The Impossible Future

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Providing genuine opportunities for musical engagement is a constant challenge for music educators. Throughout their working lives, they may find 'authentic' moments of musical engagement ever harder to manifest. The potential obstacles are numerous: the size or configuration of physical space, the number of instruments available, the quality of sound reproduction equipment, available time, institutional focus, students' prior experiences, and many more. I think it is safe to say that such conditional restraints attend all activities of musical value. While they often frustrate music educators, restrictive conditions like these frame any act of musical doing. That is, the conditional constraints placed upon us as music educators make possible the work we do. Should we aspire only to achieve the possible? Or can we strive for *the impossible*?

Using Community Music as a touchstone, this article attempts to identify approaches and attitudes to the teaching and learning of creative music-making that offer to transcend certain of the practical conditions constraining it. By probing the tensions between the conditional and the unconditional I suggest a mentality capable of rising above some of the obstacles that confront music makers. I do this in two ways: Firstly, I examine the spatial and temporal domain of the workshop as 'event.' With its mechanism for action, namely facilitation, the workshop event provides for creative music-making through a condition I call 'safety *without* safety.' Secondly, and in order to propose a wider notion of what music education might be, I examine the workshop structure[1] as an act of hospitality within a community. This allows us to examine the 'welcome' music educators extend to potential participants. The combination of the micro, the teaching situation as workshop, and the macro, community as the broader attitude towards practice, allows us to envisage teaching and learning pragmatics within an imaginative sphere. The short 'case' illustrations that precede each section are intended to remind us what is at stake.

A poststructural perspective theoretically frames this article. As a response to structuralism, an academic fashion that flourished most widely from the 1950s to the 1970s, poststructuralism offers a critique of the human subject, an appeal to historicism, meaning and

philosophy.[2] Generally understood to have been ushered in by Jacques Derrida's (1978) paper 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences',[3] poststructuralism is associated with the work of Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Julia Kristeva, and Gilles Deleuze, and bridged by Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytical theories. The article draws from this line of thought and is influenced by the gesture of deconstruction, an activity that calls into question some of the basic ideas and beliefs that legitimize institutional forms of knowledge.[4] Deconstruction involves a passion for transgression. It is a call for heterogeneity, attempting to unsettle the comfortable assurances with which we surround ourselves. It is not a rejection of all that has gone before. Rather, it seeks to respect and in some ways conserve, while simultaneously demonstrating that present modes of thinking should not set absolute limits on the exercise of critical thought and practice.[5] From this perspective human subjects are fundamentally inscribed with language: people are (and have always been) cultural, historical, and social creatures.

Situating the subject in this way gives place of privilege to community. As social beings our interest is always the interest of some community or another. Although plurality and difference can be seen as political drivers, I try to avoid universalizing difference because it tends to impute a misleading solidity.

This essay therefore maintains that it is precisely where the question of 'community' remains open and unresolved that musical action becomes most urgent and vital. Why might this be important? Because understood as an open question, community allows music leaders to carve many and varied pathways towards and through meaningful musical activities. By exploring the workshop as event, with facilitation as its activating mechanism and community as an act of hospitality, I hope to stimulate thoughts about music educational practice that are not bound by conditional and conventional constraints. By undertaking processes of thought and action that are open to possibilities beyond the realm of 'the possible', action, criticism and theory in music education can embark on a truly transformative journey.

Because of the extent to which they embrace difference, the ideas in this paper resist closure: They tremble in undecidability, where their opposition is not so much 'decisiveness' as the determinate, the known, and the formalized. We must therefore deny our senses of restriction in order to enable the emergence of something different.

I hope that this essay challenges music educators and encourages a heightened sensitivity towards the expectations of those we teach. Music educators are passionate in their disciplinary

pursuits. Passion is synonymous to love, and love exceeds boundaries. It is this excessive yearning that I want to discuss through the idea of the 'impossible future'. As music educators, we should aim to design flexible music education programmes that embrace difference: programmes in which welcome precedes and frames student engagement. Such programmes generate rich, meaningful student experiences, fueling the desire for life-long musical learning to which all music educators aspire. Because my point of reference in what follows is the idea of Community Music—in a sense not necessarily familiar to institution-based music educators—I begin by briefly locating its enterprise.

Community Music

> *A group of young adult men enter the space. They are aware that today's session will encourage their voices to be heard through a collective act of songwriting. Potential lyrics are scribbled on large pieces of paper and melodies are created. Musical forms reflective of their compositional aspirations provide opportunity for self-expression.*

Although Community Music has many meanings and orientations,[6] this article proceeds from a perspective that locates the practice within the activities of community artists whose work has been inspired by the experimental music composers and educators of the late 1960s and early 1970s. As a critique of Western capitalism, the community arts movement was part of the counter-culture prevalent throughout Western industrialized nations at the time. Politically charged, it resisted the 'high' art domination of the privileged or ruling classes. Philosophically, then, the community arts movement is indebted to classical Marxist theory and its variants, such as Althusser, Adorno, Marcuse, Benjamin and Gramsci. Because of their deep concern over the relation between the liberal individual and society, members of the community arts movement are politically inclined to socialism in which the idea of community figures centrally.[7] As a trace of community arts, Community Music has followed ideological suit, seeking to redress perceived imbalances between musicians/non-musicians, product/process, individual/community, formal music education/informal music education and consumption/participation. Thus, guided by commitments to the concept of cultural democracy,[8] the community arts movement laid the groundwork for more specific arts practices, such as Community Dance, Community Theatre and Community Music.

During the latter half of the 1980s, Community Music became more formally organized,[9] eventually aligning itself with organizations like the International Society of Music Education

(ISME).[10] As a practice, Community Music should be understood as a group of practitioners actively committed to encouraging people's music making and doing. From my perspective, Community Music is a strategic intervention. Clearly, then, Community Music in the sense I use it here differs significantly from notions of 'music in the community' or 'communal music-making,' where these terms are intended to indicate a community being musical.

Historically, the most significant difference between Community Musicians and other music educators/teachers has been a function of the non-formality or informality of the conditions in which the former tend to work. Community musicians are most often found working outside a set curriculum whilst the music educator/teacher are most often constrained by a curriculum of some description. From this perspective, Community Music consists of music teaching-learning interactions and transactions that occur outside traditional music institutions like schools and university music departments. A broad and detailed investigation into the many ways of Community Music can be found in the first issue of the *International Journal of Community Music* (Elliott, & Higgins, 2007).

The Workshop

> *Using a microphone and a sampler, traditional sounds are recorded and manipulated. These acts of capturing what are familiar and transforming them into the unfamiliar excites the children and their carers. After listening to their 'new' sounds those that are chosen are layered together using music software creating an aural dreamscape that will stimulate movement and dance.*

As a practice, Community Music is characterized less by its techniques than in its attitude towards the task at hand. Equality of opportunity, social justice, and diversity are paramount to the community musician's plight. But what of the techniques that assure the fulfilment of these promises? Although, as I have indicated, Community Music has many orientations, its primary mode of practice is the 'workshop.' Most often associated with experimentation, creativity and group work,[11] it was during the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s that ideas surrounding the workshop began to be extensively utilized.

The workshop is a spatial-temporal domain devoted to active and collaborative music-making. As a contingent structure and open space, it is ideally suited to foster and harness human desires for musicking. The seemingly simple act of 'rearranging furniture' in one's work area helps illustrate this point. Altering the layout of the room or removing the objects from it can directly increase the contributions of participants. I like to think of the workshop as 'event,' as

explored by Jean-François Lyotard (1991). Conceived this way, as the point at which something happens, it becomes a location with the capacity to shatter prior ways of making sense of the world. Run effectively, the workshop-as-event is able to challenge routine and habit: that which is established. In the hands of capable music leaders, the workshop calls forth 'new modes of experience and different forms of judgement' (Malpas, 2003, p.102).[12]

I sometimes use sticks and chairs to create rhythmic pieces. Although this activity is useful in the development of rhythmic awareness and memory, its key aim is to alter students' conceptions of the classroom they think they know. The chairs they sit on become instruments. They beat them and move around them. For a brief moment there is a sense of anarchy, liberation and a feeling of danger.

As event, the workshop becomes a disruptive happening, one that challenges with the potential to transform. Although guidance is needed within workshop events it is imperative that the structure remain porous and unpredictable. It is this commitment to openness that extends a genuine 'welcome' to the potential music participant, a feature that should permeate music education programmes of all types. I am sure many of us can recount stories of students on whom we took a 'chance', students who went on to exceed both our expectations and their own. One of my experiences of this involves a young man who was struggling to find his identity. He had no prior music-making experience but through the welcome—mine, his, and the group's—he blossomed, becoming confident and self-assured. He now runs drum workshops in various locations.

As an ethical action, the welcome is an intrinsic component of the workshop event described here. As a preparatory thought and consequential gesture, the welcome is an invitation to potential music participants. Practical as well as philosophical tensions arise, however, as the conditional and the unconditional clash within the workshop event. In other words, a certain paralysis of function occurs as the music leader strives for unconditional openness. This provision for openness is not paternalistic but grounded in an imperative for dialogue and negotiation between participants and workshop leader.

Still, the music workshop itself is only possible within limited constraints, resources, time, skill, etc. The workshop leader's passion and yearning to welcome are resisted by an event/structure that requires boundaries for its very possibility. As a preparation for a new arrival (a potential music participant) the unconditional workshop has no barriers. Those that we do not expect, but on whom we wait, do not simply cross the threshold to enter a space: they challenge

the very experience of it. The conditional workshop, with set boundaries is the only possible solution.

We might therefore say that within a workshop-event, the music facilitator reaches towards *the impossible*, something whose outcome cannot be foreseen or foretold.[13] It is this implication of the impossible that generates opportunities for the creative music-making experience. The impossible frees invention. Creativity is after all a *vent*ure into the unknown. Musical doing of this sort is fundamentally unpredictable. As such, the creative experience is always to come, a future event, as yet unknown. However, this difference, this 'other'-ness to the known, does carry traces of a past. As creativity happens, as it becomes present and possible, it is constituted by networks of traces. A similar point is made by David Elliott (1995, pp.216-217) when he suggests that, 'without some relationship to other accomplishments – without the context or background of past achievements – new productions would merely be bizarre, not original.'

One might say, then, that the music facilitator should give privilege to 'dislocation' over 'gathering.' In this sense, the harmonious sense that often attends collective musical gatherings can be a very limiting thing, since it entails settling for music-making processes that reproduce what we know and feel comfortable with. These limits conspire against the pursuit of the impossible, an idea we will encounter again, shortly, in our discussion of Community.

For example, I have relatively little experience with Hip-Hop: It is not a world in which I have moved extensively or pretend to understand. When working with several Hip-Hop DJs in a larger improvisation session, my efforts to embrace their musical offerings exceeded my and some of the group's limits. The welcome extended to all participants, both those that understood hip-hop and those that did not, helped generate respect, openness, and appreciation for the musical differences within the group as a whole. We all resisted the impulse to limit through gathering, and chose to celebrate our differences by exploring unorthodox sound combinations and instrumentations. The resultant group composition was far more effective because of its dislocation and the differences introduced by all the participants. In situations like this, however, dislocation must be continuously renegotiated to avoid what Lyotard (1988) calls a *differend*, where the rules and values of one language are imposed on another. During the creation of this piece no musical discourse predominated. Rather, and in order to maintain equality, rigorous negotiation and continuous dialogue took place. This positive action of dislocation celebrates many types of music and many types of participatory discrepancies,[14] therefore resonating

strongly with the fundamental nature of Community Music practices. Although dislocation and difference are celebrated, such celebration occurs within the context of deliberate efforts to empower the marginalized. This requires that we identify ourselves as members of communities, no matter how marginalized or how many.

Thus, the workshop space becomes a contingent site, a deterritorialized environment designed to enable and enhance experimentation and exploration. Following Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1994), deterritorialized spaces produce change. Although such spaces are bounded, they are not tightly controlled locations with fixed parameters or rigid boundaries. In terms of the workshop situation being described here, this involves freeing up fixed and set relations—physical, mental, and spiritual—whilst seeking opportunities to discover new relationships. As event,[15] the workshop releases criss-crossing pathways that connect both disparate and similar happenings. There are no roots: only a rhizomatic[16] map, a system of networks with multiple entryways.

As we explore these ideas we can begin to understand the workshop as a conduit through which—properly conducted—openness, diversity, freedom and tolerance may flow. Music teaching practices that work within these types of workshop events/structures are actively involved in the pursuit of equality and access beyond any preconceived limited horizons. As an event a workshop conceived this way is a force of the impossible future, a disruption and dissension as well as a force of integration and consensus. I suggest that the spectre of impossibility should haunt every creative music workshop, its openness always to come and endlessly at the heart of every music-making event. Those leading workshops would do well to remember their responsibility to the participants through the mark of unconditionality.

To help illustrate some of the ideas presented so far, I have created an animated model. The text (below) that accompanies the model can be read alongside it by clicking on the arrow in the left hand corner. It is reproduced in the following two paragraphs as well, should you wish to read it before viewing the model. To watch the animated diagram (duration 60 seconds), click the link following the second paragraph below.

> I refer to this as a song-writing workshop, but it could be any music-making workshop: It is not bounded by fixed parameters. There is a 'nucleus' of subjects that make up the regular group interested and active in song writing. They are always moving sometimes more actively or directly engaged with the activity than at others. Some participants choose to leave the group (moving to the left) and thus become past participants. As they leave, the influence of these subjects continues to resonate within the group that remains. This is their trace. To the right of the diagram there are those participants to come. In this

illustration, one such potential participant is welcomed into the group. The participant in turn embraces the opportunity. We do not know if this new participant has any previous song-writing experience, but the group and its leader have created a contingent space that is open, accessible, and welcoming. It is their promise.

There are also two potential participants that decide not to join the workshop. Their 'presence' remains ghostly. However, the leader's anticipation of their participation remains, and the workshop-event is affected by their potential participation. These are potential songwriters to come: The possibility of their involvement has a tremendous impact on the actual workshop because of the facilitator's commitment to openness and affirmation of the unconditional. In this way, the unconditional affords the ethical moment.

http://www.lipa.ac.uk/impossiblefutures/fig1.htm.

Facilitation

> *Through imaginative instrumental play music slowly evolves. Because of past knowledge's, patterns, scales, and structures, the music-making is initially limited. Through guidance a kind of liberation takes place.*

The tension between the conditional and the unconditional workshop requires a mechanism to activate the transformative process. That mechanism is facilitation. Facilitation is a complex practice, growing throughout the second half of the twentieth century in areas such as business, education and development. Derived from the French *facile,* 'to make easy', and the Latin *facilis,* meaning 'easy to do', facilitation seeks to nurture open dialogue among different individuals with differing perspectives. Exploration of diverse assumptions and options are often among its aims. Christine Hogan (2002, p.57) usefully describes a facilitator as '[a] self-reflective, process-person who has a variety of human, process, technical skills, and knowledge, together with a variety of experiences to assist groups of people to journey together to reach their goals.'

From a historic perspective its evolution extends from educationists such as John Dewey,[17] Maria Montessori,[18] Alexander Sutherland Neill,[19] Kurt Hahn,[20] and Malcolm Knowles.[21] It also draws on Edgar Schein's[22] 'process consultancy', the radical developments within action research discourse from such practitioners as Jean McNiff and Jack Whitehead,[23] and the person-centred counselling pioneered by Carl Rodgers.[24] Robert Chambers[25] has also been influential developing participatory methodologies for use in the developing worlds. One should mention, too, the work of Paulo Freire[26] who attacked the 'banking' concept of education[27] whilst championing concepts of reflexive, life-long learning not governed by set

curricula. From this trajectory there are now many good writings that offer methodological approaches and strategies for facilitation. The writings of Frances and Roland Bee (1998), Jarlath Benson (1987), Allan Brown (1995), Tom Douglas (2000), Dorothy Whitaker (2000), and Christine Hogan (2003) all underline the importance of facilitation within creative group work.

As a process and a way of being, creativity involves the ability to develop original, inventive, and imaginative 'things.' Maxine Greene (2000, p.19) reminds us that '[t]o call for imaginative capacity is to work for the ability to look at things as if they could be otherwise.' Facilitation is therefore employed as a method of engaging participants in order to evoke an imaginative and inventive atmosphere. In cracking open the spatial-temporal workshop domain, the music facilitator encourages and nurtures rapport with fellow human beings. This requires that the workshop be a 'safe space': The music facilitator attempts to create an atmosphere that is mindful of the participants' range of abilities yet challenging enough to stimulate all concerned. For example, I am often called to run drumming workshops that include those that have never played and those that have considerable experience. In order to ensure meaningful engagement of all participants I must assure that the working space remains deterritorialized—so that the event can be built around tolerance and play. In many instances I have found 'game-playing' a useful devise to establish a sense of group. Although written for theatre practitioners, August Boal's (2002) *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* is a useful read if one thinks of adapting his idea to musical situations.

I suggest that workshop facilitators should aim for a state of mind that I have begun to phrase 'safety *without* safety.' In it, boundaries are marked to provide enough structural energy for the session to begin, but care is then taken to ensure that not too many restraints are employed that might delimit what Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1990) calls 'flow.'[28] Safety without safety permits the participants to engage in responsible practice, but also makes room for unexpected inventions.

Commitment to safety without safety reminds us of our responsibility towards students' meaningful musical expressions. It helps us understand that while we need limits (for these are what make workshops possible) we must also assure freedom. To facilitate creative music-making experiences we must help participants reach beyond or exceed both their preconceived boundaries and our own. This puts 'danger' at the heart of the music-making workshop (my example of drumming the chairs, for instance). Only, this danger is not an unwelcome possibility, a deliberate exposure to harm. Rather, it is the kind of danger that accompanies

efforts to transcend the mundane and the predicable, within the context of a duty to care. As a positive, flexible, and playful event, the workshop dedicated to safety without safety can give rise to a structural network of support. Like the rhizome to which I alluded earlier, the workshop event can be interrupted, cracked or fractured; but it will always re-describe itself in order to follow alternative lines of flight. Failure to embrace an attitude of safety without safety results in predicable, potentially dull workshops that meet neither participants' nor the facilitator's needs and intentions.

If we combine the ideas presented so far—the workshop event, and facilitation—we find both a structural imperative and a process of engagement for the music workshop leader. The two ideas are as follows: Firstly, the conscious generation of a hospitable environment conditioned by limits, but marked with the unconditional impossible future to come; Secondly, facilitation as a procedural strategy devoted to evoking creative music-making opportunities. This is the basis for a substantial approach to generating meaningful teaching-learning transactions and interactions. That is not enough, though. We need a broader context. Otherwise, the workshop-event may become a mere instructional method, separable from the people it is intended to serve. It is through the question of *community* that music education becomes a fertile site for creative participation.

Community

> *Each person in the class attaches a drum securely to his or her body. The group are all prepared to beat a rhythm as a response to the music leaders whistle. 1,2,3,4 – the energy and exhilaration of participatory music making is revealed through a cacophony of sound and smiles.*

To me, the strength of the term community lies in the welcome it extends others. Community means an open door policy, a greeting to strangers, extended in advance and without full knowledge of its consequences. A new arrival[29] does not simply cross a threshold to enter a community: s/he is always also a direct challenge to the community at hand. This challenge surprises and calls into question prior identity and pre-determined borders. One might suggest that once 'in', the stranger becomes part of a community that necessarily excludes those who have not availed themselves of this opportunity. In some respects this is true. But the point I wish to make is that the promise of the welcome constantly puts the 'inside' in doubt. The

unconditional welcome prevents the closure characteristic of a determinate community. In other words, the outside or the excluded effects and determines the inside, or included.

Conceived of in this way, the idea of community sits decidedly outside the normative notions of community that have attended movements ranging from Enlightenment to fascism and totalitarianism. This line of thinking follows trajectories from Georges Bataille (1988), Maurice Blanchot (1988), Jean Luc-Nancy (1991), and Jacques Derrida (1995). Contemporary anthropological interpretations of community emphasize 'difference' as a guiding idea in exploring tensions found between fixed social and political relations within communal frames, and the considerable pressures towards individuation and fragmentation (Amit & Rapport, 2002; Augé, 1995; Childs, 2003; Vila, 2005). Gerard Delanty (2003) has identified four dimensions that nicely summarize contemporary challenges: collective identities,[30] contextual fellowship,[31] liminal communities[32] and virtual communities.[33] Honi Fern Haber (1994) calls this reflexive *subject-in-community.*

Poststructural communities are not conceived as static or bounded. Rather, they are organic and plural. They are dancing constellations, forever shape-shifting. My second animated model attempts to show this. As with figure one, you may either read the verbal description that appears in the following paragraphs or read it alongside the animation. A link to the animation appears after the third paragraph below.

> Subject A is surrounded by a number of the communities in which she operates –family, the gym, university friends, work colleges and neighborhood. Each of these separate 'circles' move, albeit slowly, because there is constant maneuvering within these communities. As you view the animation you will notice that the subject's school friends move from the possible present to the past (from right to left). This illustrates the many communities from which we 'fall' during our lifetimes. Although communities we once frequented disappear from our lives, they continue to leave an indelible mark. As the school friend drifts from subject A's present world, s/he remains an influence: The trace continues.

> We can see, further, that her musical interests lead her to join a songwriting workshop. If you think of this as the same songwriting workshop illustrated in figure one, you get the sense that every subject represented in figure one is a subject-in-community. As such, each subject has many complex and multilayered communities within which s/he operates.

> Finally both the soccer team and the professional band are yet to come: They are in the realm of the impossible. Like many people, subject A has always had musical interests. She was pleased to discover that a local Community Music organization was hosting songwriting workshops. She hopes that this type of activity will give her skills and

networking opportunities that will increase her chances of joining a gigging band. For subject A, the Community Music workshop is a good option as it is held once a week and in the evening. This fits into subject A's working pattern and lifestyle. The professional band is therefore to come. It currently exceeds subject A's present possibility. One might say it is a dream. Nevertheless it has already impacted her life and a number of decisions within it.

http://www.lipa.ac.uk/impossiblefutures/fig2.htm

Poststructural communities are partial and limited in time. That is to say, they are forever changing: Their borders are never fixed, and self-identity is resisted. They have as an advantage the ability to transcend the circumstances of their original formation. One might say they have community *without* unity, where community is etymologically derived from *Communis*[34] as in 'with oneness or unity.' Cited above are examples of today's realties that illustrate this point. Having the capability to transcend what is known, although mindful of the trace, is also imperative to any creative music-making experience. I have already considered the notion of invention as the coming of something new. For example, to encourage the invention of music material that is genuinely connected to the participants who make it, the music facilitator must be always thinking in advance of the welcome participants might receive. This promise can only be realized within a community that resists self-identity: that is to say, a community without unity.

Put another way, we must open ourselves to the future we do not and cannot know, *the impossible* future. We can think of two types of futures: (1) the relatively foreseeable future such as next week's band practice, July's instrumental assessment, and the inevitable lack of resources during the next academic year; and (2) the unforeseeable future, that will surprise and shatter our comfortable horizons—an influx of young asylum seekers who need schools (music classes to attend); the death of the lead violinist's father just before a concert; a magic moment of musical learning that suggests a major overhaul in curricular content.

By embracing *the impossible* future, music facilitators become more fully able to provide the conditions necessary for participants' voices to be heard. To pursue this line of thinking within the notion of community-without-unity I will consider Derrida's exploration of the borders and limits of the term 'hospitality.' It is here that I find sentiments that resonate with my understanding of Community Music's quest for a socially conscious music-making experience.

Like the workshop structure discussed previously, hospitality needs to be situated within the conditional/unconditional paradox. These tensions occur in our daily lives. Consider for

example a party you may be hosting at your home. When you open the door to your guests you intend to make them welcome. You will probably provide food and drinks whilst trying to make them feel as comfortable as possible. This is conditional hospitality: You remain master of your own house, fetch the drinks from your refrigerator, and protect your wooden surfaces with tablecloths. Your hospitality probably won't extend to allowing your guests to select a CD from your music collection or borrow your television set for an extended period of time. Although your hosting involves extending a warm and open welcome to your guests, it has its clear limits. A longing to welcome your guests unconditionally marks the alternative. That is to host a great event that people will remember and talk about for some time to come.[35]

Since hospitality invites a transgressive crossing of a threshold, any welcome takes place in the shadow the impossible. When music facilitators welcome new participants they do so with questions: What is your name? What instrument do you play? Have you done this before? What are your expectations? Can you make it every week? There is also an expectation that the person being welcomed will actually get involved with the music activities on offer. Should we take that as a given? Although questions such as these may be obvious, they illustrate the conditional side of hospitality: interrogation of the new arrival. As my party example was intended to show, welcomes are not unconditional. It is the restrictive parameters—one might say hostilities— inherent within the act of hosting that make your welcome possible. Unconditionality is not staged in order to paralyze action but to enable it. If we can think beyond our comfortable horizons we may be more successful in providing opportunities for participants' voices to be heard.[36]

I have suggested that the tension inherent in acts of hospitality (How can I create an open, accessible music-making space without completely surrendering all my possessions?) is not negative, but a condition of its possibility. Because conditional hospitality is marked through with its absolute, the unconditional, there remains always a possibility of something beyond, the possible need to change. This transformation is to come but will remain within the impossible future. The expectation of surprise, inherent within *the impossible* futures, will affect the present reality in which we are working. If music facilitators continuously anticipate potential participants, then how they organise the delivery of their teaching will be directly affected.

I believe that genuine creative music-making experiences are movements towards rapport with 'the other', instances of encounters with the unexpected and the unpredictable. The creative

music-making journey invites an experience of the unforeseeable, a venture towards the unconditional. Although this absolute may never be fully attained, awareness and openness can.

Creative music-making, like the notion of hospitality, starts to happen when one pushes against extant conditions. Good practice really takes place when we experience the paralysis of *the impossible*. The welcome to the Hip-Hop DJs cited earlier resulted in a fantastic musical collaboration that far exceeded the group's expectations. This would not have been possible had we resisted the unfamiliar. This works both ways: it was equally necessary for the hip-hop artists to welcome the opportunity. In the end, all participants encountered another musical world, one that involved not only the creation of novel musical structures, but negotiation of meaningful musical relationships.

A deconstructive vision of hospitality allows us access to an alternative operation of the word 'community' in Community Music. Community Music practice becomes a form of hospitality, a democratic musical practice promoting equality and access beyond preconceived horizons. The resultant structure resists any interpretation of community that privileges 'gathering' over 'dislocation.'[37] Community without unity (in one sense, community without community) is a community *to come,* in the sense 'that it is always *coming,* endlessly, at the heart of every collectivity' (Nancy, 1991, p.71).

The signature 'community' is thus a force of disruption and dissension as well as a force of integration and consensus. As an open question, community without unity promotes access and equality of opportunity. In this formulation (like safety without safety discussed above) the 'without' does not just separate the particular from the general but reminds us of our responsibility to participants through unconditional hospitality. Responsibility, then, describes a relationship between music facilitator and participant, among participants, but ultimately, among human beings. This relationship might be called 'co-responsibility,' in the sense that group members are responsible for each other without their personal or individual responsibilities being reduced.[38] Although beyond the scope of this essay, these issues require further investigation as regards the ethical and moral dimensions of music education.[39]

Conceiving community through a Derridean interpretation of hospitality reflects more accurately the practice of the community musician. The 'community' in Community Music is a flickering entity, both essential and unessential: Community Music. On this view, the notion of community is always provisional: 'community-to-come' or 'community *without* unity.' Community Music practice requires a vision of community that resists tightly defined

boundaries. As an act of hospitality, Community Music's perimeters must remain porous, tentative, even weak. Weakness however demands strength—strength to overcome the obstacles to collective, creative musical experience.

The open question of community haunts (or it should) all musical-doing. The practice of music education must move in and between the impossible condition of dislocated unity. Where these concerns are ignored, music education spins tightly, on a narrow axis: safe, perhaps, within its own enclave, yet drifting further away from the changing realities of contemporary living. Music education that does not embrace an open vision of community risks its relevance to the human, social world.

Conclusions

Through consideration of the conditional and the unconditional within the workshop-event, and through consideration of community as an act of hospitality, this essay has explored a general approach to teaching and learning music that is open, creative, and accessible. It has advanced an understanding of practical action that is plural, always open to re-description, and well-suited to nurturing imaginative attitudes towards meaningful musical-doing. The organisation of the article has moved from micro (the workshop as teaching space) to macro (community as hospitality). Both notions were approached through a poststructural trajectory revolving around people, participation, places, equality of opportunity, and diversity in music teaching and learning.

Formulated as an event, the workshop was seen as a process with the potential to shatter prior ways of making sense of the world, thereby calling for new modes of experience and different forms of judgement. The workshop seeks to create a conditional environment grounded in hospitality. Hospitality's double bind, however, alerts us to the necessity of the unconditional. The unconditional is not impossible, but *the impossible*. The act of facilitation therefore operates within practical limits and restrictions, but with a view to the unconditional (im)possibilities within any given music teaching/learning situation. This act seeks to ensure openness while it pushes creatively against preconceived borders. The idea of safety *without* safety served at once to remind us of our human responsibilities as music educators, of the precariousness of the creative process, and of the extent to which our identities are involved.

If one's understanding of community remains open, as I have suggested it should, the music educator's welcome to students always lies ahead. It is to come, a future to be discovered.

This gesture is a direct challenge to those self-limiting modes of teaching that circumscribe the creative voice, marginalizing and disempowering would-be musical-doing. Nietzsche (1986) reminds us that an incapacity to imagine imprisons the free spirit. It is through my capacity to imagine that I have tried to challenge the constraints that so often impede our effectiveness as music educators.

This essay urges that we think beyond the limiting identities prescribed by the academy's habits, the school's gates, and current political necessities. Our vision should be fixed on a future to come, a future that activates a process of liberation—a Great Getting-Loose[40] that refuses unyielding boundaries and static domesticity. Liberation is a task we must learn to take seriously. We must get beyond our fears and deal with the ways our habits restrict our effectiveness. In this way, Community Music particularly, and music education more broadly, can begin to break down barriers to open and accessible music-making. As Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1988b) remind us, territory is authority, but the enemy of desire. What I have proposed instead is a pathway towards the impossible, a step beyond the known into creative possibilities not yet identified.

Notes

[1] Throughout this article I use the term structure. Although I am aware that some poststructural thinking understands that it is structure that represses difference, I am following Haber (1994) who advocates a politic of difference that operates within a re-thinking of structure.

[2] There are many commentaries that successfully outline the structuralist/poststructuralist debate. I have found the following useful: Belsey (2002), Sturrock (1979), Sarup (1993), and Harland (1988).

[3] This paper was first given at a lecture organized by John Hopkins University in 1966.

[4] As a term, deconstruction has been adapted and translated from the German *Destruktion*, or *Abbau*, terms Heidegger had used in his re-examination of metaphysics. As a notion deconstruction is closely related not to the word "destruction" but to the word "analysis", which etymologically means to 'to undo' – a synonym for 'to de-construct'. It is interesting to note that although Derrida's work is most frequently associated with the term deconstruction, it is a term with which he was never satisfied.

[5] In conversation Derrida (2001, p.43) noted; 'And I feel best when my sense of emancipation preserves the memory of what it emancipates from. I hope this mingling of respect and disrespect for academic heritage and tradition in general is legible in everything I do'.

[6] See Veblen (2004) and Veblen and Olsson (2002).

[7] As an industrial working class ideology socialism became the major challenge to liberalism. See (Kingdom, 1992)

[8] In its extreme cultural democracy condemned the cultural heritage of Europe as bourgeois whilst locally standing against the Arts Council's attempts at the 'democratization of culture'. Through its manifesto the Shelton Trust (1986, p.9) politicises the term stating that 'Cultural democracy offers an analysis of the cultural, political and economic systems that dominate in Britain. More importantly, it offers a tool for action'. Essentially cultural democracy was a doctrine of empowerment and as a touchstone is still an important idea for contemporary Community Music analysis.

[9] In 1989 UK community musicians held their first gathering. This led to the formation of the national organisation Sound Sense who continues to promote and advocate Community Music in the UK. See www.soundsense.org

[10] The 7th commission of the International Society of Music Education (ISME), Community Music Activity (CMA) held its first independent seminar in 1988. See McCarthy (2004).

[11] For example see Benson (1987), Brown (1995), Doel and Sawdon (1999), and Johnson and Johnson (2000).

[12] For further analysis of Lyotard's event see Geoffrey Bennington's *Lyotard: Writing the Event* (1988).

[13] For a concise exposition of this idea as a defining religious category see John Caputo's excellent *On Religion* (2001).

[14] Charles Kiel and Steven Feld (1994) explore the idea of the participatory discrepancy in *Music Grooves*. See also the special edition of *Ethnomusicology,* Winter, 1995 (1995) and follow Kiel and Feld's ongoing dialogue at http://musicgrooves.org/

[15] It is worth noting that I have been using Lyotard's understanding of event. Deleuze's conception of this notion is different and forms one of the many connectives to his overall thinking. For further reading see Deleuze (2004).

[16] From the Greek *rhiza*, meaning root, a 'rhizome' is an underground root-like stem bearing both roots and shoots. For an exposition of this idea see Deleuze and Guattari's Introduction: Rhizome in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1988a).

[17] John Dewey (1859-1952) advocated that teachers should create conditions for learning that guide rather than direct or impose. He emphasized cooperative power and valued individual experiences. See Dewey (1997).

[18] Maria Montessori (1870-1952) developed child-centered, experiential, multi-sensory learning and encouraged children to have self-discipline and responsibility for learning. See Montessori (1912).

[19] Alexander Sutherland Neill (1883-1973) advocated a libertarian approach to schooling and founded Summerhill in England in 1924. See http://www.summerhillschool.co.uk/pages/index.html

[20] Kurt Hahn (1902-87), a German-Jewish educator who founded the Outward Bound movement as an antithesis of the authoritarian schools in Germany during the inter-war period. See http://www.kurthahn.org/

[21] Malcolm Knowles worked extensively within adult learning and coined the term 'andragogy' (as opposed to 'pedagogy': child learner). According to Knowles this phrase best described the characteristics of the adult learner who flourish more successfully with a facilitative approach. See Smith (2002b).

[22] Edger Schein removed the idea of 'expert consultancy' within the doctor-patient model. See http://web.mit.edu/scheine/www/home.html

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[23] See McNiff and Whithead (2002).

[24] Carl Rodgers (1902-87) popularizes the term 'facilitator' in the 1970s and 80s. He proposed that education should maximize the freedom of the individual to learn by removing threats, boosting self-esteem, involving students in learning planning and decision making, and using self-evaluation techniques. See Smith (2002a) and Rogers (1951).

[25] Robert Chambers championed developmental methodologies approach called Participatory Rural Appraisal. PRA is defined as a family of approaches and methods to enable rural people to share, enhances, and analyzes their knowledge's of life and conditions, to plan and act. See Chambers (1983).

[26] Paulo Freire (1921-97) developed the influential idea of *conscientization* that is the ongoing process by which a learner moves towards critical consciousness. See Freire (2002).

[27] Freire (2002, p.72) says that in the banking concept of education, 'knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to be know nothing.'

[28] According to Csikszentmihalyi (1990), flow is the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it.

[29] In *Aporias,* Derrida (1993) make use of the word *arrivant* to describe both the neutrality of that which arrives, but also the singularity of who arrives. *Arrivant* is translated as arrival, newcomer, or arriving.

[30] You might think of those ten minutes or so dropping the children off or picking them up from school, or those hours spent with work colleagues in your office.

[31] Times of emergency can ignite a sense of contextual fellowship, the death of Princess Diane, 9/11 for instance. Also reflect on waiting for the train or plane, at times of delay or cancellation people begin to talk and bond together.

[32] Liminal in a sense of transitional, those 'in-between' spaces that have importance in people's live for example your morning coffee in Starbuck, the train journey to and from work, or the gym every Saturday morning. These moments have a consciousness of communality.

[33] Most often associated with technologically mediated communities such as chat rooms, one might even think off the 'ebay' community.

[34] *Com + munis.* Common + Defence.

[35] It is interesting to note that the term hospitality is etymologically derived from the Latin *hospes* which means both 'guest' and 'enemy' (think hostile).

[36] Kristeva's *Strangers to Ourselves* (1991) offers a further insight in the notion of hospitality, cosmopolitanism, strangers and foreigners. Pertinent here is her chapter that tracks some of these ideas through Kant, Rousseau, Herder and Freud.

[37] This is a direct reference to Derrida's (1994, p.27) account of Heidegger's thought surrounding gathering.

[38] See Lenk (2006).

[39] See Wayne Bowman's (2001) *Music as Ethical Encounter.*

[40] The notion of the Great Getting Loose in Nietzsche discussions on metaphysics is explored in John McCumber's (2000) *Philosophy and Freedom: Derrida, Rorty, Habermas, Foucault.*

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