lived either peripherally or within the nine counties of the greater San Francisco Bay Area at the time corresponding with their present or past history of music performance. Three participants (60%) responded that they were fully retired, and two (40%) responded that they were semi-retired or were in the process of transitioning to retirement. Each of the five (100%) participants responded that their experience performing professionally, including musical practice over the course of the lifetime, was greater than or equal to 20 years.

Details of Musical Experience

When asked to characterize their professional experience, one participant (20%) identified themselves as a "Vocal / voice" performer, while the other four (80%) participants identified as performers who played "Musical instrument(s)." Of the four participants who selected "Musical instrument(s)," two (50%) individuals listed both oboe and English horn, one (25%) listed both bassoon and contrabassoon, and one (25%) listed Highland bagpipes, Celtic D and low D whistle.

Participants were asked to select all of the contexts in which they had shared their music, including the following selections with the corresponding numbers of responses: three (60%) responses for "Orchestra / symphony," three (60%) responses for "Chamber group (i.e. quintets, trios, etc.)," two (40%) responses for "Solo / recital," three (60%) responses for "Band / ensemble," one (20%) response for "Recording / archival," no (0%) responses for either "Non-

traditional venue" or "Social media," four (80%) responses for "Unpaid / pro bono," and one (20%) response for "Choir."

When asked to select all of the genre(s) of music that represented their professional performance experience, the following selections with the corresponding numbers of responses were reflected: no (0%) responses for either "Blues," "Folk," "Jazz," "Pop," or "Rock," four (80%) responses for "Classical," two (40%) responses for "Opera," one (20%) response for "Celtic and Scottish traditional music," and one (20%) response for "Choral music."

Barriers and Factors Relating to a Sense of Purpose

When asked if their capacity to sing or play music both professionally and in private had been impacted by an injury, disability, and/or aged-related changes, one (20%) participant answered "Yes," two (40%) answered "Maybe / somewhat," and the remaining two (40%) answered "No." All five (100%) participants responded "Maybe / somewhat" when asked if their sense of purpose had been impacted during this later phase of life (i.e. feelings of loss relating to a sense of purpose, meaningful experiences, and/or a capacity for meaning-making, goal setting and attainment).

Participants were asked to consider whether while they were practicing, rehearsing and/or performing professionally if they ever experienced any of the following that impacted their capacity to participate, with corresponding responses to all selections that applied as follows: three (60%) for "Performance anxiety," no (0%) responses for "Depression" or "Visual impairment or changes in your ability to see," one (20%) for "Chronic pain," one (20%) for "Performance-Related Musculoskeletal Disorder(s) (PRMD)," one (20%) for "Physical impairment or difficulties with dexterity / mobility," one (20%) for "Auditory impairment or changes in your ability to hear," one (20%) for "Cognitive impairment or changes in your

cognitive abilities," one (20%) for "Ageism," and one (20%) for "Ability to play difficult musical parts" was explained in a selection for "Other." Of the previous options selected that had impacted their capacity to participate, three (60%) individuals responded "Maybe / somewhat" when asked if these experiences played a role in their decision to retire, with another one (20%) that responded "Yes" and one (20%) that responded "No" to the same question. Lastly, participants were asked to describe in a list format all of the ways in which they experience a sense of purpose—the results for this question have been condensed into key phrases and themes and will be reflected in later sections pertaining to each session vignette with the individual participant.

Participant Vignettes

In the following vignettes, relevant context and background information describing each individual will be conceptualized along with participant art and processes that were observed by the researcher. Unstructured lines of inquiry that are not discussed in later sections covering themes will also be a point of focus in the context of the research questions and hypotheses. Special attention in this section will be paid towards limiting the constellation of personal details that could collectively serve to reveal the identities of the participants, especially given the narrow focus that was applied in order to sample this population. That being said, the researcher has deliberately rendered certain details into vague generalities, not in an effort to diminish participant accomplishments, but rather, in the best interest of providing a reasonable degree of protection.

Participant art will hereby be referred to in terms of the warm-up phase and the main intervention that consisted of two phases: (1) phase one, in which each of the three initial scribble drawings were completed respectively in response to individual movements or songs

from the participants' self-selected music amounting approximately to 10-25 minutes in combined total length, and (2) phase two, in which participants chose one of the same three drawings to enhance from phase one while listening to the self-selected music again on repeat and/or a to new self-selected song.

Vignette: Ruth

Given the common etymology behind the name, "Ruth" was a noble pseudonym for this participant based on the prominent theme of friendship that she conveyed in her responses during the intervention. Values of service and friendship also corresponded with Ruth's demographic questionnaire responses in which she described the ways that she experienced a sense of purpose through collaboration and bringing comfort to others.

Ruth was an 81 year-old fully, and very recently, retired female musician who played oboe and English horn as a part of a symphony, with additional experiences performing as a soloist and accompanying vocalists. Ruth had also been a teacher for 38 years. She described how comprehensively music practice had permeated her life, having participated from an early age since at least high school, and the fact that as many of her immediate family members were also musically inclined, teachers of music, or had performed professionally.

As the very first participant in the study, the option to participate in person was not extended at the time and was later accommodated for other participants when there was a suggestion that it could serve their best interests. Had it been clearer to the student researcher at the outset that modifying the procedures in this way was perhaps justifiable in serving the best interests of the participants, it may be that Ruth would have actually preferred to meet in person if the opportunity was presented to her. Despite this lack of assurance and foresight on behalf of

the researcher, Ruth still benefited from the session occurring virtually as the intervention supported her process of meaning-making.

Ruth agreed to meet virtually over Zoom and the materials were dropped off in advance of the session and were retrieved the following day. This gave the researcher the opportunity to meet the participant in person briefly on Ruth's doorstep when she opened her door to say hello. The remainder of the session did not occur face-to-face. Over Zoom, Ruth spoke openly about her memories and relationships with other people whom she cared about deeply, and her concerns for older adults who struggled to stay connected later in life.

Bilateral Scribble Warm-up. Ruth used all four types of drawing media to explore most of the page in her warm-up, as seen in Figure 1—although, whether she used both hands simultaneously was not visibly observed due to the limited view in the recording. For all of her drawings, many of the details of Ruth's process that were witnessed in person with other participants could not be fully appreciated in a virtual format.

Ruth was very receptive to the breathing exercise that accompanied the warm-up, sharing during the interview how it supported mindfulness and jesting how it also helped her temporarily disregard other anxieties:

> It's just a time to get you focused on what you're doing here, get away from what is going on. Now, luckily, I don't have any distractions here… it gets you focused to take a deep breath, and then hold it, and then let it out. It gets you out of the house, literally get focused on what I'm going to be doing with you, and what I'm to think about there instead of the needs of the house and whatnot—the ironing that *didn't* get done.

Commenting on her drawing, Ruth expressed some clear apprehension towards the scribble process: "I'm ready to move on because there's nothing that I really like about it that much." Later during the third phase she decided to enhance the drawing by adding flowers; this also

revealed another point of contact with the present moment as she described: "I happened to look out, thinking it's getting to be springtime, so, you could see a few tulips and flower over here." It was difficult to gather additional details from what could be visually observed regarding Ruth's drawing process as it was occurring on paper due to the limited view in the recording, but she appeared to be focused intently while practicing the breathing exercise.

Figure 1 Ruth's Bilateral Scribble Warm-up and Phase 2 response

Note. 18"x24" sized mixed media drawing on paper in landscape orientation depicting scribbles with red and orange flowers.

Self-Selected Music. Ruth provided the names of two pieces of self-selected music to be incorporated into the research session. For the first selection she chose The Lord is My Shepherd by John Rutter, and for the second selection she chose Russian Christmas Music by Alfred Reed.

These selections were played during the first phase of three scribble drawings, and were later repeated during the second phase.

      Scribble Drawings. Beginning with The Lord is My Shepherd, Ruth shared the first drawing from phase one seen in Figure 2. As it was discussed in the previous sections that covered themes, Ruth's process was highly focused on serving the power of the music in the way that it was written and intended, as she visually commemorated the mastery required to produce the various qualities that the scoring and notation were signifying to serve its purpose. Adding written text at the top of the drawing represented another commemorative intention. There was an opportunity to participate in a parallel process between the music and the drawing as well that was seized when Ruth used oil pastels and pressed harder with moments in the music that were more forceful.

Figure 2 Ruth's first Phase 1 response to The Lord is My Shepherd

Note. 9"x11" sized drawing on paper in landscape orientation depicting musical notation and text that reads "Music for our Lord".

The second drawing from phase one was also completed in response to The Lord is My Shepherd, and is seen in Figure 3. Ruth used oil pastels again and focused more on the narrative that emerged from what she experienced while listening to the music:

> I tried to create a calm scene. To me, the music of The Lord is My Shepherd, I call it pastoral and calming, even though it gets loud and soft… The Lord is My Shepherd is, to me, a very pastoral scene, with birds flying around in the tree.

Figure 3 Ruth's second Phase 1 response to the Lord is My Shepherd

Note. 9"x11" sized drawing on paper in portrait orientation depicting a tree, five sheep, a human figure, and four flying birds.

Again, making contact with the present moment, Ruth explained her process and what inspired

her intention to portray the music in this way: "I just looked outside my window here and I tried

to draw one of the trees that's outside my backyard."

In the third drawing from phase one, seen in Figure 4, Ruth responded to the Russian

Christmas Music using oil pastels, which appeared to be her preferred medium for all three

drawings in phase one as well as the first warm-up drawing that she decided to enhance during

phase two. Ruth may have actually taken the time to enhance each of her phase one drawings

during phase two, but this was not confirmed by the researcher during the session.

Figure 4 Ruth's third Phase 1 response to the Russian Christmas Music

Note. 18"x24" sized drawing on paper in landscape orientation depicting a Christmas tree beside two clouds raining snow on the ground and text that reads "Christmas in Russia"

In her process, Ruth focused her intentions on representing a scene that would align with the subject of the music, in the same way that she had done with the pastoral scene for The Lord is My Shepherd. In this drawing, Ruth relied heavily on her imagination and reported challenges with the materials not being able to accurately reflect her intentions—namely, the desire to depict snow.

Vignette: Carl

Based on common etymology, the pseudonym, "Carl," was befitting for how much the participant valued the experience of freedom during the intervention, but it was also appropriate given his curiosity towards dream interpretation, after the famous Jungian psychologist. The value of discovery seemed to correspond with Carl's demographic questionnaire responses in which he described the ways that he experienced a sense of purpose through giving lessons and mentorship.

Carl was a 77 year-old semi-retired male musician who played bassoon and contrabassoon as a part of a symphony, with additional experience accompanying opera singers in the past. He was currently staying active as professional bassoon instructor, and Carl also maintained connections with a colleague who was an administrator in the school system in which Carl had served in a teaching capacity. In person, he displayed an extensive collection of program playbills that represented a lifetime of performance, and his home was filled with photos of friends and family.

While the study was initially designed to be implemented exclusively over a digital platform, an in-person format was easily accommodated when it was both preferred and serving the best interests of the participants.

As the second participant in the study, Carl agreed to meet in person and the session was recorded in the participant's personal residence. This gave the researcher the opportunity to meet with Carl face-to-face for the entire duration of the session, and briefly with his spouse as well. In person, Carl demonstrated curiosity and enthusiasm for the discovery that occurred during the art process, and specifically the ways that a fantasy narrative could accompany the scribble drawings.

Figure 5 Carl's Bilateral Scribble Warm-up

Note. 18"x24" sized mixed media drawing on paper in landscape orientation depicting colorful scribbles with a large fish above a smaller fish and five small stars.

Bilateral Scribble Warm-up. Carl employed all four types of drawing media to complete his warm-up utilizing most of the page, and was more inclined towards depicting representational figures at the outset, as seen in Figure 5. The opportunity to embrace spontaneity

was appreciated by Carl when he shared how he felt: "Kind of surprised that I came up with a fishy." The bilateral process was "a bit more difficult," as Carl reflected in more detail:

> It's like trying to write with your left hand if you're right-handed, I found myself moving much more with my right hand than my left, and I think I just… I can do some things with my left hand, but… my left hand is much harder to control than my right. That's what was going through my mind at the time.

Listening to the guided breathing at the same time that he was drawing did not seem to serve Carl's process initially, as his drawing progress appeared to flow more smoothly after these directions had concluded. Carl described his thought process in becoming acquainted with the various media, articulating a heightened moment of awareness that he experienced:

> I was experimenting with different materials just to get some idea of… what are they? Do they set down a thin line or thicker line… I didn't really feel like I knew where I was going, I was just complete "now what shall I do?"

At the same time that he might have reflected some minor concerns, Carl appeared to become quickly reoriented to the process through an instinct to compose a narrative for his drawing: "I was trying to decide whether to make this some sort of small, not very harmful character, and this one, probably much stronger, much bigger, and more likely to eat the other one."

Self-Selected Music. Carl provided the name of one piece of self-selected music that consisted of five individual movements to be incorporated into the research session. The five movements of Mother Goose Suite by Maurice Ravel were played in sequence during the first phase of three scribble drawings, and were later repeated during the second phase. Each of the individual movements were titled as follows: I. Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty; II. Little Tom Thumb – Hop o' My Thumb; III. Little Ugly Girl, Empress of the Pagodas; IV. Conversations of Beauty and the Beast; V. The Fairy Garden.

Scribble Drawings. During the first phase of scribble drawing, Carl's process was observed directly in-person, which provided an opportunity to witness the ways that he responded to the music in real-time. The three scribble drawings from phase one were completed in response to all five movements of The Mother Goose Suite, and transitions between each drawing for the most past occurred in alignment with the transitions between the individual movements, with the exception of shorter first and second movements that were combined with the third movement for the first scribble drawing.

For all three drawings, Carl chose to complete his scribbles with his eyes closed. To better facilitate this process, one page was taped to the table at a time. Carl was observed responding directly to the music using a variety of speeds, changing directions of lines and line quality that mirrored changes in the music.

With full use of the page in portrait orientation, he used a light blue pencil in one hand and remained oriented to the page space by maintaining contact with the paper using his free hand and feeling the edges of the page. Seen in Figure 6, the line for this drawing was mostly continuous, and only left the page with certain moments of pause that occurred in the music. As he was drawing, Carl nodded his head in keeping with the tempo of the music. The researcher observed the lead in his pencil starting to disappear and paused the music at the end of the third movement, giving Carl a moment to finally view what he had drawn, which undoubtedly was met with surprise and awe.

After sharpening several pencils, Carl returned to begin the second and third scribble drawings from phase one. He announced that he wanted to do another eyes-closed drawing, and one of the two papers was taped to the table in landscape orientation. Resuming at the start of the fourth movement, Carl began drawing, nodding his head to tempo and starting at the top of the

page with a red pencil. Again, he intuitively used his free hand to familiarize himself with the boundaries of the page. At one point, Carl quickly switched to a light green pencil right before a more exposed moment in the music in which his personal instrument became isolated in the song. Moving from the top of the page to the bottom for this phrase of music seemed to be in alignment with the decrescendo, seen in Figure 7.

Figure 6 Carl's first Phase 1 response to movements I, II, and III of The Mother Goose Suite
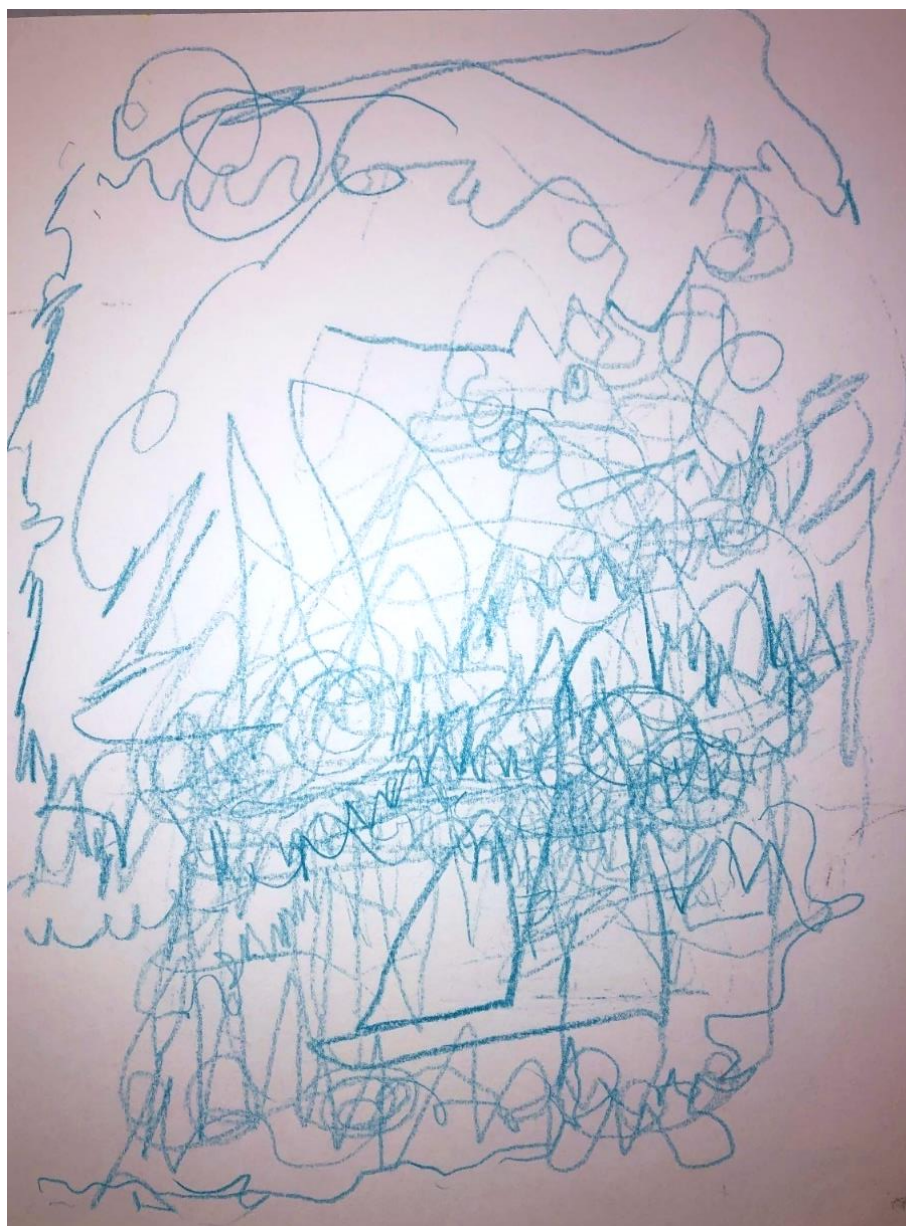
Note. 9"x11" sized drawing on paper in portrait orientation depicting scribbles in light blue pencil.
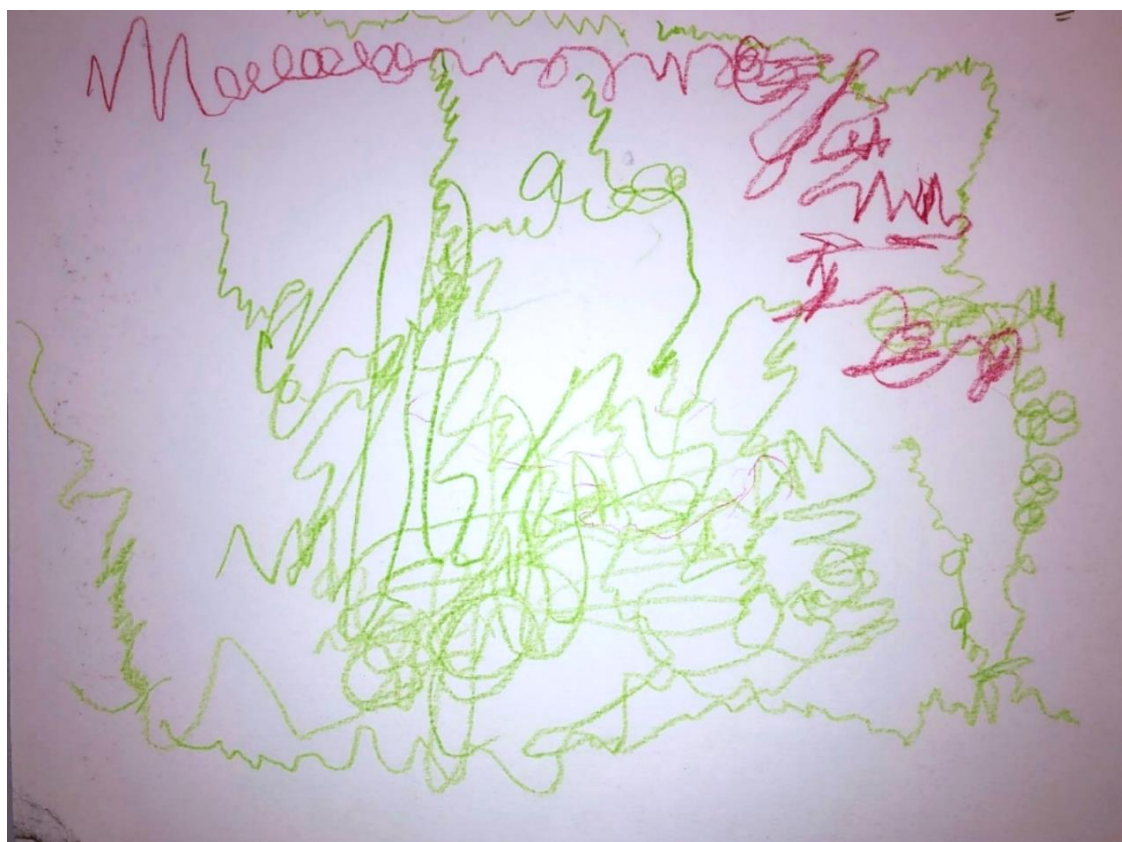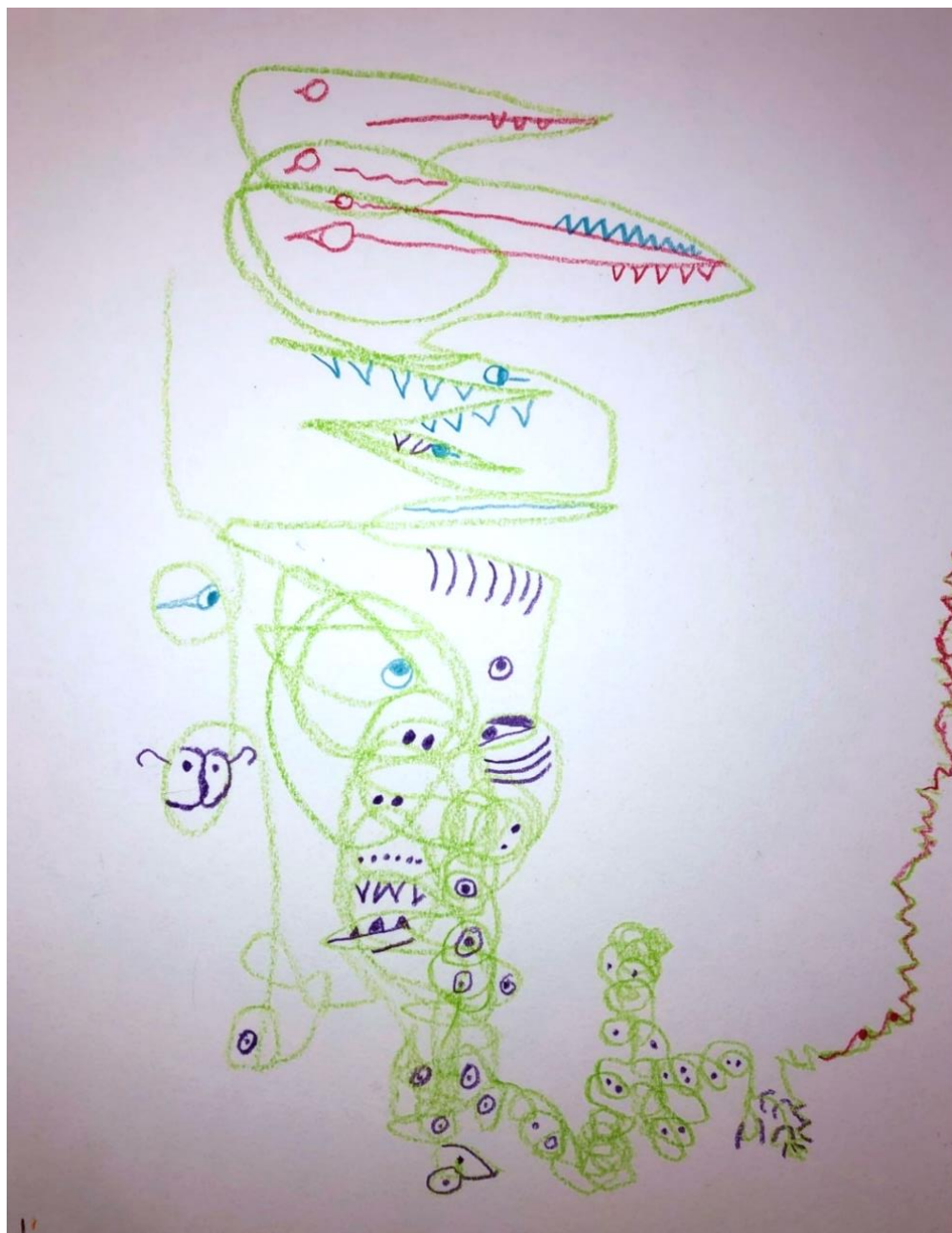
Note. 9"x11" sized drawing on paper in landscape orientation depicting scribbles in red and light green pencil.

After some time, Carl reached for the last blank paper and laid this on top of the taped scribble drawing that he had just completed. Using the other hand to hold the paper in place on the table, he responded to the fifth and final movement of The Mother Goose Suite using the same light green pencil. This drawing was later chosen to be enhanced for the second phase of scribbling. During the reflective distancing task in which Carl viewed the three scribble drawings from phase one, he voiced his planning process, desiring a more boldly colored pencil to contrast with the initial scribble.

Opportunities to engage a sense of intentionality were important moments in the art-making portion of the intervention overall; these were observed in the ways that scribbling mirrored the music for Carl, as well as in the decision-making that was witnessed during the

second phase of scribbling. With his eyes open for this phase, Carl's abstract scribble was transformed into a fantastic beast, as seen in Figure 8. Upon viewing the drawing, Carl even went back and made a few additional adjustments, remarking how one aspect of the scribble made "a strange tail," which he then emphasized with a red pencil.

Figure 8 Carl's third Phase 1 response to movement V of The Mother Goose Suite and Phase 2 response

Note. 9"x11" sized drawing on paper in portrait orientation depicting a creature with many faces.

Vignette: Leo

Drawing from common etymology, the pseudonym "Leo" was chosen to emphasize the pride in the participant's service as a Marine, and the dignity that he commemorated both in his drawings and when he performed music to honor those who were also serving or had lost their lives. The value of service also corresponded with Leo's demographic questionnaire responses in which he described the ways that he experienced a sense of purpose through community and commemoration.

Leo was a 76 year-old male musician who was fully retired from his position as college professor in another academic discipline, but was still actively playing Highland bagpipes, Celtic D and low D whistle, in addition to volunteering his time in the community. He also had extensive experience performing both in municipal holiday parades and in services for law enforcement agencies.

While the study was initially designed to be implemented exclusively over a digital platform, an in-person format was easily accommodated when it was both preferred and serving the best interests of the participants.

As the third participant in the study, Leo agreed to meet in person and the session was recorded in the participant's personal residence. This gave the researcher the opportunity to meet with Leo face-to-face for the entire duration of the intervention, and briefly with his spouse as well. In person, he had a clear sense for establishing rapport through humor that he demonstrated with the researcher and in his stories describing his volunteer work.

Bilateral Scribble Warm-up. On the demographic form, Leo was one of two participants who identified that chronic pain had impacted his capacity to participant in music

performance. Following the warm-up, he remarked briefly about the experience of pain but this was not expressed in other contexts of the drawing process.

Leo employed all four types of drawing media to complete his warm-up utilizing all of the page, and was more inclined towards symmetrical coordinated motions, as seen in Figure 9.

Figure 9 Leo's Bilateral Scribble Warm-up
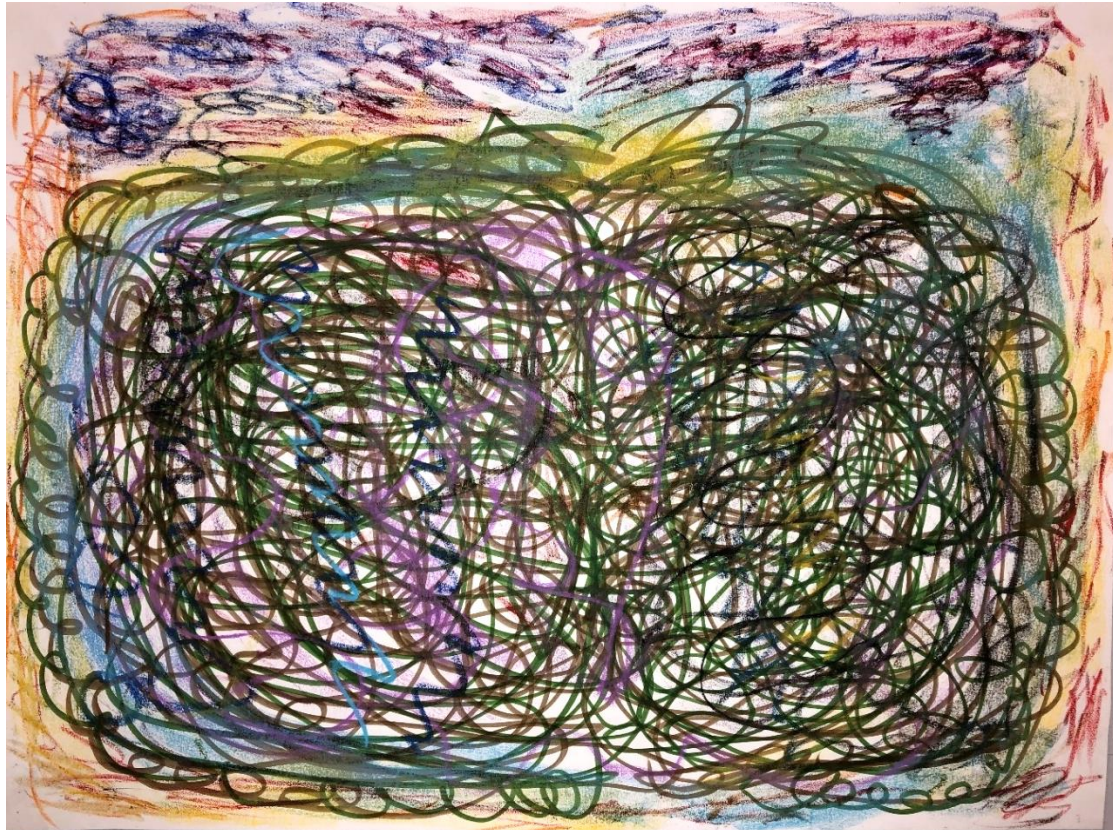
Note. 18"x24" sized mixed media drawing on paper in landscape orientation depicting colorful and primarily symmetrical scribbles reflected across the vertical axis.

With no hesitation, Leo completed his drawing using both hands simultaneously, also performing experimentation by switching pairs of media between his hands and occasionally allowing one hand to work independently from the other hand. His left and right hands were also observed to cross over onto the opposite sides of the paper from which they were respectively aligned, appearing to be quite comfortable exploring this process overall. At some points, the drawing process would be briefly interrupted by challenges that were encountered due to qualities of the

table surface, which would also recur later in the main intervention. At the end of the task, Leo remarked on the "random" quality of the drawing, comparing it to abstract expressionist paintings seen "at an art gallery where someone just throws paint against the canvas and something looks good." It was significant as well that the walls in Leo's home contained original art pieces completed by another family member that were also abstract in nature, as he remarked on the similarities between the two art forms.

Self-Selected Music. Leo provided the names of several pieces of self-selected music along with valuable historical context for each song that was provided over email correspondence. Of these selections, there were many versions of the individual songs that varied in style and interpretation, and time during the session was devoted to ensuring that the more traditionally accurate versions would be incorporated into the research session. The first three songs were played in sequence during the first phase of three scribble drawings, and the first two of these were later repeated following a new song that was introduced during the second phase. Each of the individual songs were titled and attributed as follows: TAPS by Daniel Butterfield; Marine Corps Hymn by Francesco Scala; Highland Cathedral by Michael Korb and Ulrich Roever; Genevieve de Brabant by Jacques Offenbach.

Scribble Drawings. During the first phase of scribble drawing, Leo's process was observed directly in person, which provided an opportunity to witness the ways that he responded to the music in real time. The three scribble drawings from phase one were completed in response to TAPS, the Marine Corps Hymn, and Highland Cathedral, and transitions between each drawing occurred in alignment with the transitions between the individual songs, with the exception of TAPS being repeated twice in succession for the first scribble drawing due to the shorter length of the tune.

For all three drawings, Leo chose to complete his scribbles with his eyes closed but with the added challenge of drawing using both hands simultaneously. To better facilitate this process, one page was taped to the table at a time, but at many points the drawing began to shift on the table surface. In these instances, the researcher provided additional support by holding the papers in place along the edges. Leo was observed responding directly to the music using a variety of speeds, pressures, changing directions of lines and line quality that mirrored changes in the music. Leo primarily used the three drawing media that were categorized along the more fluid end of the spectrum, voicing his preferences for these tools later during the interview.

Figure 10 Leo's first Phase 1 response to TAPS and Phase 2 response

Note. 9"x11" sized mixed media drawing on paper in landscape orientation depicting scribbles in red, black, and yellow with text that reads "West," "Chu Lai," and "USMC"; the Marine Corps squadron designation has been redacted in grey.

Beginning with TAPS, Leo initially selected yellow and black chalk for each hand, followed by black and grey colored pencils. After TAPS concluded for the first time, Leo briefly viewed the drawing and requested for the song to be played a second time. He resumed with eyes closed, at first scribbling using the colored pencils, and later drawing with smooth upward movements that mirrored the elongated ascending and descending notes of TAPS. He made contact by brushing the chalk on the paper in an outward motion with his fingertips, and finished the song in two lines using colored pencils that gradually slowed to a stop with the end of the song, meeting together back at the bottom of the page.

The same drawing, seen in Figure 10, was later chosen for the second phase of scribbling in which Leo enhanced the image in response to Genevieve de Brabant, followed again with TAPS and the Marine Corps Hymn. During this second phase, it was recommended to Leo that he complete the drawing this time with his eyes open. As Genevieve de Brabant began, Leo wrote the letters "USMC" in red marker and then switched to a yellow marker to fill in the character shapes, making a point to go back over this with yellow chalk and reinforce the color. TAPS started and Leo added grey scribbles in marker along with text at the top center of the page designating "West" in green marker. When the music in the Marine Corps Hymn became slower and more subdued, Leo added two grave stones in grey marker. It is noted that the Marine Corps squadron number has been redacted in Leo's drawing to protect his identity, but the act of naming this unit performed an important tribute in his art process. Both the use of text and symbols in Leo's drawings served a commemorative intent that aligned with his personal history and values. In his phase two drawing, Leo included dates, significant locations, spiritual iconography, a few representational figures, and several scribble shapes that added to a sense of

"chaos"; referring to these specific elements, he created a narrative for the events that occurred in his drawing:

> "West" is in a lot of cultures, especially Native American cultures, and they believe that the soul goes to the West. TAPS when it started off was *chaos*, it's how it starts, it's how people get killed, and then, as the soul goes up… the light and stuff like that. Chu Lai was an area in Vietnam that was pretty brutal… so that's this, and these are the souls going up.

As he described the passage of the spirits, Leo motioned upward with his hand and then let it fall back down onto the table with a thump, with what appeared to be a hint of resignation: "So that's that."

Figure 11 Leo's second Phase 1 response to the Marine Corps Hymn
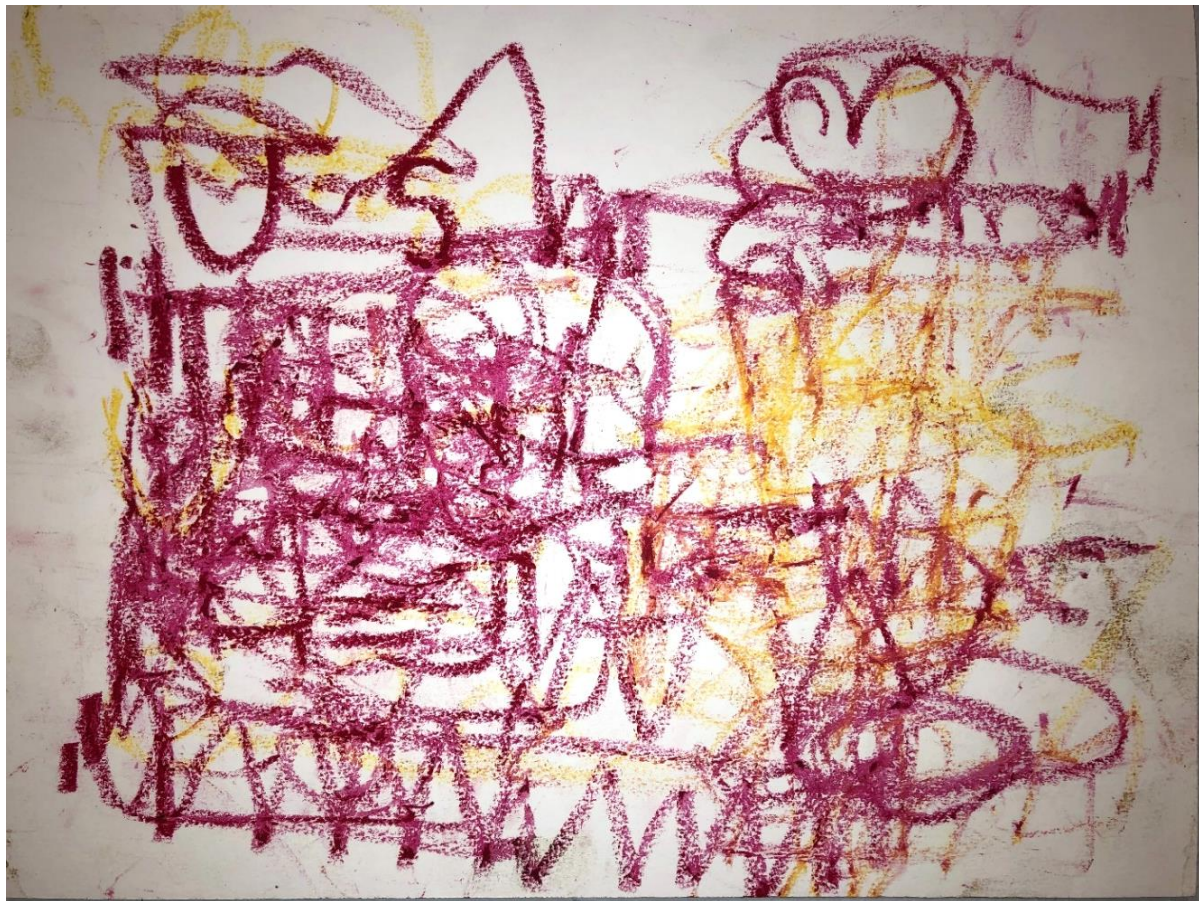
Note. 9"x11" sized drawing on paper in landscape orientation depicting scribbles in red and yellow oil pastel.

With his eyes closed, Leo responded to the Marine Corps Hymn in his second scribble drawing for phase one, again applying a bilateral approach but using exclusively red and yellow oil pastels this time. In this version of the Marine Corps Hymn, the Reveille tune traditionally played on bugle introduced the main part of the song; Leo was observed tapping his foot with the beat and only began drawing once the Reveille part had finished. The drawing was briefly interrupted when the taped paper started shifting on the table surface, but the music was restarted shortly after Leo quickly remedied these issues. Again, he waited for the Reveille to finish and his hands began marching across the paper with the oil pastels to the tempo of the Marine Corps Hymn. Even with his eyes closed, Leo wrote "USMC" in this drawing and drew a heart shape in the top right corner, seen in Figure 11.

Using his hands to feel for the edges of the paper, Leo explored the music using a variety of techniques. At one point in the song when the music slowed and became more subdued, Leo seemed surprised in this moment; after the drawing was completed, he explained: "No that was actually good, yes it was. Yeah, that was probably the music director or whoever was playing that, the Marine Corps Band or something… his or her own 'let's throw this in,' right?" Leo was also asked whether the disruptions that occurred effectively unfocused him from the process, to which he responded: "No, it doesn't really, because in some of these tunes you're marching with the crayons, you're writing things… those work pretty good, the pencils are not so good." Leo surpassed potential barriers to expression and partly attributed this to qualities elicited by certain media—some more so than others were better suited to his intentions.

In the last scribble drawing from phase one, Leo responded to Highland Cathedral, this time using exclusively chalk pastels, and again employing a bilateral approach with his eyes closed. In terms of personal significance, Leo had performed Highland Cathedral many times

before on bagpipes, which differentiated the self-selected music in this drawing from the other

songs.

Figure 12 Leo's third Phase 1 response to Highland Cathedral

Note. 9"x11" sized drawing on paper in landscape orientation depicting scribbles and a church in brown, purple, and light green chalk.

With the introduction of the solo piper, Leo dropped his head down and began drawing

simultaneously with a brown and light green chalk pastel in each hand. Creating a rectangular

shape in the middle of the drawing, which Leo described later as a church, his hands then crossed

over onto the sides of the page to which they were oppositely aligned. An area of purple was

isolated above the central form, and a cross was added to the top of this color block, seen in

Figure 12. Leo scribbled along the sides of the drawing with his hands marching when the rest of

the band joined the solo piper. The sounds of the chalk shuffling against the paper even seemed to mirror the rustling taps of the snare drums. As one hand was working, the other independently produced a stroke of color that extended with the length of the note being played. Nodding with a phrase, Leo dropped the chalk just as the song ended with a final drum beat. Upon viewing the drawing, Leo leaned back in his chair and remarked: "Interesting performance there. Yeah, without looking at it, you know, it's interesting."

Vignette: Helen

Drawing from the common etymology behind the name, "Helen" was an ideal pseudonym for this participant based on the themes of innovation and leadership that she expressed in her responses during the intervention—she also explicitly referenced the idea of inspiring others to assume the torch. Values of inclusivity and service also corresponded with Helen's demographic questionnaire responses in which she described the ways that she experienced a sense of purpose through community and contribution.

Helen was a 65 year-old semi-retired female musician who played oboe and English horn while performing in symphonies and orchestras, with additional experiences recording for archival purposes. Helen shared more insight into the specific forms of mastery that playing the oboe entailed; she also explained how proficiency would readily facilitate access in areas of music performance given the higher demand already due to a general scarcity of the instrument. She elaborated on the experience of ageism as it impacted her capacity to participate musically, and similar experiences that permeated her career working in the tech industry.

As the fourth participant in the study, Helen agreed to meet over Zoom, and she personally sourced all of the materials—the entirety of the session and interactions leading up to all it occurred virtually by necessity due to constraints of time and geographical distance; the

option to participate in person was still extended, and Helen may have actually preferred much more to meet in person, but it could not have been easily accommodated by the researcher or the participant, understandably. Despite these differences versus what was accommodated for other participants, Helen still benefited from the session occurring virtually—the intervention supported her process of meaning-making, and she was able to openly share her passions for collaboration, forward-thinking, and creative problem-solving over Zoom.

Bilateral Scribble Warm-up. On the demographic form, Helen was one of the two participants who identified that chronic pain had impacted her capacity to participant in music performance. Following the warm-up, she remarked briefly about the experience of pain but this was not expressed in other contexts of the drawing process.

At the outset, Helen indicated a strong tendency towards creative problem-solving, choosing to repurpose a music stand as an easel for her drawings. Positioning this in front of the camera, much of Helen's art process was observable, but a more limited view due to recording the session over Zoom was still unavoidable—many of the details that were witnessed in person with other participants could not be fully appreciated in a virtual format.

Helen employed all four types of drawing media to complete her warm-up utilizing all of the page, as seen in Figure 13. She also appeared to be more inclined towards the oil pastels and the bilateral approach—a trend that endured throughout the rest of her phase one scribble drawings. With no hesitation, Helen quickly completed her drawing using both hands simultaneously and experimentally by allowing one hand to work independently from the other hand at times. The drawing took on a rounded rectangular shape that was mostly symmetrical and incorporated a blend of colors primarily in a palette of blues.

Figure 13 Helen's Bilateral Scribble Warm-up
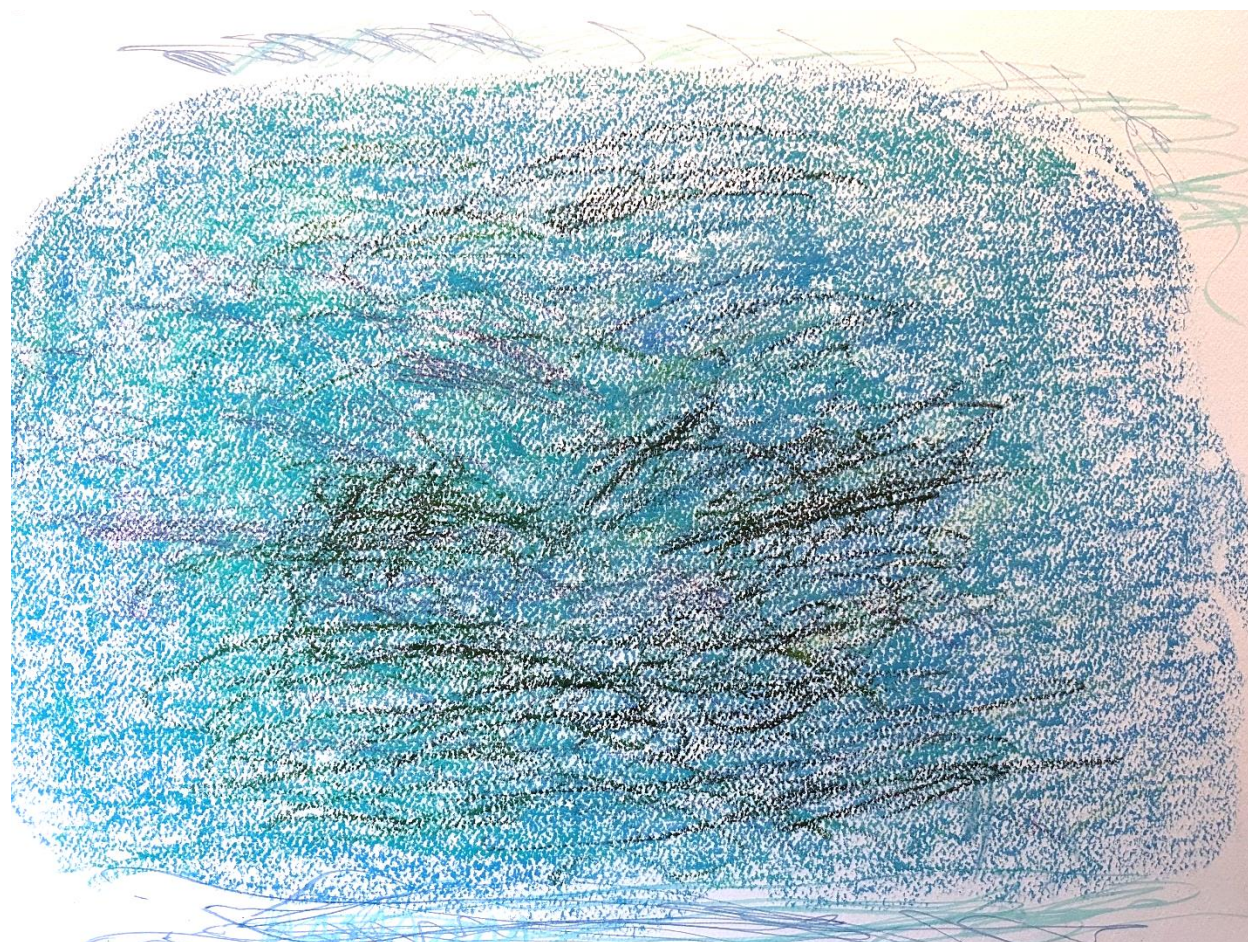
Note. 18"x24" sized mixed media drawing on paper in landscape orientation depicting primarily symmetrical scribbles in light-blue oil pastel reflected across the vertical axis.

Self-Selected Music. Helen provided the names of two pieces of self-selected music to be incorporated into the research session, and one of the two selections consisted of four individual movements. The first three movements of Le Tombeau de Couperin by Maurice Ravel were played in sequence during the first phase of three scribble drawings; during the second phase, the fourth movement was played followed Symphony No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 36: II Andantino in Moto di Canzone by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. Each of the four individual movements of Le Tombeau de Couperin were titled as follows: I. Prélude; II. Forlane; III. Menuet; IV. Rigaudon.

Scribble Drawings. During the first phase of scribbling, Helen resumed a bilateral approach using light blue and green oil pastels in her response to the first movement of Le Tombeau de Couperin. She appeared to emphasize some phrases in the music using large rounded movements, with the speed of her circular gestures matching the tempo of the song. Helen also allowed her hands to work independently of one another at times, but they would occasionally rejoin at moments in the music when several instruments perseverated on the same phrase in synchronicity. The way Helen's hands responded to the music might best be conveyed as a ballet duet that left behind a visual trail of dance movements in her drawing, as seen in Figure 14.

Figure 14 Helen's first Phase 1 response to movement I of Le Tombeau de Couperin
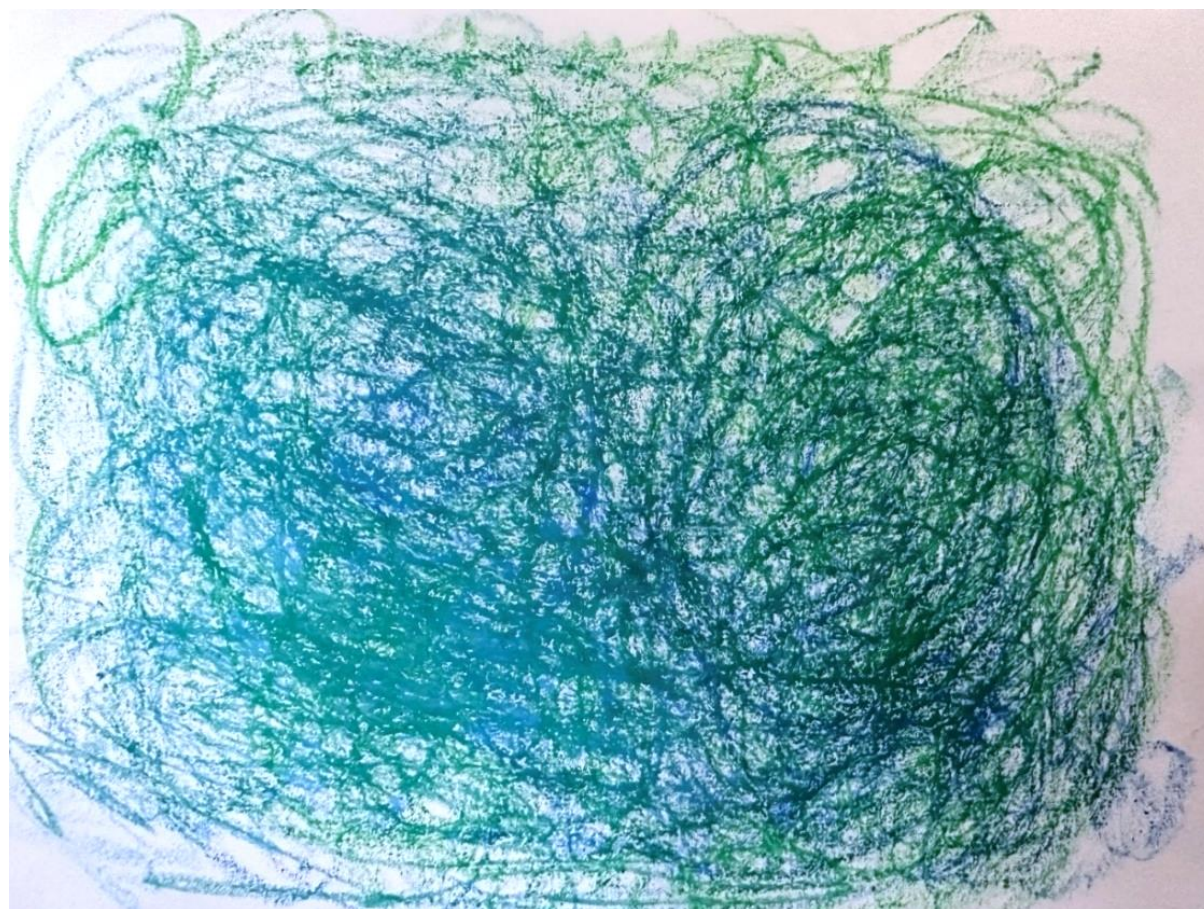
Note. 9"x11" sized drawing on paper in landscape orientation depicting scribbles in light blue and green oil pastels.

In the second scribble drawing from phase one, Helen responded to movement II of Le Tombeau de Couperin using dark blue and purple oil pastels, again using both hands simultaneously. In a similar approach that she demonstrated in the first drawing, her movements again mirrored the music, but in reply to a kind of "comical" mood that took over; angular strokes seemed to capture dissonant phrases this time, and the length of a line would also match a note that was being sustained, as seen in Figure 15..

Figure 15 Helen's second Phase 1 response to movement II of Le Tombeau de Couperin
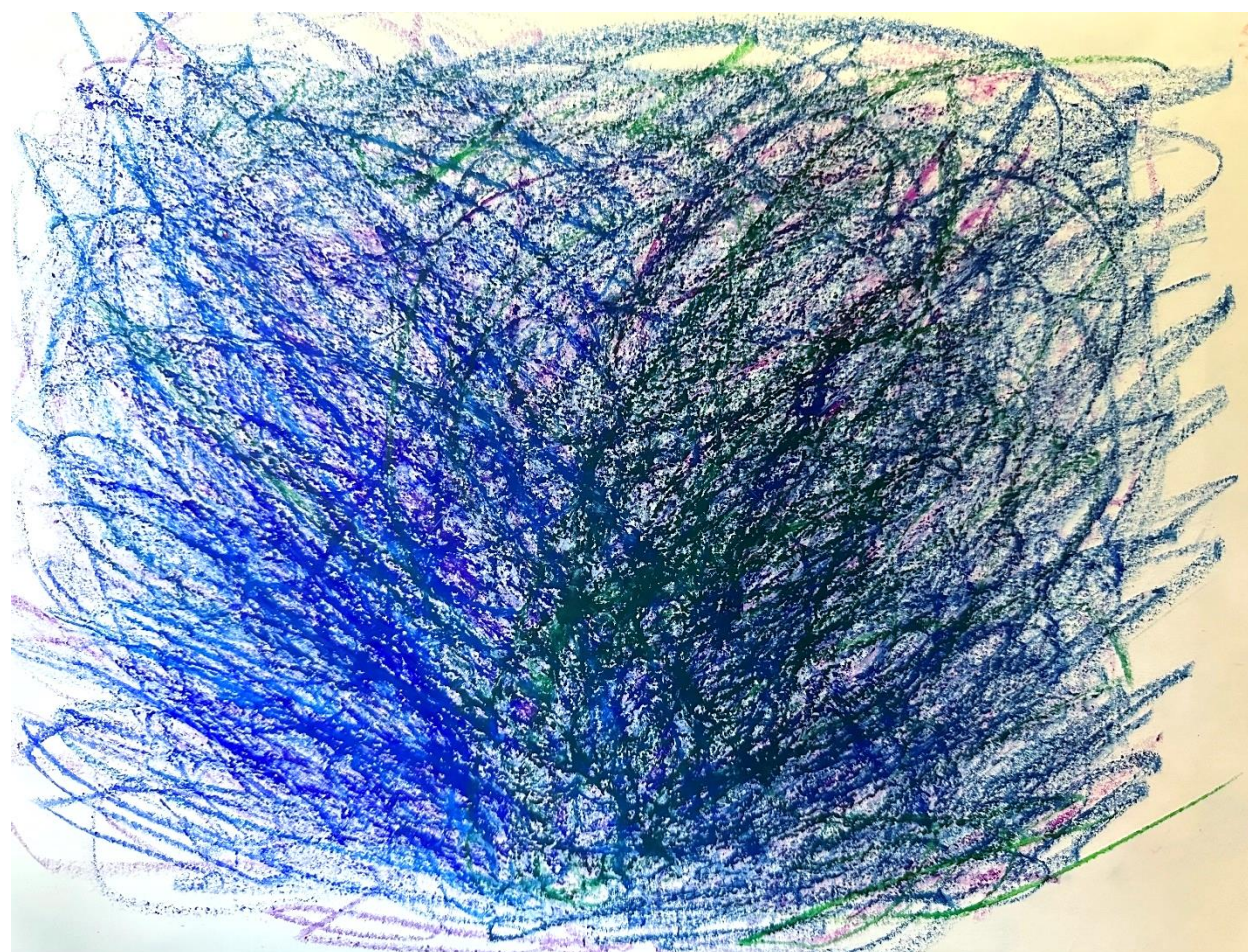
Note. 9"x11" sized drawing on paper in landscape orientation depicting scribbles in dark blue and purple oil pastels.

In Helen's last scribble drawing for phase one, her response to the third movement of Le Couperin de Tombeau also became a bilaterally choreographed dance in oil pastel, but this time

using a red and orange color palette, as seen in Figure 16. Again, her movements paralleled the technical elements in the music, sometimes making small motions with her right-hand while the left-hand made large circles in alignment with a phrase, and with different tempos between two instruments that were conversing. This third scribble was later chosen for the second phase of drawing in which Helen responded both to movement IV of Le Tombeau de Couperin and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 36: II Andantino in Moto di Canzone.

Figure 16 Helen's third Phase 1 response to movement III of Le Tombeau de Couperin and Phase 2 response

Note. 9"x11" sized drawing on paper in landscape orientation depicting scribbles in orange and red oil pastel with a tree and a sky at sunset.

In the process of completing the second phase of drawing, Helen incorporated a figure of a tree with a solid trunk and foliage, and continued to build up the surface of the paper in oil

pastel color. The scribbles kept pace with the phrasing and tempo in both selections of the music. The music in the fourth movement of Le Tombeau de Couperin started off with a lot of energy, providing a strong point of contrast for the beginning of the Tchaikovsky piece that opened with a single oboe phrase exposed and isolated in solo. By this point, there was enough oil pastel saturating the drawing that Helen's movements were gliding across the page smoothly. She concluded her art process with one last touch on the final beat of the music.

Just after describing the relationship between the sunset and the tree in her last drawing, Helen was invited to expand on the experience of ageism as it impacted her capacity to participate musically, and she spoke explicitly about the ways that ageism similarly manifested in both of the communities in which she was involved. As a musician, Helen shared, "I think you see it from afar," and this was just as true in tech how, "they feel all these brilliant new ideas need to come from young people, and it's just not true because some of us forged the way that allowed that new thinking to even be possible." Her answers conveyed a depth of awareness that also seemed "involved but not overtaken," much like what she had described was happening between the sunset and the tree, when she added a summative repudiation of ageism: "Yeah, well, part of life." At the same time, she had also said of her tree, "the sunset keeps the emotion of it alive"; through the scribble drawings, Helen was able to process and regulate internal emotional states emerging from the self-selected music and memories of her performances— revealing a perseverance of passion that would not be completely engulfed by the reality of ageism in those moments.

Vignette: Robin

Selected for its common etymology, "Robin" was more than ideal as a pseudonym for this participant as well based on themes in her self-selected music in which she focused on the

concept of a songbird at dawn, and the fact that she also was the only vocal performer in the study. Values of service and friendship also corresponded with Robin's demographic questionnaire responses in which she described the ways that she experienced a sense of purpose through volunteering and caring for others.

Robin was a 75 year-old fully retired female vocalist who still actively performed in a choral group, with additional experience singing in a choir while accompanied by an orchestra. She described her appreciation for the phenomena of beauty in the natural world and underlying mathematical properties, and the ways that singing facilitated a spiritual connection to all of these things including her faith.

While the study was initially designed to be implemented exclusively over a digital platform, an in-person format was easily accommodated when it was both preferred and serving the best interests of the participants.

As the fifth and final participant in the study, Robin agreed to meet in person and the session was recorded in the participant's personal residence. This gave the researcher the opportunity to meet with Robin face-to-face for the entire duration of the intervention. In person, Robin spoke openly about the advantages of living on the same property as her children and grandchildren, and the ways that this privilege afforded her the opportunity to stay connected to her family while maintaining independence.

Bilateral Scribble Warm-up. Robin employed all four types of drawing media to complete her warm-up utilizing all of the page, and was more inclined towards rounded and symmetrical coordinated motions, as seen in Figure 17. With no hesitation, Robin methodically completed her drawing using both hands simultaneously, also performing experimentation by switching media between her hands and occasionally allowing one hand to work independently

from the other hand. Her left and right hands were also observed to cross over onto the opposite

sides of the paper from which they were respectively aligned, appearing to be quite comfortable

exploring this process overall.

Figure 17 Robin's Bilateral Scribble Warm-up
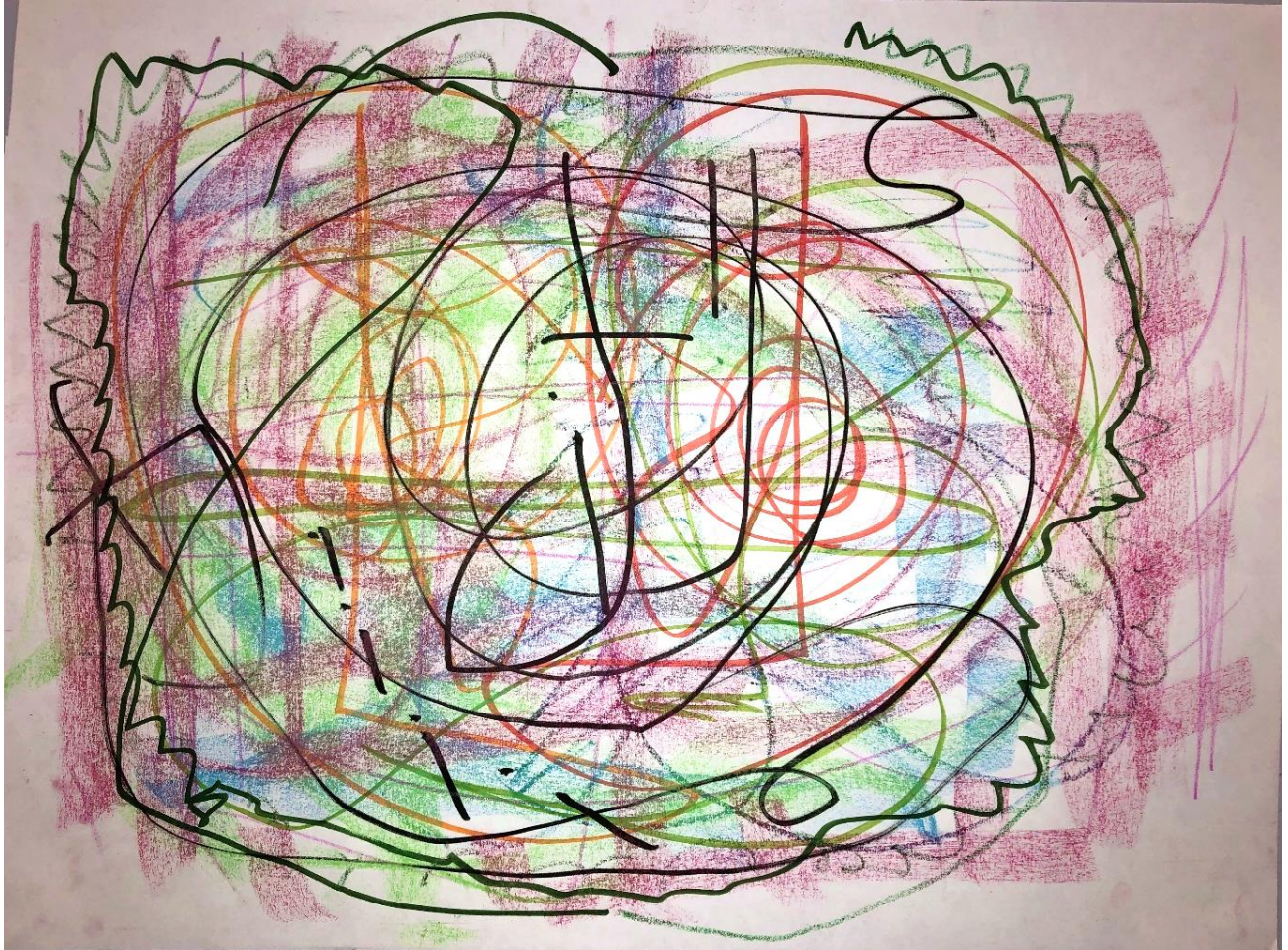
Note. 18"x24" sized mixed media drawing on paper in landscape orientation depicting colorful and somewhat symmetrical scribbles reflected across the vertical axis.

On completion, Robin was surprised for how well her non-dominant hand performed as

well as for how pleasing it was to meet this challenge, and she also voiced her preferences for the

various media. She appreciated the bold effect of the markers and the ability of the chalk pastels

to cover larger areas, citing a general aversion to the pointiness of the pencils, and that the oil

pastels were not as personally impactful, but overall enjoying the process of experimenting with

the bright colors and the kinesthetic sense in creating rounded shapes. As a math major, Robin elaborated on her fondness for circles as they represented, "powerful figures—the infinity part of it, all the relationships of the angle and stuff like that, so that's why I tended in this free-drawing to kind of circle around, maybe everybody does because the *circle* has the power."

Self-Selected Music. Robin provided the names of four pieces of self-selected music to be incorporated into the research session, the first three of which were responded to during phase one and the fourth song respectively in phase two. For the first phase, she chose Bist Du Bei Mir by Johann Sebastian Bach, Alleluia by Randall Thompson, and lastly followed with The Crucifixion by Samuel Barber, which was repeated once again in sequence afterwards due to its shorter length. Symphony No. 9 in D Minor, Op. 125: IV. Finale (Ode, "To Joy") by Ludwig van Beethoven, limited to the first ten minutes of the music leading up the choral part, was responded to in the second phase of drawing.

Scribble Drawings. During the first phase of scribbling, Robin responded to Bist Du Bei Mir using chalk pastels and markers. In measured strokes that kept pace with the tempo of the music, she pulled the long edge of the chalk against the paper to create vertical blocks of color that framed a central scribble in light blue and yellow marker, reemphasizing this area as well with white and orange oil pastel, as seen in Figure 18. As she approached the end of the song, Robin made her final marks and returned many of drawing tools to their respective containers as the song finished.

For the second response during phase one, the Alleluia piece began and Robin was observed at first contemplating her approach before reaching for a purple chalk pastel and drawing scribbles horizontally across the page, again using the long edge of the chalk. Applying the various media in layers, Robin made deliberate strokes and scribbles that appeared to follow

the ascending and descending phrases of music. A hierarchical organization emerged as well in

the horizontal bands of scribbling that were layered from top to bottom, with lighter colors

reserved for the upper portions and bold dark scribbles for the lower end of the drawing.

Viewing the drawing as the song came to an end, Robin reached for her next paper to prepare for

the third phase one response, but she later ended up selecting to rework her second phase one

response drawing that she had just completed.

Figure 18 Robin's first Phase 1 response to Bist Du Bei Mir
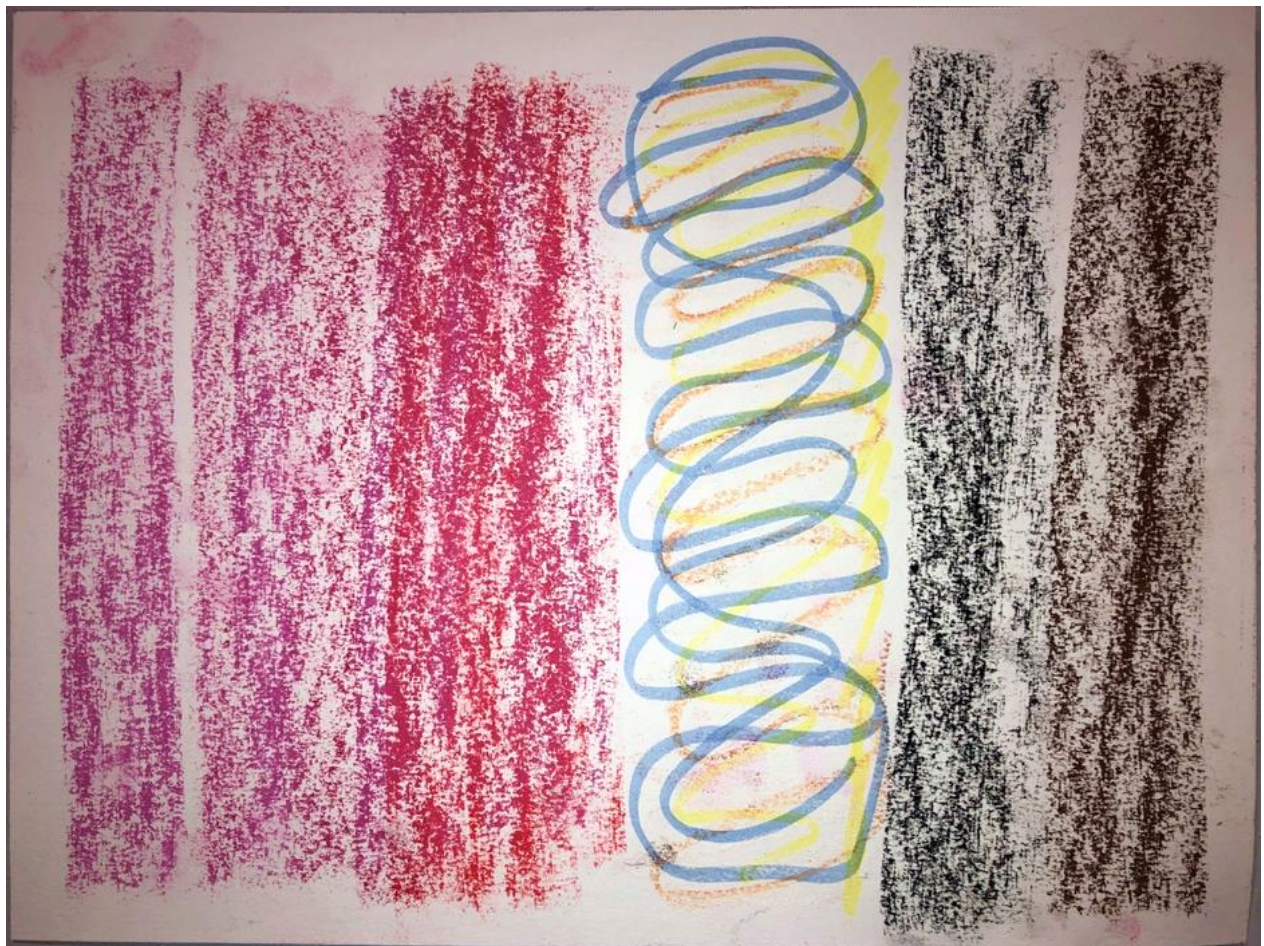
Note. 9"x11" sized mixed media drawing on paper in landscape orientation depicting scribbles in light blue and yellow markers framed by vertical color blocks of pink, red, black and brow chalk pastel.

across the top half of the page. By this point, the central theme in the music was more

pronounced, and Robin began adding details in and around the areas of the flower shapes. When

the vocal soloist finally made his entrance in the music, Robin reinforced the areas of yellow at

the top of the paper with marker; the chorus joined in shortly thereafter singing The Ode to Joy

theme, at which point, Robin viewed the image and added final touches that mirrored the musical

and vocal phrases.

Figure 20 Robin's third Phase 1 response to The Crucifixion

Note. 9"x11" sized mixed media drawing on paper in landscape orientation depicting scribbles in yellow and orange framed in a half-circle around a central figure of a bird, with a cross above, and two hearts in blue below.

In the third scribble drawing from phase one, Robin responded to The Crucifixion using a

representational approach at the outset. In this song, one vocalist was performing in solo but was

also accompanied by a single pianist, altogether serving to isolate the vocal phrases; the qualities of being musically exposed in this way seemed to correspond with the ways that Robin emphasized the representational and metaphorical subject in her drawing. With a black marker, she created the shape of a bird in the center of the drawing, adding feet in brown marker, and reemphasizing the figure of the bird with the black marker again. The long edge of the black chalk was applied in a cross above the central figure. As the music came to an end, Robin requested for the song to be repeated due to its shorter length, and she added yellow and orange scribbles with marker and chalk in a half circle shape framing the bird; beneath this figure, she added two hearts side-by-side in blue marker.

Key Findings / Key Themes Overall

Across all five interview sessions, participants expressed some form of initial performance anxiety heading into the art-making process either shortly before or just after the initial bilateral scribble warm-up. All of the participants' self-selected music represented works with which they had expert familiarity and mastery over, having performed all of these professionally, with the exception of one participant who had only performed one of the four selections. Each individual reflected positively on their process following the main intervention in which they were asked to respond using a scribble technique to self-selected music, remarking on the novelty of this experience during the interview. While expressions of performance anxiety represented the extent to which adverse responses were exposed during the session, they were only brief moments that did not actually persist as significant barriers to meaning-making.

In total, the following nine primary themes and secondary subthemes combined represent key findings that recurred throughout the interview session for all participants: (1) performance anxiety, (2) discovery, (3) emotion, (4) mastery, (5) service, (6) intentionality, (7) the power of

music, (8) commemoration, and (9) integration. Each of these themes captured significant aspects of the experiences that implicated a sense of purpose for participants, with some themes more pronounced for certain individuals than others. Overlapping contexts were observed as well such that some themes emerged in the context of other themes, and are thus described as subthemes; this was also true in some cases when major themes served as subthemes in the context of other major themes. In general and for the sake of simplicity, themes 1-5 represent primary themes while 6-9 serve as secondary subthemes appearing in contexts across the five major themes.

Performance Anxiety

Participants expressed feelings of inadequacy or that their art would not measure up to a certain standard, with a few individuals remarking on the regressive potential of drawing in general or scribbling specifically. Ruth laughed somewhat apprehensively, explicitly comparing her bilateral warm-up drawing to preschool patterns of scribbling: "Kind of messy, looks like I'm five years-old." In a similar vein, Leo made reference to memories arising from childhood of not being able to color inside the lines of coloring books, but later expressed relief for the freeing nature of the scribble: "I can't draw a straight line with a ruler, and I'm so glad because here we've got them and there's not one straight line in any of these drawings." In this way, the scribble process itself was a valuable focal point as Robin voiced her intentions: "I'm focusing on 'scribble' because I would not try to draw a human figure… the word 'scribble' is very liberating in terms of drawing."

For some individuals, expressions of disqualification were tied to a self-concept that resisted identification as a visual artist; Ruth, Helen, and Robin expressed nearly identical self-assessments compared to Carl, who was more explicit: "I'm not a *visual* artist." Among the

variations of similar phrases in which these sentiments were expressed, a few distinctions emerged when Carl framed it as an intriguing opportunity: "This is going to be very interesting because I am not an artist." For Ruth, expert familiarity of the self-selected music described in other areas of the interview became juxtaposed with a desire to enhance the visual response: "I just wish I could be a better artist." Helen highlighted the effectiveness of having something paired in the art process with which she already had mastery over—it was particularly significant how the aspect of familiarity allowed Helen to remain oriented within the novel experience such that it did not become alienating or overwhelming: "It's kind of nice to not have any expectation at all, so just something that you do know well to pair with it so that you don't feel completely lost in the mix."

Performance anxiety was a significant theme to consider in terms of whether it persisted as an effective barrier to meaning-making in the context of the research question. Additionally, performance anxiety became a necessary focus in the effort to understand what aspects of the intervention, if any, had transcended this obstacle, thereby facilitating access to creative self-actualization. It was an especially relevant point of view given that the majority of participants had cited performance anxiety as a factor impacting their capacity to participate while they were practicing, rehearsing and/or performing professionally—there was a foreseeable likelihood that a similar experience might transfer to another mode of performance.

Discovery

Despite the risk that performance anxiety might disrupt a capacity for meaning-making, all participants as self-declared novices in the visual art process remarked on having limited expectations heading into the art-making process—it was this function of having limited expectations that served to optimize the rewarding experience of discovery in the face of novelty

and uncertainty. Moments in which participants reflected on experiences of spontaneity, improvisation, freedom, realization, epiphany, inspiration, curiosity, and intrigue were also cues signaling the act of discovery.

Besides any statements in which participants declared their limited expectations outright, it was also made clear when individuals made inquiries in an effort to manage their expectations: "I've got a bunch of scribbles on my paper… is that what I'm supposed to have?" This same participant, Ruth, who shared her desire to be a better artist followed this point with an important act of discovery that occurred through mindfulness: "I think it's a very calming experience, it made me stop and think about the music that you played, and they are selections that I chose… you knew that I'd like that to begin with."

After the bilateral scribble warm-up had been completed, Carl, who stated his limited expectations at the outset later expressed intrigue and joy referring to the spontaneous improvisation that occurred:

> It was really funny because I had no idea what I wanted to start with… I'm not
> necessarily trying to create anything, it's just kind of like, "hmm what can I come
> up with?" and I'm totally surprised, that's not what I'd thought I'd come up with.

Leo remarked in one word with awe after the bilateral scribble warm-up: "Damn." He also shared his limited expectations and curiosity heading into the intervention: "I'm looking forward to it, never been exposed to anything like this before, you know, so yeah, see how it works."

Concerning the parts of the brain that are involved in reward circuitry, the greater the difference between the level of expectation and the actual outcome speaks to the windfall of pleasurable feelings that typically arises from novel experiences. The windfall that occurred for Leo was reflected by the impact of the discovery that transpired, and was captured by feelings of joy and awe: "Far out, it was. It was awesome, it was really awesome, I didn't know what to

expect when you first asked me about this." What was discovered by Leo arose from experiences

of mindfulness and integration that were stimulated by drawing:

> In thinking about the music… it all comes together when you think about that…
> when you really have to concentrate on putting what you have up here, putting it
> on paper, you know, so I would say that this experience really, really, really was
> fantastic for me personally.

Helen conveyed her sense of discovery by reflecting on both the power of the music and the

capacity of the drawing process to facilitate self-regulation and integration through mindfulness:

> It was very meaningful, and like I said, it was interesting because as a piece that
> has a lot of meaning, it brings back waves of memories, people, whatever, and
> you find the emotionalism beginning to flare up, and then you concentrate more
> on what you're doing and it keeps it in balance, which I thought was interesting. It
> was really, really cool.

For Carl, the discovery arising from inspiration was a significant windfall: "It wasn't what I

expected, and I was just blown away, you know—*this*—just, mind going any place." Carl also

remarked on the same qualities that other individuals identified concerning the mindfulness that

transpired:

> I'm not thinking in terms of "I need to play this 'baa-backa-da-da-da-da-
> pfpfpfpf'," you know, but just to hear it or be thinking about it out of the context
> of performing it, that was really, really… you just turn your mind loose.

The liberating aspect of the drawing process itself and viewing the resulting abstraction

stimulated the discovery of a desire to craft a cohesive narrative, which became a central focal

point for Carl:

> The blind scribble was interesting because when you don't have any depth of
> what's going on, it's freer, but it's also interesting to take something like this
> that's personal and just freehand, and kind of making up a story.

For all participants, the power of the music itself was significant, but this was not entirely surprising given the nature of their experience as musicians. What Robin articulated in her discovery was, however, a new form of intimacy, not only with the self-selected music but the present moment as well—both of these were possible through mindfulness:

> Creating visual art is not something I do very often but it was fun, I mean I like to try a lot of different things, so this was fun, and got me in touch I think with the music even more… a little deeper than just enjoyment, or maybe sadness, or, yeah, I think it added a more vivid and present reaction to it.

Expanding on the personal impact of this experience, Robin also reflected on a sense of validation that was discovered:

> My experience today was very meaningful, wouldn't have considered ever attempting this on my own… so this experience kind of reinforces that theme, that the music that I love… I experience it more intensely if I'm focusing on it in this way… I know I like it; I can pretty much say why I like it, but this was like "well then show me." This was a "show me," so it was very meaningful.

In all of these ways, acts of personal discovery and realization were indicative of the self-actualization that is prescribed within a sense of purpose, suggesting that opportunities for discovery are an important functional component of meaning-making.

Emotion

Participants conveyed emotions that were correlates of discovery, and emphasized the capacity of the art directive to support emotional regulation. Emotions that emerged from the music often became a central theme driving the affective experience of the participant as well as a focal point of their intentionality. This section examines other emotional outcomes more intensely with attention paid as well to the emotions that were elicited by the art materials themselves. As emotional processing occurred, participants could safely contemplate the

significance of these experiences. The inherent qualities of the art materials served a variety of

purposes for suiting the individual intentions of each participant. The capacity of the different

drawing implements to facilitate emotional satisfaction in this regard was valuable for evaluating

the effectiveness of the intervention. Feelings of wholeness, satisfaction, closure, and/or joy were

specifically targeted to assess whether the creative level of functioning had been achieved via the

identification of forms within abstracted content.

Personal satisfaction arising from feelings of pride was present in the sense of identity

and ownership that emerged as participants shared their art process and memories of playing the

music. At one point in the self-selected music when the personal instrument was more exposed in

solo, Ruth responded that she desired more time to complete her drawings: "Because that's me

right there." Leo responded similarly while listening intently to a sample of the self-selected

music: "See that's good—that's the one *we* know." Comparing the personal fulfillment of the

intervention with the satisfaction of performing professionally, Ruth conveyed gratitude for both

the privileges offered by musicianship and for realizing her new perspective as an audience

participant:

> It does make you stop and think when you put the music with the art… I enjoy
> performing and being a part of a group or a soloist, you know. I've had many
> opportunities over the years, and it's rewarding to be appreciated for what you're
> doing and to have the audience come up and say "thank you and I enjoyed the
> performance." Yeah, that's very meaningful… after the many years that I've
> spent doing the performing, it's a pleasure to be on the other side now.

When themes of pride, commemoration, and service were part of the personal significance

behind the music itself, the art materials became an effective medium for conveying the

emotional weight attached to those internal values. Here, Leo focused on the tactile qualities of

the oil pastels, drawing on their capacity to articulate complex isomorphic processes based in sensory experience:

> You can feel it, and your hands *stick* to it… this is because of the Marine Corps Hymn—you can see the "USMC" up here, and when it feels like you can stick, that means that old term "once a Marine, always a Marine," so you stick to it.

Satisfaction emanating from the correspondence between an internal state of loyalty felt by Leo and its external manifestation depicted on paper strongly supported the self-efficacy and self-actualization that signify a sense of purpose.

On the spectrum of drawing media that vary in terms of their resistive and fluid properties, materials associated with affective experience fall on the fluid end of the spectrum—chalk pastels are more fluid while oil pastels are comparatively less fluid, markers reside in the middle of the spectrum, and colored pencils fall towards the resistive end that is associated with cognitive experience. Of the participant responses that conveyed strongly affective experiences, the majority were associated with a preferential use of fluid media. Corresponding discussion with participants about the effectiveness of these materials was explained in terms of their ability to satisfy emotional intent, as Helen described: "The chalk one on the big one left a mess everywhere. It's ok, but the oil one, I don't know I just felt like it's smooth, like it just flowed more." Helen also reflected on the self-regulating capacity that was discovered: "Certain movements of the Le Tombeau de Couperin elicit emotions normally, but when you're painting, it was really like 'ok, kick it up a notch here, don't let it overwhelm'." As a moderately fluid art material, the fact that Helen described the experience in terms of painting was significant for validating the purpose that the media was effectively serving—it was beneficial for there to be versatility in the oil pastel such that it could be both resistive enough to provide control while preserving the fluidity of its emotional candor:

> In the first movement… almost like the fluidity of water as it was flowing over
> things, just different paths that it would take—it was there… the second one,
> which is more jagged peaks of sound and bursts and experiences… almost like a
> comical thing, but the third movement is just like beauty incarnate, in terms of
> just the flowing lines of that.

Carl reflected feelings of joy within a sense of intrigue as he embraced the experiences of intuition and inspiration that emerged upon viewing the abstracted content of the scribble drawings. In the process of sharing his art, Carl identified an isomorphism that occurred when one sense was experienced through another, with phrasing that suggested synesthetic perception; gesturing directly to scribbles within the image, Carl emphasized the following point: "It kind of comes back somehow, you know—it *sounds* in some ways like the Mother Goose Suite." In this example, it was also significant that the memory of playing the music was intuitively accessed through the art—the scribble offered a more tangible representation of the sense of knowing in a way that narrative alone was incompatible. These events substantiated the art-making process as a tool that supported self-efficacy by allowing participants to reauthor a story for their internal process when access to memories was encumbered. Further, in both the execution and viewing of the abstracted content that resulted from the scribble technique, participants achieved contact with the present moment through improvisation to self-selected music and through the spontaneous narratives that those images inspired. When asked how Carl felt about his experience following the intervention, the most meaningful aspect was one that empowered his intuitive instincts:

> I like the way it was set up so that my knee-jerk reaction to something like that
> was like… if it's music that's one thing, because I'm pretty familiar with music
> and I can make it work, that sort of thing, but to be coming up with a story…

that's much more wide-open, it can go… a lot of different directions… and I think it's freer too… at this point, this is still wide open.

Robin explicitly targeted the theme of joy behind the personal meaning of the self-selected music. The ability of the chalk pastels to mirror what the music was doing was a valuable experience for manifesting Robin's internal state—one that was both devoted to the idea of joy and honoring the power of the music to convey that theme; moving her hand across the surface of the table, she described how aptly the chalk facilitated her intentions:

> My music kind of goes like *this* more, so it's much smoother and flowing and stuff like that… pointy things don't really work that well, so these, the markers were good, I really ended up liking the chalk ones… so, smooth and flowing works for me better than pointy.

Singing tasks the performer with harnessing a particular affect and conveying that emotion not only through the power of music but through the command of vocal delivery. As the only individual who represented vocal instrumentation in her performance history, Robin's responses varied slightly from the other participants in terms of the mastery required for vocal phrasing. Through her art process, Robin's musical practice offered the unique opportunity of contemplating and visually representing the meanings of the words that she had sung as they were married to their musical phrases:

> I love that tune… it's the first line, it's the one I just remember and I kind of focus on it… "when you're with me, everything's great." Bist Du Bei Mir in German is "when you're with me," or something, so this is the "you," here, and as this side approaches it, it gets warmer and happier, and happier, and this is going away from it… this side is unhappy… I was trying to make it bright and cheerful… the joyful thing—the thing that makes me happy when I'm close to it.

Robin described the isomorphic processes behind the ability of the scribble technique itself to accurately reflect her internal experience:

> It's specific moments, and the Ode to Joy, I love flowers, they bring me such joy, so that was a natural figure to represent joy… the kind of progression of the themes… the theme in that 4th movement that starts off with that really *dark* and threatening one, I would put black and discoherent squiggles and things.

As a point of inspiration for all participants, it was natural that the affective experience elicited both by the power of the music and memories associated with performance of those self-selected works became such a prominent theme that emerged from the data. Just as well, the inherent qualities of the media and the liberating aspects of the scribble technique itself were an effective point of access to internal emotional states and the capacity to manifest these on paper. A sense of self-efficacy over the process and the materials was demonstrated by feelings of satisfaction and joy, ultimately supporting the use of the scribble technique in this sample of the population.

Mastery

The power of the music was as much a subtheme of mastery as it was driving the emotional experiences of participants. For the feelings of self-efficacy and outcomes of self-actualization that characterize the motivation to pursue it, mastery was a value shared by all participants. Especially for musicians, whose primary act of service is devoted to the integrity of the music and the rigor necessary for executing it, mastery became a central and unifying theme. Ruth described how visual elements corresponded with both the power of the music as she was hearing it and her memory of performing it, in terms of the level of mastery that she had to achieve; it was also significant how Ruth articulated an isomorphic process in which her drawing matched these internal experiences:

It has the louds and the softs of the Lord is My Shepherd, where the quiet gets forceful and then gets very soft, and I am also playing quite forcefully and then I get very soft at the end, so this represents the moment in the music—the theme of the music because it gets loud and soft, and the notes that it incorporates… when the music was more forceful, I pressed a little bit harder.

For Ruth, the drawing that she previously described effectively satisfied the personal significance of the self-selected music in the same capacities that were mentioned, but she also clarified an important intention: "That's so important in music that you make the music very expressive, and to make it interesting for the audience, that's the goal." In another example, Ruth confirmed that the theme of mastery was indeed the most significant focal point behind her drawings and the most meaningful aspect of her experience during the session for how she could pay homage to the power of the music: "As I look at the pictures, the one that is most meaningful to me is this one because of the crescendo and decrescendo… you know, what music does to make it interesting."

Expert familiarity begotten by the mastery of the music was valuable as much as a frame of reference for remaining oriented to the process as it was driving intentions behind meaning-making, as Carl highlighted: "I know Mother Goose Suite fairly well and you know, I knew things were coming up so they had *something* to do with that scribble." As one of the two participants who fully committed to the blind scribble approach in all of their initial scribble drawings, Carl ventured into the unknown and relied on his expert intuition of the music to guide the process:

It was really interesting because I was following, you know, I'm *here*… I know this piece of music fairly well… when it finally got along the portion at the bottom at the end, it was like "boooom-bom-doo-dee-doo-deee," you know it's weird, that's really something, that's interesting.

Leo was the other participant who completed the first three scribble drawings in the main intervention with his eyes closed, but ambitiously combined his approach with the bilateral technique that was used during the warm-up. The process of remaining oriented was contained as Leo incorporated various symbols and figures into his drawings—the mastery of meeting this challenge with eyes closed was a source of satisfaction upon finally viewing the art: "This is a church, let's say, trees, and you know all that type of stuff, so that was kind of my interpretation of Highland Cathedral… came out pretty good I think."

Even when participants did maintain visual appraisal of their process, mastery over the music was still a valuable frame of reference—not only for remaining oriented in time, but for staying attuned to personal values in an effort to balance the mastery of control necessary for managing affective internal states. Helen's process was described earlier in terms of the emotional regulation that was mastered through both the scribble drawing process and the materials; she clarified how it became, "like a way to channel it as opposed to just like a free, full outpour kind of thing." Helen elaborated on the personal significance of the self-selected music in terms of her relationship to the mastery over it, but with added insight comparing it to the process of aging:

> It's melding the beauty of what it is in keeping it because you have the technical
> and physical ability to make it happen. So, to me that's part of aging, because as
> you age, you have to keep up—your ability to have the stamina and the breath and
> the enlightenment and the mind to constantly get up every morning… I don't
> want to be one of those people that misses out, I mean, physicality is one of those
> interesting things that sometimes you have control over and sometimes you don't.

In this way, Helen reflected on an aspect of a sense of mastery that was essential for her aging process, beyond the rigor of music performance: a mastery of coping skills. For Helen, the

adaptability and perseverance that she described was also closely associated with her personal

values of reciprocity, inclusivity, and relevance:

> As you discover your multiple intelligence, how do you put them in perspective to
> welcome the people in your life that you need that have the strengths where
> you're the weakest… how can you help people where you have strengths and they
> have weaknesses… there's a fear that you're just going to get left out alone, but
> there's also the alignment of how you keep relevant, how you keep involved, how
> you keep kind of battling away at the negativity as it comes in… consistently
> enough that it becomes a new muscle you learn, to be able to continue on for as
> long as you possibly can.

If mastery as a central theme could contain all of the collocations and subthemes that Helen

described, it clearly was a critical value overall—one that permeated all of her experiences,

keeping her motivated and oriented to a sense of purpose. She added a final comment about her

art process: "For this, it makes me feel like maybe I should try again at some point on my own,

you know, play some music and see what comes out… because, you know, I think I can do better

than this."

As all participants demonstrated self-efficacy in their mastery over the intervention, Leo

and Carl also expressed an interest to revisit the process again in the future, either for

themselves, in thinking of its application with other individuals, and/or expanding on what was

produced by integrating a fantasy narrative. Leo shared an optimism for the opportunity to

facilitate agency, self-regulation, and therapeutic processing:

> I would do something like this, or that is artistry, even a drawing thing… I think
> somebody would really benefit from something like this and make it specific to
> their problem and have them think about, you know, their true intention. It may
> help them emotionally, you know, I really do think that, so I'll come knocking on
> your door, ok?

Carl was the most inspired about the aspect of developing a story, as he described his thought process in detail and a desire to include other family members in the fantasy narrative construction:

> I'm thinking about this creature in a way, but that's not the whole thing, you know—it's not going to eat anybody, and it was fun just taking the scribbling pictures and creating different faces and teeth and tail, it's really interesting… the thing that might be kind of fun would be to get one of the younger daughters or kids or something to come up with a story or two behind some of this, yeah, so when you get a chance, shoot me a couple copies of those.

As a musician of vocal practice, Robin's performance experience was unique from the other participants for reasons that were described earlier; she expanded on the physicality of inhabiting the instrument in terms of emotional control and mastery:

> Pieces that affect me deeply, I really have to be careful not to go there or else I can't perform, you know—I can't just start crying in the middle of trying to sing this thing though… you have got to hold back, you have to focus and concentrate… so it's not totally divorced at the performance from the rigor of it, and *this*, the flat-out free-flowing feeling, that they aren't totally divorced.

Musicians in both disciplines, whether that be vocal or instrumental practice, are faced with the task of mastering their internal states compartmentally; they do this by inhibiting what might serve as a distraction while channeling an intensity that gives vitality to the power of the music. The mastery to perform this act of service was a universal quality among all participants and a meaningful frame of reference for remaining oriented in a novel task. However, mastery beyond the rigor of the music was just as present as a driving factor of self-efficacy in this sample, whether that emerged from experiences of agency, coping, self-regulation, or matching internal states with external outcomes through the scribble art process and the materials.

Service

Broadly encompassing the various major themes and subthemes, service corresponds both in literal terms as service to community, friends and family, as well as it does more abstractly to capture a sense of intentionality—more specifically, in the forms of commemoration and commitment to the following concepts: the present moment, the past, other people, narratives, history and its traditions, spirituality and a higher power, a symbolic idea or value, the integrity and the power of the music, personal needs, and a sense of self or authenticity. In these respects, the idea of service was quite comprehensive and universal in the sample of participants. Service as a term was collocated with a sense of purpose most of all among the major themes that emerged from the data—this was also true for participants' descriptions of purpose in the demographic questionnaire prior to the intervention; the findings that corresponded with this theme offered more insight into the mechanisms underlying how the intervention supported a sense of purpose.

In any ensemble of musicians performing together, be it vocal and/or instrumental, collaboration is as integral to the mastery and execution of the music as are the individual parts played by any single member—in other words, as Helen put it, "you're all wrong until it sounds right." Service to others for the sake of a shared goal captures the nature of the symbiotic relationship of playing together. According to Robin, the ability to cooperate jointly was a critical part of mastery: "Especially in a chorus, because you've got the conductor, you've got the people in your section, you've got the right note, the right tempo, you've got to count like crazy—to have that all come together." At the same time that she valued this commitment to collaboration, Robin later clarified an important aspect of her intentions as a form of self-service through which a passion for aesthetics and their expression would be commemorated:

> The actual execution of it, I love beauty and singing and art, and I don't think my
> life would be complete if I didn't have this in it… I do it for *me*… it's my value to
> sing in the choir, I don't care if anybody comes and listens.

Robin expressed her deep gratitude for the privileges that facilitated the opportunity for self-care in this way, demonstrating her commitment to acceptance and how the music served as an effective container:

> I've had a pretty blessed life so I can't complain about it too much. Yeah, there
> have been tragedies, there have been things I have regretted… but maybe in music
> I don't focus on that so much, I take it for the peace and the joy… it's nice to have
> a source of that.

Comparing the personal fulfilment that she felt during the intervention with what she experienced while she was performing professionally, Ruth offered the following reflection on her various acts of service:

> It's just always to do the best to make the music what the composer wanted it to
> be, and "is it pleasing to the audience? Is it something that I would want to hear?"
> Now this is interesting… yesterday we went to the concert of the group that I used
> to play in—I *just* retired and so… now I'm on the other side of the stage, I've
> always been *on* the stage… I realize that they need to perform a variety so that it
> fits everybody's needs.

Ruth was as much oriented by her service to others both while onstage and as an audience member as she was in her commitment to friendship beyond the venue itself. Having retired from playing, she described how she was still able to maintain connections with her community by nurturing the rich friendships that persisted from her time in the symphony:

> You have these long lasting friendships… I played with him for… 39 of those
> years, so they become very close friends… They're someone that you really care
> about, and so it happened, he has passed away but his wife is still around… she

was there at the concert yesterday, and it was really rewarding to see her and to catch up, and I still keep contact with the conductor's wife… She's a very special person, and the conductor was a very special person in our lives, my husband played in the group, too, for over 30 years.

Ruth was intrigued by the aims of study as it targeted the experiences of older adults, and she emphasized a point about the issues of inaccessibility that contribute to isolation:

I've enjoyed being a part of it… and I think the whole subject of working with retirees, so often it's a group of people… that are retired and they're in their homes and they cannot drive anymore, so it becomes a real housebound situation… What do you do for this group? We do a lot… we take them places and help them to enjoy things that they can do, but it is a real *need* and your project is interesting that you're working with retirees.

Participation in the study gave Ruth a chance to reflect on the ways that she had committed to valued living—both in her personal life as well as in her support of a study that was building on the research of art therapy treatments for older adults. Participation in itself supported a sense of purpose in these ways, but Ruth's art also served her intention to commemorate the power of the music to paper: "I just made my tree a little bit bigger, and whatnot, to make it look like it's festive for the music." The self-selected music was, as well, a significant focal point in the art process for commemorating what Ruth enjoyed about playing in terms of her service to other musicians:

It's very meaningful to me. The one piece, The Lord is My Shepherd, is just a beautiful choir anthem that I have played a number of times to accompany a choir… and that's always a very meaningful experience to accompany a choir, to be a part, to make their presentation—their anthem—enhanced with the instrument.

From this description, collaboration served an important function through the integration of all parts as they contributed to a more complete picture of the performance.

From another point of view, Carl remarked on his service to the music and the ways that it could be confining, as he compared the personal fulfilment that he felt during the intervention with what he had experienced while performing professionally; integration served a different intent in this context for the ways that Carl sought to assemble the elements of a narrative—one that would complement both the drawing and the self-selected music:

> It's different, it's really sort of different and it has more rules. What's much more different in this… I'm not tied up in music so much as I am in this story that happened with the scribbling and how to come up with some kind of interpretation… that made the pieces fit together a little better, so that was interesting.

Freed from the mastery of the music, Carl's improvisation to the Mother Goose Suite combined various elements and meanings together within the scribble drawing to complete his pictorial fantasia on a theme of the self-selected music.

Musicians value inclusivity more intentionally as a means for honoring the integrity and the power of the music, but it also fulfills a personal need for acceptance, as Helen described:

> How do you build up the tribe… of who you are as a group not just as the individual, therein lies the challenge, and the joy—to me, that's the fun part, that's what makes you want to keep coming back, right? You feel like you belong. I mean, what better human trait is that to make somebody feel like they belong?

At the end of the intervention, Helen also enacted her values by sharing gratitude for the opportunity to collaborate: "Well again, a real pleasure and thank you for including me in it… sounds like we share some passions around this."

Similarly, Leo welcomed the prospect of supporting academic research in accordance with his value of serving others; at the same time, he also appreciated another aspect of memorability in which the intervention was able to promote his strengths:

> Sometimes coloring outside the lines in really cool, which I always have done, and so I would say that this experience was something that I'll never forget, seriously. It's very meaningful to me because, being a college professor, giving back to a student who's trying to get her master's degree is very important to me.

From Leo's personal history of serving in the Marine Corps, the values of belonging and commemoration were strong themes that emerged during his art process. Referring to his drawings, he explained how the experience of participating in the intervention aligned with his personal values in these ways and how it reinforced his self-perceptions:

> My personal values are being relevant as a human being and giving back to other people in the community… and also drawing on your history, because your history helps or has helped mold who you are as a person, and your character, and your way of life. So this is all historical as all of these have a basis in history—*my* history. Some of it is even relevant for today… all three of them are relevant in how I am as a person and my values.

Honoring the power of the music as it was traditionally performed channeled another core motivation to commemorate lives that were lost—both, of civilians and of those who had sacrificed their lives in the line of duty. The drawings and the tactility of the materials became a metaphorical axis point in which Leo's various intentions converged on paper:

> I feel a part of it, it feels a part of me… the colors definitely mean something in this drawing… I would say, a person dying in the black—combat—moving up, the sun in the West… so that's this one. The Highland Cathedral one—again, tactile… it's also, the tune itself, the song is extremely emotional because what it portrays is the demise of somebody, it's a memorial tune… in Scotland at

funerals, they don't want Amazing Grace, they want Highland Cathedral, you
know? I play it on the pipes, so this one here—the colors of the Earth and the
cathedral, purples for the regalness.

In his descriptions, Leo articulated a clear spiritual purpose that he was performing in service of
a transcendental process—one in which those whom he sought to commemorate in passing
would be guided by the music to the great beyond: "Personal significance of the music is starting
off with TAPS, which is a very emotional, very short tune that helps the spirit go into another
world, same with Highland Cathedral."

Robin also selected a piece of music that served a commemorative purpose with
reverence for the loss of life, but more so to honor the great sacrifice undertaken by her higher
power. Both her discussion of the song and the drawing itself were marked by strong symbolism
and mindfulness that conveyed profound gratitude:

This is the "at the cry of the first bird," and this is more graphic, if you will,
because I always thought about that bird… I suppose the idea is that they
crucified Christ at dawn, and at the cry of the first bird… I've always, when I
sung it, sort of focused on that bird… I can hear it… For whatever you think
about Christ being God, he was a great man, and so his death was really a tragedy,
but out of that tragedy many people adopted his philosophies.

Leo incorporated spiritual iconography and figures into his drawings as well, which were useful
for organizing his commemorative intentions into more concrete symbols: "These represent a
couple of my good friends, Marines who were killed, and not only them but a whole bunch of
brothers over the years… I just put down Christianity and Judaism, you know, 'rest in peace'."

Trees emerged as a common symbol in three participant's drawings, which were
reflective of an instinctive tendency to project meaningful physicality and context within an

abstract space; in Helen's work, she explained this idea in terms of the symbiotic relationship between the environment and the object inhabiting that presence:

> Reminds me of a most gorgeous sunset you've ever seen in your life… that's why I decided to finish the sunset more with like a tree that… is involved but not overtaken, that the sunset keeps the emotion of it alive.

When strong symbols and figures emerged during the drawing process, and especially if this happened during the first phase of scribbling before participants reworked the image, it seemed to signal the level of personal significance that was driving a particular intention, or at the very least how a participant relied on concrete representations to remain oriented to personal meanings and values. In the cases of Ruth and Leo, as well, their drawings went beyond graphic symbols to include script and notation. The act of giving names to things in these ways was also a strong indication of intent. However and importantly more so, strength of intent most often defied literal and figurative depictions in the drawings and was as much present in the sheer act of inspiration to make sense of things above all else.

Conclusion

In five individual sessions that collected roughly 2 hours of interview data per person, a depth of insight was captured in a relatively short period of time in the larger context of a life spent performing—one that painted a richly detailed portrait of the inner world and culture of the musicians. The means by which a sense of purpose was facilitated in this population transpired out of opportunities to surpass the barrier of performance anxiety, engage in acts of discovery, service, and commemoration, process emotion, exercise mastery and intentionality, honor the power of music, and achieve integration. The kinesthetic basis of scribbling was novel and non-threatening, and could effectively mirror internal processes that were occurring in alignment with the self-selected music as it was anchored in familiarity, personal values, and expertise.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

A summary of response highlights for each individual participant is included in this section. In order to ground the results from the study in the context of preexisting literature, this chapter is intended to revisit resources that were cited in earlier chapters. Particular focus is paid to those articles with the most relevance to the scope of the design and pertaining to both the research questions and hypotheses. Of added importance, it is necessary to emphasize the limitations, validity, and implications of the study, and share suggestions for future research, should the design be applied in similar samples or modified to capture experiences in other populations. In approaches that obtain qualitative data through virtual or in-person face-to-face interactions with participants, the topics of ethical praxis and reflexivity are of special priority in a discussion of the results.

Results

IRB approval was granted before commencing all aspects of the study, and informed consent to participate, share art data, and be recorded were obtained by all participants prior to the main intervention. Five participants completed all phases of the study, including a Google form demographic questionnaire, an art-based intervention that included four drawings, and an interview consisting of five structured interview questions with additional unstructured lines of inquiry. The average age of the participants was approximately 75 years-old, all were white, either fully or partially retired, with at least 20 years or more experience practicing or performing music professionally, and each individual reported that their sense of purpose had been somewhat impacted in this later phase of life; all participants also reported that their capacity to participate musically had been impacted in some way due to various factors. Collectively, with

the exception of racial or ethnic background, the previously listed criteria served to indicate that

all individuals met adequate eligibility to participate in the study. For all participants, classical or

traditional forms of music dominated the picture of performance history. Besides one participant

who performed music vocally, all individuals listed at least two instruments with which they

played professionally.

Primary and secondary themes emerging from participants' intervention responses were

characterized as follows: (1) performance anxiety, (2) discovery, (3) emotion, (4) mastery, (5)

service, (6) intentionality, (7) the power of music, (8) commemoration, and (9) integration.

Themes 1-5 represented primary themes while 6-9 served as secondary subthemes appearing in

contexts across the five major themes. Each of these themes captured significant aspects of the

experiences that implicated a sense of purpose for participants, with some themes more

pronounced for certain individuals than others. Overlapping contexts were observed as well such

that some themes emerged in the context of other themes, and were thus described as subthemes;

this was also true in some cases when major themes served as subthemes in the context of other

major themes.

Ruth's Response Highlights

While the majority of the interview response highlights for Ruth were already reflected in

a previous discussion of themes that emerged across all participant data, a summary of highlights

from the intervention overall with a few additional insights will be covered in this section.

Being the first participant in the study, the session that was facilitated with Ruth was

subject to several approaches that were not replicated later for other participants, ultimately due

to a lack of experience as well as a lapse in attention on behalf of the researcher. Despite these

differences, the results for Ruth were only moderately impacted in the sense that she received a

different ratio of paper sizes for the three phases of the intervention, and some parts of the

session script were later adjusted for clarity.

All the same, the outcome of the intervention for Ruth indicated that her sense of purpose

was supported most of all due to features of the intervention that created opportunities for

discovery through self-reflection and intentionality; whether this was explicitly facilitated by the

scribble technique itself was less important than the frame of reference that allowed Ruth to

remained oriented to the self-selected music and its personal significance.

Highlights from Ruth's session that substantiated the research question and the three

primary hypotheses are summarized as follows: (1) The process of self-selecting music imbued

meaning throughout the art-making experience, and for Ruth, this emerged from feelings of pride

in all aspects of her service to the music and the community. Corresponding discussion elicited

an effect that was comparable with the sharing and witnessing of memories that occur in life

review, but not in an exact sense as this would have involved evaluating and analyzing past

experiences in order to achieve a more profound self-concept. As well as it happened for all

participants, Ruth had indeed shared self-realizations in the context of reflection, which indicated

the experience of meaning-making; whether this could be characterized as a comprehensive

review of life considering major milestones and events in sequence was not necessarily

facilitated by the intervention merely due to the fact that the researcher did not probe for this

information specifically. (2) The benefits of an ACT approach with Ruth were demonstrated

beyond what was hypothesized in a multitude of ways; these included not only that valued living

and behavior were indeed conveyed in the music self-selection process, but additional features of

an ACT approach that emphasizes acceptance, contact with the present moment, and committed

action were observed in the responses to the self-selected music. (3) The kinesthetic basis for the

scribble technique was not as necessary as an access point for Ruth as it was for other participants considering that her drawings in phase one were more representational at the outset; this is not to say that a scribble motion was not utilized or valuable at all, but rather that scribbles were more purposefully isolated to serve the function of filling in areas of representational shapes with color. Further, the creative level of functioning for Ruth was achieved and reflected by feelings of satisfaction over certain aspects of the drawing process, but not in the sense that this occurred via the identification of forms within abstracted content.

Carl's Response Highlights

Being the first individual to participate in person in the study, the session that was facilitated with Carl was subject to several approaches that were not replicated for other participants. Despite these differences, the results for Carl were only moderately impacted in the sense that he received additional in-person support that participants over Zoom did not receive, and some parts of the session script were adjusted for clarity.

All the same, the outcome of the intervention for Carl indicated that his sense of purpose was supported most of all due to features of the intervention that created opportunities for imagination and discovery through novelty, improvisation, and intentionality; whether this was explicitly facilitated by the scribble technique itself seemed to be quite significant as a source of inspiration arising from abstracted content, as well as the frame of reference that allowed Carl to remain oriented to the self-selected music and its personal significance.

Highlights from Carl's session that substantiated the research question and the three primary hypotheses are summarized as follows: (1) The process of self-selecting music imbued meaning throughout the art-making experience, and for Carl, this emerged from feelings of discovery that occurred when he was liberated from the mastery of the music, but expert

familiarity with the music also served as a valuable anchor point from which he could securely explore the art process. Corresponding discussion elicited an effect that was comparable with the sharing and witnessing of memories that occur in life review, but not in an exact sense as this would have involved evaluating and analyzing past experiences in order to achieve a more profound self-concept. As well as it happened for all participants, Carl had indeed shared self-realizations in the context of reflection, which indicated the experience of meaning-making; whether this could be characterized as a comprehensive review of life considering major milestones and events in sequence was not necessarily facilitated by the intervention merely due to the fact that the researcher did not probe for this information specifically. (2) The benefits of an ACT approach with Carl were demonstrated beyond what was hypothesized in a multitude of ways; these included not only that valued living and behavior were indeed conveyed in the music self-selection process, but additional features of an ACT approach that emphasizes acceptance, contact with the present moment, and committed action were observed in the responses to the self-selected music. (3) The kinesthetic basis for the scribble technique was a valuable access point for Carl considering that his drawings in phase one produced abstracted content and inspired the spontaneous creation of a fantasy narrative. Further, the creative level of functioning for Carl was achieved and reflected by feelings of joy and satisfaction over certain aspects of the drawing process, occurring via the identification of forms within abstracted content.

Leo's Response Highlights

While the majority of the interview response highlights for Leo were already reflected in a previous discussion of themes that emerged across all participant data, a summary of highlights from the intervention overall with a few additional insights will be covered in this section.

Being the second individual to participate in person in the study, the session that was facilitated with Leo was subject to several approaches that were not replicated for other participants. Despite these differences, the results for Leo were only moderately impacted in the sense that he received additional in-person support that participants over Zoom did not receive, and some parts of the session script were adjusted for clarity.

All the same, the outcome of the intervention for Leo indicated that his sense of purpose was supported most of all due to features of the intervention that created opportunities for commemoration and discovery through novelty, improvisation, and intentionality; whether this was explicitly facilitated by the scribble technique itself seemed to be fairly significant as a non-threatening point of access that allowed Leo to remain oriented to the self-selected music and its personal significance.

Highlights from Leo's session that substantiated the research question and the three primary hypotheses are summarized as follows: (1) The process of self-selecting music imbued meaning throughout the art-making experience, and for Leo, this emerged from feelings of pride that occurred when he honored his personal history and service to others; expert knowledge of the music also represented a valuable anchor point from which he could securely explore the art process. Corresponding discussion elicited an effect that was comparable with the sharing and witnessing of memories that occur in life review, but not in an exact sense as this would have involved evaluating and analyzing past experiences in order to achieve a more profound self-concept. As well as it happened for all participants, Leo had indeed shared self-realizations in the context of reflection, which indicated the experience of meaning-making; whether this could be characterized as a comprehensive review of life considering major milestones and events in sequence was not necessarily facilitated by the intervention merely due to the fact that the

researcher did not probe for this information specifically. (2) The benefits of an ACT approach with Leo were demonstrated beyond what was hypothesized in a multitude of ways; these included not only that valued living and behavior were indeed conveyed in the music self-selection process, but additional features of an ACT approach that emphasizes acceptance, contact with the present moment, and committed action were observed in the responses to the self-selected music. (3) The kinesthetic basis for the scribble technique was a valuable access point for Leo considering the ways that his gestures and visual elements in his responses closely corresponded with what was occurring in the music. Further, the creative level of functioning for Leo was achieved and reflected by feelings of satisfaction over certain aspects of the drawing process, although not as much in the sense that this occurred exclusively via the identification of forms within abstracted content.

Helen's Response Highlights

While the majority of the interview response highlights for Helen were already reflected in a previous discussion of themes that emerged across all participant data, a summary of highlights from the intervention overall with a few additional insights will be covered in this section.

Being the second individual to participate over Zoom in the study, the session that was facilitated with Helen was subject to several approaches that were not replicated for other participants. Despite these differences, the results for Helen were only moderately impacted in the sense that she sourced her own art materials; although, this was at a fairly low cost since she already owned a few of the items. Additionally, some parts of the session script were adjusted for clarity.

All the same, the outcome of the intervention for Helen indicated that her sense of purpose was supported most of all due to features of the intervention that created opportunities for commemoration, emotional regulation, and discovery through novelty, improvisation, and intentionality; whether this was explicitly facilitated by the scribble technique itself seemed to be fairly significant as a non-threatening point of access that allowed Helen to remain oriented to the self-selected music and its personal significance.

Highlights from Helen's session that substantiated the research question and the three primary hypotheses are summarized as follows: (1) The process of self-selecting music imbued meaning throughout the art-making experience, and for Helen, this emerged from feelings of pride in all aspects of her service to the music; expert familiarity of the music also represented a valuable anchor point from which she could securely explore the art process. Corresponding discussion elicited an effect that was comparable with the sharing and witnessing of memories that occur in life review, but not in an exact sense as this would have involved evaluating and analyzing past experiences in order to achieve a more profound self-concept. As well as it happened for all participants, Helen had indeed shared self-realizations in the context of reflection, which indicated the experience of meaning-making; whether this could be characterized as a comprehensive review of life considering major milestones and events in sequence was not necessarily facilitated by the intervention merely due to the fact that the researcher did not probe for this information specifically. (2) The benefits of an ACT approach with Helen were demonstrated beyond what was hypothesized in a multitude of ways; these included not only that valued living and behavior were indeed conveyed in the music self-selection process, but additional features of an ACT approach that emphasizes defusion, acceptance, contact with the present moment, and committed action were observed in the

responses to the self-selected music. (3) The kinesthetic basis for the scribble technique was a valuable access point for Helen considering the ways that her gestures and visual elements in her responses closely corresponded with what was occurring in the music. Further, the creative level of functioning for Helen was achieved and reflected by feelings of satisfaction over certain aspects of the drawing process, although not as much in the sense that this occurred exclusively via the identification of forms within abstracted content.

Robin's Response Highlights

While the majority of the interview response highlights for Robin were already reflected in a previous discussion of themes that emerged across all participant data, a summary of highlights from the intervention overall with a few additional insights will be covered in this section.

Being the second individual to participate in person in the study, the session that was facilitated with Robin was subject to several approaches that were not replicated for other participants. Despite these differences, the results for Robin were only moderately impacted in the sense that she received additional in-person support that participants over Zoom did not receive, and some parts of the session script were adjusted for clarity.

All the same, the outcome of the intervention for Robin indicated that her sense of purpose was supported most of all due to features of the intervention that created opportunities for commemoration and discovery through novelty, improvisation, and intentionality; whether this was explicitly facilitated by the scribble technique itself seemed to be fairly significant as a non-threatening point of access that allowed Robin to remain oriented to the self-selected music and its personal significance.

Highlights from Robin's session that substantiated the research question and the three primary hypotheses are summarized as follows: (1) The process of self-selecting music imbued meaning throughout the art-making experience, and for Robin, this emerged from feelings of pride that occurred when she commemorated the power of the music; expert knowledge of the music also represented a valuable anchor point from which she could securely explore the art process. Corresponding discussion elicited an effect that was comparable with the sharing and witnessing of memories that occur in life review, but not in an exact sense as this would have involved evaluating and analyzing past experiences in order to achieve a more profound self-concept. As well as it happened for all participants, Robin had indeed shared self-realizations in the context of reflection, which indicated the experience of meaning-making; whether this could be characterized as a comprehensive review of life considering major milestones and events in sequence was not necessarily facilitated by the intervention merely due to the fact that the researcher did not probe for this information specifically. (2) The benefits of an ACT approach with Robin were demonstrated beyond what was hypothesized in a multitude of ways; these included not only that valued living and behavior were indeed conveyed in the music self-selection process, but additional features of an ACT approach that emphasizes acceptance, contact with the present moment, and committed action were observed in the responses to the self-selected music. (3) The kinesthetic basis for the scribble technique was a valuable access point for Robin considering the ways that her gestures and visual elements in her responses closely corresponded with what was occurring in the music. Further, the creative level of functioning for Robin was achieved and reflected by feelings of satisfaction and joy over certain aspects of the drawing process, although not as much in the sense that this occurred exclusively via the identification of forms within abstracted content.

Broader Contexts

Based on sources from the literature that described cultural factors of aging and shared qualities of older adult musicians, several findings stood out from the results of the study. As Kenny and Ackerman (2017) and Kenny et al. (2018) discussed common factors impacting older adult performers' capacity to play, it appeared that at least two individuals in the sample did report a form of chronic pain, but this was not solicited to be a direct result of years of repetitive playing. It was also substantiated via responses to the demographic questionnaire that performance anxiety was a significant factor for three participants, and cognitive or auditory impairment individually impacted two participants in their capacity to perform musically, although these were not explicitly investigated to be due to age-related changes. During the intervention, instances of performance anxiety surrounding the art-making process were observed, but it could not be determined whether there was any meaningful distinction or relationship with music performance anxiety based on participant responses.

In terms of ageism, only one participant described a personal experience during the interview, first having listed that it impacted the capacity to participate musically in the demographic questionnaire; however, the effect was quite considerable, especially as it became the primary reason for retirement from professional performance, and ageism was also pervasive across several dimensions unrestricted to musicianship. Bordia et al. (2020) and König et al. (2019) attributed greater detriments on well-being to higher levels of satisfaction in work when either voluntary or involuntary retirement was the case, corresponding with what was shared by the participant who had passionately enjoyed performing. The effect of retirement witnessed during the interview with the participant matched descriptions of external forces of ageism put forth by Allen et al. (2022), Ayalon and Tesch-Römer (2018), and McDonald (2013).

In parallel with the previous topic, two other participants offered examples about the common experiences shared by older adults related to aging and possibly internalized ageism—particularly, the sense of isolation that impacts well-being when losses of community and personal agency occur following retirement and age-related changes. Although the two participants were only speaking either hypothetically or about other individuals they knew personally, these examples appeared to be significant as projections of concerned mindfulness for the circumstances of aging. All of this being said, what was shared by three of the participants reflected the idea of prioritizing older adults as relevant stakeholders, as it was emphasized by Ferri et al. (2009) who characterized views of successful aging.

In terms of the five musician's personal experiences, retirement itself apparently neither contributed to a sense of isolation nor identity crisis, but it very well may have had more to do with the question never being raised. One participant did describe in positive terms the opportunity to achieve perspective from the other side of the stage in a new role as an audience member following recent retirement—beyond the intervention, creative engagement of this kind especially resembled the opportunity that Partridge (2019) described, as one in which the participant was able to reimagine themselves in the world toward establishing a new sense of purpose. Based on the definition of subjective well-being by King et al. (2014), a level of satisfaction with specific dimensions conveyed in thoughts and feelings about their lives and circumstances seemed to be present in all five participants, despite brief conversations concerning age-related changes and experiences of ageism.

Intertwined within the Intervention

The scribble technique effectively liberated participants from their apprehensions towards the drawing process and pressures they may have faced internally to create something that would

measure up to a perceived standard. Corroborating what Cane (1983) and Hanes (1995) had

asserted, the scribble technique proved to be a valuable point of entry into a novel art process

that surpassed a barrier of performance anxiety witnessed in some form in all participants, but

scribbling and the self-selected music were also not mutually exclusive in this capacity—for all

participants, music was critically valuable for remaining oriented to the present moment as well

as to personal values and sources of meaning.

Bensimon and Gilboa (2010) characterized the beneficial features of musical presentation

supporting a sense of purpose in terms of its ability to serve as a musical autobiography, which

was observed as each participant described the personal significance of the music in the context

of their drawings. While all participants formed a personal narrative about the self-selected

music and their art process, one individual was particularly focused on the inspiration to

integrate a fantasy narrative for the images that transpired, which resembled in many ways how

the Music, Drawing, and Narrative experiential described by Booth (2005) had captured

imagination. In this respect, support of the use of the scribble technique as a stimulus for the

imagination at a foundational level was accessible for all individuals who were unfamiliar with

or apprehensive towards the art-making process, in keeping with findings established by Hanes

(1995), Magniant (2004), Lusebrink (2014) and Hinz (2020). In addition to activating the

imagination, the scribble technique was also effective for eliciting meaningful memories, and

promoting psychological well-being, as it was described by Darewych et al. (2018), and

Darewych and Bowers (2018).

It appeared that the participants benefited the most from opportunities for intentionality,

inspiration, discovery, self-regulation, mindfulness, and integration of narrative, all appearing in

alignment with the capacity of art therapy to facilitate well-being via sense of purpose according

to Ilali (2018), Partridge (2019), Ravid-Horesh (2004), and Stephenson (2013). Further, the

therapeutic value in the creation of a visual record of internal process as Hanes (2001) described

was undeniably present in the commemoration, sharing, and witnessing of both tangible art

products and the self-selected music, and was by far the most meaningfully impactful aspect of

the intervention.

ACT. In support of the hypothesis, valued living occurred in the context of self-selected

music by orienting the participants in the direction of what already brought them meaning and

purpose in life, as it was described by Ramsey-Wade (2015). Beyond what was predicted,

contact with the present moment occurred at the boundary with the paper and what was

processed internally, as participants responded to the music in real time. Defusion from internal

states of emotional intensity facilitated by the regulating aspects of the art-making process was

most pronounced for one individual; nonetheless, this was found to be a sort of shared quality

among several participants who noted mastery over emotions in their service to the power of the

music, which was also validated by Juncos and de Paiva e Pona (2018) in a study of ACT for

performance enhancement in musicians.

It could be more of a stretch to suggest that self-as-context occurred in mindfulness

narratives when participants merely expressed their thought processes, but this was perhaps most

admissible when one participant defined the process of drawing to the music as a "show me"

moment. Entirely present in the articulations of cognition, mindful awareness appeared to be the

most salient in verbalized appraisals of process when participants evaluated the efficacy of

different materials. Acceptance and committed action assumed a bidirectional relationship that

indisputably occurred in the context of creative intentionality; these principles were

demonstrated not only as participants negotiated the properties of the various media, but they

were primed for all individuals following the reflective distancing phase in which the

participants chose one image to enhance—this was even more true for the initial scribble

drawings that were completed with eyes closed. Overall psychological flexibility was

demonstrated in all participants during the session, but nevertheless seemed to be innately

present in their behavior and words excluding any effect that was due to the intervention.

MDV and the ETC. In keeping with theories advanced by Kagin and Lusebrink (1978),

Graves-Alcorn and Kagin (2017), and Hinz (2020), participants revealed their preferences for

fluid and resistive media across the spectrum and articulated how specific qualities in the

individual materials satisfied their intentions or matched their internal experience of the music—

much in the way that Franklin (2010) and Smeijsters (2012) also expanded on the capacity of

isomorphic qualities within art and music modalities to communicate vitality affect. Several

individuals gravitated exclusively towards more fluid drawing media, while one individual was

more inclined towards resistive media, and underlying motivations for all participants appeared

to correspond with the metaphorical functions of MDV in the ETC that were described by Kagin

and Lusebrink (1978), Graves-Alcorn and Kagin (2017), and Hinz (2020).

All components of the ETC were accessed in varying capacities between the five

participants, reflected by different integrations concerning the following dimensions:

kinesthetic/sensory, perceptual/affective, and cognitive/symbolic. In formulating assertions about

preferential modes of information processing, whether a participant was primarily absorbed in

any one of the six individual ETC components, or exclusively in right- or left-hemisphere brain

functions, could ultimately serve to locate a focal point of therapeutic gain or curiosity according

to theory. While the study was not powered to investigate participant contexts at such depth,

flexibility across the spectrum and corresponding feelings of satisfaction and joy did serve to

indicate that all individuals demonstrated the creative level of functioning according to Kagin and Lusebrink (1978) and Hinz (2020).

Limitations

In terms of degrees of separation between the participants and the researcher, it is most relevant to establish that the majority of individuals represented at least two if not three degrees of separation from the researcher, and all were sourced indirectly by word of mouth, with the exception of one participant where any possible existing relational connection was entirely obscured. In all of the other remaining four participants, a significant dual relationship was not present, and was thus ruled out as a potential ethical concern—further, only two of the four individuals had been met previously in person long before the research session and these encounters were brief at most. An effect may still be notable in those two cases where participants had a relationship with the liaison who shared a familial connection with the researcher.

Any effect serving to limit the validity of the results may be attributed to moderate inconsistencies in approach due to human error and lack of foresight as several adjustments were made along the way. Specifically, minor changes in the script and presentation were made after the first two participants, namely due to the fact that these sessions represented the first virtual and the first in-person encounter, respectively. The bilateral scribble was clarified with a physical demonstration, and a note was included that differentiated scribbling versus drawing representational imagery; in this case, participants were reassured that a tendency to create specific objects or forms was still accepted in the intervention. Making an allowance with respect to the original design of the study in this way was highly appropriate given that the tendency to

create representational imagery could indicate a clear intention behind what is important or most meaningful for the participant—a central focus in the research.

Some concerns emerged about the possible effects of interrupting the flow of the process for participants, whether these manifested via suggestions made in the negotiation of approaches or coordination of transitions between drawings per the arrangement of songs. Attempts to mitigate these uncertainties were remedied with the option to complete one drawing per song, which also drew on the expert familiarity of the participant to switch based on their intuitive knowledge of the music. It was suggested as an alternative that individuals could just as well fully embrace a sense of spontaneity by choosing a random approach. At a certain point in providing as many options, however, it could be an issue if the plethora of choices had actually served to overwhelm the participants. All the same, it did not appear in any displays of emotion or behavior that participants were experiencing significant frustration, fatigue, or exhaustion. Announcing that "5 minutes remain" or pausing the music for any reason would interrupt the flow quite literally, but this was also valuable to an extent for helping participants manage their expectations. Minor obstacles presented in cases where songs were chosen in person or screen-sharing on Zoom had not been configured to include sound, but these brief setbacks due to researcher incompetence or Wi-Fi issues were resolved in a reasonable amount of time.

Miscellaneous limitations attributed to aspects of researcher personality influencing outcomes are essentially indeterminable, but would have had the most to do with unconscious reactions or bias, self-disclosures, human error including disorganization, forgetfulness, time-mismanagement, and inconsistencies in terms of specifying instructions. A discussion pertaining to ethical praxis and reflexivity will expand on personal factors in a later section.

Perhaps most of all, it could be that eventually allowing in-person versus virtual participation when it could be reasonably accommodated had played a role in shifting the data to some degree, and it certainly implicates the question of whether ethical fairness was properly implemented for all participants. For the first participant in the study, the option to participate in person was not extended at the time and was later accommodated for other participants when there was a notable suggestion that it could serve their best interests. Had it been clearer to the student researcher at the outset that modifying the procedures in this way was perhaps justifiable in serving the best interests of the participants, it may be that the participant would have actually preferred to meet in person if the opportunity was presented. Despite this lack of assurance and foresight on behalf of the researcher, the participant still benefited from the session occurring virtually as the intervention supported the process of meaning-making.

Benefits and drawbacks for online versus in-person

Assessing the impact of the two formats, it is necessary to extract the individual benefits and drawbacks between online approaches and sessions that were conducted in person. It could be argued that online formats were better suited to support participant independence, with less researcher influence as well that was facilitated by clear physical boundaries. There was an ostensible benefit of COVID-19 safety that could not be assured to the same extent with in-person formats. Additionally, it could be more convenient and conceivably less intrusive for participants to participate virtually. However, drawbacks from a researcher standpoint were consigned to a perspective of the creative process that lacked clarity on camera and omitted a many of the sensory cues that could better inform data collection. For virtual formats, issues of technology could potentially disrupt the session to a significant degree due to the possible threat of losing internet connection. The risk of frustration to occur if issues of technology presented

could actually serve to counteract the benefits of convenience. That being said, it seems that there could be more variables to account for on the side of technology not cooperating, thus compounded by the researcher not being able to provide direct assistance.

Conversely, in-person formats could be more personable, thereby allowing the researcher and the participant a better opportunity to build rapport. In this context, the researcher could provide direct assistance and clarity, as more information could be exchanged through in-person communication. That being said, and from the position of data collection, content might be richer in some cases where in-person sessions are adapted. In the same capacity that a virtual format might be subjectively preferable, it could also be that in-person participation might be more convenient and less demanding for individuals. In terms of potential downsides, diffused boundaries could present more of a risk of intrusions to occur, especially if the session takes place in the personal residence of the participant. It would therefore also indicate a higher likelihood for researcher influence to bear an impact on the data due to the presence of more variables overall. Unlike sessions occurring over Zoom, COVID-19 safety could not be assured to the same extent that virtual formats were capable of facilitating. Depending on subjective experiences, it might not actually be more convenient or less demanding to engage in-person. Ultimately, technology could also still become an obstacle, which would present many of the same potential setbacks of a virtual format, but the researcher in this case would also be available to provide direct in-person assistance.

Validity

Coding and theming were executed at a student level and performed manually, as opposed to automatically via computer application, which could have exposed the data to human error and bias. However, the process was repeated extensively to reach a point of saturation, and

a human lens very well may have been more aptly programed to discern certain connections that

artificial intelligence would have otherwise missed. Due to the multidimensional nature of the

research questions and hypotheses, coding and theming were implemented with a high degree of

difficulty, especially at a novice level of experience and understanding. Any issue with

transcribing recorded content manually was limited only by challenges of interpreting inaudible

content and the occasional homophone, but these instances were scarce and only minimally

impactful, if there was any meaningful significance.

Generalizability

Due to the small sample size, the study inherently lacked generalizability of the results,

especially as all participants were white and were either current or former Bay Area residents.

Limitations in sample size resulted despite expansive efforts to recruit participants, such that the

researcher employed a vast network of personal connections to reach the targeted population.

When participation was authorized, soliciting the musician's union representing the greater San

Francisco Bay Area was one method of inquiry from which sampling was achieved using a

combined approach that applied purposeful sampling through convenience and snowballing. In

addition to this strategy, both digital and paper fliers were provided to four major union-level

performing arts organizations and theaters for distribution by mail, email, and face-to-face

contact; at least four other professional organizations and academic institutions were contacted in

addition to these sources. An extended period of time for recruitment likely would have served to

support sampling a larger segment of the population, but the specificity of criteria was also quite

narrow in scope.

Implications

For future research it could be worthwhile to use a control group of non-musicians, with the goal of clarifying distinctions between the shared qualities of professional performers and the general population. If the hypotheses and research questions are preserved, perhaps a clearer view of barriers and protective factors would also be revealed. The purpose of articulating differences may be most useful for advocacy of both the arts in general and arts-based therapeutic modalities; in cases where advantages unique to a population already immersed in creative expression could be correlated with specific gains in well-being, research might compare the efficacy of the same treatment observed in a control group. Previous research has already extensively identified various health benefits associated with music exposure and participation (Böttcher et al., 2022; Catterall & Rauscher, 2008; Fernandez, 2018; Kraus & Strait, 2016; Sa de Almeida et al., 2020; Zendel & Alain; 2012), but future research may be served best by controlling for the various socio-economic privileges that facilitated access and promoted success within the profession, as these might also have served as protective factors and could better explain positive health outcomes.

Adapting the intervention in other formats could incorporate publicized performative displays for promoting social justice. Partridge (2019) articulates the therapeutic benefit of older adults embracing their role as stakeholders in this capacity, and how "projects with purpose can translate into feelings of personal purpose" (p.71). Engagement in art-based advocacy of social awareness to combat ageism could involve digitally projecting live scribble drawings to music in real time during performances. To further support inclusivity, members who had retired from the music group due to age-related changes impacting the capacity to play could be invited to participate again but in a different manner by drawing alongside the colleagues with whom they had performed professionally. Intergenerational collaboration of this kind is reciprocally

empowering and valuable beyond merely engaging individuals to remain connected to a sense of community. Besides any benefit to public health and well-being, performing arts organizations also stand to gain from exposure that increases visibility and inclusivity for the purpose of growing audiences.

With a perspective of empowerment as it was advocated by Gibbons (2016), broader inquiries could be constructive towards enhancing our understanding of how art and music-based treatment approaches can be tailored to support age-related changes The dexterity of the expressive therapies modalities in this regard is highly compatible with a point of view that allows successful aging "because of disability, rather than in spite of disability" (Gibbons, 2016, p. 14). Beyond the stage and the orchestra pit, application of the intervention in this study likely has value for any individual who finds personal meaning or enjoyment in music, regardless of age or professional experience.

Appreciation of music is as extensive in the world as it is diverse in its history, manifestations, and utility, and individuals of all backgrounds could find it meaningful to compose any kind of drawing in response to that stimulus. Music can capture ethnographic context in ways that other modalities might not be able to replicate, which can have powerful therapeutic value for cultural healing (Hämäläinen et al., 2021). Music also does not necessarily need to be heard to be experienced or appreciated either, for vibrations that carry sound waves are tactile and rhythm can be felt in the body (Kyriakou, 2021; Heiderscheit & Jackson, 2018). Whether viewing or engaging in it physically, expression through dance movement is another way that music can be experienced. In that sense, drawing is just as well a form of dance, but it also leaves behind a tangible record that Hanes (2001) values as evidence both of recovery and continuity of the therapeutic process. Thus, the duet between the two modalities perhaps not only

does more to cast a wider net to human experience, but it could establish a more concrete representation of that narrative.

Ethical Praxis and Reflexivity

With all participants, a depth of insight was captured in a relatively short period of time in the larger context of a life spent performing—one that painted a richly detailed portrait of the inner world and culture of the musicians. Bearing witness to these moments in which the participants openly shared their process and cherished meanings was singularly sacred from the standpoint of a student researcher poised to enter the field—with respect for the dignity of the older adults, gratitude for their candor, and awe for the power of art therapy that was confirmed, it was clear how personal dimensions became blended with ethical praxis. That being said, a discussion of ethical praxis and reflexivity is warranted in such cases that power dynamics, personal reflections, and countertransference are bound to occur, as are common in qualitative designs that achieve direct contact with participants; perhaps this is also particularly true in the context of phenomenological and ethnographic research that investigates intersections of consciousness and culture.

A sense of integrity as a defining feature of researcher identity means viewing oneself critically and striving to interpret situations with objectivity. Honoring these values in the fullest capacity would seem to require an acknowledgement that true objectivity is a bit of an impossibility. In other words, there may be objective truths out there, but as humans we are incapable of completely discarding our perspective in our attempts to view them objectively. Shielding ourselves behind our best intentions in this way only does a disservice to the effort to restore power imbalances—as a researcher, the intention remains to practice with integrity, but this also means acknowledging that cultural identity could distort the lenses with which we view

participants. In these capacities, ensuring best ethical practice is critically dependent on researcher reflexivity.

Theories devised in a vacuum might only serve vain attempts to deny the inescapable mess of reality—to "expect the unexpected should be a basic assumption for qualitative researchers" (Tolich & Tumilty, 2020, p. 27). For art-based research, planning for the possibility that literal messes might occur presents challenges especially for predicting and remediating repercussions. In the case that a participant's personal possessions became tarnished due to the art materials, at the very least, this possibility should have been detailed in the description of risks within informed consent. The student researcher did not possess the foresight to preface the risk of stains, and overlooked the opportunity as well to recommend adjustments to the table surface. Fortunately, most of the materials included in the study were selected for their easy removal, with the exception of the markers, and as it turned out, the stain was only temporary. For every session that followed, the researcher attempted to engage a sense of mindfulness over the surroundings in order to protect the personal spaces and belongings of the participants.

The same situation bears discussion concerning power dynamics in the sense that the researcher possessed greater insight about the procedural elements in the study and probably should have had the intuitive capacity to facilitate the session without damages occurring. Conducting sessions virtually, but especially in-person, evokes an important consideration within power dynamics in terms of the diffusion of a boundary that is unavoidable when we enter the homes of participants. How qualitative research is performed inevitably calls upon the reflexivity of the researcher to navigate their positionality in a power dynamic. As a guest, it can feel unnatural to impose rules in a home that does not belong to you, and perhaps this factored into whatever intuitive capacity was encumbered that could have spared the table cloth. On some

unconscious level, it seems very possible that the ethical imperative to preserve the authority of the participant had superseded the priority of protecting their personal belongings.

Personal residences are hardly sterile laboratories, and only for good reason—they are filled with photos, phone calls, pets, potted plants, and sometimes other family members. Somehow, experiencing these artifacts and entities became even more emotionally potentiated in the context of performing research versus how we might normally experience them in daily life. After leaving those spaces, memories filled with sensory details were cultivated in the imagination to produce a fantasy of participants beyond the session. It was sensed that a power dynamic might exist in possession of this insight, and certainly as it informed the process of writing on the behalf of the participants transcribed experiences. The role of reflexivity in this capacity was also described by Atkinson (2006) as such: "That interview accounts are coconstructed with informants, that ethnographic texts have their own conventions of representation […] and the ethnographer's interpretation of phenomena is always something that is crafted through an ethnographic imagination" (p. 402).

Conclusions

If engaging in creative practice "allows older adults to reimagine who they are in the world and establish a new sense of purpose" (Partridge, 2019, p. 71), scribbling in response to music with personal significance can effectively serve the capacity for self-reflection and meaning-making in a sample of participants who have spent their careers in the performing arts. The means by which a sense of purpose was facilitated in this population transpired out of opportunities to surpass the barrier of performance anxiety, engage in acts of discovery, service, and commemoration, process emotion, exercise mastery and intentionality, honor the power of music, and achieve integration. The kinesthetic task of scribbling with a variety of drawing

media was an optimal instrument for the improvisation and reintegration of various meanings and motivations—one that was non-threatening and satisfying as it effectively mirrored internal processes that were occurring in alignment with the music. Pairing a novel art experiential with a meaningful stimulus can anchor participants both to their personal values and to a preexisting point of mastery, for which music was especially tailored to fit the needs of this population.

The integration of expressive therapies modalities compelled analysis that could attribute the corresponding effects and mechanisms to their respective domains. Albeit, any further attempts to surgically untangle key themes emerging exclusively from either art-making or self-selected musical presentation were futile, as the two were seamlessly married in process. A sense of resolve is reclaimed in the words of Dissanayake (2017) that transcends the puzzle of pursuing these distinctions—the enduring need of our species to "make special" (p. 148). Interchangeable with the same evolutionary rationale, finding meaning and purpose persist as important targets in the field of mental healthcare for supporting well-being later in life.

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Appendix A: IRB Approval Letter

DOMINICAN
UNIVERSITY
of CALIFORNIA

Jan 17, 2023

Sophia Smith

50 Acacia Ave.
San Rafael, CA 94901

Dear Sophia,

On behalf of the Dominican University of California Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Participants, I am pleased to approve your proposal entitled *Fantasia on a Theme of Purpose: Using a Music-Guided Scribble Technique to Support Meaning-Making in Older Adult Retiree Musicians* (IRBPHP Initial IRB Application #[11096]).

In your final report or paper please indicate that your project was approved by the IRBPHP and indicate the identification number.

I wish you well in your very interesting research effort.

Sincerely,

Michaela George, Ph.D. Chair, IRBPHP

Cc: Victoria Dobbins