

Gone with the Wind:
What composers learn from creating music for young musicians

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Abstract

Contemporary Canadian music is rarely performed and studied in school music programs (Bartel, Dolloff, & Shand, 1999; Shand & Bartel, 1998; Varahidis, 2012) and post-secondary institutions (Andrews & Carruthers, 2004; Carruthers, 2000). This is primarily because the music of modern professional composers is inaccessible to students (Andrews, 2004; Bowden, 2010). In other words, composers are trained in such a way that their pieces are only playable by professionals for specialized audiences (Hatrik, 2002; Colgrass, 2004; Terauds, 2011). This study examines what eight wind-composers learned from writing educational music for young musicians. Using a narrative framework, grounded in John Dewey's theory of learning as expressed by Clandinin and Connelly (2000), data was collected through interviews. These were then interpreted and analyzed with the aid of the composers' biographies and questionnaires. Four story categories emerged from the data regarding how to write pedagogically valid educational music: 1) The composer must desire to compose technically appropriate, challenging and enjoyable music for young musicians; 2) The composer must collaborate and have direct contact with students; 3) The composer must have a working knowledge of the instruments; and 4) The composer and teachers can use the Music Complexity Chart (MC²) as numerous benefits are associated with it.

Acknowledgements

When I began this musical journey, I was uncertain as to where it would take me. I soon realized how educational the road was, literally, and am now wishing to pursue doctoral studies in music education. I would like to first thank God for granting me the patience and wisdom required for such a journey. Moreover, I am entirely grateful to my husband for all the editing and time spent listening to my comments regarding this work. I would also like to thank my parents and siblings; I am grateful for the many ways in which you filled our home with so many musical memories. To Professors Angus McMurty and Ruth Kane, thank you for thoughtful and stimulating remarks during the early stages of my thesis. Lastly, thank you Professor Bernie Andrews, my supervisor, who helped me rekindle my passion for music and composition. You also guided my vigorous walk through my thesis until the final edits were accomplished and the defence was undertaken.

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Prologue: My Story Composing

I wait in the snow, in the dark ... the thoughts of life, thoughts of departure, yes departure from the meandering life I have been treading ... words come first ... the tinkering of piano keys for the intro yes the intro; I can hear the bass and then the drums ... what goes best with my longing, my words? Yes piano – the loneliness of piano and the distant tune of the tin whistle in the background.

This stream-of-consciousness is one of many that depicts the beginnings of my compositional thoughts. I do not consider myself a professional composer by any means; however, I would consider myself one who loves to create, imagine and communicate on a small musical scale; an amateur musician or composer you might call it. When I put on my composer hat I often find myself alone, isolated, and in a dream-like state, not unlike so many other composers as you will soon discover in this thesis.

As an amateur I not only begin my compositional pieces unaccompanied but often when in a state of disarray. In the said stream-of-consciousness I convey my mind's wanderings of words, phrases and particular instruments that often jive beautifully with the words I string together. My experience composing music often begins with words which derive from my feelings at that time; I often begin with the chorus tune which I sing in my mind; I sometimes hear it in the form of a hum or piano keys and once that has been established I begin to compose the refrain and bridge. Because I often begin the compositional process away from paper, pencil and even technology, in order to retain innovative tunes and accompanying words I continuously sing the chords until I am able to record them. Unfortunately, since I am an amateur in musical notation, when I am ready to write my tune I do so using visuals and squiggly lines (see Appendix I). In the past I also recorded my beginnings on a digital recorder, but now I use the software program GarageBand.

I began my compositional process with one audience member in mind – me. However, I quickly realized the extent to which amateur musicians desired to hear and play my compositions. I also quickly learned that once a particularly larger audience was in mind the compositional process

becomes more complex. This complexity is alluded to by other composers which you will soon encounter in this thesis. For now, let me serenade you with my tale composing music for amateur musicians and what I learned.

One dreary greyish afternoon, as I was cleaning my husband's office upstairs in our cozy town home, I came across a poem he had written entitled Luke 24. I could not help but read it, noting the rhymes and rhythm. One stanza was so triumphant that confident soldiers marching onwards came to mind; and so began another composition. However, rather than beginning with lyrics, I began with an audience. Since this poem was biblical in nature and numerous church-goers were urging me to write music, I thought it an invigorating challenge to compose a church hymn. Once again the first tune, in this case a militant one, became the chorus as it conveyed the theme of the entire poem. After establishing the chorus, I began playing with other notes and rhythms that were similar to it. In order for these notes to fit with my chorus, I altered some diction and poetic syntax my husband had written; of course, before so doing, I did what every dutiful spouse would do: I approached him. He loved the idea; he actually appreciated it to the extent of brainstorming with me ways of reshaping the poetic stanzas. I learned that even the stanzas had to be simplified. Once the soprano was established, then came the help of a piano in order to set up harmonious sections. Because I was lacking in musical notation knowledge I sought help from a friend who then introduced me to a website that helps a composer formalize the notation of a composition. This proved very helpful.

Since I was composing a musical piece which would be sung and even played by congregations, it was necessary to write for a very diverse group; many of whom would be amateur musicians themselves. Because of this multifaceted dynamic I realized the significance of keeping the rhythms and tunes simple. This, coupled with a pace that was neither drudging nor frenetic as well as a range that was functional, produced a piece that was well received by the Riverview Park Church of Christ. I must admit that the congregation, comprised of various ages and cultures, has been singing the soprano beautifully; it may take time, however, for everyone to learn their harmonious parts; but what can you expect? Most of us are just amateurs.

Chapter One: Introduction

As a child I recall anxiously waiting to attend choir and music classes at elementary school. To see the lyrics written on the chalk board or displayed on the overhead projector meant we had to rehearse for an upcoming performance. I even recall frantically cleaning my recorder and eagerly expecting to set a beat on the school drums. My music teacher always had an educational piece in mind, even writing some himself. Although I never conversed with him in detail about his compositions I am certain he learned a plethora about composing for young musicians. I recall him providing the class with differing instruments and asking us to individually develop a beat. We were then divided into smaller groups and had to ascertain ways in which we could create a relatively harmonious tune. However, much of that faded as I prepared myself for high school. Upon entering grade nine, music classes had dissipated, not because of my overrun workload, but because such programs no longer existed – at least in that high school. It seemed that educational music or composing educational music was but a whisper. Today, as an English secondary educator, I have had opportunities working in a variety of schools and have noticed the decline in school music programs (Abril & Banneman, 2015; Fitzpatrick, 2013) and a de-emphasis of educational music. Even with the remaining music programs and bands I often wonder, what are music teachers teaching? Are they encouraging students to learn a variety of musical compositions, both historical and modern? Are they inspiring them to perform that which is central to their identity as well as culturally significant?

Contemporary Canadian music is uncommonly performed and studied in school music programs (Bartel, Dolloff, & Shand, 1999; Shand & Bartel, 1998; Varahidis, 2012) and post-secondary institutions (Andrews & Carruthers, 2004; Carruthers, 2000). This is primarily because the music of modern professional composers is inaccessible to students (Andrews, 2004; Bowden, 2010). In other words, composers are trained in such a way their pieces are only playable by professionals for specialized audiences (Hatrik, 2002; Colgrass, 2004; Terauds, 2011). In order to address this problem, a research team, the Canadian Music Centre, and the Ottawa Catholic School Board partnered in a SSHRC-funded project entitled *New Sounds of Learning: Composing Music for Young Musicians*. This project explores how sixteen professional composers are able to create eight new string and eight new wind works for young musicians.

In order to ascertain how composers compose, the *New Sounds of Learning Project* addresses

the four dimensions of music creativity: *place*, *process*, *product*, and *person* (Woodman & Schoenfeldt, 1989; Amabile & Tighe, 1993). To date, *place*, *process* and *product* have been examined in the New Sounds of Learning Project through the use of questionnaires (Andrews, 2013; Andrews & Giesbrecht, 2013), reflective journals (Andrews & Giesbrecht, 2014; Andrews & Giesbrecht, 2016), and compositional analyses (Giesbrecht & Andrews, 2016; Sajo, 2016). *Person* has been examined to date with those composers writing new string works in partnership with the Canadian Music Centre (Duncan & Andrews, 2015). Seven of the eight participating string-composers were interviewed at the completion of the project. All participants said they had to learn how to compose educational music ““on the fly”” (Duncan & Andrews, 2015, p. 28). Moreover, they realized that the process of writing educational music was interesting and difficult as they wrote works that seemed to challenge the students while maintaining their interest. Cumulatively, the participants learned there are specific conditions necessary to successfully write educational music: 1) have direct contact with the students; 2) acquire a working knowledge of the instrument(s); 3) desire to compose good quality and pedagogically valid music; and 4) obtain knowledge of the students’ capabilities (Duncan & Andrews, 2015).

In order to present another perspective on these findings, this thesis examines eight interviews with wind-composers. These eight composers were commissioned by the Ottawa Catholic School Board to write new wind works for students (Andrews, 2012; Duncan & Andrews, 2015); this is where our journey begins. The thesis undertakes an analysis of the *person* dimension with the eight wind-composer interviews, conducted in two different two-year periods: four interviews were administered in 2008-2009 while the remaining four occurred in 2010-2011. The purpose of this study is to discover what wind-composers personally learn from writing music for young musicians within the Ottawa Catholic School Board. Since I ascertain the composers’ personal learning, narrative inquiry is used to analyze the data. This approach not only helps uncover the composers’ experiences but reveals the challenges associated with writing educational music. Canadian contemporary music is inaccessible to students as composers are not trained to write for young musicians (Colgrass, 2004; Bowden, 2010; Terauds, 2011). Furthermore, the dominant music publishers are in the United States and Europe, and for school-based programs, they promote American repertoire and Western-European transcriptions, respectively (Andrews, 2011). This is problematic because young Canadian musicians are not learning and studying Canadian repertoire. Consequently, this study is relevant and of potential interest to

music teachers, composers, post-secondary music educators, and the few remaining Canadian music publishers.

Orientation to the Study

This study is presented in six chapters, beginning with my experiences in educational music. I have already outlined the significant problems associated with educational music in Canada and the study's purpose. While contemplating the study's purpose and guiding question, I began reviewing literature on music creativity and the ways composers write music for professional and young musicians. I quickly realized that literature depicting what composers learn while writing for young musicians was scarce. This is depicted in "Chapter Two: Existing and Current Research". A description of my methodology follows, in "Chapter Three: Methodology". Because I am trying to ascertain the wind-composers' experiences writing for young musicians, I draw upon Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) narrative inquiry in which I address Dewey's (1997) and Piaget's (1954) theories of learning and experience. Thereafter, I delve into my first encounters with the selected composers.

"Chapter Four: Composers' Stories" depicts the composers' narratives as told through interviews. Since I reveal these stories from a narrative inquiry standpoint, I make personal references and observations throughout. Following these narratives is "Chapter Five: Reflections" in which I relate the findings to literature. In the process I continue following the narrative approach by expressing my observations, analyses and interpretations. Lastly, in "Chapter Six: Limitations, Recommendations, Implications and Conclusions", I end the thesis by depicting limitations pertaining to the data collection tool and the narrative inquiry approach. Moreover, I ask questions regarding the findings and whether certain limitations drastically effected the results. I also wonder if American composers would note similar or the same elements concerning what they learn when composing for young musicians.

Chapter Two: Existing and Current Research

I have always been a songwriter at heart, even contemplating at a very young age, perhaps I could be a singer like Anne Murray or Céline Dion — I know this dates me. When I became a little older and, hopefully, wiser, I realized that my singing days were growing short and would soon fade to a hobby. Although I continued with songwriting throughout my high school and university studies, and even into my teaching career, I never thought – in my wildest dreams – to revisit music at the graduate level. When I was introduced to the topic of educational music, I wondered, okay, I understand this; it pertains to songs or music in an educational setting, right? It is what we did as children in a Kindergarten classroom with that teacher who brought a guitar, correct? However, I soon realized educational music to be so much more. Therefore, before I address that which composers have voiced about writing music and have gleaned in the past about composing music for professional and beginner musicians, I will first define educational music.

Educational music is repertoire composed for young musicians that supports their musical development (i.e., discipline-based learning). It also promotes learning across the school curriculum (i.e., arts integration). This learning can occur in any discipline: social sciences, mathematics or arts. In the arts, children can try memorizing vocabulary terms through a song, become phonemically aware through music (Bollinger, 2013), or learn notes and harmony through improvised or sheet music. Consequently, students enrolled in school music programs learn the basics of music, including chords, notation, sight-reading, music variations, but more significantly, how to play simplified transcriptions of Western-European music. As stated previously, contemporary composers through their training in post-secondary institutions (i.e., conservatory, college and university programs) learn to create music that is highly advanced, complex and, unfortunately, inaccessible to beginner musicians (Hatrik, 2002; Ross, 1998). There is, however, some educational music that is “easily playable by school ensembles with minimal effort and rehearsal time” (Andrews, 2009, p. 6). Much of it represents easy arrangements of American film music and television shows. According to Gershman (2007) and Camphouse (2004, 2007), much of this music’s quality is poor because it is formulaic and generic. Even though music for young musicians is designed to promote musical development, it is evident that not all music deemed “educational” actually fosters learning.

What Composers Say

Professional composers of various ages, backgrounds and contexts, have all expressed the importance of music to society. They claim that music is a universal language, enriches the soul, expresses emotions, and enhances the quality of life (Przybysz, 2013; Joeldouek, 2013; Alperson, 1987). Their melodic tunes, eclectic rhythms and mysterious tonalities that stir emotion only exist because someone has created them – a music composer. However, what exactly do composers reveal about composing? What is the compositional process? What do composers compose? These questions pertaining to music creativity, how composition can be learned as well as how and what composers write, must be addressed as they provide insight into what composers learn when writing for young musicians; it will become evident in “Chapter Four: Composers’ Stories” that composers have had to utilize their creativity skills as well as instrumental and compositional knowledge in order to write pedagogically valid educational music. Moreover, they have had to alter their way of thinking and thus their compositional process when writing for amateurs. Therefore, the following section discusses what composers reveal about music creation. Their depictions of music creativity are first outlined, and then this section is followed by a discussion of compositional talents and learnings. Then, the following question is addressed: What is composing and its process? Finally, examples of what particular composers have composed will be reviewed.

Music and Creativity

According to Wallas (1926), creativity occurs in four steps: productive mood, incubation, illumination, and verification. In the late 1940’s Graf (1947) related these stages to music composition – productive mood (preparation), musical conception (incubation), sketching (illumination), and composition (verification). Thirty years later, Bennett (1976) expanded upon these four categories; rather than having four, he created six: discovering a germinal notion; sketching it; writing a first draft; detailing and refining it; producing a final draft; finally, revising the draft. According to Hung (1998), composers may not always follow these steps in sequence for their creative endeavours drive them to new insights and pathways. Sloboda (1985) proposed a two-stage approach involving inspirational and execution stages; and Christiansen (1993) proposed a three-stage model consisting of exploration, organization, and polishing. Freed-Garrod (1999) proposed a four-stage approach involving

exploring, selecting, performance/sharing, and evaluation/assessment. Similarly, Roozendaal (1993) proposed four but different stages: planning, the development of large-scale concepts, noting coherence between parts, and working on musical units.

Rather than having a series of compositional stages, Katz and Gardner (2012) propose two dimensions: “within domain” and “beyond domain”. A composer engages in the former when he or she focuses on note values, as well as compositional dynamics and phrasing. “Beyond domain” is executed when a composer considers the overall conceptual framework of the piece by filling in the form with compositional details. When employing these two aspects of composition, a composer engages directly in musical creativity. Don Freund (2011) comments, “[o]nly music composition presents a medium for creative expression that is at the same time so simple and yet rich and mysterious” (p. 68).

Learning Composition

Contemporary composer Jon Brantingham (2015) states, “composing music is both a skill that can be learned and a talent that can be cultivated.” Chris Ozley also says composing requires talent. He claims his high school band director “saw that I had a talent for arranging and composing” (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014b, p. 16). Like Brantingham (2015), Kabalevsky (1988) and Freund (2011) claim that music composition can be learned. The former says that for a composer to compose well, he or she must study. “Chapter Four: Composers’ Stories” reveals the extent to which studying plays a role when writing for young musicians. There is also learning through discovery, “composition cannot be taught, but it certainly can be learned, and it is learned by discovery” (Freund, 2011, p. 67). This discovery occurs upon realization of two musical elements: musical notions can be experienced in various ways and innovative ideas derive from a reconfiguration of learned materials (Freund, 2011). As you will discover in “Chapter Four: Composers’ Stories” composers have learned to shift their way of thinking in order to be innovative when composing for young musicians.

Bob Buckley and Chris Ozley allude to the fact that compositional techniques can be learned; the former claims he learned by studying scores and associating notes with what he heard (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014a). Ozley, however, says he learned techniques from his father: “I would come up with simple melodies and harmonies, and my father would dictate them onto manuscript. Then, he made suggestions about how I could improve upon them while also teaching me what I was actually doing” (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014b, p. 16).

Composer Aaron Perrine also believes one can learn music composition, especially if someone helps motivate the amateur. He describes himself as learning a plethora about composing since his director “was willing to encourage and foster [his] compositional interests” (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014a, p. 22).

Rather than learning compositional techniques through his father, Gary P. Gilroy studied the works of his colleagues, attaining knowledge about score, as well as gathering notions and concepts. He believes that music is collaborative. Kabalevsky (1988) furthers this collaborative notion, claiming that the musicians who will be playing the work must aid the composer. This idea is later detailed in “Chapter Four: Composers’ Stories” in this thesis. According to Joseph Willcox Jenkins, not only is it important to learn musical techniques, it is also important to guard one’s musical freedom of expression, “[n]ever tolerate such specifics as ‘don’t use dischords,’ ‘don’t modulate too much,’ or ‘don’t be too modern’” (cited in Camphouse, 2007, p. 122). If a composer learns to have creative freedom, then he or she can be successful (Camphouse, 2007).

Martin Mailman is indecisive as to whether composing is an innate talent or can be learned. He says everyone can be creative; however, certain variables – how much creative thinking they embody and how committed or disciplined they are to composing – affect the outcome. In other words, depending on a novice’s creative thinking and their drive to learn music, composing may be a talent, learned or both (Lenzini, 1999).

What is Composing and its Process?

Percussion director and composer Vince Oliver says composition can be known as a craft or an art form (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014b). Andrew Boysen also refers to craft in relation to composition: “There is a small amount of talent (inspiration) and a great amount of craft (perspiration) involved when I write music” (cited in Camphouse, 2007, p 4). He continues saying that his initial inspiration for a piece can be a melodic line, pitches, a chord, or a rhythmic notion. Brantingham (2015), a self-taught composer, believes composing is an art. This creative or artistic aspect is also expressed by Mazzola, Park, and Thalmann (2011) as they claim, “[m]usic is an ever-evolving field of artistic and scientific expression, and that such extensions can be achieved by following a general process of creative exploration” (p. 3). Michael Colgrass (2004), a Canadian Pulitzer prize-winning composer, also supports this position and alludes to composing as a creative process. According to Brantingham

(2015) this process should begin with the basics of compositional training and then slowly move to the creative aspects of composing music. Concerning the basics, one should initially engage in specific directed exercises that incrementally advance one's understanding of music's technical side; for example, augmentation, diminution, and inversion of the melody.

Similar to Brantingham (2015), Freund (2011) addresses a process of creative exploration; however, his delineation is more detailed. He describes the compositional process in which beginners should partake. For example, he claims there are three stages of music composition; first, one must define the materials and limits. In other words, one must ascertain the materials – such as a hand-clapper, a particular instrument, etc. – to be used and how it will be used. For example, a music instructor can ask students to, “compose and perform on your instrument a one-minute piece that uses only two pitch-classes ... only G's and A-flats ... in any octave” (p. 72). Second, one must explore musical possibilities by testing assorted arrays of the available materials so as to ascertain their meanings and sounds. It is in this step one begins to “develop some notions about why it sounds the way it does and how we can use it in our piece” (p. 72). Following this, one should ask oneself, is there anything more I can attempt to play within the given limits? One can always experiment with different rhythms and the notion of improvisation. Last, one must decide what notes and rhythms will constitute the final musical piece while being mindful of the performers and listeners involved. The composer must then communicate the resulting music through notation – conventional, graphic, or another form.

Andrew Boysen also details his creative process and the importance of defining limits: “[if] I, as a composer, have the whole universe of musical options to me, it becomes virtually impossible to make any decision” (cited in Camphouse, 2007, p 14). He continues his discussion of Freund's (2011) first stage of composition, but includes the notion of creativity. Regarding composing, “it is a matter of closing doors and limiting choices, then examining what is left and open to you and attempting to be as creative as you can with the limitations you have set for yourself” (cited in Camphouse, 2007, p 14). With beginner musicians, Boysen does not necessarily teach a linear compositional path, but rather guides the students in writing whatever comes to mind at a particular moment. He does not force anything on the students in terms of media, forms or pitch.

Martin Mailman, composer and recipient of the Edward Benjamin Award in 1955, states that “composers often change their style of writing significantly over the years” (cited in Lenzini, 1999, p. 41). It is also notable that numerous influences, internal or external, can alter the writing process. For

example, growth and flexibility of instrumentation can influence a composer's composition.

Although altering one's style can be part of the compositional process, Chris Ozley emphasizes the simplistic and logical progression from notions to improvisation,¹ then to intuition and materialization:

I normally begin composing a new work at the piano by finding simple ideas that interest me. I improvise short motives ... I begin writing the work ... I tend to write intuitively ... I always conceive one sound leading to the next, and trust my intuition to help navigate through the process ... the forms of my work [then] tend to materialize based on the ideas I have chosen and their implications (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014b, p. 17).

It is evident that improvisation may be significant when composing; however, Vince Oliver claims it is not enough to just improvise. He has realized that if one merely improvises through the writing process the outcome will be inconsistent, unrefined and incomprehensible (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014b).

Unlike Ozley, Gary P. Gilroy begins the compositional process by sketching ideas in a notebook. Edward Gregson also sketches his ideas; however, his notions often evolve slowly (Camphouse, 2007). During this long gestation period, Gregson attempts to map out the structure and form of a piece. This is then followed by the writing of a short score. According to Francois Rabbath, 2006 Recipient of the ASTS Isaac Stern Award, creative compositional ideas can evolve from a memory, thought or the audience a composer has in mind. Sometimes it is even beneficial for a composer to add small variations to an existing work (Fanelli, 2009).

Sometimes, once an idea is sketched, a composer sits at his or her piano, which is exactly what Gilroy and Ozley do. After Gilroy has composed a piece, he reviews it, integrating "interesting colors and challenges from the incredible palette of percussion timbres and effects" (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014b, p. 17).

Kari Zamora's process differs from Gilroy's and Ozley's. Rather than sketching in a notebook, she begins by singing her melodic material. Following this, she uses both the violin and piano to arrange and write variations (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014a). Mark Camphouse (2002) does not begin his compositional process through song, but through a freshly tuned piano and some pencils. Similar to Zamora, he does not use machines or technology during his creative process, "[all] aspects of my

¹ According to Freund (2011), "During the exploratory phase, composers spend much of the time with one foot in the improvisation world and the other in composition" (p. 72).

creative work (composing and orchestration) are done the old-fashioned way...I have a lingering reputation [of] being a technical dinosaur” (p. 82). It seems that many composers begin the compositional process with sketching their notions in some way or another. Composer W. Francis McBeth believes that this is the most important step in composing as “a composer must have a general sketch of the entire piece before proceeding” to the next steps (cited in Camphouse, 2002, p. 278).

For some composers, the process does not end here. Some revise their own work years later, while others solely create innovative works, never returning to their older musical pieces. Francois Rabbath enjoys reviewing and revising older works; he even enjoys adding variations to existing works. However, Martin Mailman claims, “I don’t revise or even think about revising pieces ... I look at each piece as a new opportunity and a new challenge, but I never look back after finishing a piece. Pieces are like children: when they’re young, they need to be cared for; as they get older, they can fend for themselves” (cited in Lenzini, 1999, p. 41). Even though Mailman would never revise an older work, he claims that reflection upon older and newer pieces may be necessary if one wishes to help revitalize one’s spirits.

Although the compositional process seems lengthy and potentially exhausting, composer Don Freund (2011) reminds us of its positive outcomes, “music composition is one of the most thrilling and demanding activities I can imagine. Creating challenging, enthralling new musical experiences for the world is a gift” (p. 79).

What Composers Compose

Martin Mailman believes composers should write new literature while being mindful of the past, which is what other composers have learned. Moreover, it is important for composers to persevere, or “keep going.” “A good friend of mine, Ron Nelson, wrote some successful pieces early in his career. It would have been a tragedy if he stopped there because he would not have written *Passacaglia*, which is such a potent piece of music” (cited in Lenzini, 1999, p. 42). Karel Husa not only considers that one should be mindful of the past, but “believes composers should bring something personal, unusual, original, and in some respects different from existing works” (cited in Camphouse, 2002, p. 210).

When composers write new material they must learn to integrate audience-appropriate vocabulary, themes and messages. According to Mailman, composing is more than the vocabulary

chosen for the piece; it is a “reflection of the human spirit” (cited in Lenzini, 1999, p. 42), and it reveals a particular message. Chris Ozley believes that this message is an important communicative aspect of the composition, “music must communicate something ... [it must] elicit a meaningful response from an audience” (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014a, p. 16). Music composer and university composition professor Don Freund (2011) concurs, “a composition can be valued only in terms of how well its ideas engage the listener in music’s own non-referential world” (p. 68).

Compositions that have communicated powerful messages include Gary P. Gilroy’s *Three Stars of Tennessee*, a three movement, grade 4² work for concert band, wherein three distinct cultural regions of Tennessee are illustrated. The young musicians who first performed the work communicated the piece to such an extent the audience provided three standing ovations during the program (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014b). Randall Standridge’s composition *Ruckus* is also very powerful as it communicates the boisterous personality of Central Cass High School’s principal, Steve Lorentzen (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014b). Timothy Mahr’s *Prayers in a New Land* powerfully communicates the broader issue of California’s Asian immigration; there are “a variety of musical pleas, perhaps in observational tone, that are born of the immigrant experience, and which ask for salvation” (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014a, p. 24).

Not only must one write a composition with powerful messages, but write that which intrigues the musicians. Quincy Hilliard has learned to write interesting parts for each player, especially when composing more challenging pieces (Camphouse, 2007). In order to maintain the musicians’ interests, a composer can “create new sound colors or combinations to make each piece special” (cited in Camphouse, 2007, p. 99).

It is therefore evident that composers engage in musical creativity. This creative exploration can be linear but is often very cyclical, non-linear and non-sequential, which is detailed in “Chapter Four: Composers’ Stories” as eight wind-composers describe the compositional process associated with writing for young musicians. According to numerous composers, composing is a talent; however, music technicalities can also be learned and developed. If one perseveres to learn how to create music one could compose a variety of musical pieces expressing themes and significant messages, such as those mentioned in the latter paragraphs.

² Concert band music is graded by level of difficulty: Easy (grades 1 and 2); Medium (grades 3 and 4); and Advanced (grades 5 and 6). For a detailed analysis of these levels, refer to Andrews (2011).

What Composers Have Learned: Composing for Professionals

Maxim Gorki was right when he said that the way to write for children was as for adults, only better. In my opinion, however, it should be added that in order to write well for children one also needs to be *able* to write for adults (Kabalevsky, 1988, p. 148).

Although I have never written for professional musicians, specifically, I have written for adult and children amateurs. As a result, I concur with Soviet composer Dmitri Kabalevsky. Unlike me, he has written a large number of compositions for professional and young musicians (Forrest, 1996). The writing process for professionals and amateurs differs, as talents as well as comprehension and maturity levels are different. Kabalevsky (1988), however, points out in the above quotation that in order to write well for young musicians, one must be able to write for adults. However, what are the specifics associated with writing for adult professionals and young musicians? What have composers learned when writing for professionals and amateurs?

When composing for professionals a plethora of wisdom has been gained. First, write complex works, not reductive ones (Fanelli, 2009); second, be meticulous and develop good work habits (Glass, 1988; Cable, 2013); third, compose quickly (Cable, 2013); and last, adhere to demanding requests, but also enjoy the compositional process as the majority of, if not all, professional composers were taught how to write for professional musicians (Colgrass, 2004; Cable, 2013; *The Instrumentalist*, 2014a). Before delving into these insights, a discussion of contemporary music is in order (Glass, 1988; Fanelli, 2009; Cable, 2013).

Contemporary composers are writing complex works because they are adopting technology and other world-music techniques. Numerous composers are using multimedia computers and engaging in electro-acoustics, as well as digital and analog synthesis. Atonality, serialism, as well as intricate nuances of alternate modalities and tuning systems, are features of contemporary music compositions for professionals (Andrews, 2004).

Francois Rabbath, 2006 Recipient of the ASTS Isaac Stern Award, is just one of many composers who have written pedagogically difficult compositions for professional musicians. He has solely written challenging pieces – such as Etude 19 *Homage to Paganini* – in his method books, as exercises, scales and etudes, in his view, are meaningless. Indeed, Rabbath has ascertained that if he

writes simplistic pieces, his readers “would play it and throw it away” (Fanelli, 2009, p. 33).

American composer Philip Glass has won a Golden Globe and BAFTA award. He learned that when writing for professionals, he had to develop good work habits,

I forced myself to write music during a set period every morning, and I also forced myself to stop at one in the afternoon. I refused to take down musical ideas at other hours, even when they came to me. You might say I trained the Muse to come calling at my hours, not hers. And it worked. For years now, I have gotten my ideas in the mornings and never in the afternoons (Glass, 1988, p. xv).

Because he has conditioned himself to create music in the mornings, he has been able devote afternoons to “music business” – working in recording studios, auditioning performers, and being interviewed. Moreover, he learned the importance of collaboration with musicians, composers and theatre directors. He ascertained that distress and negativity – which is usually felt upon reading an abusive review – often dissipates when working with people. As a result, he has collaborated with visual artists, people in galleries and museums who would sponsor concerts. He even found himself designing concert posters with these visual artists. He then extended this collaboration to theatre choreographers and artists: “I have also collaborated from time to time with Serra on art/music pieces, most recently an installation at the Ohio State University art gallery in Columbus in February 1987” (Glass, 1988, p. 23).

Although Glass (1988) has worked with hundreds of artists and musicians, he has realized not everyone will enjoy his works: “I ... discovered that these earlier pieces – the music for Beckett’s *Play* and a few chamber works – aroused an intense resistance on the part of the musicians around me” (p. 18). He learned that his reductive, repetitive style would not be admired by all. Even though this was the case, Glass (1988) refrained from altering his new compositional pieces to suit his musicians; as a result, he played them himself. “One of the first things I realized was that if my new music was to be played, I would have to play it myself” (p. 19).

Howard Cable, a leading figure in Canada’s musical life, says that with “first class” professionals, one can work quickly (Cable, 2013). They can sight read expeditiously and, due to experience, they often withstand demanding schedules or time-frames. When composing for Ella Fitzgerald, he learned to work meticulously and persevere as he spent four hours a day rehearsing rather than a typical two-and-a-half hours. He also wrote an arrangement of an Irving Berlin tune for Ginger Rogers and realized how pleasurable writing for such a talented woman could be: “I had the

great pleasure of working with Ginger Rogers ... I was very moved by the way she closed the show each night ... she liked [the arrangement] so much I gave it to her as a gift” (Cable, 2013).

Aaron Perrine composes works for professionals and beginners. He has learned to delight in every note. In order to help him refrain from anxiety, he must “focus on the big ideas – especially form and pacing – before refining all of the small details” (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014a, p. 22).

Brian Balmages also composes for professionals and beginners; however, he has realized the importance of “hearing [his] music played by real people” (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014a, p. 26). He says one can learn a multitude of details about musical techniques when hearing one’s own compositions. Don Freund (2011) furthers, “hearing how others respond to one’s mystical ideas is an essential part of composition” (p. 70) as one can learn what works and what does not (Freund, 2011).

Colgrass (2004) has also worked with amateurs and professionals; however, rather than depicting the responses of musicians, he recounts how effortless composing for professionals is, they “could play virtually anything I wrote” (p. 20). Working with professionals can also be enjoyable if they are part of the compositional product. Donald Grantham realized that “almost everything was better” once the gifted conductor and performers contributed to the performance, “[I] am flattered when that individual thinks enough of my work to offer his own ideas about it” (cited in Camphouse, 2004, p. 105).

What Composers Have Learned: Composing for Young Musicians

There are virtually no primary documents published about the learnings of composers; the only recent publication — although the composers did not even record their own experiences — is *The Instrumentalist*. As a result, this section frequently cites the said publication which provides quotations from composers. These composers, and a few others, have gained four main insights when writing for amateurs: write meaningful music, collaborate, have a working knowledge of the instruments being used, and last, discern musical parameters. Before conveying these insights in detail, a few other observations will be touched upon.

Kari Zamora is a composer and the current music director for the Faubion Middle School in McKinney, Texas. She creates works for middle school string orchestras. As a middle school composer she has learned to “walk away [from composing] for a while if the ideas and melodies aren’t

flowing” and return at a later date (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014a, p. 23). This tactic seems common as composer and teacher Rowy van Hest expresses a similar practice when providing advice to amateur composers: “Do not work too long on a composition. Take some distance every now and then. Go out for a walk, read a book or go to bed” (Hest, 2014).

This notion of ‘taking-a-break’ can be helpful; however, it seems that numerous composers express the need for writing musician-applicable music. American Chris Ozley has composed for beginners. He recently wrote a piece entitled *Beyond the Ridge* for middle school students. He claims music should be meaningful for beginners; they should be able to relate to it. His compositional piece “symbolizes their journey as young musicians to a new place” (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014b, p. 16). Other composers, such as Kerin Bailey, Elissa Milne, Sonny Chua and Carol Matz, also claim that student interest and what they deem “fun” must be considered when composing (Bowden, 2010).

Timothy Mahr has learned the importance of creating musician-applicable music. When commissioned to compose for the Saratoga High School Orchestra he considered what could resonate with the musicians. He notes that numerous students had immigrated or had parents who immigrated to the United States. As a result, Mahr wrote a piece illustrating musical pleas for salvation; it conveys the immigration issue (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014a).

Budiansky and Foley (2005) also emphasize the significance of composing meaningful music. They claim that when music is generic and repetitive students are not motivated to play. Moreover, anxiety generally builds as students hurriedly prepare themselves for upcoming performances. If musician-applicable music is the focus within school music programs, and not performance deadlines, then students will likely enjoy the compositional and musical process.

Twenty-four composers, commissioned to write educational music in the New Music for Young Musicians Project, also emphasized the importance of meaningful and technically appropriate music (Andrews, 2004). For example, one of the composers notes, “[i]f [the students] are inspired by the piece, they are likely to work harder at it” (Andrews, 2004, p. 151). Moreover, in order to compose enjoyable music that is technically appropriate a composer must balance exciting and developmentally useful music with the musicians’ lack of experience. Striking this balance, however, is easier said than done. From the eight string-composers, who participated in the New Sounds of Learning Project (Andrews, 2012), four depict the challenge associated with “making the [musical] parts equally interesting” to maintain the students’ interest-level, but also “slightly challenging” to raise the

musicians' skill-levels (Duncan & Andrews, 2015, pp. 27-28). In order to address this dichotomy one composer learned to seek advice from instrumental teachers to determine whether his compositional notions were at an appropriate level (Duncan & Andrews, 2015). Colgrass (2004) also alludes to the challenges associated with the aforementioned balance. He often had difficulties incorporating beginners' technical levels and his own imagination: "Stripping down my music to the bare essentials ... challenged my imagination and sense of fantasy" (p. 21). If a balance is struck, however, then the students will be content while simultaneously learning techniques.

In order to write enjoyable, meaningful and technically appropriate music, a composer must communicate and collaborate with young musicians. Composer-student collaboration is another main insight numerous composers have gained when writing for amateurs. For example, Gary P. Gilroy, when commissioned to compose a piece for the Maryville (Tennessee) Intermediate School band, collaborated with the students. He realized that beginners – even sixth graders – have the potential to play challenging works. He describes the sixth graders' sounds as incredible and concluded saying, "[t]hey did a great job with everything they played that day. I was proud to be a small part of it" (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014b, p. 19).

When communicating with students Colgrass (2004) learned how capable children are of achieving more than one might think: "Children can easily play a combination of traditional and modern techniques" (p. 21) and, "[b]y giving the students a challenge, they will certainly rise to it!" (Andrews, 2004, p. 150). Although this is the case, Mark Camphouse (2002) suggests that working with young musicians is a challenge in and of itself, "[c]omposing and orchestrating a Grade 3 or 4 work for high school band [is] far more challenging than composing and orchestrating a Grade 5 or 6 work for a college, university, or professional military band" (p. 87). Karel Husa also identifies challenges associated with writing for amateur musicians (specifically young string players) and says that his challenges are concerned with instrumentation (Camphouse, 2002). Moreover, it is more challenging to write for band rather than an orchestra as there are more musical limitations associated with the latter group (Camphouse, 2002). Even though this is the case, Husa treats all the band instruments equally and has learned not to worry about the abilities and possibilities of the instruments involved: "If we write challenging parts for the players, they will learn them" (cited in Camphouse, 2002, p. 212).

The composers in the New Music for Young Musicians Project, also learned the significance of

composer-student collaboration (Andrews, 2004). They realized that direct contact with young musicians helped them obtain an understanding of their capabilities (Duncan & Andrews, 2015). Colgrass (2004) agrees, realizing the benefits associated with collaboration, “[m]y band piece could be a graphic piece we would all write together!” (p. 20). Kabalevsky would agree as he also considers the importance of collaboration when composing for young musicians. He learned that a composer must stop and listen attentively to the beginners for whom he or she will be composing; he learned to listen “to their language, their laughter, their tears” (cited in Forrest, 1996, p. 157).

Numerous composers have learned the significance of composer-student collaboration; however, they have also learned the importance of having instrumental knowledge. When writing educational music seven string-composers realized the necessity of understanding all of the involved instruments. One composer ““tried to think quite practically about the actual physicality of playing the instruments, and needed to increase [his] knowledge of how people learn to play”” (Duncan & Andrews, 2015, p. 27). Another composer studied the instruments in order to gain a clear understanding about those for whom he was writing.

These string-composers, coupled with numerous others, have also realized that parametrical adjustments and particular compositional parameters are necessary when composing for young musicians. Some of the string-composers claim that technical requirements, tempo, changing metres, and rhythms must be incorporated to write creatively valid music ““without subjugating the artistic side of it”” (Duncan & Andrews, 2015, p. 27). A range of melody, rhythm, harmony and texture is considered beneficial for young musicians as it fosters learning (Andrews, 2009). Regarding rhythm, Freund (2011) believes that in most cases, “composers, even the most advanced, sophisticated ones, should think of rhythm quantitatively rather than metrically when they are in the process of intuitively feeling and creating their rhythmic ideas (p. 71). Colgrass (2004), expressing detailed parameters for eleven to twelve year-old musicians, further states: “A range of approximately an octave [is] an advisable limit ... stepwise scale patterns are technically the easiest to play, and ... children feel most confident when passages are strongly doubled” (p. 20). He also claims that one should refrain from integrating solos, as eleven and twelve year-olds are generally self-conscious about playing alone (Colgrass, 2004).

Moreover, Colgrass (2004) has realized the difficulty associated with conventional notation. He

ascertained children respond well to musical compositions with graphic³ notation since “performers don’t have to know all the scales and intervals and rhythms because they are, in effect, making up their own sounds inspired by the images” (Colgrass, 2004, p. 20). Rather than expressing specifics about notation, the string-composers claim to have learned more about *what* they can compose for young musicians; as a result, they have become more cautious in what they compose (Duncan & Andrews, 2015).

It seems that the technical aspect of composition must be altered to suit the beginners’ needs; however, this does not have to impede a professional composer’s style or standards. One of the twenty-four commissioned composers in the New Music for Young Musicians Project notes, “I wrote in my usual style ... I also considered some of the basic difficulties encountered when studying a strong instrument, and to a certain degree, I tried to minimize some of these difficulties so that players would be able to be more in touch with the elements specific to my piece” (Andrews, 2004, p. 155). Colgrass (2004) claims, “[t]he knowledge I gained about how children approach playing instruments made it possible for me to write a piece that met my standards as a professional and theirs as beginners” (p. 21). Although Colgrass (2004) learned to write music that simultaneously conveys emotion, has intellectual interest, and is uncomplicated, he expresses a most important lesson, saying, “[w]hat did I learn as a composer? Overall, I would say it was a lesson in humility” (p. 21).

Conclusion

When composing for professionals many write complex pieces and have learned to develop good work habits. Moreover, they have discerned the importance of composing quickly and adhering to demanding requests while enjoying the compositional process. When composing for young musicians, however, many have learned the importance of writing meaningful and appropriate music, collaboration, gaining a working knowledge of the instruments being used, and adjusting technical aspects of music while maintaining one’s style.⁴ Thus, whether composers write for professionals or beginners, they gain insight into their own musical understanding, as well as of the personalities, talents and comprehension levels of their musicians. Colgrass (2004) expresses this insight when he says,

³ Graphic notation is comprised of abstract shapes: dots and wavy lines, expressing musical shapes and sounds (Colgrass, 2004).

⁴ Most of these learnings are cited in the same parent study.

“[t]he five months I spent at the Winona Drive Senior School were probably more of an education for me than for the band members” (p. 21).

Chapter Three: Methodology

Purpose and Methodology

When I became involved with the New Sounds of Learning Project the eight wind-composer interviews had previously been conducted by the principal investigator. Consequently, there was very little for me to ponder regarding research questions as the questions were generated and refined by the principal investigator in collaboration with members of the Ontario Regional Council of the Canadian Music Centre.⁵ The purpose of this study was to discover what wind-composers personally learn from writing music for young musicians within the Ottawa Catholic School Board. The following question guided the study:

Research Question

What do wind-composers learn from creating educational music for young musicians?

Conceptual Framework

It has been previously mentioned that the New Sounds of Learning Project addresses the parameters of educational music. As a result, its theoretical framework involves four dimensions of musical creativity: *place*, *process*, *product* and *person*. *Place* pertains to the composers' prerequisite training and writing context. *Process* refers to the compositional procedures used to compose a new piece; *product* addresses the final compositional outcome, while *person* concerns those who are involved in creating the composition, specifically, the composers' personal learning (Andrews, 2012) (see Appendix II). In order to collect data pertaining to these dimensions, triangulation⁶ is used to substantiate data analysis; that is, the New Sounds of Learning Project employs different data collection tools for each of the dimensions of musical creativity. Questionnaires were used to collect data about *place* (Andrews, 2013; Andrews & Giesbrecht, 2013), and reflective journals were used to

⁵ Members of the Ontario Regional Council are comprised of representatives from the associate composers of the Canadian Music Centre and representatives from education, the media, and arts organizations.

⁶ Triangulation is a powerful strategy that enhances validity. Triangulation occurs when two or more methods are used in a study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006).

examine the compositional *process* (Andrews & Giesbrecht, 2014; Andrews & Giesbrecht, 2016). Subsequently, composers submitted an analysis of their compositional *product* (Giesbrecht & Andrews, 2016; Sajo, 2016). Interviews with the string-composers were conducted to address *person* (Duncan & Andrews, 2015).

Since the wind-composer semi-structured interviews focus on what composers learn through their experiences, Jean Piaget's and John Dewey's theories of learning provide the lenses for my data interpretation and analysis. Both philosophers claim that people make meaning from experiences. According to Piaget, people adapt their schema or mental constructions to adapt to experiences. In other words, people construct their knowledge from past experiences and continuously adapt their knowledge when grappling with new experiences. In so doing, people engage in an adaptation continuum where assimilation is on one end and accommodation on the other. Assimilation occurs when new experiences do not promote much change. Accommodation occurs when more adaptation in thinking is required (Piaget, 1954). According to Dewey, experience is not solely individual, it is also social. Since people are continuously in relationships or a social context, their understanding of reality not only emerges from individual experiences, but from social ones (Dewey, 1997; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Thus, people make meaning from their experiences, both individual and social, which frames how they approach future experiences (Dewey, 1997; 1998). Since the wind-composer interviews address personal experiences and learning, constructivism frames my analysis of personal learning. Details concerning how the wind-composer interviews are analyzed with a constructivist framework are expressed in the following section.

Research Design: Narrative

The eight interviews and corresponding data were analyzed narratively. As a result, patterns, tensions, themes and narrative threads within or across the composers' experiences – presented in the interviews – are described (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The said elements are analyzed through Jean Piaget's and John Dewey's theories of learning and experience, specifically Dewey's notions of continuity and interaction (Dewey, 1997).

Philosopher Jean Piaget argues that people construct their knowledge and make meaning from experiences. When constructing knowledge people are drawing on past experiences, continuously

adapting their mental constructions to cope with new realities (Piaget, 1954). For example, as an amateur composer everything I know about composing is based on my experiences. The notion that people adapt their schema to adjust to experiences is similar to John Dewey's theory of personal experiences, specifically his idea of continuity.

Dewey claims there are two criteria of experience: continuity and interaction. The former pertains to the notion that the interpretation of new experiences are framed by past ones; as a result, they help shape an individual. The latter, however, concerns the engagement an individual has with the self and his or her existential conditions. The self refers to an individual's internal conditions: hopes, feelings, aesthetic reactions, and moral dispositions; whereas existential conditions refer to interactions with other people and/or an individual's environment (Dewey, 1997; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Narrative inquiry adopts these two experiential dimensions; however, it adds a third criterion, situation. According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), situation concerns social milieus or places. In other words, experiences occur in specific physical places or sequences of places. To summarize, one's past experiences, personal feelings, moral compass, environment, human interactions and the places in which these interactions occurred, shape one's experiences. Thus, narrative inquiry enables us to tell the story of coming to understand our stories; and through so doing, to re-imagine and recreate our vision of ourselves as we make meaning of our experiences.

In order to fully comprehend narrative inquiry, I will recite a story that illustrates such inquiry. Like Plato's "Allegory of the Cave", there are people who have been inside a cave since birth; some are chained and immobile while others are not. The ones who are immobile, staring at a wall in the cave, see shadows of puppets dancing and swaying and therefore believe that these shadows are reality. These immobile men and women converse about the puppet shadows, expressing their interpretations of the puppet show. The ones who are mobile are able to sit where the chained are, or walk among or behind the puppeteers. These people can also see the puppet shadows dancing and swaying on the cave wall; however, their perceptions and contexts are different. Their reality consists of knowing that the puppet shadows are just shadows and are controlled by puppeteers. As a result, their reality differs from those who are immobile. Moreover, as they walk around the cave and converse with those who are both chained and mobile, they will likely interpret the same puppet show differently from others. Thus, everyone in the cave – except the puppeteers – are spectators of the show; however, their understanding of the puppet story, how they make meaning of what they see and experience, differs

because the interpretation of the puppet shadow experience is framed by past experiences. Since the chained have never been able to see the puppeteers or the light causing the shadows, their past experiences differ from the mobile; this is continuity. Furthermore, the mobile and chained have experienced different social interactions and situations. Their experiences have occurred in different physical places or sequences of places within the cave.

Since narrative inquiry employs a three-dimensional space (continuity, interaction, and situation), this framework is used for analyzing the eight wind-composer semi-structured interviews. When addressing continuity, I consider the history involved in the composers' learning. By history I mean all the composers' past and present experiences in relation to creating compositions for young musicians. Thus, I familiarize myself with their biographies and questionnaires.⁷ Since interaction concerns the engagement an individual has with the self and his or her existential conditions, I reference the engagement between researcher and participant. Moreover, I address the composers' feelings, hopes, and their reactions toward their compositional learning environment. Regarding the last criterion, situation, the social milieus in which the composers have found ourselves are considered.

It is evident the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space is considered when ascertaining patterns, themes and narrative threads; what is not yet evident is how this data is conveyed. According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), "narrative inquiries are always strongly autobiographical" (p. 121) and there is a certain inquiry plotline. Moreover, narrative encourages detail, having well-developed characters, plot and scene (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). As a result, autobiographical information is integrated by depicting my personal amateur composer accounts. A certain plotline, developed characters and scene will also be conveyed through the use of composer biographies, questionnaires and, of course, the eight transcribed interviews.

Even though these narrative elements are contiguous with my study, Connelly and Clandinin (1990) would argue that my study does not reflect narrative inquiry perfectly. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) say the unstructured interview is used in narrative inquiry. However, according to a more recent article by Trahar (2009), a narrative interview can be semi-structured. Since I am utilizing Trahar's (2009) philosophy concerning interview questions, narrative inquiry fits well with my study.

⁷ The questionnaires were a data collection tool in the New Sounds of Learning Project (Andrews, 2013; Andrews & Giesbrecht, 2013).

Research Design: Narrative Analysis In-Depth

In order to fully comprehend Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) method of narrative analysis, I also utilize Riessman (2008). Since themes are extracted from the composers' narratives, I engage in thematic analysis. Thematic analysis emphasizes what is told rather than how it is told (Riessman, 2008) and since my research question regards what composers learn, such analysis is appropriate for the study. Themes are viewed holistically, not reduced to smaller categories, which is typical in a coding process. The research question and theoretical framework also guide the identification of themes in the stories. Often, long transcript excerpts would be presented with the researcher's text and analysis; however, it is not always necessary to integrate these lengthy interview transcripts. As a result, I present both long and short quotations from the transcripts to convey the emerging patterns. Moreover, since narrative emphasizes themes, I improve the transcripts' readability – only to an extent – by editing grammar and any extensive repetitions (Riessman, 2008).

When I began listening to the interview audio recordings, and read, as well as re-read the transcripts, I first noticed similarities among the interviews; these similarities were written in the margins. Once recorded, I decided to re-read the transcripts, on an individual basis, and remarked patterns within each interview. This helped me determine the composers' character traits and individual tensions they experienced while composing. Following this I returned to the over-arching themes and coupled some as they were overlapping. I realized the following categories (Contact with Students; Knowledge of Students' Capabilities; Ongoing Collaboration with Students) were similar. Consequently, I combined them and entitled the thematic category Collaboration with Students. See "Chapter Four: Composers' Stories" for more information. Once major themes were established, I colour-coded them with highlighters. The first emerging patterns that stretched across the interviews concerned the importance of producing enjoyable and appropriate music. There were also themes of tension as they concerned the process of 'knowing' for whom a composer is writing, and being able to ascertain music that is too challenging or familiar to the musician. Thematic analysis helped me organize data in a categorical manner; however, it must not be forgotten that without my theoretical framework⁸, much of what I gleaned from the transcripts would not have emerged.

⁸ People create knowledge from experiences. In following this constructivist theoretical framework I considered the composers' past experiences, our interactions and the places in which we found ourselves. For more details on how this framework was used, see pp 21-22 and 24-25.

Data Collection

Narrative Inquiry leans on texts that produce a multifaceted view of participants' lives. Thus, data collection is a complex enterprise since the narrative researcher is no longer an objective observer but becomes a significant element of the process. Since participant-researcher engagement is emphasized in narrative inquiry, every data collection element requires a degree of interpretation (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Riessman, 2008) and evinces this engagement. As a result, the following section conveys data collection methods involving my supervisor, the composers and I.

Data was primarily collected through either face-to-face or telephone interviews.⁹ During a face-to-face interview, the researcher can begin engaging in meta-narratives as nonverbal and contextual data¹⁰ are analyzed (Novick, 2008). These strengths, coupled with how interviews can encourage thorough experiential responses, express their appropriateness as my primary data collection tool. The interview's strengths also lie in the questions' developmental process. The interview questions were developed and refined in consultation with composers, educators and media representatives who were members of the Ontario Regional Council of the Canadian Music Centre (see Appendix III). These questions were developed in an open-ended¹¹ and semi-structured fashion. The conduct of interviews had both unstructured and semi-structured elements. Concerning the former, because the questions focused on the composers' experiences, my supervisor exerted little control over the participants' responses and provided minimal input (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2015). Although he provided minimal input, on occasion he had to probe or clarify the inquiries. According to Fontana and Frey (1994), when a researcher provides minimal input and then compares and contrasts all the interview transcripts, he or she engages in an unstructured interview known as polyphonic. Regarding semi-structured elements, my supervisor used an interview guide (a list of questions in a particular order) and followed topical trajectories that sometimes steered him away from the guide (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2015) (see Appendix IV for interview questions).

The eight interviews were conducted over two different time periods (four in the 2008-2009 school year and four in the 2010-2011 school year). The same protocol administered in different time

⁹ The interview, in its numerous shapes and forms, is finally being considered the most significant data collection tool in educational research (Gudmundsdottir, 1996).

¹⁰ Although I was not present during the interview, I listened to the audio-recordings and was able to note some contextual clues. I was also able to ascertain some verbal cues such as pauses, quick responses or stutters.

¹¹ Open-ended questions allow the composers to provide in-depth reflections on their experiences (Education Canada, 2015).

periods assists the researcher to obtain multiple perspectives on the object of inquiry (Andrews, 2012). These interviews were administered in various comfortable and participant-selected locations: pubs, restaurants and local schools. It was necessary to ensure the locations were comfortable as Clifford (2012) notes, “[c]reating a comfortable environment for the interviewee is crucial for the purposes of an informative and accurate interview” (p. 2). My supervisor and the composers agreed upon a convenient interview time. Most were conducted in the afternoon after a morning rehearsal of the new pieces.

Data were also obtained from the composers’ biographies and the New Sounds of Learning questionnaires. These two sources helped me better understand the participants’ compositional contexts and personalities. Consequently, I was able to have well-developed characters, plot and scene (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The composers’ bibliographies were sent to me by my supervisor. Upon reading them, I was also informed of the composers’ websites and, as a result, visited those to ensure all necessary information concerning the participants’ backgrounds was ascertained. The questionnaires were also given to me by my supervisor and thoroughly read. These enabled me to understand the composers’ interviews in detail, as well as help interpret the interview data.

Once this data was collected, analyzed and interpreted, I contacted the composers and engaged in member checking.¹² The composers verified that my analysis was sound and enabled me to adjust content pertaining to my interpretations. For example, one composer noted his discomfort with my use of the phrase “to my surprise” as well as “virtually identical” when relating his grading guide to the MC².¹³

Participants

Eight composers were selected to participate in the wind component of the New Sounds of Learning Project using a snowball technique (Andrews, 2012). My supervisor began by contacting Howard Cable, former CBC, Royal York Hotel, and CNE music director, arranger and composer. Cable then recommended David Marlatt, publisher of Eighth Note Publications, who then

¹² Member checking focuses on the ‘content’ of the interview as the researcher verifies with the respondent the content being published (Clarke & Robertson, 2001). The researcher also provides participants with feedback about “emerging interpretations and then obtain participants’ reactions” (Polit & Beck, 2014, p. 328).

¹³ For more detail concerning composer feedback see sections below and “Chapter Six: Limitations, Recommendations, Implications and Conclusions”.

recommended Vince Gassi, and so forth. Note that all the composers gave me permission to use their names within this study. These composers were commissioned by the Ottawa Catholic School Board to create new wind works for young musicians in school-based programs (Andrews, 2012). All of them received Western-European music training and higher music education degrees in their professional field. Furthermore, all had experience composing new wind band music. Many of them also had experience studying, teaching or writing in various genres such as jazz and classical music. Six of these wind-composers reside in Toronto and two currently reside in the greater Ottawa area. Even though these participants are composers, several are also arrangers, conductors, educators, and/or clinicians. Lastly, these wind-composers (ages 40 to 95 years) selected their own interview locations: local schools, restaurants, and a pub.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to discover what wind-composers learn from writing music for young musicians within the Ottawa Catholic School Board. Since the research question regards the composers' experiences, narrative inquiry best suits the study. In order to answer the research question eight composers were selected using a snowball technique. They were also interviewed either through the telephone or face-to-face. I first encountered Cable, Marlatt, Gassi, Yorke-Slader, Bailey, Ferguson, Jutras and Tresham through an audio-recording and then through their biographies, and in some cases, autobiographies.

Chapter Four: Composers' Stories

In this section, I present the stories of all the participants, beginning with their own life stories and contemporary contexts. I then focus on what they have learned while writing for young musicians. In order to provide a sense of temporality and space, I have presented the communications in a specific order. Stories pertaining to the composers' experiences prior to meeting the students – including their university studies – are described first. This is followed by a discussion of how they prepared before meeting the students and what they wrote for them.

Meeting the Participants

Since I did not conduct the interviews, my relationship to the composers has been limited. However, I have conversed with all of them about their narratives, thus fulfilling an important narrative inquiry element – participant-researcher engagement (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This section reveals my story: how and when I first encountered these eight composers. By expressing my story, every composer and the contexts in which we work can be understood more deeply. Furthermore, the narrative of our encounters brings our experiences (told and retold stories) to life. Perhaps these stories will prompt the readers' memories as a teacher, composer or even young musician and, consequently, feel a part of the narrative. Let me begin my tale in chronological order with a highly experienced composer and an icon among Canadian artists – Howard Cable.

I first encountered Howard Cable when I opened an audio-recording file entitled "Cable". After pausing the recording, I glanced at his website. He has revealed his stories working with Ella Fitzgerald, Ginger Rogers, Fred Davis, Freddie Green, etc., through blog posts. I read his biography which was sent to me by my supervisor and noted the length of time he has spent in the music industry – over 66 years. Cable's early years were spent in radio on CBC in 1941. Since then he has conducted and composed over 1000 radio programs. In the past decade the Howard Cable Concert Band has been heard on CBC radio and throughout the United States on the Mutual Radio Network.

Not only has Howard Cable been broadcast via the radio, but has taken a role on television. He was musical arranger and director on numerous telecasts. His experiences arranging for Richard Rogers, Frank Loesser and Meredith Willson, on Broadway are so thrilling, even the thought of this

gives me goosebumps. When I continued reading his biography I learned of his experience working with Danny Kaye. Danny Kaye is one of my favourite actors and I adore his talents, especially in the film *The Court Jester*. In Canadian theatre Cable has appeared as guest conductor at the Shaw and Banff festivals. Moreover, he has provided multitudinous scores for the Charlottetown Festival. Cable has also extensively contributed to wind and literature and is praised for his brass band works in Britain. He has written extensively for the following bands: Canadian Brass, Hannaford Street Silver and the True North Brass.

After acquainting myself with Cable, I then glanced at David Marlatt's biography, first noting his black-and-white portrait photograph. He appeared young, as he was clean-shaven and had dark hair. Upon examining the photograph, I thought it best to visit his website. His biographical photograph which was sent to me reflected his current age.

Marlatt was granted a music education degree from the University of Western Ontario and has been playing the trumpet for numerous years. He founded the trumpet ensemble Trumpets in Style and has performed in jazz bands, orchestras, concert bands, brass bands and brass quintets. Although he is a trumpet player, he has played the role of composer, arranger, clinician and conductor. Marlatt has composed works for string orchestras, concert bands, brass quintets, and so forth. He has a very diverse writing style as he has composed for professional chamber ensembles and soloists, as well as for young concert bands. The latter compositions are on numerous festival lists in both Canada and the United States. Furthermore, Marlatt has arranged and transcribed over 800 repertoires: South African folk songs, tangos, Baroque and Romantic works and Christmas carols.

Vince Gassi was next on my list as he was among the composers interviewed in 2009. Gassi's career as a composer did not begin until recently. Since both Cable and Marlatt had been absorbed in composing for numerous years, Gassi perfectly complemented these participants. Upon listening to the interview audio-recording I was in awe at his clear and tranquil voice. I also gleaned the extent to which he often pondered before responding to an interview question or paused between his thoughts.

When I read Neil Yorke-Slader's biography I quickly realized his passion for education and music. Since 1987 he has been the director of the Nepean All-City Jazz Band and many of these compositions are available through or preserved in UNC Jazz Press and/or Burnihla Music Publishing as well as the National Library of Canada's archives. Yorke-Slader leads an industrious life as he is

Vice-Chairman of Musicfest Canada (Jazz Division) and the Regional Coordinator of the Capital Region Music Festival in Ottawa. His passion for education shines forth as he also balances the said roles with that of Superintendent of Instruction within the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board. Although he no longer teaches at the elementary and secondary levels, it is significant to note the many years (17) he devoted to teaching children and adolescents music. Upon listening to the interview audio-recording he used educational terms, such as “hook” and “accessible”. This confirms his educational background.

Following my acquaintance with Yorke-Slader, I listened to the interviews from 2011. Mark Bailey was first on my list. His exuberant tone as well as his forethought of later interview questions caught my attention. He was the first composer to indicate having read the interview questions in advance. Upon examination of his biography I noted some similarities between he and Marlatt. Like Marlatt, Bailey has played the trumpet for numerous years; he played in and was an arranger for the Central Band of the Canadian Forces for 22 years, performing worldwide. As a player, Bailey has appeared with a multitude of people. To name a few: Gladys Knight, Del Shannon, the Four Seasons, Frankie Valli and Petula Clark. He also has several works published in New York and Texas and some selections were aired on CBC radio. He has a talent writing in a variety of genres from marches, overtures and jazz to rock, rhythm and blues. Bailey also founded an electro-acoustic ensemble in 2006, which he balances with private trumpet tutoring and music instruction at several high school brass clinics.

Currently, Mark Ferguson teaches in the jazz program at Carleton University, and he also tours with the *Big Band Broadcast* starring Holly Laroque and the Mark Ferguson Orchestra. At the University of Ottawa and Humber College he studied composition. Like Cable, Ferguson has worked with numerous famous artists, such as Ella Fitzgerald. He had also performed for Tom Jones. Not only has he performed as a trombonist, pianist and bandleader, he has composed in both the classical and jazz idioms. He has created sound tracks, a film score for the Museum of Civilization and for software. Like so many other composers, he also balances life as an arranger and music educator. As the former, he has written musical arrangements for a variety of organizations and as the latter, he has taught at a jazz camp, was a clinician at jazz clinics in Canadian schools and a director for the University of Ottawa Jazz Ensemble.

I glanced at the next composer on my list and immediately heard voices from my town home.

André Jutras, I read. Upon reviewing his biography, I noted the many years he has been studying music. Since age 8 he has studied oboe and chamber music, composition, orchestration and analysis. In the 80s to early 90s he played English Horn in l'Orchestre symphonique de Québec while studying conducting. He conducted approximately 100 concerts in a 3-year period and has travelled to Winnipeg, Edmonton, Quebec, Vancouver, Windsor, Thunder Bay and Alberta in order to continue his work. Although he has pursued a “classical” career, Jutras has a variety of experiences playing and/or conducting in jazz bands and ensembles, as well as concert bands and pops orchestras. He also wears the hat of arranger, composer and clinician. Since April 2000, he has been the Program Officer with the Canada Council for the Arts, administering grants to music organizations and individual artists.

Scott Tresham was the last with whom I was to be acquainted. Upon reading his biography I quickly noted his achievements from a young age. Prior to age 20 one of his compositions aired on CBC television. Following this achievement, Tresham earned a Fine Arts Certificate and studied clarinet as well as composition at the university level. He even travelled overseas to pursue a Master's degree in composition. Tresham has received commissions from a variety of sources; to name a few, Espace Musique, CBC Radio and Canterbury High School of the Arts. Several of his compositions have been performed by Canadian musicians and have been featured at the Ottawa International Chamber Music Festival. Not only does he compose, but he teaches composition at the McGill Conservatory of Music and is an artistic director in Montreal.

Experiences Prior to New Sounds

All eight composers studied music at the undergraduate level, noting that post-secondary institutions focus on teaching students how to compose for professionals. Howard Cable's disappointed tone clung to my ears, “[u]niversities do not like wind bands ... it's almost a no-no ... I don't think universities are doing a good job ... there's a certain snottiness about it. The performance majors don't want to play with amateurs. The audience is gone.” Mark Bailey commented further, “[w]ell the attitude too is very unhealthy, the Ivory Tower attitude. I'm not saying for everyone or every program, but when I was there I found it really disturbing.” Although Mark Ferguson never considered universities' focus on professional musicians prior to the New Sounds Project he claimed, “[i]n college or university there is no mention of writing for [young musicians], it's all about when

you're out there working as a professional; how are you going to write music?" He even extended his comment, providing a possible solution to this issue:

Well wouldn't it be a brilliant idea to have college musicians and university musicians writing for high school bands, it would actually give them a laboratory to, they could go to the high schools, hear their music being played, as well as working as a tool to interest the younger kids, and seeing kids that are just slightly older than them doing this. But maybe that would be a great course now, writing for junior bands or I've never seen, I've never heard of that, there must be something like that somewhere.

It is interesting to note that Scott Tresham also mentioned a similar solution,

There is an opportunity here in terms of taking university composers and matching them up with high school ensembles ... If it was part of their degree, depending on what program you're in, you have often some off commission projects ... If you went into some of the big composition schools in Canada and were able to set this up as part of their program, with no commission fees to pay necessarily ... it's an educational experience whatever you do with it.

Vince Gassi did not explicitly mention the said professional focus; however, he suggested post-secondary institutions "bring composers in and work with university students ... whatever I may or may not have learned was not enough." Similar to Gassi, Neil Yorke-Slader and David Marlatt expressed the importance of practical opportunities at the university level: "I wrote contemporary stuff and I studied all the instruments. Practical learning and quality teaching would also help. Theory courses didn't much get past how to write for different ensembles," revealed Yorke-Slader. While Marlatt claimed, "[s]ee what's [instrumentation, technicalities, etc.] awkward for a real live person." In other words, it is significant for student-composers to test their pieces on musicians. Bailey also reminisced about his university experience. However, in his experience he had some practical opportunities: "Yeah, I was lucky; I had a laboratory there, but having gone to both Humber College, Wilfred Laurier, and Carleton, I went from Humber College where it was how can you get a job as a professional musician, be it a player, arranger, or composer, to the history of composition and wow you're writing way too lyrically [in the universities]."

André Jutras described his educational experience in music and considered himself fortuitous:

I was fortunate to have that kind of teacher in Québec, actually I had two teachers who insisted in reading scores and listening to scores and trying to find out what's good and what's, you know, how to proceed. It's not only about the composition, it's also about the orchestration and one thing I learned from my teacher... is when you think about a melody you should immediately hear which instrument is going to play it. A melody or

a musical idea is not abstract. It has a sound.

I can relate to his notion of melody and instruments. As an amateur composer, when a melody comes to mind I often immediately hear the best instrument for the part.

It is evident the wind-composers expressed their personal, student experiences and noted the professional focus of university programs. What remains to be seen are their experiences as professional composers. Gassi claimed that when writing for professionals “you write something that would sound great for a section.” He may have responded this way because professional musicians are very knowledgeable in instrumentation, technicalities, and so forth, and they can easily play that which “would sound great.” According to Jutras, a composer can write that which sounds good because professional musicians have much musical experience and can therefore play comfortably and easily. Furthermore, Jutras’ works are well received because he implements colourful instrumentation:

Every time I would write for professionals, mostly as an arranger mind you, but nevertheless symphonic works, I wrote a symphonic portrayal of Manzoni, I did one with Stevie Wonder, I wrote a lot of arrangements for symphony orchestras ... usually the symphony will sight read it and it will sound good at the first reading, it will sound good. The orchestra plays it easily, comfortably and musicians appreciate my writing, my professional writing, or writing for professionals I rather say. They appreciate it because it sounds good and the instrumentation I use is colourful.

Cable expressed the ease associated with writing for professionals, saying, “[y]ou don’t have to worry about this [inconsistencies]¹⁴ for professionals. It’s a paid job. It’s more than technical.” Bailey and Ferguson also mentioned the ease associated with professional musicians and in so doing referred to professionals’ technical and improvisatory abilities. “With professionals, they have more experience technically with range and phrasing and musical experience and they can always rely on that if things go wrong; if they are in an uncomfortable situation, they can make the adjustments ... they rely on more experience to bail them out of tricky situations,” noted Bailey. While Ferguson said, “[y]ou kind of make assumptions that it’s [ranges, articulation, phrasing]¹⁵ a common language and they’re going to

¹⁴ In order to understand the context, I provide Cable’s response in its entirety. When asked, “What are the major differences composing for young musicians and professionals?” Cable said, “You don’t write things that are too hard for them. When certain players are not there, in community bands, there is no consistency. Who will they lean on? You don’t have to worry about this for professionals. It’s a paid job. It’s more than technical. You try and give them as much challenge ... It’s why I call this Chromatones...they can play scales and chromatics. I was impressed by that.”

¹⁵ In order to better understand Ferguson’s context, I provide more of his response: “I think there are a lot of assumptions when you’re writing for professionals, that ranges, articulations, phrasing are kind of a given. You don’t worry about is this going to work or are they going to understand this. For the most part when I write something for professionals I’m

understand that. It's not going to be a problem." Similar to the aforementioned, Yorke-Slader claimed that with professionals, "it's the blank canvas. In university we wrote what we wanted." Jutras concurred, "[y]ou can write whatever you want ... writing for professionals, you don't care about how difficult it is."

It seems these composers consider it pleasant writing for professionals as the complexities associated with technicalities and instrumentation do not limit a professional's performance. Bailey further commented, claiming the pride and joy associated with composing for professionals: "The beautiful thing about professionals is that you can indulge yourself to the max as a writer; your ego can kind of fly a bit. Gassi also alluded to one's ego and indulging one's self, stating, "I just finished composing for a professional band. You can write more complex pieces. You are not limited range-wise. It's very attractive writing a grade five level piece. I was able to explore ideas. It's fun to throw the notes on the page and not have to worry if they are playable." It is plausible that Gassi's joy derives from hearing his grade 5 piece being played so well because early in his career he rarely heard his pieces being played (V. Gassi, personal communication, 2016). Since then, however, he has had numerous opportunities hearing his works as all of his compositions for publication are played by professionals.

Unlike the other composers, Tresham discussed the connection a professional may or may not have to a piece. He said, "[a]s a composer writing for professional musicians, they may not like your piece at all but they'll still perform it." Marlatt did not explicitly address the 'performance' aspect; however, he did consider the connection professionals may or may not have to the compositional process and piece: "I have written for pros and ... I have had good receptions from pro groups, and some cool receptions."

It is interesting to note that all eight composers wrote music for professionals prior to the New Sounds of Learning Project. However, as I was listening to them, I began wondering, have any written for young musicians? Two, Marlatt and Jutras, claimed during the interview they had experiences commissioning music for children prior to this project. "I have done commissions for children who have similar likes and dislikes. I have learned that when you write for students, it's the same the world over," Marlatt explained. He even continued later in the interview, saying,

not there to rehearse it but now that I think about it, that's not totally true ... With professionals you can assume, you know, take it a step further and do something out of their comfort zone."

I have written for ... a number of students groups ... Young students, no matter what age, always give good receptions. They are more interested in the compositional process. They are also more interested in the piece. It's great fun. Too many professionals get the *one performance piece*, or the *two performance piece*. With students, I can never worry about capping performances.

Jutras described his experience writing for concert band two decades ago:

I have commissioned a work and met with the concert band beforehand, but the last time was in Calgary back in 1992, like 20 years ago, and it was okay. This time it was funny because when I arrived to school I didn't know what to expect and I had no idea which grade levels, so I expected perhaps a grade 2, perhaps 2 and a half.

Marlatt and Jutras were the only ones to mention – during the interview – their experiences with young musicians. As a result, I initially thought they were the only ones, from the eight composers, who had written for these musician-types. However, when I read the eight composers' questionnaire responses, I discovered that all of them wrote for students at school and post-secondary levels and/or amateurs. Ferguson reported that he composed for university level musicians, but not amateurs (Ferguson, *New Sounds of Learning Questionnaire*). Yorke-Slader, Gassi and Cable indicated that they wrote educational music for young musicians. Tresham claimed that on occasion he has been asked to compose for amateur ensembles. However, like Yorke-Slader, Gassi and Cable, he did not allude to this in the interview. Bailey alluded to writing for young musicians when saying, “[m]y first attempt at writing a piece for grade 3 level was an arrangement of a piece I had composed for the Central Band of The Canadian Forces in Ottawa ... Only after Southern Music Company asked me to put out grade 2 level pieces did I begin to feel that I might be able to produce something that young players would be interested in” (Bailey, *New Sounds of Learning Questionnaire*). Therefore, all of these composers have had prior experiences writing for young musicians and/or amateurs (Andrews & Giesbrecht, 2013). Evidence indicates that they did not mention these experiences for there were no interview questions explicitly asking whether they had previously composed for amateurs or young musicians. Moreover, the focus of the interview questions concerned what the composers' learned writing for young musicians, specifically within the school context. Evidence conveys that Marlatt and Jutras expressed, in the interview, their experiences composing for young musicians because they have extensively composed for these musician-types.

Although Yorke-Slader did not explicitly mention – during the interview – commissioning he had done with children, he said “most of the writing I have done before was without a particular group

in mind.” In other words, most of his compositions were written for general audiences, thereby not considering the specific likes and dislikes of the musicians. It seems that composer-audience collaboration is uncommon among composers as Tresham stated, “[i]n a professional situation you would be pretty much conditioned and the musicians; I mean, depending on the ensemble, you wouldn’t have very much interaction with musicians except on maybe at a few rehearsals afterwards preparing the first performance.”

Unlike the other composers, Tresham reminisced about his personal experience in the band culture: “It [the New Sounds of Learning] was an exciting project um I think principally for me to explore the cell world of the culture band and in particular with young high school students. I sort of got my own start playing in a band and so I think just the experience of going back and exploring that again was very interesting musically for me in a very personal way.”

The eight wind-composers have had rich and enlightening compositional experiences. Many described their undergraduate work and the professional focus university programs have. All eight have had experiences writing for amateurs and/or young musicians prior to the New Sounds of Learning Project; however, it is interesting that only two wind-composers noted – during the interview – their prior experiences with educational music.

Meeting Preparation

Prior to meeting the students, all the composers were informed of the school in which they would be working and the music teacher with whom they would be collaborating. However, not all were aware of the music students’ ages or musical abilities. Since Jutras, prior to the New Sounds commissioning, had already worked with young musicians and was expecting to write a grade 2¹⁶, he had preconceived notions about the experience,

It was funny because when I arrived to school I didn’t know what to expect and I had no idea which grade levels, so I expected perhaps a grade 2, perhaps 2 and a half ... when I set foot in the school, I was told that I was dealing with grade 9,10, 11 and 12 students. So I had to switch gears. But the basic idea I had remained except that the grade level changed, which means that I had more leeway, had more opportunities to develop my musical ideas ... overall it was a very good experience.

¹⁶ Grade 2 means that the instrumentation, range, orchestration, rhythmic patterns, meters, melody, keys, etc., are all at an easy level.

Jutras even explicitly claimed, later in the interview, “I already have ideas how to write for beginners.”

Like Jutras, Tresham made some assumptions prior to meeting the students:

One assumption that I always had about amateur groups, whether they be students or people who play in bands as a leisure activity as opposed to a profession, in general I think the amount of rehearsal time used to be a lot more than what professional musicians have and certainly I think in the case of the school I was working with.

Tresham assumed the students would have much rehearsal time; however, the reality of the situation was not so. “They have far less time to actually work together as a group; so that was a bit of a challenge to try and respond to what was essentially a new ensemble that didn’t have a history or a collective experience and then on top of that not have very much time at all to work at the music and prepare it.”¹⁷

Since Ferguson had never composed for elementary or secondary school students¹⁸, he was forced to “think in a way I hadn’t in the past.” He had to prepare his mind for an atypical manner of thinking: “A lot of assumptions that you make when you’re working with professionals, I couldn’t make. So it just made me think in a whole different way; so it was very different for me.”

When Bailey “walked into the school; it was a huge school, and there were a lot of limitations.” The music teacher with whom Bailey collaborated, sent Bailey a list of confines associated with the amateur group. He said, “I had to really set up a big fence for myself, a big fence, and stay always within the confines of that fence. And the teacher sent me a list of the confines so that I could set that fence up and keep always inside it, and that was a good discipline for me. It told me where I could and couldn’t go right away.”

Because Yorke-Slader had written most compositions without considering a particular group, he was forced to “make some educated guesses about the players [the student players].” He continued, “I didn’t know personalities or leadership. I found this initially challenging.” Marlatt also had to make

¹⁷ Tresham’s limited time observation differs from that of Jutras, “... you can expect young musicians to have sufficient time, rehearsal time in school. They can rehearse for three months before the performance,” expressed Jutras. Evidence conveys that their different opinions lie in the composers’ past experiences. Although both Tresham and Jutras have written for young musicians prior to the New Sounds of Learning Project, Jutras’ career as a composer began with amateurs whereas Tresham’s did not. Jutras’ comment derives from the amount of time spent with young musicians in the past. A lack of time seems common in most modern schools. Cable’s observation bolsters this claim since he described his students as only practising once a week – every Wednesday.

¹⁸ In the New Sounds of Learning Questionnaire Ferguson claimed he has not written for young amateurs, but he has composed for more sophisticated musicians, specifically university students ages 18-25 (Andrews & Giesbrecht, 2013).

some educated guesses about his audience and when asked to provide new composers some advice, he said, “[t]ake a piece that you think is suitable for them and stick it in front of them. You’ll know after five minutes if it will work or not.” Thus, prior to meeting an amateur group, a composer should prepare a sample piece. Even if this piece is unsuccessful, it can be tweaked.

Summarizing, both Jutras and Tresham had preconceived notions about writing for young musicians. Not all these ideas were efficacious in their new contexts; at times, these men had to revamp their mindset. The other composers were forced to adjust or reframe the ways they were thinking about composition; they had to familiarize themselves with or make educated guesses about musical limitations and student personalities.

What the Composers Learned

During the New Sounds of Learning Project the wind-composers learned overall that when writing pedagogically valid educational music: 1) The composer must desire to compose technically appropriate, challenging and enjoyable music for young musicians; 2) The composer must collaborate and have direct contact with students; 3) The composer must have a working knowledge of the instruments; and 4) The composer and teachers can use the Music Complexity Chart (MC²) as numerous benefits are associated with it.

Appropriate and Enjoyable Music

All the composers learned that educational music must be appropriate, challenging and enjoyable to play. Cable expressed it perfectly, “[y]ou have to write something that will interest the good players and the lesser players that are down below. They do get bored when they are not challenged.” Jutras also claimed that music “must be interesting to play” which is identical to Gassi’s beliefs, “[m]ake it as musically interesting as you can. If they can enjoy that, and it’s in their level...” Moreover, Ferguson expressed the importance of creating engaging music; however, he adds that one should not pander to the musicians:

Without pandering to the players, you want to keep it interesting for them, you know, composing something I guess they would want to play. I know when I’m writing an arrangement I always divide it into the individual parts; as a trombone player I wonder what the trombone player will think. Would that be interesting for me to play? Would I,

you know, does this look like a good chart for playing? ... I would say just what I said, try to make it interesting for the players.

Tresham and Yorke-Slader also expressed the necessity of writing engaging music. “With this particular group of students you really have to try and win them over in a way that I wouldn’t have experienced in a professional situation. So I guess I try to make melodic material as engaging as possible,” Tresham explained. Yorke-Slader stated plainly, “[w]e want everybody to be engaged in the music process ... you want a piece to be interesting.”

Bailey also claimed the importance of creating engaging music: “I learned economy ... make the most out of very little, yet make it as interesting as I could for all the players because nobody likes to be taking a background role all the time.” He commented further, later in the interview,

Engage the kids, that what you’re playing is cool and you get to name it, get to name the piece. So holding on to their interest was the trick ... They have to like the piece or else it doesn’t matter what guidelines there are ... if they really like the piece, they are going to take their horns home, hopefully, and practice it.

Bailey not only said a composer must engage students, but provided reasons for their being absorbed in the process and with the material – if young musicians enjoy the work then they will be more inclined to practice the piece. Moreover, students respond when treated equally, not always taking a “background role.” Ferguson also provided reasons for ensuring “that it’s something [the composition] that is going to appeal to them [the young musicians].” He continues: “Make music fun for the kids and make it interesting so that they’ll follow it and explore it.” Not only will they have an exploratory desire, but they will “have a frame of reference so they’re going to understand something about what you are writing.”

Bailey continued expounding the significance of engagement; however, this time he mentioned interesting musical lines:

So I would say to them [new composers], as a secret, write your piece out in four part writing first. Write it out so that it all works: interesting lines in four parts as an exercise and then orchestrate it, and then you know that you’ve entry, you have backup everywhere – your instrumentation. You can cue and you’ll always be covered if those lines work; so work the four part sketch out first, and then orchestrate it.

Bailey continued describing the importance of maintaining student interest. As a music student he was fortunate to have a kinaesthetic musical experience; his interest was maintained as he engaged in a musical laboratory, in which he arranged and tested compositional pieces. It is also plausible he

continued repeating the importance of student interest for the young musicians “were very far behind” and Bailey had to be wary of the complexities associated with the piece; the piece could not be too challenging or else he would lose student interest. He must have also heavily considered students’ thoughts of a piece and of his own instruction, for he stated, “[w]hen I first heard them play, I thought, hey, this is okay, and they like it. They’re not going ‘ewwww oh my God. This is gross.’ They didn’t beat me up and I like that.”

Like Bailey, Gassi also claimed that a musical work must have engaging sections: “I feel they liked the piece because it had interesting parts.” Ferguson expressed another way of retaining student interest in the piece and compositional process, saying, “[t]hat is why it is so important to have different ensembles because, some guy is playing third trombone in orchestra might be bored but if you put him in a brass ensemble or a brass quintet, there’s more to do...I’ve always been aware of keeping the players busy.” Thus, in order to maintain student interest and motivate them to enjoy the piece, Ferguson suggested having more than one ensemble.

Another way of producing an enjoyable work is by composing technically appropriate music – challenge the students without overwhelming them.¹⁹ As Ferguson explained the ways in which he addressed the students’ musical limitations, he and I both realized the importance of writing appropriate music: “I wanted to give them something different, you know, a challenge. At the same time, it’s a real kind of straight ahead rock kind of rhythm ... I tried to overcome those problems [limitations] just by being very careful with the ranges, not letting anything too technically difficult, and trying to make them comfortable, trying to write things that they’d be familiar with.”²⁰ Tresham and Gassi also mentioned this balance. “[Make] certain sections easier and certain parts at an easier level while others are more challenging,”²¹ Tresham expressed. While Gassi said, “[y]ou overcome it [musical limitation] ... by doubling and not making it too difficult for them. I don’t think I wrote it too easy for them.” In striving to create a fun work “they [the young musicians] would want to play,” Ferguson attempted “to keep it simple. It was basically a blues with a bridge. I really tried not to confuse the players.”

¹⁹ Although Marlatt did not explicitly mention this balance of challenge and familiarity, he did signify writing appropriate music, “Take a piece that you think is suitable for them and stick it in front of them.” Thus, a composer must introduce young musicians to suitable – in other words, appropriate – music.

²⁰ Tresham also claimed the importance of incorporating familiar musical elements into a composition, “I wanted a language that would be familiar enough to them to be able to sort of grasp it and understand it and make something out of it.”

²¹ Tresham also said, near the end of the interview, that a composer must “get a sense of what they [the young musicians] are capable of” and then “sort of accept the fact that you’ve got to push them.”

Yorke-Slader also realized the significance of simplicity and composing technically appropriate music, claiming, “[narrow] down styles that they are able to play. [Try] to make it accessible²² and successful with a young band. I endeavoured to keep the trumpet range narrow to help. Rhythmic figures can’t be too complicated. It’s like painting a picture. Painting a landscape with a limited colour palate. Don’t get ahead of yourself and write something that is too high or too fast.” Later in the interview he repeated the significance of accessibility and students’ abilities: “There were a couple of range issues in trumpet to make it more accessible. Give them something they can play. Music doesn’t sound too good if they are working too hard to play.” Bailey concurred with the notion of simplicity as he stated, “I learned to keep the frustration level down and keep it [the composition] very simple.” Although it is important to keep the composition simple, Bailey also claimed, “you want them to reach a bit, and work a bit at what they don’t know.” Thus, it is necessary a composer write a piece that is accessible to young musicians – not too complex, nor too simple.

This balance also reminds me of my educational training. When training to be a teacher, my professors would continuously say, ‘Be accessible and ensure all work is accessible to your students.’ As a teacher it can be difficult to create a balance between comfort and challenge. However, how can educators teach students new concepts if students do not step from their comfort zones? It is important to encourage student success by boosting their confidence while providing them with a challenge so they can grow as a student. Jutras also alluded to this balance as he claimed that music “must be interesting to play” and allow “young musicians [to] evolve and grow.” In order for them to grow, they must be challenged.

Ferguson repeated this notion of balance; however, rather than using the word “challenging,” he mentioned “over working”:

Really [pay] attention to voicings, not overwriting, well actually that is a big one, not overwriting, we’ve all played arrangements where the brass players have been playing whole notes for 40 bars and, it’s just counterproductive cuz you’re going to wear them out. So I guess I would advise not over working the musicians but making it interesting for them ... making it appealing to the kids.

Cable commented further, that a composer can challenge a group of amateurs: “You have to challenge them in a very particular way. You write for two different streams.” Later in the interview he explained the writing process, “... writing two independent frameworks. I wrote for the best players.

²² Accessible material is simple enough for students to understand.

This was probably fifteen to eighteen students ... but this band is not fifteen to eighteen. I wrote almost as if there were three or four different bands. It was a little like a chess game.”

All eight wind-composers mentioned the importance of writing engaging music. In order to write interesting music, the composer should integrate musical elements with which young musicians are familiar. Moreover, the students should be challenged. If a student is not challenged, then as Cable and Ferguson claimed, the young musician will become bored and interest will be lost. Therefore, educational music must be appropriate, challenging and enjoyable to play.

Collaboration with Students

In order to write interesting and enjoyable music, it is necessary to collaborate and have direct contact with students. All eight (100%) wind-composers expressed this in the interviews. Bailey said, “[k]now your ranges and the players.” Yorke-Slader concurred saying, “... know their personalities.” He even claimed how much of a learning-curve this was for him. “I learned to work with them and get to know their personalities. I tried to get involved and interact with them as much as possible.” Yorke-Slader commented further, expressing the benefits associated with composers working in schools: “Kids can work with the composer whom they see is a professional ... there is a dialogue between composer and player that enhances their experience. Schools can look more to create opportunities to connect composers with kids.” Yorke-Slader therefore believes that composer-student collaboration is extremely beneficial. Unfortunately, commissioning composers to write for young musicians is an uncommon practice. This is because school boards would have to fund the composers’ work and how could they afford such a project? According to B. W. Andrews, school boards have the money; however, commissioning composers is not integral to our culture as it is in Europe or the United States (B. Andrews, personal communication, February 26, 2016; H. Cable, personal communication, June 2, 2009).

Bailey also expressed the need for commissioning composers. In so doing, he mentioned a teacher with a similar notion:

It’s interesting that you promoted this [composer-student collaboration] because a year ago a teacher in Orleans, she teaches grade 7 and 8 music, she had exactly the same idea as this: of hands-on composers working with the kids saying okay, I’ve got this theme and what do you, you know, and here is what I’m doing. Now I think she was looking at it more like the craft of

composition and how kids would be able to get inside your [a composers'] brain as opposed to just promoting Canadian composers of band music.

He relayed the said interaction to convey the extent to which composer commissioning is required. Not only are composers contemplating the need, but teachers as well. It also seems Bailey regarded composer-student collaboration important, not only due to the benefits associated with it, but because of his positive interactive experiences: “It was a good experience in many many ways because I was able to connect with the kids.”

When asked “What are the major differences in composing for young musicians and professionals?”, Tresham responded,

[t]here is a lot more initial contact and then there is the various check-in points throughout the whole process. That might be one reason for the difference that I am thinking about which is, the students really tend to have a sense of what they want in a new piece, while at the same time not really knowing what that is or how to ask for certain things in very concrete, objective ways.

Although this was the case, Tresham ascertained the students’ desires: “Well everyone wants something that is sort of upbeat and sort of happy.” As a result of this discovery, he integrated “a major tonality” in the composition. During this process he also collaborated with the music teacher²³: “One thing that she had wanted specifically was not to do something completely tonal and did want to sort of stretch the musical language a little bit and which was fine with me.” Tresham revealed his collaborative and flexible abilities. Although he used a major-like tonality, he adjusted to the music teacher’s preferences – to stretch the musical language for the students. He further commented on his collaborative experience,

I had [the music teacher] set up a message board where we could sort of communicate back and forth and that was one of the comments that kept coming back and I said well, can you tell me why it sounds sad to you or what do you mean by you wanting it to sound more major? ... I sent them versions where it’s being harmonized with a major cord ... I would try and sort of push the discussion [asking] what is it that makes it sound this way or what is it that you would change? ... I would like to continue the discussion to really try and find what they were getting at, but it just didn’t happen whether it was because they didn’t have the time or the language.

²³ Bailey also explicitly mentioned the importance of composer-teacher collaboration, “I would say, taking on the cooperation of the teachers, first of all ...”

Although this message board did not yield expected results²⁴, Tresham was at least attempting different methods that would indicate the students' likes, dislikes and their musical thought processes. This collaborative strategy in which Tresham attempted to ascertain the students' desires, is supported by Hickey (2013). He depicts a study revealing the significance of teacher-composers provoking young musicians to describe and explain the compositional process. Moreover, students were prompted to engage in self-analysis.

Through student-composer collaboration, the composer will not only ascertain the students' musical desires and familiarities, but will gain knowledge of the students' capabilities. Both Cable and Gassi said a composer must ask the following question, "For whom are you writing?" If a composer asks himself or herself this question, it is easier to discern how to write a piece. As an amateur composer, most of my works were written without a particular audience in mind; however, as I mentioned in the "Prologue," I asked myself the said question when writing my church hymn. Because I was composing for a diverse group of Christians, varying in age and musical abilities, it was pertinent I consider for whom I was writing.

However, asking "For whom are you writing?" is not enough; it is necessary to collaborate with the musical group in order to "really be aware of the limitations of the level," Gassi explained. Gassi began his explanation by depicting the simple and informal dialogue he had with the music students, "I observed and chatted with them and shared with them who I was." After travelling to Ottawa at least 3 or 4 times for one 75 minute period (V. Gassi, personal communication, February 24, 2016), he was able to "know the students well" and know for whom he was writing. "It was enjoyable to work with the kids," he explained. Through this interaction, Gassi was able to discern the students' musical abilities and how to address them:

You don't get all the handsome percussion this time. All those nice little additions are not there. It was my worry that they would not enjoy the piece. They wouldn't have the opportunity to experience the sound ... the full instrumentation experience. What the students did there ... they did a marvellous job ... You overcome it [the lack of instruments as a limitation] by not writing for the exposed parts. By not using a lot of harmonies ... just using a little bit here and there. By doubling and not making it too

²⁴ In order to write engaging or interesting music, it is necessary to discern the students' likes and dislikes. Tresham expressed the importance of ascertaining the students' likes and dislikes; however, unfortunately, one of his attempts in discerning the students' interests was unsuccessful, "I thought by giving them [the students] bits and pieces they could give me some feedback and I would be able to sort of read the situation a little about what they liked, what they didn't like, but now having the experience I think that was probably more confusing."

difficult for them. I don't think I wrote it too easy for them. And you can write optional parts for some sections.

Cable also “learned that the first thing you have to do is hear the students for whom you are writing [and] don't assume the grade level.” In so doing, a composer will discern the students' musical abilities and associated limitations. Cable continued, “... hear the students for whom you are writing. There is such diversity between the skills. In this particular band, All Saints, it goes from grade six-seven to grade twelve.” Jutras also expressed the importance of listening to young musicians:

I learned to listen carefully to the band because sometimes when they perform for you, you might be impressed, but you don't know how much rehearsal time they have, so you don't know how good they are at sight reading for example, you don't know how flexible they are when it comes to more challenging music, rhythmic skills, and so on and so forth. So I learned to listen carefully to the band before starting to write.

Marlatt concurred, saying that one should take “into account their [musicians'] musical experiences.” Although Ferguson did not explicitly mention composer-student interaction, he implied its importance when referencing the significance of “figure[ing] out what level my band was at” in relation to the Music Complexity Chart (MC²).²⁵ Thus, in order to ascertain young musicians' abilities and compose accordingly, composer-student collaboration must exist.

In the beginning of the New Sounds Learning Project, Ferguson attempted to collaborate with the students when trying to ascertain their capabilities, “The very first thing I sent [to the students through a message board tool] was basically a scale up and down for them to play to know if this is in your capabilities; is this easy, is this hard?” Even though this was the case, “some of the kids didn't even know; they thought that was the whole piece. So maybe I was expecting too much in terms of initial feedback and I wouldn't do that again. I think I would probably just write a first draft and then work on it.” Although Tresham attempted to involve the students in order to determine their musical abilities, he was unsuccessful as many of them did not understand their own capabilities. As a result of this experience, Tresham learned to refrain from composer-student collaboration, at least in the initial writing stages. Even though this was his experience, he reiterated the importance of discerning students' musical abilities. “Really try and, it's hard, if you can get a sense of what they are actually capable of.”

²⁵ MC² is a compositional guide intended to aid composers, music teachers and publishers in creating and/or teaching educational music. See the below section entitled “MC² Benefits” for more information.

All eight wind-composers said that in order to write pedagogically valid educational music, a composer must observe, discuss and hear the young musicians. In so doing, they can ascertain a student's likes and dislikes and hopefully incorporate their familiarities into the composition. When a composer hears for whom they are writing, they will likely determine the students' musical abilities and technical limitations.

Instrumental Knowledge

In order to write appropriate, challenging and enjoyable educational music, composers must have a working knowledge of the instruments being utilized.²⁶ Marlatt claimed, "... knowing all the instruments. I'm learning more and more from this," which is similar to Bailey's statement, "[k]now a little bit about each instrument before you start getting too high a flute, so to speak." He commented further, "so they [composers] would have to, I think, know their ranges upside down of all instruments, you know the clarinets, and the flutes, and then the, if they have an oboe, you know." Yorke-Slader concurred with Bailey's reference to having a great instrumental knowledge, saying, "[h]ave a general sense of how difficult it is to play certain things on certain instruments. The kind of mistakes in general writing for band happen because of low understanding of the instruments." Therefore, if a composer wishes to avoid mistakes he or she should be quite knowledgeable about the instruments being used in a band.

However, to what extent must a composer be knowledgeable? Bailey clarifies what is meant by knowing "a little bit about each instrument" when stating, "know ... ranges upside down of all instruments." Yorke-Slader did not allude to 'little' understanding, but rather the opposite, when saying composers should refrain from a "low understanding of the instruments." "There needs to be an awareness of where each instrument sounds the best. Not what is the *playable range*, but what is the *optimal range*. Even playing in a band is helpful," expressed Yorke-Slader. He mentioned the importance of understanding the optimal instrumental range because he realized the students with whom he was working struggled with range. Note that from the eight composers, he emphasized this instrumental challenge most frequently. In summary, some wind-composers felt it was important to

²⁶ From the eight wind-composer interviews, three (37.5%) explicitly described the need of instrumental knowledge. Evidence indicates that the others did not mention this knowledge because it is a given; professional composers should be knowledgeable in every instrument.

understand all the instruments being used. A couple felt that a deep awareness of the instruments and their ranges was preferable.

MC² Benefits

When writing educational music it is beneficial to utilize the Music Complexity Chart (MC²).²⁷ This is a compositional guide intended to aid composers, music teachers and publishers in creating and/or teaching educational music. It was initially designed by the principal investigator and then refined with input from composers, music teachers and publishers (Andrews, 2011). This chart outlines the musical characteristics regarding levels of difficulty pertaining to educational music: Easy (grades 1 and 2); Medium (grades 3 and 4); and Advanced (grades 5 and 6).

Cable said, “I used that, yes for sure ... I used this quite a lot especially on the phraseology and the melody parts.” He also alluded to Canadian publishers not having a common set of guidelines for teachers and composers. Because Canadian publishers²⁸ do not have a set of common guidelines, the Chart proved very useful. Gassi also “thought it was accurate,” while Marlatt emphasized the Chart’s benefits for teachers: “Teachers need this. They need to know the differences between band levels,” which is what the MC² provides. However, the Chart is not flawless. Yorke-Slader noted that range could have been more specific and the 2/2 time could have been properly categorized. Tresham also mentioned a lack of specificity; however, rather than pertaining to range it concerned “each individual instrument.” Even though the Chart may require some revamping, Yorke-Slader ended his critique with, “I think the Chart is helpful.” Jutras, Bailey and Tresham also expressed the Chart’s usefulness, but only as a guideline. “So, if you use it as a tool, as a guide, it’s perfect; it works really well ...,” expressed the former. He even continued, delineating its benefits, “It gives a good idea, for example, in terms of instrumentation.” Bailey also reiterated the Chart’s guiding qualities: “So those are just guidelines ... and if you feel obliged to move outside that guideline, you have to have your own guideline too.” Tresham also used it “as a general guide”, saying,

[i]t’s [MC²] fairly easy to follow. There aren’t really very many specifics in terms of each individual instrument but what I found there was when I, also just to back

²⁷ Five of the eight (62.5%) composers utilized the MC² during the New Sounds of Learning Project; however, all eight (100%) composers expressed its usefulness. See Appendix V for the Chart.

²⁸ Although Canadian publishers do not have a set of common guidelines, the American Band Association does, according to Cable.

up a little bit and you probably remember, at the very start of this project we were looking at a .5 to maybe level 1 for this group and when I stuck to that, I had sent a few sketches, the reaction was oh this is way too simple, you know it's really too easy so the level kept getting bumped to finally I said well you know the teacher was more working on level 2 and 3 pieces so you know, would I be able to make it sort of more of a level 2 to 3? So that is where the piece ended up, sort of sitting and parts of it are level 1, parts of it have level 2, and there is some sections of the piece that show elements of level 3. So was it [the Chart] helpful? I think for this specific situation I ended up using it as a basic guide but then making adjustments based on the particular strengths of that band and trying to sort of answer the best I could to the requests, making certain sections easier or certain parts at an easier level.

The above quotation provides a sense of how Trehsam utilized the Chart during the compositional process. As he explicitly stated, due to his group's context and the specific situation in which he found himself, he had to use the Chart as a guideline. The above monologue should therefore provide insight into the ways in which a composer or teacher can utilize the Music Complexity Chart (MC²).

All the composers mentioned its usefulness; however, not all used the Chart during the New Sounds of Learning Project. This was the case as the eight composers had direct contact with the students and were able to ascertain the students' technical abilities. Why consult the Chart if you can obtain first-hand knowledge of their capabilities? Marlatt examined the MC²; however, he had his own guide, expressing, “[s]ome things [between the two guides] are very similar range, difficulties, doubling, etc. It's interesting to see some of the similarities and differences.” One difference lies in forms; Marlatt's guide does not convey forms.²⁹ If he believed the MC² as beneficial, why did he not solely utilize it? Evidence shows that Marlatt was very familiar³⁰ with his own guide and as a result, he felt more comfortable using it. Moreover, he disagreed with certain grading aspects and therefore decided to utilize his own guide.³¹

Gassi and Bailey also did not consult the MC². “It felt like they [the young musicians] were off

²⁹ Marlatt does not consider forms since his grading guide is one of “difficulty” or “complexity”. As a result, he does not “see how form really impacts difficulty” (D. Marlatt, personal communication, February 23, 2016).

³⁰ In an e-mail correspondence Marlatt claimed he wrote the guide to band grading approximately 15 years ago (D. Marlatt, personal communication, February 23, 2016).

³¹ In a personal communication Marlatt explained the Chart's elements with which he disagreed, “I disagree with how Bernie has grouped grade 1 and 2 together. That is an enormous difference in skill and difficulty that I find hard to see as something that should be generalized together. Have a look through how I've broken down grade 0.5, 1.5 and then 2. Comparing the 3 grade levels, you can see the instrumentation has changed, the range has changed, the technical abilities have changed, etc. There are so many differences at these first few years of student development. A beginning band (grade 5, 6, 7 or 8 in school) could play grade 0.5 for a year or more. There are some senior high school bands that struggle playing grade 2 literature. So to lump those 2 grades together is far too general for me” (D. Marlatt, personal communication, February 23, 2016).

the Chart anyways ... so I went back to some old tricks which pretty much went along with your Chart,” Bailey reported. Gassi’s good composer-student rapport, not student limitations, replaced his need for the MC²: “I didn’t have a need to consult the Chart ... I knew what the complexity was because I know the students well. For me, I knew where I was writing to.” The three composers therefore utilized other criteria, not because the MC² was error-ridden but because it was viewed as ancillary to their unique circumstances.

Unlike the aforementioned three, Cable, Yorke-Slader, Ferguson, Jutras and Tresham used the Chart. Cable examined it thoroughly, claiming, “[t]he medium level grade 3 or 4 doesn’t really apply ... I never went to 5/4 only 4/4. Grade 4 could be over here.” As expressed above, Yorke-Slader critiqued the Chart. However, he also commented positively on keys and alignment: “The keys, that’s all fine. You want consistency, alignment.” Ferguson was “blown away by it, how specific it was,” while Tresham noted, “[t]here aren’t really very many specifics in terms of each individual instrument.” According to the data, these two composers have had numerous musical experiences. Unlike Ferguson, Tresham commented on his challenges associated with student-instrumentation: “So you know, it’s a tricky thing, especially with the instrumentation changing every two weeks.” Since the constant change in instrumentation was frustrating, instrument properties were prominent in Tresham’s mind, especially when examining the Chart. As a result, he would have noticed ways in which the MC² could include an instrument section.

Moreover, it is significant to note that Tresham’s comment regarding a lack of instrumental specificity is contrary to Jutras’ position. He said, “[i]t [the Chart] gives a good idea, for example, in terms of instrumentation.” Evidence shows that Tresham desired more specific instrumentation because the students with whom he worked had a lack of knowledge about “how music is built” and did not have much time to practice their sections. Jutras praised the instrumentation because his class had nearly the full instrumentation for a concert band. Furthermore, according to data, his praise derived from his positive experience working with students who were at a much higher level than he expected: “So for me I felt that there were very little limitations in terms of what I was first expecting and the reality that I could write a grade 3 point, 3 and a half.” Moreover, although he experienced “some limitations as for instrumentation,” he was able to address these limitations without much difficulty for he was flexible, improvisatory and adaptable; he knew “if there is only one horn in the band, then you have to double that line somewhere else, usually in the saxophone part or a third clarinet

part or whatever.” Furthermore, he used the MC² as a guide and not a fixed solution.

Even though Ferguson was “blown away” by the Chart’s specificity, he noted some inconsistencies: “The level of players is not consistent ... It wasn’t totally consistent down here,” as he pointed to the issue of phrasing. Jutras did not mention inconsistencies, but rather its unique qualities:

What I found out was that presently, if you look at most of the music that is coming out from different publishers in the States, when they say it’s a grade three and a half or a grade four, for example, and I look at the Chart, and I look at for example the use of sixteenth and thirty-second notes, well there are very few thirty-second notes in grade three and three and a half from the States, and for example, it is suggested here that we could use odd meters like 5/8, 7/8 and so on. I found out that there are very few composers using that, so the 3.5, 4 in the United States for example is missing the quality to teach young musicians that all music doesn’t come in 2/4 and 4/4 and 3/4.³²

Although Jutras lauded the Chart, he still mentioned it should not be used as an absolute, “[MC²] gives a good idea, for example in terms of instrumentation, but again it is not because it says on the Chart that you can have two horns parts but if there is only one horn in the band, then you have to double that line somewhere else.” Tresham concurred with Jutras that it is “a general guide” but then “made adjustments based on the particular strengths of the band.”

Although not every wind-composer used the Chart while composing, all acknowledged its usefulness. It helps composers and teachers understand, to an extent, the musical level at which their students may be and how a composer can address it.

Confirmation of Findings

I contacted David Marlatt on February 23, 2016 asking if he would like a Pseudonym and review my thesis to ensure accuracy of all narratives and interpretation. He responded within less than an hour saying, “Hi Tess ... Of course you can use my name in your thesis. I will look it over in the next few days. You may feel free to contact me at any time via email for clarification or questions you may have. All the best, dM.” Within the same day he wrote another e-mail, detailing his comments and concerns. He expressed his discomfort with my use of the terms “virtually identical” when describing his guide and the MC² (D. Marlatt, personal communication, February 23, 2016). After sending me a copy of his guide I realized his differed in quite a few ways. Furthermore, he described

³² Jutras’ claim regarding music from different United States publishers seems to contradict Cable’s, “... the American Band Association released a common set of guidelines ... I have it.”

certain MC² elements with which he disagreed.

Through a personal communication on February 23, 2016, Neil Yorke-Slader also expressed the extent to which the Chart could be altered:

‘The Chart is not flawless as Yorke-Slader claimed suggests from its syntax that I think the chart was flawless. What I actually was saying could be better phrased as ‘Yorke-Slader noted something he felt was not properly categorized in the Chart was not, specifically the 2/2 time signature as being in the Easy level.’ Feel free to contact me – glad to help!’ (N. Yorke-Slader, personal communication, February 23, 2016).

I carefully considered Yorke-Slader’s notation. I also realized how friendly and helpful he was with his use of syntax and diction in the e-mail.

Conclusion

The composers indicate their desire to write technically appropriate, challenging and enjoyable music for young musicians. In addition, they recognize that one should also collaborate with students, have a working knowledge of the instruments, and use MC² as a guideline for composing educational music. These four main themes emerged from the wind-composer interviews; however, are these unique? Have other studies revealed similar themes?

Chapter Five: Reflections

The aim of telling these stories was to determine what wind-composers learn from writing for young musicians as most modern professional composers write inaccessible music for students (Andrews, 2004; Colgrass, 2004; Bowden, 2010). I examined the composers’ experiences, not only to encourage music teachers to program Canadian compositions in their music classrooms, but to convey

to post-secondary educators the significance of training composers to write educational music. Ultimately, in narrative inquiry, the potential transferability of the composers' experiences depends on my reflections on their stories, as well as my interpretation of their words and my literary experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Composing for Young Musicians: The Mind-Shift

All eight wind-composers were trained to write complex works for professional musicians. This way of thinking and training musicians at the post-secondary level is consistent with other sources (Hatrik, 2002; Andrews, 2004; Colgrass, 2004; Bowden, 2010; Terauds, 2011). Francois Rabbath, 2006 Recipient of the ASTS Isaac Stern Award, is only one of many who writes challenging compositions for professional musicians as complex works are consistent with professionals' abilities (cited in Fanelli, 2009). This mindset of writing complex pieces was common among six of the eight wind-composers and dominated most³³ of their musical thinking. Consequently, many wind-composers expressed challenges associated with writing educational music for young musicians. If educational music training had existed in the wind-composers' education, it is less likely these challenges would have occurred. According to Freund (2011), if a composer is trained to have innovative ideas when writing for professional musicians, it is necessary to apply that which they have learned while shifting their way of thinking. This mindset-shift is exactly what many of the wind-composers learned to do. The composers realized that their compositional training at the post-secondary level to write complex works for professional musicians was insufficient for composing educational music. Consequently, they had to adjust what they learned at university and college in order to write pedagogically valid music. While making this adjustment and shifting their way of thinking, the composers engaged in improvisation, which is consistent with Freund's (2011) as well as Katz and Gardner's (2012) notions of musical creativity.

Because many wind-composers underwent a musical mind-shift, they learned – and sometimes with difficulty – how to write pedagogically valid educational music. According to some wind-composers, when writing for professionals, they do not concern themselves with whether the music is

³³ I use the word “most” as two composers had much experience working with amateurs prior to the New Sounds of Learning Project. As a result, their compositional thinking and processes did not ‘shift’ as drastically as the other composers.

meaningful nor appropriate. Moreover, they do not worry about the professionals' technical abilities. However – when writing for young musicians – the wind-composers realized the importance of creating meaningful and appropriate music, composer-student collaboration to discern instrumental limitations, and using a musical guide.

Mind-Shift to Meaningful Music

Although one wind-composer noted the significance of writing enjoyable music for professionals, many claimed that professionals will play virtually anything. This, however, is not the case when composing for young musicians. All wind-composers learned the significance of writing music that is appealing to young musicians. This has a number of implications. The finding supports other studies and sources (e.g., Duncan & Andrews, 2015; *The Instrumentalist*, 2014a; *The Instrumentalist*, 2014b; Bowden, 2010). American Chris Ozley has composed for beginners. He claimed music should be meaningful for beginners; they should be able to relate to it (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014b). When commissioned to compose for the Saratoga High School Orchestra Timothy Mahr considered what could resonate with the musicians. He noted that numerous students had immigrated or had parents who immigrated to the United States. As a result, Mahr wrote a piece illustrating musical pleas for salvation; it conveyed the immigration issue (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014a). Other composers, such as Kerin Bailey, Elissa Milne, Sonny Chua and Carol Matz, also said that student interests and what they deem “fun” must be considered when composing (Bowden, 2010). Like the latter list of composers, two of the wind-composers used the word “fun” when describing interesting music.

In order to produce “fun” music, one of the composers explicitly mentioned providing students with “unlimited options” and in other words, musical possibilities. This provides insights into the ways in which composers can create appealing music. Moreover, the notion of “unlimited options” is supported by Barrett (2006) who conducted a case study on beliefs and practices that can inform composition teaching in K-12 classrooms. One of the teacher-composer strategies identified was extending young musician thinking and providing musical possibilities. The wind-composers produced enjoyable works by incorporating popular and student-centered music into their compositions. For example, some composers noted the extent to which they included rock, rap or Hannah Montana beats. The inclusion of popular techniques is important when writing educational music (Leung, 2004;

Swanwick, 1999).

Most wind-composers provided reasons for writing engaging music. This provides insights into the ways in which these composers think and express themselves. The wind-composers used more of a ‘craftsman’ than a theoretical or inspirational approach (Lubart, 2003; Eysenck, 1993; Bahle, 1934), and they were very grounded and well versed in the practical nature of composition. Rather than solely knowing that music must be appealing, they had a deeper, practical understanding of this knowledge; they were aware of the reasons for writing engaging music.

Many of the wind-composers also reported difficulties associated with striking a balance between writing music that is both challenging and familiar. This difficulty is consistent with Colgrass (2004) and the eight string-composers (Duncan & Andrews, 2015) who participated in the New Sounds of Learning Project (Andrews, 2012).

When striking this balance, the wind-composers also learned the significance of incorporating range, tempo, changing meters and rhythms; however, these technicalities must not be too difficult. Even though the rhythm – among other qualities – cannot be too challenging for students, the wind-composers strove to create music with a range of melody, rhythm, harmony and texture. According to Andrews (2009), this integration is beneficial for young musicians as it fosters learning.

Only one of the eight wind-composers in this study said creating music that is both challenging and familiar is very difficult to accomplish. Tresham claimed that students would like to enjoy a piece; however, in order to engage them a composer must create a challenge that is “essentially within their capabilities” (e.g., something with which they are familiar) and ensure there is enough rehearsal time. The notion of creating a challenge within a person’s capabilities resonates with Vygotsky’s (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). However, according to the composers, it is difficult to strike that balance. As a result, a composer is faced with composing that which is too simple and consequently, boring, or that which is challenging and students cannot master it due to a lack of rehearsal time. Thus, according to Tresham, a composer must decide either the former or latter when composing for young musicians. This is inconsistent with the New Music for Young Musicians Project in which twenty-four claimed the necessity of balancing developmentally useful but challenging music with student familiarity (Andrews, 2004). Evidence conveys that Tresham responded in this manner because, from all the wind-composers, he was the only one to frequently comment on students’ lack of rehearsal time. Since his students struggled to practice, his experience caused him to believe that striking a balance

between challenging and familiar material was extremely difficult. This, of course, is just one composer's experience while writing for young musicians. Overall, the wind-composers avoided very complex writing, which is a key factor differentiating music for professionals and young musicians (Duncan & Andrews, 2015; Andrews, 2009; Colgrass, 2004; Hatik, 2002). They learned the significance of writing technically appropriate and enjoyable music for young musicians. As we saw, this was an important theme which is relevant to the research question: What do composers learn when writing music for young musicians?

Mind-Shift: Knowing Limitations

Because composer-student collaboration is not emphasized at the post-secondary level, it was a challenge for some wind-composers to communicate with the young musicians. For example, one composer attempted – through a message board – to involve the students in order to determine their musical abilities and limitations. This particular tool was unsuccessful as many of them did not understand their own capabilities and lacked the necessary musical language to communicate their desires. The composers also realized the challenges associated with instrumentation: instruments were lacking, the instrumental skills in a band were diverse and varied, there was a lack of rehearsal time, etc. Frustrations and challenges associated with student-composer collaboration and instrumental limitations are consistent with Duncan and Andrews' (2015) study with eight string-composers.

Although the wind-composers experienced some challenges while writing educational music, they overcame many of them by shifting their mindset. In other words, the composers learned to attempt and adopt different techniques that would help them compose educational music. All eight composers collaborated with students, not only to ascertain their musical likes and dislikes, but to determine their musical limitations. These narratives, which express a desire to collaborate with young musicians, support Colgrass (2004). He realized the benefits associated with collaboration, noting the different ways young musicians learn composition skills. Kabalevsky concurred with the importance of collaboration when composing for young musicians. He learned that a composer must stop and listen attentively to the beginners for whom they will be composing (Forrest, 1996). This comment closely resembles that which two wind-composers explicitly expressed in this study. Not only did Cable and Jutras listen to, and communicate with, the young musicians but all the wind-composers did so. Cable and Jutras, however, were the only ones to explicitly say that one should listen to those for

whom one is writing. The significance of composer-student communication is supported by Kaschub (1997). She presents a study in which six 6th-grade music classes and a large high school choir generated and refined a group-conceived composition. She used a professional composer as a guide and documented lessons learned. Such challenges included clear communication between the composer and students. On a number of occasions, she had to be the interpreter between the composer and students. The wind-composers did not appear to have numerous communicative issues with students; however, from the eight composers, Tresham expressed some communication issues. It seemed that he clearly articulated his questions and notions, but the students could not respond to his inquiries or address his ideas as Tresham claimed they were confusing and he was expecting too much from the students.

The theme of student-composer collaboration is also replicated in the New Sounds of Learning Project with the string-composers (Duncan & Andrews, 2015). Although composer-student interaction was emphasized in both studies, composer-teacher collaboration was not to the same extent. It is interesting to note that even when asked “How do you think music teachers and composers can work together so that composing for young musicians is in the curriculum?”, most wind-composers did not mention teachers, but rather the students, publishing companies, or just commissioning in general. From the eight wind-composers, only three (37.5%) referenced composer-teacher collaboration. This is inconsistent with the New Sounds of Learning string-composer study. Duncan and Andrews (2015) claim that all composer participants felt that only positive outcomes could derive from teacher-composer collaboration and that this would help composers write higher quality repertoire for young musicians.

Evidence shows that only three wind-composers expressed composer-teacher collaboration because most were focused on the students’ interests and capabilities rather than the music teacher’s suggestions. Moreover, they did not have an entirely successful experience with their assigned music teachers, since Cable mentioned the importance of “a two-way street” and not knowing how to “solve this [communicative] disconnect” between the teacher and composer. There is no mention as to the reason for this disconnect.

In order to write appropriate and enjoyable music, the wind-composers not only learned the necessity of composer-student collaboration but also of instrumental knowledge. Some expressed the importance of composers “knowing” the instruments’ ranges. It is important to understand the

technical aspects of an instrument, such as how to play it, knowing the ranges, and so forth. However, it is not enough to have content knowledge of all the instruments, but educational knowledge. It is imperative composers have a working knowledge of the instruments being used in such a way they can pedagogically address students' musical limitations and thus, compose educational music. It takes another skill set to write for students because it is necessary to engage them, which Vygotsky (1978) alludes to when describing the ZPD. This zone is between what a learner can do without help and what he or she can do with help. Thus, it is the zone in which a learner can progress with guidance. Andrew Boysen alludes to this zone when saying that he does not generally force the students to understand pitch, forms, or media, but rather asks: "In what are they interested?" Once he has seen what they have composed, he attempts to gauge their present understanding of form and then carefully provides suggestions (Camphouse, 2007). Moreover, James Curnow emphasizes the importance of "never want[ing] to over- or under-estimate the abilities of an organization [i.e. the musical group]" (cited in Camphouse, 2004, p. 10). If composers have content and educational understanding of the instruments being used, they will be more successful in addressing instrumentation and the students' needs. This replicates findings in the string-composer New Sounds of Learning Project. The string-composers also realized the importance of acquiring a working knowledge of the instrument(s) being used (Duncan & Andrews, 2015). This similarity has a number of implications. Although both composer groups had different musical approaches, some of the fundamental musical and compositional aspects remained the same: instrumentation.

Mind-Shift to Educational Guides

When writing for professionals, the composers did not concern themselves with technical limitations or having the appropriate amount of instrumental knowledge. As a result of this context, the composers never required a compositional guide. When writing for young musicians, however, it is necessary to understand and address their musical and instrumental limitations. An educational guide or musical chart can be useful in this context (Rusinek, 2011; Webster, 2011). The wind-composers expressed numerous benefits associated with a guide known as the Music Complexity Chart (MC²) (Andrews, 2011). They noted the ways in which this Chart, or similar guides, helped them learn to write pedagogically valid music. Their narratives support studies indicating the extent to which compositional constraints, frameworks, length of time, rhythms, etc., can help throughout the

compositional process (Soares, 2011; Webster, 2011; Andrews & Giesbrecht, 2014).

It is significant to note that the MC² theme is not expressed in any other study.³⁴ However, similar to the wind-composers, the New Sounds of Learning Project involving the string-composers revealed that parametrical adjustments and particular compositional parameters are necessary when composing for young musicians. Some of the string-composers claimed that technical requirements, tempo, changing metres, and rhythms must be incorporated to write creatively valid music without deemphasizing the artistic side of it (Duncan & Andrews, 2015). This is consistent with the wind-composers' experiences. As an example, Jutras used the Chart to discern technical requirements necessary for his grade level that would resonate with Gregorian music. In other words, without subjugating the artistic aspect and complexities of Gregorian music, he was able to integrate appropriate technical requirements.

It seems the technical aspect of composition must be altered to suit the beginners' needs; however, this does not have to impede a professional composer's style or standards. Jutras' experience in the latter paragraph is only one of many from the New Sounds of Learning Project depicting the said situation. The wind-composers' stories support the following study and sources. One of the twenty-four commissioned composers in the New Music for Young Musicians Project noted that he wrote in his usual style while considering some of the basic difficulties encountered when studying a strong instrument (Andrews, 2004). Colgrass (2004) also made similar statements. Therefore, a guide can help a composer write music that simultaneously conveys emotion, has intellectual interest, and is uncomplicated. It can help a composer ascertain a young musician's musical level without impeding the composer's style or standards. This is what many of the wind-composers learned.

Conclusion

In this chapter we determined that the wind-composers had to think about their audience (young musicians) and shift their musical thinking accordingly. Rather than having content knowledge of all the instruments, they had to develop educational knowledge; they had to learn to engage their students

³⁴ Evidence shows that this theme has not been identified in any other studies because it has only been used in the New Sounds of Learning Project during the string-composer sessions and the wind-composer sessions. The aforementioned string-composers were asked about the Chart; however, a theme concerning this guide was not identified. The string-composers did not explicitly mention the Chart's benefits (Duncan & Andrews, 2015).

and guide them in such a manner that the young musicians will learn music composition. This technique is known as the Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978). Because the composers engaged in this mind-shift, they encountered some challenges associated with composer-student communication and collaboration. Challenges were also experienced when ascertaining the students' technical limitations. Although this was the case, the wind-composers learned to write pedagogically appropriate and enjoyable music.

Chapter Six: Limitations, Recommendations, Implications and Conclusions

As the climax dissipates and the audience sighs, viewers anticipate the film's ending; the composers' stories have been revealed and the subplots have been woven into the main story-line: what wind-composers learn writing music for young musicians. During the New Sounds of Learning Project the wind-composers learned that in order to write pedagogically valid educational music: 1) The composer must desire to compose technically appropriate, challenging and enjoyable music for young musicians; 2) The composer must collaborate and have direct contact with students; 3) The composer must have a working knowledge of the instruments; and 4) The composer and music teacher can use the Music Complexity Chart (MC²) as numerous benefits are associated with it. However, before the curtains close on this production, the audience must await any underlying or minute conflict resolutions; in this case – the study's limitations.

Limitations

Narrative inquiry was used when analyzing data regarding what wind-composers learn through their experiences. Since their experiences were educational and “narrative thinking is a key form of experience” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 18), narrative inquiry was appropriately employed. The narrative approach, however, is not seamlessly contiguous with my research question. Furthermore, it, and the study's primary data collection tool, have their own limitations.

In “Chapter Three: Methodology” the study's reflection of narrative inquiry has been conveyed. According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), narrative strongly emphasizes the relationship between researcher and participant. Although I interacted with the composers through member checking, I was unable to thoroughly reference the interview-interaction process for I did not conduct the preliminary interviews personally. Moreover, I could not narratively convey the snowball technique used to recruit the composers, as I was not the initiator.

Narrative inquiry also has its own limitations. When analyzing and arranging data narratively, it is possible the researcher can overly personalize and interpersonalize the data (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In other words, I may have become too preoccupied with integrating my own personal stories, thus detracting from relevant data. However, this intersubjectivity should be limited as I only

incorporated a minimal number of personal stories and ones conveying researcher-participant engagement. Researcher-participant engagement has already been limited for I did not coordinate or conduct the preliminary interviews.

Another limitation concerns the researcher becoming so entangled in narrative technicalities – for example, developing detailed characters, a fascinating plot, setting, and so forth – that he or she may record irrelevant information, or neglect to incorporate all necessary information (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), I avoided creating a “‘Hollywood plot’ ... in which everything works out well in the end” (p. 181), thus limiting impertinent information. I accomplished this by acknowledging narrative smoothing. Narrative smoothing is a process by which the researcher brings coherence to the story yet refrains from integrating their “‘good intentions” and those of the participants in every aspect of the study (p. 181). Throughout this study I avoided “‘unbending censure” which is often located in critical ethnographies (p. 181). I also ensured the plots were unconditional, tentative and clean. When engaging in narrative smoothing the researcher must balance this smoothing contained in the plot with what is obscured in the smoothing (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In other words, I had to be alert of the composers’ stories, that which they told during the interviews, and those which were not told.

In order to ensure I was recording pertinent information, I engaged in member checking; the eight composers verified that my data was sound. Through this, I also established a relationship with them (that which narrative emphasizes) and thus, incorporated more of its elements into my study. One such element concerns our first e-mail interactions; I narratively conveyed these interactions when describing the composers’ personality traits. Furthermore, I did not seem to overly personalize data or focus too much on technicalities, for the composers never mentioned my personal stories engulfing theirs. Rather, they claimed how respectfully interwoven our stories were. This feedback proved very beneficial and I am glad to have incorporated the composers’ notations into my findings.

Narrative inquiry is just one of the many approaches in qualitative research. In qualitative research, a theme can be considered without a majority and is often identified anywhere from 20% to 40%. This, however, depends upon the number of participants in the study. Since my study has eight participants, a theme is considered acceptable even if two (25%) of my participants present a similarity. Although this aspect is acceptable in qualitative research, the percentages seem quite low in my estimation. As a result, in my opinion, this identification should be considered a limitation. Because I

deem this a limitation, I have, in “Chapter Four: Composers’ Stories,” expressed the corresponding percentages for each theme. Consequently, the reader is able to ascertain the more valid themes.

Other limitations concern my experience with the data collection tool, face-to-face interviews. Because I was not present during the interviews, it was necessary to contact and clarify with the interviewer some significant social cues. For example, when discussing the Music Complexity Chart (MC²), several composers pointed to certain Chart elements. Because I was absent, I continued asking myself, to where were these composers pointing? This constant questioning was somewhat frustrating and a nuisance. Although it was frustrating, I only had to clarify two hand gestures.

Another limitation regards what Larkin, Watts, and Clifton (2006) describe as the participants’ voices. Sometimes when an audio-recording device is used during the interview, it may not capture the participants’ stories in their entirety. This could be due to technical glitches or a poor interview location. Unfortunately, a few composer-interview locations were clamorous due to background noise. As a result, the audio-recording did not record everything the composers expressed. For example, due to incessant noise, approximately 14 seconds of audio-recording was impossible to decipher during Gassi’s interview. Consequently, 14 seconds of data was lost. However, this loss was not great as the 14 seconds of data was irrelevant³⁵ to the study.

Larkin et al. (2006) also mention that numerous researchers “simply ‘collect’ and ‘represent’ [respondents’] voices [which] oversimplifies the task” (p. 103). By so doing, the participant’s voice becomes lost. It is inevitable that a researcher must interpret and contextualize what is being represented or described by the respondent. This ‘representation’ of voices was limited through member checks and triangulation.

Contribution to Research

The proposed research study is the final stage in the New Sounds of Learning Project. Since the project examines the parameters of educational music and very little research exists concerning how composers compose educational music, it is necessary to explore what composers learn when creating music for young musicians. Although the aforementioned enterprise has already ascertained what string-composers glean from writing for young musicians (Duncan & Andrews, 2015), it was necessary

³⁵ What I mean by irrelevant is that the 14 seconds of data was part of an off-topic conversation between the interviewer and Gassi.

to open up the field of view, so to speak, by asking wind-composers the following: What do you learn from composing new wind works for young musicians?

This study will contribute to the research on educational music, specifically, the process of educational music composition (Andrews, 2012). As a result, it will help enable composers to effectively create educational works for young musicians within school classrooms. Students and teachers may be encouraged to learn and instruct new Canadian works, respectively. Moreover, this study will inspire post-secondary and conservatory instructors to integrate more educational music into their curricula. Thus, knowledge gained from this study has implications for post-secondary educators, elementary and high school teachers, as well as composers. As Colgrass (2004) states, “[c]ollectively, composers could be a force for better music education; after all, school music classrooms are where the audiences of the future are created” (p. 23).

Conclusion

Many of the wind-composers suggested ways in which post-secondary instructors can integrate educational music into the curricula. For example, four (50%) wind-composers mentioned a laboratory session for university students. Both Ferguson and Tresham said this laboratory could enable music students to collaborate with young musicians. Marlatt and Bailey did not explicitly mention a laboratory; however, they alluded to one by claiming the importance of undergraduates ‘testing’ their pieces on young musicians. This notion of ‘testing’ is consistent with other sources. Brian Balmages has experienced composing for professionals and beginners, realizing the importance of “hearing [his] music played by real people” (*The Instrumentalist*, 2014a, p. 26). He said one can learn a plethora about musical techniques when hearing one’s own compositions. Don Freund (2011) furthered, saying, “[h]earing how others respond to one’s mystical ideas is an essential part of composition” (p. 70) as one can learn what works and what does not (Freund, 2011). Moreover, Colgrass (2004), Budiansky and Foley (2005), and Andrews (2009) emphasize the need for undergraduate training in educational music.

These educational workshops could potentially help composers learn to have educational knowledge of all the instruments being used. It is imperative composers have a working knowledge of the instruments being used in such a way they can pedagogically address students’ musical limitations and thus, compose educational music. Composers can learn to guide a student in such a way that the young musician can be engaged. Vygotsky (1978) alludes to this guidance when describing the Zone

of Proximal Development (ZPD).

Yorke-Slader also suggested that “practical learning” would benefit university and college students. He referenced Humber College as a prime example. Thus, according to the wind-composers, there is potential for post-secondary music programs to improve the way in which they teach composition. Although this is the case, would other composers or post-secondary educators agree with these notions? Research on the ways in which post-secondary and conservatory instructors can integrate more educational music into the curricula, as well as the extent to which these applications are successful, can be conducted.

Furthermore, collaboration was an important theme in this study. Every wind-composer mentioned its significance; however, one composer, Tresham, experienced challenges with composer-student communication. Although Tresham attempted – through a message board – to involve the students in order to determine their musical abilities, he was unsuccessful as many of them did not understand their own capabilities. More research should be conducted on successful collaboration methods.

Moreover, numerous studies have been conducted in the United States on educational music (Groulx, 2013; Shuler, 2012; Ciorba & Seibert, 2012, etc.); however, very little has been written on what composers learn. As a result, it would be fascinating to conduct a study on what composers learn from writing educational music for young musicians in the United States or Europe. Would the results be similar to what wind and string-composers learn in Canada? Would these composers also ascertain the importance of writing enjoyable and appropriate music, as well as the significance of composer-student collaboration, having a working knowledge of the instruments and utilizing a set of standard guidelines? I know the wind-composer narratives were enlightening and extremely significant for Canadian music students. I only hope that other music educators and composers will realize the same. But I suppose, “Que sera, sera / Whatever will be, will be / The future’s not ours to see / Que sera, sera” (Livingston & Evans, 1956).

The End

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Appendix I

Composing Samples: Draft #1 (Below Left); Rough Draft #2 (Below Middle)

By grace we've been saved through faith
 And that is not of ourselves
 It's the greatest gift; it's the greatest gift.
 It's the gift of our loving God

We're walking the road we're on
 going back to where we came from

We need pain in our life
 to make us whole
 it can penetrate externally
 but never my soul

Dreamcatcher, why would you want to take away my dreams?
 Dreamcatcher, how could you do such a thing?

I thought we thought this out, but I guess I was wrong
 I never had a doubt, we were going so strong

But I guess life throws us curves
 Sometimes we get what we deserve

dreamt we were sitting on an old park bench
 watching the sun go down
 felt the warmth of its crimson rays
 and we dream without making a sound

So I took your hand and said dance
 Perhaps it was a night of romance

Then I slumped → HAD F HERE YAY!

Chorus: Intro: guitar
 Dreamcatcher...
 Dreamcatcher...
 We need pain in our life
 to make us whole
 it can penetrate externally
 but never my soul
 We're walking the road we're on
 going back to where we came from

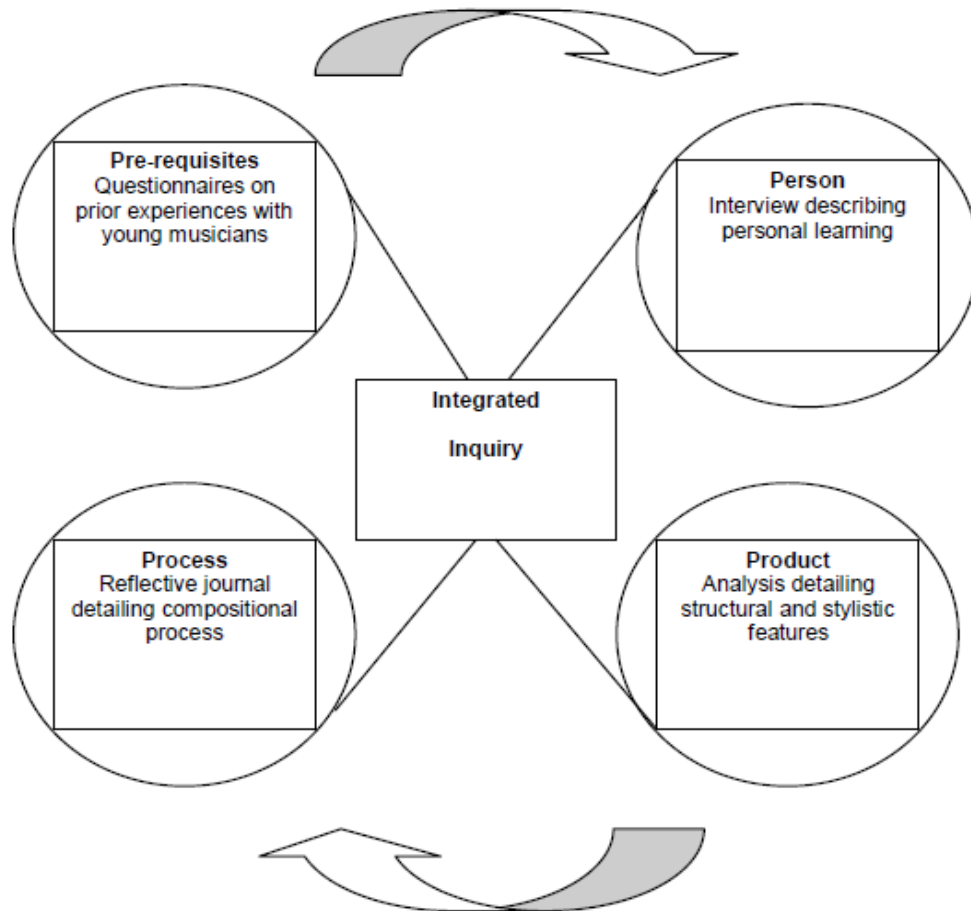
Bridge

Chorus

Outro

Say Dreamcatcher, dot

Appendix II

Conceptual Framework of the New Sounds of Learning Project

Appendix III

Figure 1
Integrated Inquiry Research Process



Appendix IV

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

- 1). Could you describe what you have learned from your overall experience in composing a work for young musicians?

- 2). What would you say was the critical musical limitation? How would you address that?

- 3). We developed the music complexity chart, MC² to try to define some of the different levels, and I just wondered if you had a chance to look at it. Do you have any comments on it?

- 4). What are the major differences in composing for young musicians and professionals?

- 5). Did you experience any changes in your approach to composition per se after this experience?

- 6). What advice would you give to a young composer who was composing his or her first educational piece?

- 7). How do you think music teachers and composers can work together so that composing for young musicians is in the curriculum?

- 8). What are your thoughts on post-secondary institutions and training composers to write for young musicians?

Appendix V

Music Complexity Chart (MC²)

This Chart assists composers, teachers and publishers. Upon viewing the Chart, composers should be able to assign grades; teachers should be able to evaluate repertoire; and publishers should be able to effectively market educational music.

ELEMENTS	Easy Level (Grade 1 < 2)	Medium Level (Grade 3 < 4)	Advanced Level (Grade 5 < 6)
Overall Organization <i>*Instrumentation</i> <i>*Range</i> <i>*Orchestration</i>	1 part per instrument (e.g., alto sax, French horn) or 2 parts (e.g., 1 st and 2 nd trumpets, 1 st and 2 nd violins); basic percussion; condensed score; opt. tympani Initially within octave; gradually up to the 12 th Doubling of parts (e.g., tenor sax/trombone, oboe/flute, cello/bass)	2 and 3 parts (e.g., 1 st and 2 nd Fr. horns, 1 st , 2 nd and 3 rd clarinets); more instruments (e.g., piccolo, bassoon, alto/bass clarinet, bari sax, aux. percussion) Upwards of 2 octaves Brass, woodwind, strings, percussion instrument groupings	4 French horn parts; division of parts (e.g., divisi 1 st flute); specialized instruments (e.g., contra bass clarinet, flugelhorn, English horn, cornet) Complete range of the instruments Sectional divisions (e.g., clarinet section, French horn section)
Rhythm <i>*Note values</i> <i>*Rhythmic patterns</i>	Whole, half, quarter, eighth and dotted notes; some sixteenths Combinations and syncopations of note values above in melody and harmony	Sixteenth and thirty-second notes; triplets; dotted sixteenths Combinations and syncopation of notes in melody, counter-melody and harmony	Full range of notes and dotted notes Polyrhythmic patterns

*Meters	2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 6/8, C	5/8, 7/8, 5/4, 2/2, 3/2	Use of polymeters
Melody *Melodic structure *Melodic direction *Intervals	Brief Motives and short phrases; limited variation/development Tonal/modal melody Step-wise movement, leaps to P 5 th up/down	Longer motives and phrases; variation and development Chromatic/whole-tone Wider intervals (P 6 th -to P 12 th)	Extended development and variation of motives and phrases Atonal/serial melody Augmented and diminished intervals
Harmony *Key signatures *Keys *Harmonic organization	Winds: 1 sharp; up to 3 flats Strings: 1 flat; up to 3 sharps. C+, G+, D+, A+; F+, Bb+, Eb+; A-, E-, B-, F#-; D-, G-, C-	Upwards of 5 sharps and 5 flats E+, B+; Ab+, Db+; C#-, G#-, F-, Bb-	Upwards of 6 sharps and 6 flats; use of accidentals in place of key signatures Enharmonic keys: F#+/Gb+; C#+/Db+; D#-/Eb-; A#-/Bb-
Form *Types *Themes	Binary, ternary, rondo, tone poem, variation, overture Theme or variation of theme in separate sections	Sonata, polyphonic forms (e.g., fugue) Multiple themes or development of multiple themes	Combination forms (e.g., sonata-rondo, rondo-variation) Multiple themes and/or development of themes and/or

*Duration	1 – 2 movements; upwards of 4 minutes	within sections 1 – 3 movements, upwards of 8 minutes	variation of themes within sections 1 – 4 movements; upwards of 12 minutes
Expression *Dynamics *Articulations *Phrasing	pp, p, mp, mf, f, ff crescendo, diminuendo Detached, staccato, legato, and accents Phrasing within bars and upwards of 2 bars	sfp, sfz; changes in dynamics Sostenuto, variety of accents/articulations, contrasting passages Moderate phrasing (up to 4 bars in length)	Full range of gradations (e.g., ppp to fff); rapid dynamic changes; sustained crescendo/diminuend o Full range of articulations, variety within sections Extended phrasing (up to 4 bars and more)