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A composer-teacher in context: Music for the performing arts faculty in a New Zealand secondary school

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Music at

The University of Waikato

by

JANET JENNINGS

The University of Waikato

2008
Abstract

This thesis examines the processes and outcomes of a composer-teacher’s practice in the context of a New Zealand secondary school. The research was undertaken by the composer-teacher/researcher as a case study that integrates an investigation of the context with four action research music composition projects developed as a creative response to that context.

Chapters One to Three comprise the background theory. Chapter One provides an introduction and overview of the research; Chapter Two explains and justifies the research methods. Chapter Three peels away and examines five layers of the secondary school context identified as significant in shaping the perceptions of the participants: approaching the context in a multi-layered way enabled coherent synthesis and appraisal of the relevant literature.

Chapters Four to Seven comprise the four action research music composition projects. Each action research project focuses on a music score composed by the composer-teacher/researcher for a specific group of students at Macleans College, Auckland. The composition, production, and performance processes are investigated from the perspectives of all the participants. Each music project comprises a four part progression – plan (composition process), data (music score), data analysis (recordings of performances, surveys, and interviews with all participants) and reflection (feedback, and feedforward into the next project).

Each phase of the research generated significant outcomes, such as the four original music scores. Chapter Eight summarizes the themes, issues, and patterns that emerged, and makes recommendations for further research.

A model of co-constructive practice emerges from this research: teacher and students co-construct artistic worlds through performance. The model is not new (it is common practice, adopted by generations of musician-teachers) but is rarely acknowledged and currently un-researched. This research demonstrates the
validity of the practice from both musical, and teaching and learning perspectives, and examines the strengths and limitations of the model. At its best, the creative processes co-constructed by a teacher with her students are shown to provide a crucible within which intense and creative learning experiences occur. Students of all levels of ability are shown to gain confidence in this context, and subsequently develop skills with apparent ease. The co-constructive model is limited in that it cannot meet the musical needs of all students: co-construction should be considered as one model of practice, appropriate for use in association with many others.

This research provides ‘virtual access’ to a particular world of performance practice, revealing the secondary school context as a realm of authentic and valid musical practice.
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CHAPTER ONE
Introduction, research background, overview, and original contribution

“Aesthetics ... has not addressed very well the problems of linking the individual and the artistic experience to the larger social fabric of reconstructed living. Schooling and education provide a theatre in which such performances may be played out, and where such reunification may take place”

(Maxcy, 2001: 14)

Introduction

I put my computer into the car and a heavy bag laden with paper copies of music. I live only two kilometres from my place of work, Macleans College, a secondary school in Auckland, New Zealand. As I drive this short distance I pass many students walking, chatting, and laughing in their sky-blue shirts and dark blue shorts, skirts, or trousers on their way to school. The school itself looks out over the turquoise waters of the Hauraki Gulf, with Waiheke Island clearly visible over the water. The ranges of the Coromandel Peninsula form a backdrop on the horizon.

I turn into a small car park outside my domain, the school’s auditorium. As I take the bag out of my car, three students gather around me: “Have you got our music today, Mrs Jennings? Is it finished?”

I am a musician (at this stage of my life focusing specifically on composition) – and teacher (currently Head of the Performing Arts Faculty at Macleans College). Yes, I have finished the music composition process, but today my students and I are going to start the business of turning the notes on the page into musical reality. Will the music fulfil my expectations as a composer? Will the music provide a positive learning experience for my students? ...
Research background

David Elliott outlined a ‘praxial’ approach to music teaching in his 1995 publication of *Music Matters*. Praxial philosophy signalled for me a possible resolution of the dichotomy I experienced when first employed as a secondary school music teacher in the 1980s: my music teaching practice initially seemed to be divorced from both my life as a musician and from the reality of music making. Elliott’s praxial philosophy of music education focused on the practical business of music making.

In 2005 Elliott edited *Praxial music education: Reflections and dialogues* in which music educators reflected on ten years of praxial music education in the classroom. In the introduction to this publication, Elliott outlined his philosophy and issued a number of challenges to music teachers. Two of these challenges (Elliott, 2005: 12), that the music teacher “embody and exemplify musicianship” and that the music teacher “endeavour to develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges”, seemed to me to encapsulate the binary nature of my current reality as a music teacher: I am both musician and teacher; my musical life is integral to, and indivisible from, my work as a teacher. Elliott’s challenges prompted me to reflect on the practice I had developed since the 1995 publication of *Music Matters* as a composer-teacher in a New Zealand secondary school.

I began composing music for my students in 1996. This process seemed to integrate my intense desire for personal musical expression – to “embody and exemplify musicianship” – with my responsibility as a music teacher to “endeavour to develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” (Elliott, 2005: 12). Composing for my students represents only one aspect of my many shifts in teaching and learning practice since 1995, and the music making based on my scores comprises only a very minor part (as I believe it should) of the musical activity within the school. Nevertheless, this practice has formed a significant creative aspect of my work, and the identity I have created as a composer-teacher, in recent years.
As I reflected, I faced the possibility that the model of practice I had developed as a composer-teacher could constitute what Regelski (2007: 19-22)\(^1\) believes to be strategic action rather than communicative action: I could be manipulating my students in the pursuit of my own musical goals at the expense of their learning needs. In Regelski’s words (2007:19), strategic action in a music education context is:

> success-oriented and can sometimes be highly manipulative or serve the goals of the Actor more than, or at the expense of others in the lifeworld. Both can be characteristics of teachers and of researchers.

Tom Schuller (2007: 3), Director of the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, Paris, points out that “Those who work in education are very fond of claiming major benefits for education ... The question is, does it work, and how?” I decided that the model of practice I had developed as a composer-teacher should be investigated and examined.

**Research overview**

Through systematic research I have sought to explore and present the creative and educational processes and outcomes of a composer-teacher’s practice in the context\(^2\) of a New Zealand secondary school. I refer to myself as a composer-teacher because the term conveys my sense of identity accurately. I refer to the student participants variably as students, participants, musicians, players, instrumentalists, dancers, or actors in order both to represent their primary sense of identity in each context and to avoid textual clutter.

This research was undertaken as a case study combining an investigation of the context with four action research music composition projects developed as a creative response to the context. The investigation of context reveals the recent and considerable philosophical and structural changes that have transformed the education system in New Zealand over a fifteen year period. Although the action

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1 Regelski adopts these concepts from Habermas, as cited by Outhwaite (1994).
2 The word ‘context’ is used to denote a complex, multi-layered range of conditions that shape the perceptions of those working within it. The conditions comprising the context of this research are explained in more detail in Chapter One: 6 and developed throughout the thesis.
research projects build on my prior experience of composing for students, my daily reality as a musician-teacher has changed fundamentally during the first decade of this century. In particular, the multi-disciplinary nature of these projects marks a change in the emphasis of my work, and is a direct response to the changes revealed in the context investigation.

I undertook each action research project (the creative response to the context) by composing music for a specific group of students at Macleans College and examining the composition, production, and performance processes through the twin lenses provided by David Elliott’s challenges. The challenge to “embody and exemplify musicianship” provided the lens to examine the process from a composer’s perspective while the challenge to “develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” (Elliott, 2005: 12) brought the research into focus by examining the process from a teaching and learning perspective.

I thus designed the research framework, methodology, methods, and techniques to accommodate and give equal weight to the musical and educational aspects of the research, and to give voice to all the participants. My guiding principle was to capture and convey the essence of the context and the experience.

The following diagram illustrates the single-study, multiple-event structure of this case study:
Diagram 1: Case study structure

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This framework accommodates two research approaches. The background theory (description and analysis of the context) takes a top-down approach by investigating the context that has shaped the perceptions of all the research participants. In contrast, the action research music composition projects, produced in response to the context, provide a bottom-up focus on the work of individuals. The combination of two approaches is appropriate in that individuals shape the context within which they work as well as being shaped by it. As Bowman (2005: 56) reminds us, the “meanings and values of musical practices are plural, historically emergent, unstable, socially relative, and contextually specific”.
Background theory (Chapters One – Three):

The background theory (A composer-teacher in context: Clarifying the vision) comprises three chapters. Following on from this research overview (Chapter One), Chapter Two provides a detailed explanation and justification of my research methods, in particular the artistic inquiry methods that integrate the musical and educational thrusts of the research.

Chapter Three is presented as a series of essays. The essays peel away and examine five layers of the secondary school context that I have identified as significant in shaping the perceptions of the participants. Approaching the context in a multi-layered way, ranging from philosophical and pedagogical concerns to my personal perspective, enabled me to synthesize and appraise the relevant literature coherently. Each essay presents trends and issues arising from the literature in a way that is appropriate to the layer of context:

- Essay One places this research in the philosophical discourse surrounding praxial approaches to music education. The identity issues faced by music teachers are addressed: Am I a musician? Am I a teacher? Can I be a musician-teacher?
- Essay Two examines how the research fits into the context of recent, sweeping curricular change in New Zealand schools;
- Essay Three examines the co-curricular educational context which is revealed as a distinctive and influential feature of the New Zealand education system;
- Essay Four describes the specific context (Macleans College) in which the work was undertaken; and
- Essay Five, my personal narrative, brings the background theory to its narrowest focus – the point where the skills and interests of one composer-teacher intersect with specific students.

3 Aldous Huxley (1959: 2), a leading twentieth century essayist, defines the essay as “a literary device for saying almost everything about almost anything. By tradition, almost by definition, the essay is a short piece, and it is therefore impossible to give all things full play within the limits of a single essay. But a collection of essays can cover almost as much ground, and cover it almost as thoroughly, as can a long novel.”
Four action research music composition projects (Chapters Four – Seven):

Chapters Four to Seven comprise the four action research music composition projects (hereafter referred to as “music projects”). The structure of the music projects accommodates my creative response (the music compositions) to the context, and explores the processes and outcomes from the points of view of all the participants.

Each music project comprises a four part progression (plan, data, data analysis, reflection) as illustrated in the following diagram, and explained below:

Diagram 2: Action research music project structure

- **Plan**: a narrative describes my planning and composition process. I focus on the ways in which my work reflects Elliott’s twin challenges to the music teacher to “embody and exemplify musicianship” and to “develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” (Elliott, 2005: 12).
**Data:** the music score is presented as data created in response to the philosophy and the ‘drivers’ (stimuli for composition) revealed in the exploration of the context. The research is thus a form of artistic inquiry in that the response to the context is creative; the music scores function as data and form the focal point of each action research project. I wrote the four music compositions for a variety of ensembles as follows:

**Chapter Four (music project 1):** *At the Beginning of Time* – a narrative work for percussion and voice;

**Chapter Five (music project 2):** *The Pied Piper* – a narrative dance work for wind, percussion and piano;

**Chapter Six (music project 3):** *Macbeth* – a drama for actors and instrumentalists; and

**Chapter Seven (music project 4):** *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha* – an SATB choral work.

**Data analysis:** three modes of analysis are applied in response to each music score, each giving voice to the students who participated in the projects:

i) Recordings of the scores performed by the students for whom they were written are provided on CD or DVD: the performers’ responses are therefore initially expressed musically, rather than verbally. The performances illustrate musically the level at which the composer-teacher has been able to “develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” (Elliott, 2005: 12).

ii) A survey of all student-participants is undertaken by means of questionnaires, providing a quantifiable response to the work undertaken.

iii) An account and analysis of interviews undertaken with participants in each of the music composition projects is provided. The account focuses on the music’s capacity to “develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” and the students’
responses to this practical application of Elliott’s challenge to the music teacher to “embody and exemplify musicianship” (Elliott, 2005: 12).

- **Reflection:** Each music project concludes with a reflection (presented as a personal narrative) providing feedback on the project and feedforward into the next project. The projects thus form a spiralling process of experiment and development, constituting improvement-led practice.

The written account of the music projects comprises an unfolding story of what has transpired during the course of the research.

I used action research methods (the completion of each project allowing for reflection which shapes the approach to the subsequent project) because bottom-up or improvement-led approaches support the development of both compositional and teaching skills. Praxis consists of action, reflection on the results of that action, and further action building on that reflection: action research methods are essentially praxial. It is appropriate that a musician-teacher should use research to inform and improve practice.

The praxial approach also navigates the potential friction between the composition of music as a creative activity and as a form of research by employing the creative activity as an essential component of a systematic investigation. This research is intentionally and significantly inter-disciplinary in attempting to unite the fields of music composition and music education by embracing a praxial approach to music making. The composer-teacher/researcher is placed together with her students working actively as musicers: the practical business of music making (composition and performance) lies at the heart of this research.

**Conclusions (Chapter Eight)**
In examining my practice as a composer-teacher, I confronted the suggestion (Regelski, 2007) that my model of practice could constitute strategic action: I could be manipulating my students in pursuit of my own musical goals. I developed a
research model to place my practice in context, and then examined it from the points of view of all the participants. The four music projects brought the perspectives into focus, and a model of co-constructive practice, rather than ‘strategic action’, emerged from this research: teacher and students worked together as ‘musicians’, co-constructing artistic worlds through performance.

The crucial feature of the co-constructive model is that teacher(s) and students are all committed to the artistic process – the model thus accommodates the artistic energy and creative drive of all the participants. The learning process is genuine because it has no pre-determined end. Students responded to working within this context by describing their experiences as “real”.

The model is not new: it is common practice, undertaken by generations of musician-teachers. This research, however, demonstrates the validity of the practice from both musical, and teaching and learning perspectives, and examines the strengths and limitations of the model. At its best, revealed in music projects three and four, the creative processes co-constructed by a teacher with her students provided a crucible within which intense and positive learning experiences occurred. The model is shown to provide a context for students to engage in the creative, expressive, communicative, and transformative experiences that characterize the arts.

Significant themes, issues, and patterns emerged during each phase of the research process, and each phase generated significant outcomes. Chapter Eight summarizes each phase of the process and makes recommendations for future research and practice.

The following patterns emerged from the teaching and learning perspective:

- Students gain confidence when working in positive, collaborative partnership with other students and a committed teacher;
- Confidence underpins engagement and motivation, and facilitates the rapid and significant development of skills;
• Confidence is not only the necessary foundation for positive learning experiences, but also an important outcome as it facilitates further learning; and
• Confidence enables students of all levels of experience and ability to develop skills with apparent ease.

Music projects one and two provided less positive learning experiences for the participants: these music projects revealed the delicacy and complexity of collaborative learning processes. The following conditions were shown by music projects three and four to provide the ideal context for co-constructive practice:

• The musician-teacher’s active involvement and commitment is central to the co-constructive model;
• Students exercise choice to be involved;
• Students share some common experience, background, or motivation with the teacher;
• The learning takes place in an environment free from distractions associated with the curricular context, such as bells ringing, noise from adjoining classrooms, and time restrictions; and
• In New Zealand schools, the co-curricular context provides ideal conditions for co-constructive practice.

The identification of the co-curricular context as the preferred learning environment for the participants is particularly significant because no prior research has been undertaken to examine the outcomes of this distinctive aspect of the New Zealand education system. Current government initiatives and strategies, developed in the absence of any research into co-curricular activity in New Zealand schools, may unintentionally have a negative impact on schools’ co-curricular programmes.

The co-constructive model is limited in that it engages teachers and students who share some motivation, background, or interests. The music teacher is responsible for the musical development of all students and co-construction cannot meet the
musical needs of all students. Co-construction should be considered as one model of practice, only appropriate for use in association with many others.

This research provides ‘virtual access’ to a particular world of performance practice. In practice, teachers compose for their students, and co-construct performances with them. The school is conclusively revealed and acknowledged by this research as a realm of authentic and valid (“real”) musical practice.

**Original contribution of this research**
The original contribution of this research lies partly in its focus on the musical practice of a teacher composing for her students, and students of her teacher-colleagues: although Elliott specifically stresses that the teacher “must embody and exemplify musicianship” and the praxial philosophy of music education as articulated by Regelski (2004: 12) envisions all music making in terms of the “historically and presented situated social or cultural world”, research into composition in schools has focused entirely on student compositions. Teachers compose for their students, but this particular world of performance practice, as the following overview of praxial approaches to music education and related research will show (Chapter Three: 37-44), is at present unresearched and rarely acknowledged.

My research takes place in the wake of recent and substantial change to the New Zealand school curriculum: the background theory describes this new context and documents the work of one composer-teacher and her students working within it. It thus explores an area highlighted by a recent study as currently lacking “documented research information”: “New Zealand teachers’ and children’s attitudes, knowledge, and values regarding the Arts” (Fraser et al, 2007: 1).

A considerable body of research into the curricular environment in New Zealand schools has been undertaken over recent years, but my study is the first to widen the focus to include co-curricular learning – a distinctive feature of the New Zealand secondary school context. The co-curricular environment is revealed in this study as the context that best supports students’ learning.
This study is also original in that it offers a creative response to the research topic in the form of music compositions, and analyses them through musical performance in addition to verbal/written responses provided by means of interviews and narrative analysis. It is not the intention of this research to present a general study of the contribution of composer-teachers in the world of music teaching, nor to confront concerns about the often contrasting musical identities of music teachers and their students, but rather to offer a creative and practical response to the challenges outlined in the topic and the drivers revealed in the context. The structure of the research is therefore a reflection of the praxial philosophy it seeks to demonstrate. The music compositions produced as data for this research are in themselves original contributions of intrinsic value.

My research contributes to the growing literature surrounding praxial approaches to music and music education and the tension experienced by music teachers in developing an ‘identity’ as both musician and teacher. There are hazards in presenting research for others based on one’s own work and these are weighed and addressed in Chapter Two. Nevertheless, in using my own work as the basis for this research, I have been able to draw on prior long-term practical experience as both musician and teacher. In doing so, I hope to provide an illustration of philosophy in practice to help inform the ongoing praxial debate which, ironically, has tended to be dominated by theoretical perspectives.
A composer-teacher in context: Clarifying the vision

CHAPTER TWO

Research methods and theoretical perspectives

“Qualitative research requires a process to engage one’s inner world as well as one’s outer world where the research is to be conducted”

(Wildman, 1995: 174)

Chapter One provided an overview of my research and described the research process. This chapter places my research within the wider context of established research practices. I draw together the theoretical perspectives that support my work and that provide the rationale for my choice of research design, methods, and techniques. The innovative methodology – the way in which data have been created and analysed in order to engage with the research intentions – is then explained and justified. Finally, I address issues of validity, reliability, and generalizability.

Philosophical epistemology: Qualitative

Qualitative research can take many forms within an array of disciplines. In broad terms qualitative researchers attempt to make sense of phenomena that cannot usefully be subjected to quantification, such as human relationships, interpretations and reflections on experience, personal expressions, and the dynamics of the creative process. Bresler (1996: 6) explains that the “aim of qualitative research is not to discover reality, but to explore different interpretations of that reality ...”

Davies (2007: 17) points out that the definitions of research are “legion” but gives one definition that resonates with my work: research is “a process of engaging in planned or unplanned interactions with or interventions in parts of the real world, and reporting on what happens and what they seem to mean”. Qualitative research is “dynamic and interactive” in nature (2007: 142) and looks to “gain an in-depth understanding of personal feelings and experience” (2007: 191). My research explores the dynamics and products of a creative and educational process, and
involves interpretation and reflection on this experience. Through a series of music projects, I have sought to explore, describe, and reflect on specific aspects of this “intervention”.

This approach is consistent with other published qualitative research in music education. Roulston (2006: 160), for example, states that in music education “research for ‘understanding’ has been the predominant purpose, i.e. researchers provide descriptive accounts of participants’ experiences from various theoretical perspectives”.

**Research paradigm: Interpretive, and utilizing complexity theory**

All research is framed by the researcher’s attitudes (and often assumptions) about what we know (ontological concerns) and how we know it (epistemological concerns). Chua (1986) suggests three underlying paradigms for qualitative research: interpretive, positivist, and critical. My research is interpretive in assuming a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities and they exist in people’s minds) and a subjectivist epistemology (as composer-teacher/researcher I create understanding together with my colleagues and students). I thus acknowledge that all aspects of my research are unavoidably affected by my own perceptions and experience. This approach is incompatible with positivist assumptions that reality is objectively given and can be described by measurable properties that are independent of the researcher and context.

I drew on complexity theory as a paradigmatic approach. Developed in the natural sciences, complexity has been applied to diverse fields such as psychology, economics, and architecture, as well as the social sciences and education (Mason, 2008). I turned to complexity theory to provide a rationale for action research projects which give voice to individual participants in a creative project taking place within complex interactive systems (the individual school, the ‘education system’, the wider community, and so on). As Kuhn (2008: 178) explains, complexity offers “ways of thinking and talking about social reality that [match] the complexity of our experiences”.

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Complexity theory suggests that systems are shaped by individual voices, although the process of this shaping is unpredictable: systems are viewed as being in a “process of continual formation” (Haggis, 2008: 169). By viewing systems in a bottom-up rather than top-down way, complexity theory focuses on the ways in which individuals working within systems produce change: systems are thus seen as being ‘self-organizing’. The changes are seen to take place in an “emergent” or unpredictable way (Mason, 2008: 38). Complexity theory argues against “the linear, deterministic, predictable, positivist, universalizable, stable, atomized, objective, mechanistic, controlled, measurable, closed systems of law-like behaviour and simple causality” (Morrison, 2008: 28). In doing so, it suggests the “need for case study methodology, qualitative research and participatory, multi-perspectival and collaborative (self-organised), partnership based forms of research, premised on interactionist, qualitative and interpretive accounts” (Mason, 2008: 7). My study, which focuses on the work of individuals within a specific context, meets the need identified by Mason.

The importance of the work of individual teachers is overwhelmingly confirmed by research into the factors that affect student achievement. Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, and Fung’s synthesis (Ministry of Education, 2008: 6) of research into teacher professional learning and development confirms the wealth of prior research indicating that “student learning is strongly influenced by what and how teachers teach” (Brophy & Good, 1986; Sanders & Horn, 1994; Wright, Horn, & Sanders; Donovan, Bransford, & Pellegrino, 1999; Alton-Lee, 2003; Nye, Konstananopoulis, & Hedges, 2004). Focusing specifically on the arts, Stake, Bresler, and Mabry’s case studies (1991: 4), investigating “ordinary teaching in elementary schools”, confirm that individual arts teachers make a significant impact in the lives of their students irrespective of the school or system within which they work.

Auckland University’s John Hattie (2003: 2-4) provides extensive data indicating that students account for “about 50% of the variance of achievement” and teachers account “for about 30% of the variance”. According to Hattie’s research, other variants, such as the influence of home, specific school, or peers, account for
comparatively minor variations in student achievement. Hattie (2003: 3) stresses that “It is what teachers know, do, and care about which is very powerful in this learning equation”. My four action research music projects focus on the teaching and learning processes developed between an individual teacher and her students.

**Theoretical framework: Case study**

The case study framework accommodates the combination of a *bottom-up* focus on the work of individuals (the four action research music projects) with a *top-down* investigation of the way the context has shaped the work of those individuals.

Case study research is defined by Yin (1989) as an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly defined. Case studies allow “investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events” (Yin, 1989: 10).

Although data for case studies is typically collected by interviews and fieldwork, or through archival research, case study may also involve participant observation. Bissex (1990: 26) describes this type of case study as:

> a reflective story, of the unfolding over time, of a series of events involving particular individuals ... The researcher includes ... intentions and meanings in the meaning she makes of the story and, as interpreter if not also actor, is herself a character in it.

Long employed in education (Burns, 2000), there are also many precedents for the adoption of case study methodology in music research. An Ed.D. thesis undertaken by Albert Tiberio at Columbia University Teachers College, *The Effects of Situational Factors on the Original Musical Compositions of College Music Faculty: A Single-Case Study*, is a particularly relevant example. Tiberio’s case study (1996: thesis abstract) describes the:
... interactive role that situational factors play in the compositional life of an Instrumental Music Professor who is also a composer, and how these factors influence the composing of four compositions written at four different collegiate institutions within a span of nine years.

In similarly heuristic terms, my immersion in the secondary school context over an eighteen year period has led me away from an aesthetic approach to music making towards a philosophy of music as praxis. I have designed a case study model that incorporates four distinct action research music composition projects (referred to as the “music projects”), each evolving in response to drivers revealed within the framework of a performing arts faculty in a New Zealand secondary school. The background theory comprises five essays which describe and explore the multi-layered, interactive context in which the projects take place: the music projects were conceived and developed within, and cannot be understood independently of, their context. By structuring the background theory into five essays I have sought to acknowledge and reveal the “multiple voices and layers of meaning that exist simultaneously in arts education” (Holland & O’Connor, 2004). As Kuper (1999: 98) points out, cultural processes cannot be understood in isolation but must be “read, translated, and interpreted”.

**Methodology: Action research, autoethnography, and artistic inquiry**

**Action research:** My case study framework incorporates four action research music composition projects undertaken in turn. Each music project allows for analysis and reflection to shape the composition process of the subsequent project. The action research model places the creative aspect of this work (in the form of original musical compositions) within a research model that is genuinely investigative and systematic.

The key distinction between action research and other research methods is the role of the researcher: as Bresler (1996: 8) points out, “the researcher in action research is an insider. His primary area of expertise is his practice (‘knowing how’) rather than a theoretical one (‘knowing about’)”.
Action research was defined by Kurt Lewin (1946: 36) as a “spiral of steps, each of which is composed of a circle of planning, action, and fact-finding about the result of the action”. The spiralling structure of the action research process recognizes that whereas in the physical sciences theory generally leads to practice, in teaching and the arts practice can often lead to theory: knowledge is gained through action.

The action research process facilitates professional development in that each project allows for reflection and subsequent improvement of practice. Schwalbach (2003: 2) notes that action research in education “sparks” teacher learning as well as supporting student learning: the teacher engaging in action research is “growing as a professional and expanding his or her professional scope”. This concept is particularly useful in light of the binary nature of my research: a bottom-up, improvement-led approach is equally appropriate in supporting professional development as both composer and teacher. In broader terms, action research is consistent with the theoretical perspective of complexity, which calls for education to move towards bottom-up development and change – what Morrison (2008: 25) calls a “re-assertion of ... experiential, exploratory learning, a rejection of tight prescription and linear programming of teaching and learning”.

My research has grown out of my ongoing practice as a composer-teacher, thus aligning with Moustakas’ definition (1990: 176) of action research as a process that involves immersion, incubation, illumination, explication, and creative synthesis. Such research is typically focused on the researcher’s professional action and is appropriate when the researcher is empowered to adjust future action based on the research, and when improvement is possible.

Argyris and Schôn (1978) describe a four phase action research process of discovery, invention, production, and generalization. I have adapted this model for my series of music projects as follows:

- the initial phase (Plan) comprises a personal narrative examining my composition practice and processes from the perspectives provided by David
Elliot’s twin challenges to “embody and exemplify musicianship” and “develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” (Elliott, 2005: 12);

- the second phase (Data) comprises the music scores – the tangible product of action;
- the third phase (Data analysis) gives voice to all the participants, providing a range of perspectives through which to view and understand the data; and
- the fourth phase (Reflection) provides feedback on the project, and feedforward into the next project.

Each phase of the process can produce results that are of intrinsic value: the music scores, for example, form the focal point of the research and are of value in themselves rather than functioning solely as a vehicle for performance and education.

**Autoethnography and artistic inquiry:** Richard Deasy (2002: 6) notes that “research needs to define with greater depth, richness and specificity the nature of the Arts learning experience itself and its companion, the Arts teaching experience”. The autoethnographic approach I have adopted (combining creative work, personal narratives, surveys and interviews, and analytical essays) has facilitated in-depth exploration of the nature of the several teaching and learning experiences that comprise this research. The point of this approach is to “connect the personal, or autoethnographic, to the social or cultural, or ethnographic” (Roulston, 2006: 159). Roulston (2006: 159) adds that autoethnography encourages “alternative methods of representation (such as performances, dialogues and poetry)”.  

In the field of arts education Elliot Eisner has long been a proponent for methods of evaluation and research that move beyond the textual and into the realm of “artistically crafted research” (1995: 1), or what he has more recently called “arts-
based research” (1997: 12). He suggests (Eisner, 1981: 7-8) that research might take artistic forms other than the written word:

In artistic approaches to research, standardization of form is counterproductive. What artistic approaches seek is to exploit the power of form to inform ... We expect inventiveness and personal interpretation in the arts ... In artistic approaches to research, the major instrument is the investigator himself.

Eisner’s concept has led to a burgeoning of research that emphasizes the researcher as “practitioner” rather than “editor” (Sullivan, 2005: xv). Shaun McNiff (2000: vii), for example, in the field of dance therapy, calls for research methods that reject the “strong tendency to rely on behavioral science paradigms whenever discussing the subject of research”. He suggests (2000: 4) that:

In accepting the argument that we need to justify what we do through “accepted” behavioral and social science research methods, we have placed ourselves under the dominion of concepts and methods that do not resonate with what we are, what we do, and what we need to know in order to improve ourselves and more effectively communicate with the world.

Rita Irwin has developed a methodology (dubbed a/r/tography) in the field of visual arts education that is rooted in action research processes. A/r/tography combines art making with writing, and encourages research from the combined perspectives of researcher, artist, and teacher (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004).

Social science researchers have themselves experimented with artistic forms of representation. Sandelowski (1994: 56), for example, encourages social science researchers to acknowledge and celebrate artistic forms of inquiry:

Celebrating the art permits us to turn to non-scientific sources of knowledge (literature, art, and literary and artistic criticism) as data themselves and to use theory imaginatively (including theories of fiction, dance, and music) to frame and enhance analysis. Celebrating the art permits us to experiment
with forms of representing findings that best reprise the experiences we wish to convey.

Lenore Wadsworth Hervey (2000: 7) defines artistic inquiry according to the following criteria:

1. Artistic inquiry uses artistic methods of gathering, analysing, and/or presenting data.
2. Artistic inquiry engages in and acknowledges a creative process.
3. Artistic inquiry is motivated and determined by the aesthetic values of the researcher(s).

Wadsworth Hervey (2000: 38) adds a personal reflection, in words that are particularly apposite to my research, on considering the possibility that “in advocating artistic inquiry I might somehow be doing the arts a disservice”:

I can say that my purpose is not to shore-up or validate art by calling it science, but by recognizing its value as art. I wish to invite an expansion of our understanding by including the arts as a means of communicating the discoveries of practitioners whose ways of knowing and working are artistic.

Artistic inquiry is consistent with complexity theory, which is “catalytic ... requiring researchers to make links and generate their own thought-out research approaches” (Kuhn, 2008: 186). Nevertheless, established research approaches – qualitative philosophical epistemology, and case study and action research methods – have provided an effective framework for my research. It is in the methodology – the process that includes data gathering, data analysis, and drawing conclusions based on data – that my arts-based research could not be contained within the established research structures of the behavioural sciences.

In order to examine the creative musical and educational processes and outcomes of my practice as a composer-teacher, I composed music in response to the drivers revealed in my exploration of the context in which I (the composer-teacher) wanted to convey the experiences we wish to convey.
teacher/researcher) have been working (a performing arts faculty in a New Zealand secondary school). The data (the music scores) thus comprise tangible creative responses to the context – responses that represent a model of practice I have developed over several years.

**Data analysis:** The ultimate goal of data analysis, as expressed by Wadsworth Hervey (2000: 49), is “to find meaning in the data to understand what it is offering in response to the research question or to uncover its truth”. It is important to acknowledge that the data analysis in my research cannot reveal incontrovertible facts about the data. In order to analyse the data, I sought methods of data analysis that would most effectively give voice to all the participants in the process. The data analysis thus seeks to deepen understanding (to “uncover truth” (Wadsworth Hervey 2000: 49) rather than pin down the whole truth) about the work of a composer-teacher in a specific context.

I chose musical performance as the first mode of analysis: the students reveal their musical responses to the data (music scores) by performing them. This represents a deliberate choice of an artistic method of analysis reflecting the praxial philosophy on which this work is based: playing music is given precedence over verbalizing about it. The performances were recorded on CD or DVD as tangible evidence of the process.

The performance mode of analysis is supplemented by surveys (questionnaires completed by student-participants) and interviews with the student-performers. The survey questions were designed to focus the students’ attention on the ways in which the music developed and matched their “musicianship with appropriate challenges” (Elliott, 2005: 12).

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6 I have avoided using the term triangulation to describe my methods of data analysis. Mills (2000), and many others, insist that triangulation is the best way to address the issue of reliability. This is appropriate in terms of research which can reasonably expect to discover facts about a phenomenon. My research aims to deepen understanding of a phenomenon in its complex context, but any claim to pin down indisputable truth would be misleading.
Students volunteered to contribute to the interview process, and, given the choice of face-to-face (individual or group) or electronic dialogue, only a small number of senior students chose the face-to-face method. Junior students (in particular the Year 10 dancers involved in music project two) preferred face-to-face group interviews. Whether the interviews were face-to-face or electronic, I undertook the interviews as guided conversations (Kvale, 1996; Warren, 2002), using the survey questions to guide the interviews. In this way, the interview responses throw light on the survey responses. I transcribed the face-to-face interviews, collated the electronic dialogues, and returned them to the interviewees for final comments. I stored all the survey and interview responses. The perspectives revealed through surveys and interviews combined with the musical responses comprise a systematic investigation of the composer-teacher’s practice from the students’ point of view.

Each music project also includes two personal narratives, one outlining the planning and composition process and the other reflecting on the outcomes of the project. The research thus presents the perspectives of two stakeholder groups – the teacher-composer and the students. Narrative, performance, surveys, and interviews combine to communicate the experiences of all participants in the process. The written account focuses on the music’s capacity to “develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” and the students’ personal responses to this practical application of Elliott’s challenge to the music teacher to “embody and exemplify musicianship” (Elliott, 2005: 12).

I have thus sought to create and examine data in innovative and illuminating ways (of necessity avoiding a rigid application of prescribed research methodology which could stifle originality and relevance) but have utilized established research methodologies where these can be seen to be helpful.

**Issues of validity, reliability, and generalizability**

As explained above, I set out to examine the processes and outcomes of a composer-teacher’s practice by giving voice to all the participants, so that my research would accurately represent the experience. The students demonstrate their responses to
the music through their performance of it. This mode of analysis is supplemented by surveys (conducted by means of questionnaires) and interviews with participants. The surveys provide a quantifiable element to the research – an overview of the responses of the student-participants: those responses are then examined in depth by means of the interview process.

Gubrium and Holstein (2002) remind us that the purpose of interviews is not to relay facts, but to obtain the participants’ analysis of what happened. We interview when “we want to know something about what another person has to say about his or her experience of a defining event, person, idea or thing” (Nunkoosing, 2005: 699). Although Fontana and Frey (2005) point out that the most common form of interviewing involves face-to-face spoken exchange, I found that the students were markedly less reticent when given the opportunity to provide responses electronically. The electronic dialogues provided a wealth of illuminating material in which the participants revealed their interpretations of the music project rehearsal and performance processes.

Many researchers have raised questions over the multiplicity of meanings and uses, and validity of findings based on reflexive practice (Czyzewski, 1994; Lynch, 2000; Hammersley, 1999; Paechter, 1996; Troyna, 1994; Davis, 1959), but my inclusion of personal narratives reflects Wildman’s belief that “qualitative research needs to engage the researcher’s world view as well as that of the researched” (1995: 172). Wildman (1995: 176) describes the researcher’s “internal thoughts, reflections and musings” as a “crucial part in the overall research process”. Isakson and Boody (1993: 32) state that our biases are an inescapable part of the research process and that rather than apologise for them, we should instead give as full an account of them as we can. They suggest that individuals “have unique ways of understanding things” and that it is the viewpoint of the researcher that invests the research with originality and interest for others.

Wolcott (1990: 126), writing about subjective approaches in the field of education research, points out that validity “serves most often as a gloss for scientific accuracy
among those who identify closely with science and for correctness or credibility with those who do not”. He justifies his claim that validity is a “quantities oriented” concept thus:

Questions they [scientists] addressed to us were the ones they pondered among themselves, for example, “How do you deal with the issue of validity?” And instead of replying, “That’s your problem,” we too hastily replied, “We’ve got it.”

This serves as a useful reminder that the quest for understanding and truth is not necessarily or always assisted by mechanical applications of scientific research concepts. Wolcott (1990: 131) regards subjectivity as “a strength of qualitative approaches” and adopts a subjective approach “rather than attempt to establish a detached objectivity that I am not sure I want or need”.

Peshkin (1988: 21) suggests that researchers can avoid the “thwarting biases that subjectivity engenders” by actively seeking out their own subjectivity so they manage it through the process of gathering, scrutinizing, and writing up the data. Within any qualitative research project, therefore, it is important that the background and interests of the researcher are outlined so that the reader of the research is aware of the lenses through which the experiences were perceived.

My personal narratives form discrete sections of the background theory and action research process. I based the narratives on journal entries made throughout the process, observing Schwalbach’s advice (2003: 89) to write “thick, rich description of what you did and what you found ... Let your reader see and hear what happened ... this elaboration will increase the reliability of your study”.

The narrative providing subjective background theory is juxtaposed with, and balanced by, essays which investigate the context objectively. The ‘objective’ account is also viewed through the lens of the researcher, however, and therefore cannot be supposed altogether to avoid reflecting her personal, cultural, and theoretical predispositions.
My study could not be replicated because it involves an essentially individual, creative response to the topic, but its value should not be denied, or its reliability questioned, on this basis. In the field of educational research, complexity theory challenges experimental methods that demand replicability and predictability: Morrison (2008: 28), for example, points out that “Classical experimental methods ... may not be particularly fruitful, since, in complex phenomena, results are never clearly replicable or predictable”. My aim, in Janet Ward Schofield’s words (1990: 203), is to produce “a coherent and illuminating description of and perspective on a situation that is based on and consistent with detailed study of that situation”. Statistically significant findings drawn from randomly selected samples may be replicated, but cannot necessarily afford insights into specific contexts.

Similar questions can be answered with regard to the generalizability of this research: to what extent is it possible to make inferences about other situations from a non-randomly selected case study? Lincoln and Guba (1985: 124), dubbing the concept “transferability”, argue that “the degree of transferability is a direct function of the similarity between the two contexts” and that “transferability ... must be reassessed in each and every case in which transfer is proposed” (1985: 217).

Experience suggests that our ability to generalize is more readily engaged and developed than this. Robert Donmoyer (1990: 187), for example, points out that his first three teaching positions were undertaken over a six year period in three very different schools: despite the different contexts “each year teaching became easier; ... increasingly I could even control events. Generalization, of one sort or another, occurred”. Donmoyer usefully applies Piaget’s schema theory to the concept of generalization: we are able to generalize knowledge from one context to another by assimilation (shaping what we see according to what we already know) and accommodation (reshaping our image of the world to accommodate the new images and concepts). Viewed in this way, diversity becomes “an asset rather than a liability” (Donmoyer, 1990: 189).

Although my research can be generalized in terms of assimilation and accommodation, the assumption that we should necessarily be able to generalize in
the complex system of education may be naïve. Complexity theory reminds us that we cannot control or predict cause and effect within a complex system: “given a sufficient degree of complexity in a particular environment, new (and to some extent unexpected) properties and behaviours emerge in that environment … complexity theory makes space for individuality, for the apparently marginal …” (Mason, 2008: 36). Mason calls for a shift of focus from “decontextualised and universalised essence to a concern with contextualised and contingent complex wholes” (2008: 40).

The value of this research does not lie solely in the opportunity provided for the reader/listener/viewer to make inferences about other situations on the basis of reading/listening/viewing it. Langer (1953) argues that narrative can create a virtual reality. I have sought to provide my reader/listener/viewer with virtual access to a particular world of performance practice. The revealed world may provide not only information, but also inspiration, motivation, or counsel for other practitioners/researchers.

**Ethical issues**

It was particularly important that all the students involved in this research process were protected from coercion given my comparative power as both researcher and (in some instances) their teacher. Participation in the projects was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all participants. All guidelines for observation and research in schools, as outlined in Appendix 1 of the University of Waikato’s *Human Research Ethics Regulations* (2000: 13), were observed in the creation of research consent forms. In addition, a Guidance Counsellor (Mrs Barbara Jones) was appointed as an independent advisor for the students.

Some of the music projects involved National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA)\(^7\) assessment opportunities: for these projects only students of other teachers in the school were assessed; students in my own classes did not take part in the

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\(^7\) New Zealand’s senior secondary school assessment system (the NCEA) is explained in Chapter Three: 50-57.
projects involving NCEA assessment. The students knew that I was not involved in marking any of the assessments of any of the participants.

Confidentiality of survey responses was assured: participation was voluntary; the surveys were not distributed or collected by the researcher; they were completed anonymously. Anonymity of interview responses in the final written document was assured, but I was concerned that students would not feel able to express negative opinions freely because of my involvement as composer-teacher and researcher. Students volunteered for interviews, and to avoid pressure I gave them choice as to the vehicle for the interview process: many chose to be interviewed by electronic means.

Anonymity was assured for audio taped performances, but not for the performances recorded on DVD. All students had the right to withdraw from the performance. They also signed permission forms for the recordings to be used as part of the final document.

In practice, a level of trust existed between the participants in the research. No students withdrew from the projects, and even when students expressed negative opinions about a project, they were enthusiastic about participating and having the opportunity to express those opinions.
A composer-teacher in context: Clarifying the vision

CHAPTER THREE
Investigation of context with literature reviews

“A study of musicians’ experience of meaning finds its place somewhere at the centre
of a wheel whose spokes are music cognition, performance, psychology,
constructivism, sociology, music education and the philosophy of music education”
(Bryce, 2003: 5)

This chapter comprises five essays that explore the context in which the action research projects were undertaken as follows:

Essay One: Philosophical context – a praxial philosophy of music education
Essay Two: Curricular context
Essay Three: Co-curricular context
Essay Four: Specific context (Macleans College)
Essay Five: Personal narrative

Each essay reviews relevant literature surrounding aspects of the context.

The word ‘context’ may imply something that is fixed and unchanging: the background theory of this research reveals a maelstrom of changing philosophy and practice surrounding and shaping the work of a composer-teacher in a New Zealand secondary school.
Essay One: Philosophical context – a praxial philosophy of music education

“In place of a stable and secure aesthetic foundation for all music and musical value [praxis] offers the fluid and slippery realm of human practices”

(Bowman, 2005: 56)

My research has its roots in a praxial philosophy of music and music education. Praxial concepts and their recent application to music education are traced in this essay. The practical business of music making is shown to lie at the heart of the philosophy. The praxial philosophy of music education is shown to be consistent with the constructivist approach which is shaping early 21st century curriculum development in New Zealand schools. A current lack of research into the musical lives of teachers is highlighted and linked with ongoing debate around issues of music teacher identity and music teaching practice in schools.

David Elliott appropriated the term ‘praxial’ in Music Matters: a New Philosophy of Music Education (1995) in which he aimed to “develop a multidimensional concept of music and musical works, a multilayered concept of musical understanding, a multifaceted concept of musical values, and a diverse approach to achieving these values” (2005: 7). The term ‘praxial’ is used to indicate a broad philosophy, rather than a specific instrumental or vocal training programme (such as the Orff, Kodály, or Suzuki models): praxis connotes “action that is embedded in, responsive to, and reflective of, a specific context of effort” (Elliott, 1995: 175). Music Matters has proved to be influential, and, along with subsequent literature and dialogue, has informed the practice of music teachers over the last decade.

The term praxial emerged in music education philosophy in Philip Alperson’s 1991 article “What should one expect of a philosophy of music education?” It is derived from the Greek work prassein, meaning ‘to do’, and has been adopted from

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Aristotle’s extended treatment of *praxis* as one of three different kinds of knowledge. Distinguishing *praxis* from *theoria* (characterized as contemplative, abstract, or intellectual knowledge) and *techne* (the skill or craft, characterized by *poiesis*, the making of things), classical Greek accounts refer to the practical knowledge that deals with action within the variable contexts of human situations as *praxis* (Regelski, 2004: 6).

Praxial concepts of music and music education take their place in an ever expanding body of literature exploring music as a cultural phenomenon. David Lines (2003: 168) places “Elliott’s convincing study of ‘praxial music education’” in the context of other approaches by thinkers such as Abeles, Hoffer, and Klotman who promote the “relative autonomy of music”. A praxial approach to music education assumes that music is a form of procedural knowledge and that learning to ‘know’ music cannot be separated from learning to ‘do’ music: instruction cannot be based solely on the contemplation of music. In the New Zealand secondary school classroom, this approach has involved a move away from the study of music as the study of ‘works’ written and performed by others, to the practical business of making music – composing, improvising, and playing.

Praxial approaches to music education fit within the broader educational theory of constructivism which has shaped curriculum development in New Zealand schools since the 1993 publication of *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework*, and has informed the development of *The New Zealand Curriculum* (2007). Constructivist approaches argue for models of teaching and learning that place the learner at the centre of the process (Von Glasersfeld, 1987; Eisner, 1993; Prawat & Floden, 1994; Bauersfeld, 1995; Elliott 1995; Kukla, 2000; Bartel, 2002; Ernest, 2003). This shifts the emphasis of teaching and learning from teachers passing on a body of knowledge to learners taking responsibility for, and actively engaging in, their own learning processes. Learners thus ‘construct’ their own views of reality rather than reproducing the reality presented to them by teachers (Von Glaserfeld, 1995).
Programmes that combine practical music making with contemplation of music are not unfamiliar in New Zealand’s short history of music education. E. Douglas Tayler, appointed as Supervisor in School Music at the Department of Education in 1925, wrote that “... if music is to flourish, we must train children to create music, to perform it and to listen to it” (1927: 7). Frank Callaway (1951: 12), fourth Honorary President of the International Society for Music Education and an acknowledged world leader in the field of music education, similarly began his A New Zealand post-primary school music scheme with a thoroughly practical vision of school music:

School music should mean a full range of school activity based on instrumental and choral-class instruction, officially recognised, properly organised, applying to every member of the school community ...

Callaway, following Vernon Griffiths’ lead, put his philosophy into practice at Dunedin’s King Edward Technical College. The New Zealand Education Department did not follow through on the recommendations in Tayler’s 1927 scheme or Callaway’s 1950 report, however, and such approaches can be seen as visionary rather than characteristic in terms of the history of music education in New Zealand classrooms. Practical music making flourished in the co-curricular context and was supported by government funded schemes providing instrumental and vocal tuition outside the classroom, but until the major shifts in education practice of the 1990s, music in the secondary school classroom focused on theoretical aspects of music making.

The New Zealand secondary school system was dominated by the national assessment systems put in place as a result of the Thomas Report (Department of Education, 1944) until the curriculum reforms of the 1990s – a system based on assessment by means of written examinations which had the effect of promoting aesthetic rather than practical approaches to music education. The publication, in 1989, of the Syllabus for Schools Music Education: Early Childhood to Form Seven, marked the significant shift from contemplative and theoretical music education in the New Zealand classroom to a focus on the student as an active participant in music making.
Praxial approaches to music education explicitly challenge what Regelski (2004: 2) refers to as “the aestheticization of art and music by philosophy, and its resulting aesthetic vocabulary and music-appreciation-as-connoisseurship paradigm of ‘refined taste’”. Regelski points out that music and music education “have been discussed almost exclusively in philosophical terms … since Ancient Greece, and thus long before the social sciences as we know them were born …” Pierre Bourdieu (1993: 236) refers to the consequent “sacralization” of music and art: “the world of art is as contrary to the world of everyday life as the sacred is to the profane”, a view that can be seen to underlie Schoenberg’s famous assertion that “If it is art it is not for all, and if it is for all, it is not art” (Schoenberg, 1946: 10 (cited by Martin, 1987: 122; Regelski, 2004: 25)). The intellectual edifice constructed in the effort to provide music with philosophical legitimacy has led Christopher Small (1997: 1) to reflect “the trouble is [that most of the theories are] terribly abstract and complicated” and bear “very little relation to anything I [recognize] in my own musical experience, as listener, or as performer, or as a composer”.

McCarthy and Goble (2005: 19) label the primary thrust of North American music education in the 1950s and 1960s as “The Evolution of Music Education as Aesthetic Education”. They cite Allen Britten, Harry Broudy, Charles Leonhard, Bennett Reimer, Abraham Schwadron, and Ralph Smith as scholars who “began to work toward formulating a new philosophy built on principles drawn from Western aesthetics” in an effort to “provide music educators with a … respectable basis for explaining the nature, value, and uniqueness of their subject in the school curriculum”. The application of this approach in New Zealand was reflected in a secondary school music syllabus that was entirely theoretical: the School Certificate Music examination, for example, from 1945 to 1972 comprised questions based on the lives and works of composers within the western music tradition combined with theoretical requirements such as the writing of four-part cadential figures.

The inclusion of music within the curriculum at all, however, was dependent upon the academic validity accorded the subject by the ‘aestheticians’. It would also be misleading to assume that the aims of a programme of music education based upon
aesthetic principles were adequately supported by the form of assessment they were linked with – externally assessed written examinations. Abeles et al (1984: 75), for example, take pains to dissociate the aesthetic experience from attempts to write about it:

... an aesthetic experience must be experienced. It is almost worthless (and annoying!) to have someone describe a song or painting to you. There is no way to ‘secondhand’ aesthetic experiences ... It is possible to look up the answers to math problems or geography quizzes, but that doesn’t work with things aesthetic. There are no aesthetic ‘answers,’ only experiences.

Schwadron noted in 1973 that “the results of a decade of philosophic-aesthetic inquiry are impressive” (1973b: 46), an observation supported by the increase in doctoral dissertations on philosophical issues reported in the Journal of Research in Music Education (McCarthy & Goble: 26), although he also noted (Schwadron, 1970: 26) that music educators were not involved in the philosophical discourse. The music curricula, however, were generally not being developed by those implementing the philosophies in the classroom. Schwadron (1973a: 38) was also critical of the “statistical, pencil-to-paper measurements of affective behaviour in music” – an approach attributable to the widespread value placed on quantitative research methodology.

The aesthetic rationale was held up to question during the 1970s. Gary (1975: iii), for example, defined a much broader purpose as appropriate for music education: “to reveal to students what music can do for their lives and to offer as many opportunities for musical learning as they desire and are capable of assimilating”. In Britain, Paynter and Aston (1970: 2) focused on student composition, stressing that the processes should be “child-centred and start from the needs of the individual”. Many of the leading advocates of the prevailing aesthetic approach to music education held firmly to their convictions in what became almost a battle over the definition of ‘aesthetic’ in North America: Reimer (1972: 30), for example, stated that if music abandons its aesthetic role in favour of a social role it becomes “a demeaned thing, and the teaching and learning of it are equally demeaned”.

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Nevertheless, a loss of confidence in the aesthetic approach to music education is discernable in literature of the 1970s and 1980s. Swanwick (1979), for example, promoted the concept of music education as a creative process involving both knowledge and skills – including composition and performance. Kenneth Phillips (1983: 30) suggested a move to “a more central philosophy that embraces both the utilitarian and the aesthetic”. Colwell (1986: 37) noted that while music education “continues to march forward under the aesthetic education banner ... it is searching for a new gonfalon that is not only more understandable to the general public but closer to what has become accepted educational practice”. Malcolm Ross (1984: 46) suggested a much broader notion of the ‘aesthetic’, envisaging “good aesthetic education” in the context of classroom “jam sessions”.

Praxial conceptions arose as a response to the need for a philosophy broad enough to accommodate “the variety of meaning and values evidenced in actual practice in particular cultures” (Alperson, 1991: 234). Thomas Regelski (2004: 11) identifies five key themes that summarize important conditions of praxis:

1. Praxis consists of action and reflection on the tangible results of that action. Such reflection on the results of praxis informs the personal theory and praxial knowledge that, in turn, guides future praxis – and so on, in a never-ending spiral.
2. Praxis arises in the real world from concrete, present and meaningful situations that elicit action.
3. Praxis takes place in terms of the historically and presented situated social or cultural world and is a form of reciprocal interaction with that world.
4. The social world in which praxis takes place is itself constructed (or reconstructed) by praxis; it is not the natural world.
5. Meaning, too, is socially constructed, not a priori and absolute.

Regelski goes on to describe praxis as “a domain of practical ‘judgments’ occasioned, to begin with, by tangible ‘situations’ offering unique options and possibilities”. There can be no “standard praxis” because “Praxial knowledge is ... highly individualized since it results from the agent’s accumulated experience with the
always situated and variable particulars of this or that individual or group” (Regeslski, 2004: 7).

David Elliott’s articulation of a praxial approach to music education in *Music Matters* (1995) can be placed in the context of many challenges to the aesthetic education model evident in the mid-1980s. Leonhard (1985: 7), for example, while acknowledging that he had been “at least partially responsible” for it, questioned the profession’s emphasis on aesthetic education during the previous thirty years and the credibility of those who continue to express it:

I never anticipated that the concept of aesthetic education would come to be used as a major tenet in the justification for music education. That has, however, happened. As a result, the profession has been sated with vague esoteric statements of justification that no one understands, including, I suspect, most of the people who make those statements.

David Elliott’s *Music Matters* still represents “the most fully developed and publicly visible articulation of a praxial philosophy of music education” (McCarthy & Goble, 2005, 38). Elliott’s insistence that the music teacher “embody and exemplify musicianship”, and that the music teacher “endeavour to develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” (Elliott 2005: 12), implies a situation where the composer-teacher could and should employ her compositional (or other musical) skills within the school context. This has often not been the case in practice. New Zealand composer David Farquhar (1997: 4), for example, describes his surprise when he discovered long after leaving St Peter’s College (Cambridge) that “Harry Luscombe, a live New Zealand composer, had been on the staff in my first years at the school”. Farquhar comments that “most of the composers we performed were ... dead”. This dichotomy between the compositional and teaching practice of the composer-teacher could be seen as a natural consequence of a philosophy of music education as aesthetic education.

Praxial approaches to music teaching seem to suggest that music making and music teaching are not separate currency, but two sides of one coin. David Elliott’s twin challenges imply that a music teacher should be active musically as well as facilitating
the musical development of her students. The literature associated with praxial approaches to music education, however, has paid little attention to the musical lives of teachers.

The MayDay Group first met on May 1, 1993, with the intention of critically re-examining the status of practice in music education. The founders describe themselves as an “eclectic and varied group of thinkers, from a variety of disciplines and countries, [who] function as a think tank, concerned to identify, critique and change taken-for-granted patterns of professional activity, polemical approaches to method, and social, musical and educational philosophies, educational politics and public pressures that have threatened effective practice and stifled critical and open communication among music educators” (http://www.maydaygroup.org). The MayDay group’s e-journal, Action, Criticism & Theory [ACT] for Music Education, is described on the Group’s website as comprising:

... refereed and invited critical, analytical, theoretical and policy development articles of international interest that illuminate, extend or challenge the Action Ideals of the MayDay Group.

No research published in ACT, however, addresses the musical or educational implications of a teacher composing for students and this is characteristic in terms of music education journals and music education research generally. Several articles in Music Education Research and International Journal of Music Education, for example, address various aspects of, and make reflections on, student music composition, but none addresses the possibility of the teacher composing for students.9 Dissertations and theses in the music education field also reflect research interest in the area of student composition rather than composition by a teacher for students.10

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Rhoda Bernard (2004: 283), focusing generally on performance rather than composition, suggests that the current lack of research into the musical lives of music teachers indicates an underlying assumption that “once music educators secure teaching positions in schools, they must necessarily make a choice between making music and teaching music ... it is as if once a musician-teacher begins teaching classroom music in a school, her music making outside of school ceases, or at least ceases to matter”. This is ironic because music educators “are expected to be skilled music makers as well as music teachers” (Bernard, 2004: 283). Bernard describes music teachers as having “fluid professional identities with two layers: musician and teacher”. She complains that “only two researchers in the United States have conducted studies of school music teachers as music makers and music teachers” both of which categorize the professional identities of a music educator as an “either-or proposition: either musician or teacher”.

Bernard claims that the literature surrounding music education “pits music making and music teaching against one another in its discussion of the professional lives of music educators” (2005: 7). This is unhelpful because “experiences of making music are absolutely central in the way that musician-teachers make meaning of who they are and what they do” (2005: 13).

Bernard’s views have proved to be controversial. Roberts (2007: 7), for example, asserts that “I know of no place in the serious literature that scholars of identity in music education are calling for the replacement of the musician identity, or, in fact, for the abandonment of the music-making identity or activity by music teachers”. Roberts (2007: 3) refers to “the personal war we wage with ourselves to maintain a balance with these two identities” as “critical to our success in the classroom”. Regelski (2007: 3) confirms that the literature describes the “relation between

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Bernard cites Klotman (1972; 1973); Leonhard & House (1972); Hoffer (1993); Abeles et al., (1995); Mark (1996).

Bernard is unconvinced by Roberts’ attempts to portray conflict as a productive force: “Characterizing the opposition between musician identity and teacher identity in terms of a war certainly seems to be a negative portrayal. Reading this passage makes me wonder: Must this opposition be seen as a war” (2007: 4).
teacher and musician as one of conflict, tension, struggle, war (etc.)” and as a state that needs to be “balanced, harmonized, resolved, or maintained in some kind of dialectical synthesis or complementarity (etc.)”.

Despite such protestations, Bernard’s claim (2005: 10) that “those working and writing in the field of music teacher education place a higher value on the teaching of pre-service music educators than on their music making” is supported by a survey of the literature. Studies in the field of pre-service music teacher education consistently focus on teaching at the expense of music making and/or suggest that teaching competencies are of more value than musical competencies (Campbell (1999); Clandinin (1993); Conkling (2004); Dolloff (1999); Roberts (1991; 2004; 2007); Teachout (1997); Wayman (2006)). Woodford (2002) asserts that most teacher trainees who enter teacher training after specialist music training regard themselves as musicians first and teachers second: in his view, teacher training should aim to reverse this identity concept. Roberts (2007: 7) underlines the apparent futility of music performance studies, as opposed to music education studies, when he claims that “for many [performance graduates], the instrument gets put away after the graduates search in vain for employment in their performance field and resort to working in areas totally removed from the musical life they enjoyed as a performance major in our major universities”.

These studies suggest that teachers with a strong musical identity may not be motivated to meet the musical needs of their students. Froehlich and L’roy (1985) even suggest that undergraduates’ perceived lack of commitment to teaching may be the result of their formal music training. Bouij’s longitudinal study of the development of Swedish music teachers’ identity (1998) confirms that musicians who are unable to support themselves as performers often turn to teaching for financial reasons – a choice that may lead to a lack of commitment. Roberts (1991: 33) questions whether a student with an “apparently strong need to construct a ‘musician’ self ... is able to construct an identity as a ‘teacher’ at all”.¹³

¹³ This statement appears to contradict Roberts’ recent assertion (2007: 7 – quoted in this essay: 39) that “I know of no place in the serious literature that scholars of identity in music education
Several researchers complain that music education is not perceived to be as prestigious a course of study in a university as music performance (Mark (1998); Roberts (1990; 2004)). Roberts (1990), for example, notes that music education majors in the Canadian context resent the perceived higher status of the performance majors. Such studies seem to indicate some level of negativity, or even possibly hostility, on the part of those who identify themselves as music educators toward those they perceive as primarily musicians (however that may be defined) rather than teachers.

Regelski (2007: 30-31) suggests that teachers who “favour the identity axis of musician” may use inappropriate teaching methods (“rote teaching ... autocratic methods, and the like”) to achieve what he perceives to be their aim of aspiring to “professional performance standards”. He favours the approach of the music educator, as opposed to the musician who teaches (Regelski, 2007: 31):

> Music teachers who plan and teach diligently in pursuit of conceptions of music learning that are not focused on professional music standards would seem to center their identities around conceptions of music education that are predicated more in terms of the unique nature and need of music education in schools, and of the age groups with which they work.

These are broad and unsubstantiated claims, made in the ‘either-or’ language criticized by Bernard (2004: 283), but they indicate, if nothing else, that some who perceive themselves to be music educators first and musicians second are suspicious of the motivations of those music teachers who affirm a strong sense of identity as ‘musician’.

Regelski’s suggestion (2007: 30) that music making within a school may involve an unhealthy degree of autonomy seems to imply that, having opened the praxial door, some music education theorists are critical of the work of some school music practitioners:

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are calling for the replacement of the musician identity, or, in fact, for the abandonment of the music-making identity or activity by music teachers.”
The idea of “teacher” and “musician” as located in different “mazes of relations” has too often led to school music being separated from music making in the music world that thrives outside of schools. School music, then, becomes its own practice; one that too often is a musical dead end for most graduates, and one that may be the only ‘professional’ music making of some music teachers.

This assertion seems to belie Regelski’s own notion of the “situatedness” of praxis: “Praxis arises in the real world from concrete, present and meaningful situations that elicit action” (2004: 11). Schools are social and cultural worlds, inhabited by people who also inhabit other worlds (the “mazes of relations”, referred to by Regelski (2007: 30), and Schatzki (2007: 53), that characterize all human experience). It is not possible for a microcosm to exist as an “autonomous” world as Regelski asserts (2007: 30): the various microcosms of school music inevitably exist alongside, and interacting with, other social or cultural musical contexts. Music making in the real world comprises an infinite variety of interacting musical microcosms, including those of schools. My research entails the creation of musical worlds within the microcosm of a secondary school: in putting my practice to the test, I acknowledge Regelski’s concerns, and analyse the outcomes of the practice he criticizes.

The perceived tension between music performance and music education extends to internationally known musicians. The four Honorary Presidents in the fifty year history of the International Society for Music Education (Leo Kestenberg, Zoltán Kodály, Dmitri Kabalevsky, and Frank Callaway) were all both “musical artists and educators” (Elliott, 2004: 93). The 50th anniversary edition of the International Journal of Music Education Vol. 22 (2) 2004 comprises brief biographies of these four men. The achievements of Kestenberg, Kodály, and Kabalevsky (the former acknowledged as a great performer and the latter two as great composers) are conveyed in the ‘either-or’ language that divides the music maker from the music teacher. Kestenberg is described by Gruhn as “a musician who was expected to have a career as a brilliant piano soloist, but turned into a politician who was deeply concerned with music education”. According to Ittzes (2004: 137), when Kodály was
asked “why he had stopped composing larger symphonic pieces, he replied that the music education of the masses ... was more important for him than composing these greater works”. David Forrest (2004: 41-42) (citing Dimentman (1988)) suggests that “it was Kabalevsky’s involvement, commitment and promotion of mass music education that was a goal to which he sacrificed, more than once, his plans for music-writing”. The language reflects a perceived tension between music making and music teaching in the lives of these professional musicians.

Recent research (Scott-Kassner & Kassner (2001); Strauss (2001)) suggests that most music teachers do, in practice, engage actively in music making outside the classroom. While not addressing the possibility of composing music for students, Jody L. Kerchner (2002: 4) also argues that music teachers should bring their musical skills into the classroom:

If students see us conducting, performing band literature with students, and presenting recitals, we gain credibility as musician educators. These experiences show our students why we have become music educators – we are passionate about creating music alone and with others ... Novice teachers need not decide whether to perform or to teach; satisfaction and excellence in craft come with either, or the combination of both.

Historically it has been acknowledged, albeit fleetingly, that composers are employed as secondary school teachers in New Zealand and produce music compositions within that context: in 1981, for example, CANZONA published an overview of New Zealand composition between 1950 and 1980; Dorothy Freed (1981: 39) wrote that “many N.Z. composers work in schools, and much music is written for particular school choirs, orchestras or operatic groups”; David Farquhar (1981: 54) noted that “It is ... in the schools that there has been the greatest and most varied activity in music theatre”; Valerie Harris (1981: 37) pointed out that “Teaching is the most favoured occupation [of most composers], either in one of the universities or as a music teacher in a primary or secondary school”. Philip Norman’s article “An outline of New Zealand music 1940-1980” (1981: 15), however, noted that “Tertiary institutions (universities, teachers colleges, and polytechnics) are the prime employing bodies of
composers” adding that “New Zealand music is dominated by tertiary institutions”. Articles in subsequent editions of CANZONA lend support to this view. Articles are predominantly written by, and about, composers working within our tertiary institutions. This may suggest that the work of practising composers in schools is to some degree marginalized by university music institutions in New Zealand.

In practice, secondary school teachers in New Zealand and elsewhere compose for their students, but this particular world of performance practice is at present unresearched. Elliott’s insistence (2005: 12) that the music teacher should “embody and exemplify musicianship” implies that the music teacher is a skilled musician, but carries the added implication that this should be a tangible aspect of the music teacher’s professional life both inside and outside the classroom. It cannot be argued, however, that this vision of the music teacher as both musician and teacher is accepted without question by music educators, either in performance-based tertiary institutions or music education institutions. The musical microcosm of the school – affirmed in praxial theory and existing in practice – seems to be denied validity as a realm of authentic music making by those employed to teach both music and music education in universities.

I have not set out in this research to present a general study of the contribution of composer-teachers in the world of music teaching (although this is work that could usefully be done), or to prove theoretical points about the formation of musician-teacher identity. I am, however, offering a creative, descriptive, and analytic study of one teacher working as both musician and teacher by composing and working together with her students as music makers.
Essay Two: Curricular context

“Major curriculum change has been a feature of the New Zealand education landscape for many years”

(Bolstad, 2008: 12)

This essay places praxial approaches to music teaching into the wider context of a school curriculum that has undergone recent and sweeping change. The impact of the New Zealand arts curriculum (introduced by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in 2000, and revised in 2007) is addressed and the changes to senior secondary school assessment systems explained. Various drivers for the composition projects – the data of this thesis – are revealed in this exploration of the curricular context:

- Music project one: ‘At the Beginning of Time’ (for percussion ensemble and voice) is a creative response to the demands of the recently introduced secondary school qualification – The National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA);
- Music project two: ‘The Pied Piper’ (a narrative dance work), is a creative response to the broadening of the arts curriculum to include the discipline of dance; and
- Music project three: ‘Macbeth’ (a drama for actors and instrumentalists), is a creative response to the broadening of the arts curriculum to include the discipline of drama.

Fundamental curricular change has been effected within the New Zealand education system over the course of the last fifteen years. This change of direction was signalled clearly in the 1990s but remained largely unnoticed outside the professional world of educators. The introduction of new secondary school qualifications in 2002, the National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA), however, caused consternation that continues to be expressed regularly in the media. The fact that NCEA is an assessment system that reflects a philosophical change enshrined in the curriculum – that the curriculum was the catalyst for the
change – is perhaps not generally understood. The shift has been essentially
towards a constructivist\textsuperscript{14} approach to teaching and learning: The New Zealand
Curriculum (MOE, 2007: 9) confirms this philosophical perspective in its eight
principles (“foundations of curriculum decision making”) that “put students at the
centre of teaching and learning”.

Historically, what was taught in New Zealand secondary schools was determined by
syllabi and examination prescriptions. The Syllabus for Schools Music Education:
Early Childhood to Form Seven (MOE, 1989) nevertheless formed the philosophical
basis for the major changes of the 1990s by shifting the focus from students in the
classroom as music listeners to music makers: music education was described in
terms of the creation (composition) and re-creation (performance) of music, as well
as its appreciation.

The release of the Draft National Curriculum Statement (Department of Education,
1988) and The New Zealand Curriculum Framework (MOE, 1993) marked a
fundamental change from a content-focused, syllabus-type approach based on what
students should be taught, to a constructivist student-centred focus on ‘outcomes’ or
what students should be able to know and to do. The implementation of the
curriculum documents has created an environment that encourages the musician-
teacher to develop praxial ‘study’ for students: such ‘study’, as Regelski (2005: 20)
has indicated, takes “the form of ‘doing’, of praxis, not academic study ‘about’ music
of the kind that has characterized aesthetics-based premises of connoisseurship and
contemplation”.

The Ministry of Education noted in its Curriculum Stocktake Report to Minister of
Education, September 2002 that New Zealand’s current curriculum has much in
common with the curricula developed in England, Canada, South Africa, and Australia
during the 1990s. Professor P. D. Renshaw (1992: 4) of the University of Queensland,
for example, refers to the “organisation of curriculum” as “an ongoing and reflexive
process that cannot be preordained for all children”. Renshaw speaks of the need

\textsuperscript{14} For a definition of constructivism see Chapter Three: 32.
for “adaptation of the curriculum content to meet the needs and interests of the children”. C. G. Wells (1999: 6) describes the British shift towards a student-centred philosophy as “education ... conducted as a dialogue about matters that are of interest and concern to the participants”. However, the syllabus approach is still widespread internationally: Singapore, South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, the Netherlands, and the Czech Republic, for example, maintain syllabus-based systems (Donnelly, 2002: 8).

Although constructivism is currently the prevailing theoretical perspective in New Zealand education it is not without its critics: Kirschner, Sweller, and Clark, (2006: 75), for example, analyse “the failure of constructivist, discovery, problem-based, experiential, and inquiry-based teaching”. The Education Forum, a right-wing “education policy advocacy organisation” (www.education.forum.nz), currently chaired by Byron Bentley (the Principal of Macleans College) and comprising representatives from business and commerce as well as from the New Zealand education sector, has consistently opposed the constructivist basis on which curriculum change in New Zealand has proceeded. The group criticizes, for example, the failure of the Ministry of Education to “address key design components such as outcomes – not content – as the basis for specifying the curriculum” (Education Forum, 2001: 1). The ongoing debate, focused mainly around the implementation of the NCEA, reminds us that the school context is complex and never static.

The shift from aesthetically-based music education practices to the praxial approaches outlined in Essay One is consistent with both the wider philosophical change and the consequent change to the assessment system. The practice of a teacher composing for her students is not only compatible with the philosophy but is also reflected and encouraged by changes within a music curriculum that now emphasizes composition and performance rather than the study of musical ‘works’. The new assessment system, with its focus on internally assessed performance in music, has functioned as a driver – a stimulus for composition – for my work as a composer-teacher. The first of the music projects undertaken in this research
comprises a work composed principally to provide NCEA assessment opportunities for students.

The two traditional New Zealand arts subjects – music and visual arts – have been supplemented by drama and dance to form what is now described as a four-discipline “arts learning area” within the curriculum (MOE, 2007: 20). The recent growth of drama and dance as ‘subjects’ taught within the curriculum has been viewed with suspicion by many music teachers, but the new performing arts curriculum focus can be seen to provide new opportunities for multi-disciplinary approaches. The second and fourth music composition projects undertaken in this research have been written for combinations of performing arts students – musicians, actors, and dancers – thus offering challenges and a range of learning opportunities for students that did not exist in the former context.

Arts within the curriculum in New Zealand

In 2000, a National Curriculum Statement for the arts was introduced to New Zealand schools by the Ministry of Education replacing (and building on) the existing syllabi for art and music. This was the last of the seven National Curriculum Statements to be put in place under *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (MOE, 1993) – the foundation policy statement covering teaching, learning, and assessment for all students in all New Zealand schools.

*The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (MOE, 2000) brought dance, drama, music, and visual arts, previously considered separately within the New Zealand educational context, under a single banner as “The Arts”. *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* was mandated in 2003, by which time primary schools (Years 1 to 6) and intermediate schools (Years 7 and 8) were required to provide teaching and learning programmes to students in all of the four disciplines. Secondary schools (Years 9 to 13) were required to offer at least two of the four disciplines to students in Years 9 and 10. The curriculum provided for specialist, but not compulsory, programmes in the arts in Years 11 to 13.
The aims of *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (MOE, 2000: 12) relate to the “development of skills, knowledge, attitudes, and understanding in a broad range of traditional and contemporary arts forms”. A set of ‘achievement objectives’ is provided for each of the arts disciplines, outlining what students can be expected to do, and to know, at each of the eight levels of the curriculum. The eight levels are stage related, rather than age related. This takes into account that students learn at different rates: one Year 9 student, for example, may be working towards achievement objectives at level 3, while another may be working at level 6.

At each level, learning is approached through “four interrelated strands” which are defined as follows (MOE, 2000: 13):

- Developing Practical Knowledge in the Arts
- Developing Ideas in the Arts
- Communicating and Interpreting in the Arts
- Understanding the Arts in Context

The changes have not been uncontroversial. In its *Policy Framework for Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* the Ministry of Education (1999: 1) claims to “adopt an approach of rigorous eclecticism with respect to the underpinning philosophies of its curriculum documents”. The ministry’s claim is derided, however, by the Education Forum. John Morris (2001: 1), writing as the Forum’s Chairman in 2001, points out that “the ministry, which designed, developed and is now implementing the new framework” is also in charge of “reviewing its own creation”. Morris believes it is “doubtful” whether the experts conducting independent reviews “include those with very different perspectives from those within the ministry”. It is certainly unlikely that the only reports cited by the ministry (Smith, 1998; Foley, Hong, & Thwaites, May 1999) in the *Policy Framework* document (MOE, 1999: 1) contributed in any meaningful way to the draft *Arts Curriculum Document* published in May 1999.

New Zealand’s recognition of four distinct disciplines within the arts curriculum, however, can be seen to be consistent in the international context. Although the arts are defined in different ways in international curriculum documentation, recent
research (Taggart, Whitby, & Sharp: 2004) comparing the arts curricula in 21 countries shows all participating countries have well defined curricula in place for each of the arts disciplines. Drama and dance are included in the curricula of most of these countries. The implementation in New Zealand of an arts curriculum encompassing dance, drama, music, and visual arts is mirrored in New South Wales, for example, while in Queensland the same disciplines are augmented by the inclusion of media studies.  

Prior to the release of *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (MOE, 2000) provision of any arts tuition was a matter of choice for secondary schools. The place of visual arts and music in New Zealand secondary schools was therefore theoretically confirmed, rather than challenged, by the mandating of *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* statement. Howard Fancy (MOE, 2000: 5), Secretary for Education at the time, emphasized in his foreword to the document that the arts disciplines “offer students unique opportunities for imaginative thought and action, for emotional growth, and for deeper understandings of cultural traditions and practices ...”, adding that “Such opportunities are integral to young people achieving their potential as learners and participating fully in their communities and in society as a whole”. In practice, however, dance and drama were added to an arts curriculum which in many schools had previously comprised only music and visual arts. Change in the school landscape familiar to music teachers quickly became apparent as drama took hold in the secondary school environment, potentially placing music, a ‘boutique’ subject with small numbers of students at senior level, under threat. It was mandatory for each secondary school to offer only two of the four arts disciplines: theoretically, a school could choose to offer drama or dance instead of music.

In practice, many schools have created faculties of performing arts encompassing the disciplines of dance, drama, and music. In the eight years since the launch of the arts curriculum no secondary school has removed music from the curriculum to offer another arts discipline in its place. My research engages with the spirit of *The Arts in*

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15 The connections between the New Zealand curriculum and the 21 arts curricula comprising Taggart, Whitby and Sharp’s international study is noted by Arslanagic and Dunmill (2006: 6).
the New Zealand Curriculum (MOE, 2000) by exploring the opportunities offered to a composer working with students in the context of a school with a lively performing arts faculty: music project two, for example, is a dance work, and music project three is an edited version of Macbeth performed by drama students and instrumentalists. It is unlikely that these works would have been produced in a secondary school context before the introduction of drama and dance into the school curriculum.

The National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA)

The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum document (MOE, 2000) was designed to complement and support the achievement standards developed for the National Certificate in Educational Achievement (NCEA). The NCEA was introduced in 2002 replacing the previously offered qualifications: School Certificate (usually offered in Year 11), Sixth Form Certificate (Year 12), and the Year 13 qualifications of Higher School Certificate, University Entrance, Bursaries, and Scholarships. In 2008, NCEA is the main qualification at all levels in the senior secondary school. Two of the composition projects that comprise the data of this research met students’ music assessment requirements for the new qualification.

In practice, the implementation of the NCEA qualification in music built upon the 1993 additions of composition and performance as assessed components of the School Certificate prescription, and commensurate changes made in the University Bursaries examinations in 1995. These changes were prompted by the Syllabus for School – Music Education: Early Childhood to Form Seven (MOE, 1989) and the pressure of the music teaching community to include practical music making (composition and performance) in the assessment processes.16

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The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA: 2005)\textsuperscript{17} stresses that NCEA is not what is taught in schools, which is supposedly governed by the curriculum, but is “only about assessment”. Such a claim ignores research that suggests any changes in assessment practice affect both teaching and learning (Bond, 1989; Hacker & Rowe, 1997; Herr, 1992; Linn, 2000). Even Paul Black (2001: 5), commissioned by the Ministry of Education in 2000 to write an independent report of the proposed development of NCEA, dismisses this claim as “disingenuous”.

NCEA represents a major change from a norm referenced to a standards based (or criterion referenced) form of assessment.\textsuperscript{18} Assessment systems are not a straightforward matter. Roy Nash (2005: 100) of the Massey University College of Education notes that “The field of assessment and testing is one of the most hotly contested in education and the struggle between the principles of norm-referencing and standards-based (or criterion-referencing) lies at the heart of it”. Auckland University of Technology (AUT) prefaces its Policy for Assessment of Student Achievement with the following summary:

Philosophically the process [of assessment] is complex ... At its heart, assessment involves establishing criteria suitable to the context of learning, looking for evidence related to the criteria and making judgments based on the evidence. While as educators we do our best to objectify this process in an endeavour to be fair and consistent, there is inevitably some subjectivity present in each of the above steps (AUT, 2005).

The move from a norm referenced to a standards based model of assessment can be seen to bring assessment within New Zealand secondary schools closer into

\textsuperscript{17} The New Zealand Qualifications Authority and the MOE are entirely separate institutions (set up under the Education Act 1989 to replace the former Department of Education) the former supposedly dealing solely with assessment issues, and the latter dealing with all other aspects of the education system. In practice, assessment and teaching/learning processes are inseparable, and I (and many teachers of my acquaintance) find the dual system baffling.

\textsuperscript{18} Standards based assessment is a method of assessment in which a learner’s performance is measured against predetermined standards or criteria of achievement, as opposed to norm referenced assessment methods which assess students’ achievement relative to the achievement of others by marking on a comparative basis and using the assessment outcomes to rank the students in order. NZQA defines the difference thus: “Students are now assessed against preset standards, rather than the achievement of other students. That means assessment results explain or describe what students can do, not where they fit into a ranked list of ‘marks’” (NZQA, 2007).
alignment with the model preferred by New Zealand universities. The University of Auckland’s *Teaching and Learning Policy* statement (2004: 2), for example, provides definitions of both criterion based and norm referenced assessment methods and notes that “Within the context of a student-centred learning ethos, the primary model of assessment which should be used is the criterion referenced, standards based model”.

NZQA’s statement that NCEA is “only about assessment” may imply that the implementation of NCEA does not constitute a major change of direction for New Zealand education. The vigorous and sustained debate within the community surrounding the new qualification reflects a conviction that this change in the method of assessment drives both what is taught, and how it is taught, at senior level in our secondary schools. Prior to the implementation of NCEA, Michael Irwin, policy analyst for the New Zealand Business Roundtable, referred to it as “one of the silliest educational policies yet dreamed up” (2001: 1), and John Morris, conservative headmaster of Auckland Grammar School, predicted it to be “An ill-planned recipe for academic anorexia” (2001: 1). Morris is even quoted in *Subtext* (the newsletter of the Education Forum, 2004: 1) as referring to “gender bias” in the new assessment system. His statement implies that internally assessed research assignments prepared by students over a long period of time present a superficial alternative to the work stimulated in the context of an externally assessed written examination:

> Boys do not like ongoing assessment. Girls are much better at doing on-course assessment, they like prettying things up. It’s just the way they are.

Warwick B Elley (2005: 1), Emeritus Professor of Education at the University of Canterbury, prefaxes his attack on the system by citing a variety of responses:

> The whole process has been variously described as a bandwagon, a grand design, a steamroller, a juggernaut, a new paradigm, a revolution, the biggest reform in 50 years, a political hot potato, a tangled web, a bureaucratic nightmare, a panacea, a blueprint for the 21st century and an educational monster.
New Zealand Herald columnist Deborah Coddington (2007: 4) asks readers to “look at NCEA (please, just for one minute, I know it hurts)” before stating that “After 17 years, seven education ministers, and $600 million of taxpayers’ money, it’s still a dog”. She apparently feels no need to provide evidence for her assertions, basing them solely on her perception that “There may well have been problems with the old School Certificate and University Entrance which my children and I sat, but they sure as hell didn’t dominate news the way NCEA does”.

According to the first Ministry of Education funded research into the effects of the implementation of NCEA, the shift from a norm referenced to a standards based assessment model was undertaken to “enhance student motivation to learn” (Meyer, Weir, McClure, Walkey, & McKenzie, 2007: 8). An assessment system that evaluates and grades students in comparison with each other (norm referenced) rather than in response to their ability to master skills and perform tasks (standards based) motivates high achieving students but discourages those who are destined to achieve at lower levels. Research indicates that students are motivated to learn when assessment criteria are directly related to learning outcomes: success is under the students’ control and not dependent on comparison with others (Deevers, 2006; Farrington & Small, 2006).

Meyer et al. (2007: 8) point out that “it was once regarded as acceptable for half of New Zealand young people to ‘fail’ School Certificate after eleven years of compulsory schooling (the grade was normatively scaled so that half passed and half failed)”. The effects of education under this system are to some extent ‘positional’, enabling some people to achieve but only at the expense of others. Education becomes a ranking exercise with assessment designed to “stratify achievement and sort students into those who would be directed to particular pathways and occupations”.

The shift to standards based assessment within the New Zealand secondary school system reflects current international research: the American Federation of Teachers (AFT Teachers, 2003: 9), for example, issued a statement – Where we stand:
Standards-based assessment and accountability – as a result of a national conference in 2002, noting that “in a standards-based system, the primary purpose of assessments is not to sort ‘winners’ from ‘losers’ – it is to ensure that all students have the knowledge and skills that they need to succeed ...” NCEA was introduced into schools in New Zealand as our education system has sought to emphasize the importance of achievement for all students.

Under the NCEA system of assessment, each discipline is divided up into sets of either achievement standards and/or unit standards. Schools determine the form in which these components are combined to create the courses they offer: some schools offer only achievement standards, some schools offer only unit standards, and some schools offer courses that allow for a mixture of the two. Standards from several learning areas may also be combined to create a course: music, drama, and dance standards, for example, could be combined to create a ‘performing arts’ course. The flexibility of the system is intended to encourage schools to tailor courses that meet the needs of their students, thus reflecting the student-centred focus of the curriculum.

Achievement standards are designed to provide a complete and comprehensive course within a discipline at each year level if offered in their entirety. There are, for example, six level 1 music achievement standards provided for students studying in Year 11 (www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/assessment). These are divided into two Domains, those of Making Music and Music Studies. Achievement Standard 90012, for example, under the Domain of Making Music, is titled Perform contrasting music as a featured soloist. To achieve this standard, the students must meet the achievement criteria: “Perform contrasting music, generally accurately, demonstrating some technical skills, appropriate musicianship and presentation skills”. To achieve at a higher level, Achievement with Merit, the criteria demand that the music should be played “fluently and mostly accurately, demonstrating technical skills, effective musicianship and presentation skills”. Achievement at the highest level, Achievement with Excellence, is described as performing “confidently, fluently and accurately, demonstrating secure technical skills, convincing musicianship and
communication skills”. Assessment of this standard is carried out by teachers (internally assessed), with some examples of work for some standards – rotated annually – sent to a National Moderator19 as a means of ensuring the validity of the assessment.

In contrast, Achievement Standard 90015, *Aurally identify, describe and transcribe music elements from simple music*, is placed in the Domain of Music Studies, and is “externally assessed” by means of an examination at the end of the school year.

Students can undertake a full course by undertaking a further four achievement standards, three assessed internally and involving additional performance, composition, and study of “music works”, and one externally assessed standard that requires the student to “identify and describe fundamental materials of music”. Each achievement standard allows for achievement at each of the three levels (‘achievement’, ‘achievement with merit’, and ‘achievement with excellence’) by measuring the student’s work against a set of achievement criteria.

Students can move on to another discrete set of achievement standards at Level 2 in Year 12, and can complete their secondary schooling in music (as in most other disciplines) with Level 3 achievement standards in Year 13.

The complementary set of assessments known as unit standards comprise a clearly defined set of skills, most of which are assessed as either achieved or not achieved (merit and excellence grades assess differences in the quality of the work assessed). Unit standards are not designed with the specific intention of providing a complete and comprehensive course within a discipline if offered in their entirety, and can be offered by institutions other than schools (such as tertiary institutions offering unit standards as part of trade apprenticeships). There is a multiplicity of unit standards developed and put in place by different organisations and registered on the

19 Prior to 2008, education professionals (usually practising teachers) were contracted by NZQA to act as moderators. In 2008, full time moderators were contracted (for a maximum period of three years) in an attempt to moderate more student work more consistently. There are two full time music moderators in 2008, and one drama moderator. The number of dance students was not regarded as sufficient to justify appointment of a dance moderator.
qualification framework: National Qualification Services for example ‘own’ over 4500 unit standards; Māori Qualification Services ‘own’ 500; and various Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) ‘own’ over 4000 unit standards.20

As one achievement standard at each level requires a student to perform as a soloist, and a further standard at each level requires performance as a member of a group, the NCEA system of assessment can be seen to offer many opportunities for a music teacher to compose music that presents “appropriate musical challenges” (Elliot, 2005: 12) for her students. Two of the music projects in this research were composed to provide specific students with assessment opportunities for NCEA performance requirements. At the Beginning of Time, for example, was composed for a percussion ensemble, meeting the students’ request for a specifically composed work that would allow for both NCEA group assessment and provide a piece for performance in the annual Chamber Music Contest run by Chamber Music New Zealand.

Although my research offers a positive response to the creative opportunities that have been opened up by the recent philosophical changes and associated changes in assessment systems, some schools (including Macleans College in which my music projects were undertaken) are critical of NCEA to the point of adopting off-shore assessment systems to replace it. In 2007, for example, 43 of New Zealand’s 412 secondary schools are members of the Association of Cambridge Schools in NZ Inc. (ACSNZ)21 – an organisation that offers sets of British syllabus-based courses with no overarching curriculum. Many of these schools are offering Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) as an alternative to NCEA (www.acsnz.org.nz/schools.html).

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20 The complexity of this system is bewildering. The Ministry of Education and NZQA are currently undertaking a review of all the standards with the intention of reducing the complexity and reducing inconsistency. The review is scheduled for completion in 2010. (This information was provided verbally by Geoff Gibbs, working as part of the Ministry of Education’s Alignment of Standards with the Curriculum Project.)

21 Of these 43 schools are independent or integrated schools (not state secondary schools). 22 of the 43 schools (over 50%) are single sex schools in a country where 80% of schools are co-educational. Of these 22 single sex schools, 17 are schools for boys (figures provided by the Data Management Unit of the MOE). These figures indicate the conservative nature of the majority of schools adopting the CIE system. In Britain, 200 similarly conservative schools have adopted CIE instead of their local curriculum-based system.
Ironically, criticism of the current assessment system is not confined to those who oppose its fundamentally constructivist basis: the NCEA achievement standards are criticized by some for functioning as old-fashioned syllabi in a new disguise. Rachel Bolstad (2008: 31), for example, draws attention to the gap between the stated intentions of the curriculum and reality: “In theory, the school curriculum is seamless from Years 1-13, but in practice there is a sharp disjuncture between Years 10 and 11, when Achievement Standards ... become the de facto curriculum”. Bolstad (2008: 32) goes on to point out that “This situation does not appear to have been explicitly planned, but to have evolved out of the recent changes”. Complexity theory reminds us that systemic change may appear to be the result of top down planning, but in reality systems are created in unpredictable, bottom up ways.

My research has its roots in the context formed by the philosophical shifts and consequent assessment changes that have taken place in the New Zealand education system between the early 1990s and 2007. The secondary school context has undergone deep-seated and wide-ranging change in this time. In 2008, processes are underway to make significant further changes to the existing suites of achievement standards and unit standards and a change of government in the general election of 2008 could signal either a reversal or further fundamental change to the New Zealand secondary school curriculum and assessment system. A composer-teacher’s work may take a particular form in a particular context at a particular time, but the secondary school context is not static.

**The New Zealand Curriculum (2007)**
The *Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (MOE, 2000) (together with all the separate learning area curriculum documents developed during the 1990s) was superseded by the launch, in October 2007, of *The New Zealand Curriculum* (MOE, 2007). Arts maintain their status within this curriculum as one of the “learning areas” (increased from seven to eight), which are defined as “broad groupings of knowledge ... considered essential for a general education: arts, English, health and physical education, learning languages, mathematics and statistics, science, social sciences, and technology” (MOE, 2007: 16).
The status of music amongst the arts is unchanged (although its name has been extended from *music* to *music – sound arts*). Students must learn in all four arts disciplines over the course of years 1 to 8, and in at least two in years 9 and 10. Students in years 11 to 13 may choose to specialize in one or more of the disciplines. Schools are required by *The New Zealand Curriculum* (2007: 20), as they were by the former arts curriculum, to provide tuition in “at least” two arts disciplines for students in years 9 and 10.


The major change between the two documents is a new emphasis in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (MOE, 2007) on the social outcomes of education. *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (MOE, 2000: 12) focused on students’ development of skills, knowledge, attitudes, and understanding in the arts. *The New Zealand Curriculum* (2007) places the arts (and all other learning areas) within a broader context. Karen Sewell, the Secretary for Education in 2007, describes the document as “a clear statement of what we deem important in education” (MOE, 2007: 4). The ‘front end’ of the curriculum (MOE, 2007: 8-16) is described as follows (MOE, 2007: 4):

> It takes as its starting point a vision of our young people as lifelong learners who are confident and creative, connected and actively involved. It includes a clear set of principles on which to base curriculum decision making. It sets out values that are to be encouraged, modelled, and explored. It defines five key competencies that are critical to sustained learning and effective participation in society ...

The emphasis *The New Zealand Curriculum* (MOE, 2007) places on social outcomes may suggest that knowledge and skills have correspondingly diminished in importance. Trevor Thwaites (2008: 18), for example, refers to the “educational space” available to music education as “confused, troubled and diminishing”. He
rightly acknowledges, however, that “for the performance arts the key competencies [thinking; using language, symbols, and texts; managing self; relating to others; participating and contributing (MOE, 2007: 12)] appear as a gift, for the arts can easily deliver on each and every competency”. The explicit development of key competencies and a focus on values such as “excellence, ... innovation, ... community and participation” (MOE, 2007: 10) in the music classroom should not detract from the development of purely musical skills and knowledge.

Curriculum is “designed and interpreted in a three-stage process”, according to The New Zealand Curriculum (2007: 37) in a statement that illustrates the extent to which education in New Zealand has changed from the syllabus-based system that dominated it throughout most of the twentieth century:

The national curriculum provides the framework and common direction for schools, regardless of type, size or location. It gives schools the scope, flexibility, and authority they need to design and shape their curriculum so that teaching and learning is meaningful and beneficial to their particular communities of students. In turn the design of each school’s curriculum should allow teachers the scope to make interpretations in response to the particular needs, interests, and talents of individuals and groups of students in their classes.

The music compositions comprising the data in this research illustrate the way in which the New Zealand curriculum has allowed one teacher the freedom to “make interpretations in response to the particular needs, interests, and talents of individuals and groups of students”. The fact that schools have exercised their “authority ... to design and shape their curriculum” by offering alternative, off-shore based forms of assessment to those provided by the Ministry of Education and NZQA shows that such freedom is being exercised in widely differing ways. The editorial (Stirling, 2007) in an October 2007 edition of the New Zealand Listener draws attention to the fact that “a nation that has so proudly eschewed class structure is ... rapidly erecting a two-tier education system. Our schools are being colonised while the government stands by”.

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Despite the differing ways in which the curriculum can be interpreted and implemented, and the fact that curricular change is ongoing and inevitable, *The New Zealand Curriculum* (2007) has reinforced the four discipline arts structure (the context of this research) which was introduced in *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (2000). Many large schools have formed faculties in order to streamline the former departmental system, music in many cases placed together with drama and dance in a performing arts faculty. This can be an uneasy alliance given the understandable unwillingness of school principals to provide staffing for small classes of students. However, a performing arts faculty that integrates drama, dance, and music is potentially of enormous value to our secondary school students. Such a faculty, as this case study illustrates, offers many creative opportunities for a composer-teacher and her performing arts students.
Essay Three: Co-curricular context

“We consider taking part in co-curricular activities ... as being an integral part of a young person’s development”

(Macleans College: http://www.macleans.school.nz/co_curr.)

This essay backgrounds the co-curricular activity that is promoted in New Zealand schools and which is integral to this research. Many inter-school events are focal points for schools’ annual co-curricular cultural programmes. The three specific co-curricular events which have functioned as drivers for this research are outlined. The following compositions were produced in response to these drivers:

- Music project one: ‘At the Beginning of Time’ – a narrative work for percussion and voice, which also meets curricular needs;
- Music project three: ‘Macbeth’ – a drama for actors and instrumentalists (see Essay Two: 51??); and
- Music project four: ‘A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha’.

The word co-curricular made its appearance in some New Zealand schools in the 1990s, and is now used more commonly than the older term extra-curricular. The words are used synonymously in New Zealand to denote school activities that take place outside the curricular programme of classroom instruction and learning. The American distinction between them (co-curricular referring to activities that have some ‘outside the classroom’ focus, but are nevertheless mainly curricular activities; extra-curricular for activities with no classroom component) does not apply in New Zealand.22 The adoption of co-curricular in place of extra-curricular is explained by Shirley Boys’ High School (www.shirley.school.nz) as follows:

For us, the word “extra” suggests something that is simply added on. At Shirley Boys’ High School the students are encouraged to take part in a wide variety of school activities in order that they may discover and develop

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22 The Ministry of Education adopted the American usage of the term in a 1994 publication (Music education in secondary school; A handbook for teachers) to denote “activities which take place out of class time, but are still part of the music programme and are therefore not “extra-curricular”. This usage, however, has not taken hold in New Zealand.
interest and talents and further enjoy their time at school. The words “co-curricular activities” better reflect our philosophy, promoting the importance we attach to participation in sporting and special interest activities. Many of our hardest working students in the classroom are also fully involved in co-curricular activities.

Given the emphasis placed on co-curricular activity in New Zealand schools it is interesting to note that no research has been undertaken to examine the roots of this distinctive element of our school culture or its outcomes. It appears to have been accepted without question as part of a long-standing tradition. An entry in An encyclopaedia of New Zealand 1966, for example, describes “extra-curricular activities” as a “very important feature of post-primary education in New Zealand” (www.teara.givt.nz/1966/E/EducationPost-primary):

In these activities members of staff take an active interest and spend a great deal of time. Almost every pupil belongs to some school sports team or plays some game organised within the schools, and the schools themselves have expansive playing areas which are maintained in good order. There is also a strongly growing interest in non-sporting activities, including music and drama, and in clubs of almost every kind. An account of the extra-curricular work of any school can be read in any school magazine ...

The Education Review Office (ERO), the government agency that monitors schools’ ability to meet the educational needs of their communities, reviews all schools (state, integrated, and independent) every three years, and publishes a report on the education practice in each school. The fact that 240 such reports currently listed on ERO’s web pages comment on the co-curricular programmes of the schools involved is testimony to the importance New Zealand’s governing educational bodies place on these programmes. The 2004 ERO review of Cromwell College, for example, identifies the school as having “particular strengths” in “co-curricular activities ... and curriculum developments in visual art, reading and junior English” (www.ero.govt.nz). Westlake Boys High School was commended in 2004 for its “emphasis on supporting student achievement through quality learning programmes and a wide range of co-curricular activities”.
Evidence of the importance New Zealand parents and students place on co-curricular opportunities is provided on the American Field Scholarship (AFS) website. American Field Scholarships offer New Zealand students the opportunity to study in a variety of countries. Each country is profiled on the AFS web pages (www.afsnzl.org.nz), and under “school life” details of co-curricular opportunities (or in many cases the lack of them) are noted along with other vital information such as the daily hours of study and the number and type of subjects studied within the curriculum.

Secondary school teachers’ awareness of the significance of co-curricular activities to students and parents was highlighted in 2002 when the Post Primary Teachers’ Association (PPTA) chose to take strike action over a pay dispute by banning teacher involvement in the co-curricular life of schools. The strike action was successful and the ban on teacher involvement in co-curricular activities was lifted on 29 July 2002.

Schools generally ensure teachers’ willingness to engage in co-curricular activities by including reference to co-curricular involvement when they advertise vacant teaching positions in the *New Zealand Education Gazette* (MOE, 2007). Of the 99 secondary schools that advertised vacant positions for assistant teachers in the 3 September 2007 edition of the *Education Gazette*, for example, 55 schools published statements declaring an expectation that applicants would commit to co-curricular involvement. The expectation is occasionally worded obliquely, such as Burnside High School’s statement of their intent to “seek enthusiastic teachers who share our goal of excellence in academic and cultural pursuits for all students” (MOE, 2007: 71), but is more commonly expressed explicitly. Otumoetai College, for example, requires all applicants to show “a commitment to high academic standards and commitment to the school’s extracurricular programme” (MOE, 2007: 68). Kelston Boys’ High School states that “Participation in the school’s extensive co-curricular programme is essential” (MOE, 2007: 66).

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23 All vacant teaching positions in New Zealand are advertised in *The New Zealand Education Gazette*, published in magazine format on a monthly basis by the MOE and also accessible online: http://www.edgazette.govt.nz.
In the first decade of the 21st century, the importance of co-curricular activities in New Zealand schools is expressed not only in advertisements for teachers and in school magazines and year books, but also on school websites. Dunstan High School claims to be “justly proud of the range of opportunities available to students in and out of the classroom” (www.dunstan.school.nz), with Fraser High School stressing that “The Visual and Performing Arts are highly valued ... both as key areas of learning and as well supported co-curricular activities” (www.fraserarts.school.nz). Tararua College acknowledges awareness that “some of the most important educational experiences for our students come from opportunities offered and taken up outside of academic studies” (www.tararuacollege.school.nz).

Schools typically express their educational philosophy in terms of achieving a ‘balance’ between academic and co-curricular programmes. Samuel Marsden Collegiate School (www.marsden.school.nz) expresses it thus:

Marsden promotes the philosophy that a balanced involvement in academic and co-curricular activities is healthy and fulfilling. Our co-curriculum, with wide-ranging opportunities for involvement in sport, the arts, music, drama, debating, outdoor education, inter-school exchanges, community service and work exploration, extends the educational experience.

Hamilton Boys’ High School “strives to achieve balance between Academic, Cultural and Sporting endeavours” (www.hbhs.school.nz); Newlands College believes that “our students should ... participate in a balanced curriculum that includes co-curricular activity” (www.newlands.school.nz). Massey High School expresses its aim for balance as taking a “holistic approach to education” which “provides opportunities for every student to develop interest and abilities to complement their academic achievement” (www.masseyhigh.school.nz). Kelston Boys’ High School aims to cater for its “ethnically diverse group of students” by focusing on “the provision of academic, sporting and cultural opportunities” (www.kbhs.school.nz).

Belief is frequently expressed on schools’ web pages in the power of co-curricular activities to nourish desirable character traits. Takapuna Grammar School, for
example, believes that involvement in co-curricular activities is “essential to developing well rounded students, giving them opportunities to develop social skills, competitiveness, collegiality and perseverance” (www.takapuna.school.nz). Students who participate in co-curricular opportunities are expected by Epsom Girls Grammar School to “learn leadership, co-operative, self management and goal setting skills” (www.eggs.school.nz). With specific reference to co-curricular music activities, Rosehill College points out that “Co-curricular groups can be highly beneficial to those who take them … Through interaction with others strong leadership skills are often developed and young musicians often turn out to be dynamic leaders of the community at large” (www.rosehill-college.co.nz).

Independent schools, which rely on attracting fee-paying students, sell their co-curricular wares assiduously, characteristically linking claims to academic excellence with the provision of wide ranging co-curricular opportunities. Nga Tawa, the Wellington Diocesan School for Girls, for example, includes the following statement under a heading of “Academic Excellence”: “Each year, Nga Tawa achieves extremely high pass rates in all levels of NCEA … Nga Tawa’s wide ranging co-curricular opportunities extend students to their full potential, spiritually, socially and culturally” (www.ngatawa.school.nz). Wanganui Collegiate School describes itself as “a premier co-education Boarding and Day School in New Zealand, known for its fine holistic education and the character of its young men and women”. The school is “proud of its scholastic achievements as a leading academic institution” and adds that “This attainment occurs alongside a comprehensive sporting, cultural and service programme”.

State schools use the lure of co-curricular activities to attract foreign fee-paying students. The income gained as a consequence is intended to compensate for what they believe to be shortfalls in government funding of state schools. Fielding High School, for example, advertises a “wide variety of co-curricular activities” on its web page for international students (www.fielding.school.nz). Hastings Boys’ High School offers international students “opportunities to participate in a wide range of
curricular and co-curricular experiences that would not be possible elsewhere” (www.hastingsboys.school.nz).

Pride is expressed by schools not only in the range of co-curricular activities, but in the quality of achievements. Schools are frankly competitive in their attitude to the co-curricular achievements of their students. St Hilda’s Collegiate School (www.sthildas.school.nz), for example, boasts of its

... formidable reputation as a strongly competitive school in sport achieving top National and South Island rankings in hockey, netball, tennis, rugby, athletics and cross country. Our choirs, music groups, orchestra, drama, school productions, stage challenge and debating teams also enjoy success in local and regional competitions.

Schools that traditionally take pride in their sporting achievements typically stress that cultural achievement is also a vital part of school life. Hamilton Boys’ High School expresses pride in its “strong tradition of excellence and achievement” and the “success at regional and national levels” achieved by its students, but also highlights its awareness “of the need to continually evolve and develop” with the regular introduction of “New sporting and cultural groups”.

Government awareness of the co-curricular workload of teachers has resulted in the development of schemes placing Sports Coordinators and Arts Coordinators into state schools to assist with the associated administrative and organisational tasks. The government’s Arts Coordinators Project was launched in 2001. Schools are currently required to apply for the funding, and 344 schools took advantage of the scheme in 2007.24

24This information was provided verbally by Judy Matthew, MOE contract manager for the Arts Coordinators Project, October 2007. From 2009, the funding will be distributed directly to schools through their annual ‘Operations Grant’ with no requirement that schools should continue to pay for Arts Coordinators. Some schools may choose to use the funding for different purposes and small schools will receive less funding than formerly.
New Zealand schools not only develop their own curricula to meet the needs of their communities, but further develop their cultural identities through their co-curricular programmes. Schools in New Zealand thus develop as microcosms with a strong sense of culture, and the performing arts departments and faculties within the schools (microcosms within the microcosm) develop within, and express, their various cultures. Given the significance of co-curricular activities in New Zealand schools, and that musical groups have traditionally functioned as co-curricular activities, teachers of performing arts are inevitably deeply involved in co-curricular activities in their schools.

The intrinsically competitive model of sporting co-curricular activities has increasingly been adopted and adapted by cultural groups. The result is an abundance of competitive inter-school cultural ‘festivals’ which form the focal points of the annual programme for school cultural groups and correspond to the competitive leagues and divisions of the various sporting codes. It is not the purpose of my research to investigate the positive or negative aspects of competitive inter-school cultural festivals, or the impact of co-curricular involvement on teachers: research into this practice has yet to be undertaken and could be very revealing. From the point of view of my research, co-curricular performing arts festivals are a significant feature of current practice. They create a demand for repertoire and can offer the opportunity for a creative response from both teachers and students.

Three such festivals, each outlined below, have functioned as drivers for the creation of data for this research.

**The New Zealand Community Trust Chamber Music Contest**

This annual competition is “the longest running youth music competition in New Zealand and is the only national chamber music competition for young musicians and composers in the country” (www.chambermusic.co.nz). The competition features a series of regional contests from which a maximum of eight groups are selected to perform in the National Final. Fourteen District Contests were held in
2007, and Chamber Music New Zealand states on its website that 538 groups and 2033 students participated overall (www.chambermusic.co.nz)

The purpose of the competition is to “encourage young musicians regardless of standard or experience, to perform together and strive towards excellence” and to “provide an opportunity for musical activities within schools to have a link with the wider community at both a local and national level” (www.chambermusic.co.nz).

The conditions of entry for 2007 required groups to comprise three to eight full time secondary school students, performing on any combination of instruments including a single voice, but not a conductor. The works, or movements of works, presented were to be of not less than four minutes’ nor more than fifteen minutes’ duration. There is no specific encouragement for students to perform works by New Zealand composers in this competition, but the original composition section of the competition encourages student-composers to participate.

The score for At the Beginning of Time, for percussion ensemble and voice, which comprises the data for music project one, was written as the result of a request from the performers for a suitable piece to enter in this competition. The piece also met the NCEA assessment requirements for group performance for some of the participants.

The University of Otago Sheilah Winn Festival of Shakespeare in Schools

The first Sheilah Winn Festival of Shakespeare in Schools was held in 1992, with seven regions taking part. In 2007 there were 21 Regional Festivals, involving over 5000 students (www.shakespeare.org.nz). There are several competitive components: students may perform 15 minute scenes (directed either by students or teachers) from any one of Shakespeare’s plays or perform five minute scenes which must be student-directed. In addition there is a costume design competition and a competition for student-composed music.

These figures are provided on the Chamber Music New Zealand website as applying to the 2007 competition. Exactly the same figures are provided in connection with the 2006 competition, so they cannot be entirely accurate. They have been included, however, to provide an indication of the status of the competition.
The regional competitions comprise fifteen minute and five minute scenes: one of each is selected to compete in the National University of Otago Sheilah Winn Festival of Shakespeare in Schools. Regional festivals also offer a variety of awards for the competing groups.

The competition regulations prevent compilations from more than one play, and also prevent any content being added to the original play, but there is nevertheless scope for creative approaches to the text. Some groups present 15 minute adaptations of the entire play, or edit scenes in order to explore particular themes, rather than presenting a scene in its entirety. Successful presentations typically rely on perceptive and effective editing of the original material.

Macleans College, the school in which this research is based, hosted the South Auckland Regional Sheilah Winn Festival of Shakespeare in Schools for five consecutive years from 2002 to 2006. Groups from the school were selected to compete in the National Festival in four of those five years. A 15 minute performance of Macbeth, presented at the 2006 festival, is the third of the four composition projects that comprise this research. It was performed by a group of 22 student-actors with the edited text interpolated into a music score for piano, violin, cello, and percussion.

**The New Zealand Choral Federation BIG SING Festival**

The New Zealand Choral Federation (NZCF) is an incorporated society run by regional groups in main centres. In addition to many regional events, the NZCF runs four national events: The Kids Sing (for primary school choirs), The Classic Sing (for adult choirs), The Sing Aotearoa Festival (to celebrate group singing), and the BIG SING (for secondary school choirs).

The inaugural BIG SING festival was held in 1988. It is now an established national event comprising ten regional festivals and a national finale. Over 6000 students forming several hundred choirs take part each year (Monk: 2004). At the regional
festivals each choir presents a nine minute recital comprising two or three works in differing styles, at least one of which must be a New Zealand composition. 

A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha, the last of the music composition projects presented in this research, was composed for a newly formed group of relatively inexperienced singers. The work was performed at the Auckland Regional BIGSING festival in 2006.
Essay Four: Specific context

“Professional learning is strongly shaped by the context in which the teacher practises”

(Timperley, 2008: 7)

Essays two and three have shown how the education system in New Zealand requires each school to design its own curriculum. As a result, each school in New Zealand develops and even markets its own distinctive culture and identity. This essay describes Macleans College, the specific context in which the projects that form the data of this research were conceived and produced.

Macleans College

Although research indicates that students’ achievement is more significantly affected by the work of individual teachers than by the schools they attend, schools nevertheless account for variance in student achievement. European and North American studies, for example, ascribe between 10% and 20% of variance in student achievement to the schools the students attend (Bosker, 1992; Byrk & Raudenbush, 1992; Colemen et al., 1966; Creemers, 1994; Creemers, Peters, & Reynolds, 1989; Jenks et al., 1972; Luyten, 1994; Madaus, Airasian, & Kellaghan, 1980; Marzano, 2003; Rowe & Hill, 1994; Scheerens & Bosker, 1997). Macleans College has maintained consistent policies designed to sustain high levels of student achievement since the school’s inception in 1980. These policies focus on providing a safe and orderly environment for students, articulating high and clearly defined expectations for students’ academic and social development, and involving students, parents, and the community in an extensive co-curricular programme.

Macleans College is a co-educational state secondary school in the south-east Auckland suburb of Bucklands Beach. Like all New Zealand secondary schools, Macleans College is ‘self-managing’. The 1989 Education Act, the 1990 Education Amendment Act, and the 1991 Education Amendment Act (4) provided the structural framework for each school to take responsibility (under the control of a
parent-elected Board of Trustees) for most aspects of school management. The changes were established under the label of Tomorrow’s Schools. Schools in New Zealand consequently employ their own staff, manage their school properties, and design and implement school curricula. Macleans College has thus created a distinctive culture and environment for and with its students. The school’s website stresses its academic strength, extensive co-curricular programme, and its values system based on the whānau\textsuperscript{26} house concept.

The school is accorded the highest possible ‘decile rating’ by the Educational Review Office: decile 1 schools “draw their students from areas of greatest socio-economic disadvantage”; as a decile 10 school, Macleans College draws its students from “areas of least socio-economic disadvantage” (ERO, 2007: 1). Opened in 1980 with a roll of 199 students, the school has grown steadily with the roll in 2007 exceeding 2400 students representing over 50 nationalities (www.macleans.school.nz) – a large school by New Zealand standards, although by no means the largest in Auckland.

Macleans College was the first S80,\textsuperscript{27} or ‘whānau house school’ to be built in New Zealand. The design features eight separate whānau house buildings (the original plan catered for four; the school’s continued growth was not predicted) each consisting of various classrooms surrounding a large central space. This means that the school’s house system is based on physical as well as organizational structures. The whānau houses provide “safe, home-like, stable and manageable” environments for between 200 and 300 students of all year levels, functioning as eight small schools within the single large one (MOE, 2001: 20). The most recent Education Review Report of Macleans College (ERO, 2007: 2) comments that the “whānau

\textsuperscript{26} The Māori word ‘whānau’ is commonly used in New Zealand to refer to ‘extended family’. The concept of a ‘whānau house’ is readily understood by New Zealanders to mean a place where family, or closely connected people, can gather and feel at home.

\textsuperscript{27} Macleans College, founded in 1980, was the last state secondary school to be built in New Zealand until 2004. When Alfriston College and Botany Downs Secondary College were built in 2004, the S80 design was used for both new structures. This reflects the positive impact of the whānau house concept.
system is valued by the students, staff and parents and contributes to the high standards of discipline and behaviour evident across the school”.

The whānau house structures represent a significant change from the traditional groupings of classrooms according to traditional subject areas. The concept, however, acknowledges the need for specialist facilities and Macleans College was built with a spacious music block comprising two large teaching spaces and practice rooms, and an auditorium that seats audiences of up to 245 people and provides generous stage space, green rooms, and props and costume storage areas. A drama teaching space adjoins the auditorium stage. These areas are positioned for access after hours, adjacent to car parks which facilitate loading of instruments and equipment as well as catering for the audiences of public performances. The performing arts teachers therefore benefit from the settled, positive environment engendered by the whānau house structures, but are able to work in specialist facilities in close proximity to each other. In contrast, the teachers of the four large faculties of English, mathematics, science, and social science teach in the whānau houses, with no more than two teachers from one faculty in each. The music projects that comprise the data of this research could not have been produced without adequate rehearsal and performance facilities.

The positive spirit of the students fostered by the whānau system is also evident in what the Macleans College website refers to as a “reputation for high performance in the core business area of academic success”. Senior students are offered two qualification pathways: the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) or Cambridge International Examinations (CIE).28 The 2007 Education Review Report endorses the school’s claims of academic strength, noting that “Collated data indicate that students regularly achieve a higher percentage of excellence and merit results” when compared with national NCEA results and that the “overall ... pass

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28 The introduction of foreign based assessment systems was discussed in Chapter Three: 56-57. Macleans College implemented CIE examinations, in addition to NCEA, in 2004, and in 2007 over 50% of senior students undertake a CIE programme of learning. The Principal and Deputy Principals of the school are staunch advocates of the syllabus-based CIE examination system, and there is considerable, but by no means universal, support for the system amongst the teaching staff.
rate” based on both qualification pathways is “undoubtedly high” (ERO, 2007: 4). Although the ERO report comments on the difficulty of making “valid comparisons of student achievement data with the MOE ... benchmark indicators as more than half of senior students are taking the CIE qualification pathway”, its comment on the overall achievement of school leavers is decisive and positive (ERO, 2007: 5):

Figures for 2005 demonstrate that 92 percent of students left school with at least Year 12 qualifications. Less than 1 percent left with no formal attainment. These figures ... compare extremely well with 79 percent and 4 percent respectively for schools of a similar decile.

Macleans College places considerable emphasis on student participation in its exceptionally comprehensive and rigorous co-curricular programmes. It is school policy to insist that all students participate in at least one major sporting, cultural, or service activity (www.macleans.school.nz/co_curr/). The school has a variety of measures in place to implement this policy. Senior teachers interview all prospective students as part of the school enrolment process, and students sign an agreement to abide by this and a number of other school policies. Co-curricular participation, in addition to academic attainment, is listed on the reports that are sent to update parents with regard to their children’s progress twice each year. Time is allocated for teachers to check the level of each student’s co-curricular involvement. Further incentive to participate is provided by an annual co-curricular prize-giving, and major co-curricular awards are presented alongside major academic awards at the junior and senior prize-givings.

In 2007, co-curricular programmes were offered in 37 sporting activities at Macleans College,29 each programme comprising many teams competing at varying levels in regional and national competitions. The co-curricular cultural opportunities provided by the school are equally varied. Many music groups, such as the senior orchestra, intermediate strings, junior and senior concert bands, jazz band, and chamber orchestra, form early in each academic year and practise on a weekly basis.

29 This information was provided verbally by Simon Peek, one of the two Deputy Principals of Macleans College, October, 2007.
These groups give concerts in the school and wider community as well as participating in the various co-curricular festivals and competitions. Other groups, such as the casts assembled for the junior and senior drama productions and the annual musical production, the wearable arts competitors, Sheilah Winn Shakespeare Festival groups, Stage Challenge casts, and various chamber music and rock groups, may rehearse for clearly defined periods of time to prepare for specific events or festivals. The music projects comprising the data of this research were designed to provide challenges and artistic opportunities for a relatively small number of participants over short periods of time: they represent one point of focus in a multi-faceted environment.

The school takes pride in both the variety and quality of its students’ co-curricular achievements, celebrating success at the weekly school assemblies and house assemblies, and on the school’s active website. On 17 October 2007, for example, the following items were given prominence on the home page of the website with photographs of the students involved: international students had won a local indoor soccer tournament; the Macleans College Young Enterprise Team had won first place in a regional competition; three Macleans College students had been selected for a series of drama workshops in London as a result of their success in the 2007 Sheilah Winn Shakespeare Festival; a Macleans College folk music group, The Teacups, had been chosen to open the José González concert in Auckland in January. A further nine items were listed covering activities as diverse as weight lifting and a Chinese Moon Festival organized by students of the school. Such items are updated daily under a heading of “latest news” (http://www.macleans.school.nz).

The school’s co-curricular programmes also reflect its ethnic diversity. A recent Education Review Office report (2007: 1) on Macleans College records the ethnic composition of the school as New Zealand European/Pākehā students 29%, Māori 2%, Chinese 27%, Other European 15%, Korean 9%, Indian 6%, Other Asian 5%, Middle Eastern 2%, Pacific 1%, Sri Lankan 1%, and other ethnicities 3%. At the annual flag pageant, students and teachers representing over 50 nations celebrate
the countries of their birth. Co-curricular groups such as the Korean drummers, Chinese, Korean, and Indian dance groups, Chinese dragon dancers, and the Kapa Haka group, are open to students of all nationalities and participate in festivals, in school performances, and in the wider community.

The Founding Principal of Macleans College, Mr Colin Prentice, articulated the principles which continue to shape the school: a clear set of values captured in acronyms that are still taught to all year 9 students; the high academic standards the school espouses; the principle of participation by all students in the co-curricular programme. The organizational systems set in place in 1980 are also still evident: for example, in 2008 (the time of writing), assemblies are still conducted in the same place, at the same time, and in the same format as the first assemblies in the 1980s. A past pupil from the founding year of 1980 would recognize much that is said and done within the school in the first decade of the new century. The school sets out to foster and support achievement in a wide range of ways. The positive atmosphere of the school is evident in the performing arts facilities which swarm with musicians and actors at lunchtimes and weekends voluntarily practising and preparing for performances. This is an environment that encourages a composer-teacher to take school arts processes and performances seriously.

Despite this consistency of approach, much has changed at the school and some changes have significantly affected the music composed for this research. The diverse ethnicity of the school reflects national trends, in particular the fact that permanent and long-term migration to New Zealand over the last fifteen years has been predominantly from Asian countries (www.whss.govt.nz/resources/FactSheet). The proportion of Asian students at Macleans College has grown steadily since the late 1980s and this change has had a direct effect on the music projects that comprise the data of this research. The development of skills in western art music is promoted by Asian parents, and Asian students dominate many of the school’s instrumental groups. Many of these students are highly disciplined and technically skilled.
Changes within the curriculum have prompted significant changes in the teaching and learning of performing arts since the implementation of *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (MOE, 2000). The growth of drama in the school began in 2002, with drama offered as an option subject at Year 10 level. By 2007, drama within the curriculum had strong support from students from Years 9 to 13, and a very strong co-curricular presence in the school. *Macbeth* (music project three) for actors, violin, cello, piano, and percussion, was composed for a group of drama students and musicians who wanted an original approach to Shakespearean text for their 2006 entry in the Sheilah Winn South Auckland Festival of Shakespeare in Schools.

Dance has not embedded itself in the curriculum as quickly or successfully as drama. Dance classes began at Years 9, 10, and 11 in 2003. The national shortage of dance teachers qualified to teach in the secondary school environment is associated with similar concerns in the tertiary context: for example the Tertiary Education Commission’s *Performance-based research fund quality evaluation: Creative and performing arts panel – the 2006 quality evaluation* notes that “As in 2003, Music, Literary Arts and Other Arts attracted significantly better quality categories than the other disciplines [which include dance] reviewed by the CPA panel”. The panel attributes this difference in quality to “the more established nature of these disciplines”.

The failure to find qualified secondary school teachers necessitated the appointment of dance teachers at Macleans College (and other secondary schools) through a special permit called a *Limited Authority to Teach* (LAT). The dance teachers first employed in the school thus had experience teaching in a range of dance styles at community academies of dance but no training or experience in the secondary school context. Their lack of experience in dealing with large groups of secondary school pupils, and difficulties coping with school procedures, and assessment and reporting systems, understandably resulted in short periods of teaching tenure at the school. Music project two, a one act dance work, was intended to provide inspiration and support for the newly formed dance classes, as well as providing a challenge for a specific group of instrumentalists.
In contrast, music has long been an important feature of teaching and learning in the school, in both curricular and co-curricular terms. A national Itinerant Teachers of Music Scheme, funded directly by the Ministry of Education, provides group instrumental tuition free of charge to over 200 students in the school. A team of fourteen teachers, for example, offered tuition at Macleans College in the following range of instruments in 2007: violin, viola, cello, double bass/bass guitar, acoustic/electric guitar, drums, voice, flute, clarinet, oboe/bassoon, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, and percussion. Students are withdrawn from academic classes for 40 minutes each week for these instrumental lessons.

New Zealand secondary schools have offered instrumental tuition through the Itinerant Teachers of Music (ITM) Scheme for over 60 years. Students who begin instrumental lessons under this scheme, or under the Out of Hours Music Scheme for primary school students, are customarily encouraged at Macleans College to transfer to ‘private’ individual tuition from teachers outside the school system as their skills develop. As Macleans College is a decile 10 school, most of the proficient musician-students pay for private instrumental tuition. Some chamber groups operate under the umbrella of the ITM scheme: the percussionists for whom *At the Beginning of Time* (music project one) was composed rehearse together on a weekly basis with occasional tutoring by the itinerant percussion teacher.

The Music Department is grouped with Drama and Dance under a Performing Arts Faculty structure, but there is no attempt to integrate the disciplines within the curriculum. In 2007 Year 9 students were given the choice to study two of the four arts disciplines for three hours each week for one semester (half the school year). At Year 10, the disciplines of English, maths, science, social studies, physical education and health were compulsory for all students for three hours each week. All other subjects including the four arts disciplines were offered as ‘options’: students chose three options and studied their chosen disciplines for three hours each week. In

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30 The information about the instrumental tuition available at Macleans College was supplied verbally by Raewyn Williamson, Music Administrative Assistant, Macleans College, October 2007.
Year 11 English and maths were compulsory: students chose three additional subjects. English was the only compulsory subject in Year 12.

This curriculum structure is reviewed on an annual basis and changes are both frequent and inevitable. The structure outlined above was established in 2005 and placed all performing arts disciplines on an equal footing with visual arts for the first time in the school’s history. The two inter-disciplinary music projects (Macbeth for actors and instrumentalists, and The Pied Piper for dancers and instrumentalists) were written as a direct response to the school’s creation of a performing arts faculty. The other projects are entirely music-based, but nevertheless reflect the strong place the performing arts occupy within the curriculum and the culture of the school. The structure allowed for the employment of six full time teachers within the performing arts faculty, a situation that continues in 2008.

The physical structures of a school change over long periods of time; the systems and procedures are subject to review but still tend towards inertia. The population inhabiting the institution, however, changes rapidly. The entire student population at Macleans College, as in all Year 9 to Year 13 secondary schools, changes over each five year period and the teaching staff turns over almost as quickly. A survey of staff conducted in a staff meeting in August 2006 revealed that fewer than 30 teachers in a teaching staff of over 180 had taught in the school for longer than five years. Many of the students who participated in the music projects comprising the data of this research have already left the school, and none of them will remain in 2011. Only one of the six staff members teaching music, drama, or dance in 2007 began teaching at the school before 2006.

The positive culture of this school, the product of its socio-economic setting, physical structures, and clearly articulated values, has supported the creation and production of these music projects. The projects nevertheless represent precise meeting points between one composer-teacher and specific groups of students at specific times. These people were part of this school context for all or part of the four year time
span of the music projects: they were shaped by that context while they worked within it, but also played their own small part in shaping it.
Essay Five: Personal narrative

“Meaning and identity arise ... from where an entity fits into the mazes of relations that characterize the arrangements of which it is a part”

(Schatzki, 2007: 53)

This essay comprises the personal narrative of the composer-teacher/researcher and completes the examination of the context in which the four action research music composition projects have been undertaken.

In Chapter Three I referred to the key themes Thomas Regelski (2004: 11) has identified as summarizing important conditions of praxis:

1. Praxis consists of action and reflection on the tangible results of that action. Such reflection on the results of praxis informs the personal theory and praxial knowledge that, in turn, guides future praxis – and so on, in a never-ending spiral.
2. Praxis arises in the real world from concrete, present and meaningful situations that elicit action.
3. Praxis takes place in terms of the historically and presented situated social or cultural world and is a form of reciprocal interaction with that world.
4. The social world in which praxis takes place is itself constructed (or reconstructed) by praxis; it is not the natural world.
5. Meaning, too, is socially constructed, not a priori and absolute.

I have designed this research to embody these praxial themes: the data of the thesis (the music scores) and the data analysis represent musical action and reflection with the intention of guiding future praxis; the essays comprising the background theory peel away and examine layers of the context, revealing their interconnections and the way in which the context shapes the perceptions and actions of people within it, as well as being itself shaped by them.

This personal narrative completes the background theory by bringing it to its narrowest focus – the point where I have interacted with specific students at specific
times to create these music projects as a form of “reciprocal interaction” (Regelski, 2004: 11) within the context of our own musical community at Macleans College.

It also represents the point at which I confront the suggestion that my practice as a composer-teacher could be focused on my own musical development at the expense of my students. Regelski (2007: 28), for example, warns of “those whose focus is more singularly on music than on teaching it and, thus, whose main interest is in fulfilling their own musical needs”. This statement implies that a strongly musical focus on the part of the teacher inevitably submerges the teacher’s concern for the musical (and personal) development of his/her students.

Regelski (2007: 9) calls for “more research which systematically investigates in depth, and which goes on to explore changes in values, motivations, and identity reported at various stages of subjects’ eventual teaching careers ... [Such research] would provide useful insights about the development of identity and its influence on teaching practice”. He also warns, however, (2007: 33) that:

Studies that begin with perspectives or frameworks that are then proven, affirmed, or confirmed through the strategic (in the Habermasian sense) use of methods, subject selection, and data risk of being “not even wrong”; i.e. they are unlikely to make any important contribution at all to the knowledge base.

I acknowledge the risk that my research into my practice as a composer-teacher could lack validity if I set out with the intention of proving through “strategic” methods that my model of practice is effective. Roberts (2007: 11) comments that “Our mysteries cannot be unpacked if we just go searching for confirmation of our own agenda”. Rather, I have set out to explore and present the creative musical and educational processes and outcomes of my practice by giving voice (both

31 Roberts’ views on research in this regard seem to have undergone a considerable shift in recent years. In his 1994 paper ‘Music teachers as researchers’, for example, he highlights the gap between research in music education and the reality of the classroom, and recommends that “teachers ought to be involved in research processes with their own agenda” (1994: 24).
musically and verbally) to all the participants in the four music composition action research projects.

It would be naïve, however, to claim that I (in common with all researchers) have not come to my research from a particular perspective. In this essay, I am thus setting out to reveal (rather than conceal) my own skills and interests, artistic training and experience, perspectives, and motivations.

Essays Two and Three (outlining the curricular and co-curricular context) revealed the ways in which schools in New Zealand are self determining. This has led to the creation of a variety of school cultures, as schools reflect the diversity of their local communities. Essay Four described the specific context in which I undertook four music projects – Macleans College in Auckland. The experience of working in this large, urban, decile 10 school is markedly different from the experience of working in, for example, a relatively remote regional school, and my music compositions for students in other schools have been markedly different from the projects that comprise this research.

It is important to acknowledge that I chose to work at Macleans College and I support the philosophy of the school. All teaching positions in New Zealand are advertised in the Ministry of Education’s bi-monthly Education Gazette, and all teachers in New Zealand exercise their right to apply for positions in schools of their choosing. I chose to apply for a position at Macleans College in 2002, moving from another school with a very different culture in which I had worked positively for several years. It is characteristic of the New Zealand education system that teachers gain experience by working in a variety of contexts. All aspects of my work at Macleans College (and the other schools in which I have taught) have been shaped by their context, but I have also (together with my students) shaped the culture of the schools.

I do not intend this thesis to imply that the performing arts programmes at Macleans College would be appropriate or desirable for another school or that the arts
programmes at this school are ‘superior’ to programmes developed in different contexts. Neither do I suggest that programmes evident in the school now would necessarily be appropriate in the future nor that the music projects that comprise this research were ‘superior’ to the other musical programmes (whether ‘classical’, rock, jazz, or any other genre or style) developing in the school at the time. Nevertheless, a significant number of students studying at Macleans College for the duration of this research were instrumentalists taught within the Western European classical tradition. As a ‘classically’ trained musician myself, and with a love of and commitment to this tradition, I composed music scores to “develop and match” the musicianship of these students, and to develop the skills of many other students with different musical identities, with “appropriate musical challenges” (Elliott, 2005: 12). In doing so, I set out to “embody and exemplify musicianship” (Elliott, 2005: 12) with positive outcomes for both my students and myself.

A brief overview shows how my musical training developed in the Western European classical tradition. My skills, interest, and commitment have continued to develop within this broad framework: the music I write reflects this background. Like many of my students, I developed keyboard skills from an early age, firstly as a pianist taught by a private instrumental teacher. I developed a love of singing at school through participation in co-curricular choirs and also learned basic percussion and violin playing skills through the Itinerant Teachers of Music scheme. I continued studying music at the University of Auckland, completing a Bachelor of Music (Performance) degree in organ and harpsichord studies. My university studies were characterized by an emphasis on ‘Early Music’, and supplemented by studies in composition, harmony and counterpoint, music history, choral and orchestral conducting, and orchestration.

My secondary teacher training comprised a one year course undertaken after my specialist music training. I am thus a product of what Regelski (2007: 7) refers to critically as “The paradigm of preparing music teachers as musicians first (in sequence) or foremost (in percentage of studies), and secondarily as teachers”. I believe, however, that developing skills as a musician first and teacher second...
provided me with an appropriate pathway into a career as a secondary school music teacher: a teacher’s musical skills are integral to the development of a strong school music programme; teaching skills, although equally important, are more readily developed than musical skills. Formal institutional training represents, however, only one phase in the development of a musician, teacher, or musician-teacher: perhaps a willingness to reflect and build on practice is more significant ultimately to positive development in any field than the sequence or emphasis of formal training.

I have worked actively as a composer for several years. I write for other schools and other community musicians, as well as writing for my own students. In 2006, for example, I wrote a choral work (*Ring Out Wild Bells*) for another school, a work for string orchestra (*Workout*) for another school, and a piano trio (*Brief Encounters*) for the New Zealand Chamber Soloists. I write with the style and technical control of each group in mind, but regard a focus on performance ‘standards’, or labels such as ‘amateur’ or ‘professional’, as missing the point of musical experience. Essentially, I set out to write music for ‘classically’ trained players to play, and for singers to sing.

The musical background of many of the music students who participated in these music projects mirrors my own. All of the student string players and pianists, and most of the wind players, have studied their instruments independently of the school context through established networks of private instrumental teachers. The work of these private instrumental teachers is supported by a professional organization, the Institute of Registered Music Teachers of New Zealand. Assessment of students’ performance in New Zealand is provided principally by British music examination bodies – The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and Trinity College London – and (to a lesser extent) The Australian Music Examinations Board. In contrast, most (but not all) of the percussionists and singers with whom I worked on these music projects gained these musical skills, as I did myself, through the government funded Itinerant Teachers of Music Scheme. Most of the students, including the actors and singers, developed their ensemble skills primarily through the ensemble opportunities offered within the school (of which
these music projects represent a small sample) but some were also engaged in ensembles (orchestras, chamber groups, and so on) within the wider community.

David Elliott articulates a vision of music education within a school as “a multidimensional concept of music and musical works, a multilayered concept of musical understanding, a multifaceted concept of musical values, and a diverse approach to achieving these values” (2005: 7). In setting up a case study to investigate the processes and outcomes of my practice as a composer-teacher, I am not attempting single-handedly to encompass this praxial vision. It is important to acknowledge that no teacher has the ability to provide for the musical development of all students in all genres and styles herself, and I believe that no teacher could or should attempt to meet the performance needs of all students by composing for them. The students’ own development as composers must also addressed by music teachers.

Although David Elliott’s praxial vision taken in its entirety is beyond the scope of this research, my music projects have nevertheless taken place within a faculty which espouses a praxial philosophy. As Head of Faculty at Macleans College, I have sought to put David Elliott’s vision into practice by placing high priority on the appointment of a team of teachers with a wide range of skills and interests. In addition, teachers are brought in on a part time basis to work with specific groups where appropriate, such as the itinerant percussion teacher noted in Essay Four (80), a jazz specialist for specific groups, and teachers to work with such groups as the Chinese Dance Group and Korean Drum Group. The performing arts programme within the school has been designed to meet the diverse needs of its students, developing and changing as a result of ongoing collaborative and reflective practice. I have showed in Essay Four (73-82), the account of the Macleans College context, that the music projects I undertook for this research formed only a tiny fraction of the artistic activity underway at the time they were put into practice within the school. They represent, as I believe they should, one facet of a multidimensional, multilayered, and multifaceted performing arts programme.
The music projects reveal, in addition to my ‘classical music’ orientation, that my artistic interests have never been restricted to music: in addition to university music studies, I completed a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Auckland, majoring in English literature and drama. I studied dance for six years as a child and this has been an area of lifelong interest for me. These interests are reflected in my willingness to embrace the implementation in New Zealand of a secondary school arts curriculum encompassing dance, drama, music, and visual arts: I was directly involved in the implementation of both drama and dance into the curriculum at Macleans College in 2002, designing and teaching the course for the first Year 10 drama classes.

My experience of working with drama and dance has led to my conviction that the communicative principles that create convincing dramatic performances also generate compelling musical performances. This understanding has contributed significantly to the development of these music projects. I have set out to challenge actors and singers by extending their musical horizons, and also to challenge musicians by engaging them in dramatic contexts.

Each music project involves teacher and students working together in context-based music making, responding to drivers within the school context: these may be curricular drivers (specific achievement standard tasks, for example, as outlined in Essay Two: 55-57) or co-curricular drivers (as outlined in Essay Three: 69-72), or a combination of the two. The music projects are the result of a change in my teaching and learning practice: the projects have grown out of personal attitudinal shifts which have taken place over a period of time and which reflect wide ranging philosophical shifts in the secondary school context (as outlined in Essays One and Two).

I began teaching in 1989 as an assistant teacher of music and English. At this stage my teaching practice within the curriculum in both subjects was similar, and typical of the ‘syllabus-based’ approach to teaching in New Zealand at the time: in both English and music classes students sat at desks in a classroom studying ‘works’
(novels, poetry, musical works) or learning subject specific skills (studying English grammar or music theory). Practical music making for the students I taught took place almost entirely in the co-curricular (or what was then called ‘extra-curricular’) context: I directed a co-curricular choir and three chamber music groups in my first year of teaching, and took over the school orchestra in my second year. There was also a dichotomy between my life as a musician and my life as a teacher of music within a school: I maintained a distinction in my mind between my work at school and my work as a ‘real musician’ performing as a singer and harpsichordist in regular concerts and radio broadcasts outside the school environment.

I read David Elliott’s *Music Matters* (1995) shortly after its publication and found that it crystallized much of my experience. This coincided with my move into secondary school ‘middle management’ – the term used in New Zealand schools to describe the roles of teachers placed between the senior management team and those colleagues whose job description does not extend beyond normal teaching and pastoral functions. As a Cultural Coordinator (responsible for the planning of the annual co-curricular programme), Head of Department, and later Head of Faculty, I assumed responsibility for coordinating the work of a team of teachers, planning curricular and co-curricular development for the department with and for the team. I was thus in a position to reflect on, and make changes in my practice, setting the direction for teaching and learning for groups of students and teachers. Elliott’s *Music Matters* acted as both a catalyst for change and a focus for new directions. My changes in teaching practice were supported by the shift within the New Zealand education system to standards based assessment procedures, characterized by tasks written and assessed by teachers, and underpinned by a student-focused curriculum.

As a beginning-teacher in the 1980s I perceived schools as institutions in which students were taught knowledge and skills, and were then assessed to measure their achievements. I have approached my current research from a different personal perspective – developed over the decade from 1995 to 2005 – of schools as communities in which teachers and students work together to discover, learn, and create. (Essays One, Two, and Three, reveal how praxial philosophies of music
education, significant curricular change, and the co-curricular context in New Zealand have shaped this perspective).

I do not claim that the reader/listener/viewer can necessarily make inferences about the practice of other composer-teachers, or musician-teachers, from my work, but I have sought to provide virtual access to a particular world of performance practice.
A composer-teacher in context: Action research projects

CHAPTER FOUR

Music project one

“Music appreciated is music used!”

(Regelski, 2005: 22)

This chapter comprises the first of four music composition action research projects. Each project sets out to examine all aspects of the process through the twin lenses provided by David Elliott’s challenges: to “embody and exemplify musicianship” and to “develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” (2005: 12). This approach gives equal weight to the musical and educational aspects of the research. The intention is to give voice to all the participants and thereby capture and convey the essence of the experience.

Each project consists of a four-phase process as follow:

Plan: Composition process. The four action research projects each begin with a personal account of my creative processes in undertaking them. Each narrative describes the ways in which I have attempted to “embody and exemplify musicianship” and to “develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” (Elliott, 2005: 12). I have based the narratives on journal entries I wrote each day throughout the research process.

Data: Music scores. The music scores are included in the body of the text. As explained in Chapter Two (20-23), this research is a form of artistic inquiry in that the response to the context is creative: the music scores function as data, and form the focal point of each action research project.

Data Analysis: Performances; surveys; interviews. The data (music scores) of all the music projects were performed by the students (instrumentalists, singers, dancers, and actors) for whom they were written as the primary method of data analysis: as
explained in Chapter Two (20-23), the validity of the composer-teacher’s musical response to David Elliott’s challenges is then addressed by means of the musical (rather than verbal) responses. The students demonstrate the level at which the music has provided an appropriate challenge by performing it. The tangible evidence of the performance is provided on the CDs and DVDs attached to the written document.

This mode of analysis is supplemented by surveys (conducted by means of questionnaires) and interviews with participants. Surveys provide an effective tool when the intention of the research is to collect and quantify generalizable data involving large numbers of respondents. In this research, involving in-depth analysis of the attitudes and responses of small numbers of respondents, the survey tool is deliberately narrowly focused. The survey data provide a quantifiable element to the research – an overview of the responses of the students: those responses are then examined by means of the interview process. The musical data (CDs and DVDs) and the attitudinal data obtained through interviews reveal student voice strongly and effectively.

Berg (2004: 38-39) describes data analysis as “consisting of three concurrent flows of action: data reduction, data display and conclusions and verification”. I used the survey and interview process to identify themes and patterns in the students’ responses. I returned to the recorded performances frequently to consider the ‘fit’ between the students’ verbal (and written) responses, and their artistic responses.

**Reflection: Feedback and feedforward.** The final phase of the action research comprises a personal account in which I reflect on the relationship between the ways I set out to “embody and exemplify musicianship” and “to develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” (Elliott, 2005: 12), and the emergence of participants’ responses revealed in the data analysis. I draw conclusions and use them to inform future practice (the subsequent action research project).
**Timeframe.** The projects took place over a one-year period beginning in November 2005, with the four performances taking place as follows: **Project 1 – At the Beginning of Time** – February 2006; **Project 2 – The Pied Piper** – March 2006; **Project 3 – Macbeth** – May 2006; **Project 4 – A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha** – August 2006. The individual timeframes for each project are provided in each action research account.

**Diagram 2 (b): Action research music project structure**

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**At the Beginning of Time** – A narrative work for percussion and voice

**Plan: Composition process**

I wrote the first music score, *At the Beginning of Time*, over a two-week period in November 2005 in response to a request from the students (an established percussion ensemble within the school) for a work suitable for performance in the annual New Zealand Community Trust Chamber Music Contest. The conditions of competition entry for 2006 required groups comprising three to eight full time
secondary school students to perform on any combination of instruments including a single voice, but without a conductor. The works, or movements of works, presented were to be of not less than four minutes’ or more than fifteen minutes’ duration. The ensemble had already chosen another work for performance in the competition, and asked me to write a work of approximately six minutes’ length.

The piece was also designed to meet the NCEA assessment requirements for group performance for two of the participants. The percussionists were all involved in larger ensembles (orchestra, wind band, and so on) within the school, but the percussion parts for these ensembles are typically undemanding technically, sometimes very repetitive, and frequently involve more bars of rests for the players than bars of notes.

The NCEA achievement standard that assesses group performance (AS 90013: www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea) states that the “contribution of the student in the group performance must be clearly identifiable and assessable”: performance in a large ensemble does not meet this requirement. The Ministry of Education provides further guidelines for setting up and assessing this achievement standard in the form of a teaching resource called Group Perform (www.tki.org.nz). This resource advises teachers and students that group performance should “represent the upper level of the student’s ability”: playing the percussion parts in the school’s large ensembles may not give the players opportunities to show their technical, ensemble, or presentation skills at a high level. The percussion ensemble was formed so that the players could develop their skills, and meet the group assessment requirements for NCEA through performance of chamber music for percussion. I set out to compose music to meet the curricular and co-curricular needs of these students.

The ensemble comprised two skilled and experienced players of tuned and untuned percussion (Year 11 music students seeking Level 1 NCEA assessment opportunities) another player of tuned and untuned percussion, two relatively inexperienced players of untuned percussion, and one competent timpanist. One player was also a singer-actor. As the Chamber Music Contest allows for inclusion of a single voice, I discussed the possibility of writing a musical presentation of a Māori myth with the
singer-actor: she was enthusiastic about the opportunity of working with a storyline and voice as well as a range of percussion instruments. The group performance achievement standard (AS 90013: www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea) requires that “performance should show evidence of technical skills, accuracy, ensemble awareness and presentation”: performance of a narrative would encourage students to develop their presentation skills. From my point of view I therefore had an opportunity to write a substantial work for percussion, a new venture for me, and also to introduce a dramatic element into the score – a prospect which I found artistically pleasing and which I felt would challenge the students as well as meet their NCEA assessment needs.

At the time these discussions were taking place (October 2005), Year 10 drama students were preparing and performing presentations of Māori creation myths. Engaging with Māori mythology acknowledges the bicultural foundations of New Zealand, and encourages students to value Māori tradition. They also provide a point of cultural connection for all New Zealanders as creation mythologies of all cultures share common elements. These myths formed one focus of work in the performing arts faculty for a six week period and were shared through performance, according to our practice in the faculty, for members of the school and the wider community.

The myths begin with the creation of Ranginui (the sky) out of Te Kore (the nothingness) followed by the making of the moon and the sun. I chose to build the score on this section of the myths, attracted by the challenge of generating a sense of abundant creation in space through sound: the wide range of timbres and dynamics of the percussion instruments seemed ideal for this task.

I began with constructing a brief libretto which fell neatly into three sections:

At the beginning of time there stood Te Kore, the nothingness. The beginning was made from the nothing. From the nothing, the begetting. From the nothing, the increase. From the nothing, the abundance.

Great Ranginui, the spread out space, dwelt with the red glow of dawn, and the moon was made.
The great sky above us dwelt with the shooting rays and the sun sprang forth.

This libretto suggested the structure of the score: an opening section for untuned percussion to begin in quietness (Te Kore, the nothingness) and build to a climactic point (From the nothing, the abundance); a slow and ethereal middle section introducing gentle tuned percussion (the moon); a fast and dynamic closing section with a demanding xylophone part (the sun sprang forth) to showcase the technical skills of the two Level 1 NCEA music students.

I purchased a purerehua (Māori bull-roarer consisting of an oval flattened piece of wood tied by a string to one end and whirled in circular patterns above the head) to open the piece. I then listed the conventional percussion instruments available in the school and grouped them according to the sounds I envisaged as appropriate for creating the different atmospheres and developing the dramatic potential of each of the three sections:

Section 1 – the purerehua begins the work in unmeasured time, later reinforced by bass drum; wind chimes suggests the passing of time and link the three sections; three timpani, woodblock, and guiro to move the piece into measured time; bongos, tom toms, maracas, and claves to build to a climactic point emphasized by the rattle.

Section 2 – glockenspiel, tubular bells, and claves create ‘moon music’; no instruments would produce the background sound I envisaged, but after some experimentation I found that tapping pebbles together was pleasingly effective.

Section 3 – temple blocks, cymbals, suspended cymbal, two xylophones, tambourine, and whip.

Musical motifs and the way each section would build formed in my mind as I worked on the libretto and instrumentation. During this developmental stage I attended two percussion ensemble rehearsals to help me gauge the technical capacity of each
player: I had worked with three of the players on previous occasions, but I did not know the other players.

I envisaged the vocal line initially as sprechstimme notated on a clefless five-line staff with crosses for noteheads providing specific rhythms and a pitch outline. Work with the actor-percussionist undertaking the vocal role convinced me that attempting control over pitch would not contribute to the effectiveness of the performance: she responded positively to my rhythmic notation, but welcomed the freedom to make her own decisions with regard to pitch.

I wrote the piece with comparative ease as the outline, timbres, and atmosphere of each section were already in my mind. Part 1 was written for the timpanist, part 2 for the least experienced player of tuned percussion, parts 3 and 4 for the most experienced players both undertaking NCEA assessment (part 3 also contains the vocal part), and parts 5 and 6 for the least experienced players.

I built performance notes into the score, based on my conviction that the communicative principles that create convincing dramatic performances also generate compelling musical performances. I envisaged the piece beginning in stillness (notated as rests, the players dressed in black standing with their backs to the audience). The use of the purerehua (the player standing upstage centre) is as significant visually as it is aurally. The speaker was asked to stand downstage centre, and turn to face the audience before beginning her text. I wrote into the score that the intention of the piece is to communicate the story to the audience, with the players working visually as well as musically to achieve this.

I intended the dramatic aspect to challenge the students, and extend their thinking and their musical horizons. The piece was also designed, however, to extend their technical skills. As always, writing for a small ensemble allows for the creation of individually tailored musical lines: I took considerable care to provide variety, activity, and appropriate technical challenges for each player. The need for contrasting textures meant that all players would inevitably be faced with bars of rests at points throughout the work, but I divided these equitably and followed
moments of inactivity with important motifs for individual players: for example, Percussionist 2 has 25 bars’ rest in the opening section of the work, but these are punctuated by pulsing rhythms on the bongos which give much of the opening section its character, sweeps on the wind chimes which mark the move from unmeasured to measured time, and some syncopated guiro rhythms.

The two most experienced players (Percussionists 3 and 4) asked for demanding xylophone parts: the closing section of the work is built around their xylophone duo. I deliberately repeated the most demanding motifs exactly, rather than varying them with each repetition, in order to put a reasonable limit on the technical demands. Bars 94 and 95, for example, are particularly difficult to play, but bars 96 and 97 comprise an exact repetition of the material:

Ex. 1: At the Beginning of Time, bars 94-95, percussion 3 and 4 (xylophones)

Percussionist 2 also wanted the opportunity to play tuned percussion, but at a less technically demanding level than Percussionists 3 and 4. My response was to write the glockenspiel passage which provides the melodic material for the central section of the work (the ‘moon’ music). The passage is musically significant but the notes are easy to play:

Ex. 2: At the Beginning of Time, bars 59-60, percussion 2 (glockenspiel)
The final bars of the work illustrate the way in which the parts for the least experienced players (Percussionists 5 and 6) are integral to the texture, designed to develop ensemble skills, but are comparatively undemanding technically:

Ex. 3: *At the Beginning of Time*, bars 102-106, full score
From my point of view composing this piece gave me an opportunity to explore the integration of dramatic and musical approaches, and to experiment with creating atmosphere and telling a story effectively through sound. I hoped that the students would find their own lines varied and challenging, and would relish the opportunity to communicate an elemental story to their audiences.
Data: Music score

(Score attached as Appendix A: 270)

Data analysis: Performance, surveys, and interviews

The attached DVD of *At the Beginning of Time* includes footage of the preceding rehearsal of the work which provides further tangible evidence of the match between the music and the ability of the students to perform it. The students prepared the work in two hour-long rehearsals and a further two-hour workshop rehearsal. The work was performed and recorded in February 2006. I have not ‘analysed’ the performance in writing myself at this point (although I have commented on it from my perspective in the reflection phase of this music project) as the players have expressed their own response to the music through their performance. Musical performance is deliberately placed as the first mode of analysis, reflecting the praxial philosophy on which this research is based.

Surveys and interviews

I prepared a one-page survey in order to gain quantifiable attitudinal responses to the music and process of learning and performing it from the six students participating in the project. The surveys were designed for quick completion (less than ten minutes) and were distributed to the players at a meeting held within one week of the performance. This ensured that the survey was completed by all participants without encroaching unfairly on their time and goodwill. The survey questions were deliberately limited in scope: the musical performances express the students’ primary (musical) responses, and the participants were given voice extensively through the interview processes. The surveys provided an initial focus for the interview processes.

Because students are accustomed to (indeed indoctrinated into) regarding the teacher as the dominant partner in the teacher-student relationship, it was important to establish that they were free to respond openly and honestly and that their responses would not cause offence to me, a teacher. The survey thus begins with a statement from the composer-teacher to the students: “There is no need for
you to be polite, or positive about the music. I would appreciate you being frank and honest”. This statement was reinforced verbally when the surveys were distributed.

To further encourage open and honest responses, the surveys were completed anonymously – although the small number of participants in this project made anonymity difficult to maintain. In practice, I found that the students were not inhibited in their responses, and although I was disappointed as a composer-teacher because their responses to *At the Beginning of Time* were in some cases negative, I was relieved as a researcher that they felt able to express their negativity without restraint. Honest responses are crucial in terms of the validity of the research.

Each survey uses a Likert scale of 1 to 5 in order to quantify the participants’ responses to closed questions: the 1 to 5 scale allows the researcher to distinguish between strongly positive and positive responses (1 and 2 on the scale), negative and strongly negative responses (4 or 5 on the scale), with 3 on the scale allowing the participants to indicate a neutral response (students indicated that they wanted the freedom to make an “it was OK” response).

The survey questions for *At the Beginning of Time* were as follows:

1. I enjoyed learning to play *At the Beginning of Time*
2. I enjoyed performing *At the Beginning of Time*
3. I think the group enjoyed performing
   *At the Beginning of Time*
4. I found the style of this music challenging to play
5. I found the piece challenging to learn
6. I think this is an effective piece in performance
I designed the questions to encourage students to respond both subjectively and objectively. Students typically gauge their responses to their own and others’ performances in terms of enjoyment. Such responses reveal students’ engagement and motivation. Skinner and Belmont (1991: 3), for example, suggest that “positive emotions” such as “enthusiasm, optimism … and interest” are primary indicators of students’ motivation to participate in, and be successful in, the learning process. The first two questions thus encourage instant and honest emotional responses to the production process (question 1) and the performance (question 2). Question 3 encourages students to shift their focus from their own responses to those of their peers, thus providing insight into the students’ understanding of production process and performance as a group, rather than individual, experience.

Elliott believes (2005: 12) that the music teacher should “endeavour to develop and match … students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges”: questions 4 and 5 ask for analytical responses in terms of the music’s stylistic (question 4) and technical (question 5) challenges. This resonates with other research that suggests that students’ interest and engagement is triggered by tasks that lie “at the border of their competencies” (Skinner & Belmont, 1991: 3). Question 6 allows students the opportunity to disengage from their personal experience of rehearsing and performing the work, and to comment objectively and aesthetically on the quality of the work in performance. The survey questions facilitate teasing out what constitutes a “challenge” through the interview process.

I decided against asking for student responses to the concept of a teacher writing music for her students: such a question could appear to be soliciting support for my practice.

Interviews with all the students (conducted either as face-to-face exchanges, group interviews, or by electronic means) permitted me to follow up hunches, probe complexity, and try to understand and explain the responses demonstrated in the questionnaires. Fontana and Frey (2005) suggest that it is much more difficult
than initially anticipated to ask questions and get answers in an interview situation. Face-to-face interviews accommodate participants who are enthusiastic about sharing their ideas (Cresswell, 2005), but in practice even the most confident and articulate of the students valued the opportunity provided by electronic communication to consider their responses deeply and respond freely. As one student wrote (in an email) “I find it difficult to say to your face that I don’t like the piece, but I can write it to you. I know you don’t really mind but I just can’t say it to you”. Fontana and Frey (2003) draw attention to the way in which group culture can interfere with individual expression: using a variety of interview protocols and processes in this research has allowed for both individual expression and the expression of group culture.

I have combined discussion of the questionnaire and interview responses, as the interview responses illuminate the meaning captured in the limited survey data. Bar graphs provide visual representations of the survey responses. The interview responses provide excerpts from both individual and group interviews thus providing a strong sense of the voices of the participants.

The following themes emerged from the survey and interview process:

• The social aspect of rehearsal process was important to the students;
• Assessment results were important to them;
• All the students had difficulty overcoming initial lack of stylistic understanding of the work;
• Most of the students responded negatively to the dramatic aspect of the work; and
• Participants’ estimate of the group’s enjoyment was more negative than their individual responses.

These themes emerged as follows:
Survey questions 1 and 2 deliberately provided a distinction between the process of learning the music and the performing of it: the responses show that this distinction was meaningful to the players. Tables 1 and 2 indicate that the players
were more positive about the process of learning the work than they were about performing it. Only one student indicated negativity towards the learning process, but three indicated either negativity or strong negativity towards performing it:

Table 1: *At the Beginning of Time* – survey question 1

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert scale (1 indicates strong agreement)</th>
<th>Untuned percussion</th>
<th>Tuned percussion</th>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
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Table 2: *At the Beginning of Time* – survey question 2

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<th>Likert scale (1 indicates strong agreement)</th>
<th>Untuned percussion</th>
<th>Tuned percussion</th>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
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The interviews threw up various explanations for the comparatively negative response to the performing of the piece as opposed to the learning process. The piece was learnt by means of a series of workshops: comments such as “the rehearsals were really fun” and “it was fun because our teacher brought pizza to the rehearsals” showed that the players enjoyed the social aspect of the workshop process. This provided me with a timely reminder that these students’ reasons for
engaging in musical processes are not necessarily in tune with my own: the social aspect of their music making appeared to be of greater importance to many of them than musical meaning or expression.

The survey asked the participants to identify themselves as players of tuned or untuned percussion and, as the bar graphs show, this distinction proved to be significant: the two players of tuned percussion were much more positive about their experience of learning and performing the piece than the other players. Their interview responses suggested various reasons for this, the most clearly stated of which, again, was not associated with musical content or processes: they both indicated a strong investment in the performance because their NCEA group assessment results depended on it. The opportunity to “get a good grade” was deeply important to them. They were the most experienced and capable players of the group, and responses such as “At first I didn’t understand it, but I got to like it” showed a willingness to confront a new experience and grow through it.

Only one participant told me in interview that she enjoyed performing the piece more than learning it: “At first I really thought the piece was quite ridiculous. The rhythms looked absolutely mental, and the tuned percussion part at the end appeared to make no sense at all”. She went on to say

... but it gradually grew on me. I really did enjoy performing this piece. It was very exciting for the main reason that you had to be very quick movement wise, it was quite choreographed ... but I’m not sure the others felt the same.

Her responses focused on the technical aspects of the work: she showed little interest in the cultural value of the narrative and the possibility for the performer to give it powerful expression in sound.

She was right in saying that other players did not enjoy the “choreographed” aspect of the piece and this seems the most likely explanation for the comparative negativity about the performance. One player, for example, said “I don’t
understand why we had to walk around the stage and not just play the piece”. Another tried to explain her feeling of discomfort when confronted with words on the score: “It was something different to what we normally play and we weren’t used to it”. One student explained that “It was really a new experience for me; in fact I believe it was new for everyone to be playing a percussion piece with an acting component. Some of us found it a bit off the wall”. Another simply said “I hate acting”.

Question 3 allowed each student to gauge his or her response in comparison with the perceived responses of the other participants:

**Table 3: At the Beginning of Time – survey question 3**

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<th>Likert scale (1 indicates strong agreement)</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Untuned percussion</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Untuned percussion</td>
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It is interesting to note that the students’ estimate of the rest of the group’s enjoyment was more negative than their individual responses. This may be the direct result of one player’s openly expressed negativity in rehearsal – a level of negativity which did not feature in the interview responses of the other participants – which may have altered the group dynamic disproportionately. In interview one participant said “I really enjoyed it, but I enjoy acting and moving. I know Jamie32 hated it – I don’t know what everybody else thought”. Most of Jamie’s negativity, as explained in an interview, was associated with embarrassment at having to “act”.

32 Names have been changed to preserve anonymity.
Questions 4 and 5 encouraged the students to distinguish between the technical challenge provided (“I found the piece challenging to learn”) as opposed to the stylistic challenge (“I found the style of the music challenging to play”): 

**Table 4: At the Beginning of Time – survey question 4**

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<th>Likert scale (1 indicates strong agreement)</th>
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</table>

The survey responses show that the majority of the players found the style of the music challenging and this was reinforced by the interview responses. The narrative component, as already discussed, was specifically identified as challenging by four of the players in interview. It was not only the stage directions and dramatic component, but also my concept of communicating the story to their audience through sound that was challenging for most of them. I had, for
example, chosen to create an atmospheric background of sound for the second section of the piece (the creation of the moon) by asking three percussionists to tap pebbles together. Typical responses to this were “We couldn’t help giggling while we were playing the pebbles” and “Pebbles aren’t instruments”. The opening section of the piece is unmeasured, creating from my perspective a sense of timelessness to reflect the text, and this caused some bewilderment: “How can you play something without bars? I didn’t think it would work at all, but it did in the end”. A word that surfaced frequently in interviews was “weird”: “I found it really weird to start with” and (more encouragingly for the composer) “Eventually we became used to what it was supposed to sound like and then it didn’t sound so weird”.

The survey responses show that the majority of the players found the piece technically challenging. “YES!” wrote one player, “the rhythms were VERY hard at times such as when the drum beats were beamed five together so it went against the natural accents and it was so hard to get your head around”. It is interesting to note that neither of the tuned percussionists registered very strong agreement with the survey question about technical challenge, and one even indicated a neutral response, although both players commented in interviews that they enjoyed working with a technically demanding part. One said “I did find the pitched percussion at the end very hard. But the more I played it the easier it became – just like anything”. One of the less experienced players seemed to think the xylophone part was a little too challenging for her fellow performers (“I reckon the pitched percussion had problems when playing the fast melody”) and the player who indicated a neutral response to the question may have been underestimating the difficulty, or unwilling to admit that the part was significantly challenging. The two players concerned, however, were pleased that the piece proved an effective vehicle for NCEA assessment from their points of view: one reflected with satisfaction on having earned “excellence for group performance” and the other said “I wanted a good mark and I got it”.

Question 6 asked players to consider the effectiveness of the music in performance, encouraging them to consider the music in its entirety:

**Table 6: At the Beginning of Time – survey question 6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert scale (1 indicates strong agreement)</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 Untuned percussion, 0 Tuned percussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 Untuned percussion, 1 Tuned percussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 Untuned percussion, 0 Tuned percussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 Untuned percussion, 0 Tuned percussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0 Untuned percussion, 0 Tuned percussion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The comparatively positive responses to this statement initially seem surprising, but many of the interview responses indicated that this question prompted some students to move beyond their own physical and emotional responses, in particular the embarrassment they felt when asked to “act”, and they were able to consider the piece with a degree of objectivity. Three players commented on the “atmosphere” of the piece, and that it was “different” and “unique”. After watching the video of the performance one commented that “It’s really exciting to watch. I like the constant movement. It’s very dynamic”. Another student focused on the way the music communicated the story: “The different instruments portrayed the sun, moon and earth really effectively. Yeah, it seemed weird and a bit embarrassing when we were playing it, but it sounded really good in the end – I definitely think it was a new experience that was worth having. Even the pebbles sounded good”.

**Reflections: Feedback and feedforward**

I reflected on each day’s work in the journal I kept throughout the research process. After completing the composition of At the Beginning of Time I summed up my
attempts to “embody and exemplify musicianship” and to “develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” (Elliott, 2005: 12) as follows:

I have set out to bring these students into the world of Māori mythology by combining dramatic and musical approaches. I wanted to experiment with creating atmosphere – to take the players and their audience into the world of the story through sound. I have enjoyed exploring the range of percussion sounds. This, to my mind, is one way to “embody and exemplify musicianship” for my students. I’ve tried to create varied and challenging lines for each player – to “match” their musicianship. I hope they will relish the “challenge” of communicating a powerful story through the music. This should “develop” their musicianship.

My intentions can be summarized as follows:

- to tell a story effectively through sound;
- to integrate dramatic and musical approaches;
- to meet NCEA assessment requirements for group performance for two participants;
- to match and develop the technical skills of its player; and
- I intended the dramatic aspect of the work to challenge the participants, and extend their thinking and musical horizons.

I believe some of these intentions were realized, but the data analysis revealed a considerable gap between my intentions (and expectations) and the responses of the players.

Musically, I was particularly pleased with the first two sections of this three section work. Moving from the unmeasured opening (“Te Kore – the nothingness”) into the measured segment (“From the nothingness, the abundance”) was very effective in performance. The middle section (“And the moon was made”) using pitch (the glockenspiel motifs) for the first time in the piece was hypnotically evocative as I had intended. The vocal rhythms were strictly notated but in performance sounded spontaneous and unforced, as intended.
The third section (“And the sun sprang forth”) was less successful in performance. The intention was a burst of brightness from the xylophones and temple blocks: in performance the sound was shrill and thin rather than bright and striking. The school’s xylophone and temple blocks were comparatively inexpensive and this may have affected the tonal quality achieved in performance, but the sound did not match my conception of it.

The three forms of data analysis (performance, surveys, and interviews) combine to prove that the music effectively matched the technical abilities of each student, an important point reinforced by the positive NCEA results achieved by the two players of tuned percussion. The work met the assessment needs of the students: an important consideration, as previously noted, for percussionists.

David Elliott calls for teachers to “develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” (Elliott, 2005: 12). This project highlighted a tension between providing a “musical challenge” and whether or not that challenge is “appropriate”. As my journal notes indicate, I had hoped, and indeed expected, that the students would relish the “challenge” of communicating a powerful story through the music. The data analysis indicates that my hopes and expectations as a composer and teacher were not wholly fulfilled: the students were able to perform their parts technically, and those parts provided appropriate technical challenges, but the challenge of communicating the story effectively through the combination of music and movement was not fully realized.

The interview responses indicate that all the students, even those I regarded as musically sophisticated, were initially bewildered by what I considered a relatively conservative score, and some of them were unable to overcome their embarrassment when required to present the story dramatically. The taped performance illustrates the gap between the technical proficiency of most members of the group and their musical understanding of the work: their focus rarely extends beyond translating the score into sound through the medium of their instruments. I had provided them with a technical “match” but required too great a stylistic leap for the level of musical understanding of some members of the group.
After their initial performance of the work, the students decided not to participate in the New Zealand Community Trust Chamber Music Contest. As I composed the piece partly in response to this co-curricular driver, one of the main purposes of my work remained unfulfilled. The main reason for withdrawal cited by members of the group was heavy workload resulting in lack of rehearsal time. One of the players of tuned percussion stated that chamber groups who achieve tangible success in the contest perform at such a high level that her percussion group would not “stand a chance”. Although this attitude belies the purpose of the competition (to “encourage young musicians regardless of standard or experience, to perform together and strive towards excellence” (www.chambermusic.co.nz/music-contest)), she was undoubtedly realistic in competitive terms. Although no members of the group cited dissatisfaction with my composition as a reason for withdrawing from the contest, I suspect that had my concept of wholehearted commitment to communicating the story through performance been realized (or “relished” as I had hoped) by the group, they would have welcomed the opportunity for further performance.

For me, the data analysis revealed unexpected responses and attitudes. I began this research as an established composer-teacher, having spent several years composing music for students with whom I worked in the belief that they responded to my music with enthusiasm. I had set out to evaluate the outcomes of my practice by undertaking systematic research rather than making assertions based on my own personal convictions. I felt that the data analysis called me to examine my assumptions.

I write music as a creative response to the secondary school context in which I work. I set out to introduce my students to different ways of thinking and communicating through the music I write: for example, what the music is ‘about’ (such as the Māori creation mythology) may be as important as the development of musical skills. My research thus represents an intentional integration of the fields of music and music education. My motivations as a composer are distinct and complex: developing and matching “students’ musicianship with appropriate challenges” (Elliott, 2005: 12) is one of many motivating factors. This action research project revealed an
unexpected gap between my intentions and expectations and the responses of the students.

On reflection, I was satisfied that this project established the validity of my research: the students responded honestly to questioning and their responses were illuminating. I could draw conclusions and put those conclusions to the test in the second project. The introduction of a dramatic element into the music had undoubtedly challenged the students (and may prove ultimately to have been a formative experience for some of them) but they needed preparation for this shift in practice. The players’ experience consisted of playing percussion parts, and their focus lay in the technical processes of playing the notes. I had required them to make a major leap: a series of smaller steps of learning may have been more appropriate and fruitful.

As a composer I wanted to write another work combining dramatic and musical elements. I chose to write a dance work as the basis of my second action research project for a variety of reasons: one of those reasons was to transfer the ‘dramatic’ element of the work to students whose prior learning as dancers should fit them for it: the musicians would be asked to express characterization musically but not physically.
A composer-teacher in context: Action research projects

CHAPTER FIVE

Music project two

“In all those activities we call the arts, we think with our bodies. They negate with every gesture the Cartesian split between body and mind”

(Small, 1998: 40)

The Pied Piper – A narrative dance work

Plan: Composition process

Dance joined drama, music, and visual arts as one of the four arts disciplines comprising “The Arts” as an “essential learning area” as outlined in The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum (2000). This inclusion formally recognized for the first time in New Zealand schools that “An education in the arts results from learning in all four disciplines” (Ministry of Education, 2000: 7).

As Head of the Performing Arts Faculty at Macleans College, it was my responsibility to implement a dance course within the school’s curriculum. This presented me with significant problems: I was delighted at the inclusion of dance (and drama) within the arts curriculum but there were few trained secondary school teachers with dance qualifications available to teach school dance courses in the years between 2000 and 2005. Dance degrees, such as Auckland University of Technology’s Bachelor of Dance Course, have subsequently been implemented, providing dancers with the necessary tertiary qualifications to open up career pathways in secondary school teaching.

The New Zealand Teachers Council makes provision for schools to employ untrained teachers when registered teachers cannot be found for specific roles. In these circumstances, an untrained teacher may work under a permit known as a Limited Authority to Teach (LAT) (www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz/registration/how/lat.stm).
In order to implement a dance course at Macleans College in 2004 I employed LAT dance teachers whose experience and skills comprised training and qualifications in specific dance styles (such as ballet or jazz) and teaching in community dance centres. I decided that writing a one act dance piece could potentially help the dance teachers implement the courses and give the students in the newly formed dance classes a sense of purpose. Both musicians and dancers would have the opportunity to work on, and learn from, a multi-disciplinary project.

I chose the familiar folk tale, *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, as the basis for a narrative dance work for two reasons. Firstly, the story would focus the students’ attention on aspects of human behaviour that are the source of many of society’s problems – in particular, the consequences of lack of integrity (honesty, responsibility, ethical action) and respect for others. Secondly, in practical terms, I thought the narrative would offer a variety of opportunities for groups of students to explore different styles of dance. I composed the work over a six-week period in December 2005 and January 2006.

The project was designed as a curricular, rather than co-curricular, opportunity for the dance students. I planned for three dance classes, at Years 10, 11, and 12, to be involved in the performance. These classes were taught at different times during the day, however, and there would be little opportunity for rehearsal together: the *Pied Piper* narrative allowed for the creation of a dance structure that could be rehearsed in discrete sections with specific dances for the children, the rats, and other groups of characters. The story could easily be adapted for classes that at this stage comprised only girls.

The Year 11 and 12 dance students could be assessed against a number of NCEA achievement standards based on this dance work. Three of the level 1 achievement standards, for example, are internally assessed: the first requires the student to “compose movement sequences”, the second to “perform dance sequences” and the third to “perform as a member of a group” (www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/assess). The dance students could thus be involved in choreographing sequences for the work, as well as performing them.
In practice, I did not teach the dance students and I did not know most of them personally at the time of writing the music. I had, however, worked for several years with a group of Year 13 instrumentalists, in particular some outstanding wind players (flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon) and percussionists, and I tailored the music to provide assessment opportunities for two Level 3 achievement standards: “prepare and present performances of music as a featured soloist” and “present a performance of a programme of music as a member of a group”.

The Pied Piper is himself a wind player so the choice of story seemed pleasingly appropriate. Two of the players (1st flute and 1st oboe) were musician-teachers, enthusiastic about working on a project collaboratively with students: their lines are more technically demanding than those of the other instrumentalists. I underpinned the texture with a piano part to give one of the school’s many talented pianists the opportunity to play in an ensemble: I also envisaged that the dancers would be assisted by the piano’s percussive clarity.

I used the following synopsis of the familiar story:

In 1284, while the town of Hamelin was suffering from a rat infestation, a man dressed in colourful garments appeared, claiming to be a rat-catcher. He promised the townsmen a solution for their problem with the rats. The townsmen in turn promised to pay him for the removal of the rats. The man accepted, and thus played a musical pipe to lure the rats with a song into the Weser River where all of them drowned. Despite his success, the people reneged on their promise and refused to pay the rat-catcher. The man left the town angrily, but returned some time later … seeking revenge. While all the inhabitants were in church, he played his pipe again, this time attracting the children of Hamelin. One hundred and thirty boys and girls followed him out of the town, where they were lured into a cave and never seen again. Depending on the version, at most two children remained behind (one of whom was lame and could not follow quickly enough) who informed the villagers what had happened when they came out of church.

(http://en.wikipeida.org/wiki/The_Pied_Piper_of_Hamelin)
As a composer I wanted to write the music in response to the story’s resonance (an ancient moral tale), strong visual images (the colourful figure of the Pied Piper and the rats), and the musical possibilities (the Piper’s music is central to the story line).

I began with images of the performers as I envisaged them on the stage, which I matched with my knowledge of the dancers in the three classes. I pictured the senior class of Year 12 students taking the roles of the children’s mothers. These students would need solo dances, and I saw them as clearly defined characters to be introduced with their own musical themes. This led to the idea of matching their costumes with those of their ‘children’ (members of the Year 11 dance class) to create character groups.

At this point I decided to change the title from The Pied Piper of Hamelin to The Pied Piper. The story could be presented in a modern, local context. The mothers and their children would represent New Zealand stereotypes: a ‘flamboyant’ mother, self-important and elegantly dressed to match her children; two ‘gossip’ mothers, whose children would also be gossips; one or two ‘gym’ mothers, dressed like their children in track suits, with water bottles as props; a ‘mobile phone’ mother, anxiously texting her children; a ‘solo mum’, poorly dressed, but enjoying a close relationship with her disabled child. I believed that moral purpose of the tale, central to the embodiment of it in dance, would be clearer for the students when placed in a local context.

With characters and images acting as stimuli, musical motifs linked with specific instruments and players began to take shape in my mind. I envisaged the ‘flamboyant’ mother in association with South American rhythms, claves and maracas, and a syncopated clarinet theme; the two gossip mothers invited a high-pitched busy dialogue for two flutes; the ‘gym’ mothers found expression in breathless, slurred oboe figures; the ‘mobile phone’ mother could be nicely delineated by xylophone and piano motifs. Flute or oboe could have also been used to characterize the Pied Piper figure, but I wanted to use the music to distinguish this character from all the others: I chose alto saxophone knowing that the distinctive timbre would intrude effectively into the texture when introduced for the
first time. The depth and sonorous nature of the sound would invest the Pied Piper with a useful impression of authority. This choice also allowed a student suffering from a long-term illness to be involved in the project: I wrote the *Pied Piper's Lullaby* for him, knowing that he would not be sufficiently well to play in the whole work, but would be able to play one movement.

With no text to determine structure, I was aware that I would need to control the dramatic element of time both to tell the story effectively and to allow for practical aspects of performance. I chose to tell the story chronologically: flexible use of time integrating flash forward and flashbacks can allow for subtle juxtaposition of ideas on stage, but I felt that straightforward chronological presentation would best express the simple strength of this story. By concentrating on the most significant moments of the story, time would be expressed in selective (or compressed) form: I decided to set the action over a time period of one weekend, compressed into a 35 minute one act structure, each movement/dance focused on one important aspect of the story.

The individual movements/dances needed to be of optimal length (long enough to allow for development of character and mood, to convey the story, and to extend and challenge the dancers, but not so long as to overly tire them or stretch them beyond their capacity), and to balance and contrast with each other to create an effective musical and dramatic whole. In practical terms, the music would also have to accommodate such stage conventions as entrances, exits, and costume changes. I decided that each dance would need to be between two and four minutes in length.

To convey the time structure, and also to afford a musical link between movements, I decided to use tubular bells to represent the chiming of a town clock. The work thus begins with three strikes on the tubular bells, signalling the release of the children from school at 3.00pm on a Friday afternoon. This provided useful dramatic justification for the sudden, exuberant entry onto the stage of the group of children that marks the onset of the action. I was also aware that the school had purchased a set of tubular bells which had rarely been used: my score would offer an opportunity to showcase the instrument, and give students the experience of playing it.
With these initial decisions made (the cast of characters with accompanying musical motifs, instrumentation, approximate total length, and guidelines for length of individual dances) I was ready to create an outline of the entire work. As I worked on the outline, the music and dance began to run like a video in my mind, musical ideas connecting strongly with visual images. During this crucial stage in the creative process most of the music took shape, first in my mind, then as musical outlines jotted quickly by hand onto manuscript paper. I produced a charted outline of the work at this stage.

Matching the characters with specific instruments and musical motifs was important to me for many reasons. It is a technique that creates a connection with the identity of each character for the audience, particularly important in a dance work where the audience has to construe meaning with no assistance from dialogue: I envisaged visual cues – such as colour coding, and style of costumes and props – to reinforce this connection. The timbre of each instrument in association with its musical material, and eventually the choreography and performance itself, generates both mood and characterization. Matching of characters with instruments also helped me to meet the assessment needs of the students: the NCEA achievement standards require musicians to work in both solo and ensemble capacities; dancers are also required to perform as soloists and in groups. Matching each instrumentalist with a specific solo dancer ensured that each instrumentalist was also automatically provided with opportunities to perform as a soloist. I was also aware that the musicians needed to be challenged but not over-taxed: I provided each player with solo opportunities, but ensured that much of the music would not be overly demanding. A score of this length would be a challenge in itself for a (predominantly) young ensemble.

The only major musical change in progressing from my chart and sketched musical outlines to producing the detailed score involved the solo piano part devolving to a piano duet. This allowed me to use the piano’s tonal range freely without worrying about technical constraints. The choice did not compromise the pianists as they were not undertaking NCEA music assessments. While playing in the work would
provide ensemble experience for the players (particularly important for pianists) the parts are technically undemanding.

The five student wind players (2nd flute, 2nd oboe, clarinet, and bassoon) were taught individually by private music teachers, with their performance as soloists largely restricted to their annual Associated Board of the Royal School of Music or Trinity College London examinations. At the time I wrote The Pied Piper, there were not many ensemble opportunities within the school for skilled wind players: the orchestra focused on a strong group of string players and the wind bands were performing music that presented few musical or technical challenges for these players.

I set out to provide lines for all the instrumentalists that would engage their interest, but not prove to be overly demanding technically or too difficult to read. The three percussionists, for example, play a wide variety of instruments, including marimba, glockenspiel, and xylophone parts for the one player of tuned percussion. All players are given times of rest but are not left out of the texture for long; all the parts are given roughly equal exposure. My aim was to “match” their technical abilities, while producing a significant musical “challenge” (Elliott, 2005: 12) in terms of ensemble playing. This is essentially a piece of chamber music: each player constantly feeds in and out of the texture, and each player deals with some complex rhythmic material.

I intentionally wrote some beguilingly simple melodic lines and harmonies: the outer sections of the ternary Dance of Mother and Her Child, for example, are expressive in the style of a baroque trio – decorated by marimba ornamentation, and supported by piano duet as continuo. The intention was both to draw the players, dancers, and audience into the emotional life of the mother and child, and to express the fact that the story, although dressed in a modern aspect, is an ancient one.

I was relatively inexperienced in writing for wind instruments, so composing this music gave me the opportunity to explore the tonal possibilities of these
instruments, and experiment with various tonal combinations. I enjoyed working with the contrasting timbres (very different from working with the comparatively homogenous sound of stringed instruments). The opening motif of the *Midnight Dance of the Rats*, for example, features a thick texture for two bars, unison in shape but discordant in detail, thus representing the malevolence of the rats (the phrase begins on B flat for the flutes, for example, but B natural for oboe 2), before dissolving into scurrying motifs (trills for oboe 2, grace notes for the flutes, and chromatic figures for oboe 1, clarinet, and bassoon) intended to reflect the rats’ movements. This dance thus provided the opportunity to extend the young performers’ harmonic vocabularies. The underlying piano quaver ostinato figure (with guiro and tambourine rhythms adding colour and emphasis) propels the rhythm of this dance. Individually the lines are easy to play, but in combination they require acute ensemble skills:

**Ex. 4: The Pied Piper – Midnight Dance of the Rats, bars 22-24, full score**
I enjoyed exploring the different sonorities evident within the range of each individual instrument, and writing what I hoped would be attractive lines for my players. The *Dance of Mother and her Child*, for example, initially exploits the low register of the flute before sweeping into the high register as the mother’s anxiety grows:

**Ex. 5: The Pied Piper – Dance of Mother and her Child,**

(a) bars 28-31, flute 1

(b) bars 39-44, flute 1

This was my first opportunity to write music for dance, and from my point of view this is an example of the creative opportunities offered to a composer working within a secondary school after the inclusion of dance within the arts curriculum. I greatly enjoyed the process of envisaging the dance and writing music to sustain and strengthen it. The importance of music in conveying story, character, relationships, and mood in a dance piece – in other words conveying much of the meaning of the work – cannot be underestimated, but the visual communication of the story would be left to the dancers, whose prior training I expected would equip them for the task. In this way, I intended to combine musical and dramatic elements in a context appropriate for all the performers, thus avoiding the embarrassment experienced by some of the players involved in music project one.

I maintained a conscious awareness throughout the composition process that the music had to support the dancers’ movement: as I worked with the initial motifs and themes, and later filled in the musical details, I matched all my rhythms with
movement and sometimes specific dance steps to facilitate the realization of the music as dance.

Action research methods support the praxial nature of the composition process (action, reflection on that action, and further action building on that action). I built on my experience of composing the score for the first action research project (At the Beginning of Time) by conceiving percussion parts as integral to The Pied Piper. I called on specific motifs I had found to be effective (such as the slow sweep of wind chimes to indicate the passing of time) as well as tonal effects (atmospheric use of wood block effects used experimentally in the central section of At the Beginning of Time for example, prompted similar use in Midnight Dance of the Rats). I felt confident in employing marimba/xylophone as an essential part of the texture throughout The Pied Piper, having worked hard to assimilate the language and technique of these instruments when working on the previous project.

Each dance invited exploration of a variety of styles and forms, which facilitated the dual aspect of my work – to “embody and exemplify musicianship” and to “develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” (Elliott, 2005: 12). Sunday’s Festive Dance, for example, is fugal in form. Unlike keyboard players, wind players and percussionists are unlikely to gain familiarity with fugal forms as part of their normal playing experience: writing a fugue for these players gave them the opportunity to understand the form through their playing of it. It was a challenge for me to marry the needs of the storyline, mood (relief at the departure of the rats), sense of time (Sunday morning, conveyed by the descending chime figures for piano and glockenspiel), with the technical aspects of fugal writing. The fugal form facilitated the dance by neatly accommodating unison dance sequences during statements of the subject: the episodic material (incorporating the motifs associated with the different characters) provided character material for dance solos, duets, and trios. The first episode, for example, features the flutes (a duet for the gossip mothers) and combines their motifs from the opening scenes with material from the fugue subject and the descending chime figure:
Ex. 6: *The Pied Piper – Sunday’s Festive Dance*, bars 47-54, full score

"Gossip mothers... dance the first episode (solo section) (flute theme)"
Combining an augmented entry in the bass with motifs in stretto close to the end of the fugue (bar 134) likewise gave me the chance to demonstrate these typical fugal devices for the students while creating appropriate musical material to produce a sense of lively chaos which propels this dance towards its climactic statement of subject and answer at bar 145:
The work was thus designed to provide interesting, idiomatic, engaging, and technically appropriate lines for each player, as well as a challenge in ensemble performance and an exploration of contrasting forms and styles. The musical styles and forms would consequently provide opportunities for contrasting dance styles to challenge the young dancers. As a composer, I aimed to express characterization and mood in each individual dance and facilitate the dance steps of the various
ensembles without losing a sense of the overall balance, progression, and flow of the storyline.

**Data: Music score**

(Score attached as Appendix B: 310)

**Data analysis: Performance, surveys, and interviews**

The attached CD of *The Pied Piper* demonstrates the musical response of the instrumentalists to the score. The musicians undertook two one-hour rehearsals, and a two-hour workshop rehearsal during March 2006. The dancers prepared the work over an eight-week period of four weekly rehearsals during February and March 2006. They expressed their artistic responses for an audience in performance, but the video camera malfunctioned. Consequently no DVD of the dancers was produced. Given the complexity of the performance process, and the fact that I did not discover the recording failure until several days after the performance, it would have put unacceptable pressure on the performers to rectify this failure. There is therefore no tangible artistic response from the dancers included in this document.

**Surveys and interviews**

Surveys designed for quick completion were distributed to the performers (not by the researcher/teacher-composer) at a meeting held three days after the *Pied Piper* performance. The surveys were completed anonymously: as there were 45 students and two musician-teachers involved in this project anonymity was assured. One instrumentalist did not complete the survey because of illness. I have combined the discussion of the survey and interview responses, as in the first music project because the interview responses throw light on the survey responses. The intention of the data analysis is to deepen understanding of the processes and outcomes of the work of a composer-teacher in a specific context.
The survey questions for *The Pied Piper* (using the Likert scale of 1 to 5 for responses) were as follows:

1. I enjoyed learning to perform *The Pied Piper*

2. I enjoyed performing *The Pied Piper*

3. I think the group enjoyed performing *The Pied Piper*

4. I found the style of music challenging to perform

5. I found *The Pied Piper* challenging to perform

6. I think the audience enjoyed *The Pied Piper*

7. I think *The Pied Piper* is an effective piece in performance

All the senior students (the instrumentalists and Year 12 dancers) chose to undertake electronic interviews: many wrote that this offered the opportunity to consider their responses carefully. The Year 10 dancers were interviewed in a group (at their request) which gave them courage to express their opinions freely. Subsequently, five of the Year 10 dancers asked to be interviewed individually, because they did not feel free to express some opinions in the group context.

Some similar themes emerged from this survey and interview process as revealed in music project one:

- Some participants had difficulty overcoming initial lack of stylistic understanding of the work; and

- Participants’ individual responses were more positive than their estimates of the group’s responses.

Other themes emerged as follows:
• Although assessment results were registered as important to senior students, musical interest took precedence over focus on assessment;
• The responses of the four groups (instrumentalists, Year 12 dancers, Year 11 dancers, and Year 10 dancers) were clearly differentiated;
• Junior students identified particularly closely with the roles they undertook;
• A clear division was revealed between the responses of ballet and contemporary dance trained students, as opposed to jazz and hip-hop trained dancers;
• The concept of “challenge” was interpreted in varying ways; and
• Positive responses related closely to the level of responsibility (“ownership”) undertaken by the students.

Survey questions 1 and 2 (tables 7 and 8) again deliberately provided a distinction between the process of learning the work and performing it. This distinction was meaningful to the performers involved in At the Beginning of Time, but the survey responses reveal little distinction between the attitudes to the learning and performing processes for The Pied Piper:

Table 7: The Pied Piper – survey question 1

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Instrumentalists</th>
<th>Year 12 dancers</th>
<th>Year 11 dancers</th>
<th>Year 10 dancers</th>
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<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Likert scale (1 indicates strong agreement)
Table 8: The Pied Piper – survey question 2

The students were asked on the survey forms to identify which group they represented – instrumentalists, Year 12 dancers (the ‘mothers’), Year 11 dancers (the ‘children’), or Year 10 dancers (the ‘rats’). The survey results show a clear differentiation in response between these groups. The instrumentalists were overwhelmingly positive about learning and performing the work, and the Year 12 dancers were also positive about the process. The Year 11 dancers were more ambivalent, with a number of students expressing a degree of negativity. The Year 10 dancers as a group were negative about both learning and performing The Pied Piper. The survey results were commensurate with the attitudes I observed during the rehearsal process.

In interview, the instrumentalists confirmed their positive attitudes toward the experience. Their responses focused predominantly on the nature of the individual lines and the experience of playing in a group in which, as one student said, the music “came together really well”. Three instrumentalists commented specifically that their individual parts suited their instruments: “I seemed to be able to play my best notes ... my [instrument] sounded really good, and I felt like I could really play well”. All the instrumentalists commented specifically on their solo opportunities: typical comments focused on melodic material (“I couldn’t get the tune out of my head. I love that tune”). This confirmed the importance of melodic content to these young musicians, and provided a probable explanation for the difficulties
encountered by the percussionists approaching *At the Beginning of Time*: they found the work’s lack of melodic content and harmonic support disconcerting, even though a percussion work might be expected primarily to explore timbre and rhythm.

The sense of participating in a positive chamber music experience registered strongly in the instrumentalists’ interview responses. Nearly all commented on their prior (predominantly large group) experiences as being comparatively “boring”, with “pages of rests” and “pretty easy stuff” to play. Typical responses focused on the pleasure the students felt in listening to their combined work: “I really didn’t think we could play like that”, and “I was blown away by how good we sounded”.

Although the responses of the instrumentalists focused on their practical musical experience of turning the score into sound, some comments reflected an interest in the musical narrative: “The opening dance was cool because it sounded like children playing. It operated on a double level because you could hear the energy but you could hear the bullying of the disabled child in the music because the minor 3rds were quite disturbing”. The comparative lack of melodic focus, relatively discordant harmonies, and ostinato-based structure of the rats’ music were readily assimilated by the players because they responded to the narrative content of the dance: “I really loved playing the rats. We sounded evil and like we were creeping round in the dark”.

Four of the instrumentalists gained NCEA performance standards through their performance. In interview all these students were enthusiastic about the grades they obtained, and expressed the opinion that working in such a competent group on what they felt to be a challenging score had lifted their musicianship to a new level. In contrast to the music project one participants, however, the assessment results did not form the focus of the interview responses. The performers focused on their experiences of playing the music, and their responses to the music itself. This may partly reflect different priorities on the part of these individual students, but it also suggests that when thoroughly engaged by the music – as was clearly the case with this work, but was not the case with music project one – musical interest took precedence for the students over concerns with assessment.
The survey responses of the dancers revealed a considerable difference in attitudes based on a range of factors, but primarily reflected the age and prior experience of the students, and also possibly the dancing roles they undertook. The Year 12 students choreographed and danced the roles of the mothers and the Pied Piper, the Year 11 students undertook the roles of the children, and the Year 10 group performed as the rats in a dance choreographed by their teacher.

Of the 18 Year 10 dancers involved (the majority of whom were 14 years old at the time), 13 expressed considerable negativity towards both the learning process and the performance. The interview responses focused on one major negative preoccupation. The instrumentalists may have “loved playing the rats”, but the Year 10 dancers certainly did not. Most of their negativity was verbalized as a reaction to “having to dance as a rat”. One girl said, in a reaction that was typically strongly felt and strongly expressed, “My god – I had to dress up as a rat! It was disgusting”.

Several Year 11 and 12 dancers, however, pointed to what they referred to as the “divided” nature of the dance classes in explaining the divided reaction to working with The Pied Piper. The following comment from a Year 12 dancer was typical of the explanations provided by senior students:

Our classes are a mix of ballet girls, and hip-hop/jazz dancers, there are no in-betweens. The ballet dancers have been exposed to contemporary dance and are used to different music. Those girls were comfortable in the process of preparing and performing this work. The jazz girls were different. They hated being put outside their box.

This student, surprisingly, was one of the “jazz girls”. One of the senior “ballet dancers” expressed her views more forcefully:

I felt a lot of anger toward the negativity of The Pied Piper. It seemed as if the juniors weren’t willing to attempt a different type of dancing other than the socially acceptable street dancing. And I personally believe that this was the sole reason for the attitude taken to by some of the dancers. A certain amount of ‘street cred’ is apparently attached to anything other than what dominates music videos – which is hip-hop. This is a common thread in our dance classes – the segregation of the hip-hoppers and ballet girls. Without
exception, any ballet, modern or lyrical dance forms at every point in the curriculum gets met with a snicker from a certain group of girls. I just believe that it is absolutely ridiculous to limit yourself in that way.

Five of the Year 10 dancers asked for individual interviews and expressed similar views, adding that they would not say so in the context of the Year 10 class. One dancer referred to the “completely immature and closed-minded attitude of the hip-hop girls” when explaining her reluctance to express a minority viewpoint in the group context. Other comments revealed that the hip-hop girls were considered to be the dominant group in this class.

The relationship between the Year 10 dancers and their teacher broke down during the project preparation period, and the teacher (employed on a Limited Authority to Teach) left the school for a variety of reasons. The group’s new teacher found that, although all members of the group were willing to carry the project to conclusion, the majority of dancers were openly negative – to the point of hostility – about dancing as rats.

The strong sense of identification with role was not confined to the Year 10 group. Several Year 11 dancers emphasized that they did not enjoy taking the roles of children: “I would rather have been a mother. I felt a bit stupid dancing as a child with a mobile phone”. The Year 12 dancers showed some desire to dissociate themselves from this focus on role identification: “It’s about dancing, not about what you wear” and “So they were dancing as rats. So what? They just need to grow up”. It is likely that the more detached attitude towards role displayed by all the Year 12 dancers reflected their age and greater performance experience, but it was also evident that they were comfortable with their ‘senior’ roles (the mothers, and the Pied Piper). Overall, the dancers’ identification with role was a significant determining factor in terms of their responses to the project.

The most positive reactions to the project came from senior dancers who had the opportunity to choreograph their own dances. The choreography process gave these senior dancers ownership of the project in a way which could not be extended to a large group of junior students with no prior choreographic experience. One
senior student referred to the “open nature” of the music: it “allowed me to express my own feelings of dance and music interpretation on a free and open stage”. Another senior student commented that “there were times when I was trying to choreograph that I was frustrated, but this comes with any choreography and with any new challenge. I really enjoyed performing the pieces the other girls and I choreographed”.

Question 3 gave the opportunity for students to gauge the responses of others in the group:

**Table 9: The Pied Piper – survey question 3**

The responses reflect the way the work was undertaken: the instrumentalists worked separately, and recorded the music onto a compact disc for the dancers to work with. The group atmosphere amongst the instrumentalists was positive and openly expressed as such during the rehearsal process. The dancers’ responses to this question show some ambivalence which was clarified in interviews: Year 11 and 12 dancers were aware of the strongly negative response of the majority of the Year 10 dancers and some of the Year 11 dancers, but were also aware that this attitude was not universal. The survey did not offer a way of recording this distinction: one Year 11 dancer commented that she indicated an “OK” response on the Likert scale, because some students really enjoyed the experience and others did not: “Some people liked it and others didn’t but you can’t put a number on that”.
Nevertheless, the survey responses overall show a significant distinction between the unanimously positive responses of the instrumentalists, and the overwhelmingly negative responses of the dancers. Individual dancers who registered their positive responses to the project were fully aware of the openly expressed negative responses of the majority – in particular the responses of the Year 10 dancers. Although many of the senior dancers and instrumentalists knew each other well, and indicated in interviews that they had discussed the project, in the performance context each performer identified solely with the responses of others within his or her own discipline.

One of the Year 12 dancers offered a discerning insight into the reactions of the Year 10 dancers as a group, based on her considerable performance experience as well as her close observation of the group process:

> Every time you do any performance the group dynamic is different. You create a new culture every time. Sometimes you know that everybody is responding to one dominant person and other times it's difficult to tell why the group is heading a particular way. I've done performances where the group were really dysfunctional and we just mucked around, and then worked with the same group of people where the dynamic was really positive. I've learnt now that sometimes in a group I need to step in straight away and take the lead to keep things on track. Other times I take a back seat because I know somebody else wants to lead. You learn to feed into the process. The Year 10s were dominated by a negative group but that can happen with any production. It was annoying but I think it was more to do with group dynamics than with the music or dancing. To be honest it's much better if the teacher is really involved.

The Year 10 students did not have the prior production experience that might have enabled those with a positive attitude towards the project to counter the negative attitudes of the ‘hip-hop girls’. The negative response to the project may seem to indicate that the music simply did not meet the needs of the students, but the students’ responses indicate that the complex realities of group processes shaped their attitudes. More effective group management on my part, as Head of Faculty, may have altered the group’s attitudes and perceptions. It is possible, however, that
the Year 10 dancers gained valuable knowledge and experience about working in groups from participating in this project even though their responses were overtly negative.

I wrote the work, however, with the intention of providing a positive multi-disciplinary performance experience in a performing arts faculty. In practice the instrumentalists and dancers worked within their own disciplinary silos, and the dancers connected with other dancers at their own curriculum level. The project became, in effect, four projects: a music project and three separate dance projects. I had anticipated that this natural division – produced by learning the work within the curricular context of the school timetable – would be overcome when the work was put together. This did not happen because the group cultures established in the curricular context were carried into the final rehearsal processes, and the project was completed with little sense of collective intent.

Questions 4 and 5 (Tables 10 and 11) were designed to focus the students’ attention on the music’s capacity to “develop and match ... [their] musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” (Elliott, 2005: 12). The questions refer to “performing” the work, rather than “playing” it, so as to be equally applicable to both musicians and dancers. They were also intended to encourage the students to distinguish between the stylistic challenge provided by the music, and the physical or technical demands revealed in the performance of it:

**Table 10: The Pied Piper – survey question 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Instrumentalists</th>
<th>Year 12 dancers</th>
<th>Year 11 dancers</th>
<th>Year 10 dancers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Likert scale</td>
<td>1 (indicating strong agreement)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Pied Piper: I found the style of music challenging to perform
Table 11: The Pied Piper – survey question 5

The survey responses indicate that all students were able to relate and respond to this distinction. Table 10 indicates that all the participants found the “style of music challenging to perform”. In interview, however, the dancers focused on the music as a vehicle for their dancing: musical style was inextricably linked to their sense of dance style.

Although the division between ballet trained and jazz or hip-hop trained dancers was as evident in the senior groups as in the Year 10 group, the senior jazz dancers all indicated in interview that in retrospect, although many had not enjoyed the process at the time, they had been challenged by their involvement: one Year 11 student commented that she was “made to think, and made to extend myself” even though she was “a bit negative about having to dance as a child – I would rather have been a mother”. Three students specifically stated that, given a choice of style, they would always choose jazz-related dance styles, but they thought dance at school should “move us outside our comfort zones”.

A year after the interview process one student contacted me about her progress in the first year of a university dance degree:

I want you to know that I am so grateful now that I did the ‘Pied Piper’ when I was at school. Prior to the ‘Pied Piper’ we had been allowed to choose our dance genre, and I always chose jazz to dance music as that is what was ‘cool’. At university I found that dance is so much more than that and I was
expected to have come through NCEA with an understanding of ‘telling story through dance’. I was asked in one of my first classes to improvise showing emotion and storyline etc. I am the only one of the jazz dancers here who is comfortable doing lyrical and contemporary dance and that’s because I choreographed the opening sequence of the ‘Pied Piper’. If I had not had the Pied Piper experience I would have been completely lost. I think it is important for students in high schools to understand what dance is about, and our class definitely needed to step out in to the real world a bit. I am going to use the music for one of my uni assessments if that’s OK with you.

My research is not designed as a longitudinal study, but this response reminded me that school-based experiences may have long term as well as short term impact on both students and teachers. Three of the eight senior dancers have chosen to further develop their dance skills at tertiary level: this student indicated that her capacity to undertake tertiary dance study was supported by the project, and that her understanding was widened and deepened in a way that she was not immediately aware of.

The word “challenge” provoked considerable debate amongst the senior musicians and dancers: “I want work to be challenging”, said one dancer, “but I don’t want to be totally confused by it, if it’s all challenge and no result I lose interest”. Her concern with the ‘level’ of challenge inherent in any task was a consistent theme expressed by senior students in the interview responses. One dancer summed up the typical senior response as follows:

A challenge can be good, and it can be bad. Sometimes when you say somebody else is finding something “challenging” what you really mean is that it’s too difficult for them and they can’t cope. That’s challenge in a bad sense. When you ask me if I found ‘The Pied Piper’ challenging I don’t want to sound as if I couldn’t do it. Actually I found it difficult because I couldn’t dance in the style I’m used to. I had to work really hard to come up with a different style of dance because the music and the story made me dance differently. I think that’s a challenge in a good sense. Yes, it was challenging.

The focus of the “challenge” discussion for most of the senior dancers in terms of performance, rather than style, was on the level of responsibility they undertook.
All the Year 12 students choreographed their own dances as part of their NCEA choreography requirements, and they all felt that this presented a significant, and welcome, challenge. Participating in *The Pied Piper* allowed assessment opportunities for three achievement standards: one for solo choreography, a second for group choreography, and a third for performance in a theatre dance work. *The Pied Piper* is 35 minutes in length, and the Year 12 dancers undertook the responsibility of choreographing all the dances except the Year 10 *Midnight Dance of the Rats*. Their sense of pride in meeting the challenge presented by the project grew out of their sense of ownership and substantial achievement.

The survey responses indicate that the instrumentalists found the music challenging more in terms of performance than style. This was confirmed in the interviews. Discussion on musical style focused on the range of styles throughout the work: “Each dance was in a different style and different mood. We had to adjust quickly. That was quite challenging”. No musician expressed a sense of being taken outside his or her “comfort zone”. All the musicians, however, commented on the challenge presented by preparing and performing a substantial work in which their own contribution was considerable and significant. One of the pianists reflected on the different quality of the ensemble challenge presented by *The Pied Piper* in comparison to the solo works he was accustomed to learning (and, very occasionally, performing):

> The notes were generally pretty easy, much easier than the Chopin *Ballade* I am learning at the moment, but the score was too long for me to memorise, so I had to read it all, and I couldn’t stop if I got something wrong. I had to learn to keep going. I thought at first it was going to be easy, but in the end it was a challenge.

Most of the musicians were comparatively experienced ensemble players, but all agreed that although the individual lines were challenging enough to be interesting, the main challenge lay in the complexity of the ensemble work: “It’s not like being at band practice where you get so many rests you’ve got time to do your homework in between playing, we all had to concentrate all the time”.

The survey responses of the Year 10 dancers indicate that although they found the style of the work challenging, the performance itself was not perceived to be challenging. The group interview provided straightforward explanations for these responses. Taking the role of a rat was seen as an unwelcome challenge. The story was regarded as inappropriate for teenagers: “it’s a children’s story” and “we wanted to get on with our dances from Chicago”. The dance itself, however, consisted of very simple movement sequences and many of the dancers were openly scornful about what they perceived as “easy” steps. In performance, the cross rhythms (Midnight Dance of the Rats: bars 70-80) confused many of the dancers, but no dancer indicated any perception that the music had presented a rhythmical challenge.

Questions 6 and 7 (Tables 13 and 14) asked the instrumentalists and dancers to consider the effectiveness of the work in performance. Question 6 focused on audience response, thus encouraging students to consider the work from perspectives other than their own. Question 7 then encouraged students to further dissociate themselves from their personal involvement and consider the work in its entirety:

**Table 13: The Pied Piper – survey question 6**

![Bar chart](image)
Table 14: *The Pied Piper* – survey question 7

The survey indicates that the students generally perceived the audience (a full auditorium of 240 people) as responding in a neutral or positive way. There were significant and interesting differences, however, in the ways the different groups of students gauged audience response. These differences clarify the apparent anomalies in the survey responses: two students, for example, indicated that the audience was very positive indeed, and three indicated that the same audience was very negative.

All the senior dancers indicated that they were very aware of the group response of the audience during the performance. As one Year 12 dancer commented:

> Performing is much more enjoyable when you have a good audience. The audience for *The Pied Piper* was pretty good. You could tell a lot of them were really enjoying the story and got quite involved in it. They liked the mother and child dance and the rats.

Most referred to applause levels and duration as one, but by no means the only, indicator of audience support:

> Basically if they clap a lot, you know they liked it, but actually you know as soon as you go on stage how the audience is reacting because you can see their faces and it always feels good when they look like they’re into it. I didn’t think they would like *The Pied Piper*, but it was much better than I thought it would be ...
The Year 10 dancers were also aware of the group audience response. Several students commented with some surprise that the audience seemed to enjoy the performance: “it was actually quite cool in the end” and “I thought we were crap but they seemed to like it”. Nevertheless, seven Year 10 dancers indicated their belief that the audience did not enjoy the performance. Several students in the group interview referred to one negative post-performance comment about the rat costumes made by one member of their peer group in the audience. It is likely that this comment reinforced these students’ own negative perceptions of their roles in the performance, and strongly affected the students’ perception of the audience reaction.

The instrumentalists as a group were understandably much less aware of overall audience response during the performance. Rather than performing directly to the audience, they sat in a chamber music formation, focusing on reading their music and maintaining tight ensemble. Players instead tended to gauge audience response on the reactions of friends and family after the performance. One player commented, for example, that he “didn’t notice the audience”, but “my mum really liked it”. Most players, as indicated by the survey, received positive feedback after the performance from friends and relatives.

The survey responses to Question 7 (Table 14) reflect the pattern that emerged from all the survey responses: there is a close correlation between students’ perception of the effectiveness of the work and their enjoyment in learning and performing it (Tables 7 and 8). The four groups are clearly differentiated showing predominantly very positive responses from the instrumentalists, positive responses from the Year 12 dancers, neutral responses from the Year 11 dancers, and negative responses from the Year 10 dancers.
Reflections: Feedback and feedforward

As outlined in the planning phase of this music project, I composed *The Pied Piper* in order to:

- Give the newly formed dance classes a sense of purpose;
- Give students experience of working on a multi-disciplinary project;
- Provide NCEA assessment opportunities for senior instrumentalists and dancers;
- Provide interesting, idiomatic, engaging, and technically appropriate lines for the musicians;
- Explore a variety of forms and styles to increase my technical control as a composer, and extend the stylistic awareness of the students;
- Gain experience in writing a dance work in response to a resonant narrative; and
- Encourage students to explore an ancient moral tale.

As with music project one, I believe some of these intentions were realized, but the data analysis again revealed gaps between my intentions and the responses of many of the participants.

Musically, I was delighted with this work. The narrative and characterization are effectively conveyed by the music, and the textures and timbres are revealed in performance exactly as I conceived them. Although the junior dancers in particular responded negatively to the project, the music facilitated the choreography as dance music should. The instrumentalists were overwhelmingly positive about the music itself, and their experiences of playing it.

The work provided appropriate NCEA assessment opportunities for the senior instrumentalists and dancers. All the students assessed by means of the project gained *excellence* or *merit* grades.

Rather than providing a positive focus for the dancers, however, the project exposed a pre-existing sense of division in the dance classes. The students were aware of a
divided culture in their classes in a way that I, as Head of Faculty, was not. The research prompted the development of a faculty policy of listening to student voice (using the survey model provided in this research) in order to improve teaching and learning practice. This was the most significant outcome of music project two, and related to faculty policy and overall faculty teaching practices, as well as to my own practice as a composer-teacher.

In writing both *At the Beginning of Time* and *The Pied Piper* I had departed from my usual practice of composing for the students with whom I was working myself in a curricular or co-curricular capacity. Both of these scores were written primarily for students working with other teachers. I had surmised that the musicians responded negatively to the dramatic element of *At the Beginning of Time* because of their lack of dramatic experience. I then wrote the *Pied Piper* expecting the dancers to respond positively to a dance work composed specifically to meet their needs. I did not expect the hip-hop and jazz dancers to resist the challenge of developing new styles of dance, and I did not expect the junior dance students to react negatively to dancing in the roles of rats.

Both projects had many positive outcomes, including highlighting the need to develop a unified culture in the dance classes. Nevertheless, the negativity expressed by some of the students was a new experience for me as a composer-teacher. I believed there could be two explanations for this: either I had previously been unaware of negative student reaction (in the way that I was unaware of the negative culture in the dance classes), or the practice of writing music for students whom I had taught could produce different outcomes from writing for students with whom I had no prior relationship.

I decided to make a further attempt to combine musical and dramatic elements in a context appropriate for all the performers. I chose to test the conclusions I had drawn from the data analysis of music projects one and two by making the following adjustments:
• I would write for drama and music students with whom I had worked over substantial periods of time; and

• The new work would be produced in the co-curricular context to enable students of different ages to develop a genuinely multi-disciplinary culture during the production process.

Music project three would thus represent more closely my usual practice as a composer-teacher. I would be able to examine any differences that resulted from the change of focus.
A composer-teacher in context: Action research projects

CHAPTER SIX

Music project three

“Teachers and students should work together to meet the musical challenges involved in realistic musical projects”

(Elliott, 2005: 12)

Macbeth – A drama for actors and instrumentalists

Plan: Composition process

The annual Sheilah Winn Shakespeare Festival provided me with the opportunity to write for drama and music students with whom I had worked over substantial periods of time.

I was actively involved in the introduction of drama into the curriculum at Macleans College in 2002, designing the course and teaching the first Year 10 drama classes. By 2006 drama was firmly established in the school, and the resulting keen interest and high skill level of student-actors in the curricular and co-curricular drama programmes provided me with a ‘driver’ for music composition. The Macbeth project grew out of my relationships with a group of students, some of whom were singers, and three of whom were also dancers, as well as some fine instrumentalists.

As Head of Performing Arts, I organized and hosted the South Auckland Regional Sheilah Winn Festival of Shakespeare in Schools at Macleans College for five consecutive years from 2002 to 2006. In each of these years as many as 40 groups of students from different schools presented scenes from Shakespeare’s plays in the
South Auckland Regional Festival – one of the country’s larger festivals, although by no means the largest. There are two categories of performance: scenes of a maximum duration of 15 minutes can be directed by either teachers or students; five minute scenes are directed specifically by students. The Macleans College auditorium’s capacity (245 seats) was not sufficient to meet the audience needs for the eight-hour event in each of these five years: some students and parents stood at the back or sat on the steps of the four aisles for many of the performances. The atmosphere was typically intense and competitive, but also supportive, with close audience attention paid to all performances and generous applause offered by groups from all schools for performances deemed to be effective.

Given the positive nature of the Shakespeare Festival over the five year period in which it was hosted at Macleans College, my drama students embraced the event both as performers (in 2005, for example, 14 groups prepared scenes and entered the competition) and as audience members. As I directed one or more Festival groups each year, my students customarily requested to work with me. This project therefore offered the opportunity to return to my usual practice of writing for students with whom I had built significant relationships, through work within the curriculum and through mutual work on other co-curricular projects. I wrote the work over a three-week period in March 2006.

My students typically responded positively to working with Macbeth. The play deals with the pursuit of power, and I had previously explored with students (both theoretically and in performance) many production concepts to communicate this theme: Macbeth in Māori context with Duncan as tribal chief; in Japanese context with Samurai warriors fighting for supremacy; in New Zealand secondary school context, with Duncan as the Principal, and Macbeth, Banquo, and Macduff as his Senior Management Team. I now decided, in consultation with the actors and instrumentalists, to explore a new concept, basing the action of the play in a circus, with the actors interpolating their text into a through-composed score played by the instrumentalists. Continuous music with changes of style, genre, and tempo providing appropriate support for the action is a traditional feature of circuses:
setting the scene to a through-composed score was therefore integral to the circus concept.

Setting the action in a circus may seem an incongruous and gratuitous choice, but the intention of the concept was to create a microcosm in which the themes of the play could be explored effectively for modern performers and audiences. Shakespeare’s audiences inhabited a political world similar to that of the play— a world dominated by absolute rulers and disturbed by life-threatening political intrigues.

Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth*, his ‘Scottish play’, shortly after the death of Elizabeth I and the succession (subject of prolonged doubt and anxiety) of James VI of Scotland to the English throne, thus investing the action with a specific contemporary political focus for his audience. The plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries provided a vehicle for subtle political commentary in a society that rigorously suppressed freedom of speech: audiences responded with keen interest to the layers of political implications embedded in the text; plays were banned and play companies shut down if perceived by the authorities to be overtly subversive (Jennings, 1999). This world is lost to students and audiences in twenty first century New Zealand who expect no such finesse in the expression of political opinions: ‘traditional’ performances with actors in quasi-Elizabethan costumes wielding swords risk losing much of their power as a result. Modern directors search for production concepts that present the themes of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama in thought provoking ways which are relevant to their audiences.

It may also seem gratuitous discussing the political allegory employed in Shakespeare’s plays (either with students or in this thesis) when describing the process of composing a 15 minute scene for performance by students in a secondary school Shakespeare Festival. Such discussion, however, reflects the four “interrelated strands” around which each of the four arts disciplines (dance, drama, music and visual arts) is structured in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (2007): “Understanding the Arts in Context, Developing Practical Knowledge in the arts,
Developing Ideas in the arts, and Communicating and Interpreting in the arts” (MOE, 2007: 20). Within the first of these strands, “Understanding the Arts in Context”, music students at senior level are expected to consider their music making “in relation to historical, social, and cultural contexts, considering the impact on music making and production” (MOE, 2007: Achievement Objectives, Level Seven, The Arts).

The circus concept arose initially from an image of the witches as circus clowns. The action of the play is dominated by three witches: they are an embodiment of evil, inciting Macbeth to pursue his ambition to gain the throne by killing King Duncan. I envisaged clowns as potentially sinister and compelling witches: circus clowns need no rationale for unpredictable actions; they have an intrinsically disturbing and macabre quality; the fixed, mask-like quality of their face paint conceals their emotional responses. They are archetypal characters whose behaviour is pre-determined and whose emotional lives and individual motivations are disguised.

Students responded to the clown/witch image with enthusiasm, three of the potential witch/clowns immediately meeting in the auditorium to develop voice and movement techniques to express their potential characters. Duncan slipped easily into place as the archetypal Ringmaster, with cloak and top hat as his symbols of office. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth became the Strongman and Strongwoman. A chorus of acrobats, dancers, and plate spinners volunteered to take the various supporting roles. Using archetypes allowed me to focus on theme: I envisaged a scene where all the characters are inadvertently caught up in a cyclical power struggle (symbolized by the circus ring) fuelled by powers of which they are unaware, and over which they have no control.

The circus thus took shape in my mind as a microcosm in which the violence of the pursuit of power is heightened by its contrast to the enforced gaiety of its context. I was aware that my music score needed to generate these two layers of meaning – the superficial world of the circus and its underlying violence. I had to accommodate the delivery of text, attempt to heighten and intensify its meaning,
and use the music to communicate character quickly and effectively – a major challenge in a performance with a maximum length of 15 minutes.

My first task was to produce a libretto condensing the action of the play into a coherent 15 minute entirety. I chose to focus the action on the following key points of the drama:

- The introductory scene between the three clowns/witches ("when shall we three meet again?");
- The description of Macbeth’s successful battle; the clowns/witches greeting Macbeth as Thane of Glamis, Cawdor, and (prophetically) King;
- Lady Macbeth calling upon evil spirits and persuading Macbeth to murder Duncan;
- The murder itself;
- the appearance of the Ghost at the new King/Ringmaster’s banquet; and
- The suicide of Lady Macbeth; the killing of Macbeth and ‘crowning’ (with top hat and cloak) of a new Ringmaster.

I thus chose to omit Banquo, MacDuff, and most of Shakespeare’s minor characters, bringing Duncan’s ghost into the banquet scene in Banquo’s place. I created three roles for malevolent servants by combining various small roles (nurse, doctor, messengers, and lords): this was intended to provide both continuity and commentary (and therefore clarity) for the audience, and to provide challenging roles for three talented students of varying ages and stages of development.

According to the rules of the Sheilah Winn Festivals of Shakespeare, the chosen text can be freely re-arranged and cut, but no text can be added. In the process of condensing the text I spliced many lines of dialogue together, combining the front end of one line with the back end of another, always, however, maintaining the prevailing metre (iambic pentameter), and therefore the character, of the verse. The following exchange, for example, reduces Act I Scene ii of the play (78 lines of text) into a brief exchange between Ringmaster Duncan and his three servants:
Duncan: Whence camest thou?:
Servant 2: From Fife, great king:
Servant 3: Where the Norwayan banners flout the sky
And fan our people cold.
Servant 1: Norway himself
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor
Servant 2: The Thane of Cawdor
Servant 3: Began a fresh assault.
Duncan: Dismay’d not this
Our captains Macbeth and Banquo?
Servant 2: Till brave Macbeth,
Servant 3: Well he deserves that name,
Servant 1: Confronted him,
Servant 2: Rebellious,
Servant 3: Arm ’gainst arm
Servant 1: Curbing his lavish spirit,
Servant 2: And to conclude,
All servants: The vict’ry fell on us.
All cast: Great happiness!

The characters of Ross, Lennox, Malcolm, and the wounded Sergeant have been replaced by three servants who toss the lines between them in a way that is intentionally reminiscent of the three witches (and not representative of the way the lines are delivered in Shakespeare’s play). Duncan’s question, “Dismay’d not this our captains Macbeth and Banquo?” is an essential part of the backstory: the witches have introduced the name of Macbeth, but Duncan provides the audience with the necessary information about his status and function.

In my edition of the dialogue, Servant 2 cursorily interrupts Duncan in order to continue the story: “Till brave Macbeth … Confronted him … Curbing his lavish spirit”. The servant’s disregard for Duncan’s interjection (written into the music score by means of the rhythmic notation which took shape in my mind as I worked on the libretto) has the effect of reducing Duncan’s status: he has the trappings of power – the cloak and top hat – but the power is deliberately presented as illusory.
My intention was to combine music with text to communicate an interpretation of theme, action, and character economically and effectively.

Developing the libretto for this scene clarified many aspects of the way the rest of the scene would progress. The physical and vocal qualities of the actor taking the role of Duncan particularly suited the Ringmaster persona: he is a jovial boy with a strong voice and a large, engaging stage presence; he is also a talented tap dancer. Duncan greets the tale of Macbeth’s victory with a phrase which tends to sound contrived and unnatural in performance: “Great happiness”. By presenting the action in a stylised circus context I envisaged Ringmaster Duncan downstage surrounded by his three servants (already appearing in my mind costumed symbolically in green unitards to distinguish them from the rest of the cast and to suggest their malicious intentions) with his circus performers in tableau behind him. The whole cast could then take up the cry of “Great happiness”: the preceding dialogue thus takes on the character of recitative, the music propelling the text in a crescendo towards this final phrase. The superficiality of Duncan’s response (cheerfully triumphant, with no apparent understanding of any human cost in achieving victory) could then be emphasized by his breaking into a brief celebratory tap dance, imitating rhythms provided by a woodblock, as a prelude for a circus dance for the whole company. This also confirmed for me that percussion would play a major part in the music score.

I thus developed the libretto with the actors, the potential instrumentalists, and the staging concept all at the forefront of my mind. Musical ideas took shape at this time, and I jotted themes and motifs on manuscript in association with lines of text. By the time the libretto was complete, I had an outline of the work in all its aspects – musical structure, instrumentation, and a vision of its effect in performance – that I was able to run like a video in my mind. I found this part of the creative process deeply satisfying.

The choice of instrumentation reflects the dual nature of this research: specific instrumentalists were keen to participate (the finished score would be tailored to
provide them with “musical challenges”) and I had an artistic concept at heart that was important to me as I attempted to “embody musicianship”. I knew from the outset that musicians who were keen to participate comprised a violinist, cellist, percussionist, and pianist. The side drum formed an appropriate link between Macbeth’s function as a soldier in Shakespeare’s play and my realization of the play in a circus context: Macbeth is greeted in the play with the line “A drum! A drum! Macbeth doth come”, which calls for a military drum signal; side drum rolls are also traditionally used in a circus to signal dangerous acts.

Although initially I would have liked to include a trumpet and trombone in the score for the same reasons (they are military instruments, but also traditionally used in circuses) I decided that the tonal possibilities provided by the group of volunteers would meet the needs of the scene effectively and more economically. Violin glissandi could be effective as a caricature of the traditional circus trombone glissandi (or ‘smears’), and the stringed instruments and piano could cover the emotional range from circus jollity to murder. The appearance of Duncan’s ghost at Macbeth’s banquet, for example, was expressed musically by a prolonged ‘scream’ produced by the violin bowed between bridge and tailpiece, while the cello (using snap pizzicato) and woodblock (and later guiro) exchanged a dialogue in quaver movement, and the piano provided a heartbeat ostinato in crotchet movement at the lowest end of its range combined with a semiquaver motif in tone clusters at the highest end (bars 164-192):
Ex. 8: *Macbeth*, bars 164-167, full score

My intention was to define and support the structure, mood, and meaning of the edited text with the music. I used my experience of setting text for music project one (At the Beginning of Time), and decided to set the text as pitchless
sprechstimme. Initial work with the three actors undertaking the witch/clown roles convinced me that this decision was appropriate: the actors responded positively to my rhythmic notation, but welcomed the freedom to make their own decisions with regard to pitch.

I worked at reflecting natural speech rhythms, using the music to ‘build the scenes’ towards important phrases and climactic moments, and the accompaniment to heighten meaning and intensify atmosphere. All the performers agreed in discussion that their challenge involved communicating characterization and meaning effectively both in terms of the original text and its interpretation in the score. Although the concept was a stylized (rather than ‘realistic’) performance, the actors would need to give the text the impression of spontaneity. This would test both their performing skills and my skills as a composer.

I used the music to define the structure of the scene, treating some dialogue (such as Act 1 Sc ii quoted above) as recitative, followed by aria-like treatment of key moments: Lady Macbeth’s entrance, for example, and her opening lines to Macbeth (“Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be what thou art promis’d …”) are given a languorous accompaniment with cello and piano as she seduces her husband into committing murder:
Ex. 9: *Macbeth*, bars 96-100, full score

Vln. 1

Vc.

Perc.

Pno.

---

Vln. 1

Vc.

Perc.

Pno.
The fragmented cello motifs as Lady Macbeth commits suicide (an onstage occurrence in this production) echo this scene, but the cello’s melodic movement is predominantly descending and is robbed of its accompaniment and therefore much of its strength. Lady Macbeth’s disintegration is mirrored in the disintegration of her music.

**Ex. 10: Macbeth, bars 207-215, full score**
I designed the dance sequences to fulfill a number of functions. At the most basic level, they are used to accommodate entrances and exits (such as the first entry of the circus performers) and provide transitions between sections of text (such as the dance for circus performers following Duncan’s tap dance). I saw the dance scenes as integral to the creation of a circus atmosphere: the initial entrance of the circus performers, for example, takes place as a procession around an imaginary circus ring.

The dance music is also used to provide thematic commentary on the text. The final words of text, for example, are uttered after the suicide of Lady Macbeth by the entire cast: “Turn, hell hound, turn”. Macbeth is then murdered by his successor: the cast’s response is to resume their circus ring dance to the same music that accompanied Duncan’s tap dance. This was intended to underline my interpretation of the play: pursuit of power is a meaningless, heartless, and inevitable process. This dance merges into an echo of the witches’ opening music to conclude the scene, so the scene finishes as it started – further suggesting that the action could be seen as part of a cyclical process in which individuals are insignificant.
I chose to integrate melodic and rhythmic motifs associated with circus music into a predominantly atonal score to capture the dual aspect of the scene: the jollity of the circus and its underlying violence. The most common type of circus music is the circus march (or ‘screamer’), and the most well known of all circus screamers is the march generally known as Thunder and Blazes. Composed in 1897 by the Czech composer Julius Fučík (pupil of Dvořák) the march was originally entitled Grande March Chromatique (reflecting its characteristic chromatic motifs). Fučík renamed the work The Entry of the Gladiators (reflecting the composer’s interest in Roman history) when he published it in 1900 (Nicholas, 2007). In 1910, the Canadian composer Louis-Phillipe Laurendeau arranged the march for a small band under the title Thunder and Blazes: it is this version that has become inextricably associated with circus clowns:

Ex. 11: Thunder and Blazes theme, (Fučík)

The Thunder and Blazes theme is so familiar that my students instantly identified the opening witch/clown sequence and cast parade as ‘circus music’ even though my only direct reference to the theme is a seven-note violin phrase in bar 27:

Ex. 12: Macbeth, bars 27-29, violin 1

I intended the tempo, rhythms, chromaticism, and melodic shapes to evoke circus images for the performers and eventually the audience. In order to suggest the underlying tensions of the scene I then distorted the melodic and harmonic material, stretching melodic leaps for deliberate ungainliness (such as the ascending 9th and descending 10th in the cello’s opening bar), and confusing the tonal centres by avoiding straightforward tonal procedures (I used 7ths instead of octaves in the
piano bass line, for example, in bars 25 to 37, and whole tone patterns such as the ascending violin figure in bar 6).

I integrated another musical reference into the cast dance initiated by Duncan’s tap dance sequence (bars 56-75). Although this was intended primarily to further reinforce the dichotomy between the childlike circus context and vicious pursuit of power within it, my inclusion of Chopsticks in this dance was also a little musical joke for the enjoyment of the cast: Chopsticks (a version of The Celebrated Chop Waltz, written in 1877 by Euphemia Allen) is known and played with unwearying enthusiasm by most students in the music department at Macleans College (and all other schools I have worked in). I twisted the familiar musical pattern by presenting it bitonally:

Ex. 13: Macbeth, bars 279-280, piano

These examples illustrate ways in which I set about composing this 15 minute Shakespeare scene for my students. The musical success of this piece would be dependent upon its ability to suggest simultaneously both superficial merriment and fundamental conflict. I hoped that the audience would be drawn into the circus context initially at a superficial level, maybe greeting the witch/clowns with laughter, but that the essential blackness of the scene would be powerfully realized through the multilayered approach. My compositional process was dominated by the circus vision and my desire to present that vision in tangible form: this, for me, was the artistic centre of the work – the way I would “embody and exemplify musicianship”.

Just as I embodied musicianship in creating the score, embodying the multilayered circus concept also lay at the heart of the challenge for the students. Some of the actors were also singers, but had understandably never attempted sprechstimme.
The score called on them to perform their dialogue according to precisely notated rhythms but with the apparent sponataneity and the convincing characterization required by a fully staged work. I hoped to break down what I regarded as artificial distinctions between their work as actors and their work as musicians: the score deliberately requires a combination of many performing skills that these students were accustomed to practising in isolation, but had not been challenged to integrate.

The instrumentalists (violinist, cellist, pianist, and percussionist) are all technically skilled soloists and capable sight readers. They were active contributors to many of the co-curricular music activities in the school: members of the orchestra, chamber orchestra, and (in the case of the percussionist) some of the school bands. I set out to provide them with the opportunity to work as soloists within a small ensemble playing more technically demanding music than was usually available to them in the school context. I was concerned that the music should not be overly time consuming to prepare, as I knew these students to be prone to overcommitment. In order to provide a balance in this regard, I ensured that each instrumentalist was given some sections of score that would allow them to function as a soloist and others that required little or no preparation: the violinist, for example, features as a soloist in the initial dance (bars 25-39) but merely bows open strings between the bridge and tailpiece for the appearance of Duncan’s ghost (bars 164-192).

I was aware that the violinist, cellist, and pianist were accustomed to performing almost exclusively nineteenth century Western European repertoire as soloists. In contrast, most of the actors had never moved outside the realms of twentieth century popular music in their stage performance practice. I set out to extend the tonal landscape of the entire group by providing a generally atonal (or at times bitonal) score. I hoped that the inclusion of familiar circus motifs and the Chopsticks theme would provide a helpful link with a musical language that was more familiar to them. I set out to challenge their musical expectations, but was unsure initially (after the negative responses of Year 10 dancers to The Pied Piper) whether their responses would be sufficiently positive to carry the project through to completion.
My intention was to provide a challenge in ensemble performance. The instrumentalists are all required to work as both soloists and accompanists to the text; the actors are required to use all their expressive skills in communicating text and character, but also to work in ensemble with each other and with the instrumentalists.

Data: Music score

(Score attached as Appendix C: 569)

Data analysis: Performance, surveys, and interviews

The attached DVD of *Macbeth* reveals the response of the performers to the score. The performance was recorded in the Macleans College Auditorium at the May 2006 South Auckland Regional Sheilah Winn Festival. The students (both actors and musicians) prepared the work over a three-week period prior to the performance: principals and musicians committed to four hours of rehearsal each week. All the students participated in the final technical and dress rehearsals.

Surveys and interviews

As with music projects one and two, surveys designed for quick completion were distributed to the performers at a meeting held shortly after the performance. The surveys were completed anonymously by the 26 participants. The participants comprised four instrumentalists, nine principal actors, and 13 chorus members.

In the surveys associated with the first two music projects I included questions to differentiate between different aspects of “challenge” (stylistic challenge, technical challenge, and so on). The students, however, preferred to discuss the concept of “challenge” more freely, so I decided to provide that freedom in this survey: Question 4 allows students to interpret what constitutes a “challenge”.

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The survey questions for *Macbeth* (using the Likert scale of 1 to 5 for responses) were as follows:

1. I enjoyed learning to perform our 15 minute *Macbeth*

2. I enjoyed performing *Macbeth*

3. I think the group enjoyed performing *Macbeth*

4. I found *Macbeth* challenging to perform

5. I think the audience enjoyed *Macbeth*

6. I think *Macbeth* is an effective piece in performance

The group comprised students of all levels: Year 9 to Year 13. Again, most senior students chose to undertake electronic interviews, but Year 9 and 10 students were interviewed in small groups or individually.

It is immediately clear from the DVD of the performance, and the responses to all survey questions that my concerns about the project’s viability were groundless. The instrumentalists and actors were enthusiastic about participating in this project: 22 of the 26 participants, for example, responded very positively to the first three survey questions. They enjoyed learning the piece as well as performing it, and enjoyed the sense of participating in a positive group experience.

Significantly different themes from music projects one and two emerged from the surveys and interview process for this music project:

- A positive performing experience was seen by students as more important to them than a focus on either assessment or the social aspect of the rehearsal process;
• Students showed awareness of the multi-disciplinary concept and their own roles within it;
• Students were analytical with regard to the quality of the music and performance concept;
• Students indicated that “challenge” was not a major factor for them in this work;
• All participants approached this project with a sense of trust in the work itself, in the rehearsal environment, and all the other participants; and
• The confidence and commitment evident in the performance reflected the positive nature of the rehearsal process.

Table 15: *Macbeth* – survey question 1

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<tr>
<th>Likert scale (1 indicates strong agreement)</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>25 Instrumentalists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15 Chorus actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10 Principal actors</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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Table 16: *Macbeth* – survey question 2

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<td>15 Principal actors</td>
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In interview, the instrumentalists confirmed their positive attitudes toward the experience. In contrast to *The Pied Piper*, however, their responses focused on the experience of participating in a dramatic work, rather than solely on their musical experience. One instrumentalist said “I loved the whole thing, the way it all came together”, and another said “I am not very fond of contemporary music, but we created the atmosphere for the whole performance which was very cool”. A third said “Brilliant music and a brilliant performance. I really don’t need to say any more”.

The actors were also overwhelmingly positive about the experience. Typical comments included: “I LOVED PERFORMING THIS!!” and “It was original, innovative, and just such a fantastic idea combining the music and circus concept with Macbeth. I loved every moment”. Actors and musicians in interview expressed enthusiasm for the way the music supported the text and performance concept: “Everyone who participated enjoyed the fantastic atmosphere that the music created” and “The music added edge and energy to the work, and also created its dark and eerie atmosphere”. All interview responses confirmed the positive group response indicated in Table 17.

I was concerned that the chorus actors may feel negative about their lack of dialogue: the piece is built around the principal actors and musicians, and most chorus members were not given the opportunity to work with text. Student actors
often weigh the importance of their roles by counting their lines of dialogue: I have on rare occasions contended with students refusing roles they deemed to be insultingly small. The surveys show that in this project although the principal actors recorded more “very positive” responses than the chorus members, the chorus members were nevertheless uniformly positive about their involvement.

Two factors emerged in interview that accounted for what I believe to be a commendably mature approach to chorus participation. Some chorus members showed their awareness that the greater rewards of a principal speaking roles come at a cost: “I was really busy when we were working on Macbeth, so I was happy just to be involved and not to have a heavy rehearsal load and have to get lines down”. Primarily, however, chorus members indicated a belief in the importance of their roles irrespective of dialogue: “Each chorus member had an important role, whether it was plate spinners, acrobats, or bubble blowers” and “It helped that each member of the chorus had a role to play that really contributed to the overall performance. Everybody felt they were in Macbeth for a specific reason”. One senior student had a very small and physically uncomfortable role as a result of the costuming, but still stressed that “the group was able to see that no matter how small their part was they were still important and they knew that it looked and sounded AMAZING”.

This was a co-curricular project offering no NCEA credits, but students expressed no concern about lack of assessment opportunities. On the contrary, many students were emphatic that a positive performance experience overrides concerns with assessment: “I loved doing something I had never done before that was also of a very high standard so performing it seemed like an honour. Assessment didn’t come into my thinking for this one”. The co-curricular context was specifically identified by students as contributing to the positive experience: “We were performing because we wanted to be there and we could get on with the work without interruptions”. The attitude of all the actors seemed to be summed up when one student said “I was just glad to be part of it. It was one of the strangest and most beautiful pieces of work I have ever done”.

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The major theme that emerged from interviews with all the *Macbeth* participants was their sense of trust in the project. This was built partly on the project itself, but equally significantly on their prior experience of drama and music projects in the school: “I’ve always experienced a sense of trust in drama and music where there aren’t any problems with acceptance of ideas put forth by anyone (students and teachers alike) and everyone is very open”. The sense of being part of a supportive and open culture appeared to be shared by all members of the group: “I feel the students on the ‘drama scene’ of Macleans have developed a really strong sense of being open to possibilities and it means there aren’t many constraints in performance” and “I know everyone enjoyed this piece, but then again we are all performing arts people”.

Trust in the supportive culture of the group was thus the starting point for the project. Students were able to approach rehearsing and performing the piece with openly expressed confidence from the outset: “Macbeth was especially enjoyable because I felt we were able to immerse ourselves completely in performance and commit to the circus idea without the fear of being judged by our peers”. The performers were not only confident, but aware of that confidence and able to celebrate it: “It was great in Macbeth the way the cast embraced all facets of the piece from costumes to music and blocking. We knew we could do it”.

It was evident throughout the rehearsal process, and in the performance, that all performers and actors had sufficient confidence to take responsibility for the project, and ownership of their own roles within it. In expressing their response to the score, for example, actors typically referred to their own responsibility to develop a role: “the music was detailed and exciting and it helped me immensely in developing my character”. Musicians expressed their commitment to supporting the dialogue and concept: “I knew that if I didn’t listen and work with the actors the bubble would burst”. Enjoyment of the project was inextricably linked with confidence in it: “Everyone always had belief in Macbeth and wanted to perform it to a high standard. This ALWAYS makes it much more enjoyable”.

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These comments overall show a depth of understanding of performance practice built, in many cases, on considerable prior performance experience gained mainly through opportunities at school, and to a lesser extent in the wider community. There were, however, five junior chorus actors, and one junior principal actor, whose prior experience was limited to drama classes within the curriculum. Their growth in confidence and skills throughout the rehearsal process was clearly evident, and their responses to the project were as enthusiastic as those of their more experienced colleagues. These students focused on their enjoyment in terms of “being part of a family”. Another spoke of having felt “nervous of the seniors” at the first rehearsal, but subsequently feeling “like I belonged”.

Survey responses to Question 4 (Table 18) predictably revealed that the musicians and principal actors considered Macbeth to be “challenging”. Five chorus members considered their roles to be challenging, but most indicated that “challenge” was not a major factor for them in this work.

Table 18: Macbeth – survey question 4

It is significant that all chorus members referred to this question in interview, typically commenting that “challenge” was “not my reason for being in this piece”, and that “I didn’t find the chorus work difficult at all because I had no lines, but I really learnt a lot”. In fact, very few of the chorus members were dancers: most were solely actors. With the guidance of two senior dancers (both of whom were enthusiastic senior participants in The Pied Piper), this cast of non-dancers
choreographed and performed effective and convincing dance sequences. One actor’s comment that “we all enjoyed creating our own movement and it all ended up meshing well with the theme of the piece” accurately describes the rehearsal process, and highlights that the chorus faced a considerable challenge. It is likely that the actors’ apparent lack of awareness of this challenge reflects both their confidence in facing and accomplishing their task, and their preconception that a dramatic “challenge” involves dealing with dialogue.

One actor commented on the “physical demands of my part” but added that “working in costume helped us all get used to the free nature of the movement”. The Year 10 Pied Piper dancers focused much of their attention on their costumes. The Macbeth circus costumes included some tight-fitting unitards that the actors may have felt embarrassed to wear: no actors made negative references to costumes in interview, however, other than to comment on their effectiveness in performance. Confidence in the work removed the students’ focus from their personal appearance to the concerns of producing “magic on the stage”.

The instrumentalists and actors were fully aware of the challenges they faced, as indicated by both survey and interview responses. The instrumentalists focused in interview on the stylistic challenge presented by the work, and the challenge of working with the actors. Macbeth was perceived as being “a good contrast to other work we were doing” and “very different to what I usually play”. Technical challenges were acknowledged in interviews, and the performance demonstrates that they were met successfully. Accommodating the text, for example, presented the players with a new concept: “I found some of the notes tricky, but the main challenge was fitting the music in with the actors, you have to listen to the words. It was great because we really felt part of the performance”.

The actors were equally aware of the challenge of fitting text with music: “I found it very difficult to get my words in the right timing and sequence. I had never done anything like this before”, and “I am used to singing with music accompaniment, but not speaking so I found it hard to grasp that in this piece the words fitted into the breaks and the music then commented on the words”. All the actors recognized
that the music supported their characterization: “Even though fitting text with music was challenging, the music helped us get into character and to fulfil the concepts of this Macbeth in performance”. My concern that the music might be too challenging stylistically for the actors was unfounded. Several commented on the music’s stylistic “difference” as a positive quality: “The music made us listen in a different way, it gave us mood and atmosphere”.

The challenge of fitting the dialogue and movement with the music was perceived as enjoyable rather than intimidating. The students expected to be challenged, and expected to practise their way through potential difficulties: “I must admit, at first, the accompaniment was difficult to follow. I had never performed script to music before, let alone Shakespeare to music. But like any other pieces, all that was needed was practice”.

Challenge was seen by the principal actors and musicians as a positive concept: “We enjoyed the challenge which is the whole point of taking part in these performances – escaping from the dullness of a comfort zone” and “I had trouble with the over the top nature of my character, and I didn’t understand at first why it was SOOO over the top, but it was great learning how it fitted with everything else”.

Table 19: 

<table>
<thead>
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<th>I think the audience enjoyed 'Macbeth'</th>
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<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instrumentalists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chorus actors</td>
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<td>Principal actors</td>
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Likert scale (1 indicates strong agreement)
The positive audience response is evident on the DVD recording. The actors showed their awareness of the audience’s enthusiasm in their survey and interview responses: “The audience absolutely loved it”. The actors showed their awareness of audience response as central to a successful performance: “I think the effectiveness of a performance relies heavily on the audience”. Some referred to previous negative experiences: “Nothing is worse than an audience making you self conscious about your performance”. The actors approached the event with the expectation that the audience would be supportive: “The Sheilah Winn Shakespeare Festival has an openness that allows ideas to prosper and be cultivated. It makes performance especially enjoyable”.

The instrumentalists were pleased and surprised by the audience response. Although three of these four ‘classically’ trained musicians (violin, cello, piano) had been playing their instruments since early childhood, their performance experience usually occurred in circumstances they described as “quite restrained” and “formal”. One instrumentalist described the experience of playing in this context as “so different I felt like I was acting rather than playing”. I believe this indicates considerable development in the players: they added an awareness of music as communication to their usual concentration on interpretation and technique.

In interview, actors and instrumentalists referred to both the work itself and their own work as performers as the significant factors in creating an enthusiastic audience response: “We had a great piece to work with, and all the performers took their roles seriously and worked with conviction”. Some interview responses showed students’ understanding of the transforming power of performance: “The audience was brought into our world on the stage”.
The survey responses indicate that all participants believed the work to be effective in performance. Interview responses focused on the production concept (the combination of circus theme with music) as the major factor in the success of the work: “The production concept was so creative that I couldn’t wait to share it with the audience”. Students were not only able to describe the concept (“The music and circus theme fitted Macbeth perfectly”) but many made perceptive and analytical comments: “The music suited the circus concept. All our characters looked very vibrant and colourful, but there was a grim sense of evil underlying each one of them”. Many comments expressed the students’ sense of ownership and desire to communicate themes to their audience: “One of the main concepts we conveyed was that on the outside the Macbeth world looked perfect, but it was filled with despair and corruption”.

Many students commented on the way the music defined structure and mood. One actor, for example, described “differentiation between sections” as “effective” and one instrumentalist referred to the way “changes in tempo and style gave a sense of fluctuating moods to pull the audience in and out of a sense of security”. These comments show an awareness of musical craft, or the way in which I “embodied musicianship” (Elliott, 2005: 12): “I think the piece was created with a huge amount of thought. It made me feel part of a very special process”.

Although most of the senior students emailed interview responses (“that way I can really think about the questions”), many students initiated face-to-face discussions
with me (rather than formal interviews) in subsequent weeks. In these informal group discussions, students typically spoke of the project from their perspectives as experienced performers. Students indicated clearly that they are keenly aware of the quality of the work they engage in as performers and that their perception of ‘quality’ is related to context: “I have enjoyed most of our school projects – but all in different ways – like, the pantomime last year was great even though it was so silly – but it was a really good pantomime”. One comment, which was strongly endorsed by the group involved in discussion, seemed to encapsulate the students’ attitude to the concept of ‘quality’: “We know if something’s good, you know. Teachers might think we don’t know, but we do – and we don’t want to do crap work”. Another student responded: “Yeah – if it’s good, we want to do it”.

Overall, comments on the work’s effectiveness conveyed the performers’ satisfaction in all aspects of the piece coming together successfully: “I think that this piece was the most effective piece I have ever seen at the Shakespeare Festival” and “The effect the piece created was unrivalled in the Festival – the performance was magical.”

**Reflections: Feedback and feedforward**

My intentions as a composer-teacher, as outlined in the planning phase of this music project, can be summarized as follows:

- to communicate the story effectively and coherently;
- to integrate dramatic and musical approaches in a multi-disciplinary work;
- to meet the requirements of the Sheilah Winn Festival of Shakespeare;
- to match and develop the technical skills of its principal performers; and
- to challenge the participants, and extend their thinking and artistic horizons.

In addition, I set out to work with students with whom I had established prior relationships, to determine whether this was a determining factor in students’ response to the project.
All my intentions as a composer were realized. I was very pleased with both the score – which came to life as I envisaged – and the performance, which was committed and dynamic. The students’ positive response to challenging music was heartening: one student referred to the music as “a breath of fresh air from so much of the music we hear over and over again”.

As a composer, however, I was also pleased with the score of the previous project, *The Pied Piper*: the music was equally successful in matching and developing the skills of the musicians as well as supporting and strengthening the dance narrative. Nevertheless, the production process and performance of *The Pied Piper* was a negative experience for many of the students involved. In practice, the crucial difference between the two projects was not the quality of the music, but a combination of the prior learning of the students and relationships between the participants.

The negative responses of the Year 10 dancers to *The Pied Piper* challenged me to reconsider my practice. I believed that composing for students (thereby embodying musicianship (Elliott, 2005: 12)) allowed me to model artistic commitment more genuinely and effectively than preaching it. In this process I believed I was facilitating a culture within which students can participate confidently in artistic experiences. This thinking, however, while underpinning my philosophy as Head of Faculty, was not stated explicitly in my intentions as the composer of the first two projects that comprise this research.

*The Pied Piper* was performed by four separate groups of students (instrumentalists, Year 10 dancers, Year 11 dancers, and Year 12 dancers) in a curricular context. I had taught only six of the 45 participants. The negative culture that had already developed within one of these groups affected the trust of all the participants in each other, and, as a result, in the project itself. Although the instrumentalists were positive about their participation and contribution, and the senior dance students gained significant choreographic experience and skills, the process and performance lacked the joyous sense of engagement, commitment, and fulfilment that was evident in the *Macbeth* performance.
Personal identification with role, a determining negative factor in the junior dancers’ responses to *The Pied Piper*, was not mentioned by any *Macbeth* participant in interview. This marks a significant difference in attitude between the participants of these two projects. The preoccupation of the majority of Year 10 dancers with their *Pied Piper* roles as rats reveals a self-consciousness which inhibited their commitment to rehearsal and performance. These students lacked trust in the project and trust in each other: they responded by attempting to protect their own identities.

Lacking in trust and self confidence, the Year 10 dancers were unable to disconnect their self-concepts in order to engage fully in the project. Their lack of engagement was evident in lack of interest and lack of motivation. They participated willingly, but not proactively: the project was something that ‘happened to them’, rather than something they could co-construct. Lack of trust, confidence, and engagement significantly affected the quality of the learning experience for these students.

Similarly, the percussionists who performed *At the Beginning of Time* (music project one) focused on the positive social aspects of learning the piece (“it was fun because our teacher brought pizza to the rehearsals”) while stressing lack of engagement in the performance. Lack of performance engagement was typically expressed as discomfort with something perceived as “new” and “different”. The one student who “really enjoyed” both the process and the performance provided a significant explanation for her engagement: “I enjoy acting and moving”. For this student, the experience of participating in music project one built on her prior experience. The challenge was too great for the other students whose prior learning did not provide this scaffold.

Crucial differences in attitude to *Macbeth* are revealed in the interviews: frequently used verbs and adjectives included “loved”, “fantastic”, “amazing”, “creative”, “magical”, and “exciting”; frequently occurring nouns were “confidence”, “trust”, and “conviction”. Enjoyment is inextricably bound up with the “magic” of performance (“I LOVED PERFORMING THIS” and “the performance was magical”): commitment in performance is built on trust in both the quality of the work and the
other participants (“Everyone always had belief in Macbeth” and “We knew we could do it”).

This project took place in the co-curricular context: the students chose to participate, but rehearsals had to be undertaken during evenings or weekends (rather than in school time) and the students’ work was not submitted for assessment. I expected these factors to impact negatively on the project, but the opportunity to contribute to a positive performance experience proved to be more important to the students than concerns with time commitments or assessment opportunities.

The *Macbeth* project confirmed that embodying musicianship through composition projects can provide intensely positive learning experiences for both composer-teacher and students. Trust and confidence led to engagement and motivation, evident in the students’ commitment to the project and willingness to undertake responsibility for communicating the work effectively in performance. Approaching the creative process with confidence enabled even the least experienced participants to gain significant levels of skill with ease.

I set out with this project to determine if writing for students I taught (or had taught) would produce different outcomes from writing for students with whom I had no prior relationship. The outcomes of this project were certainly more positive. Most students referred in interview to their sense of being part of a supportive and open culture within the faculty that enabled them to be “open to possibilities”. This culture was not developed through one project, but was built through regular co-constructed performances which provided the foundation for the *Macbeth* performance process.

The Year 10 *Pied Piper* dance students were not “open to possibilities” and they showed little or no discernible shift in knowledge or skills as a result of participating in *The Pied Piper*. The *Macbeth* participants (actors and instrumentalists), however, many of whom described themselves as “open to possibilities”, developed new skills so quickly and easily that they were barely conscious that the work involved
considerable challenges. This suggests that significant learning can take place within the crucible of production processes and performance, but confidence is the necessary foundation for such experience. Increased confidence is also an important outcome. Such confidence could be expected to facilitate further learning.

I decided to test this conclusion with one further co-curricular project. Some of the *Macbeth* actors had prior experience singing in musical productions, but only one performer had sung as a chorister. Choral music has not traditionally been a strong aspect of the musical life at Macleans College. At the conclusion of the *Macbeth* project, I invited the *Macbeth* actors to form a choir. Several other students – also inexperienced singers – expressed their desire to join the choir, and all agreed that they would participate in the New Zealand Choral Federation’s annual BIG SING festival. I thought that participating in the competition would provide an appropriate focus and challenge for the new ensemble.

I was able to approach this venture with confidence myself, as I am an experienced chorister and choir director. I hoped that the students would bring their confidence and willingness to move outside their “comfort zones” to the project. We had a ten week period to form a choir and prepare for participation in the festival.
A composer-teacher in context: Action research projects

CHAPTER SEVEN
Music project four

“Any performance ... should be judged finally on its success in bringing into existence for as long as it lasts a set of relationships that those taking part feel to be ideal and in enabling those taking part to explore, affirm and celebrate those relationships”

(Small, 1998: 49)

A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha – an SATB choral work

Plan: Composition process

Music project three indicated that significant learning takes place within the crucible of production processes and performance. Confidence seemed to be not only the necessary foundation for such experience, but also an important outcome. I designed music project four to test this conclusion: I presented participants of music project three, who had already demonstrated themselves to be confident and “open to possibilities”, with the challenge of developing singing techniques and learning to sing together as a choir.

The New Zealand Choral Federation’s annual BIGSING Festival requires each choir to perform a nine minute recital of two or three contrasting choral works, at least one of which must be a New Zealand composition. Only one of the prospective choristers who undertook this project had choral experience: most were actors or music theatre performers. Some solo singers of popular music also joined the group. I encouraged the singers to take group singing lessons from the Itinerant Teacher of Music (as outlined in Chapter Three, Essay Four: 82) and most of the new choir members took advantage of this opportunity to develop their singing techniques.
I brought an extensive background in choral singing to this project, both outside the school context (as a cathedral chorister in Auckland, and singing with early music ensembles in New Zealand and Australia), and as a university and secondary school choir director.

In my experience, teenage singers, unable to hide behind the comparative safety of an instrument, frequently lose confidence if they perceive the group they are part of is not respected by others. I was aware of the important part that repertoire, as well as training, plays in the development of a choir’s confidence: I wanted students to sing music they perceived as relevant to them, challenging, but not insurmountably difficult. I was attempting, in David Elliott’s words (2005: 12), to “develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges”.

Because of time constraints (a ten week preparation period between May and July 2006) I needed to choose repertoire quickly to match the skills of the singers, and write a score (the required “New Zealand composition”) to complement the other repertoire. I chose the Sanctus from Fauré’s Requiem as an attractive work (mostly in two rather than four parts) that encourages singers to produce sustained melodic lines with a unified and focused sound. I added a version of Oh Happy Day! (featuring harmonic progressions rather than control of vocal line) to provide a suitable vehicle for this group to express their exuberance. I then chose a traditional Māori text, A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha, and decided to set it in both Māori and English, reflecting the fact that te reo Māori and English are two of New Zealand’s three official languages (the other being New Zealand Sign Language).

Fauré’s Sanctus, scored for an orchestra of violas, cellos, basses, horn, and organ, with an additional solo violin line, works well in performance accompanied with a piano reduction of the score and a solo violinist. Oh Happy Day! could be performed in a variety of ways, but I chose to use piano, bass, and drum kit. A violinist, percussionists, and pianist would therefore be involved in preparing this repertoire: I felt that this combination of sounds would resonate with my chosen Māori text. Three of these players had been involved in previous music projects, and expressed readiness to participate in music project four.
Te Rauparaha (c.1768-1849) is significant historically as a war chief of the Ngāti Toa tribe, and is remembered in particular for his haka, *ka mate ka mate*, now performed (in an appropriately Bowdlerized version) by the All Blacks at the beginning of international rugby games (http://www.nzepc.auckland.ac.nz). In the process of settling his people in the Wellington Province, Te Rauparaha engaged in prolonged tribal warfare as well as skirmishes with European settlers. His descendants are currently, and controversially, seeking Treaty of Waitangi settlements to recompense their tribe for loss of land in the Wellington area, although they themselves occupied the region by force. The choice of text was therefore topical as well as culturally significant.

The text is an invocatory hymn to Kupe, the legendary Polynesian discoverer of New Zealand – a determining factor in my choice of the text. As explained in Chapter Three (72-73), each of the Macleans College whānau houses is named after a noteworthy New Zealander: Kupe House was one of the first whānau houses to be built at the school.

Tales of Kupe’s exploits in the area of New Zealand subsequently claimed by Te Rauparaha are many and varied: his circumnavigation of the Cook Strait islands is described in terms of a magical severing of the islands from the mainland. The attribution of the text to Te Rauparaha is uncertain: the New Zealand Electronic Text Centre (www.nzetc.org/tm/scholarly/tei-Pom01Lege-tl-body3-d2-d9.html), for example, provides a variant on the text, and describes it as “an old song heard in Maori villages on both sides of the Cook Strait”. Nevertheless, the song claims relationship between Te Rauparaha’s ancestors and the god-like figure of Kupe, and functions as a justification for their settlement in the lands around the Strait.

The version of the text I used (Jones, 1973: 2) begins with a tribute to Kupe: “Ka tito au/ Ka tito au/ Ka tito au ki a Kupe – I sing/ I sing/ I sing of Kupe”. Kupe’s exploits are listed, implicitly linking Te Rauparaha with Kupe’s exploration of the Cook Strait region: “Te tangata/ Nana I topetope/ Te whenua./ Tu ke a Kapiti,/ Te ke Mana,/ Tu ke Arapawa – Kupe, the man/ Who cut up the land./ Kapiti stands apart,/ Mana stands apart,/ Arapawa stands apart”. Te Rauparaha claims the islands are “signs of
my ancestor, Of Kupe, Who explored Titipua – Ko nga tohu tena/ A taka tupuna, A Kupe, Nana I whakatomene/ Titipua”. The text ends with an ambivalent triumphant claim that could be attributed to either Kupe or Te Rauparaha: “It was I explored/ The land! – Ka tomene au/ Te whenua-e!”

The structure of the music is largely determined by the text, but I reintroduced the opening textual motif (“Ka tito au”) before the final phrase (“Ka tomene au/ Te whenua-e!”) to create a satisfying ABCA¹B¹ structure:

A: Ka tito au,/ Ka tito au, / Ka tito au ki a Kupe

   I sing,/ I sing,/ I sing of Kupe

B: Te tangata/ Nana I topetope/ Te whenua./ Tu ke a Kapiti,/ Te ke Mana,/ Tu ke Arapawa

   Kupe, the man/ Who cut up the land./ Kapiti stands apart,/ Mana stands apart,/ Arapawa stands apart

C: Ko nga tohu tena/ A taka tupuna,/ A Kupe

   These are the signs of my ancestor,/ Of Kupe,/ Who explored Titipua

A¹: Ka tito au,/ Ka tito au,/ Ka tito au

   I sing,/ I sing,/ I sing

B¹: Ka tomene au/ Te whenua-e!

   It was I explored/ The land!

The vocal lines of the opening A section develop out of a five-note motif to produce an echoing, invocatory effect:
Ex. 14: A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha, bars 6-7, alto motif

This section is distinguished by its SSAA texture. The second sopranos and altos deliver the Māori text, with first sopranos interpolating the English text between the Māori phrases in order to communicate the English meaning clearly:

Ex. 15: A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha, bars 12-15, SSAA

The vocal lines are supported by a chordal piano accompaniment, and sweeping violin scale figures (picked up by the piano) which not only provide a dramatic flourish, but also provide the opening pitch for inexperienced altos:
I took similar care with voice leading throughout the work, using the instruments, or other vocal lines, to provide the pitch for the singers prior to each of their entries. The tubular bells, for example, prefigure the bass entry in Bar 25:

Ex. 17: A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha, bars 25-27, tubular bells, bass

The B section contrasts in mood, tempo, texture, timbre, and rhythmic intensity. Tenors and basses toss the Māori text between them as a form of fast, rhythmic chant on one pitch (rhythmically challenging, but melodically simple and stylistically
appropriate). Frequent changes of time signature accommodate the rhythmic irregularity of the text, and provide dramatic intensity:

**Ex. 18: A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha, bars 32-36, tenor, bass**

Sopranos and altos interpolate the English text. I added rototoms to the texture to reinforce the rhythmic quaver rhythms, to give the percussionist an interesting part, and to build the B section toward the climactic C section.

The C section is marked *maestoso*, and comprises a simple six part chord progression in the vocal lines to create rich timbre and texture. The crotchet tenor and bass lines, delivering the Māori text, continue the chant-like effect of the B section, but in augmented form for greater grandeur. Overlapping piano scale figures and standing cymbal rolls add momentum and intensity to the slow moving vocal lines, and add some interest for the technically assured pianist. Tubular bells reinforce chord changes and add rhythmic definition, while the violin assists the singers to maintain pitch by sustaining key notes within the harmony:
Ex. 19: A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha, bars 52-56, full score

Maestoso $\frac{3}{4} = 108$

S.

These are the signs

S.

These are the signs

A.

These are the signs

T.

Ko nga to-hu te-na Ko nga to-hu

B.

Ko nga to-hu te-na Ko nga to-hu

Vln.

Tub. B.

Roto-t.

Perc.

Maestoso $\frac{3}{4} = 108$

| 186 |
After three contrasting sections, repetition of the opening echo motif (A¹: “Ka tito au/ ka tito au – I sing/ I sing”) ensures musical coherence and releases the musical tension of the C section. The repetition also fulfils a narrative function: the B and C sections invoke Kupe; repeating the A section reminds us that the song is sung by Te Rauparaha.

I set the final section of text, “Ka tomene au/ Te whenua-e! – It was I explored/ The land!” using the fast, rhythmic, chanting style introduced in the B section, thus propelling the piece towards a final shout of triumph:
Ex. 20: A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha, bars 86-88, full score

I who explored the land! e!
I who explored the land! e!
I who explored the land! e!
tome ne au, Te Whe-nua - e!
tome ne au, Te Whe-nua - e!

Vln.

Full B.

Roto-t.

Perc.
As a composer, I conceived the work as a dramatic narrative, and hoped that the music would evoke the world of Kupe and Te Rauparaha – of explorers and warriors – for the singers, instrumentalists, and listeners. As a teacher, I carefully crafted instrumental lines to provide appropriate levels of technical challenge for the small accompanying group of musically assured instrumentalists, and vocal lines to accommodate the inexperienced singers. The piece nevertheless demands sustained control and harmonic assurance of the sopranos and altos in particular, and rhythmic facility and well projected tonal production from all the singers. Overall, I also created the piece to complement the other two works in our BIGSING Festival programme, both stylistically and in terms of musical challenges for the performers.

Data: Music score

(Score attached as Appendix D: 572)

Data analysis: Performance, surveys, and interviews

The attached DVD, recorded in the Auckland Town Hall at the 2006 Auckland BIGSING Festival, of the Macleans College programme (comprising *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha*, Fauré’s *Sanctus*, and *Oh Happy Day!*), reveals the responses of the performers to all the scores. The rehearsal process took place over ten weeks in June and July of 2006, and involved weekly two-hour rehearsals.

Two performances on the recording were affected by technical problems beyond the control of the performers. The performance of *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha* was negatively affected by the failure of the stage managers to turn off the announcer’s microphone beside the percussionists. The standing cymbal (played with metal beater) and the rototoms were amplified and, as a result, frequently overpower the singers. The soloist’s microphone malfunctioned during *Oh Happy Day!*: her voice is accordingly difficult to hear on the DVD.
Nevertheless, the performance was successful, and the choir was one of five – out of more than 80 competing groups – awarded a prize at the Festival. The choir subsequently performed *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha* on several occasions, including at the University of Waikato Lilburn Trust Composer Competition (September 2006), where the piece won first prize for acoustic composition.

**Surveys and interviews**

Surveys designed for quick completion were distributed to the performers at a meeting held four days after the first performance. The surveys were completed anonymously by 24 singers and the participating instrumentalists.

This project differed from the three preceding projects in that the group performed two other works drawn from established repertoire in addition to the music I composed for them. This provided the opportunity to survey the responses of the students to three works in contrasting styles to establish what level of impact differing styles of repertoire might have on the learning and performing processes, and whether my involvement as composer impacted significantly on the students’ responses to *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha*.

The survey questions, completed for each of the three works, were as follows:

1. I enjoyed learning to perform *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha /Sanctus /Oh Happy Day!*

2. I enjoyed performing *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha /Sanctus /Oh Happy Day!*

3. I think the group enjoyed performing *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha /Sanctus /Oh Happy Day!*

4. I found *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha /Sanctus /Oh Happy Day!* challenging to perform
5. I think the audience enjoyed *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha /Sanctus /Oh Happy Day!*

6. I think *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha /Sanctus /Oh Happy Day!* is an effective piece in performance

It is clear from the DVD of the performance that the students’ choral singing skills developed sufficiently during the 10 week preparation time to enable them to perform as a choir in three contrasting styles confidently and effectively. Their positive responses were confirmed through the survey and questionnaire process.

Similar themes to music project three (*Macbeth*) emerged from the survey and interview processes:

- A positive rehearsal and performance experience was seen by this group of students as “real” learning, and more important to them than a focus on assessment;
- Students approached challenges with an assumption that they could be met;
- Confidence and commitment evident in the performance was expressed in terms of “enjoyment” in the surveys and interviews;
- All participants approached this project with a sense of trust. Significant factors in development of trust were identified as:
  - Quality of the work – which should be “effective” and provide appropriate “challenge”;
  - Trust in the commitment of all participants, including the teacher; and
  - The teacher’s role was agreed by all students to be crucial in the development of a positive group culture.

The students identified the co-curricular environment, rather than the classroom, as their work context of choice. They referred to their capacity to “get into the zone” – the focused state of readiness for learning and performance – in the co-curricular
context. The significant distinguishing factors in the co-curricular environment were identified as:

- A positive group culture readily created because students participate by choice; and
- Rehearsal in appropriate facilities unaffected by distractions and time restrictions.

The surveys overall reveal almost equally positive attitudes towards all the pieces learnt and performed. This could suggest that students were indifferent to the choice of repertoire, and that their positive responses were motivated by factors other than the individual qualities of the works. Interviews revealed, however, that most students were keenly aware of, and analytical about, the works themselves, and expressed considerable readiness to share their opinions.

Questions 1 and 2 asked students to register their responses to the learning process (Tables 21-23) and performance experience (Table 24-26) on a Likert scale of 1 to 5. The responses indicate that the students were almost (but not entirely) unanimous in enjoying the learning and performing processes:

**Table 21: A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha – survey question 1**

![Likert scale graph for Choir enjoyment of 'A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha']
In interview, as well as in performance, the confidence these students brought to the previous project (*Macbeth*) was clearly evident. Although many students referred to their lack of experience as choristers and/or singers, their comments were cast in positive terms: “Even though my voice hasn’t been trained, I loved learning to sing an alto line, something quite different from singing in musicals each year”. The project was described as an “opportunity to learn new things” and “a good way to improve my singing”.

Comments about the learning process typically referred to rehearsals being “a bit slow at times”, with a number of sopranos and altos referring specifically to the
opening section of *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha*: “the sectionals trying to get the first part to work were a bit tedious. It took a while to get it together”. In interview, however, most students when commenting on the “boring parts” of rehearsals showed their willingness to work slowly in order to achieve results: “The harmony sounded awesome when we got it right. I think this gave us the determination to nail the piece whilst learning because we could tell it would be really effective”.

Typical comments linked the enjoyment of the learning process with the positive social experience of being part of the group: “I enjoyed the convivial atmosphere and singing in a choir for the first time”. It is interesting to note that a small number of students (between five and seven) indicated neutral or negative responses to the learning process survey question, but all students were positive about the process in interview. This could suggest a reversal of the group pressure I observed operating on the Year 10 dancers in *The Pied Piper* (Chapter Five, Music project two: 140): five of the eighteen Year 10 dancers indicated in surveys that they enjoyed the rehearsal and performance process, but were uncomfortable about expressing positive responses in interviews, and unable to do so in the presence of other members of the class. It is possible that some individuals were less enthusiastic about the learning processes in this project than they felt able to admit in interview.

It is more likely, however, that the negative responses were linked to the “boring” aspect of slow rehearsal processes, because only one student gave a negative response to Question 2 (the performance aspect) of the survey. She referred to this response in interview: “I can’t stand *Oh Happy Day*! mainly because I think the words are stupid. The music is catchy I suppose but it’s repetitive and you get sick of it”.

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Table 24: *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha* – survey question 2

![Bar chart showing responses to the survey question for *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha*.](chart1.png)

Table 25: *Sanctus* – survey question 2

![Bar chart showing responses to the survey question for *Sanctus*.](chart2.png)

Table 26: *Oh Happy Day!* – survey question 2

![Bar chart showing responses to the survey question for *Oh Happy Day!*](chart3.png)
Interviews confirmed that students were overwhelmingly positive about performing in a choir context: “I enjoyed learning A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha, but performing it was the best part”. Many students revealed how their perceptions had been shaped by their experience as actors: “As an actress rather than a singer, the piece gave me room to perform how I know, with intensity and expression fitting to the piece”. Singing was embraced as a form of acting, rather than as a separate discipline: “Singing should be as expressive as acting. I felt I was assuming a role and had full freedom to project the emotion and strength that went with it”.

The students’ prior experience as actors scaffolded their development of singing skills. As a result, the students responded positively to the narrative and dramatic aspect of A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha: “The piece is so powerful and full of strength that it just felt like it was just meant to be performed, and so I loved being able to participate in its performance”.

Students’ responses tended to include commentary about the works themselves. One student, for example, referred to her engagement in the performance in terms of the chanting aspect of the work and its structure: “I was totally invested in the process and wished I could chant with the boys. I loved the build up in the middle and towards the end, and the collective ‘eh’ sound at the end”. Another student referred to timbre, texture, and structure: “Singing as a group is a real rush. The full-bodied sound of the piece and its shape (if that makes sense) makes it great to perform”.

It is significant that all the instrumentalists involved in A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha commented on their involvement in the dramatic narrative: “It was quite intense, we were part of it, not just playing the music for it”. In contrast, Fauré’s Sanctus was referred to by both instrumentalists and singers in terms of its “beauty”, “control”, and “tunefulness”, whereas Oh Happy Day! was described as “really fun to sing”, and “catchy” with “cool bass line and harmonies”. All three pieces were discussed with equal objectivity and almost equal enthusiasm. I was very pleased that the Sanctus, a late nineteenth century Latin setting of part of the Ordinary of the Mass
by a French composer, was almost as popular with the students as the contemporary pieces: the students were “open to possibilities” with regards to the repertoire.

Question 3 (Tables 27-29) asked students to differentiate between their own responses and those of other members of the group.

**Table 27: A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha – survey question 3**

![Bar chart showing responses to survey question 3 for A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha]

**Table 28: Sanctus – survey question 3**

![Bar chart showing responses to survey question 3 for Sanctus]
Students involved in music projects one and two gave comparatively positive personal responses to performing and learning the works, but indicated a belief that the rest of the group responded negatively. Students involved in this project, as in music project three, however, were confident that their personal responses were shared by their co-performers. Confidence in the responses of other performers was expressed freely in interviews: “I know that everyone in the choir really enjoyed learning the piece, but especially performing it. The last shout at the end [of A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha] was so strong and would linger in the room afterwards”. Some students even expressed what they clearly believed to be responses on behalf of the whole group: “We had to contain our excitement to be able to focus. We always felt so good at the end of the piece waiting for that amazing echo”.

Overall, the comments reflect the complexity of group processes, with many factors contributing to both personal enjoyment and individuals’ perceptions of the group’s enjoyment. Some comments suggested that A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha specifically contributed to the growth of group confidence: “I think all the group enjoyed working on this piece, we sort of gelled as a result of liking it so much”. The performance process, as distinct from the learning process, contributed to positive responses: “We got to perform it in heaps of places and it was fun and it sounded really great. I’m sure the whole group will agree on this”. Individual confidence and positive attitudes contributed to the group dynamic, but were also reinforced by it:
“It’s hard to describe how good you feel when you’re performing together with people you can rely on. When you know everybody is committed, then you can commit yourself totally”.

Question 4 (Tables 30-32 asked students to gauge the level at which they found the three works “challenging” to perform:

**Table 30: A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha – survey question 4**

![Chart showing responses to survey question 4 for A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha]

**Table 31: Sanctus – survey question 4**

![Chart showing responses to survey question 4 for Sanctus]
Despite their inexperience as choristers, no members of this group indicated that they had found any of the music very challenging to perform. They were discriminating, however, in terms of gauging their responses to each work: overall, the survey results indicate that *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha* was considered the most challenging work to perform, and *Oh Happy Day!* the least challenging.

In interview, although students characteristically expressed belief that they were not stretched musically beyond their abilities, they were thoughtful about what constitutes a “challenge”. Discussion focused on specific challenging aspects of *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha*. The sopranos and altos, for example, all acknowledged that the opening harmonies had presented them with a challenge, but typically flagged their awareness that challenges are welcome if they can be met: “I sung alto for this piece and found it quite hard to sing, just because it relied so much on the singer’s knowledge of what the notes were, but practice made perfect”.

Tenors and basses focused on the rhythmic challenge posed by the chant-like sections of the work: “Fitting in the rhythm and shape with the Maori words and instrumental parts was not as easy as the other pieces, but judging by the enthusiasm and co-operation given to rehearsals and performances, I would say everyone enjoyed the challenge provided”. Others pointed out that the multi-sectioned aspect of the work added to the rhythmic challenge: “It took us time to
make sense of the rapidly changing time signatures and styles of music, but once we understood we could perform with confidence”.

The instrumentalists (three of the four had performed in Macbeth) were enthusiastic about the opportunity to work with a different type of ensemble: “It was a new experience for me to accompany a choir. It’s different because it gives you more exposure, but I found the singers were really responsive to everything that we were playing”.

Many singers focused on the challenge of memorizing a Māori text. Although all participants were familiar with some Māori vocabulary and pronunciation, there were no Māori speakers in the choir: “It’s much easier learning English words”. Overall, however, there was an appreciation that the Māori text added “intensity and strength” and “made the piece feel real and authentic”.

The students clearly expressed, in performance, surveys, and interviews, that although they were aware of some challenges, they approached those challenges with an assumption that they could be met. Some attributed their ability to meet the challenges to hard work and determination: “there’s nothing you can’t do if you work at it”. Others focused on their ability to move into a “performance state”, or “get into the zone”, as the essential factor: “As nervous as I was, I don’t think we slipped up at all, we just let the music carry us and that’s how we met the challenge”. All participants regarded challenge as part of a positive experience: “There were musical challenges at first, particularly rhythm in the middle section and pitch at the opening, but when we overcame these we felt we gained a deeper understanding of our musical ability”. The notion of “difficulty” was rarely touched in interviews, or was carefully placed in a positive context: “I felt that performing [A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha] was challenging but not in terms of difficulty, but maybe because it requires total commitment to have impact”.

I felt that all the students (and the singers in particular) had faced a very considerable challenge in undertaking this project. Although I set the text of A Song
Sung by Te Rauparaha (as outlined in the planning narrative) with considerable care in terms of voice leading and harmonic support for the singers, and chose the other repertoire with equal care, the works could nevertheless all be included in the mainstream repertoire of experienced choral groups. The students’ indifference to the difficulty of the task they faced reflects their confidence in embracing challenge.

In interviews, senior students (particularly those in Years 12 and 13) expressed awareness that insufficient challenge could be as detrimental to a positive performance experience as insurmountable difficulty: “If a teacher is going to write for students, they need to carefully consider the talent of their group and make sure the music is not too challenging or too simple – this will avoid embarrassment for the performers”. Another senior student commented that “you clearly thought about all this because [A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha] was perfectly suited to the strengths of all of us, so we could bring the notes alive”. All the students acknowledged that repertoire significantly affects attitudes to performance.

Trust in the supportive culture of the group was acknowledged as a significant factor in approaching the challenge with confidence. Junior students, most of whom began the project with limited performing experience of any kind, all attributed their ability to meet the challenge of performing the repertoire to the support offered by other members of the choir: “I couldn’t sing the music on my own, but I could do it with the boys behind me and other good singers next to me”.

Question 5 (Tables 33-36) asked the students to focus on audience response, thus encouraging them to consider the music from perspectives other than their own:
Table 33: *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha* – survey question 5

![Bar chart for A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha](image)

Table 34: *Sanctus* – survey question 5

![Bar chart for Sanctus](image)

Table 35: *Oh Happy Day!* – survey question 5

![Bar chart for Oh Happy Day!](image)
The positive audience response is evident on the DVD recording. The surveys and interviews (as was the case with music project three) revealed students’ considerable awareness of, and insight into, audience response: “It’s always clear when you finish a performance and there’s a moment of hear-a-pin-drop silence and then an appreciative response. This was the case with [A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha]”. Students connected the content of the text and its musical expression in the setting with the audience response: “[A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha] is a piece that invests its singers with a real sense of power, mana I guess, that I’m sure the audience could not help but feed into”. Some students expressed their awareness that they were communicating a story that had strong cultural connections for members of the audience: “There were a lot of Maori singers in the audience. You could feel them listening hard”.

Although the performance was for a choir, and did not involve acting or dancing (unlike the previous multi-disciplinary projects) the singers brought the dramatic awareness they had developed through previous projects into the choral context. Interview responses consistently focused on the dramatic aspect of the work, and its impact on the audience: “The piece is about communication of a story and its characters, that is meant to be delivered to people, so it’s a very effective piece to perform to people”. Junior students gave less detailed responses, but focused on similar concepts: “I think the dramatical element of the piece really drew the audience in”.

Although question 6 (Tables 36-38) asked the performers to further dissociate themselves from their personal involvement and consider the works objectively and aesthetically, survey and interview responses revealed a close correlation between students’ perception of the effectiveness of the work and their enjoyment in learning and performing it:
Several students indicated that their initial responses to repertoire are significant in determining attitudes towards any performance process: “You sort of sound it...”
out at the first practice ... is it good ... is it going to work? ... it’s embarrassing if you think it’s not good enough”. This comment, which again reflects the destructive power of self-consciousness, was picked up by others: “Yes, and you look to see what the others are thinking”. After the initial ‘sounding out’ of the repertoire, individuals commit themselves to the rehearsal process, and a group culture forms. A positive group culture imbues all the participating individuals with confidence: “When the group is committed we can do anything”.

At this stage in the interview process, students who had been involved in two or more of the projects were willing to discuss freely their attitudes to repertoire, performance processes, and participation in the music projects comprising this research. Senior students contributed to discussions which shed light on issues that had arisen in earlier surveys and interviews.

The first music project (At the Beginning of Time) combined curricular and co-curricular elements; the second (The Pied Piper) took place entirely within the curricular context. In contrast, music projects three (Macbeth) and four (A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha) took place entirely within the co-curricular context: all rehearsals took place in the evenings and weekends, in addition to the work students were undertaking within the curriculum. Despite the extra work involved, and no opportunities for that work to contribute towards assessment, the data analysis reveals considerably more positive student responses to the co-curricular projects than to work that took place within the classroom.

All these students agreed that co-curricular activities took precedence for them over work undertaken within the curriculum, and they identified several reasons for this preference. All argued that participating in a positive performance “is much more important” than concerns with assessment and amply repays the necessary time commitment.

Several aspects of classroom culture were described as militating against commitment to rehearsal. Timetabling requirements and rehearsal facilities were
identified as significant factors. Classroom periods at Macleans College are one hour in length, and are defined by the ringing of a bell: students come from a variety of other classroom contexts, and move off to other activities when the bell rings. Co-curricular rehearsals are typically between two and three hours long, and students attend solely to focus on that activity. Students stressed that they could not “get into the zone” during a one hour period. They referred to being “distracted”, “unable to concentrate”, and “always waiting for the bell to go”.

The classroom context – working in uniform rather than costume or rehearsal blacks, in a classroom rather than rehearsal space or auditorium – added to the “distraction”: “It’s just about impossible to get into a focused state when everything around you is noisy ... you can hear other classes ... you’re just in class, not really involved” and “When you put on your rehearsal gear and go into the auditorium you make a shift in your thinking and attitude. You can’t do that in class”.

The two most significant factors contributing to a positive project, however, were identified by students as the development of a positive group culture and the teacher’s involvement in the project. Students stressed that a positive group culture is much more readily created in the co-curricular context because all the students are there by choice: “It’s really frustrating when you’re working with your class and some kids just pull everything down. The great thing about the choir was that we chose to be there, so we were all committed”. Students characteristically felt “at home”, “confident”, and “relaxed” in the co-curricular context, because they could “trust” the “commitment” of all participants.

The teacher’s role was agreed by all the students to be crucial in the development of a positive group culture:

I think the biggest factor in a classroom or anything at school is usually the teacher – we pick up the teacher’s vibes. We know when teachers are committed and we know when teachers know their stuff. If the teacher picks
up negativity and deals with it straight away the group feels secure and functions well.

Throughout the survey and interview process for all the music projects I avoided asking for students’ responses to the concept of a teacher writing music for her students as such a question could appear to be soliciting support for my practice. In these final discussions at the end of music project four, however, students volunteered opinions (and some offered advice) about my practice of composing for students. All the many comments made during discussions were positive, supporting the concept of co-construction of artistic projects between teacher and students. These ranged from specific encouragement to teachers to compose for students (“I would URGE teachers to compose more works for their groups – they will always have something special there to look back to and relate to personally”) to more general comments (“I cannot comment on other schools because I don’t know what the atmosphere is like, but I think all schools should strive for the teacher/student relationship we have in performance at Macleans”).

Students consistently referred to the practice of a teacher writing for students as a “relationship issue”. Some commented specifically on my work as a composer: “I love playing works by greats such as Mozart/Brahms/Shostakovich/Messiaen … but there’s an ‘X factor’ … having a sense of relationship with the person who’s written a piece”. Relationship with the composer equated with relationship to the music: “I thought how wonderful it was to be singing a piece by our teacher, because we had a relationship with the work before we even saw the music”.

Through the teacher-composer/student relationship, students gained a sense of connection with the reality of music making. Students frequently used the word “inspiring”, for example, to express their response: “Seeing the work of someone you know makes you understand that real people can write music. I found this inspiring because most of the music we perform seems to just come from a book”. This led to increased confidence in students’ own creative processes: “I am more
involved in composition myself now because I like the feeling of being involved in making a piece of music right from the beginning”.

Most responses, however, did not distinguish between my involvement as a composer, and my involvement as a teacher or director. They focused on the process of co-constructing performance with a teacher: “It was positive and exciting being involved in the creative process. We could all work together at creating what you had envisioned”. A typical response referred to teacher and students “working together in a productive atmosphere”. Several students commented specifically that my willingness to invest time in writing music for them indicated that I trusted them: “You had the confidence in us to perform work of your own … that made me feel confident about myself”. One student expressed her opinion that “the days are gone when teachers and students do not work together”.

Students characteristically connected their positive performance experiences in these projects with learning: “Students enjoy using work composed by their teachers, and if students are enjoying what they are doing, they are learning”. All students agreed that involvement in performances (in any performing arts field) provided many of their most “meaningful”, “important”, and “memorable” experiences at school: “My experience at Macleans makes me think it is great for teachers and students to work together and do lots of performances … I have grown so much through performing”. One comment significantly drew vociferous support from all the students: “The main thing is the work we did on these projects was real”.

Reflections

My intentions as a composer-teacher, as outlined in the planning phase of this music project, can be summarized as follows:

- to evoke the mythical world of Kupe, and communicate the dramatic narrative of Te Rauparaha for the performers and listeners;
- to craft instrumental lines to challenge musically assured instrumentalists;
• to craft vocal lines to accommodate and support inexperienced singers; and
• to meet the requirements of the BIGSING Festival.

In addition, I set out to work with students with whom I had established positive prior relationships (a determining factor in the positive experience of music project three). These students had described themselves as “open to possibilities”: involvement in music project three (*Macbeth*) seemed to facilitate their rapid and significant development of skills. Such confidence could be expected to facilitate further learning.

I put this concept to the test by inviting the *Macbeth* actors to form a choir. In the new context, all the participants developed new skills with apparent ease. My intentions as a composer were realized in a committed and dynamic performance.

This project confirmed for me that significant learning takes place within the crucible of production processes and performance when participants bring confidence into that context. For these students, the committed involvement of their teacher – evident to them through both composition and direction of the performance – was a significant factor in building trust and confidence in performance. Confidence is not only the necessary foundation for such positive learning experiences, but also an important outcome. Such confidence facilitates further learning.

The students’ identification of the co-curricular context as their preferred learning environment was a significant conclusion of this project. The co-curricular environment provided these students with ideal learning conditions: supportive and committed participants worked together in appropriate conditions with adequate time free from interruption. It is important to note, however, that students choose to participate in co-curricular projects, whereas learning within the curriculum is compulsory. The students who participated in music projects three and four chose to put aside time to participate: at the outset of these projects they brought positive attitudes and a desire to be involved in performance.
Nevertheless, music projects three and four (*Macbeth* and *A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha*) demonstrate that when the skills and interests of students and teachers intersect, co-constructed rehearsal and performance processes produce a joyous context of engagement, commitment, and fulfilment that builds trust and confidence. This is a context that supports and facilitates learning.
A composer-teacher in context: Conclusions

CHAPTER EIGHT

“Large issues … are probably best advanced through attention to the so-called small details illuminated by ethnographic and ethnohistorical research”

(De Nora, 2000: ix)

I set out to examine the creative and educational processes, and outcomes, of my practice as a composer-teacher in the context of a New Zealand secondary school. To do this, I developed a research framework that incorporates creative activity (music composition) as an essential component of a systematic investigation. David Elliott’s twin challenges (2005: 12) to music teachers – to “embody and exemplify musicianship” and “to develop and match … students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” – facilitated the exploration of processes and outcomes from the points of view of both composer-teacher and students.

The research was undertaken as a case study integrating an investigation of the context (presented as a series of essays) with four action research projects. Each action research project comprises a four part progression: plan (my composition planning process); data (music score); data analysis (performance, surveys, and interviews); reflection (feedback and feedforward into the next project).

In its entirety, this study provides the reader/listener/viewer with virtual access to a particular world of performance practice – “a contextualised and contingent complex whole” (Mason, 2008: 36). In practice, teachers compose for their students, but this world of performance practice has until now been unacknowledged and unresearched.

Significant themes, issue, and patterns emerged during each phase of the research process, and each phase generated significant outcomes. This chapter summarizes the written discussions of each phase of the process and makes recommendations for future research and practice based on the revealed themes, issues, and patterns.
The thesis concludes with an evaluation of the outcomes: I have developed a practice of composing for my students – does this model of practice work, and how?

Summary of each phase of process: Research methods

Development of innovative, coherent, and flexible research processes

Research framework: I confronted the problem of designing a research framework to incorporate creative activity as an essential component of a systematic investigation. The resulting research structure (case study framework to place the creative response in context, and action research projects featuring the creative response as data) is coherent and offers the flexibility to explore data from multiple perspectives.

Background theory: Presenting the background theory as a series of essays provides an alternative to the traditional literature review and, I believe, offers a more appropriate structure for the exploration of multiple layers of interrelated context. Each essay functions as a vehicle for the exploration of trends and issues, and (where relevant) the literature surrounding them, in a way that is specifically appropriate to that layer of context. This multilayered approach accommodates my personal narrative as the composer-teacher – an important structural element in a framework designed to integrate creative activity with systematic investigation.

Integration of top-down and bottom-up research approaches: Placing the action research projects within the case study framework allowed me to grapple with the reality of my work context and explore the space I inhabit with my students. The structure of the research significantly acknowledges that individual activity is shaped by, responds to, and co-evolves with context, but that the individual also contributes to and shapes that context.

Structure of the action research projects: I adapted Lewin’s action research framework (a “spiral of steps, each of which is composed of a circle of planning, action, and fact finding about the result of the action” (1946: 36)) to accommodate creative processes and products. The model I developed reveals creative processes
in the planning phase, presents the creative products as data (the action phase), facilitates appropriate evaluation of those creative products (data analysis or fact finding stage), and provides feedback on the creative processes and feedforward into the next step of the “spiral” (reflection).

The combination of modes of data analysis provides a model for evaluation of creative products: in this study, artistic responses (provided by giving ‘voice’ to students through their performance of the creative products/music scores) are combined with verbal responses (provided through surveys and interviews).

**Research framework as a model and stimulus for further research**

**Action research incorporating artistic activity:** In practice-based disciplines such as music there is ongoing debate about the form of doctoral research (and the PhD in particular), and the inclusion of creative processes and contribution of artistic activity to research (Phillips & Pugh, 2000: 205). My research provides a model for the inclusion of creative processes and products within the systematic PhD investigation required by many (although not all) tertiary institutions.

The action research model is appropriate for, and may provide a stimulus for, the incorporation of forms of creative activity other than music into the research process. The model can be used within the educational context, or adapted for use in other contexts.

Within the educational context, the model facilitates the development of both artistic and teaching skills, and provides a process for evaluating the outcomes of the artist-teacher’s practice. It is common practice in New Zealand secondary schools, for example, for drama teachers to write plays for (or devise plays with) their drama students. Playwright-teachers could use this research model to explore and reveal their practice, either within the case study framework or independently of it.

The model in its entirety may be too rigorous and time-consuming to be incorporated into ongoing reflective practice by teachers. Some of the processes
demonstrated in the research can be adapted, however, to support teachers’ ongoing reflection and facilitate subsequent improvement of practice. The surveys (designed for rapid student completion on a Likert scale that allows for positive, negative, and neutral responses), further examined by means of interviews (online or face-to-face) with students, can provide an easily implemented mechanism for listening to student voice.

**Case study framework incorporating action research projects:** The model can be applied to research the work of any individual within a complex system. Such studies will provide insight into:

- the context;
- the activity of individuals; and
- the ways in which context shapes the activity of individuals and is shaped by it.

Such studies can be expected to capture and convey the essence of context and experience in a way that broader *top-down* studies cannot.

Clusters of such individual studies, however, may provide data for (and thus contribute to) broader studies of complex systems (educational or otherwise) on a local, national, or international basis. My study of a composer-teacher’s work in the context of a New Zealand secondary school, for example, provides a stimulus for other composer-teachers to explore and reveal their practice. A cluster of such studies may provide valuable data for broader studies of the work of composer-teachers in New Zealand secondary schools, secondary schools internationally, and/or other educational contexts such as primary or tertiary institutions.

**Background theory: Exploration of multiple layers of context**

The five essays comprising the background theory of this research combine to capture and convey the essence of the context within which one composer-teacher undertook four music projects with her students (Macleans College, Auckland, New Zealand). The essays provide both a coherent account of complex, interrelated aspects of the context, and a record of the responses of one individual at a specific
time (2006 and 2007). This context has shaped the perceptions of all the research participants.

In exploring and defining each layer of context and the literature surrounding it, each essay identifies relevant trends and issues, and discusses them in the wider context of national and international thought.

**Essay One: Philosophical context – a praxial philosophy of music education**

**Summary:** This essay places praxial approaches to music education within the wider context of music education philosophy in New Zealand and internationally. The following concepts, trends, and issues are identified and discussed:

- The word ‘praxial’ is based on ancient antecedents, but has been adopted into music education philosophy in the late twentieth century;
- Praxial approaches to music education assume that music is a form of procedural knowledge and that learning to ‘know’ music cannot be separated from learning to ‘do’ music;
- Praxial approaches to music education fit into the broader educational theory of constructivism which has shaped curriculum development in New Zealand since 1993;
- Although praxial concepts are embedded within specific music education programmes developed throughout the twentieth century in New Zealand and internationally, the term ‘praxial’ indicates a broad philosophy rather than a specific instrumental or vocal training programme;
- David Elliott's *Music Matters* is identified as the most fully developed and influential expression of praxial philosophy in music education;
- Elliott’s praxial philosophy can be seen to have developed as a challenge to the prevailing aesthetic music education model evident internationally from the 1950s to the 1980s. The aesthetic music education model formed the basis of New Zealand’s secondary school music syllabi from 1946 to 1993;
- Although praxial approaches to music teaching seem to suggest that music making and music teaching are not separate currency, the praxial literature
reveals some negativity towards music teachers who identify themselves as ‘musicians’ (however that may be defined) rather than teachers;

• The literature pays little attention to the musical lives of teachers, and has not addressed the implications of teachers composing for their students;

• the literature associated with praxial approaches has been produced by theoreticians rather than practitioners;

• The vision of the music teacher as both musician and teacher is not accepted without question either in performance based tertiary institutions or music education institutions; and

• As a result, the musical microcosm of the school – affirmed in praxial theory and existing in practice – seems to be denied validity as a realm of authentic music making by those employed to teach and research both music and music education in universities.

Reflections and recommendations for future research: Three significant themes that call for future research emerge from Essay One:

1. Essay One reveals that although praxis consists of “action and reflection on the tangible results of that action” (Regelski, 2004: 11), praxial music education literature is dominated by contributions from theoreticians and pre-service music teacher educators. Regelski (2004: 11) defines musical praxis as music making arising in specific “social or cultural” worlds as a “form of reciprocal interaction with that world”: this definition calls for studies of the work of individual teachers and their students that convey the essence of praxial philosophy in specific contexts. My research provides such a perspective, and supplies a model and stimulus for other individual practitioners to contribute to the literature.

2. Praxial approaches to music education (embedded within the currently prevailing constructivist approach to curriculum development in New Zealand) have shaped the practice of New Zealand music teachers since the mid 1990s. Clusters of individual studies may provide data for (and thus
contribute to) broader studies of the outcomes of this major shift in theory and practice. Longitudinal studies should be undertaken as they may reveal unintended, unexpected, or perverse outcomes of the shifts that have occurred. It is important that all aspects of such a major shift should be questioned and put to the test.

3. Essay One reveals a significant tension between those who perceive themselves to be music educators first and musicians second, and those music teachers who affirm a strong sense of identity as ‘musician’. Such tension is revealed in the suspicion expressed by some music educators about the attitudes and teaching methods of those they regard as primarily musicians, and probably explains the lack of research into the musical lives of teachers. The suspicions are shown in Essay One to be based on assertion and opinion rather than evidence. I have undertaken my research from the dual perspective of musician-teacher. Further bottom-up studies may contribute to broader studies of the outcomes of the different perspectives in practice. It is important that such research is undertaken, because the skills, knowledge, and perspectives of teachers are known to impact strongly on students’ learning. The decisions that underpin the selection of pre-service teachers and the way they are trained should be made in response to research-based evidence, rather than unsupported assertion and untested theory.

**Essay Two: Curricular context**

**Summary:** This essay outlines the fundamental curricular change that has been effected within the New Zealand education system over the course of the last fifteen years. The following concepts, trends, and issues are identified and discussed:

- Historically, what was taught in New Zealand secondary schools was determined by examination syllabi and prescriptions;
marked a fundamental change from a content-focused, syllabus-type approach to a constructivist focus on ‘outcomes’;

• Although constructivism is the prevailing educational theoretical perspective in New Zealand, it is subject to criticism both nationally and internationally;

• The release of *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (MOE, 2000) brought dance, drama, music, and visual arts under a single banner as “The Arts”, and many secondary schools have created faculties of performing arts encompassing the disciplines of dance, drama, and music;

• The National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) was introduced in 2002, and represents a major change from a norm referenced to a standards based form of assessment;

• The implementation of NCEA has been marked by prolonged and vigorous criticism from many community sectors;

• Under the NCEA system of assessment, each discipline is divided up into sets of achievement standards and/or unit standards;

• The release of *The New Zealand Curriculum* (MOE, 2007) confirmed the place of the arts as one the eight learning areas, and the status of music as one of four arts disciplines; and

• The major change signalled by the release of *The New Zealand Curriculum* (MOE, 2007) is a new emphasis on the social outcomes of education.

**Reflections and recommendations for future research:** Essay Two reveals a fundamental shift towards a constructivist approach to teaching and learning, underpinned by *The New Zealand Curriculum* (MOE: 2007), and embodied in a newly created, standards based assessment system.

Broad assessment of the outcomes of these changes is currently being funded by the Ministry of Education. It is crucial, however, that all aspects of any shift should be questioned and put to the test by independent researchers (dependence on ministry funding puts pressure on contracted researchers and can bring their true independence into question). All educators should be aware that shifts in practice
may produce significant unintended, unexpected, and possibly unwelcome outcomes.

Clusters of individual studies may provide data for (and thus contribute to) broader studies of the outcomes of this fundamental shift in theory and practice.

**Essay Three: Co-curricular context**

**Summary:** This essay identifies co-curricular activity as a distinctive aspect of the New Zealand education system. The following concepts, trends, and issues are identified and discussed:

- The adoption of the word *co-curricular* (replacing the older term *extra-curricular*) by many schools signals the value placed in New Zealand on school activities that take place outside the curricular programme of classroom teaching and learning;
- Evidence of the importance New Zealanders place on co-curricular activities is provided in the emphasis on such activities in Education Review Office reports, the American Field Scholarship website, recent PPTA industrial action, advertisements for teaching positions in the *New Zealand Education Gazette*, and on the websites of individual schools;
- Teachers are deeply involved in schools’ co-curricular programmes;
- Co-curricular performing arts festivals (based on competitive sporting models) are a significant feature of current practice in New Zealand; and
- No research has been undertaken to examine the roots or the outcomes of this distinctive element of our school culture.

**Reflections and recommendations for future research:** Essay Three draws attention to the lack of research into a distinctive and valued aspect of the New Zealand education system. Three themes that call for future research emerge from this essay:
1. Despite the considerable emphasis placed on co-curricular activities in New Zealand schools, no research has been undertaken to examine the outcomes of this practice. This is significant, because research feeds into national policy making processes. Initiatives and strategies developed within the Ministry of Education (such as Schools Plus, designed in 2008 with the stated intention of transforming the New Zealand education system) are based on research (whether undertaken in genuine independence of the ministry, or not). Such initiatives and strategies may impact on the ability of schools to create and implement co-curricular programmes: Schools Plus, developed – in the absence of relevant research – with no reference to co-curricular activity, may have a significantly negative impact on schools’ co-curricular programmes. My research draws attention to the strengths of co-curricular practice, and may feed into much needed broad research into this distinctive aspect of New Zealand educational practice and culture.

2. Teachers (and performing arts teachers in particular) are deeply involved in schools’ co-curricular programmes. Research could usefully be undertaken into the time and energy teachers commit to these activities, and how (or if) such commitment is reflected in schools’ structures, policies, and decision making.

3. Co-curricular performing arts festivals form the focal points for co-curricular programmes in New Zealand secondary schools. These festivals (three of which are outlined in Essay Three: 67-70) are based on the competitive model of sporting activities. It is not the purpose of my research to contribute to debate about positive or negative aspects or outcomes of competitive interschool cultural festivals, but research into co-curricular programmes in New Zealand schools could usefully do so.

**Essay Four: Specific context**

**Summary:** This research was undertaken in response to the specific context in which it was undertaken – Macleans College. The various Education Acts of the early 1990s
(established under the label of *Tomorrow’s Schools*) decentralized the education system in New Zealand, giving schools responsibility for most aspects of school management. As a result, each school develops its own distinctive culture and identity. This is significant because schools account for approximately 10% to 20% of variance in student achievement. Essay Four identifies and discusses the following distinctive aspects of Macleans College:

- Macleans College is a large, co-educational, multi-cultural, decile 10, secondary school in Auckland, New Zealand;
- The school’s claims of academic strength, extensive co-curricular programmes, and a clearly articulated values system, are supported by the Educational Review Office’s data;
- The ‘whānau house’ structure is identified as contributing significantly to the positive spirit of the school;
- The co-curricular programmes are extensive and reflect the school’s ethnic diversity;
- Music was established within the school in its inaugural year (1980); and

**Reflections and recommendations for future research:** I have identified in this essay the aspects of the school that have influenced my work within it. These aspects include the physical structures of the school, the school’s systems, procedures, and curriculum, and the population (students and teachers) within the school.

This essay draws attention to the extent and speed with which the implementation of *Tomorrow’s Schools* has decentralized New Zealand’s education system. Although broad assessment of the outcomes of these changes is currently being funded by the Ministry of Education, individual *bottom-up* studies can explore the quintessential reality of teaching and learning within a self-managing school in a way that *top-down* studies cannot (acknowledging, however, that such studies will reflect the personal, cultural, and theoretical predispositions of participant-researchers). Such studies...
should provide data for (and thus contribute to) broader studies of the outcomes of the decentralization process. It is essential that such wide-ranging and fundamental changes should continue to be researched from a variety of perspectives.

**Essay Five: Personal narrative**

**Summary:** This essay brings the background theory to its narrowest focus – the point where I have interacted with specific students at specific times in the creation of four music projects. The essay is important in the context of a study undertaken by a participant-researcher, as personal perspectives should not be concealed, but recognized and employed to reveal truths which may not be accessed by other research methods. Essay Five reveals my skills, interests, artistic training and experience, perspectives, and motivations as follows:

- My musical training developed in the Western European classical tradition;
- I trained as a musician before undertaking one year of teacher training;
- The musical background of many of the students who participated in the projects mirrors my own;
- The music projects have taken place within a faculty that espouses a praxial philosophy, and they represent “reciprocal interaction” (Regelski (2004: 11) with specific groups of students;
- The music projects represent only one facet of a multidimensional, multilayered, and multifaceted (Elliott, 2005: 7) secondary school performing arts programme;
- My artistic interest in literature, drama, and dance has contributed significantly to the development of the music projects;
- Since I began teaching in 1989, my practice has fundamentally changed, reflecting the constructivist shift in education in New Zealand, and strongly influenced by praxial music education literature, in particular the publication of David Elliott’s *Music Matters* in 1995;
- I have set out to place myself together with my students on a learning continuum rather than placing a divide between myself as teacher and my students as learners;
• In practice, students and teachers within this context work actively together as performing artists; and
• Although I have committed myself to this practice in the belief that I was supporting the learning of my students, I acknowledge that my practice is based on my own personal constructs and reality, and may not reflect the reality experienced by my students.

Reflections and recommendations for future research: This essay concludes the background theory of my research, and brings me to the point where I confront the suggestion that my practice as a composer-teacher could be focused on my own musical development at the expense of my students. The subsequent four music projects explore my practice from the points of view of all the participants.

Three significant themes that call for future research emerge from Essay Five:

1. Essay Five describes changes in one music teacher’s motivations, teacher identity, and teaching practice over a period of 18 years, thus providing, in Regelsi’s words (2007: 33), “useful insights about the development of identity and its influence on teaching practice”. Studies undertaken from the perspectives of individual practitioners can provide virtual access to particular worlds of performance practice in the way that broader top-down studies cannot. Clusters of such studies may contribute to broader research into the formation of teacher identity and its impact on teaching and learning in schools.

2. Essay Five reveals that I trained first as a musician, and then as a teacher, and that I retain a strong sense of identification as a musician. Essay One reveals concerns expressed by some music educators about the attitudes and teaching methods of those who regard themselves as either primarily musicians, or as musicians who teach. Without further research, assertions about the effects in practice of the work of teachers who identify strongly as musicians remain broad and unsubstantiated claims. I have set out to
contribute to this debate by acknowledging such concerns and confronting the implications of my practice by putting it to the test. The impact of teachers with varying musical backgrounds and perspectives can be expected to be particularly significant in the context of a decentralized education system such as New Zealand’s, in which each school develops and implements its own curriculum. A comparative study of the outcomes of music teaching and learning as implemented in New Zealand by music teachers with widely differing perspectives would be very revealing. Individual studies such as mine could contribute to a comparative study.

3. This essay also raises the issue of disparity between the musical identities of teachers and those of their students. The musical identities of most of my students, unlike my own, have been shaped by the commercial music industry. Research into the musical identities of teachers and those of their students, and the impact of possible disparities, could usefully be undertaken.

Action research music projects
Each action research music project took place as a four-phase process: plan; data; data analysis; reflection. Each phase of this process generated significant outcomes.

1. The planning phase of each project, comprising a detailed narrative identifying the compositional ‘drivers’ and describing the compositional process, may provide guidance and motivation for other composers confronting the issues involved in writing for specific groups of musicians.

2. The data, comprising four original music scores, are significant in themselves. Two of the works have been performed successfully by other groups, each piece leaving its composer and the context in which it was originally produced and taking on a “life of its own” (Tippett, 1974; cited by Swanwick, 1979: 2). One student has used The Pied Piper as the basis of one of her university dance assignments. As Regelski observes (2005: 22), “Music appreciated is music used!”
3. The data analysis is significant in including students’ musical as well as verbal responses. The combination of recorded performances, and survey and interview responses, combine to capture and convey ‘student voice’ – the experience of groups of students involved in artistic processes and performance.

4. The reflection phase of each project draws together the perspectives of both composer-teacher and students.

**Music project one – At the Beginning of Time: Summary of process**

I briefly summarize each project individually, before identifying the most significant patterns to emerge from the action research projects, and evaluating the outcomes of the model of practice as a whole:

**Plan:**

- The score was written in response to a request from an established group of percussionists who wanted a piece to perform in a co-curricular festival, and curricular assessment opportunities for two of the participants;
- I took the opportunity to write a six minute piece for percussion (a new venture for me) and to introduce a dramatic element into the score;
- The score incorporated a narrative, notated as pitchless sprechtstimme, about the creation of Ranginui (the sky) out of Te Kore (the nothingness); and
- The score included some stage directions, encouraging students to engage with the dramatic nature of the work.

**Data:**

- *At the Beginning of Time* – the score of a narrative work for percussion and voice.

**Data analysis:**

- A DVD provides a record of a performance of the work by the students for whom it was composed;
• Students were comparatively positive about learning the work, but comparatively negative about performing it;
• Both the social aspect of the rehearsal process and the opportunity to gain assessment results were identified as important to students; and
• Most of the students responded negatively (with some embarrassment evident on the DVD recording and registered in survey and interview responses) to the dramatic aspect of the work.

Reflection:
• The data analysis revealed a considerable gap between my intentions (and expectations) as a composer-teacher and the responses of the students;
• As a composer, I was pleased with the first two sections of this three section work, but I subsequently re-worked the third section;
• The work matched the technical abilities of each student and met their assessment needs; and
• The students met the technical challenge of the work, but the challenge of communicating the story effectively through movement as well as music required too great a shift in understanding.

The data analysis called me to examine my assumptions: I had required the musicians to communicate ‘dramatically’ without considering their lack of prior experience. I wanted to further explore composing for students in an inter-disciplinary context, but also needed to acknowledge that musicians may prefer their involvement to be solely musical. I chose to write a dance work for the next project, addressing the issues revealed in music project one by writing for, and working with:
• dancers whose prior learning would provide the scaffold for embodying narrative; and
• musicians who would be expected to express characterization musically rather than physically.
**Music project two – The Pied Piper: Summary of process**

**Plan:**
- The project was designed as an inter-disciplinary curricular, rather than co-curricular, opportunity for three dance classes and a specific group of wind players and percussionists;
- The selection of the *Pied Piper* story was suggested by its suitability for division into discrete sections for the dance classes, its resonance as an ancient moral tale, and its appropriateness for the choice of instruments;
- Structuring the work, conveying characterization, relationships, and mood, and providing support for the dancers’ movement, all formed major foci of the composition process; and
- Each dance was designed to provide interesting, idiomatic, engaging, and technically appropriate lines for each player, as well as exploring contrasting forms and styles;

**Data:**
- *The Pied Piper* – a narrative dance work for wind, percussion, and piano.

**Data analysis:**
- A CD provides a record of the performance of the music. No DVD of the dance performance was produced because of a malfunction in the video equipment during the performance;
- The responses of the four groups involved (instrumentalists, Year 12 dancers, Year 11 dancers, and Year 10 dancers) were clearly differentiated, with the musicians responding most positively and the Year 10 dancers registering very negative responses;
- A clear division was revealed between the generally positive responses of ballet and contemporary trained dancers, as opposed to comparatively negative responses from jazz and hip-hop trained dancers;
- Junior students identified closely with the roles they undertook;
- The concept of “challenge” was interpreted in varying ways; and
• Positive responses related closely to the level of responsibility ('ownership') undertaken by the students: Year 10 dance students, accorded the least responsibility, recorded comparatively negative responses.

Reflection:
• The data analysis again revealed a considerable gap between my intentions as a composer-teacher and the responses of many of the students;
• As a composer, I was delighted with the work: the narrative and characterization were effectively captured in the music, and the music facilitated the choreography;
• The instrumentalists were positive about the music, and the assessment opportunities provided for them;
• The project revealed a pre-existing sense of division within, and between, the dance classes and strong, negative peer pressure in the Year 10 class in particular; and
• Although the division of the narrative into discrete sections facilitated the rehearsal process, the result was a learning experience which was not genuinely inter-disciplinary because each group rehearsed separately until the final rehearsal.

The project prompted me to develop a performing arts faculty policy of listening to student voice in order to improve teaching and learning practice: the students had been aware of the divided culture in their classes in a way that I, as Head of Faculty, was not.

I had chosen to write a dance work believing that the prior learning of the dancers would provide the scaffold for embodying narrative, and that the musicians would be encouraged to express characterization musically. The negativity expressed by the dancers was a new experience for me as a composer-teacher. I reflected that:
• I had either been previously unaware of negative student reaction; or
• The practice of writing music for students whom I taught (as had been my usual practice) could produce different outcomes from writing for students
with whom I had no prior relationship (as was the case with the *Pied Piper* dancers).

I chose to make a further attempt to combine musical and dramatic elements in a context appropriate for all the performers, while addressing the issues revealed in music project two by writing for, and working with:

- Students with whom I had previously worked; and
- In a co-curricular context to enable the development of a genuinely inter-disciplinary production process.

**Music project three – Macbeth: Summary of process**

**Plan:**

- The score was written in response to a co-curricular ‘driver’: the Sheilah Winn Festival of Shakespeare in Schools;
- The composition process involved creating a production concept and editing Shakespeare’s script into a libretto, as well as combining music with text to communicate an interpretation of theme, action, and character economically and effectively; and
- I set out to provide a challenge in ensemble performance for both instrumentalists and actors.

**Data:**

- *Macbeth* – a drama for actors and instrumentalists.

**Data analysis:**

Significantly different themes from music projects one and two emerged from this music project:

- A DVD provides a record of a dynamic and committed performance;
- A positive performing experience was seen by students as more important to them than either assessment or the social aspect of the rehearsal process;
- Students were analytical with regard to the quality of the music and performance concept;
All participants approached this project with a sense of trust in the work itself, in the rehearsal environment, and all the other participants; and
The confidence and commitment evident in the performance reflected the positive nature of the rehearsal process.

Reflection:
My intentions as a composer were realized;
The rehearsal process and performance communicated a joyous sense of engagement, commitment, and fulfilment that was not evident in music projects one and two;
In music projects one and two, some students’ lack of trust, confidence, and engagement significantly affected the quality of the learning experience;
Trust and confidence in music project three led to engagement, motivation, and significant achievement; and
Music project three confirmed that embodying musicianship through such music projects can provide intensely positive learning experiences for both composer-teacher and students.

I had chosen to direct this project myself, and work with students whom I had previously taught. The positive culture evident in this project was not developed solely in this context, but had been built through prior production processes and performances. The participants in the Macbeth project were “open to possibilities”, developed new skills quickly and easily, and significant learning took place in the crucible of the production processes and performance. Confidence could be seen as both the foundation for the experience and an important outcome.

In order to test whether such confidence facilitates further learning in a different context, I chose to write a choral work for the actors, most of whom had no choral experience. The new choristers would perform in the annual BIGSING Festival.
Music project four – A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha: Summary of process

Plan:

- The score was written in response to a co-curricular ‘driver’: the New Zealand Choral Federation’s annual BIGSING Festival;
- I chose an invocatory hymn to Kupe, popularly supposed to have been sung by the war chief Te Rauparaha, as a text to set for the choristers and instrumentalists;
- I conceived the work as a dramatic narrative to evoke the world of Kupe and Te Rauparaha;
- I crafted the instrumental lines to provide appropriate levels of technical challenge for the musically assured instrumentalists, and vocal lines to both support and challenge inexperienced singers; and
- The work was designed to complement two other works prepared and performed by the choir: Fauré’s Sanctus, and an arrangement of Oh Happy Day!

Data:

- A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha – a choral work with piano, violin, and percussion accompaniment.

Data analysis:

Similar themes to music project three (Macbeth) emerged from this project:
- A DVD provides a record of a dynamic and committed performance;
- A positive performance experience was seen by this group of students as “real” learning, and more important to them than a focus on assessment;
- Students approached challenges with an assumption that they could be met;
- Confidence and commitment evident in the performance was expressed in terms of “enjoyment” in the surveys and interviews;
- All participants approached this project with a sense of trust based on their perception of the work’s quality, and their trust in all the participants, including the teacher;
• The teacher’s role was agreed by all students to be crucial in the development of a positive group culture; and
• The students identified the co-curricular environment, rather than the classroom, as their work context of choice, because positive group culture is more readily created when students participate by choice, and the rehearsal process is unaffected by distractions and time restrictions.

Reflection:
• My intentions as a composer were realized;
• The students involved in music project three (Macbeth) had described themselves as “open to possibilities” – their confidence was carried over into the process of forming a choir and learning choral skills;
• Confidence and a positive learning environment facilitated rapid and significant development of skills;
• Confidence is not only the necessary foundation for positive learning experiences, but also an important outcome as it facilitates further learning; and
• The students’ identification of the co-curricular context as their preferred learning environment was significant: this learning context is characterized by supportive and committed participants working together by choice in appropriate conditions with adequate time free from interruption.

Action research music projects: Emerging patterns
The action research projects provide the first comprehensive study of a composer-teacher working in a secondary school context. David Elliott’s challenges (2005: 12) to music teachers – to “embody and exemplify musicianship” and “to develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” – provided twin lenses to explore the processes and outcomes from the points of view of both composer-teacher and students. Each action research project (summarized above) revealed or prompted specific significant outcomes.
In their entirety, the music projects reveal significant patterns. From the compositional perspective, the four projects represent an embodiment of praxial philosophy. This is most evident in the narratives that explore the ways in which the music was crafted. The compositional processes, shaped by my close association with the performers, were marked by direct connection with specific ‘musicers’ within a specific community, reflecting David Elliott’s definition of praxis (1995: 175) as “action that is embedded in, responsive to, and reflective of, a specific context of effort”.

My increasing interest in inter-disciplinary composition (music combined with drama and dance), can be seen as a response to a new curricular context: drama and dance joining music in the performing arts faculty at Macleans College. Prior to beginning this research, my compositions comprised choral and instrumental works. I will continue to use the pitchless sprechstimme I developed for music projects one and three (At the Beginning of Time and Macbeth) in music-drama contexts, and I have gained the confidence to write for dance groups. My compositional skills developed significantly through the action research process, in particular my control of timbre and texture when working with wind and percussion instruments.

From a teaching perspective, my practice changed as a result of undertaking the action research projects. The shift took place after the completion of music project two (The Pied Piper) when the project revealed dysfunctional relationships and practices within the faculty of which I, the Head of Faculty, had been unaware. The decision to use brief surveys and set up interview processes as a mechanism for listening to student voice was made as a direct result of this research. This illustrates the way in which action research ‘sparks’ teacher learning and thus supports student learning.

Two significant and related patterns emerge from the teaching and learning perspective: the strong positive correlation between students’ confidence and their ability to develop new skills, and the emergence of positive performance
experiences as more important to students than two other significant secondary school foci – social concerns and assessment.

Music project two (The Pied Piper) revealed the extent to which peer-group culture can influence group learning. In the context of some specific classes, students within the culture responded to peer pressure, and were dominated by it. Peer pressure was the dominating group factor, embarrassment the clearly evident emotional response. Self-protection mechanisms prevented students from learning.

In contrast, music projects three and four demonstrate a group of students learning as an effective unit. The projects provided a context which facilitated the development of confidence and provided evidence of consequent positive learning experiences and the rapid development of new skills. The data analysis revealed the most significant factor associated with the development of a positive learning context to be the committed involvement of a teacher.

My contribution to music projects one and two comprised composing for students with whom I had little prior relationship, and the rehearsal process and performances were undertaken by the students, independently of me, and with minimal teacher supervision or input. I wrote the music for projects three and four for students I had taught myself, and the students and I then co-constructed the performances together. I was involved throughout the rehearsal and performance process. My contribution as a composer was significant (various groups of students were provided with music that matched their needs and skills) but my presence during the production processes was the major contributing factor to the positive learning experience evident in these music projects.

In the absence of a strong and positive teacher presence, students were constrained by their vulnerability to inhibiting social pressures as they sought acceptance from their peers. Students involved in music projects three and four registered their relief at freedom from peer pressure which in projects one and two revealed itself as insecurity and embarrassment. Learning about the development of group culture
through experiencing it can be, in itself, a valuable learning experience, but music projects one and two show that this context is less likely to facilitate the building of confidence and, as a result, is less likely to support the development of skills.

The factors associated with the development of confidence were revealed and identified as follows:

- Confidence develops in collaborative learning contexts in which students work together with a committed teacher, trust the quality and meaningfulness of the work, and trust all the participants;
- Confidence is built, and skills develop strongly, within the crucible of production processes and performance if all the participants trust in the work and each other;
- As confidence increases, concerns with peer-related issues decrease, and learning outcomes are improved;
- Although development of confidence can be inhibited if major leaps in learning are required without prior learning to provide a scaffold, trust and positive relationships contribute more significantly to development of confidence than prior learning;
- Lack of confidence may be expressed in a variety of ways: the Year 10 dancers’ strong negative identification with their roles as rats in music project two, for example, revealed their lack of confidence;
- Confidence supports students to engage proactively in learning experiences – willingness to take ‘ownership’ of the work indicates increasing confidence, and impacts positively on achievement;
- Confidence is not only the necessary foundation for positive learning experiences, but also an important outcome – confidence facilitates further learning; and
- Confidence enables students of all levels of experience and ability to develop significant skills with apparent ease.
Confidence was revealed in differing attitudes towards the concept of “challenge”. Students involved in music project one (At the Beginning of Time for percussion and voice), for example, revealed an awareness of stylistic challenge when they described the work as “weird”. The stylistic challenge created a barrier to their learning, and although the students were able to meet the technical challenge of the work, its communicative potential was not explored in performance. In the interview processes associated with the subsequent three projects, the word “challenge” provoked considerable debate: the word was seen by many students as a euphemism for “difficult work” whereas confident students were able to engage with the notion of “challenge” as a positive concept.

Students participating in music projects one and two were preoccupied with social concerns, and concerns with assessment results. The social concerns were expressed in both positive ways (“it was fun because we had pizza at rehearsals” (Chapter Four: 104)) and negative ways (“any ballet, modern or lyrical dance forms ... get met with a snicker from a certain group of girls” (Chapter Five: 133)). Both music projects one and two provided assessment opportunities, and all the students involved reflected with satisfaction that they had gained merit or excellence in the respective NCEA achievement standards. Music projects three and four, however, showed a shift of student focus from either social concerns or assessment to the rehearsal and performance processes. The rehearsal and performance processes then provided a context in which the students developed new skills with apparent ease.

It is highly significant that the co-curricular environment – a distinctive feature of the New Zealand secondary school context – was revealed as the context that best supported students’ learning. The distinguishing factors in the co-curricular environment were identified as:

- Freedom from distractions characteristic of the curricular environment, such as bells ringing, noise from adjoining classrooms, and time restrictions; and
• A positive group culture readily created because the students participate by choice.

In an atmosphere of trust, free from self-consciousness and distractions, students entered into the focused state that signifies readiness for learning. Music projects three and four demonstrate the sheer exuberance of learning experiences occurring in this context.

**Evaluation of outcomes: A model of co-constructive practice**

*"The main thing is that the work we did on these projects was real"*

*(Student, Macleans College, Chapter Seven: 208)*

I set out to examine the creative and educational processes, and outcomes, of a composer-teacher’s practice. This is significant because no research has previously been undertaken to explore the work of composer-teachers within the school context, or examine the impact of their practice on students. The data analysis gave voice to all the participants in order to deepen understanding of the processes and outcomes, rather than to reveal incontrovertible facts. Each phase of the process, as summarized above, generated significant outcomes, such as the development of an investigative research framework that incorporates creative processes, and the four original music scores that resulted from the creative processes.

In undertaking this research, I confronted the suggestion that my model of practice could constitute *strategic action* rather than *communicative action*. Regelski (2007: 19; cited in Chapter One: 3) describes ‘strategic action’ mainly in terms of teachers’ motivation rather than outcomes: strategic action in a music education context is “success-oriented and can be highly manipulative”. He warns (2007: 30) against music teachers assuming that “the ‘function’ of music education” is to create “the autonomous world of school music” because they risk creating a “sense of ‘disconnect’ between school music and ‘real’ music making”. These may be teachers (2007: 28) “whose focus is more singularly on music than on teaching it and, thus,
whose main interest is in fulfilling their own musical needs”. Such teachers “favour the identity axis of musician”, and may use inappropriate teaching methods (“rote teaching ... autocratic methods, and the like”) to achieve what he perceives to be their aim of aspiring to “professional performance standards” (2007: 30-31; cited in Chapter Three: 41). He questions whether “just performing music is inevitably educational” (2007: 26).

My four action research music projects took place in a complex context, and are presented as one facet of one school’s multidimensional, multilayered, and multifaceted performing arts programme (Elliott, 2005: 7). Even when the projects are considered within this broad context, however, the practice presented and investigated in this research reflects many of the concerns expressed by Regelski. The research was undertaken by a teacher who favours the “identity axis of musician”, who is interested in “fulfilling [her] own musical needs”, and the projects created four artistic worlds within what Regelski might describe as an “autonomous world of school music”. The emphasis of the projects was the preparation and performance of music.

This thesis presents a positive model of co-constructive practice that challenges Regelski’s assertions. The composition, rehearsal, and performance processes of the four music projects were viewed through twin lenses provided by David Elliott’s challenges. The challenge to “embody and exemplify musicianship” provided the lens to examine the processes from a composer’s perspective while the challenge to “develop and match ... students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges (Elliott, 2005: 12) provided a teaching and learning perspective. The projects themselves brought the two perspectives into focus, and a model emerged of teachers and students co-constructing artistic worlds through performance.

The co-constructive model comprises teachers and students creating artistic worlds together within the microcosm of the school. The co-constructive model is not new – it is common practice, instinctively undertaken by generations of musician-teachers. This research, however, demonstrates the validity of the practice from
both musical and teaching and learning perspectives, and examines the strengths and limitations of the model. The model of practice is shown to be positive because it accommodates the artistic energy and creative drive of all the participants – teacher(s) and students.

The strengths of the co-constructive model are most clearly evident in the data analysis (recordings, and survey and interview responses) of music projects three and four. A simple truth lies at the heart of the joyous learning experiences revealed in these music projects: the rehearsal and performance processes provided a “real” artistic experience for all the participants. The process of co-construction involved teacher and students working together as ‘musicers’; the learning process was genuine in that it had no pre-determined end; the process demanded investment and commitment from both teacher and students. The microcosm of the school was experienced as a valid, rather than “autonomous”, context for authentic artistic experience.

The students’ description of their experience as “real” brings into question Regelski’s assertion that creating musical worlds in a school can create a “sense of ‘disconnect’ between school music and ‘real’ music making”. The distinction Regelski draws between “real” music making and music making in a school context is an artificial one, and belies Regelski’s own notion (2004: 11) of the “situatedness” of praxis. This thesis demonstrates the participants creating artistic worlds in response to context, rather than striving to ape professional standards of performance as suggested by Regelski (2007: 31). The music making examined in this research is as “real” as music making in any other context.

The musician-teacher’s active involvement and commitment is central to the co-constructive model. David Elliott (2005: 12) challenges the music teacher to “embody and exemplify musicianship”. This research demonstrates that modelling artistic engagement in the school context is an effective teaching strategy, but the most significant engagement with the students in this research involved the teacher’s work as producer of the performances, rather than her contribution as
composer. The data analyses reveal that the compositions were significant to the processes because they developed and matched “students’ musicianship with appropriate musical challenges” (Elliott, 2005: 12), but it is evident that students’ musical needs can be met in a variety of other ways. The music score that comprises the data for music project four (A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha), for example, was performed with two other works by other composers which also provided appropriate musical challenges for the students. The involvement of the teacher is crucial, but the nature of the involvement is not.

The model of co-constructive practice is shown by this research to have significant strengths and some limitations. Music projects three and four in particular provided a context for students to engage in the creative, expressive, communicative, and transformative experiences that characterize the arts. These experiences were at times powerfully intense (as the performance of Macbeth – music project four – turned out to be), but also provided the context for more relaxed music making (such as the informal singing around a guitar that took place in the auditorium foyer during Macbeth rehearsal breaks).

Through these experiences (as revealed in the detailed accounts of the music projects provided in Chapters Six and Seven: 146-210) students explored a range of values, gained motivation and confidence, learned to participate and contribute, learned to think creatively and critically, learned to manage their own behaviour, and to relate to others – educational outcomes specified by The New Zealand Curriculum (MOE, 2007: 10-12). The data analyses reveal that the projects did not involve either rote learning or autocratic teaching methods, and students were not primarily learning so-called ‘professional’ musical skills, although these music projects supported such development and some of the students will pursue careers in their various artistic fields. Students experienced rich learning in the context of co-constructing music performances with their teacher.

Music projects three and four revealed that creative processes co-constructed by a teacher with her students can provide a crucible within which intense and positive
learning experiences occur. Music projects one and two, however, revealed the delicacy and complexity of the processes. A decision to use surveys and interviews as a mechanism for listening to student voice was made in the faculty as a consequence of this research (Chapter Five: 145). This practice is strongly recommended as a means of ensuring that students’ positive and negative experiences are registered and used to inform decision making within the school context.

Although music projects one and two were less positive learning experiences for many of the participants because the work took place in conditions different from those outlined above, the co-constructive model still demonstrated significant strengths:

- The projects widened the musical horizons of some students whose musical identities have been formed almost entirely by the commercial culture that surrounds them; and
- The school provided a safe and professionally monitored context for intense performance processes. Although Regelski suggests (2007: 11) that teachers who undertake “on-the-job music making” may be working “through” students, rather than “with” them, students’ vulnerability to manipulation is minimized in the school context. Those who seek performance opportunities in the commercial context may be exposed to the commercial imperatives of run-for-profit organizations.

The following conditions were shown by music projects three and four to provide the ideal context for co-constructive practice:

- Students exercised choice to be involved;
- A strong teacher presence facilitated the development of a positive, collaborative group culture;
- The students who chose to be involved shared some common experience, background, or motivation with the teacher;
• The learning took place in an environment free from distractions associated with the curricular context such as bells ringing, noise from adjoining classrooms, and time restrictions; and

• In a New Zealand school, the co-curricular context provided ideal conditions for this practice.

The identification of the co-curricular learning context as the preferred learning environment for the participants is a significant outcome of this research. Further research should be undertaken to explore ways in which the positive co-curricular conditions identified by students in this study could be used to change and improve learning conditions within the classroom.

The co-constructive model is shown in this thesis to be limited in that it is most positive when engaging teachers and students who share some motivation, background, or interests. The music teacher, however, is responsible for the musical development of all her students. As co-construction cannot meet the musical needs of all students it should be considered as one model of practice, only appropriate for use in association with many others.

The strength of the model is built upon the teacher’s whole-hearted commitment: students recognize that such commitment is artistic as well as pedagogical. The composition process is demanding and time-consuming, but I write for my students because I find artistic and creative fulfilment in doing so. I undertook this research because I wanted to confront the possibility that my model of practice involved working “through” rather than “with” my students (Regelski, 2007: 11). I believe this research proves that it is not only feasible, but desirable for a music teacher to develop her own musical personality and artistic commitment within the school context. Co-construction of music projects with students (which may involve the teacher contributing in a variety of ways) is a positive model of practice to place alongside other models of teaching and learning. This research may stimulate other individuals to put their practice to the test in a variety of contexts. Such studies may contribute to a broader study examining the practice of musician-teachers.
Limitations of this research

Tight timelines were required in order for the researcher to complete the projects and documents within the three-year PhD research period. This resulted in some specific limitations in the final document. The lack of visual evidence associated with music project two (The Pied Piper) is significant. The video recording process failed, and although a CD recording of the music was produced subsequently, it was not possible within the timeframe to reconstruct the whole performance for a further attempt at video recording.

A further limitation was imposed by the ethics requirements surrounding publication of the research. The projects which entailed NCEA assessment (music projects one and two) were put into place by other teachers thereby removing the researcher from the assessment processes (Chapter Two: 28-29). The teachers were willing participants in the projects, but, given the impossibility of anonymity in a small faculty, it was agreed that no reference to their teaching practices would be included in the published document. Reference to the participating teachers’ attitudes and responses could have contributed significantly to the research process and conclusions.

The narrow focus of the survey questions could be considered a limitation of this study. The choice to use the students’ musical responses as the primary form of data analysis was deliberate: playing the music was given precedence over verbalizing about it. The intention of the surveys in this research was not to collect large amounts of quantifiable and generalizable data from large numbers of respondents. Rather, the surveys were designed to encourage students to respond both subjectively and objectively (Chapter Four: 102-103), and to provide a focus for the subsequent interviews. The musical data (CDs and DVDs) and the attitudinal data obtained through interviews reveal student voice strongly and effectively. A more comprehensive survey tool would be necessary if further, broader-based research were to be undertaken.
The most significant limitation of this research is its focus on the work of one composer-teacher and her students. As noted in Chapter One (25), many researchers have raised questions over the multiplicity of meanings and uses of findings based on reflexive practice. This research is limited to an exploration of one composer’s work in one specific context: the model of co-construction offered in Chapter Eight (238-243) comprises one model of practice, only appropriate for use in association with many others. Discussion of other teaching strategies, such as the involvement of students with the teacher in compositional processes, lies outside the scope of this research. Teaching and learning is only one focus of this research: the other focus is the artistic creative motivation, experience, and output of one composer.

The strength of the research, however, lies in its detailed account of one particular world of performance practice: it is a creative, descriptive, and analytic study of one teacher working as both musician and teacher by composing and working together with her students as music makers. It is by nature limited in scope. As Jonathan Stephens (2007: 10) writes:

We should welcome different perspectives on the identity of the ‘musician-teacher’ as opportunities to enlarge and enrich our understanding. Some perspectives may be more helpful than others – just as certain vantage points provide a more satisfying view of a landscape. To view an object in one way only, or to assume, on the basis of limited evidence, that one vantage is superior to another, is potentially to deny the observer a proper understanding of the nature of the object.
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A composer-teacher in context: Appendices

APPENDIX A

Music project one

*At the Beginning of Time* – A narrative work for percussion and voice
At The Beginning Of Time

Janet Jennings

The intention of this piece is to communicate the story to the audience. The players need to work visually as well as musically to achieve this. I suggest the players wear black and begin in stillness, standing in front of the instruments, heads bowed:

Players 2, 1, 3, 4 and 5 should have their backs to the audience.

**Instruments:**
- Timpani: G C F
- Bull roarer
- Wind Chimes
- Woodblock
- Bass Drum
- Guiro
- Bongos
- 2 low pitched Tom Toms
- Maracas
- Claves
- Rattle
- 8 Beach Pebbles
- Gong
- Glockenspiel
- Chinese Temple Blocks
- Suspended Cymbal
- Cymbals
- Xylophone - 2 players, hard rubber mallets
- Tambourine
At The Beginning Of Time

\( \text{\textcopyright}\ 60 \)

Janet Jennings

\begin{align*}
\text{Percussion 1} & \quad (10^\circ) \\
\text{Percussion 2} & \quad (10^\circ) \\
\text{Percussion 3} & \quad (10^\circ) \quad \text{3 turns to face audience} \\
\text{Percussion 4} & \quad (10^\circ) \\
\text{Percussion 5} & \quad (10^\circ) \\
\text{Percussion 6} & \quad (10^\circ) \quad \text{Bull roarer}
\end{align*}

\( p \)

\begin{align*}
\text{Perc. 1} & \quad (10^\circ) \\
\text{Perc. 2} & \quad (10^\circ) \\
\text{Perc. 3} & \quad (10^\circ) \quad \text{*The note values should be reproduced fairly accurately - but aim to make text sound and look spontaneous and free of rhythmic restraint. Tell the story.} \\
\text{Perc. 4} & \quad (10^\circ) \\
\text{Perc. 5} & \quad (10^\circ) \\
\text{Perc. 6} & \quad (10^\circ) \quad \text{mf} \quad p
\end{align*}

\textit{At the beginning of time there stood Te Kore, the}

272
Perc. 1

(6")
(2 to wind chimes. Move unobtrusively at all times.)

Perc. 2

(6")

Perc. 3

noth-ing-ness.
The be-

(6")

Perc. 4

(6")
(5 to bass drum. Move unobtrusively at all times.)

Perc. 5

(6")

Perc. 6

Perc. 1

(8")
(1 to timpani. Move unobtrusively at all times.)

Perc. 2

(8")

Perc. 3

gin-ning was made from the noth-ing. From the

(8")

Perc. 4

(8")

Perc. 5

(8")

Perc. 6

mp

273
(3 to tom toms. Move unobtrusively at all times.)

(4 to tom toms)

(5 to guiro)

Perc. 6

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Perc. 6

From the nothing
the abundance.

(6 to woodblock. Move unobtrusively at all times.)
Perc. 1

Perc. 2

mf (resonant, not loud)
(3 to claves)

moon was made.

Perc. 4

(4 to tubular bells)

two pebbles unobtrusively tapped together

to pebbles)

Perc. 5

Perc. 6

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

(2 to glockenspiel)

Perc. 3

Perc. 5

Perc. 6

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Perc. 6

Perc. 5

Perc. 6
The great sky - above us
Dwell - with the shooting rays
78

Perc. 1

f
And the sun sprang forth.

Perc. 2

f
And the sun sprang forth.

Perc. 3

f
And the sun sprang forth.

Perc. 4

f
And the sun sprang forth.

Perc. 5

f
And the sun sprang forth.

Perc. 6

f
And the sun sprang forth.

79

poco accel.

Perc. 1

ff
(3 to xylophone - hard rubber mallets)

Perc. 2

ff
(4 to xylophone - hard rubber mallets)

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

whip

Perc. 6

do not damp (6 to tambourine)
APPENDIX B

Music project two

The Pied Piper – A narrative dance work
The Pied Piper

Three O'clock on Friday Afternoon: Children's Dance

Janet Jennings

The stage is empty. Bells chime 3.30pm on Friday afternoon. Children are playing in the distance (offstage)
A single child, on crutches, weakly limps onstage.
The child looks around warily; heliha is used to being tormented by the other children.
Children burst onto the stage. They are playing exuberantly.
School is out and the weekend has begun
The playing children begin to circle round the lame child.
They begin to torment him/her.
The children are now circling and closing in on their victim
The children push their victim
Lame child falls
All dancers freeze in brief tableau

The lame child begins to move.
The other children shrug off
their embarrassment
Children show they are aware of their own cruelty but they resume cheerful play
(Lame child limps to cube upstage centre and remains seated throughout rest of this dance)
Time has passed and the children are visibly tiring.
The bells chime 6.00pm.

The children sink, one by one, down onto the cubas, forming a tableau. They are tired.
The cymbal heralds the arrival of the first mother. Children look up expectantly.
The Arrival of the Mothers

A tempo (\( \dot{J} = 120 \))

Some children remain in tableau, moving in time with the music while watching for their mothers to enter. Some children rise and begin to dance.
First mother (clarinet theme) enters
She is flamboyant and elegantly dressed,
as are her children

(Use colour coding and similarity of dress style
to match children and mothers)
"Flamboyant" mother begins her dance.
Children join the dance as their mothers enter, but their mothers dominate this dance.
Two "gossip" mothers (flute/piccolo theme) enter.
Their dancing (and that of their children) shows their love of gossip.
"Gym" mothers (oboe theme) enter. They have been jogging and are tired.

Gym mothers and their children wear tracksuits and carry water bottles.
"Mobile phone" mothers enter (pianola/xylophone theme)

Their children also carry mobile phones and they are all texting or talking into their phones.
The mothers and their children dance in various combinations
Exit March of the Mothers and Children

più mosso alla marcia

All dancers freeze in brief tableau.
The mothers have lost their patience.
The mothers begin to march around and between their children
The mothers gradually round up their children and all dancers begin to march in varying groups and patterns.
The marching dancers begin their exits
The last of the mothers and children march off the stage leaving the lame child alone onstage.
Dance of Mother and Her Child

rather slow and wistful $\dot{=} 66$

Flute 1

Flute 2

Oboe 1

Oboe 2

Clarinet in B♭

Bassoon

Alto Saxophone

Marimba / Xylophone

Percussion 1

Percussion 2

Piano R.H.

Piano L.H.

rather slow and wistful $\dot{=} 66$

Lone child (oboé theme) hears mother (flute theme) calling
Child rises to meet mother

Mother enters
A tempo

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl.

Bsn.

A. Sax.

Mbha / Xylo.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Pno. R

Pno. L

Her dress is ragged. She dances on point, always showing her anxiety for her child.
Child tries to reassure mother
The relationship is very affectionate. This must be conveyed clearly in the dancing.
The child sits on a cube. The mother continues to dance, expressing her anxiety about her child's future. (The repeat of this section forms the exit music for mother and lame child.)
The child again reassures his/her mother.
(Roscoe: mother and child exit. Child waves farewell to audience.)
more agitated ($J = 82$)

The mother is not reassured and her dance expresses ever increasing anxiety. She is thinking of her child's future and this should be conveyed in her dance.
Further reassurance from the child prompts the mother to lay anxiety aside.
Midnight Dance of the Rats

*fast and stealthy* \( \dot{=} 120 \)

- Piccolo
- Flute 1
- Oboe 1
- Oboe 2
- Clarinet in B♭
- Bassoon
- Alto Saxophone
- Marimba / Xylophone
- Percussion 1
- Percussion 2
- Piano R.H.
- Piano L.H.

_Stage lights dim gradually as bells strike midnight._

_First rat appears._
Some more rats appear and scuttle to hide behind upstairs cubby.
One more rot appears
And yet more rats scuttle across the stage
Rats freeze in tableau, mostly upfront
Rats move warily in upfront area
Pics.
Fl. 1
Ob. 1
Ob. 2
Cl.
Ban.
A. Sx.
Mids / Xylo.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Pno. R
Pno. L

*Rats freeze in tableau*

*sempre*

*Rats move downstage*
Rats' dance begins.  Unison movement.
Unison movement
Unison movement
All rats join the dance in unison movement.
Unison movement of most parts, but some parts may function as soloists.
Contrapuntal movement as rays gather around one victim
Rats torment their victim

This is a grotesque parody of the opening children's dance.

The victim falls; other rats freeze.
Dance begins again with small movements
All rats gather together into a group dancing in a wild unison
Contrapuntal movement but still strong dynamic
Rats freeze suddenly as they hear the morning bells chime.
Stage Light gradually comes up.
Rats scurry across and around the stage
Rats are held enough to stay onstage (ie in the park) ...
even though it is morning.

They are hiding, however, moving warily behind the cabbes.
The rats are now still, crouched, almost hidden by the cubers.
Saturday in the Park

Playfully \( \text{\textit{j}} = 120 \)

The children and their mothers enter; the mothers cheerful, the children playing.
and then the gossip mothers
...and the mobile phone mothers.

*All mothers and children dance exuberantly in the downstage area*
The rats emerge from behind the cubs, joining the dance.
The rats dance, still upstage, with increasing vigour.

Their dance becomes a parody of the mothers and their children.
The rats move downstream, moving around and between the mothers and children, terrifying them.
Rats chase the mothers and their children (contrapuntal rather than unison movement)
Mothers and children jump onto the cubes to escape from the rats. The rats circle them with increasing menace.
The Pied Piper enters (saxophone theme).
Rats, children and mother suddenly freeze
Pied Piper's Lullaby

*Tacet:* Piccolo, Flute, 2nd Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, and 1st & 3rd Percussion

*Slowly and hypnotically* \( \downarrow = 45 \)

\[ \text{The Pied Piper dances very slowly at first, barely moving, playing his pipe and echoing the movement of the music.} \]

Pipe Piper dances between the children, mothers and rats, always playing his pipe.
Rats, mothers and children sway slightly, hypnotized by the music

Rats begin to move, forming a swaying line ...... they dance behind the Pied Piper
Pied Piper stands still except for movement of his pipe. The rats continue trance-like movement.
rit. . . . A tempo

Pied Piper resumes dance, leading the rats...

Pied Piper exits, followed by hypnotised rats.
Sunday's Festive Dance

Lively and rhythmical \( \frac{3}{2} \) = 128

The bells strike eight o'clock. It is Sunday morning and mothers and children gather in the park to celebrate the departure of the rats.
The children are playing, the markhors greeting each other — the dance has yet to begin.
Mothers and children ... are forming coherent groups, beginning to dance
Dancers form a semicircle encouraging soloists to move centerstage for 1st episode
All dancers join the "gezisy mothers" in cheerful dance.
Dancers form semicircle around soloists
"Flamboyant" mother dances the 3rd episode.
(Chorale theme)
Lance child's mother (oboe) joins the dance with a little flurry of movement from the "gossipa" (flute)
All mothers and children gather ....
and dance in unison
Mothers and children form a semicircle for the next episode.
which is danced by gossip mothers and children, and the lame child and mother
Mothers and children gather for brief unison dance
for "gym" mothers and children (looes) and ....

"Mobile phone" mothers and children (piano and xylophone)
"Gossip" mothers dance around semicircle of mothers and children, chattering and laughing ....
All mothers and children join in contrapuntal dances
Dancers form coherent group and . . . dance in union
All mothers and children dance in contrapuntal movement
Their dancing slows down, but they are still interacting cheerfully...
until they freeze on the entry of the Pied Piper
(fenixophone theme)
The Pied Piper moves among the groups of mothers and children holding out his hat, begging for money.
They turn away, exiting the stage in small groups.
The bells chime 8 o'clock in the evening.
Pied Piper is left alone, counterstages.
He freezes.
Children's Lullaby

Tacet: Piccolo/Flute, 1st & 2nd Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, and 1st & 3rd Percussion

Slowly and hypnotically \( \downarrow = 45 \)

Stage lights dim gradually. The Pied Piper dances very slowly at first, as in "The Pied Piper's Lullaby"
Night has fallen.
The children enter, dressed in PJs, some with teddy bears
They follow the Pied Piper in a hypnotic trance-like dance
poco rit. . . . A tempo

Mothers enter in their white nightgowns, swaying, also in hypnotic trance

rit. . . . A tempo

Mothers stand, grouped upstage, swaying, as their children form a line, dancing behind the Pied Piper
Pied Piper leads children offstage
Mothers’ Lament

Tacet: 2nd Oboe, Alto Saxophone

Slowly fitting and melancholy \( \text{\textit{L}} = 87 \)

Flute 1

Flute 2

Oboe 1

Clarinet in B♭

Bassoon

Marimba / Xylophone

Percussion 1

Percussion 2

Piano R.H.

Piano L.H.

Slowly fitting and melancholy \( \text{\textit{L}} = 87 \)

Mothers are left on stage, immobile in tableau. The bells begin to chime midnight.
Mothers sway as their lament begins.
The dance begins.
Mothers freeze in tableau
as lame child enters
Lame child's mother dances in her excitement...
Her child reassures her        Lame child and mother continue their brief duet.
All mothers join in unison, swaying in their laments

They dance
The dancers freeze in tableau and lights gradually dim to blackout.
Reprise of Saturday in the Park

Playfully $J = 120$

Stage lights come up on empty stage

(All dancers continue to dance when they have acknowledged applause)
"Flamboyant" mother takes curtain call
(and is joined by her children)
"Gossip" mothers take curtain call
(and are joined by their children)
"Gym - mothers take curtain call
(and are joined by their children)"
"Mobile phone" mothers take curtain call
(and are joined by their children)
Lame child and mother take certain calls, joined by all mothers and children dancing to stage left and right...
as Pied Piper and Rats take curtain calls
All cast dance in watusi.
Fats begin to chase mothers and children
The chase finishes in tableau, with mothers and children cooing on cacti.
APPENDIX C

Music project three

Macbeth – A drama for actors and instrumentalists
Macbeth

Quick and robust $J = 108$

- Violin I
  - pizz.
  - $f$
- Violoncello
  - \( \text{mf} \)
- Percussion
  - side drum
  - woodblock
  - \( \text{mp} \)

1st witch

(As curtain opens, 3 Witches, costumed as clowns, dance. Chorus, costumed as other circus performers are frozen in tableau upstage.)

2nd witch

(As curtain opens, 3 Witches, costumed as clowns, dance. Chorus, costumed as other circus performers are frozen in tableau upstage.)

3rd witch

(As curtain opens, 3 Witches, costumed as clowns, dance. Chorus, costumed as other circus performers are frozen in tableau upstage.)

Quick and robust $J = 108$

- Piano
  - \( \text{p} \)
  - \( \text{sfz} \)
  - \( \text{mf} \)
When shall we three meet again In
when the hur - ly bur - ly's done,
when the bat - tle's lost and won.
That will be ere the set of sun.

Upon the heath.

Where the place?
molto rall.

There to meet
There to meet
There to meet
There to meet
There to meet
There to meet

molto rall.

C

\( \text{A tempo } J = 108 \)

Fair is foul, and foul is fair.

C

\( \text{A tempo } J = 108 \)

F

\( \text{A tempo } J = 108 \)

F

\( \text{A tempo } J = 108 \)

F
Hover through the fog and fill thy air.

(Three witches begin this phrase on three different, high pitches, descending to the end of phrase.)

Hover through the fog and fill thy air.

(Three witches begin this phrase on three different, high pitches, descending to the end of phrase.)

Hover through the fog and fill thy air.

(Three witches begin this phrase on three different, high pitches, descending to the end of phrase.)

(Chorus moves out of tableau and dances around circus ring.)
Vln. I

Fife, great king;

Vc.

Where the Nor-way ban-ners flout the sky And

Perc.

Pno.

G

Nor-way him-self as-

fan our peo-ple cold.

G

Pno.
sisted by that most dis-loy-al

trai-ter,

The Thane ofCaw-dor,

be-gan a fresh as-

Dis-may'd not this Our cap-tains Mac-beth and Ban-quo?

Till

sault.

Red
51 poco accel.

Vln. 1

Vc.

Perc.

Pno.

52

Vln. 1

Vc.

Perc.

Pno.

\textit{(getting louder and a little faster)} Con-

\textit{(getting louder)} wull he de-serves that name,

\textit{(getting louder and a little faster)} Re-

\textit{(getting louder)} front-ed him,

\textit{(getting louder and a little faster)} arm 'gainst arm

\textit{(getting louder and a little faster)} brave Mac-beth,
Curb-ing his lavish spir-it,
And, to con-clude,

vic-t'ry fell on us. Great hap-pi-ness!

vic-t'ry fell on us.

vic-t'ry fell on us.
(Chorus dances around circus ring)
Tempo primo $j = 108$

1st witch

2nd witch

3rd witch

(Chorus freezes into tableau)

Tempo primo $j = 108$
Vln. 1

Vc.

Perc.

Pno.

(Macbeth enters)

All hail, Mac-beth! hail to thee, Thane of

Vln. 1

Vc.

Perc.

Pno.

Glamis!

f All hail, Mac-beth! hail to thee, Thane of Caw-dor
poco rall.

Viola:

Vio. 1

Vc.

Perc.

Pno.

f All hail, Macbeth! that shall be king hereafter

poco rall.

A tempo

Viola 1

Vio. 1

Vc.

Perc.

Pno.

A tempo

Choir moves out of tableau

I know I am Thane of Glamis;

1st servant

2nd servant

3rd servant

K

K

523
The king hath hap-pi-ly re-ceiv'd, Mac-beth, the news of thy suc-cess;

We are sent to give thee from our roy-al mas-ter thanks;
bade me, from him, call thee Thane of Cawdor.

Glamis, and Thane of Cawdor. The greatest is behind.

(Lady Macbeth enters)

(Chorus freezes into tableau, facing upstage. Witches face downstage, not in freeze frame)
Slow and languorous $J = 60$

Vln. I

Vc.

Perc.

Pno.

[b]Lady Macbeth[/b]

Glamis thou art, and

Slow and languorous $J = 60$

Caw-dor; and shalt be what thou art prom-ised. Yet do I

526
fear thy nature;  It is too full o' the milk of human kindness  To catch the
If chance will have me nearest way;

king, why, chance may crown me, without my stir.

Hie thee
hither,

That I may pour

my

spirits in thine ear And chastise with the valour of my tongue All that im-
III

Vln. I

Vc.

Perc.

Pno.

III

pedes thee from the golden round, Which fate and

metaphysical aid doth seem to have thee crown'd with
If we should fail, al. We fail. But screw your courage to the...
Come thick night, And pall thee in the dun-nest smoke of hell, That my keen knife see not the wound it makes, Nor
freely and getting louder to the final shout of "hold, hold!" (Macbeth raises dagger behind Duncan.)

heaven peep through the blanket of the dark, To cry "Hold, hold!"

(hissing gets louder)

With haste $j = 112$

(Duncan falls forward, remaining on stage)

(Macbeth slits Duncan's throat.) (Servants move out of tableau; move cubes to form table for banquet scene)

With haste $j = 112$
125

(Vln. I)

(Vc.

(Perc.

Servants remove Duncan's tophat and coat. His body is upstage hidden by cubers)

(Pno.

127

(Vln. I)

(Vc.

(Perc.

(Macbeth and Lady M. step onto cubers, upstage)

(Pno.

(Chorus moves out of tableau)
129

P

Vln. I

Vc.

Perc.

Pno.

servant 1

servant 2

servant 3

aside) Thou hast it now: king,

(Places Duncan's tophat on Macbeth's head)

132

P

Vln. I

Vc.

Perc.

Caw- dor, Glamis,

(Puts Duncan's coat on Macbeth)
Vln. I

Vc.

Perc.

Pno.

\((aside)\) And, I fear, Thou...

\(138\)

Vln. I

Vc.

Perc.

Lady Macbeth

play'dst most foul-ly for't (Lady M. joins Macbeth)

\(Q\)
Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks; Be bright and jovial among your guests tonight (Macbeth)

(Chorus moves out of tableau, faces downstage, to join banquet with new king and queen)
R
tempo primo $J = 108$

Vln. I

Vc.

Perc.

non we'll drink a measure the table round.

Pno.

(All cast dances round table.
Servants bring in cans of beer)

R
tempo primo $J = 108$
1st witch

2nd witch

3rd witch

ff Fair is foul,

and foul is fair.

ff Fair is foul,

and foul is fair.

ff Fair is foul,

and foul is fair.
Vln. 1

Vc.

Perc.

Pno.

- All chorus sits round table; Duncan at upstage end with head down. -

\[ S \]

Meno mosso \( J = 100 \)

- 1st Lord -

- the table's -

\[ S \]

Meno mosso \( J = 100 \)

(Servants hand out cans, taking care not to upstage main action)
Slow bowing between bridge and tailpiece

Here is a place reserved sir. Here, my good lord.
(Cast reacts to Macbeth's behaviour but cannot see the ghost)

(tone cluster: C to E flat.)
Which of you have done this?

What, my good lord?

(Ghost rises, approaches Macbeth who backs away in horror)
Thou canst not say I did it.
Vln. I

Vc.

Perc.

Pno.

never

Vln. I

Vc.

Perc.

Pno.

shake thy gory locks at me

(rising) Gentleman, rise; his
highness is not well

(Some cast have begun to rise, but now sit)

lord is often thus, And hath been since his youth:
Are you a man?

dare look on that which might appal the devil: the
time has been That, when the brains were
out, the man would die, And there an end;

What!
Quite un-mann'd in folly?

A-vaunt! And quit my

sight! Let the earth hide thee!

(Ghost exits)
At once, good night: Stand not upon the

Order of your going, But go at once.

(Chorus moves upstage, freezing in tableau facing upstage. Servants move cubes into circle)
It will have blood, they say;

blood will have blood:

(Lady M descends into madness)
deeds must not be thought after these ways; so, it will make us

(Macbeth sits on cube, upstage, head in hands)

mad. It will make us mad. (Lady M moves downstage) Yet here's a spot.

(Servants are listening to Lady M)
210

Out, damned spot! Out, I say!

213

Hell is murky!

Fie, my lord, fie, a soldier and a

(Servants group around Lady M, but not too close)
fear'd Yet who would have thought the old man to

have so much blood in him? [1st servant] Do you mark that?
Vln. 1

Vc.

Perc.

Pno.

What will these hands ne'er be clean?

Ev-en so?

```
```

What's done can-not be un-done.

To bed, to

poco rit.
228
Vln. I

228
Vc.

Perc.

Phn.

(She lies centrestage; uses dagger to stab herself.)

(Servants group around body)

232
Tempo primo $J = 108$

Vln. I

Vc.

Perc.

woodblock

Foul whis-pr'ings are a-broad.

Un-natural deeds do

Tempo primo $J = 108$

Phn.
Vln. I

Vc.

Perc.

breed unnatural troubles

3rd servant

The queen, my lord, the

Pno.

Meno mosso

Vln. I

Vc.

Perc.

(rising) She should have died hereafter; There

queen, my lord, is dead.

Meno mosso

Pno.
would have been a time for such a word. (moves downstage towards Lady M's body)

To-mor-row, and to-mor-row, and to-mor-row Creeps

(Clowns move slowly into group around Macbeth, upstage of him)
in this petty pace from day to day, To the last syllable of recorded time; (Macbeth kneels by body) (Witches move close behind M) And
all our yesterdays have lighted fools the way to dusty death.
Out, out, brief candle! Life's but a walking shadow.
stage, And then is heard no more;

it is a tale told by an id-i-o-t,
260

Quick and wild \( \dot{=} \) 112

(Vln. I)

(Vc.)

(Perc.)

(all chorus)

Turn, hark hound, turn!
(all shouting)

(Chorus gathers round Macbeth. 1st Lord slits his throat.)

DD

Quick and wild \( \dot{=} \) 112

(Pno.)

262

(Vln. I)

(Vc.)

(Perc.)

(Macbeth's crown and coat are removed, and put on another chorus member)

(Pno.)

562
(Cirrus resumes; chorus dances around the two bodies)
(Chorus freezes. Witches move downstage.)
Vln. I

Vc.

Perc.

Pno.

\textit{(Witches move into opening positions, and freeze)}

\textbf{poco rit.}

\textbf{pizz.}

\textbf{mp}

\textbf{P}

\textbf{PP}
APPENDIX D

Music project four

A Song Sung by Te Rauparaha – an SATB choral work
Kupa, Kupa, Kupa,

Kupu, Kupu, Kupu,

Kati-to su ki a Kupa, Te tanga ta, te tanga ta

I sing of Kupa, Te tanga ta, te tanga ta

574
S. poco rit.

S.

Ku-pe,
I sing of Ku-pe,

Ku-pe, Ku-te-to au ki a Ku-pe,

A.

Ku-pe, Ku-te-to au ki a Ku-pe,

T.

B.

Te ta-na-ta, Te

Vln.

Tub. B.

Roto-t.

Perc.

poco rit.

Ritmico $j = 132$

metal beaters, damp immediately

mp
Ku-pe, The

Na-na i to pe to pe Te whe-nu-a, Te whe-nu-a,

Te whe-nu-a, Te ta-ngu-ta, Te
man Who cut up the land Ku-pe the man Who

man Who cut up the land Ku-pe the man Who

Te ta-nga-ta, Te ta-nga-ta,

ta-nga-ta, Na-na i to-pe-to-pe
cut up the land

Na-nai to-po-to-pe Te whe-mu-a, Te whe-mu-a,

Te whe-mu-a, Te whe-mu-a,
Kapiti stands apart, Manu stands apart,
Tu ke a Kapiti,
Tu ke a Kapiti, Tu ke Manu, Manu,
Allargando

Maestoso $j = 108$

S.

part,

A-ra pa-wa stands a-part.

These are

S.

part,

A-ra pa-wa stands a-part.

These are

A.

part,

A-ra pa-wa stands a-part.

These are

T.

Tu ke Ma-na, Ma-na,

Tu ke A-ra-pa-wa, Ko nga to-hu

B.

Tu ke A-ra-pa-wa,

Ko nga to-hu

Vln.


Tub. B.


Roto-t.

Yarn-covered mallet

Perc.

Allargando

Maestoso $j = 108$
signs of my ancestor

\[\text{ta-ku-tu-pu-na, A Ku-} \]
S.  
Who explor'd  
Ti-ti-pu-a

S.  
Who explor'd  
Ti-ti-pu-a

A.  
Who explor'd  
Ti-ti-pu-a

T.  
wha-ka-tome-ne  
Ti-ti-pu-a

B.  
wha-ka-tome-ne  
Ti-ti-pu-a

Vln.  
P

Tab. B.  

Roto-t.  

Perc.  

poco rit.  Tempo primo \( j = 54 \)
Kā ti-tō a-u, a-u, It was

Te whe-nu-a, Te

metal beaters, damp immediately

poco rit.  Ritmico $\frac{1}{2} = 132$
I who explor'd,

It was I,

It was I,

I who explor'd,

Te whe-nu-a, Te whe-nu-a, Ka To-me-ne au, Ka whe-nu-a, Ka To-me-ne au; Ka

Vln.

Tub. B.

Rotot.

Perc.
S. 86
I who expl'd the land!

A. I who expl'd the land!

T. to-me-ne au, Te Whenu-a-e!

B. to-me-ne au, Te Whenu-a-e!

Vln.

Tub. B.

Roto-t.

Perc.

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