THE CHAMBER MUSIC PIANIST

An exploration of the skills required by pianists working in small ensembles

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Abstract

This document is submitted in conjunction with a creative portfolio of audio recordings for the Doctorate of Musical Arts program at Griffith University. An analysis of chamber music production from a practicing pianist's perspective is at the core of this research. From a personalised viewpoint it explores the unique set of skills that a chamber music pianist calls upon for their work, specifically those distinct from the pianist in the role of soloist or accompanist. This practice-led project combines self-reflexive writing with data drawn from semi-structured interviews with fourteen international professional pianists. Overall, this research was driven by a desire to induce appreciation of the complex and demanding occupation of the chamber music pianist and the skills required to master this role. It aims to add to the currently limited information available on the subject and demonstrate why focused, distinct study of the skills needed for the preparing, rehearsing and performing of chamber music should be seen as an indispensable part of any pianist's education.

Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

SIGNATURE: 

DATE: JUNE 24, 2016

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My thanks go as well to all those who have assisted and supported my concert series, DeClassified Music. Many of the musical performances produced for this series influenced this research. Therefore, I am particularly grateful for the support shown by Greg Thompson, Theme & Variations Piano Services and FireWorks Gallery in Newstead.

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Lastly, I wish to convey my gratitude to my mother for the constant support she offered throughout the duration of this endeavour.

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INTRODUCTION

A. The Project

This research seeks to investigate chamber music from a practicing pianist's perspective and to explore the proposition that a chamber music pianist requires a unique set of skills distinct from those of the piano soloist or accompanist. It is an example of artistic research and is typical of research from an artist's perspective. Thus, it concerns knowledge of the process of creativity, not its outcomes, and delves into the 'what to do' and 'why' - knowledge - as well as the 'how to do' - skill (Coessens, Crispin & Douglas, 2009, p.26; Covey, 1989, p.47). As such, it is situated in the borderland between the arts and academic worlds (Borgdorff, 2012, p.132) thereby aiming to provide insights both to musicians who play this repertoire as well as to scholars in the musical field.

The dual line of inquiry at the crux of this project developed as I found myself progressively gaining a deeper interest in chamber music repertoire and its performance. I felt that knowledge from one's personal accumulation of experience was fundamental to development in this area of expertise. However, as a young professional I also felt that I should, even at my stage of career, have greater clarity as regards the particular knowledge and skills I might be drawing upon when preparing, rehearsing and performing such music.

Leading to the commencement of these studies I had graduated from the Queensland Conservatorium, spent four years at the Australian National Academy of Music, was awarded a Master of Music from the Queensland Conservatorium, and graduated with distinction from the Royal College of Music in London with a Postgraduate Diploma in Performance. To complement my studies, I prepared and competed in a selection of piano competitions including the ABC Symphony Australia Young Performers Awards (2006), in which I was the keyboard winner, and the Kerikeri Piano Competition (2009), in which I was awarded a second placing. My relative success in these endeavours and the high-level training I had received was very much focused on solo performance.

After these years of study, I began to reflect upon how they had prepared me for work as a chamber music pianist. I realised that the building of a skill set relating to chamber music had been largely neglected. There had only been the elective courses, which seemed to rely on students learning largely through trial and error, and some encouragement to form music partnerships with fellow students. Even though pedagogical guidance was offered in these situations, this was almost exclusively in the form of general interpretative assistance of the musical work being prepared.

Literature on this subject confirmed that my situation was not uncommon. It also revealed that discussion and guidance in relation to chamber music pianists, or from their perspective, was very limited. As well, I found accounts from more experienced musicians which shared my now growing realisation that the exclusionary teaching of solo over chamber might be somewhat shortsighted.

For example, in 1981, German cellist Hans Erik Deckert noted in a lecture in Edinburgh that the teaching of skills required for working successfully in collaborative conditions is often neglected. He related that in the musical education and everyday practice he had experienced, chamber music would lead a "subordinate, almost backstage existence" (p.3). He continued by claiming that many young musicians never experience the benefits of chamber music and therefore they entered their careers "chronically lacking in experience". Deckert also put forth the following question, "Can we not … practise a chamber music technique by singling out concrete elements in the genre and working on them concentratedly?" (p.5). In my experience, the situation does not seem to have changed greatly since these observations were made.

To mention another example, Luba Sindler (1999) observed in *Clavier* magazine that "music students have few opportunities to perform in chamber groups." In relation to piano students, Sindler noticed that they usually prepare only solos and just the occasional duo piano work for their recitals (p.8). Further, the American-based violinist David Sariti recognised that even in 2007, ensemble skills were still a neglected aspect of musicianship in the training of many instrumentalists, even though such skills are amongst the most crucial skills to learn. Sariti also noted that most pedagogical tomes remained "strangely silent" on this matter (2007, p.16-17). As part of this article, Sariti asked the question, are students "simply tossed into a group and left to fend for themselves, coached more in the topical issues of a particular piece than in basic, universal concepts?" He answered this himself with a further question, asking if any teacher was "*not* guilty of this". Of particular interest, Sariti then stated that it cannot be assumed that students will pick up on the skills necessary for good chamber musicianship simply by playing the repertoire: "they must be *taught*" (p.18).

For this research project, I also explored these issues in interviews with a number of experienced professional pianists. Amongst these, Dutch forte-pianist Bart van Oort explained that he believed that a downgrading of chamber music skills might be more of a "British, American thing". He also made the observation that many music schools worldwide still seemed to separate the learning of aspects relating to chamber music from those of solo playing in a dismissive and unnecessary way (interview, April 28, 2014). He further explained that this was typified by some institutions sending piano students to learn about chamber music from teachers "who usually don't attract students anymore".

Further, I have found the downgrading of chamber skills reflected in the sometimes almost blatant dismissiveness of the topic by many of my pianist colleagues. For instance, a few expressed their thoughts on chamber music skills and my project with retorts such as, “Chamber music? Doesn’t the pianist just play softer than usual?” and “How can you write a dissertation about something that could be explained in two lines?” These glib responses might be meant as humorous retorts, and could be expected of expert practitioners, who are known to exhibit their knowledge tacitly as a kind of ‘knowing-in-practice’ (Schon, 1983, p.viii). However, I felt that such flippant remarks might also be representative of how the skill and knowledge required of an expert chamber music pianist is often undervalued - not just by pianists themselves, but also by fellow instrumentalists, audiences, teachers and tertiary institutions.

Therefore, this research was undertaken not only to satisfy my own curiosity and need for clarity, but also to discourage the apparent carelessness exhibited by many in the profession in relation to the skill and knowledge of pianists working in the chamber music setting. It is hoped that by aiming to make the tacit in this field more explicit, knowledge and therefore understanding of this under-explored area might be advanced. Further incentive was derived from growing evidence that supports a general need for practitioners’ perspectives on matters of performance. After all, it is widely acknowledged that even the most experienced performer, teacher or scholar can fail to appreciate what truly lies behind the production of a musical performance (Jones, 2006, p.228; Rink, 2002, p.xi).

Therefore, this is a project with active musicians in mind which aims to refine the focus on chamber music through the lens of a practising pianist. It aspires to offer clearer knowledge and understanding of the subject whilst keeping in mind that as we gain knowledge, we surpass older ideas (Nietzsche, 1878, p.154). Ultimately, if this research can influence readers to consider their own perspective, it may be able to activate a rethinking of pedagogical priorities.

However, the subject area of the chamber music pianist has tremendous scope. Therefore the following three points will clarify this work’s focus. Firstly, this analysis is centred on professional acoustic chamber music performance on a ‘modern’ piano. Reference is made to historical instruments on occasion, because of their relevant and important historical implications, but not digital keyboards and contemporary digital technologies. Even though the technical and performative considerations of such instruments are exciting to ponder, boundaries for this research had to be drawn. Secondly, even though the range of repertoire for chamber music ensembles is expansive, with the term ‘chamber music’ having been used in English as early as the mid-16th century (Baron, 1998, p.1), the repertoire underlying this research and most often experienced by those interviewed is from the Classical era onwards. This is unsurprising given the

piano-centric nature of this project. Thirdly, the perspective of the chamber music pianist in this research is considered broadly rather than in relation to a specific instrumental combination. Even though it is recognised that the techniques for working with groups of different size and instrumental makeup call for specific and unique technical considerations, it is the intention of this research to clarify issues that apply to chamber music performance in general.

Overall, as a complete submission, this research is presented in two parts with both components complementing one another in accordance with the expectations of the Doctorate of Musical Arts program at Griffith University. The first part, the core component of this research, is a portfolio demonstrating my creative practice. This consists of four studio recordings made in the Queensland Conservatorium Theatre on a Steinway model D instrument, and another disc demonstrating a selection of various live performances. These live recordings were also performed on Steinway instruments, D and B models, and were conducted as part of the concert series I manage in Brisbane, DeClassified Music. This chamber music series was initiated in 2012 by myself and a colleague in conjunction with Theme & Variations Piano Services, the then Steinway piano distributors in Brisbane. Beginning at their piano showroom, the series evolved from the Commercial Road Chamber Music Series to being renamed DeClassified Music in 2013 with myself as the sole manager and artistic director. Since its inception, support has been offered by council, state and federal funding bodies, as well as by local businesses, and it has expanded into various venues. In recent years, its concerts have showcased leading Australian musicians from around the country. Whilst offering opportunities to such musicians, it was also conceived and operationalised during my candidature as a way to provide opportunities for myself from which I could explore chamber music. These performances have been crucial in leading my research.

The second part of this submission is this accompanying exegesis component. It is comprised of an Introduction, three main sections, a short Conclusion and an Appendix (which outlines further details of the Creative Portfolio). As this Introduction continues, it will offer a brief overview as to what the term ‘chamber music’ refers, a review of the relevant literature, and a description of this project’s underlying methodology. The three chapters to follow will consider the key issues of collaboration and listening, and identify the specific skills required in the stages of preparation, rehearsal and performance. Though certain issues cross over under these headings, I have attempted to separate relevant practical issues into neat sections for the sake of clarity and easy reference.

Naturally, this work does not aim to be the ultimate source on its topic. As well, it will not, and cannot, conceivably cover every possibility or skill that pianists may encounter or require in chamber music situations. Moreover, as this is a highly personalised study, it will be like all

practice-led work in that it will be typically idiosyncratic in nature and motivated by emotional and personal concerns (Haseman, 2006, p.4; Barrett, 2009, p.4). One can never be free from one's own context, after all (Nonaka & Toyama, 2003, p.3). There may, however, be particular value in creating such work, for perhaps it will assist to make this project's content relatable. It might also inspire others to consider and ponder the nature of their own chamber music experiences. Nevertheless, this project has been designed so that restrictions imposed by my personalised viewpoint are compensated for, primarily by the drawing of data from interviews undertaken with fourteen highly experienced pianists.

B. Chamber Music

Chamber music has been viewed as one of the most uplifting, cultured and pleasurable pursuits that European civilisation has produced and also as "art of the musical idealist" (King, 1948, p.10 & 70). It is claimed that chamber music is one of the oldest of instrumental literatures (Ulrich, 1966, p.x) and it is often referred to as "the music of friends" (Hinson, 1978, p.ix). Chamber music is characterised by its intimate nature and is used as a medium for the expression of particularly personal musical ideas (Ulrich, 1966, p.2). It can often be complex and highly demanding music which characteristically draws not only on the entire spectrum of skills of the individual player, but also on those of the group as a whole (Loft, 1992, p.11).

Chamber music is distinguished from other traditions, particularly improvised disciplines, in that players always learn their music from a highly detailed, often revered, score (Fiske, 2008, p.ii). Therefore, a consolidation process is required so that players can unify their playing and musical ideas (Good, 2002, p.188). Thus, this genre is characterised by a detailed rehearsal process. This not only involves the task of synchronising playing, but also the wrestle to extrapolate the layers of spirit and expression that might lie beyond the mere score. For indeed, it is typical of performance in the traditions of Western classical music for players to consider composers' intentions. As pianist Susan Tomes notes, "what composers want us to express is not the notes, but their idea." For chamber musicians, this is often the most time consuming aspect of rehearsal work and usually the most interesting part (Tomes, 2004, p.184).

According to King, it was from the middle of the sixteenth century that chamber music began to evolve in earnest (1948, p.9). The term 'chamber' was probably derived from such music being originally composed for and experienced in smaller venues. It therefore referred to music designed for performance in a home rather than in a public space such as a church, concert hall or opera house (Ulrich, 1966, p.6). However, chamber music has always been performed in diverse spaces. For example, Ferguson observes that from the very beginning, chambers for this music "varied in

size and appointment, from the palatial music rooms of the aristocracy to the garret above Thomas Britton's (the small coal-man's) shop in Clerkwell, London" (1964, p.22).

As regards instruments used within this genre, the string quartet combination of first violin, second violin, viola and cello might well be the most renowned instrumental grouping, and thus it is the focus of much ensemble related literature. However, chamber music can involve any combination of instruments, even a mix of instruments and voice, if the voice is used 'instrumentally' and equally to the other parts.[1] Therefore, used as a comprehensive term today, chamber music could be basically defined as composed Western music for a small ensemble, usually no bigger than a nonet, comprised of any instruments or voice (Robertson, 1957, p.7).

Intrinsic to this genre, however, is that players, and vocalists, must all have their own musical part. No parts are doubled in chamber music. In this way, each part is individual and also integral to the whole. Additionally, there is usually no need for a conductor (excepting some specific demanding works, such as Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*), the players instead leading and following as required. Consequently, the role that a chamber musician plays deserves to be recognised as one that is particularly skilled and complex.

This has been noted in general terms by numerous authors. For example, Goodman observes that any performer who plays in a chamber ensemble displays skills at both musical and social levels (2002, p.165). Klickstein claims that a chamber musician needs to demonstrate skills that include group synergy, minimisation of social friction, group culture and rehearsal strategy (2009, p.114). Ulrich notes that chamber music is based upon flawless balance and ensemble, and selfless teamwork (1966, p.6). Eisler points out the important contrasting states of leadership and support that a chamber musician must draw on (2009, p.29), and Kokotsaki lists balance, externalisation of attention, regulating, time availability and achieving integration as skills deemed necessary for musicians in this role (2007, p 641).

With such complexity involved, participation in a chamber music ensemble can therefore present many musical and social challenges. However, it can also be extremely rewarding, for chamber music is enriching simply because of its very essence - that of teamwork. Indeed, chamber music involves people working together to achieve something beyond the capabilities of a single individual working alone (Marks, Mathieu & Zaccaro, 2001, p.1).

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[1] For example, one of the ensembles of which I was a part during this research was comprised of soprano, piano, clarinet and bass clarinet, and it sought to display each musician equally. Creative Portfolio: 'Artico Ensemble', self titled album: chamber music of Spohr, Cooke, Mendelssohn and Rutter.

With such teamwork can also come the reward of new knowledge creation. Nonaka and Toyama observe that both an organisation and an individual can grow as team members create and define problems, develop and apply knowledge to solve these problems, and then further develop gained new knowledge through the action of problem solving (2003, p.3). This process has been noted to be particularly typical of those ensembles that work as egalitarian groups (Klickstein, 2009, p.117). Opportunely, equality comes naturally to this form of music making, parity demonstrated from the beginning in the music score, which functions as this genre's nucleus.

Concerning the piano's inclusion in chamber music, it was gradually involved as it grew central to European music making subsequent to its invention in the early eighteenth century (Ripen, 1980, p.682). Following the then consequent disappearance of the harpsichord and its function as continuo, a piano being accompanied by a single violin and/or cello grew into the 'piano trio', comprised of piano with violin and cello (Ulrich, 1966, p.210). The piano trio became one of the most widely cultivated chamber forms, second in importance only to the homogenous string quartet (Smallman, 1990, p.2). It demonstrated composers' adjustment to include the distribution of thematic material amongst three instruments, as well as their writing to appropriately blend and balance instruments of non-equivalent tonal character and dynamic strength (Smallman, 1990, p. 3). Josef Haydn (1732-1809) made one of the first substantial contributions to the piano trio repertoire[2] (Ulrich, 1966, p.210), but it is recognised that Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) eventually emancipated this form from being keyboard-dominated (Smallman, 1990, p.2).

As the piano continued to be mechanically developed through the Classical period, so did composers' treatment of it in the piano trio. Ludwig van Beethoven, for example, (1770-1827) started immediately with his Opus 1 trios[3] to move beyond the range of his predecessors towards a more expansive conception of the genre (Smallman, 1990, p.47). However, it was late in the Classical period that Smallman considers this genre to have reached maturity, with the piano trios of Franz Schubert (1797-1828) (1990, p.72).

Apart from the piano trio, though, there were also other prominent piano-inclusive combinations that emerged, such as the duo or duet sonata, piano quartet (piano usually with violin, viola and cello) and piano quintet (piano usually with string quartet), these developing in a similar manner. It should also be mentioned that Mozart additionally developed many other chamber forms of the late classical period, involving wind, stringed and keyboard instruments in a remarkable variety of groupings (Smallman, 1990, p.4). Examples include the Piano and Wind Quintet K.452 (piano with

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[2] Creative Portfolio: Piano Trio in D minor Hob.XV: 23 (1795) by Joseph Haydn, second movement, 5:58min. Live performance.

[3] Creative Portfolio: Piano Trio in C minor Op.1 No.3 (1793) by Ludwig van Beethoven, first movement, 9:56min. Live performance.

oboe, clarinet, bassoon and horn, 1784) and his *Kegelstatt* Trio K.498 (for clarinet, viola and piano, 1786) which combines instruments from three different families.

Following on from Beethoven and Schubert, and by the time the Romantic period was in full swing, chamber music had grown noticeably in prominence, in both domestic and public concert life. Indeed, now the "normal concert was of chamber rather than symphonic music" (Tilmouth, 1980, p. 116). This was coupled with composers responding enthusiastically to the increased brilliance and expressive range of the modernised piano (Tilmouth, 1980, p.116). As solo virtuosi displayed the growing vastness of the solo piano repertoire, simultaneously duo sonatas, piano trios,[4] quartets and quintets of great breadth and power emerged, many from pianist-composers such as Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847), Robert Schumann (1810-1956), Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)[5] [6] and César Franck (1822-1890).

Moving into the twentieth century, chamber music was seen to be useful as a medium with which to explore innovation, such as the transition to atonality (Dahlhaus, 1989, p.254). Even though the piano trio form was still being used and developed by composers such as Maurice Ravel (1875-1937), Charles Ives (1874-1954) and Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975), there was now a noticeable move away from such traditional forms, and an increased inclusion of more unusual combinations of instruments (Tilmouth, 1980, p.117). One combination became the quartet of piano, violin, cello and clarinet, examples of which include Paul Hindemith's *Quartet* (1939)[7] and Olivier Messiaen's *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* (1945)[8].

Now in the twenty-first century,[9] [10] chamber music continues to be a popular medium for composers and performers of notated music. Performances of new and historical music continue to take place in timeless concert institutions, in venues being built specifically for this music's performance, and in homes, music series and festivals around the world. Perhaps influencing this music's popularity might be the current economic climate, where larger classical music formations, such as orchestras and opera companies, seem to be facing an ever increasing challenge to

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[4] Creative Portfolio: Piano Trio No. 4 in E minor Op.90 "Dumky" (1890) by Antonin Dvorak, 2nd movement, 6:56. Live performance.

[5] Creative Portfolio: Piano Trio in B major Op.8 (1854) by Johannes Brahms, fourth movement, 6:32min. Live performance.

[6] Creative Portfolio: Piano Quartet in G minor Op.25 (1859) by Johannes Brahms, fourth movement, 8:49min. Live performance.

[7] Creative Portfolio: Quartet for clarinet, violin, violoncello and piano (1939) by Paul Hindemith, 27min. Studio recording, *Flashpoint.*

[8] Creative Portfolio: *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* (Quartet for the End of Time) (1945) by Olivier Messiaen, 48min. Studio recording, *Flashpoint.*

[9] Creative Portfolio: Sonata for Violin and Piano in G minor by Vadilije Mokranjac (1923-1984), 2nd movement, 6:51min. Live performance.

[10] Creative Portfolio: Studio recording, *I read the old dream slowly.* Works by Australian composers written between 1989 and 2012.

ensure ongoing financial support. For whatever reasons, new chamber music ensembles continue to emerge, and chamber compositions, both old and new, continue to be performed. Even in this postmodern, post-truth time, performers and composers demonstrate this music's ability to endure, stay fresh and develop, thus illustrating its capacity to successfully adapt to changing contexts.

C. Literature Review

Print and electronic resources are numerous which concern pianists exploring their practice in general. This abundance might be expected, for as we find ourselves drawing further away from the time of the great pianists of the 'golden age', we also move away from when secrecy and aloofness characterised the idolised concert pianist. This now belongs in the past, and modern society now seems to expect a closer and more intimate look at the performer's life (Chaffin, 2002, p.28). Indeed, current audiences are apparently keen to hear the insider's perspective, to hear the performer's voice (Emmerson, 2012, p.27). Consequently, books and articles convey in detail the nature of the work, the challenges, and the problems which confront pianists in the profession. Examples include *A Pianist's Landscape* (1998), *Notes from the Pianist's Bench* (2000), *Beyond the Notes* (2004), and the article "Evoking Spring in Winter: Some personal reflections on returning to Schubert's cycle" (2009) by pianists Carol Montparker, Boris Berman, Susan Tomes and Stephen Emmerson respectively. Disclosure is further extended by our evolving technology, this showcasing personal and professional information around the world, most prevalently from musicians' ubiquitous websites and from social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

However, most discussions of pianism are noticeably made from the perspective of the solo pianist, and then, to a lesser extent, from the 'accompanist's' view-point. Therefore, the literature fails to adequately address practical aspects from the perspective of a pianist performing chamber music, this role requiring collaboration with others whilst the pianist manages to retain their individual identity (Baron, 1998, p.8). Indeed, there are startlingly few revealing accounts written about or from the perspective of an ensemble pianist.

The few books and articles that are available have naturally been crucial sources for this research. Most influential were the writings of Susan Tomes, especially her first book *Beyond the Notes* (2004). Tomes, the pianist in the famous Florestan Piano Trio and other ensembles, expresses in her book that she has tried to capture some of her and her groups' experiences. She explains that she felt encouraged to give insight into the relatively undocumented area of what goes on in private practice and chamber rehearsal for "the more people learn about what we [classical musicians and Tomes' chamber music groups] do, the deeper their understanding of the music will be" (p.xv).

Tomes' other books *A Musician's Alphabet* (2006) and *Out of Silence* (2010) include further thoughts about her experiences as a chamber music pianist.

Even though they do not specifically refer to chamber music, books and articles from pianists' perspectives that discuss issues of accompaniment have still been influential to this study, for such writings from performing pianists offer detailed insight as regards aspects of collaborative work and interpretation. Such sources have included *Evoking Spring in Winter: Some personal reflections on returning to Schubert's cycle* by Stephen Emmerson (2009), *The Complete Collaborator: The pianist as partner* by Martin Katz (2009), and *The Art of Accompanying: Masterlessons from the repertoire* by Robert Spillman (1985).

Also consulted were those sources which explored aspects of ensemble playing from other instrumentalists' perspectives. Examples of these include *How to Succeed in an Ensemble: Reflections on a life in chamber music* by the violinist Abram Loft (2003) and the article "Ensemble Skills: Do we really teach them?" by violinist David Sariti for *American Music Teacher* (2007). Writings on ensemble performance in general have also been crucial, for example, the chapter "Musical Collaboration" in *The Musician's Way: A guide to practice, performance, and wellness* by Klickstein (2009) and the chapter "Ensemble Performance" by Elaine Goodman in *Musical Performance: A guide to understanding* (2002).

Articles and research documents that observe chamber music pianists from an academic viewpoint have also been of direct influence. One such example has been *Understanding the Ensemble Pianist: A theoretical framework* by Kokotsaki (2007). This document takes steps to develop a theoretic model for the attainment of high quality music ensemble performance from a pianist's perspective. Even though Kokotsaki's focus is largely theoretical in contrast to the practical nature of my research, these insights have been important in reinforcing my own observations and perceptions.

Books and articles that discuss artistic practitioners and artistic research have also guided this project. Examples include *The Reflective Practitioner: How professionals think in action* by Schon (1983), *Practice as Research: Approaches to creative arts enquiry* edited by Barrett and Bolt (2007), *The Artistic Turn: A manifesto* by Coessens, Crispin, and Douglas (2009), and *The Conflict of the Faculties: Perspectives on artistic research and academia* by Borgdorff (2012). In addition, sources that discuss methodologies pertinent to this research were naturally consulted, such as *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts* by Dean and Smith (2009) and the article "Practice-led research and the future of the creative industries" by Harper in the *Creative Industries Journal* (2011).

Especially for Chapter One, non-music related sources were consulted particularly for the sections Emotional Intelligence and Communication. These included *Creative Collaboration* by Vera John-Steiner (2000), *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ* by Goleman (1995), *Emotional Intelligence in Everyday Life* by Ciarrochi, Joseph and Mayer (2002), *Small Group and Team Communication* by Harris and Sherblom (2008), and the article "Team dynamics: A social network perspective" by Bowers, Dixon and Warner in the *Journal of Sports Management* (2012).

Blogs were consulted for this project as well, such as that of Phllip Kennicott, who is the Art and Architecture Critic of *The Washington Post*, and pianist Stephen Hough, who writes a blog for *The Telegraph*. Lastly, writings from eminent pianists which discuss their approach and thoughts in relation to music making in general have also contributed. Influential examples include *Alfred Brendel on Music: Collected essays* by Alfred Brendel (2001) and *Everything is Connected: The power of music* by Daniel Barenboim (2007).

D. Methodology

This research is an example of practice as research and of knowledge creation through action. The writing of a personal journal and the interviewing of experienced chamber music pianists provided rich data to enable and feed this project's realisation. The methodologies implemented draw on practice-led and action research models. They typify artistic research by not being bound by a rigid methodological approach (Haseman, 2006, p.3), instead showing an intertwining of experimentation, participation, interpretation and analysis (Borgdorff, 2012, p.211) with the ultimate aim of achieving improvement.

Creative practice was clearly at the centre of activities, and inquiry was approached from the inside out, rather than looking from the outside in (Harper, 2011, p.11). As this research progressed, understandings were developed from an action-based creative practice, and underlying everything was the desire to critically consider the modes, methods and outcomes of creating (Harper, 2011, p.12). As such, this research is based on the premise that practice can result in research insights, these arising out of making creative work (Smith & Dean, 2009, p.2). It thereby adopts Barrett's proposal that knowledge is derived from doing (2007, p.1).

The creative experiences that informed this research included my involvement with several main chamber music groups and with various additional short-term groups who performed as part of my DeClassified Music concert series. Throughout the first four years of this project, a journal documenting experiences had was used as a method of data collection. This is an established and

conventional means of data collection, and the information gathered was used as a reference from which to review, reflect and act upon (Jones, 2006, p.234).

Throughout, critical reflection was key to this project, and the iterations of the action research methodology, with its cycles of action and reflection, provided an appropriate methodological tool. Typical of action research, the practice itself was primary to the investigation and learning was accomplished by 'doing' in a 'real situation', rather than by experimenting and analysing work in a contrived, experimental study (Dick, 2000; O'Brien, 1998). Following the reflection central to this methodological approach, comparisons were then made with alternate data sources, such information gathered from published sources and this project's interviewees. Resultant conclusions then facilitated more productive and positive experiences in the continuing creative practice. This process was often repeated, prompting interesting and recurring experiences and issues, both musical and non-musical. Observing these significantly contributed to the overall research.

Necessarily, the creative experiences required for this research included the participation of other musicians. Therefore, the means to retain colleagues' anonymity were deeply considered. As a consequence, reference to any particular musician, apart from those interviewed, has been repressed, and if circumstances have been related, details have been slightly altered to ensure anonymity. Additionally, direct inclusion of all but a few of my personal journal entries was held back, because these writings are very personal and include references to numerous personal interactions that should remain confidential.

This research also acknowledges that colleagues with whom I was working might not have described things in the same way as related in my journals. Therefore, the reader should be advised that experiences informing this research are reported from my perspective only.

i. The interviews

In addition to my experiences and the written sources consulted, valuable data was collected from semi-structured interviews conducted with fourteen experienced professional pianists, these enabling this research to achieve a depth of insight through a triangulation of data sources. This was considered to be crucial from the outset, for these grant this largely self-reflexive project scope and relevance, and offer fresh insights as regards this research's lines of enquiry.

This research accepts, however, that knowledge gathered through such interviews is by its very nature not fixed or absolute (Nelson, 2013, p.39). It also acknowledges that experience might not be something that can be fully passed on as skill or knowledge, because "nobody and no body is identical" (Coessens, Crispin & Douglas, 2009, p.113). However, there are also many who believe

that most of what needs to be known about collaborative talent can be imparted to others (Katz, 2009, p.4). Therefore, the data gathered from these interviews is considered necessary to this project, for through these pianists' experience emerges their obvious understanding of the craft, and by sharing their first-hand knowledge, this research allows others to share in their understanding. From this, perhaps others might develop a deeper awareness themselves as they absorb what these professionals have found successful, unfavourable and why, and what they believe to be valuable to their understanding of their craft.

The selection of subjects for the interviews was by virtue of their considerable know-how, their experience as chamber music pianists, and by their representing a diversity of culture, gender and age. Interviews were conducted in person in Brisbane, Melbourne, London, Amsterdam, The Hague and New York. Six of the pianists were female, the other eight male, and ages ranged from late-20s to 60s. Thus, these pianists represent a valuable range of different perspectives.

One of the primary challenges concerning these interviews was to extract knowledge from participants known to be steeped in a tradition based on tacit know-how. I recognised that my interviewees would typically know more about their practice than they could say (Schon, 1983, p. viii). Indeed, I expected that, as pianists, they could find discussion about what they do unsettlingly separate and removed from their music practice, and they might regard the challenge of thinking through and articulating this somewhat daunting and confronting (Tomes, 2006, p.110 ; Emmerson, 2012, p.29). Perhaps this is because musicians can find that their kind of knowledge is difficult to describe, or even that an attempt to describe their practice should be avoided as it might leave them "occupationally paralysed" (Schon, 1983, p. viii). It was also conceivable that these pianists may be reluctant to honestly share their thoughts and experiences for they may feel a certain amount of insecurity about revealing their supposed "weaknesses" (Chaffin, 2002, p.43).

As a pianist myself, I related to this typical harbouring of insecurities in relation to the revealing of my private thoughts and experiences. Indeed, throughout the course of this research, I felt the need to keep a certain degree of privacy and anonymity. After all, creative work requires one to be deeply searching, and the experiences had can be profoundly personal and revealing. Adding to this, some instances can be simply impossible to relate in all truthfulness, for, as a musician, one is always evolving, changing perspectives, having realisations and moving on. One is never a fixed quantity, and changes to one's perceptions often happen organically and even unconsciously.

To hopefully prevent such thought processes from handicapping this project's interviewees, I worked at establishing a relaxed and comfortable feel to the interviews so that subjects would feel at ease. Firstly, I made sure to ask permission for the interview well in advance. Secondly, I chose

to use a semi-structured format for the questioning so that the interviewees could lead the interview in the direction they wished. The interviews were thus conducted in a conversational way with no imposed time limit. Thirdly, I offered the subjects freedom to choose the venue for their interview in the hope that convenience and familiarity would enable their comfort and therefore openness to discuss the issues. Settings therefore ranged from university spaces to homes and cafes.

In the interviews, many of the participants made comments or inferences that they had not thought about or discussed certain chamber music related issues in such detail or in such a tangible way before. At times, certain issues were even sometimes trivialised. Overall, however, the interviewees all presented with sincerity and thoughtfulness, thus I perceived the results to be comprised of honest accounts of personal opinions and experiences.

As is characteristic of semi-structured interviews, the questions asked were not identical for each participant. This was because of the deliberately casual nature of the interview process, the uniqueness of each interviewee, and that the interviews were conducted over several years. Many statements, anecdotes and examples from my own experiences led the interviews and major themes that emerged from participants' answers helped to inform the direction of my research and subsequent interviews. Answers varied widely in length, some participants focusing more on certain issues than on others.

All the interviews were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards established by Griffith University's Human Research Ethics Committee, and all appropriate protocols were followed. As part of this, participants were informed of the nature of the project and that they could withdraw at any point. Though they did not consent to the transcript of their interview being reproduced in this thesis, all participants agreed to having their interviews audio recorded and to having selected comments included in this paper and linked with their respective names and backgrounds. Whenever I cite from these transcripts, I have ensured that any other musicians' names that were mentioned have been afforded full anonymity, as have anecdotes that described situations which might identify un-named individuals.

The first three interviews were conducted at the Queensland Conservatorium in Brisbane. I found opportunity to take advantage of these pianists who were visiting the institution for recitals or lectures in their field. These interviews were each approximately thirty to forty minutes in length and commenced with a brief questioning in relation to the interviewee's initial introduction to chamber music. Questioning then focused upon the skills involved in their work, and then delved deeper into specific techniques and how they viewed the role of the chamber music pianist.

The first interview was with Roy Howat in September of 2012. A Scottish-born, Cambridge-educated pianist, violinist and scholar, Mr Howat has a special expertise in French music and travels internationally to give concerts, broadcasts and lectures. As noted in his professional biography, Roy Howat has "played concerts and broadcast with an array of distinguished soloists, chamber groups and singers" ("Roy Howat", 2016). Recent acclaimed performances have included a tour with the Panocha Quartet in Japan, the Czech Republic and the UK (including the Wigmore Hall). For our interview, Mr Howat was generous with his time and forthcoming with his perspectives. He acknowledged the importance of listening as a skill for chamber music pianists, and offered further valuable insights, such as the importance of the pianist's left hand as regards balancing issues. Perhaps unexpectedly, I left the interview feeling that Mr Howat viewed the chamber music pianist's role to be unabashedly 'supportive' to others in the group. Interestingly Mr Howat also indicated that he was perhaps unused to thinking in such detail about his chamber music work, admitting towards the end that "those are some tricky questions to answer."

In March of 2013 I conducted my second interview with Peter Hill, a British pianist and musicologist. An Oxford and Royal College of Music graduate with a special interest in contemporary music, Mr Hill was head of the department of music at the University of Sheffield, writes extensively, and enjoys success in both solo and chamber music pursuits. Early in his career he was a founding member of Dreamtiger, an ensemble devoted to organising concerts of contemporary music, and more recent chamber activities include his recording of a disc of Stravinsky's works for two pianos. At the time of our interview, Mr Hill was in Australia performing such chamber works as Messiaen's *Visions de l'Amen* and *Quatuor pour la fin du temps.* In our interview, Mr Hill shared his insights regarding chamber music freely and humorously and we started with recounting memories of his musical childhood and how this might have affected his chamber music skill. Hill then explained his understanding of aspects such as listening, matching other instruments' sounds, blending and the intricacies of working with other musicians. To end the discussion, Mr Hill was particularly adamant about the basic importance of every ensemble member knowing all the involved musical parts of a work, not just their own.

Taiwanese pianist Hsing-Chwen Hsin was my third interviewee in April of 2013. A faculty member, and Head of Performance at the National Chiao Tung University-Hsinchu in Taiwan, Ms Hsin is a graduate of several esteemed institutions including the Yehudi Menuhin School and Stony Brook University in New York, where she was awarded her doctorate. Ms Hsin enjoys a career as both a soloist and chamber musician, her chamber music pursuits beginning with her brother, who was a violinist, and continuing on with many other distinguished artists, including Yehudi Menuhin. Ms Hsin shared her thoughts sincerely and generously, but this was a shorter interview, perhaps in part because of Ms Hsin not speaking in her native language and perhaps because Ms Hsin was

unused to my line of questioning. However, of particular interest were Ms Hsin's thoughts regarding breathing as a pianist, of the pianist being like a conductor, and her recollections from her time at the Menuhin School. She recounted that she witnessed string players learning chamber music skills in designated string quartet lessons, but noted that pianists were not schooled similarly. Instead they were invited in an 'accompanying' capacity to string player's solo lessons. Ms Hsin admitted some frustration of being kept in such an 'accompanying' role in her early years. She shared how she aspired to being a soloist in her own right and that in later studies she enjoyed the change of asking "people to play with *me*."

My fourth interview was with Leigh Harrold in May of 2013. This interview was less formal as Mr Harrold is a long-time friend and colleague of mine from our time together at the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM). Professionally, Mr Harrold remains at ANAM, now working as a member of the faculty as a collaborative pianist with the students. A holder of a PhD, Mr Harrold leads a busy life as a highly sought-after pianist, accompanist and collaborator based in Melbourne. He is also a long time member of chamber groups such with the Syzygy and Kegelstatt ensembles. I approached Mr Harrold immediately following a performance he had given in the Queensland Conservatorium Theatre after which I conducted an impromptu interview. Because of these circumstances, our interview was restricted to only twenty minutes in length, therefore we could not delve as deeply as I would have liked into the subject area. Nevertheless, Mr Harrold shared valuable insights openly and with humour, particularly as regards the collaborative side of chamber music and uniqueness of the pianist's role. He also related that he was 'very lucky' to have received special, focused chamber music training in his student years and he admitted that without this "I think I would have struggled more getting into the industry, definitely."

Lisa Moore visited the Queensland Conservatorium in May of 2013 and so I was presented with the opportunity to interview this Australian-born, New York-based pianist. With a special interest in contemporary repertoire and theatrical performance, Ms Moore holds a doctorate from Stony Brook University in New York and was the founding pianist of the Bang on a Can All-Stars, touring with this renowned ensemble for sixteen years. Some of her more recent chamber music excursions include the making of Grand Band, a piano sextet featuring some of the finest pianists in New York City, and TwoSense, a commissioning cello and piano duo dedicated to expanding the chamber music repertoire. Moore's awareness of the importance of people skills whilst also taking care of oneself in the chamber music arena distinguished this thirty-minute interview, and her insights as regards pedalling and certain rehearsing techniques were insightful.

My final interview to take place in Brisbane was with Ukranian-born, Melbourne-based Sonya Lifschitz in October 2013. Another friend and colleague, Ms Lifschitz is a graduate of the Peabody

Conservatory and holds a practice-based PhD from the University of Melbourne. With much experience performing classical chamber music, she has a special interest in new music. Ms Lifschitz was in town to perform in my concert series, DeClassified Music, and her reflections were thoughtful and imaginative. Ms Lifschitz's expectations of chamber music were notable in her search for “personalities”, for “less homogeneity and more individuality” and that it was most satisfying for her when there was “real conversation” amongst players. Interestingly, Ms Lifschitz felt that “sadly 98%” of a pianist’s chamber music skill has to be learnt through experience because, based on her training, conservatories seem to focus only on “how to play your instrument.”

In this same month, I travelled to Melbourne and interviewed Timothy Young at the Australian National Academy of Music where he is Head of Piano. A graduate of the *Nicolò Paganini Conservatorium* in Genova and winner of the Chamber Music Competition of Liguria, Mr Young is a founding member of Ensemble Liaison and in demand as a soloist and collaborative pianist. In our thirty minute interview, the technicality and directness of Mr Young’s answers was engaging. Whilst acknowledging the importance of listening and blending skills, Mr Young imparted that social skills were for him “extremely important” for chamber music pianists. He also emphasised the pianist’s singular role as regards time spent in preparation, their knowledge gained from reading full scores and playing both melody and harmony, and the selflessness sometimes required, especially in the duo combination.

In April of 2014 I commenced the series of interviews which were conducted outside of Australia. In 2013 I was awarded a Fellowship from the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust of Australia to ‘expand my music, career and industry knowledge in specific ways to achieve excellence as a pianist and artistic director’. Therefore, having already an international itinerary charted for London, the Netherlands and New York, I took the opportunity to simultaneously interview pianists for this project too.

I started with two artists based in London. The first was Kathron Sturrock, the artistic director and pianist of the long running and highly regarded chamber ensemble The Fibonacci Sequence and a graduate and now faculty member of the Royal College of Music. This interview was conducted at this college, Ms Sturrock giving her time and answers generously in a lengthy interview of over forty-five minutes. Ms Sturrock made it clear that she regarded social skills to be most important for chamber music pianists, sharing that it was necessary to be “nice to work with” and that you have “got to be happy to be adaptable.” She shared many thoughts and experiences regarding aspects of this, imparting sage advice for preventing certain problems from occurring. She also agreed with my proposition that it was strange that chamber music related social skills were not a part of a

student's education at places of learning such as the Royal College. As the interview progressed, Ms Sturrock imparted other valuable thoughts as regards further skills such as balance and blending. Interestingly, I gained an impression that many of Ms Sturrock's abilities were subconscious talents, thus detailed accounts of these were not central to our discussion.

The second London interview was with Susan Tomes at her home in Wimbledon. Born in Scotland and the first woman to study music at King's College, Cambridge, Ms Tomes is described in her professional biography as "a rare example of a woman who has achieved several decades as an acclaimed chamber music pianist" ("Susan Tomes", 2016). Ms Tomes has made over fifty recordings as a soloist and as a chamber musician, these with groups such as the piano quartet Domus and with the Florestan Trio. Ms Tomes is currently engaged with a long-running duo series with Austrian violinist Erich Höbarth, now exploring the sonatas of Schubert with performances at Wigmore Hall in London and at the Queen's Hall in Edinburgh. Ms Tomes also writes regularly for The Guardian. I was particularly looking forward to this interview because of Ms Tomes being the author of several books which initially inspired this research project. I was not disappointed. Our interview extended for well over an hour and her candid comments offered insights beyond her published writings. Similarly to the other interviewees, Ms Tomes discussed practical issues, and she also reinforced and expanded upon many of the perspectives expressed by my previous interviewees. In particular, she focused upon the singularity of the pianist's role and how pianists are viewed in their profession when they collaborate. Of special interest was how Ms Tomes proposed that the pianistic role could be viewed through a feminist lens and how she expressed that the sometimes 'submissive' role of the pianist could be related in some ways to the subjugation of women in Western history. Ms Tomes also shared the experience, had by all of my interviewees, of being initially introduced to chamber repertoire in an 'accompanist's' role. She similarly shared a realisation had early in her career that her musical part was not, as she was encouraged to believe, an 'accompaniment' in terms of it being easier and musically supportive to a 'solo' line. Ms Tomes explained that she now believed that this distorted perspective was ultimately damaging to pianists and to the performance of chamber repertoire, especially in the duo context.

Following my stay in London, I then travelled to the Netherlands to conduct three more interviews, also in April of 2014. The first was with fortepiano specialist Bart van Oort in his room housing a collection of period keyboards at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague. Currently teaching fortepiano and lecturing in Historical Performance Practice at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague, the *Conservatorium van Amsterdam*, and at the Royal Flemish Conservatory in Antwerp, Mr van Oort has made more than fifty recordings of chamber music and solo repertory. Included are the *Complete Works for Piano solo and Piano four-hands of Mozart* (14 CDs), and with his

ensemble the Van Swieten Society the *Complete Haydn Piano Trios* (10 CDs) and *Schubert at Home* (chamber music by Schubert). Considering that Mr van Oort is a fortepianist, and, alone among the pianists I interviewed, a leading figure in historically-informed performance practice, I expected this interview to offer certain differing perspectives. However, the contrasts were more than I had anticipated. Even though Mr van Oort similarly acknowledged the importance of social skills and partnership equality with the other interviewees, he starkly declared that the modern piano was not made for chamber music, "the modern piano, the Steinway, is not a chamber music instrument." Also, for him, issues of articulation were of greater concern than those relating to 'blending'. As regards pedalling, Mr van Oort related that he only used this "half of the time", and when he did, he did not worry about creating too much volume, in fact he purposefully used it "to make more volume." Indeed, overall, Mr van Oort impressed that the issue of volume control for fortepianists was not an issue as it is for 'modern' pianists, and this viewpoint affected all aspects of chamber music making, even stage seating. I was informed that seating fellow instrumentalists in the bend of the fortepiano did not create potential 'balance' issues for him, for the fortepiano sound would simply never get too loud. As a further contrast, interestingly Mr van Oort related that music programs in The Hague, with which he was involved, did not have separated programs for solo and chamber music study. Instead, his students often brought their chamber music to their individual lessons with him. In these lessons, he did not discuss only interpretative aspects, but also the "functioning of the group too - we talk about what makes a trio a trio, what are the respective responsibilities of each member in the interpretation."

My second interview in the Netherlands was held at the Amsterdam Conservatory with David Kuyken, a principal study teacher in piano at the conservatoires in Amsterdam and The Hague. A soloist and chamber musician, Mr Kuyken performs regularly with musicians such as violinist Janine Jansen and with the Prazak and Mandelring String Quartets. For more than a decade, he has programmed his own chamber music series in the Rode Hoed in Amsterdam. This interview also offered valuable insights and interesting contrasts, even though it suffered from certain distractions by being held in the foyer of the Amsterdam Conservatory as it was closing for the day. For Mr Kuyken, the skills of listening and flexibility were paramount. In contrast to earlier interviews, it seemed that social skills were of only small consideration for his chamber work. Also unlike other interviewees, he uniquely shared his thought that the performance of chamber music from memory was something he liked. In this interview, I noticed, as with many of my other interviewees, that Mr Kuyken perhaps had not recently consciously considered some of the issues I was presenting. Indeed, like Mr Howat, he recognised this by acknowledging the different line of the questioning I was taking by commenting that "they are actually difficult questions." However, Mr Kuyken, like others, seemed to warm to the interview's topic as the questioning progressed and he shared some profound thoughts.

Jan Willem Nelleke was my third interview in the Netherlands. Mr Nelleke teaches at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague, at the *Franz Schubert Institute* in *Baden bei Wien*, Austria, and is also an acclaimed composer. The Naxos website states that Mr Nelleke's "exceptional qualities as a duo partner have been widely recognised" and that he has established duo partnerships with many musicians such as flautist Philippa Davies, the cellist Karine Georgian, the mezzo-soprano Bettina Smith and the baritone Frans Huijts whom he performs with frequently throughout Europe ("Jan Willem Nelleke", 2016). Mr Nelleke's recent recording projects include chamber music by Poulenc, and Schubert's *Winterreise*. For this interview, I returned to The Hague to meet Mr Nelleke at a cafe. From the start, Mr Nelleke embraced the term 'accompanist'. When I asked him "do you think this term means something negative now?" Mr Nelleke replied, "Not to me, but there are people who consider that, yes I know, but it's usually people who don't know what it entails to be an accompanist. A lot of people … consider it less important to be an accompanist than to be a soloist, but that's just their ignorance." When I later asked if perhaps duo/collaborative pianists should 'reclaim' the word 'accompanist', Mr Nelleke replied, "Why not? It's great to have company isn't it?" As the interview progressed, Mr Nelleke agreed that balance was an important consideration for chamber music pianists, as was the role of being both a leader and a follower. He too shared valuable insight regarding the handling of the social aspects of rehearsing. Perhaps most interestingly, when I referred to blending, he acknowledged this, but made a point that 'contrast' was a part of this too, "sometimes you do go with the colour the other instrument gives you, but a lot of times explicitly against it."

From the Netherlands I travelled to New York in May 2014. Here I held my final two interviews, these being with two younger pianists: Vicky Chow in Brooklyn, and David Friend in Manhattan. A Julliard and Manhattan School graduate, Canadian-Chinese Chow is based in New York and almost exclusively performs contemporary and new music, both as a soloist and chamber musician. Ms Chow became the pianist to succeed Lisa Moore in the Bang on a Can All-Stars ensemble and she also collaborates with other ensembles such as ICE, Wet Ink Ensemble, and the Wordless Music Orchestra. Recently Ms Chow has given the world premiere of John Zorn's new piano trio *The Aristos*, and Michael Gordon's *Ode to La Bruja, Hanon, Czerny, Van Cliburn and little gold stars* with Grand Band (six pianos). Ms Chow shared many priorities with the others I interviewed, but her interview was valuable as she added her own learned experiences and insights to the questions posed. Interestingly, and similarly to most of my project's participants, Ms Chow showed signs of not having thought consciously about many of the topics I raised, this demonstrated by her starting answers with "Well, I guess it's not all the time, but now that you mention it, that has happened …" or "I think so - yeah, now that we're talking about it …" Ms Chow also acknowledged the revealing nature of my line of questioning, "Oh - now you're asking personal things!" Later in the interview, Ms Chow brought to my attention that, as for fortepiano,

balance was not an issue for a chamber music pianist playing electronic keyboard or when being amplified. The sound projectionist instead has control of the ensemble's balance. Ms Chow also brought to my attention the cultural influence on social interactions in groups, herself making a unique subject as a Canadian person from a Chinese culture living in New York.

Also with a special interest in contemporary music and a graduate of the Manhattan School of Music, my last interviewee, David Friend, furthered his studies in Cornell University's Critical Performance program, focusing on experimental and contemporary keyboard performance practices. Mr Friend often performs as a soloist, but he is also a self-described "dedicated chamber musician" ("David Friend", 2016). As examples of his experiences, Mr Friend is a founding member of several innovative ensembles including TRANSIT New Music; he performs regularly with ensembles such as Ensemble Signal, Hotel Elefant and Grand Band; he has performed extensively in Columbia University's Composer Spotlight series with a variety of ensembles; and he workshopped and premiered Julia Wolfe's *Steel Hammer*, an evening length chamber piece that was a finalist for the 2009 Pulitzer Prize. In this final interview, Mr Friend offered further insights. For example, he brought to my attention the "freighted history" that the piano enjoys, along with the romantic idea of the solo pianist. He proposed that even though the concept of the "eccentric hero" might be reinforced by teachers and piano competitions, perhaps being a chamber musician is in actuality the inversion of such traits. Even though the usual issues were addressed, Mr Friend's conversation centred on sound projectionists and how their inclusion in new music performance changes issues for pianists. In connection to this, Mr Friend discussed chamber music in reference to its changing role for pianists over time. When I asked Mr Friend which skills might have carried all the way through the centuries, he referred to a recently read concept he had empathised with: "You can be a horrible person and a great opera diva and be a great virtuoso pianist; but to be a great chamber musician, to play with good ensemble, you have to be a good person."

CHAPTER ONE - Collaboration

The meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemical substances: if there is any reaction, both are transformed.
— C.G. Jung

In chamber music, collaboration is the crux. Pianists need to leave behind their identity as a soloist, preferably becoming, as Kathron Sturrock commented, “comfortable being part of a team, and not ‘look at me, here I am’ ” (interview, April 17, 2014).

Working in a chamber music group can be exciting and can inspire great creativity. On the other hand, as in any team, this work can also become boring, demeaning and sometimes extremely frustrating (Harris & Sherblom, 1999, p.2). On its best days it can generate a synergy where the whole of the group is better than the sum of its parts (Harris & Sherblom, 1999, p.11). Valuable productive ideas can emerge from players’ joint thinking and from their sustained, shared struggles; players’ activities and partnerships can allow effective confrontation of shifting realities and searching for new solutions; and players can engage in and professionally grow from mutual appropriation (John-Steiner, 2016, p.3). However, at its worst, poor collaboration can lead to the misrepresentation of profound musical works and even to the destroying of personal friendships. Sometimes, as I have regrettably experienced, problems even continue after a group has been dissolved, as related by Kathron Sturrock, “when people get either turfed out or leave, there’s an awful lot of hurt and it’s really, really like divorce in some cases - it really, really hurts and some people then go off and feel very vindictive” (interview, April 17, 2014).

This chapter is presented based on the premise that people are often unaware of, or even mistaken, as to how groups really work (Borman & Borman, 1988, p.2). There is an abundance of research regarding teams and group work in general, but hardly any discuss this in relation to chamber music, especially from a pianist’s perspective. Additionally, this research recognises that skills regarding teamwork do not seem to be a part of pianists’ training nor a consideration for most piano teachers. This omission is perhaps regrettable considering that the collaborative experience is complex and charged with both cognitive and emotional issues (John-Steiner, 2000, p.124). Thus, this research suggests that such an oversight might need to be addressed, considering also that the ability to get along with people and maintain relationships could be viewed as important to one’s professional success as one’s technical ability. After all, a primary aim for chamber ensembles is to function with the utmost group cohesion, efficiency and effectiveness so as to enable the group to perform to the best of its ability. To borrow Vicky Chow’s words, “the best chamber musicians are the ones that are aware of the other people they are engaging and making music with, “they are aware of ‘the collaboration’ ” (interview, May 9, 2014).

Therefore, this chapter seeks to highlight the nature of the pianist's individual role in the chamber ensemble, better understand some of the factors that can either foster or inhibit a group's pursuit of high performance, and examine certain skills that pianists can draw on to improve their chances of success. It is proposed that perhaps pianists' effectiveness in this context could be enhanced if they better understood their nature and role in relation to their working with others and that benefit might be gained from considering teamwork related issues and skills when participating in collaborative chamber music projects. A pianist with a deeper understanding of this might be better equipped to increase the group's outcome satisfaction and musical result.

This chapter begins with the section The Pianist. Here, a pianist's singularity as a member of a chamber music group is explored by examining the intrinsic nature of the pianist's role and discussing what this research has labelled the 'accompanist issue' in relation to their chamber music work. The chapter then continues with The Team. Opening this section is a review of challenges that might be experienced by pianists in the collaborative chamber music setting. This is then followed with a discussion regarding certain non-musical issues, namely team assemblage and the importance of a type of democratic equality where each ensemble member's voice is valued for its distinct contribution. In the final section of this chapter, two main skill areas have been selected for closer examination: Emotional Intelligence and Communication.

The information presented in this chapter is recognised as being only an introduction to this topic. Due to the scope of this project, many aspects of chamber music teamwork have been mentioned only briefly and some left relatively unexplored. Nevertheless, it is hoped that this examination will adequately support the suggestion that this area of chamber music practice could benefit from increased exposure.

A. The Pianist

i. The pianist is a loner

From the outset, pianists are comparatively cut off from the social life that prospers in many musical ensembles and orchestras (Tomes, 2004, p.xiv). Classically trained pianists do not work in 'sections', not many have full-time occupation as a regular part of an orchestra or ensemble, and their early training and practice rarely includes regular musical social opportunities in group tutorials, orchestral rehearsals and orchestral tours.

Most professional pianists, including myself, have also practised alone for many hours a day from a very young age. For pianists there is the combination of harmony, melody and complex contrapuntal writing to master, significant technical intricacies to conquer, and the sheer size and

scope of repertoire and styles with which to become familiar. As they continue with their hours of solo practice for the remainder of their professional career, pianists are also required to make significant choices as regards their interactions in their adult private and social lives to enable this.

At the crux of this solitary disposition is that the piano is better equipped than any other instrument to perform solo. Thus, pianists are renowned for their self-sufficiency (Tomes, 2004, p.xiii) and they emerge from their studies with strong musical personalities and the ability to create their own interpretation of a musical work (Kemp, 1996, as cited in Kokotsaki, 2007).

Therefore, the classical pianist can be viewed as a kind of loner, one who can spend long periods of time “quite happily” on their own (Blank & Davidson, 2007, p.234). They may even be associated with the romantic ideal of an eccentric. David Friend described this in terms of “the lone artist who strikes out on his own path” (interview, May 12, 2014). It would make sense, then, that such a background might influence how classical pianists interact with others when organising, planning, rehearsing and interpreting music within a chamber ensemble.

Accordingly, I have often found it worthwhile to remind myself that a soloistic approach is not ideal for chamber music work. Sometimes the “whims and fancies” that have been encouraged for years in solo playing can bring chaos and destruction to collaborative interactions (Pridonoff & Pridonoff, 2007, p.62). This perspective is supported by Hackman’s observation, that highly individualistic team members can even turn into “team destroyers” and undermine the teams they become part of. Such people can prove to be unskilled when working collaboratively, and their individualistic focus can discourage the teamwork necessary for optimal team performance (2004, p.85).

Additionally, pianists might also consider that, even though their solo pursuits may have encouraged high levels of conscientiousness, and even above average intelligence (Blank & Davidson, 2007, p.234), they and the group can benefit greatly if they recognise others’ talents and allow other individuals to compensate for those areas where their own knowledge, skills, experience or musical style are less satisfactory (Hackman, 2004, p.86). After all, despite personal success and acclaim, part of the responsibility of a chamber music pianist is to be aware of the widely acknowledged egalitarian nature of chamber music work. One must dismiss egocentric tendencies, and sometimes subdue a strong personality for the good of the whole. If this is not managed, the product may be flawless and virtuosic, but the integral concept of chamber music will be sacrificed (Montparker, 1998, p.142). As a consequence, reviews might transpire like that of Philip Kennicott’s concerning pianist Lang Lang’s Deutsche Grammophon piano trio disc with Vadim Repin and Misha Maisky, “… in the end you get very little chamber music - and a whole lot of Lang Lang” (2009).

ii. *The 'accompanist issue'*

I have often felt that the pianist within chamber music has a unique identity issue to consider. Even though egalitarianism might be sought by most chamber music ensembles for ultimate team and musical success, I have experienced that a pianist's role is still sometimes compromised by what this research will label the 'accompanist issue'.

Many pianists interviewed for this research found this to be a problem too, and Susan Tomes believes that this matter is particularly bothersome in duo partnerships.

> If they play on their own, pianists are lionised. If they play in a trio, quartet or quintet they are again acknowledged as having the lion's share of the music, and often as being the driving force. But, uniquely, if they play in a duo they suddenly become 'an accompanist' (2004, p.180).

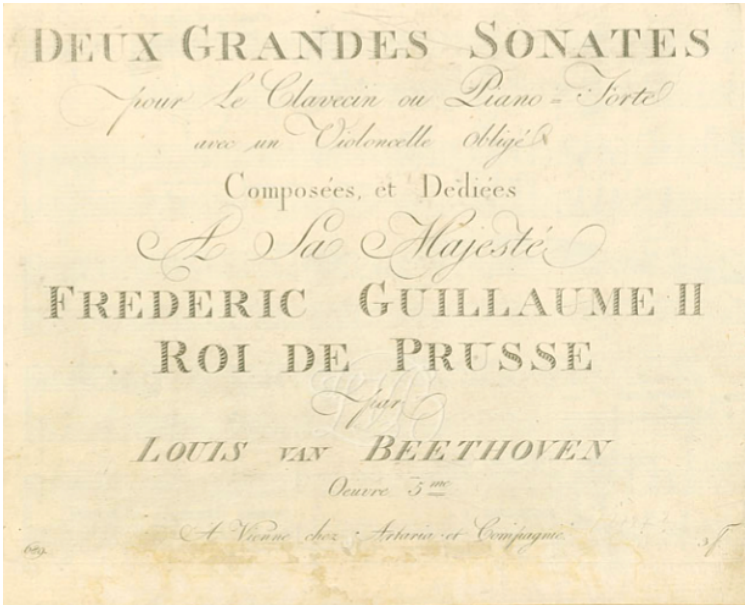
Indeed, the term 'accompanist' is often ascribed to chamber music pianists who perform with one other instrument in a duo combination. Regrettable it is, then, that this word's use often implies subserviency. Thus pianists in such situations are often viewed as providing a 'supportive' role, only there to provide a musical background for the supposed 'soloist'. Instances where this occurs include the following: those who refer to sonata repertoire, such as the Beethoven piano and violin sonatas, as 'violin sonatas'; the recordings and concert promotional posters that advertise a challenging duo program with the string player featured in large hero type and the pianist in much smaller font; the instrumental teachers who call in student pianists to 'support' their students for 'experience' as the violin student learns duo repertory for their own 'solo' performances; the duo recitals where the cellist or violinist confidently takes centre stage, whilst the pianist meekly follows and seats themselves several metres behind; and the reviews of duo recitals in which the poor pianist is "caged" into the final sentence (Tomes, 2004, p.179).

This treatment of pianists in the music profession aligns with what I have seen mirrored in the psyche of the general public. For example, I have experienced being described as "*just* the accompanist", the 'just' implying inconsequence and unimportance; I have been welcomed to a concert venue for a duo recital with the demeaning question, "oh - are you the accompanist then?"; I have often received ill-informed compliments such as "you provided a lovely accompaniment to the violin playing tonight - isn't he wonderful?"; and I have enjoyed feedback post-concert such as, "you should play softer dear - sometimes I could actually hear the piano over the cello!"

When looking at the evidence, the idea that pianists are somehow the subordinate 'accompanist' in duo chamber music performance is simply unfounded. On closer examination, it might be more accurate to consider the *pianist* as having more musical responsibility than the other player in the

partnership. Indeed, perhaps at times the other instrument is there to accompany and enhance the *piano* soloist? To support this reversal, the importance of the pianist's role is made clear when considering that the composers of landmark duo works were usually trained as concert pianists themselves - Beethoven, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms, Prokofiev, and Shostakovich, to name but a few. Indeed, some of these composers clearly referred to their duo sonatas as *piano* and violin/cello sonatas, not the other way around (Tomes, 2004, p.180). For example, the inscription on the manuscript of Beethoven's Op. 5 cello sonatas (1797) reads "for piano with obbligato cello."

Example 1. Ludwig van Beethoven, Deux Grandes Sonates Op.5, title page. Artaria edition (1797)



Jean Barr emphasises that this ordering on the manuscript and on early editions, as seen here, indicates quite clearly what the composer viewed to be important (Lewis, 2007, p.21).

Also supporting this proposed change in perception is the technical and musical difficulty of most piano parts. Often the piano part will boast equal melodic material, as well as the majority of the accompaniment figures and harmonic texture. This type of writing leads to the pianist's uniquely heightened sense of perspective, their having to always think through their part both horizontally - melodically - as well as vertically - harmonically.

A pianist is also the only one in the partnership, and usually in all chamber ensembles, who works from a full score. This naturally expands a pianist's mental view of the music being played in comparison to their relatively blinkered single line duo partners. Often this means that only the pianist comes to rehearsal seeing the "whole picture" of a musical work (Tomes, 2004, p.xiv).

To continue as devil's advocate, it might be worth considering what could happen if a considerable mistake is made during a duo chamber music performance. If the instrumentalist makes the mistake, in my experience the music usually continues on relatively seamlessly as the pianist, watching their full score, caters for the mistake by filling in melodies and harmonies or perhaps catching up a few bars. What would happen if the pianist was to make a mistake of equivalence? I propose that the music would be noticeably damaged. If the piano part's harmony along with its melody is lost, rhythmic momentum would cease, and a single line from the lone instrumentalist would be all that is heard. It is also likely that the instrumentalist would not be as well equipped to 'catch' the pianist, to be able to pick up seamlessly after the blunder. After all, they would not have a complete score to consult or as full an understanding of the harmonies involved.

Considering these reasons, why then does the 'accompanist issue' persist for chamber music pianists? Why has this distortion lingered when many reasons demonstrate that it should be, if anything, otherwise?

Bart van Oort observed that answers to these questions may be connected to the development of the modern piano.

> Until 1850, there's only a musician who takes responsibility for his own part and plays 'out' on his instrument when he needs to. The instruments can give their full potential all the time because the composers know how to deal with it. It's just, when you approach that repertoire on modern instruments that have so much more potential, especially the piano, then you bring it out of balance, and the piano has to scale down - and so becomes an 'accompanist'. (interview, April 28, 2014)

Hsing-Chwen Hsin observed another angle (interview, April 12, 2013). She noticed that perhaps the disproportionate status of duo partnerships is sometimes commercially influenced. Advertising, and consequent public perception, being sometimes dependent on who is paying and organising for the concert to happen - "because he (the instrumentalist) is the sponsor initially, it's 'his show' … it sort of effects how the music is made."

Susan Tomes, however, believes that it may be contributed to by the culture in which string players, in particular, are educated, for she believes many are not coached to understand the true nature of the collaborative process. She observed in her interview, for example, that there are some young eighteen year old violinists being launched into the profession with a twisted understanding of the music they play. Tomes also reminisced that in her student days she, like many pianists today, was sometimes taken for granted by such string players, being treated like an

'accompanist' in the negative sense. She recalled her realisation when it dawned on her that this was an upside down perception,

> I suddenly realised that these [piano] parts, which are more complex and interesting, are actually the main musical narration, as it were, and the string part is the beautiful supplementary part. It's not conceived as a solo part for the strings and an accompanying part for the piano. Actually, if you look at the music and who presents the thematic material, who does the modulations, who does the varieties of texture, who does the rhythmic inner voices - all these things - it's actually the piano that has the most of it, naturally because the piano can do multi-layered things. And usually the other part is basically a melodic line or is doing response type material … a lot of times when you analyse it musically, the piano part is actually carrying the main river of music. The string part is, as it were, floating on the top of that. (interview, April 21, 2014)

Tomes also suggested that this culture is sometimes encouraged by pianists themselves, who, when faced with the inflated ego of their duo partner, become submissive and take on the expected background role so as to keep their musical companion happy. Pianists, she observed, can often tend towards being the "bigger person" for the sake of the music and the "greater good" (interview, April 21, 2014).

Indeed, pianists themselves might also need to shoulder some of the blame from another angle, for, as Roy Howat observed, the label of 'accompanist' to mean 'less important follower' might have been a reaction to brilliant pianists who collaborated badly, "if pianists tried to play like a soloist and drowned out the other instrumentalists, basically they were being told, 'hey, know your place - you're not running the show' " (interview, September 13, 2012).

Additionally, Howat suggested that the 'accompanist issue' might have also been derived from the singer and instrumentalist partnership, a "soloist, diva thing" from the Romantic era (interview, September 13, 2012). Susan Tomes agreed with this 'diva' theory as regards high profile violinists too,

> … it all goes back to the days of Paganini and other very celebrity violinists who made the cult of personality which came to the fore in the 19th century for the first time, and inevitably, anyone who played the piano with such a person would be subordinate and seen as subordinate to them, and I fear it just went on from there. It sailed into the 20th century with people like Heifetz who sometimes didn't even put the pianist's name on the concert program. (interview, April 21, 2014)

Tomes reflected that this might also be what has affected audiences into complying with this perception,

> … you realise that if that was the way the general public was trained to see it, then they're not going to voluntarily start saying to themselves "Wait a minute - that pianist was awfully good, and that piano part was terribly difficult, so maybe that piano part was as important." People are lazy, you know, about concepts and things like that, and especially now when there is such a cult of celebrity in the media and people can be celebrities for nothing. I think there's a tendency to just think, "Well ok, that person must be the celebrity because they are standing up, and that person must not be the celebrity because they're sitting down." It's sometimes as simple as that. (interview, April 21, 2014)

Interestingly, Tomes additionally observed a similarity between the 'subjugation' of the pianist as an 'accompanist' and the subjugation of women in Western history,

> In a way it's come to be a little bit like the parallel case of feminism and how women grew to realise that … they had been forced for a very long time to be the power behind the throne, not on the throne … It seemed to me there were actually parallels with the somewhat smaller field of chamber music and the pianists, and how pianists … have somehow almost been connived to being in the background because they sort of had a bigger view of the whole thing and they thought "oh, it's ok, I privately know how important this is." (interview, April 21, 2014)

Finally, as mentioned previously, it might be worth considering the negative connotations that the word 'accompanist' itself brings with it. However, this is perhaps strange for, after all, to literally 'accompany', to go somewhere with someone, is not at all demeaning. Instead, as Jan Nelleke proposed, the word 'accompanist' can have very pleasant connotations,

> I think accompanist is a nice word … You can *accompany* someone to the station. That means if someone goes the wrong way, you say, "hey, let's go this way - I know a short cut." Or if a car comes, you hold someone - and the other way around …. There is not one that walks in front or one who walks back. (interview, April 30, 2014)

Roy Howat suggested this too, and continued this thought by saying that, in truth, *every* instrumentalist in the ensemble could be described quite rightly as being an accompanist, "in its [chamber music's] real sense, everybody is accompanying everybody" (interview, September 13, 2012).

But, fortunately, as with issues of feminism, even though the 'accompanist issue' might remain to a degree, times have improved for pianists into the twenty-first century. After all, a hundred years ago, pianists who shared the stage often played concerts behind screens and had their names

completely left off the programmes (Katz, 2009, p.277). Nevertheless, this research holds the view that this topic is still worth consideration in today's world, simply because there remain many who think of chamber music pianists as 'accompanists' in the negative sense. There are even musicians who believe that piano parts are written to 'accompany' theirs, and they hold the view that a pianist could not possibly know and understand a 'cello sonata' as well as they do. Indeed, from a personal perspective, I believe this topic certainly deserves review, for I still experience and witness such attitudes being expressed both implicitly and explicitly, and these have had a negative impact on me personally and professionally. After all, as suggested by Susan Tomes, forced subjugation can have a profound mental effect, "sometimes you can see in the pianists themselves that they too feel cowed, and that they too feel subordinate - you can tell in their body language, in their presentation, and the way they come onstage" (interview, April 21, 2014). Contemplation of this issue is encouraged also by the aligned belief of all the pianists interviewed for this project. Though they all used different words to describe their reactions, they all proposed that true chamber music, that gives faithful representation of the repertoire, grows from an egalitarian partnership. All were certain that chamber music could not be true to itself if one player had to relinquish their autonomy.

To conclude this section, a comment given by David Kuyken (interview, April 29, 2014) might install confidence to pianists in trying circumstances. It might be an aid to them to remember that "the power" in the chamber music duo is, in actuality, always in their hands, so to speak, "I never understand [how a pianist can become 'the accompanist'] - because *we* have more means to decide how things are going [musically] - use them!" Indeed, the next time I find myself being dictated to, forgotten or dismissed, I will recollect and take heed of this suggestion. Such advice might have helped me, for instance, when I was once rehearsing Schumann's *Märchenbilder* for viola and piano with a young violist after only having had the music for a short time and him having had it for many months. In my journal, I have noted this player's attitude towards me and my unpreparedness for this.

> Many of the viola player's comments today were incredibly patronising and indicated a lack of understanding of the music. For example, he turned to me at one place in the music, pointed with his bow and said "I can see you can move your fingers - so play faster here." Later he stated to me that this "was a viola piece - it doesn't matter what the piano has there, this is how it goes" and he proceeded to demonstrate that we should play at a very fast speed, even though the piano part was very full. I suggested that perhaps we should rehearse it a bit slower, at least at the moment, and particularly because I felt the character of the music might actually be stronger if all the rhythms in the piano part were allowed to be heard fully. He indicated again to me, through his body movements and general adamance, that my opinion and the writing in the piano part were both insignificant to him. This perspective and behaviour startled me. I was unsure how to react. I think I mostly answered him by staring at the

> score on the music desk with a somewhat bewildered expression, hoping to find appropriate answers there.

Unfortunately, because of this player's approach to the rehearsal and the music, my journal entry continues by recalling that I brought our first rehearsal to a swift, curt end, and then later terminated the musical partnership. In retrospect, perhaps knowing Kuyken's advice and this section's information then might have granted me the necessary knowledge and fortitude to persevere with this partnership.

B. The Team

i. Challenges

Typical of collaboration is the challenging nature of interactions between group members. With the potential for synergy amongst players also comes the potential for friction (Klickstein, 2009, p.114). Indeed, I have unfortunately felt, alongside many other musicians, an element of truth in the commonly quoted industry saying, 'chamber music is music you play with people who *used* to be your friends'.

Leading to such friction is the demanding work expected of the chamber group, namely, that of making a cohesive group interpretation of a musical work from a detailed score. Sensitive and extremely accurate work is needed for the interpretation of Western classical music and a musical interpretation can be a highly personal thing. Therefore, in rehearsal, differences in taste can easily lead to differences of opinion, this giving rise to disagreement and conflict (Davidson, 1997, p.216).

Also intrinsic to a chamber music group is that each player in the ensemble is a performer and often deeply dedicated to their craft. They can therefore be sensitive to criticism about their playing and protective of their talent. At times they can even be bloody-minded and prone to a troublesome degree of egocentricity. Indeed, disputes can arise because of there being many "big personalities" in a group and their "all having ideas", as was observed by Sonya Lifschitz (interview, October 3, 2013).

Additionally, as with all teamwork, chamber music cannot be undertaken in a vacuum, unaffected by deadlines, time limits, or schedules (Marks, Mathieu & Zaccaro, 2001, p.358). Indeed, I have often observed how a range of factors such as stressful performance deadlines, the demands of large and difficult repertoire, different players' performance habits and anxieties when under stress, and the competitive and comparative nature of the music industry can influence how chamber music players interact with each other.

Challenges can also arise because chamber music teams usually operate without work place standards, and they are often manager-less, self-directed teams who have undergone no 'team oriented' training. In addition, a salary and/or hourly pay rate is only enjoyed by a select number of established groups. Therefore, stress can often be related to financial reasons, with much rehearsing taking place outside of players' regular work hours. As a result, team members are often tired and/or overworked. Indeed, I have found that working with a colleague who is complaining at every rehearsal about how they are 'so tired' and 'so overworked' is not conducive to harmonious interactions or creativity.

I have also found that further challenges to chamber music groups can emerge from how they are initially assembled, their unmethodical approach to general functioning, or because of a lack of awareness from certain or all players as regards the complexities of teamwork and communication. For instance, in relation to both communication and general functioning, on one occasion I found it stressful to not be informed of a composer's attendance to our rehearsal. I found it upsetting that the violinist in the group failed to pass on the information so that we could better prepare the composer's work, and that he did not consult with the group in relation to which rehearsal might be most suitable for the visit.

However, sometimes it is the longevity of certain working relationships that can incite problems. For instance, Peter Hill observed, "If you have been playing with the same cellist for 35 years, how on earth do you create a 'professional' atmosphere?" Hill continued,

> Because you're working under very considerable stress, especially when you are on tour or you're making records or doing live broadcasts … Not everybody plays their best all the time, and with the professional stresses and strains, [you can think] you know, "my god, why on earth can't they remember to count that bar correctly?" or whatever it is. And [you can] just become sick of the sight of somebody. (interview, March 19, 2013)

A pianist's cultural background can also create challenges, a player's nationality and its attributes sometimes affecting interactions in the group. This was noted by Vicky Chow,

> Not all the time people listen because I think there's a culture here [New York] where you want to just be louder … I think that's a very American culture thing. Chinese culture is more quiet - well, not all the time - but more shy. And I'm also Canadian, so I'm always saying 'I'm sorry' and I'm always apologising. I'm always polite and let other people go first. I think the culture's a little bit different here - I think people are more aggressive here and outspoken. (interview, May 9, 2014)

It was also noted by Kathron Sturrock,

> … a horn player … said it depends on the countries …. apparently you could in the Netherlands … say, “listen, Brieley,” you know, “when you are playing loud, the sound is really getting a bit hard - can we take care of it?” But you couldn’t say that here [London] … it isn’t as easy as it should be … people get very offended. (interview, April 17, 2014)

Obstacles might also be created by gender-related issues. For example, in my journal I have noted on several occasions that I felt frustrated by what I perceived to be a dismissive attitude or unnecessarily emotional response directed towards me from some male colleagues. I could find no reason for this besides the fact that I was female. I therefore raised this issue with the female pianists I interviewed. I was interested to find that most had also experienced such problems on occasion, perceiving gender discrimination to sometimes be a cause for disquiet. For example, Susan Tomes observed the following,

> I find that … on occasion it’s fine for a certain kind of rough banter between men [in chamber music rehearsal], but sometimes if I try to join in with that, everyone is sort of upset with me, offended or surprised … [And] a suggestion is ‘masterful’ if it comes from a man and often ‘nagging’ if it comes from a woman … I think there’s an awful long way to go before these things equalise. (interview, April 21, 2014)

Even though pianist Vicky Chow acknowledges that a patriarchal attitude, or ‘boys club’, might still remain in chamber music making, in her experience she instead found that sometimes it was her fellow female players that tended to create the problems by being overly aggressive. She commented that this was possibly so that they could be assured that they would not be overlooked, “… they really over-compensate … I feel if anything *that’s* annoying - when they are *already* defensive” (interview, May 9, 2014).

However, Sonya Lifschitz agreed with Susan Tomes, likewise relating her perception that sometimes being female can incite dismissiveness from male co-performers. Lifschitz also felt that this could compound when combined with being younger in age than the other players,

> These great players … invited me to play [with them]. They heard me play a solo concert and really liked it and invited me to do these couple of concerts with them in Europe. And it was very exciting, I thought, ‘wow this is going to be the best thing ever’ … They turned out to be these two completely dominant controlling kind of ‘males,’ you know, they thought they were going to have this sort of mid-twenties girl come in and they will tell me exactly what to do. Anyway, it was a really uncomfortable situation … it made me angry and resentful and I thought, ‘I don’t want to be in this situation.’ (interview, October 3, 2013)

I have also experienced the unfairness of having my musical opinions dismissed by older players in rehearsal. One example was when in a duo with an older colleague, someone whom I had often given deference to in the past because of their five-year seniority. However, as we grew older together, I gradually saw us on equal terms professionally. Unfortunately, in our chamber music rehearsals it became apparent that this person did not share my perspective, for when offering suggestions, they were sometimes casually dismissed and given no consideration. This indicated to me that this colleague thought my opinions to be of less value compared to her own. As experienced by Lifschitz, when these instances accumulated in number, I grew resentful, and problems arose concerning our ability to collaborate successfully.

British pianist Kathron Sturrock also related that ageism could, on occasion, create a challenge for her. Ageism in this example, however, occurred from Ms Sturrock being an older contributor,

> There is a problem, I think, with age: however well you get on with someone, if you are the next generation up they don't tend to want to hang out with you. I found that quite hurtful because I think I'm quite hang-able out-able with. I have to say to myself, "Well, they don't see it like that." … it is hurtful - that is true. (interview, April 17, 2014)

As a final noted challenge for chamber music groups, it is interesting that this study's interviews revealed that the main aspect that seemed to create challenges was having to work with co-performers who displayed a non-team-player-mentality. This was a notion I could whole-heartedly agree with. Indeed, this dislike was pervasive, and similar opinions were shared like that of Bart van Oort's who related as follows,

> I am not interested in co-operating with anyone who is not having the same enjoyment out of [collaborative] music making that I do. If they are there for their own good, well, let them be good on their own. I do not need to be a part of that. (interview, April 28, 2014)

ii. Group assemblage

As observed by Loft, an ideal assemblage of a chamber music group would be one where all members of the group know each other well, have started the ensemble together, are compatible personally, technically and musically, and they look forward to a long association (2003, p.189). This scenario, however, does not match the reality for many groups.

Considering ad hoc groups, when players come together for one concert only or a pianist might be called upon to make a 'guest appearance' with a long standing group, perhaps the process of how

to put together a team is less important. Nevertheless, I believe that having belief in a partner's capabilities is still crucial, especially to counteract the marginality, estrangement, and self-doubt that frequently plagues creative people in general (John-Steiner, 2000, p.127). Therefore, if playing standards of the group members match, and especially if one has worked with the group before, perhaps it might be that much easier to avoid problems. Then, it can be like “having a dinner party with old friends”, as described by Roy Howat (interview, September 13, 2012).

When creating or joining an ensemble intended to function for a longer time, however, the process for team assemblage might be worth considering in some depth. Interestingly, though, like other aspects of teamwork as regards chamber music, how to create and establish a new chamber music group seems to be a subject that is not addressed by conservatoires or by piano teachers in the studio. Instead, I have witnessed that students often experience assemblage by being placed together with others by teachers according to their year of study, general playing standard or convenience, or student players might congregate randomly because of previous friendships or certain repertoire, along the lines of “We need a horn player - do you play horn? Great! Would you like to play the Brahms Horn Trio with us?”

In relation to professional groups, my experience has been that the randomness of the assemblage process seems to continue. For example, the ‘job descriptions’ are often vague or not completely accurate, especially if the group is not one of the few established organisations with management structures and a board. Indeed, in my experience, clarity can lack as to the administration or levels of responsibility expected from new players, the time expected for rehearsal, or even in regards to the aims for the ensemble. I have also observed that the process of selection is often biased, a player sometimes being chosen above another if they are already known socially or professionally, are personally attractive, have a great sense of humour or demonstrate an easy going, non-confrontational nature. Sometimes a member is simply selected because they might just be the only player in town who performs at the required standard or they might be the only piano or violin player available for rehearsals on the university faculty. For some more established groups, auditions are held, but I would suggest that these processes seem to be often influenced by the previously mentioned points too, judging by the anecdotal evidence that has come my way.

Perhaps it is worth considering that chamber group assemblage seems to be a particularly arbitrary process when compared to, for example, some business organisations. To contrast, they are more likely to advertise a job publicly with a clear, written outline of the job expectations. For full-time jobs, hours of work expected and salaries are accurately indicated. Hirers may even implement a researched approach when assembling a team. Often through delicately prepared face-to-face interviews, and maybe even tests, they will gradually whittle away applicants until they

are left with a potential team member who is best experienced for the role available, has the appropriate personality and who adds to the range of different skills and personality types in the team. During the selection process, a focus might be applied to the recognition of personality type, perhaps drawing on research by such well known names as Isabel Briggs Myers. Then, when selected, new team members might attend lectures about team work, use tests to learn about their personality and how they might fit into their team (Myers-Briggs Type Inventory, Marston's DISC assessment or the Belbin Team Role Inventory), undertake team exercises to identify behavioural strengths and weaknesses, or they might simply be reminded continually about their team responsibilities.

To contrast, even an established, full-time ensemble asking for a new player's Myers-Briggs Type or requesting that they join the ensemble on a program to discover their and each other's personality types is something that I feel would most likely be met with considerable ridicule and derision in the profession. Indeed, even mentioning the word 'teamwork' in a chamber music context I have found is likely to be met with raised eyebrows and sarcastic comment. But maybe there is room for chamber music ensembles to take a more considered approach when assembling their group, especially in light of the challenges that members of chamber groups are likely to confront.

Perhaps ensembles can take note that one of the most common problems in relation to team assemblage is when members themselves select who will be in the ensemble. A problem that emerges is that members tend to choose people who resemble themselves. This would be expected, for group members tend to aspire to be comfortable with one another, and believe that harmonious relations will facilitate effective team performance. In other domains, this, however, has been proven to not be ideal. Instead, it has been realised that a diversity of knowledge, skill, perspective and experience is what is most important to teams' creativity (Hackman, 2004, p.86). Many claim that there is strength in diversity, for it adds perspectives and insights to the group when solving difficult problems. It also lessens destructive tendencies such as 'groupthink', when strong unanimity can lead to a deterioration in the decision-making process (Harris & Sherblom, 1999, p.56). Therefore, it might be beneficial for pianists to be mindful that their collaborative partners can build on their solidarity as well as their differences, and that differences perhaps should be welcomed to a degree, for they can stimulate and challenge an individual (John-Steiner, 2000, p.128).

I have found that it is also important for ensembles to have an accurate appraisal of one's collaborative partners' professional and musical standard. After all, an individual can affect the group's overall standard by having, for example, a comparatively lower level of practical skill, a

different expectation of quality, or the inability to put together their part in the limited timeframe available. Such a situation, no doubt, has led to another often-cited industry warning, that 'the group is only as good as the worst player'. In light of this, and as I have experienced, a group will inevitably be more effective when standards are matched, especially considering that it has been shown in other domains that generative ideas usually emerge from joint thinking, from significant conversations, and from sustained, shared struggles (John-Steiner, 2000, p.3). Therefore, having a certain equalisation of standard amongst the selected players might be a valuable aim. If this is not possible, however, then accurate assessment of the capabilities of one's fellow players might be advantageous so that one can prepare one's mind to expect realistic outcomes.

iii. Leadership and democracy

Goodman believes that there must be at least one leader in a chamber music team and that it is the style of this person's leadership that determines the team's social climate and teamwork effectiveness (2002, p.164). Tuckman concurs, and notes that chamber groups are indeed characterised by an appointed or emergent leadership (1965, p.385). This would make sense considering that, in other domains, many experts express skepticism over the viability and productivity of truly leaderless groups, and they warn that such groups can lack a clear focus or structure (Harris & Sherblom, 1999, p.260).

Sometimes a leader can emerge in a chamber music group because of instrument choice and/or nationality - for example, Bart van Oort suggested that Russian violinists may be expecting to "call the shots" musically because of their particular training (interview, April 28, 2014). Alternatively, sometimes the leader might be the founder and administrator of the group, those who have arranged the upcoming gig, or perhaps they are the most experienced professionally. Personally, I have felt that a leader is indeed necessary to some degree, especially in groups larger than a duo and when considering administrative functions, which are often carried by chamber musicians themselves. Yet, whoever takes on the managerial/leadership role has to make sure that they are proficient in helping the group to reach the goals it sets out to accomplish (Harris & Sherblom, 1999, p.253).

As regards the musical interactions and processes, however, I would support having an evenness of responsibility amongst members, with each chamber musician being a conversation-partner with equal rights (Deckert, 1981, p.2). Indeed, I have often heard the chamber music group being referred to as a kind of a democracy. It could perhaps also be viewed as a 'self-managed performing unit' where the team as a whole has responsibility not just for doing work, but also for monitoring and managing how that work gets done (Hackman, 2004, p.85). This seems logical, especially in the musical sense, for the respecting and recognising of each individual's contribution

is one of the genre's main attractions, this innate characteristic stemming from each individual's part being integral to the performance of the overall work.

However, this should not be interpreted to mean that a group should strive to be one comprised of many leaders. This issue was raised by Vicky Chow when she described a situation in which she was a part of a rehearsal when multiple people in the ensemble were trying to lead simultaneously (interview, May 9, 2014). Conflicting physical cues combined with forceful verbal musical directions were delivered by many in the group on this occasion. As a member of this ensemble, Chow described this as being very confusing and she reflected that it was far from ideal.

Therefore, perhaps the aim might be that everyone in the ensemble be both a musical leader *and* follower. The leadership in the rehearsal room moving, as Kathron Sturrock suggests, from one to the other - when one is leading, the others are following (interview, April 17, 2014). To enable this, Leigh Harrold (interview, May 19, 2013) suggested that there should be 'an air of diplomacy about' and David Kuyken suggested that one must come to rehearsal with a feeling of "openness", an approach that enables one to be able to "take on someone else's way of playing." If a player is instead found to not be 'open' in rehearsal, Kuyken sees this as the end of proceedings and recommends to desist playing with this individual, "Let's have a drink, let's be good friends, but let's not play together," he suggested (interview, April 29, 2014).

In my own experience, I too have found that the promotion of democracy in the rehearsal room improves the music-making process. It encourages a feeling of inclusion amongst the players and allows musical ideas to be presented in a manner comfortable to each unique individual. When I have worked with someone not open to different approaches and the equal exchange of ideas, I have felt that my creativity was being stifled. To illustrate this, this section ends with an excerpt from my artistic journal in which I had described such an experience.

> It was an intensive period of rehearsal leading to the performance. Stress was not alleviated by the fact that the cellist was suffering from a non-characteristic hand injury and therefore was stressing about how much he would be able to rehearse. The Shostakovich cello and piano sonata came together easily. However, because the cellist had played this on a number of occasions, he had a very set interpretation of this work. I had only performed the piece a few times previously. The cellist declared it was to be done his way mainly because he was the cellist, and this was (apparently) cello repertoire. When I questioned this approach, he said that I could present to him a different way of playing things and he would consider it. I found this difficult to do, however, when put on the spot, especially after I had been presented with his strong viewpoints. And this cellist is a very articulate person. He can clearly articulate what he would like to present musically. It is something I admire. But I work differently. I usually infer things musically as I play and I like to gradually uncover an interpretation. I can sometimes find it difficult to put ideas into words and sometimes my creative ideas are

> usually not very concrete when they first present themselves to me. Unfortunately this cellist interpreted this initial lack of verbalisation to mean that I was void of interesting ideas. So he continued to present his ideas forcefully and sometimes condescendingly, “Now - Shostakovich was a Russian composer you know…” In a late night rehearsal, this single-minded approach did not bring about a pleasant rehearsal experience, and my overall mood and receptiveness was altered for the worse by the end. I felt that the cellist sensed this too, for he also seemed frustrated by the rehearsal. I think he thought that I was being unnecessarily dour - this made me feel even more unhappy about things. The resultant performance from these rehearsals was not as clear an interpretation as I would have liked, but it was satisfactory - nevertheless, I resolved to limit my working with this musician into the future.

C. Emotional Intelligence and Communication

It is apparent that the players in a chamber music group depend on a highly complex set of interpersonal skills in order to produce a unified performance (Good, 2002, p.186). Indeed, when working in ensembles, the majority of challenging experiences I have been involved in were as a result of social interactions within the group. Such experiences were shared by many interviewed for this research including Kathron Sturrock, who claimed that because of this, a player’s social skills were so important to her that they were in fact the deciding factor when she selected her co-performers (interview, April 17, 2014). Therefore, perhaps it can be claimed that for a pianist to succeed as a chamber musician and team player, maybe the most useful collaborative skills for them to develop and implement are their social ones. Consequently this research explores two social skill sets in this section under the headings ‘emotional intelligence’ and ‘communication’. These were chosen for their all-encompassing natures and potentially high value to the chamber music pianist.

i. Emotional intelligence

The term ‘emotional intelligence’ (EI) is a relatively recent phenomenon, attracting increasing attention since the 1990’s (Davies, Roberts & Stankov, 1998, p.989). A reason for this might be the available brain-imaging technologies that emerged at that time, and which continue to lead us to understand more clearly how the brain works regarding emotions (Goleman, 1995, p.xi).

Past research has often examined people’s specific intelligences within various sub-areas, one such sub-area being social intelligence, Thorndike defining this as the ability to perceive one’s own and others’ internal states, motives, and behaviours, and to act towards them optimally on the basis of that information (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, pp.2-3). Even though Salovey and Mayer concede that such a subarea is not so readily demonstrable, these authors nevertheless define emotional intelligence as a subset of social intelligence, describing this equally elusive concept as “the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them

and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (1990, pp.4-5; Caruso, Mayer & Salovey, 2009, p.1). Perhaps a further streamlined definition of EI is that it is "the capacity to carry out reasoning in regard to emotions, and the capacity of emotions to enhance reasoning" (Brackett, Mayer & Warner, 2002, p.2). In other words, emotional intelligence describes abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations, to control impulse and delay gratification, to regulate one's moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think, to empathise and to hope (Goleman, 1995, p.34).

Psychologists and educators are interested in EI because it has been said to matter more than IQ and because they want to understand its implications for people's lives (Brackett, Mayer & Warner, 2002, p.12). This makes sense, for after all, academic intelligence has little to do with a person's emotional life (Goleman, 1995, p.34). Indeed, Goleman states that academic intelligence offers virtually no preparation for the turmoil - or opportunity - that life's vicissitudes bring (p.36). Consequently there is an accumulating number of research studies now available that indicate that the study of EI offers a great deal to the enterprise of understanding human performance (Caruso, Mayer & Salovey, 2004, p.7).

Interestingly, Brackett, Ivcevic, & Mayer believe that it is conceivable that emotional abilities, and therefore EI, play a significant role in creativity when products express emotional content (2007, p.33). EI is therefore pertinent for pianists playing chamber music, for the product produced by them is one that indeed expresses emotional content. Also of possible interest is that group members' interpersonal skills and compatibility are key to group performance, and that a combination of EI with IQ can lead to the making of the best decisions, as well as to the developing of more satisfying and successful teams (Yost & Tucker, 2012, p.1).
Included in one's EI is the ability to monitor others' modes and temperaments and to enlist such knowledge into the service of predicting their future behaviour (Yost & Tucker, 2012, p.5). Those with emotionally intelligent skills can also effectively regulate and manage moods, not just as an individual but also in others around them (Salovey & Mayer, p.12). For a pianist working in a chamber music team, development of such skills would clearly be beneficial. After all, as stated by Salovey and Mayer, emotions and moods may be used to motivate and assist a team's performance when attempting complex intellectual tasks (p.16).

Salovey and Mayer also state that when people approach tasks with emotional intelligence, they should be at an advantage for solving problems adaptively. They note that emotionally intelligent individuals may be more creative and flexible in arriving at possible alternatives to problems, and that they are also more able to integrate emotional considerations when choosing among alternatives (p.16). These points give further weight to the importance of EI for chamber music

pianists, for we are often required to solve problems when under pressure and in situations that require adaptation. For example, influences often include ever changing environment, instruments, players, deadlines and repertoire.

To gain further clarity as to the usefulness of EI to chamber music pianists, it is important to consider that those with deficits in EI can have difficulty regulating their emotions and recognising emotions in others. This would present challenges for a chamber music pianist, for a rehearsal can indeed become emotional. As observed by Vicky Chow, “This is a very emotional thing that we do - it is very difficult, people get emotional - we’re humans,” and she continues her observation by noting that it is important for these emotions to be kept under control so that work can be done (interview, May 9, 2014).

Also, a low EI can mean that individuals can not recognise emotion in themselves. This aspect would make it impossible to use what Lisa Moore believes to be a good mantra for chamber music pianists: that of “knowing yourself”. Moore explains that it helps a pianist to know when they are not having a good day so that they can be extra careful to prevent taking offence or being offensive (interview, May 22, 2013).

Additionally, those with a low EI level may not be able to have the perceptiveness and self-control to show ‘tolerance’, which is rated as one of the most important skills for pianist Timothy Young. Young believes this enables a pianist to better support other ensemble members, allowing them to shine. An underdeveloped EI would also be an obstruction to a pianist’s ability to read personalities. Young also believes this to be “a huge part of what we do” (interview, October 18, 2013).

A study by Bracket, Mayer and Warner (2002) claims that evidence is accumulating concerning EI as a distinct mental ability that can be reliably measured (p.1). In relation to the improvement of a pianist’s EI, these authors also suggest that a person with low EI may have less emotional knowledge than others and it is likely that it can be improved through education (2002, p.13). While many argue that one’s IQ cannot be changed much by experience or education, some, like Goleman, believe that EI can be learned and improved upon, especially by children (1995, p.34). However, researchers also concede that future exploration will be necessary to help us see how EI develops in an individual or the extent to which EI can be changed.

This discussion of EI was included as a part of this research project because recognising its implications may be beneficial for pianists working in chamber music. They may be encouraged to observe their own abilities and perhaps feel that recognition and development of related skills may

enhance how they interact with their co-performers and handle challenging social situations. Through a developed awareness, they might also be able to recognise when a co-performer may have a low EI, and therefore view trying situations with improved understanding. Recommending how to improve one's EI or suggesting how piano teachers may incorporate EI related concepts into their studio is beyond the scope of this research. Instead, it is the aim that this information may serve as either a helpful introduction or a reminder that it is perhaps EI, and not IQ, that may be central to determining a chamber music pianist's collaborative success.

ii. Communication

Communication is "the transaction between and among people whereby all parties are continually and simultaneously sending and receiving information" (Harris & Sherblom, 1999, p.2). Successful communication between people is believed by some to be the tool that will create peace, mutual understanding and collaboration (Graves, 2003, p.83). Many of those interviewed for this project agreed with my perception that communication is of vital importance amongst chamber musicians. For example, Vicky Chow shared that in her view, successful communication is the crux of a chamber music group's success, for the activity, for her, is ultimately about relationships and trust (interview, May 9, 2014). Interestingly, Sonya Lifschitz stated that, in her opinion, as much as 80% of a group's success might be reliant on their communication skill (interview, October 3, 2013).

Most pianists interviewed for this research divulged that they preferred to play out their ideas in musical terms during rehearsal as opposed to verbalising them. As mentioned in my previously included journal extract, I have also found this approach to suit me - especially as regards the unfolding of musical ideas. It is interesting to note that Conlon and Murninghan's (1991) research regarding string quartets observed that in rehearsal, successful quartets likewise tended not to speak, players instead picking up information from one another when playing (Davidson, 1997, p. 220). Nevertheless, this section will commence by discussing aspects relating to verbal communication, as this plays a significant role too. After all, it has been suggested that every chamber music player in a group needs to act as a kind of "internal coach" for the ensemble (Loft, 2003, p.188), and, as Bart van Oort observes, without verbal communication, a rehearsal can become "passive" and players can fail to inspire one another (interview, April 28, 2014).

Verbal communication can be particularly complicated and challenging for chamber musicians when discussing musical issues in rehearsal. For example, as Jan Nelleke observed, "The moment you want to describe something, you have to exaggerate it already [because of] the way you have to put it into words - [because it is] something that usually cannot be put into words" (interview, April 29, 2014). David Friend noted its complexity too, but from a slightly different angle, "You have to be able to communicate about your sound or an idea, say, to a string player … or to people who

maybe don't have the same background as you" (interview, May 12, 2014). Nevertheless, putting one's thoughts into spoken word and relating it in an appropriate way remains a skill that pianists need to develop, especially in light of the comment, "he who keeps quiet, consents" (Bormann & Bormann, 1988, p.7).

Conversation and suggestions in rehearsal should ideally be made, considered and responded to with utmost selflessness and with the least possible defence of ego. However, Loft suggests that such might be achievable by "only the most saintly of musicians" (2003, p.187). Therefore, developing skills in assertiveness and in response to assertiveness could be considered very important to chamber music pianists. These skills can be challenging to draw on when embroiled in rehearsal procedures. They can become complex too, as suggested by Kathron Sturrock, who admitted to sometimes fretting and losing sleep over whether or not and how to communicate issues within her ensemble (interview, April 17, 2014). Consequently, a skilled approach to assertiveness might be one of the most important communication skills, for both non-assertiveness and its opposite, aggression, can quickly lead to a communication breakdown between individuals (Langrish, 1981, p.71).

When considering assertiveness, perhaps a pianist should start by noticing that they need to be careful so that their criticism and opinions do not come on too strongly and self-righteously, that their suggestions remain untainted by any suggestion of the proverbial "free lesson" (Loft, 2003, p. 184). Timothy Young agreed that this is paramount and is an important skill to master (interview, October 18, 2013). Jan Nelleke also underlined the importance of this skill and suggested that a pianist can manage this by avoiding placing blame on other players, for "it gets offensive, and you can't solve anything with that" (interview, April 30, 2014). He proposed that to be pleasantly assertive, a pianist might use 'we' instead of 'you' or 'I'. He suggested that by doing this, it is more respectful and less confrontational. For example, Nelleke illustrated this by depicting an imaginary situation where a pianist is playing in a trio with two string players who are constantly playing with bad intonation. The pianist might observe this by saying, "I don't feel we have the right colour here together - can we just do cello and piano together - and now violin, maybe you and the cello play together now?" Or Nelleke suggests that perhaps a hint can be dropped to the string players, "The practice hall is empty for half an hour after this, maybe you guys might want to touch up some things?" He further advised that keeping a "light" tone can be valuable to prevent a feeling of blame placement. For instance, if one player is always playing too loudly, the pianist can say with good humour, "Hey, I feel a bit overpowered in this passage!" Author and guitarist Klickstein agrees with the implementation of this kind of approach and also recommends the use of non-accusatory words. His suggestion to avoid blame placement is to use conditional questions, for example, "Is it possible that the flute came in early at measure 40?" (2009, p.120).

Knowing when and when not to be assertive can also be useful. Kathron Sturrock suggests that pianists on a first rehearsal should be particularly aware of this, otherwise more experienced players or established group members might think disparagingly, ”Well, who are you?” (interview, April 17, 2014). Harris and Sherblom agree that this scenario is a ‘norm’, and that the newcomer in a small group should expect that it is assumed that they will listen quietly and attentively at first (1999, p.46).

On the other hand, accepting and responding to another player’s assertiveness and criticism also requires skill. Most importantly for this scenario perhaps, is to remember to not take criticism personally, for, as Leigh Harrold commented, “it doesn’t mean they’re telling you you’re a bad person” (interview, May 19, 2013). Following this, perhaps a part of accepting another’s criticism professionally could involve the use of active listening, when one responds verbally and nonverbally to let others know that they are paying attention (Harris & Sherblum, 1999, p.135). Giving feedback might also indicate that what has been said has been heard and understood (Harris & Sherblum, 1999, p.139). However, avoidance can also be useful on occasion, this being when one carefully moves the conversation away from a potential point of conflict (Harris & Sherblum, 1999, p.237).

When looking back on some of my journal entries, and from witnessing certain interactions amongst other musicians, I have noticed that sometimes pianists can find themselves being accommodators, especially when the situation is influenced by the aforementioned ‘accompanist issue’. Accommodation refers to there being a one-sided concession that implies the giving up of all or most of one’s own position for the sake of others (Harris & Sherblum, 1999, p.234). For instance, I have noted some occasions when I have been faced with the ego of a fellow musician who believes they are ‘the soloist’, and on such occasions I have found myself regularly complying, or accommodating with a colleague’s comments and criticisms for the benefit of the overall process. Some of the interviewees, such as Timothy Young and Susan Tomes, made similar observations about certain experiences they had had. However, perhaps pianists should be careful here, for it might be that too much accommodating can lead to the forfeiting of the teamwork that is of intrinsic value to chamber music work. After all, as proposed earlier, having several unique perspectives in a group is widely noted to add to creative problem solving and enhanced solutions (Harris & Sherblum, 1999, p.235).

Further, I have found that allowing oneself to be railroaded into constant compromise can be a risk for another reason, for when one is always required to give up part of their position, one can feel disempowered and resentful (Harris & Sherblum, 1999, p.235). Therefore, pianists perhaps should

be mindful that compromise in a chamber group should aim to be *true* compromise. Then each player can feel empowered in the concession and will benefit from what all have agreed is the greater good (Harris & Sherblum, 1999, p.235).

Another consideration for chamber music pianists might be the implementation of what Covey (1989) refers to as empathetic communication. This is the action of seeking first to understand, then to be understood (p.237). As Covey states, most people do not listen to others with the primary intent to understand, they usually listen instead with the intent to reply. He also comments that we are often filled with our own rightness instead of attempting to fully understand what's going on inside another's head (1989, pp.239-40). This type of communication would have made a difference, for example, when I was in a particular situation with a group that failed to inform me of a change of rehearsal venue. Even though this occasion did not concern communication and musical matters within the rehearsal, it warrants inclusion for it did have a significant impact on the subsequent rehearsal. As I noted in my journal, I had to contact this group from the originally agreed upon venue, when no one turned up, and I had to acquire the new venue information and make my way there. I naturally arrived late, and somewhat flustered. At this point, I found that the organiser of this rehearsal did not seek to empathise as to why I was late and from where my irritation came from. Instead, he communicated to me that the group was rather put out because they were being held up. Also, very little consideration was given to my being inconvenienced. Needless to say, following this interaction, the rehearsal did not start well from my perspective, and my state of mind, unfortunately, proceeded to then affect the whole group. Upon reflection, if the other players had attempted to understand my annoyance regarding this, perhaps they would have understood why I was not on time, settled and ready for the rehearsal. Perhaps they might have offered me an apology, and even made me a cup of tea. Thus appeased, the rehearsal could have then started from a good place, and the incident never spoken of again.

Concerning physical communication, perhaps one issue pertinent for chamber music pianists is being aware of player charisma. Many successful musicians have high levels of charisma, this being regarded usually as a positive attribute for it enables them to communicate well with audiences. However, pianists should perhaps be wary of a musical or group decision led by an individual's charm, for such might not be as valuable as those led by knowledge or expertise (Harris & Sherblum, 1999, p.241).

Also in relation to physical communication, is the observation that the right physical attitude can prevent problems in rehearsal. In her interview, Susan Tomes suggested that physically communicating through one's deportment and bearing "that you will not tolerate poor behaviour" can prevent it occurring in the first place, "somehow people pick up on that - so I think, if one could

learn to have that attitude more consistently, it might help" (interview, April 21, 2014). Sonya Lifschitz mentioned this too, commenting that entering a rehearsal situation with a vibe communicating a "kind of gentle assertiveness" was desirable (interview, October 3, 2013). Bart van Oort concurs, and also suggested that an appropriate attitude in rehearsal can broadcast the right feeling, and can mean that other players will not expect constant submissiveness, for instance, from their pianist (interview, April 28, 2014).

As mentioned previously, most of the pianists interviewed for this research agreed with my contention that a chamber music group's level of success is a direct result of the quality of their communication skills. Unsurprisingly it is, therefore, that further aspects relating to communication are discussed in the subsequent chapters of this research. To conclude discussion at this point, however, is mention of a particular notion suggested by several interviewed for this research: that chamber music making is at its best not only when players use their communication skills to strive for a connection musically, but also when they endeavour to make a connection personally. Sonya Lifschitz agreed wholeheartedly with this, and so this section, and chapter, closes with her thoughts,

> Ideally it is when you have both. And I guess for me, the older I get and the more experience I have, it's really important that the *personal* connection is there. Because if it's not there, then I'm almost not interested - even if they are completely amazing players. Yes, it's of course nice to play with great musicians and you learn from it. But ultimately, if I'm not comfortable *personally*, if it's not a really nurturing dynamic on a human level, I have less and less time for that. (interview, October 3, 2013)

CHAPTER TWO - Listening

The extent to which one can listen - there are a lot of levels … I'm sure that the most talented people simply hear more … They hear inflections, they hear things that a lot of people don't hear. Therefore they are better. And the same goes in chamber music playing.
- David Kuyken

This research acknowledges that much of what a chamber music pianist knows cannot be verbalised or taught, for pianists could be viewed as producing knowledge through action, with most of this derived from doing and from the senses. This is typical of any artistic practitioner (Barrett, 2007, p.1). However, this research also supports the notion that guidance can nonetheless assist a pianist to gain or improve their skills (Katz, 2009, p.4). Therefore, even though the subject matter of this chapter may be particularly intangible, it is put forth in the belief that because a chamber music pianist's listening skills are critical, analysis and deeper understanding of them might have some value.

This is in line with the current move away from musicians relying solely on intuition and tradition for solutions (Rink, 2002, p.xi). Such an approach is illustrated by Yale-based pianist Boris Berman in his *Notes from the Pianist's Bench* (2000). Here, Berman suggests that students now search for specifics and practical guidance on various matters. The usual vague descriptive words typifying teaching methods of the past are now not enough, and Berman addresses this by drawing on his knowledge to make his expertise verbal and tangible, and therefore clear and accessible to others (p.3). Such perspectives have inspired this research in general, and this chapter specifically.

Relating to this has been my search for detail regarding how chamber music pianists can listen and what they listen for. Typically, details regarding these areas seem to be rarely articulated. Therefore, this chapter seeks to address this, as well as to highlight certain corresponding technical demands that I, and those I have interviewed, have found useful in creative practice. For accompanying listening skills must be an array of technical abilities to enable the realisation of musical aims. After all, technical ability is required to apply what has been listened to (Sariti, 2007, p.17). Indeed, if chamber music pianists wish to become masterful at their instrument, technical concerns must be overcome so that aspects of artistry and co-performer communication can take centre-stage (Klickstein, 2009, p.21).

It was felt convenient to divide this chapter into two main sections as per the lines of inquiry. The first section, therefore, analyses the chamber music pianist's listening skill and how it might go beyond that of a pianist practising and performing solo. The second section digs a little deeper, exploring what a chamber music pianist might be specifically listening for. As mentioned, technical solutions are included, as well as illustrative examples from my own experiences.

It should be noted, though, that this chapter explores listening only as regards acoustic ensembles that operate without amplification. When using electronic instruments, amplification, or microphones, a sound engineer ultimately controls the overall balance, dynamics and homogenisation of the ensemble's sound. The listening skills required of a pianist in these contexts are therefore disparate to those drawn on by pianists who need to rely on their own ears and judgment.

As in chapter one, here too I draw on my own experiences as well as on those had by pianists interviewed for this project. This is bolstered by information found in published sources.

A. The Skill of Listening

Tireless and keen listening is key to efficient practicing and achieving musical excellence (Berman, 2000, p.126; Klickstein, 2009, p.16). However, when playing in an ensemble, pianists need to not only consider the sound they are making themselves. They need to extend their listening scope to include that of the sound created by other individuals in the ensemble, as well as to that of the overall group. As described by Sonya Lifschitz, chamber music pianists therefore need to learn to "listen differently" so that they can "listen to the sound as a whole" rather than just their component of the sound (interview, October 3, 2013). David Kuyken considered this to be a chamber music pianist's most important skill, the ability to not only hear one's own part, but to also be very attuned to listening outside of one's own playing (interview, April 29, 2014). Consequently, the listening skill required of a pianist playing chamber music, compared to when solo, could be considered to be more challenging (Pridonoff & Pridonoff, 2007, p.62). Little wonder, then, that experienced pianist Jean Barr states that such a skill takes time to acquire (2011, p.18).

In his interview, Roy Howat described how he enacted his listening skill in a chamber music environment, "The mind is constantly zipping back and forward from one to the other: you're attending to what you're doing for a split second, then you're listening to them, and processing it, and then getting back to your own [part]" (September 13, 2012). Howat, similarly to Lifschitz and Kuyken, commented that this way of listening is indeed a skill, and that gradually it becomes natural to a chamber music pianist, becoming a subconscious process. Timothy Young agreed too that this way of listening is a learned skill. He also claimed that as it is something governed by the brain, it can be trained (interview, October 3, 2013).

To describe this particular way of listening, Kokotsaki uses terms such as 'active listening', 'externalisation of attention' or 'aural communication' (2007, p.656). Another term that could be used is 'responsive listening'. Sonya Lifschitz used these words, and she explained in her interview what she meant by 'responsive',

> It's a [type of] listening when you constantly have to be on your toes to hear what other people are doing and how you are going to respond to that. And what they do triggers something in your mind, in your imagination. You're listening to how you would respond - which you wouldn't do if you were to play by yourself … this stimulation that triggers ideas and thoughts and responses is partially external, not just internal … That is the beautiful thing about chamber music, it really brings out things that you might not think about. (interview, October 3, 2013)

This description also points out a significant difference between the listening skills of the soloist and chamber music pianist. It indicates that a pianist can be stimulated and inspired by listening closely to their co-performers, and when skilful listening occurs, it can trigger one's own imagination. Resultant responses can include a chamber music pianist adjusting their part in a way that they might not have previously considered. Personally, I have found that such listening can lead to revelations, originality and artistic growth.

In an attempt to further describe a chamber music pianist's listening skill, Boris Berman's three step process in relation to how one might listen as a pianist could offer a starting point,

1. How do I want it to sound?
2. Does it sound the way I want?
3. If not, what should I do to make it sound the way I want? (2000, p.116)

However, these three steps increase in their intricacy when the pianist works in chamber music. In an ensemble situation, "how do I want it to sound?" includes not just consideration of one's own part, but of other parts and how the combination of parts will sound as a whole. "Does it sound the way I want?" once again requires not just the analysing and evaluating of one's own part. Step 3, "If not, what should I do to make it sound the way I want?" means not just constructive change to one's own part, but the simultaneous leading through one's playing combined with verbal communication to affect other players' parts.

There are also further refinements for chamber music pianists to consider. Firstly, as one's co-players are also following the ongoing process described above, pianists must be open to verbal suggestions from other players in regard to improving their sound and how they play their part. Secondly, pianists need to determine how much of their attention should be given to the other musical parts being played so that their own part does not suffer from neglect, and vice versa. As Roy Howat observed, "If you listen too hard to the other part, one starts falling apart in one's own part - so there's a certain level that means you can listen very carefully but stand a tiny bit back from it, and keep paying attention to your own part." Thirdly, chamber music pianists must not be set in their interpretation - they must be flexible so that they can adjust after hearing their part

combined with the others. Fourthly, chamber music pianists need to be able to listen critically to other types of instruments, including the singing voice. Several of the pianists interviewed for this project, including Roy Howat and Peter Hill (September 13, 2012; April 19, 2013), indicated that having training on another instrument or instruments can be an advantage in this regard.

Lastly, as when playing solo, chamber music pianists need to be able to adjust to the particular piano they are playing. For any pianist in any role, this is a perpetual challenge, for performance instruments change dramatically in size, make, sound, quality and maintenance level. Such adjustment can be complicated, as illustrated by Alfred Brendel's observation, "What energy is sometimes needed to 'listen to' a particular piano, and what pertinacity to make it amenable to a certain piece of music!" (2001, p.336) For chamber music pianists, however, acclimatisation involves more factors than if playing solo. They must adjust not only from performance to performance, but sometimes, as well, from one rehearsal to the next. Also, chamber music pianists need to be aware of how their given piano affects their own sound, as well as how it affects their co-performers' and the group's overall sound.

Greater awareness of these differences in listening skill, between the soloist and chamber musician, might be beneficial, for an increased consciousness and acknowledgement of the complex skills involved may lead to increased group effectiveness. Indeed, I have personally found such to be the case. Therefore, as simple as it may sound, I find benefit in consciously reminding myself pre-rehearsal to move my ears away from my musical part and into others' parts, and to make sure I relate information received back into my part. This basic mental preparation can be especially advantageous when one has been in the practice room by oneself for an extended amount of time.

Alternatively, if a chamber music oriented listening skill is not implemented, then one's co-performers might become frustrated. As observed by Timothy Young, some musicians might be happy in thinking, "I can hear perfectly what I'm doing," but he believes that these individuals have missed the point. By not listening appropriately for the chamber music format, they are ultimately ignoring the meaning of the music (interview, October 18, 2013). Vicky Chow offered similar views,

> One of my biggest pet peeves … [is] when someone's in their own world and they're … not listening, they're not interacting and…not engaging with your part … It's just like any interaction: us talking, or you talking to anybody else - I am sure you have met people who just talk at you? (interview, May 9, 2014)

B. What is a Chamber Music Pianist Listening For?

Accuracy of intonation is still well within the chamber music pianist's listening domain in relation to their co-performers. However, understandably, this is not a listening priority as it might be for other instrumentalists who are required to determine their own pitch. Then, what are pianists listening for? Apart from being together and the close synchronising of parts, other aspects might include listening for interpretative details, discerning when to lead and when to follow, the group's balance in relation to how parts sound together, and the blending with instrumental sounds. In the following sections, these aspects are discussed in turn.

i. Interpretation

Interpretation refers to many things including tempo choices, bowing and breathing decisions, and, as Morton suggests, how a co-performer chooses to inflect his or her line, how much of the melody is brought out, and "the kind of emotion or imagery the performer imbues the part with" (2002, p. 112). In relation to these aspects, I have found that one's listening needs to be focused small scale on individual lines, and on larger scale concerns, such as whole movements or entire works.

Pianists can listen for various interpretative directions whilst playing in ensemble. Amongst other things, they can focus on how a crescendo is being led, a phrase is being turned, the tempo is being manipulated, an articulation marking is being interpreted and how the overall musical character is being communicated. Listening is important considering that many musicians prefer to communicate their artistic concepts and interpretive inclinations via their playing. Indeed, some musicians consider it of importance that their experience of music remains musical and strictly non-verbal (Tomes, 2004, p.xvii). This might be understandable, for, as mentioned in Chapter One, verbalisation in relation to sound, is a description of a very subjective reaction to the music (Barenboim, 2007, p.11). Also, it can be very difficult, in fact probably impossible, to adequately chart in words one's tiny yet ongoing decisions and changes of calibration every second. Further, no matter how carefully an interpretation is mapped out, a musician's expression of a musical line will reflect their feelings and reactions to a particular moment (Morton, 2002, p.112). Therefore, pianists need to listen for variations in the interpretation of others that occur spontaneously, so that they can respond (Davidson, 1997, p.220).

As part of this, a chamber music pianist needs to be listening for unexpected events that require spontaneous adjustments. These can be positive when, for example, a player, perhaps in a moment of inspiration, departs from what was rehearsed. But they can also include mistakes. Particularly in performance, one must be listening for un-remembered repeats, mis-counted rests, forgotten breaths, changed phrasing and any other number of mistakes created by simple human error. Then the consequent step of adjusting quickly is crucial. This task perhaps falls more heavily

on the shoulders of the pianist because they are the sole possessor of the full score and the caretaker of a more comprehensive part. Here, Peter Hill gives an example of executing this task,

> … she skipped two or three beats or something, and I just kind of went with her, you know, as the way one does … anyway at the end of the thing I was embraced wildly and she was sort of pathetically grateful for I had sort of covered up her mistake … it was kind of second nature for me to do that … and listening to one's partner is the beginning and end of it all really. (interview, March 19, 2013)

ii. Leading and following

Listening for when to lead and when to follow has been a primary concern in my experience as a chamber musician. My journals refer to this frequently. Unsurprisingly the literature and this study's interviewees also refer to this important issue, such as when Jan Nelleke commented that pianists must not remain only as a follower, "… you're just as much a leader … the moment you're submissive in that, you're not doing justice to the music" (interview, April 30, 2014). Eisler also underlines that chamber music pianists should ideally demonstrate both strong leadership and empathetic support in their music making (Eisler, 2009, p.29). Thus, pianists need to listen so as to know when to take the metaphorical reins and steer the music, and when to alternatively follow and actively support other players.

In my experience, sometimes these two states are made apparent by the general motivic transfer in the music, such being described by Susan Tomes as a "constant coming and going between the different parts - interplay" (interview, April 4, 2014). Understandably, Sonya Lifschitz described this aspect of chamber music making as being like "a kind of dance" (interview, October 3, 2013). She reflected that "you have to have the skills to follow and really, really listen … but then you have to lead, because you're in a dance with the people you are playing with." Gerald Moore notes these two states in relation to vocal accompaniment. He colourfully describes this skill as the pianist moving between "the valleys and hills of the song's terrain" and relates further that it takes courage and experience to make these "seismographical judgments" (2004, p.323).

However, I have found that these two roles are not always distinct. Nor are they exclusive, for they are often required simultaneously. For example, when playing the Brahms Piano Trio in B major Op. 8, in the fourth movement the musical flow seemed to improve when I was the 'leader' for the overall tempo. This might have been because the piano part had the most and the fastest notes, as is often the case. Whoever has such, usually carries the main responsibility for tempo stability and rhythmic coordination (Deckert, 1981, p.5). However, even though I found it useful to lead in this way, I also needed to simultaneously act as a 'follower'. I needed to be listening carefully to

inflect the tempo so as to assist others' parts and to adjust my volume depending on what was necessary for appropriate balance. Therefore, I found that the demands of the music and ensemble required me to concurrently be strong and confident, to be able to lead, whilst also being flexible and sensitive, so as to be also able to follow.

Unfortunately, though, sometimes a pianist is prevented from leading when they feel they must. As Timothy Young exemplified, if a pianist is given very little rehearsal time with a duo partner, then the pianist can find themselves forced to be only a follower to their co-performer. This could become detrimental to the music and may compromise the composer's vision, Young stated, and it may also preclude conversation as regards artistic exchange. Susan Tomes related similar thoughts in her interview, sharing the following admission to which I, and I am sure many other pianists, can sympathise:

> I hate it when I feel like there's a kind of default setting of say a violinist or cellist who is always in the foreground, pianist always in the background. I just honestly feel that Brahms, Shostakovich or whoever would be shocked if they came across that attitude. (interview, April 21, 2014)

Tomes further observed, "whoever is in the musical foreground should feel free to be so." Indeed, chamber music pianists need to feel at liberty to be "conversation partners" so that they can carry the music whilst being simultaneously carried themselves (Deckert, 1981, p.2). This might very well be the crux of what is the art of chamber music: the concept of leading and following, the determining of when and where to take on these roles, the mutual giving and taking, and, all in all, the exhibiting of a certain "chamber-music-mindedness" (Deckert, 1981, p.1).

iii. Balance

Simply put, a chamber ensemble aims for a balance that enables an audience to clearly hear the leading musical material above accompanying lines and textures. Attaining an ideal balance between instruments can be challenging and it can be affected by many contingencies. These might include instrument type, the size of the piano, the way instruments are set up, the music being played, how it is being played, venue acoustic and which parts or musical lines are deemed by the performers to be more dominant.

How a pianist balances their sound against their co-performers' sound could be thought to be dependent on their listening skill. Vicky Chow observes this, "Balance … has to do with listening, being aware … to be a good musician it has to be that way" (interview, May 9, 2014). From the pianist's perspective, this often means listening for the careful control of their own volume. This is because the loudness of the piano can easily become an ensemble problem, particularly when

playing on large ‘modern’ instruments. Without careful control, the best of intentions from a pianist can be defeated, their careful work in rehearsal forgotten in the heat of performance (Eisler, 2009, p.28)

Controlling the appropriate volume is widely recognised to be particularly an issue with piano trios, for, as Peter Hill pointed out, piano trios are often very “over-written” for the piano part, this causing the music to “easily turn into a kind of piano concerto with a couple of people playing pizzicato in the background” (interview, March 19, 2013). Volume is also a particular issue as regards music from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, for composers understood the instruments of their time, and obviously did not anticipate the nature of the ‘modern’ piano and its different sonority (Rosen, 1971, pp.353-354). Indeed, Dutch fortepianist Bart van Oort believes that we can blame the ‘modern’ piano for pianists’ notorious volume problems, for he considers that these instruments were not designed with chamber music performance in mind (interview, April 28, 2014). Concert-sized instruments especially were built for the purposes of filling large concert halls and rising above orchestral sound in Romantic concertos.

Such considerations eventually influenced my choice of instruments for my DeClassified Music series. When the series initially commenced, I was fortunate enough to have access to a Steinway D model - a nine-foot concert instrument. I provided this for the series’ concerts thinking that if I had access to ‘the best’, then I should offer such to my artists and audiences. However, I noticed that it was difficult for myself and fellow pianists to control this instrument in the context of chamber repertoire and small concert venues. Following my interview with Mr van Oort, in the next years of this series I instead provided a smaller, six-foot eleven-inch Steinway B-model instrument. Even though this piano was not an historically accurate instrument by any means, I had grown to feel that it was at least more suitable for the repertoire and small performance space than the full size D-model. I felt that the pianists, including myself, could relax more when playing on an instrument this size and worry less about overpowering their colleagues. However, usually chamber music pianists are unable to select the size and/or type of instrument for their performance. As Alfred Brendel notes (2001, p.335), “How often does the player find a piano he can rely on, a piano which will do justice to the exactness of his vision?” Therefore, chamber music pianists must be careful and accurate in their listening skills, and they need techniques to draw on which allow them to control their volume. They need great mastery of these techniques so as to maximise impact and minimise acoustical hazards (Eilser, 2009, p.28).

To determine if there is a balance problem in an ensemble, Kathron Sturrock and Sonya Lifschitz both summarised that this can be quickly assessed by listening with the following as a guide: If you can’t hear the other players over your own playing, then you are too loud (interviews, April 17,

2014; October 3, 2013). But once a pianist identifies that they might indeed be too loud, what can they do about it? What techniques can a pianist draw on so as to not overpower other instruments whilst maintaining the integrity of their own often very full, and complex, musical part?

Leigh Harrold suggested that pianists should start by considering aspects of balance even before a first rehearsal (interview, May 19, 2013). He gave the example of the César Franck Sonata for Violin and Piano. He explained that he would prepare this part differently in relation to balance if he were to play with either a flautist, cellist or violinist. He explained that pianists can be mindful from the outset which register these instruments and their players project in naturally, where they might have their weaknesses, and where the piano part is most full and strong. These considerations should in turn affect how pianists then prepare their part.

Kathron Sturrock suggested that pianists can aim for a transparency, or "air between the strands", in one's sound to control volume. She also advised that a feeling of *forte* or *fortissimo* can be achieved by the way a pianist "attacks" the keyboard instead of through use of arm weight,

> When you play your solo works you play *fortissimo* and you know what it feels like in your body. But if you played that *fortissimo* with a cellist, there would be nothing left of the cellist. But it has to sound like the right attack, so you have to learn - it's … attack, not weight. (interview, April 17, 2014)

Jan Nelleke mentioned the concept of transparency of sound too. He recommended that pianists could also focus on texture, "the more 'polyphonic' you play, the clearer your sound will be" (interview, April 30, 2014). Here, Nelleke was perhaps referring to the clarity of musical lines. He might also have been referring to the differentiation of dynamic levels within a chord which can enable melodies to be brought out of a contrapuntal context (Parncutt & Troup, 2011, p.294). This concerns the choosing of which notes should be more prominent and which notes less so, this also leading to the often unconscious art of balancing the notes in a chord. Timothy Young referred to this as "voicing" chords (interview, October 18, 2013). I have found this technique useful too. My performance, included in my Creative Portfolio, of the Brahms Piano Trio in B major Op. 8[11] exemplifies this well. I was on a concert nine-foot Steinway instrument, the violinist was experimenting with a historically inspired non-vibrato technique and the cellist was defiantly playing non-vibrato and on gut strings. Considering these circumstances, the small venue and the thick, romantic, virtuosic piano writing typical of Brahms, I had considerable balance problems to address. One way I managed to cut the piano resonance and volume down was by 'voicing' some of the big, Brahmsian chordal passages. I reduced the emphasis on certain notes of the chords,

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[11] Creative Portfolio: Piano Trio in B major Op.8 (1854) by Johannes Brahms, fourth movement, 6:32min. Live performance.

often certain middle notes, and left in the sounding of notes that I instinctively felt were most crucial to the integrity of the chord.

Alternatively, Roy Howat suggested control of balance and volume can be governed largely by the balance between the pianist's hands. He is specific in his advice, explaining that often a situation calls for the production of much more left hand sound than the pianist might expect (interview, September 13, 2012). Not long after hearing this observation, I was listening back to certain recordings I had made, such as Cooke's *Three Songs of Innocence*[12] for clarinet, soprano and piano. I analysed that in my efforts to not overpower the other two instruments, I had allowed my part to become too anaemic. It immediately struck me that these performances could have benefited greatly from more of my left hand being present. I concluded that such advice is therefore especially pertinent when the instrumental/voice combination is top heavy.

However, as David Kuyken observed, this type of specific advice need not suit every situation (interview, April 29, 2014). Indeed, I have found this when performing Haydn piano trios[13]. Here, less left hand is preferable to balance the sound and manage the piano volume. As previously mentioned, in such eighteenth century works there is the original keyboard instrument to consider. This is typified by a bass that was relatively thin and weak and which had a poor sustaining power (Rosen, 1971, p.353). Haydn catered for the fortepiano's weak bass by doubling much of the music in the cello line. Therefore, if one were to concentrate on providing more left hand, this could drown out the cello line and therefore unbalance the music.

Pedalling is another major consideration when controlling dynamics and balance. As Leschetizky claims, the use of the damper, or sustaining, pedal is quite as important as any other department of piano practice (1913, p.49). Accordingly, the demands of pedalling for pianists are more than the simple depressing or releasing of the damper pedal. Usually it involves a quasi-continuous series of intermediate positions that allow for more or fewer dampers to clear the strings in different registers (Parncutt & Troup, 2011, p.292-3). This is governed, as Walter Gieseking observes, by listening, in his words, "from the dictates of the ear" (Banowetz, 1992, p. 231). For chamber music pianists, Bart van Oort suggested that minimal use of the pedal in an ensemble situation is the key to gaining sort after clarity without volume. Jan Nelleke also suggested that pianists in a chamber music situation should use far less pedal than when playing solo (interview, April 30, 2014). Lisa Moore observed similarly, describing how she often used a lot of flutter pedal when she played in ensemble, for it created the richness desired whilst also clearing the sound (interview, May 22, 2013). Another pedalling technique, shallow pedalling, was noted by Jean Barr for *Strings*

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[12] Creative Portfolio: *Three Songs of Innocence* (1957) by Arnold Cooke, 6.34min. Studio recording, *Artico Ensemble*.

[13] Creative Portfolio: Piano Trio in D minor Hob.XV: 23 (1795) by Joseph Haydn, second movement, 5:58min. Live performance.

magazine, this being another way to improve dynamic and tonal balance (2011, p.18). Additionally, I frequently employ finger pedalling, especially in the left hand, particularly when there are frequent changes of pedal or flutter pedal being used.

The *una corda* or soft pedal can also be of use in controlling the volume. This pedal can reduce loudness and mellow the timbre (Parncutt & Troup, 2011, p.294). However, there is a danger of this pedal's over use. Lisa Moore suggested that extended treatment needs to be rethought, especially if this is the primary technique being used to manage loud sections (interview, May 22, 2013). Also inadvisable, as Eisler notes for *Strings* magazine, is pianists affixing their left foot on the soft pedal, only to remove it in the more soloistic passages. For the sake of the music, one has to be more subtle than this when using this pedal as a balance and volume control method, otherwise one's piano part becomes comprised of two very different tone qualities (2009, p.28).

Another unique choice for pianists is that of using the full stick or short stick in relation to the piano lid. Overall, all but one of the interviewees preferred and recommended that the piano lid be always open fully, and that it was the task of pianists to control the volume of the sound from their keyboard. Most, including Roy Howat, Lisa Moore, Susan Tomes and David Kuyken (September 13, 2012; May 22, 2013; April 21, 2014; April 29, 2014), further observed that opening the piano lid on a full stick also affected the clarity of the piano sound. This, they claimed, allowed for a more extensive range of colours and nuances to be explored, and paradoxically, allowed pianists to more easily be in control of their volume and, therefore, a group's balance. Eisler, from *Strings* magazine, also makes this observation about clarity (2009, p.28).

Interestingly, I have heard anecdotal reports from some pianist colleagues who claim that having the piano lid on the shorter stick did not lessen their sound. They believed that it instead served to make the piano sound louder for the audience, for having the lid at the smaller angles served to channel the sound out more directly. Alternatively, the full stick at the larger angle enabled the sound to escape up and around the room.

I have found these views in relation to the piano lid pertinent, because frequently the piano lid has been automatically lowered for me so as to reduce and control my sound. This was often the case if my musical partner was young and relatively inexperienced. I have always automatically allowed this to occur, assuming that the piano lid simply affected my volume. Knowing now that the lowering of the piano lid potentially affects clarity and that it might not have the softening influence intended, my permission is now granted more cautiously.

A contrasting perspective, however, comes from Bart van Oort. Whilst he agreed that the full stick enabled clarity, he also claimed that it made the sound "too clear - too transparent - too

loud" (interview, April 28, 2014). He therefore suggested that there was no problem with the piano lid being completely shut for chamber music performance. Van Oort also made the point that if one were to find pictures of Mendelssohn, Schumann, Liszt, Beethoven or Mozart at the piano, the piano lid would always be closed - for solo performance as well as chamber. He suggested that even though this was related to the aesthetics of listeners viewing the innards of the piano, it was also linked to sound. Perhaps pianists should therefore consider how having a closed lid would have affected composer/pianists in relation to what they would have heard from their piano. It might have influenced what they wrote for the instrument. On the other hand, Jan Nelleke stated simply that, "the music might be written for closed piano, but the pianos are designed to be open because it gives the best sound" (April 30, 2014).

As a final point on balance and dynamics, another piece of the piano furnishings can be of consideration. Stephan Hough, in an article he wrote for the Telegraph (2011), proposed a simple rule: you will play louder than you realise if you can't hear yourself properly. He therefore suggested that chamber music pianists should consider the impact made by the music desk or music stand on the piano. As it is usually a thick piece of un-carved wood, he claimed that it literally blocks the sound of the piano from the ear of the pianist, as well as that of any instrumentalists seated behind it, such as a cellist or string quartet. Hough claimed that this wooden barrier affects not only the way the pianist creates his or her colours, but also the balance between the instruments. He therefore suggested that the solution was to have the stand at an angle so that the score remained visible and the pianist's ears were able to be above the top of the stand. Hough admitted to even relying on his own set of clamps to create the ideal low setting he preferred.

iv. Blending

The term blending is used here to refer to when pianists adjust their sound in relation to timbres and articulations heard from their ensemble. Blending can go in two directions. One can aim to 'match' or aim to 'contrast'. As observed by Jan Nelleke, one can aim to create a similar colour to what is heard, or one can aim for separate colours (interview, April 30, 2014). Sonya Lifschitz observed this too, stating that pianists can potentially match or contrast with the timbre or resonance of other instruments (interview, October 3, 2013).

Blending is an interesting challenge for pianists, for the piano sound is created by hammers which hit strings, unlike other instruments that have strings being stroked by a bow or sounds being made with the breath. However, whilst the piano is percussive in nature, the 'modern' piano has been developed to suggest a singing, sustained tone. Therefore, there is a large range of articulations and sounds at a pianist's finger tips. This is controlled by the pianist influencing the speed with which the hammer hits the string (Parncutt & Troup, 2011, p.289). This key speed can be controlled

with perceived ‘touches’ and body movements, and the resultant sound changed with the pedals. All this is led by what pianists read on their scores and by what they are hearing from their ensemble. As with balancing, blending seems to be carried out mostly at a subconscious level. Kathron Sturrock, for example, claimed that she only realises she has been doing this when it is noticed by someone else (interview, April 17, 2014).

Three main aspects of blending could be regarded as articulation, dynamics and timbre, and, as mentioned, listening governs how pianists might adjust their key speed and pedal usage to match or contrast with what they are hearing. This notion is supported by David Kuyken, who observed, “first of all your ear and judgment, and then your touch” (interview, April 29, 2014), and also by Boris Berman, who similarly writes, “You cannot refine your touch without refining your ear” (2000, p.3).

As regards articulation, Bart van Oort encourages pianists on any type of piano to take particular consideration of the markings on their score (interview, April 28, 2014). Eisler also encourages this, but she further notes that in groups of disparate instruments, players must be particularly aware of the contrasting attacks and articulations within the group (2009, p.29). As an example of such, Jean Barr, for the journal *Clavier Companion,* observes that compared to a pianist’s usual staccato sound, a violinist’s staccato is not as dry (2011, p.18). Hearing this difference may induce a pianist to therefore adjust their sound so that they can better match with the stringed instruments in the ensemble.

Also concerning stringed instruments, Peter Hill recommended that pianists be aware of how a violinist’s bow can make their sound potentially “inexorable” (interview, March 19, 2013). String players pride themselves on being able to draw the bow slowly so that they are sustaining their sound, even aiming to magically conceal the break between the up and down stroke (Loft, 2003, p. 193). Matching such extended sounds, made on woodwind, brass and voice too, is a challenge for pianists, for the sound of a piano, after all, inevitably decays at a rate outside pianists’ control. For pianists, legato playing instead depends on illusion (Katz, 2009, p.260). Therefore, so as to match long bows or sounds, pianists need to skilfully give the impression that the sounds they play are not immediately decaying. Knowing when to employ this might start by taking the advice given by Katz, that when playing with string players, pianists should never lose touch with the bow and keep it within their sight at all times (2009, p.260). The ‘how’ must then rely on their clever use of sustaining pedal, legato touches and dynamics.

In relation to blending and dynamics, David Friend gave the example that if other players in his ensemble are leading a crescendo, then he too needs to match this. Indeed, pianists need to listen

carefully to exactly how soft, how loud or how graded dynamic levels are in the ensemble and then try to match these levels if aiming for an homogenous effect (interview, May 12, 2014).

Concerning instrumental timbre, David Kuyken observed that listening carefully to the timbre of different instruments in one's ensemble is vital so that one can mould one's sound to blend appropriately (interview, April 29, 2014). As an interesting instance of this, Lisa Moore exemplified a particular occasion when matching was a challenge (interview, May 22, 2013). Moore explained that on this occasion she was given an usually loud, brassy sounding Yamaha piano on which to perform. She felt that to have this instrument blend in any way with the instruments she was playing with, which included harps, she had to go so far as to use the soft pedal throughout the performance. Moore found that this mellowed and softened the overall tone of the piano, taking the edge of this piano's brassiness, thus enabling her particularly bright and boisterous instrument to blend better with the sounds around it.

Whilst pianists are mostly listening to match their sound with their colleagues, sometimes they feel that the music is better served if they contrast and go explicitly against what is heard. An arrangement of a tango by Astor Piazzola I played with two clarinetists from Artico Ensemble provides a useful example for this. In rehearsal, I had been playing instinctively with these players, my instinct being to try to match the clarinet parts in rhythm, dynamics and articulations. However it was suggested to me to instead mismatch with them, to play consistently softer against their crescendos and diminuendos, and to stay very legato when they explored changing articulations. I was even encouraged to remain constant rhythmically as they employed rubato in their melodic parts. After trying their suggestions, I immediately preferred the contrast suggested. It gave the music satisfying layers of movement and allowed the clarinet lines the freedom to be dramatic and unbound in their expressivity. Overall, aiming for contrast here helped to portray this music's layers and sentimentality.

Also in respect to contrast, fortepianist Bart van Oort made the interesting observation that the action of the historical instruments he usually plays makes contrast inevitable, for the fortepiano has an attack and quick decay of sound which renders it largely unable to 'blend'. Even though he does not encourage pianists on more modern instruments to act as if they were on fortepianos, van Oort claimed that he often points out this natural contrast to remind pianists on 'modern' instruments that they must be careful to listen for when to exploit this where appropriate. Interestingly he also believed that exploring only 'matching' in relation to blending confines pianists to consider only "tone colour and quality," and that this can make music "extremely boring" and unlike how much of the music was intended to sound (interview, April 28, 2014).

This chapter has discussed various aspects concerning *Listening*. It attempted to define the listening skill as experienced by chamber music pianists, and it then proceeded to identify and discuss a range of issues that a pianist might be listening for when in ensemble. As mentioned at the section's beginning, this research has recognised listening to be an area of pianism that is difficult to describe, due to its intangible nature. Nevertheless, being led by my experiences, this chapter has sought to clarify aspects of what this complex skill might entail. The resultant analysis hopefully serves as both a reminder of the importance of this skill, and as a demonstration that it is deserving of a high level of scrutiny.

CHAPTER THREE - Preparation, Rehearsal & Performance

The work of a chamber music pianist can be placed into three basic stages: preparation of their individual part before rehearsals have commenced, the rehearsal of the work with the chamber group, and the performance of the work in a live or recording situation. Of course pianists may also practice their individual part between rehearsals of the group, and there may be rehearsals and individual practice between multiple performances. Nonetheless, for this third and final chapter, these three abridged stages provide a useful framework within which this research can further consider the skills required of chamber music pianists.

As in earlier chapters, journal entries gathered from my own experiences have led the way in identifying the issues involved, and information drawn from interviews and written sources have provided additional insights. Furthermore, the discussion presented here also does not claim or aim to cover every conceivable aspect that pianists may encounter when practising, rehearsing or performing chamber music. Rather, it focuses on issues that I have perceived to be pertinent in my own practice at this stage in my career. Inevitably, given the intermingling network that is the chamber music pianist's skill set, certain points made in previous chapters are at times revisited. Factors such as listening and collaboration, for example, are naturally pervasive throughout every stage of a chamber music pianist's practice. Nevertheless, this chapter offers the opportunity to unpack such central concepts in more depth, and to consider aspects that were missed or only touched upon in previous discussion.

As noted earlier, when examining the literature, the greater part of available information regarding pianists and their practice is inevitably from the perspective of the solo pianist preparing solo repertoire. Of course the concepts and techniques used by a chamber music pianist naturally draw upon those used for solo work. However, given the collaborative nature of chamber music, there are additional skills for a pianist to acquire which allow them to correlate their solitary practice with their upcoming group practice (Klickstein, 2009, p.121). Skills that I have used to assist such preparation are discussed in the first part of this chapter.

The second section discusses work in the rehearsal situation. In relation to this stage, perhaps chamber music pianists can benefit from the increased study of musical rehearsal that has emerged over recent decades (King, 2004, p.11). It seems, however, that these emerging studies mostly concern the string quartet (Biasutti, 2009; Conlon & Murnighan, 1991; Davidson & Good, 2002; Good, 2002), or, if they are regarding pianists, are often from the viewpoint of an accompanying pianist (Emmerson, 2009; Katz, 2009; Spillman, 1985). Granted, much can be gained from studying other instrumentalists' experiences in chamber music, and there are great

similarities between the work undertaken by chamber music pianists and that of the accompanying or ‘collaborative’ pianist. This research, however, champions the unique context of the pianist in chamber music. It recognises the egalitarian nature of their setting, the larger scale of their repertoire, and their consequent need to remain decisive and accountable. This section therefore approaches the rehearsal situation from this perspective.

Whereas reliance on memory skill and on one’s self might be central to the piano soloist, it is proposed that insight, rapport, responsiveness and compromise might be more central to the identity of the chamber music pianist. Therefore, the final section of this chapter, regarding performance, considers these aspects as well as the issues of heightened awareness and listening, body language, the patience and team considerations involved in studio recording, and some further aspects such as seating and tuning arrangements.

A. Preparation

From their very first lesson, a pianist is trained to practice for the performance of solo repertoire. This should not be surprising given the complexity of the task and that the skills involved transfer into all areas of the pianistic profession. However, my own experience, and anecdotal reports from others, suggest that there are additional skills required for the forward preparation of chamber music repertoire, these coming into play because pianists are practising an isolated part of an eventual whole. For instance, chamber music pianists will not be concentrating on memorisation and how they can solely interpret the given work. Instead, they will be working to ready their part so that it can tie in with upcoming group practice. They will also be identifying and allaying their usual personalised and soloistic impulses so that these do not interfere with group aims. Therefore, under five subheadings, this section addresses aspects of piano practice that might underlie pianists’ preparation of their ensemble part for a first rehearsal: Learn Quickly, Controlling Dynamic Levels, Togetherness, Interpretation, and Personalities.

Perhaps the oversight of the teaching of these skills in the teaching studio is because many pianists seem to have not consciously considered that they might indeed be practising a work differently when preparing for a chamber music rehearsal. In several cases my interviewees confirmed this proposition. For instance, when I asked Vicky Chow in her interview (May 9, 2014), “Do you find that you prepare differently for a chamber music first rehearsal than you do for solo music?” She replied firstly, “My gut answer or reaction is no, I don’t think that I actually do.” However, following this initial response she then proceeded to admit that there were probably “sub levels” of things that she did differently, that she was not aware of, and she admitted that there were perhaps certain approaches that might be more pronounced in her chamber music

preparation. For instance, I suggested that she might, for example, be thinking about the other instruments' parts when learning her part. She immediately agreed, stating: "you have to". Roy Howat reacted similarly (September 13, 2012). To a comparable initial question, his reply was equivalent: "not really". However, as he appeared to consider the question, he too explained how his manner of preparation differed for chamber music repertoire. He said that he would take note of what the other instruments were doing, the important interactions, and how he would have to balance. He explained that he would listen to a few performances or recordings, and that he would identify the places that he would need to eventually focus on so as not to encumber the group.

Based on such evidence, and my personal belief that there do seem to be differing considerations for the preparation of chamber music, this section presents ideas that I have found to be integral to my preparation of a work for a first rehearsal.

i. Learn quickly

Chamber music pianists need to develop the ability to learn music quickly in a short space of time. They must not only be quick, but thorough. There are several reasons for needing this skill. Firstly, there are the demands of the pianistic profession, for as Jean Barr notes, "it is not uncommon [for pianists] to have to learn an entire [duo] sonata in less than a week" to be ready for rehearsal (2011, p.18). Indeed, I have frequently been called upon to rehearse and perform demanding works with much less time than I would like. To contrast, few pianists would contemplate preparing a solo sonata in such time-frames. Secondly, pianists hold a pivotal role in the chamber repertoire, their part heavily influencing other players in the ensemble. Therefore, as Roy Howat observed, "we can't go in [to rehearsal] unless we have enough technical command of our part to hold the whole thing together." Further, he added, "you're a conductor at the piano" and so one has a responsibility to be in command of one's part (interview, September 13, 2012). Thirdly, pianists need to have their notes prepared because they also keep a natural regulatory role in the ensemble. Other instrumentalists seem to expect the pianist to be supportive, both in a musical and in a moral sense (Kokotaski, 2007, p.658). Vicky Chow exemplified this when she related that she tries to be "pretty aware of what is happening with everybody … and so when things don't come together, I naturally try and adjust [for them]" (interview, May 9, 2014).

Lastly, thorough preparation of one's part enables one to focus more on listening in the first rehearsal rather than on note reading. With the notes familiar and under control, one can 'sit back' from their part so that they can monitor the unfolding music as a critical observer. Kokotaski's study recognised that being in such a position is particularly effective, for a reliance on the alternative, sight-reading, can mean not only an overall superficiality in the playing, but that the task of listening actively to one's co-performer is likely to be neglected (2007, p.659). Recognition of this was

reported by many of this research's interviewees too. For instance, Sonya Lifschitz stated, "The more comfortable I get with the repertoire, and the more familiar, the more I start hearing internally the other parts and kind of imagining how I would play with them" (October 3, 2013) and Susan Tomes observed, "I like to be prepared … I try to get to the point where I know everything so well I don't need to look at the music much in rehearsals - I find that makes me feel freer myself to pay attention to what's going on with the others" (April 21, 2014).

As Tomes underlines in her book (2004), the insouciant habit of sight-reading at the first rehearsal is not for the chamber music pianist (p.xiv). This perhaps should also apply to all chamber musicians too, as illustrated by Jan Nelleke, "I'm annoyed if people just sight-read the part. It simply doesn't do. It wastes the time of everyone" (interview, April 30, 2014). However, in my own experience, sight-reading in a rehearsal is sometimes required: perhaps the group has planned a stipulated sight-reading session to 'feel out' a work, they are rehearsing to try a newly composed work, or they are trying ideas for a composer. However, on a personal note, I also do not feel confident arriving for the first rehearsal unless I can comfortably play most of the notes with relative ease, close to what I have predicted will be the final tempo. I find that this is especially the case if I am to play with collaborators with whom I have never before played. Therefore, in order to feel ready, being able to learn notes quickly is essential.

ii. Controlling dynamic levels

Consideration of dynamics can also be a part of the preparation for the upcoming group rehearsal. Indeed, increasingly now, I pay attention to what will be the appropriate dynamic level of each passage right from the beginning of my preparation, for as Jan Nelleke observes,

> One of the main differences I find is you're also not free to choose your own dynamics and balance within the instrument. As a soloist you are far more free to do that. And I don't mean that you have to play softer as an accompanist or chamber musician, but you have to adjust to what you hear around. You're not determinant all yourself. (interview, April 30, 2014)

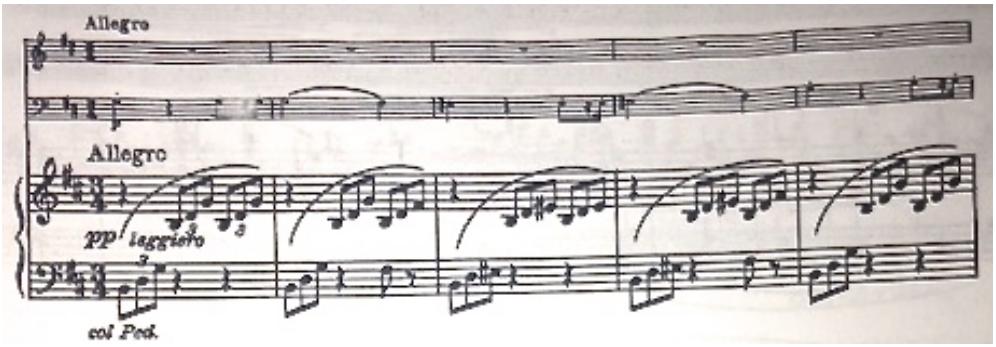
The incorporation of sharp accents, big chordal passages, strong melodies, big gestures, the literal following of dynamic markings in the score, and the overall projection of sound need to be considered carefully in the chamber context, for all choices will affect other players and parts.

Consequently, because of the overpowering nature of the 'modern' piano, I have become accustomed to now preparing chamber repertoire with an overall softer dynamic range and lighter touch. I also try to identify where in the score I will probably most need to control my volume and which techniques will most appropriately assist. This will then affect how I continue to practise and

play certain musical sections, how I lead into them musically, and what technical challenges will need to be given the most practice time.

An example can be made of the beginning of the fourth movement of the Piano Trio in B major Op. 8 by Brahms[14]. As seen below in the score extract, the piano has continuous triplet figures at a fast tempo marked *pianissimo* and *leggiero,* and these support a thin cello melody marked to be played *piano*. I interpreted these instructions to mean that the notes heard from the piano must here be played as soft as possible, whilst also keeping the movement's character of fervour and energy alive. In my practising, I therefore identified that this might be a potential problem if the dynamic level was not controlled well in the piano part. I was also aware that this section needed special attention for, being at the beginning of the movement, I could not 'warm up' into the right volume and character - I had to be ready to be absolutely precise from the very first note. Also, to start *exactly* with the cello from the very first note required my close attention. Therefore, in my practice I proceeded to make sure to prepare this passage so that I could eventually execute it easily in rehearsal in a manner that was exact, accurate, in character and appropriately *sotto voce.* The techniques I employed to enable control of dynamic level were largely muscular and concerned pedal usage. I needed to maintain appropriate awareness of the small muscles of my hand for dynamic control, evenness and clarity, and I used the soft pedal with minimal damper pedal so as to preserve clarity, even though it is marked *col Ped*.

Example 2. Johannes Brahms, Klaviertrio No.1 in B major Op.8, p.43 bars 1-5. Peter's edition

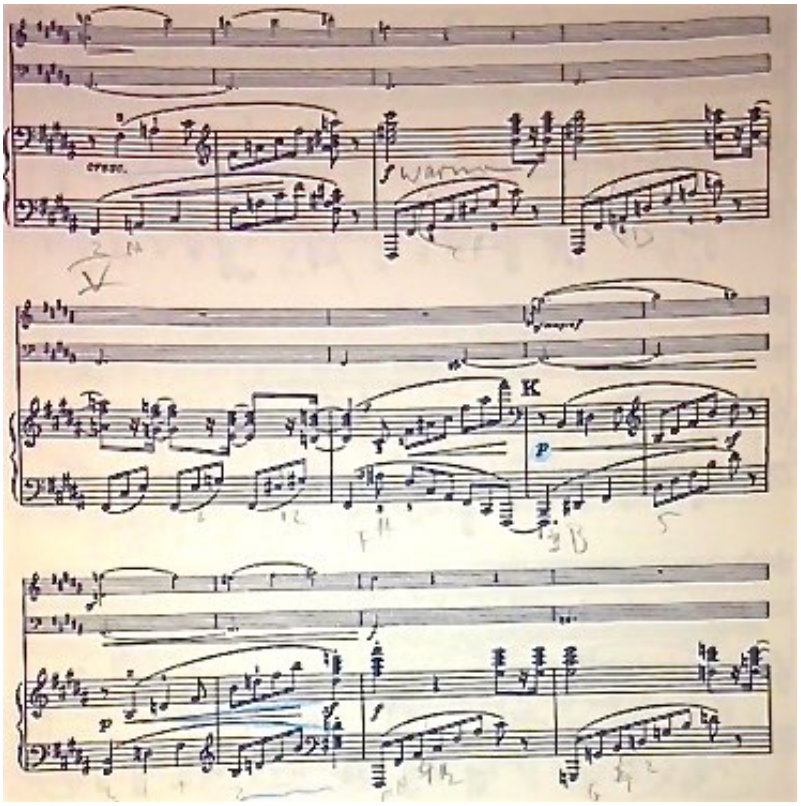


Further dynamic markings in this movement also required careful judgement. I identified that the careful practising of these, especially the softer indications, might be necessary for they might have been placed there not only as interpretive indications, but also to remind pianists of when they must cut back volume so as to not overpower the violin and cello. I therefore practised these changes in preparation for the first rehearsal, especially as they sometimes occurred swiftly and

[14] Creative Portfolio: Piano Trio in B major Op.8 (1854) by Johannes Brahms, fourth movement, 6:32min. Live performance.

dramatically when at tempo, and therefore required anticipation and much control. An example of these dynamic markings can be seen below.

Example 3. Johannes Brahms, Klaviertrio No.1 in B major Op.8, p.52 bars 1-12. Peter's edition

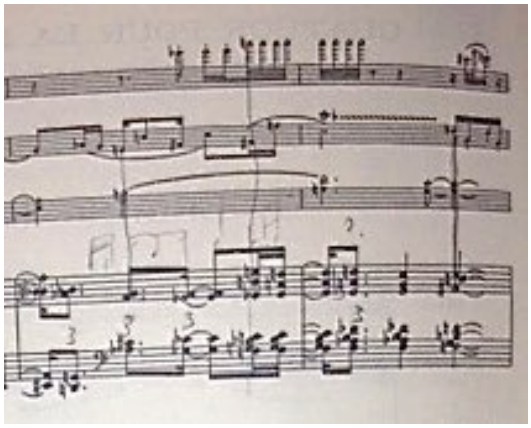


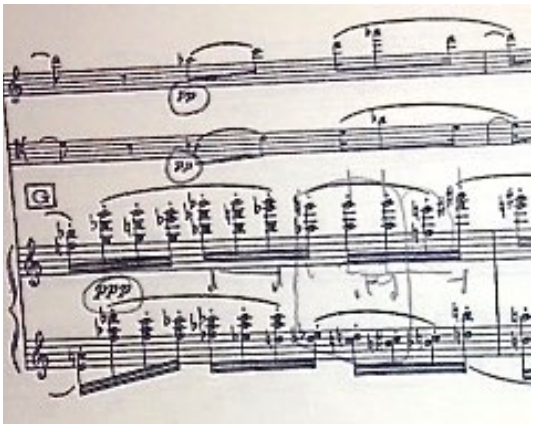
iii. Togetherness

It has been remarked that perhaps some of the most refined forms of timing arise in musical performance, particularly in the coordination between musicians playing together (Shaffer, 2007, p. 577). Chamber music pianists therefore need to be mindful of future group togetherness and timing in their preparative practice. In relation to this, I habitually mark my score in my private practice to alert my mind to such things that will be important in rehearsal, such as important entries and notes that should be particularly aligned.

Below are some examples of where I have made such markings. In these cases, I have signalled where notes in other instruments' parts need to be exactly aligned with the notes in my part. With such reminders thus laid out, I can then practise my part with these particular points in mind, in this way preparing myself mentally so as to be able to keep 'half an ear' available for such moments in rehearsal. It also means that when I am later playing these constantly changing chords in rehearsal, I can keep my attention on my own musical lines on the score and not divide my gaze.

Example 4. Olivier Messiaen, Quatour Pour La Fin Du Temps[15], p.2 bar 2 & p.12 bar 3. Durand edition





Also concerning togetherness, I have found it useful to practise conscious breathing when preparing a work for rehearsal. Hsing-Chwen Hsin observes the importance of breathing, “Pianists need to breathe much more: all the other string players and wind players … need to anticipate and show that they are preparing … we don’t prepare, and that’s why it’s often that we get there faster” (interview, April 12, 2013). It is very difficult, after all, for any instrumentalist to start together with another with no preparatory upbeat or indication. Thus the act of breathing can assist pianists to indicate necessary natural motion for synchronisation. As well, actively breathing can be important not just for playing with winds and strings, but for collaborations with other pianists. Peter Hill observed this, noting that in piano duets and duos it can enable togetherness, especially at the beginning of sections (interview, March 19, 2013). Indeed, I have found that this technique can sometimes be extremely important, for attaining togetherness amongst pianists can be notoriously difficult because of the percussive, instant nature of how the piano sound is made.[16]

An example can be made of the Mozart Sonata in C major piano duet K.521.[17] Seen below is the opening phrase in octaves as found in the *Primo* part (which was the part I played).

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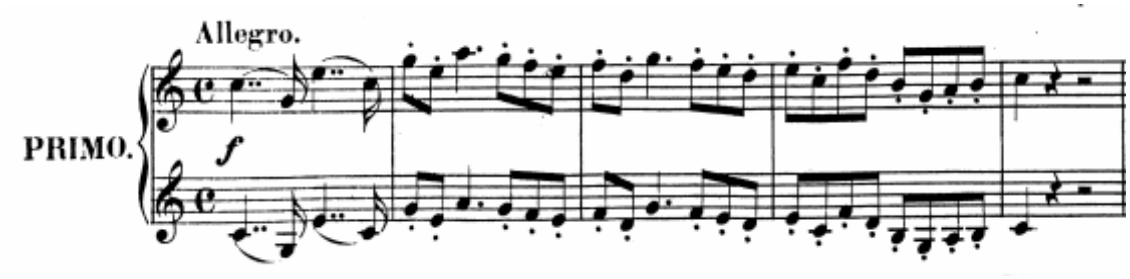
[15] Creative Portfolio: *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* (Quartet for the End of Time) (1945) by Olivier Messiaen, 48min. Studio recording, *Flashpoint.*

[16] Creative Portfolio: Symphony No.2 “Resurrection” (1888-1894), by Gustav Mahler, arranged for 4 pianists, 8 hands by Heinrich von Bocklet. 78min, Studio recording.

[17] Creative Portfolio: Sonata for four hands in C major K.521 (1787) by Wolfgang Mozart, first movement, 6:58min. Live recording.

Example 5. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Sonata for four hands in C major K.521, first movement, *Primo*, bars 1-5.. Breitkopf & Härtel



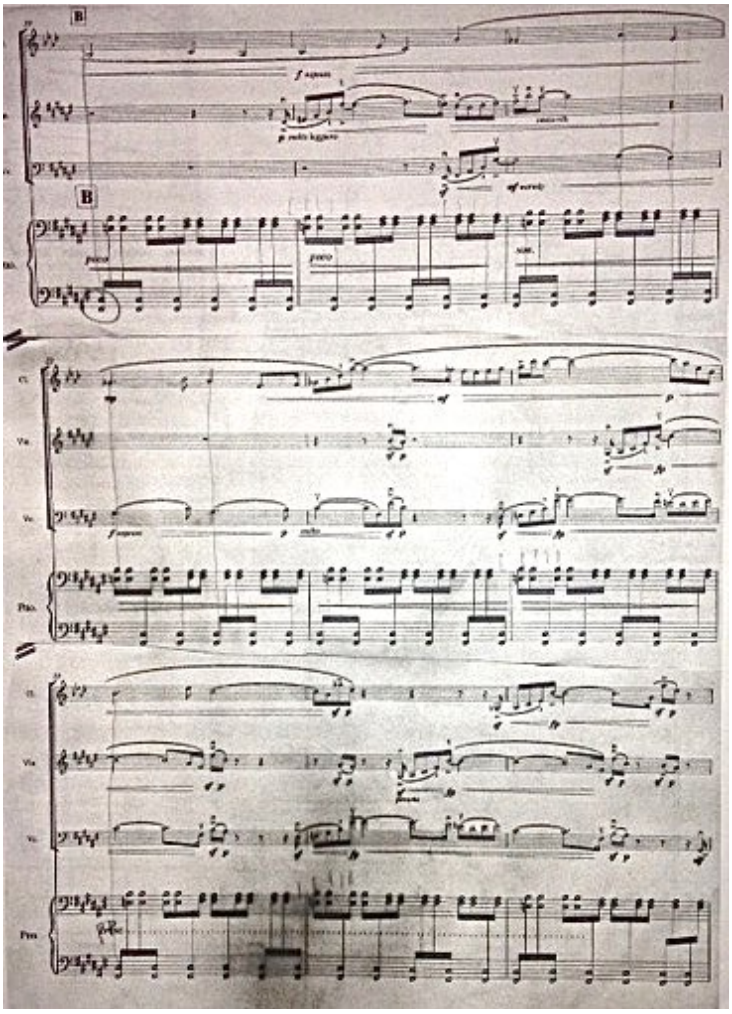
This is doubled exactly in the *Secondo* part's lower register. Therefore, exact togetherness and unified intent was crucial. I recognised this potential difficulty in my preparation, and thus in my practice I rehearsed starting this as if with someone else. Then, when it came time to rehearse with my collaborator, I was somewhat prepared for this challenge. From this point, we then refined our starting process to be then fully realised in performance: my duet partner and myself would start by settling ourselves together on the duet stool and then give each other an indication through sideways eye contact and head nods that we were comfortable and prepared to start; after a short silence and stillness accompanied by hands resting in our laps, one player would give two short intakes of breath, as 'sniffs', to indicate beats three and four for our upbeat; on the fourth beat and second larger, more energetic 'sniff', the other player would join in, and we would both accompany this with an upward movement of our hands, somewhat akin to a conductor's upbeat. Thus we would be moving similarly and together, arriving as one on the first beat to be able to continue into the phrase in synchronisation.

Such a refined process seems to be distinctly 'classical' in my experience. Jazz musicians, for example, before starting a new tune in performance, often share a few audible words amongst the group. These sometimes include thoughts regarding tempo choice or what the lead in will be. This is then often followed by someone audibly counting everyone in. Because of the contrasting silent and considered start necessary for the performance of classical ensemble music, and the absolute exactness and clarity required, observing and practising breaths for togetherness at the beginning of a work or section is something to consider.

Practising with strict rhythm and a clear pulse is also essential. This has become integral to my method because it can assist other players in the group to be immediately comfortable with the tempo and rhythm from the first rehearsal. Also, because the violinist and violist make their sound right up next to their ear, and woodwind, brass and voice make a sound that travels through their head, I have come to think that a clarity of rhythm and pulse might help enable these players to hear details in my part distinct from their own playing.

Having a clear rhythm and pulse in the piano part is particularly useful if a section of the music has complicated entry points. For an example, I found this advantageous at the beginning of *Le Tombeau de Monk* by Joseph Twist.[18] As seen in the section of score in Example 6, the piano has fast, consistent semiquavers and the other instruments are required to execute their entries with and over these notes. Having a strict rhythm and clear pulse enabled the other players to keep track of the beats and to make their entries with relative ease exactly with my semiquavers as required. The group concurred that my playing in this way was especially useful in the first few rehearsals, after which I relaxed my rhythmic strictness and obvious pulsing as the group grew more familiar with the music. This score extract also serves as another example of how I have marked my part for group togetherness.

Example 6. Joseph Twist, Le Tombeau de Monk, p.2. (2006)

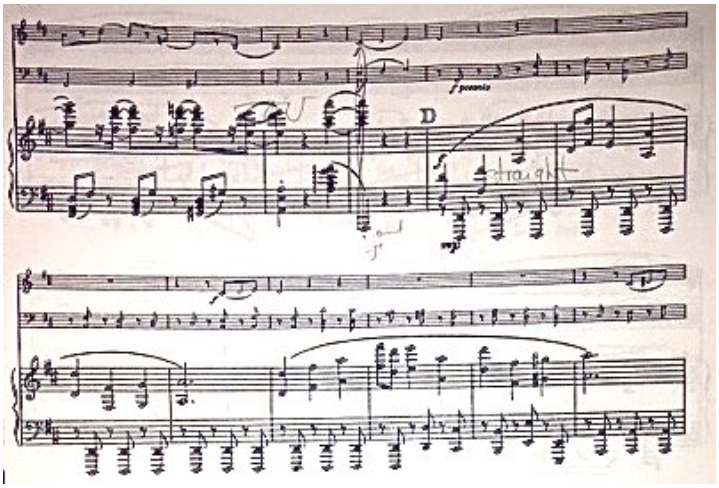


Having a very clear rhythm and pulse can also be particularly helpful for when other players are to play ‘off the beat’. For example, I will refer again to the fourth movement of the Brahms Piano Trio

[18] Creative Portfolio: *Le Tombeau de Monk* by Joseph Twist (2006), 11:09min. Studio recording, *I read the old dream slowly.*

in B major Op.8[19]. As shown below, I have written the word ‘straight’ on the score to remind me not to manipulate the tempo. My aim was to play it without any rubato so that the cellist, who was to play the second quaver of each crotchet beat, could fit in accurately with my left-hand quavers, which were similarly ‘off the beat’. This section is also another example which required the practising of exact dynamics. The piano part’s left hand is marked *mezzo piano*, and the cello part *forte pesante*. This to me is the composer’s warning that loud left hand octaves in the piano part might obscure the cello melody. Therefore I practised strict adherence to these dynamics.

Example 7. Johannes Brahms, Klaviertrio No.1 in B major Op.8, p.46 bars 1-10. Peter’s edition



iv. Interpretation

When preparing a solo work, an important and presumed part of practising would of course be the formulation of ideas as regards its interpretation. However, when preparing a chamber work, one has to keep in mind that many of the interpretational decisions will not be determined until the group rehearsal, when all parts are being played and everyone is present to agree or disagree. After all, the interpretational process will ultimately be a group activity. Nevertheless, I have found that attending the rehearsal with at least some ideas already in place is important, as it expedites the rehearsal process. For example, in my journal I have often noted that it is useful to have prepared awareness of the large structural aspects in the music and of the places that share melodic material with the other players. Additionally, I have found it valuable to have prepared developed opinions about details of expressive shaping, mood, character, and tempo, and ideas in relation to how the overall work can unfold.

I am not alone in thinking that such preparation is important. Spillman, for one, notes that in rehearsal, musicians usually prefer something ‘solid’ against which to operate or react (1985, p.

[19] Creative Portfolio: Piano Trio in B major Op.8 (1854) by Johannes Brahms, fourth movement, 6:32min. Live performance.

359); Loft observes that valuable rehearsal time can be lost if deliberations about interpretation consist only of random, off-the-cuff observations by players (2003, p.207); and Bart van Oort recommended that everybody involved must prepare so that they can " … put in the best they have, with the most initiative they have, [and they must] make their own part great rather than serviceable, and inspire each other" (interview, April 28, 2014). Further, Peter Hill passed on advice which was inspired from a masterclass he attended at the Royal College of Music with the famous pedagogue Nadia Boulanger (interview, March 13, 2013). He related that Ms Boulanger taught that chamber musicians must come to rehearsal with a strong view not only of their part, but also of all the other parts in the music. Even though there might be room for a group to discover an interpretation together, which may be "more organic" as Jan Nelleke proposed (interview, April 30, 2014), sometimes the strength of an idea can be lost through accommodation and the 'feeling out' of a meaning. Hill explained this by posing the question, "Now, my point is, is it the right thing to *negotiate* your way to an interpretation?" He answers this himself, "That seems to simply sound like a compromise - do you want to *compromise* a performance of the slow movement of the Ghost Trio? No hell you don't … you want something as extreme as possible."

To develop ideas in relation to interpretation, therefore, chamber music pianists must not only learn and interpret their part, they also need to know the other parts and the musical work as a whole. If pianists cannot manage this type of preparation, not only will they be underprepared, but, as Sonya Lifschitz explained, they might also experience something of a shock when playing in the rehearsal.

> Then you go into the rehearsal environment with other people, and different sounds are coming into your ears. You're hearing yourself differently and the whole relationship [of] ear to hand starts changing, and all of a sudden, oh my god, "I have never seen this!" (interview, October 3, 2013)

Such preparation can be difficult, however, for one is, of course, practising only a single musical fragment of a work consisting of many parts. It can be a particular challenge too when the piano part lacks musical sense when played on its own. I use several ways in which to counteract these challenges. Firstly, I listen to recordings, which nowadays are usually available online. I not only listen to these recordings for interpretational ideas, but sometimes I play along with them too, in this way developing a sense of how the work might feel when in rehearsal. Secondly, as the pianist, I have easy access to the full score, a full keyboard and two hands. I can therefore play through all the other parts, playing them together in different combinations so as to know their interrelationships. Thirdly, I often practise singing or following the other part or parts whilst playing my own. Kathron Sturrock recommended this as well, saying that pianists should practise for a

chamber music rehearsal with a feeling as if they are ‘playing’ the other part or parts whilst they are playing their own (interview, April 17, 2014).

Bart van Oort observed that without such thorough interpretational preparedness, a rehearsal can slump into an unwanted feeling of “passiveness” (interview, April 28, 2014). Indeed, this ‘passiveness’ is something I have experienced on occasion, and it can be frustrating when it is caused by one or even all of the musicians in the group having developed little or no conviction about the music being rehearsed. Therefore, as part of my preparation, I not only ponder the interpretational aspects as mentioned previously, but also consider how I will explain my thoughts regarding such to the group. Further, I sometimes also envisage a vague plan for how the first rehearsal might proceed, in case this ‘passiveness’ envelops us.

v. Personalities

As a final point in this section, it is important to note that I often find it useful to prepare my part whilst being mindful of the personalities and characteristics of the other player or players in the group. I have found that the preparation of repertoire needs to be different depending on who I will be playing it with. For instance, I have found that when working with other players from a similar training, it can mean working with those who might share similar musical, technical and/or rehearsal ideals. Then, often much can be accomplished smoothly and with unspoken communication. I have found this to be the case in piano duet work especially. However, if one’s collaborators have differing ideals, priorities and rehearsal ideas, then a more thoughtful preparation can be beneficial in relation to the clarifying of one’s thoughts to allow for easy and improved communication.

As well, individuals will inevitably play their instruments differently - characters, tastes and capabilities affecting sound and technique - and consideration of this will also affect my preparation. For example, in a month during my candidature, I played similar repertoire with two different cellists. One cellist was a player known to have a large sound and to like large gestures, and the other was dedicated to historically-informed performance practices, including the intricacies of a non-vibrato technique, and he had a comparatively introverted nature. Hence, the preparation of the repertoire needed to be different so as to correspond with each player.

To sum up, in this section it has been suggested that deliberate, effective and detailed preparative practice beyond learning the notes can benefit the chamber music pianist. Fortunate it is, then, that a commitment to ‘being prepared’ seems to be built into pianists’ psyches as part of their initial solo training. David Friend observed this,

> Pianists, perhaps more so than any other instruments, get ingrained into them that you show up completely prepared: you're on it, you know how the piece works, you know how it fits together … I think there is something about our training that means you don't show up for a lesson unprepared - and so you don't show up to a rehearsal unprepared. You're not 'reading' things ever, right? You've already sorted it out, already beaten your head against the wall for a while in the practice room. (interview, May 12, 2014)

Yet, for a chamber music pianist there is also a certain risk to being prepared: one can indeed prepare too much. Jan Nelleke observed this. He explained that preparation can become a danger when "you are so deadlocked into your own interpretation [so] that it's difficult to see it the other way." He therefore suggested that pianists should not practise until it is 'perfect', because then "you're not flexible enough" to alter and try things in rehearsal (interview, April 30, 2014). Kathron Sturrock agreed with this, and felt that pianists can become "quite rigid" in their interpretation if they have practised their part too thoroughly. Sturrock therefore recommended that, "as long as you practise many hours, always bear in mind the whole piece: the interpretation doesn't revolve around your own part - it has to revolve around the *whole* piece" (interview, April 17, 2014).

Even though I have very rarely been in a position where I have practised a work until it is 'perfect' for a rehearsal, on occasion I have found myself not being prepared enough for the open-mindedness required. In such cases, my journal noted that I would become quickly disgruntled and less willing and able to change or compromise. Consequently, I have found it useful to remind myself throughout my preparation that much can potentially be changed in rehearsal. I have resolved that even though I should prepare to have my notes well known and my musical ideas strongly developed, I also need to remember that others might present at the rehearsal with equally thorough preparedness and with equally strong and contrasting convictions. Thus, in the end, I am aware that I need to present as well prepared and definite, whilst also being open to growth and change.

B. Rehearsal

A performance can conceal much of what brings it into being (Coessens, Crispin & Douglas, 2009, p.152). For example, the high skill level involved in the often strenuous hours of rehearsal for a chamber music performance is usually invisible to those outside of the group. Audience members, and some musicians, can even be largely unaware that rehearsal occurs in any serious way at all (Tomes, 2004, p.xv).

However, some audience members, and presumably all classical musicians, would be aware that rehearsals are the grounds where chamber players converge to learn the score, plan the

coordination of timing, and establish general expressive features in the music (Davidson, 1997, p. 220). They would know that it is here where players explore how best to bring musical works to life, this process producing the resultant artistic manifestation (Coessens, Crispin & Douglas, 2009, p. 152; Tomes, 2004, p.xv).

Nevertheless, many would not comprehend the depth and time required to work out the "subtle pauses, sudden breaks, slight speedups and pullbacks, swells and dips in loudness" which indicate players' awareness of the events that mark the progress of the music (Loft, 2003, pp.197-8). They would be unaware that in rehearsals, players explore various interpretative considerations, and that they search to compromise whilst also aiming for an eventual interpretation that will be convincing and compelling. For, as part of this process, players need to try to get "under the skin" of the composer, to ultimately feel as if they are not just having ideas about the composer's ideas, but thinking the same ideas as the composer (Tomes, 2004, p.153). The overall objective of this section, therefore, is to shed some light on the rehearsal process from the perspective of a chamber music pianist.

In rehearsal, pianists often find themselves challenged by working in ever-changing collaborations. In the short-term group scenario, pianists are deprived of the valuable foundation that can be enjoyed by established groups, this built from prior familiarity and connection with their co-performers. Kokotsaki suggests that such collaborations fail to benefit from the reduced discussion and quicker group consensus that longer term groups enjoy (2007, p.659). Pianists are also tested by the profession's often challenging time restrictions. For all groups, inadequate time for rehearsal and reflection will inevitably affect the likelihood of a high quality result (Kokotaski, 2007, p.659). However, having sufficient time is unusual in a professional player's life (Tomes, 2004, p.154). Because of such trying professional circumstances, a pianist's contemplation and honing of rehearsal skills would surely be beneficial.

In Chapter One, aspects relating to team work and communication were demonstrated as being crucial to musicians when rehearsing. In this section, further collaborative concerns are discussed in relation to the rehearsal context. Specifically, these are divided into the following sections: scheduling of rehearsals, assessing personality, rehearsal techniques, verbal discussion, group morale, and body language.

i. Scheduling of rehearsals

A chamber music project often begins with the planning of a rehearsal schedule that will lead up to the performance or recording date. From experience, I have found it beneficial to articulate and communicate one's own preferences to the group. For example, would I prefer months of spaced

out rehearsals or intensive rehearsals just in the week of the performance? Would I prefer rehearsing in the morning or the evening? How long would I like rehearsals to run for? Might I expect one or more breaks in these rehearsals? Where would I prefer rehearsing? What days of the week suit me the best? If I do not share my preferences in relation to such questions, a plan is highly likely to transpire that will not suit my schedule and activities, and how, when and where I wish to work.

Often, though, my journal notes that scheduling has sometimes been somewhat out of my control. On these occasions flexibility has been required. For instance, I note occasions such as the following: when the players lived in another city and so rehearsals had to be planned uncomfortably close to the performance date; when all the musicians had busy schedules and the only day on which everyone was available was next Saturday, my only day off in the last two weeks; or when I had a 5.30am start on a particular day, but the rehearsal had to start at 8pm, because that was when the violinist finished their work and was available.

However, even though flexibility is required, in my experience I have found it beneficial to also know one's limits in relation to how far one will accomodate others. For example, in my journal I noted the following situation,

> The cellist called in an hour or so before the rehearsal start time saying she was "too tired" to travel the distance of one suburb to practise at the Steinway showroom as we had planned. She said that the rehearsal had to be an hour later in the evening and at her place instead - even though her rehearsal room was very small and I was not allowed to play her piano '"louder than *mp* because it might break it was so old."

This entry continues to relate how I should have communicated my thoughts to the other players regarding this inconvenient change of plans and even opted out of this particular rehearsal. This might have meant a frustrated response from the other players, who were ready to comply to the cellist's demands, and it might have affected our preparation for performance. However, I noted in retrospect that it would have been worth the risk. As it was, I attended the rehearsal and, because of the circumstances, I was tired and a bit resentful, and, because of the set-up and piano available, I felt it it was not a productive use of the group's time.

It can be equally important when working with certain musicians to schedule rehearsals with the explicit understanding that 'rehearsal time is work time'. After all, scheduled rehearsal time is often very valuable time considering the busy, ever changing, and seemingly random schedules lived by many professional musicians. Kathron Sturrock in her interview (April 17, 2014) underlined how some musicians might not be mindful of this. Therefore, so as to help ensure that her rehearsals started on time, she shared that she often arranged rehearsals accompanied by the following

reminder: “bows on strings at 10am.” She claimed that she expressed this to remind her colleagues that the process of arriving and setting up, combined with the usual accompanying friendly conversation, needed to happen *before* the planned 10am rehearsal start time. Another measure Sturrock uses is the scheduling of an added half an hour before the actual rehearsal start time. This way, group members can arrive at 9.30am, for example, to unpack and share a cup of coffee if they wish, and then the actual rehearsal can begin on time at 10am. As noted in my journals, having this type of clarity in scheduling might have assisted certain groups I was working with on several occasions. For example, one recorded circumstance was when a duo partner was often arriving on time at the rehearsal only to then need time to get dinner and ‘unwind’ before work could begin. Another circumstance also involved group members arriving at the start time, only to *then* start unpacking, chatting, and preparing for the rehearsal.

ii. Assessing personality

It can be valuable to be able to read the other personalities of group members quickly when in rehearsal. In his interview, Timothy Young noted this (October 18, 2013). He claimed that pianists need to be sensitive to lots of different types of personalities when working collaboratively. Mr Young further observed that players’ manner of preparation for a first rehearsal can often give the pianist a good idea of their personality right from the start. Peter Hill also observed that in rehearsal there needs to be “a certain amount of reading other people’s character” so that the pianist can realise to what extent they can “push” them in various directions (interview, March 19, 2013). Indeed, I have found that with accurate assessment, appropriate communication and working relationships can be established.

I have come to realise that reading the personality of the *group* is important as well. Understanding this and the group’s particular dynamic can influence how one approaches group conversation, rehearsal methods, aims, repertoire choices and administrative matters. To assist one to read a group, it can be useful to ponder the reasons why it was established. Such can encompass aims, concepts, repertoire choice, main intended performance venues and target audience.

Misunderstanding a group’s ‘personality’ or dynamic can lead to conflict. I have noted in my journal a particular occasion when I experienced this. This group claimed that it wished to grow professionally, and they set themselves large-scale aims. I responded to this and therefore questioned them when they were not reflecting these aims in their concert schedule, player capability, time given and rehearsal method. Conflict arose from my pushing them in the direction I thought they wanted to go. When I subsequently left this group, in hindsight I wished that I had recognised early on that the player and group personalities, and standards, were not suited to their initial aims. If I had made a point of noticing this beforehand, I might then have been more

discerning, and perhaps not joined the group as a permanent member. If I had decided to join them nonetheless, I could have at least had a realistic perspective that could have assisted me to work more constructively with them.

iii. Some rehearsal techniques

Once rehearsals have commenced, I have come to realise that one cannot always rely on other players in the group to run the proceedings. Sometimes I have witnessed players attending rehearsals only to look expectantly to one another as they presume others will run and guide the activity. I too have been guilty of this. However, this lack of initiative and energy from players can render a rehearsal dull and unproductive. Preferable behaviour, as Berman states, is to generate impulses “and to have a strong will and initiative” (2000, p.203). After all, if another player steps up to run the rehearsal, one might then wish retrospectively that the group had focused and worked on alternative aspects.

A rehearsal can often commence with a reading through of the musical work at hand. As when practising alone, starting with an overall view can assist players to understand the work needing to be done and the good places to begin. It can also simply be an easy way to start the collaborative playing, the reading through enabling players to adjust quickly to their surroundings. Following this, a group may then continue as they might when practising as individuals, taking one page or section at a time, listening for improvement, and trying different and progressive tempos. Such detailed work can be useful in a group situation especially if the ensemble has not played the repertoire before or if the work is complicated. I have found this type of detailed work easier to actualise in a smaller ensemble.

Also, as in private practising, I have found that the use of the metronome can be effective, particularly if the rhythm is difficult, the interlocking of parts is complex, or if the tempo is feeling unsettled and is becoming too idiosyncratic. It can also be of assistance to allow players to focus less on togetherness issues and more on the ways the parts relate to each other and interweave. Sometimes, setting a metronome for a slow movement can be useful if players’ tendencies are to continually slow and get bogged down in expressive details. However, if a metronome is used, it must be capable of being loud enough to be heard by all players. Sometimes this requires the group to play softly so they can focus better of rhythmic alignment. Alternatively, one of the players in the group can stop playing to visibly conduct the others. This can be particular effective if there is a difficult collective start to a passage or a challenging link between technically difficult sections.

Rehearsing as a group can also require approaches which may not be used regularly in private practice. To rehearse a difficult section, for example, I have found that it might be preferable to not

restrict the practising to the bar or bars in which the problem might sit. It can be particularly advantageous for a chamber ensemble to practise with a significant lead in, perhaps from several lines before. Starting as such gives a flow to the music and context. It also enables the group to settle into togetherness before reaching the problem section.

Another group rehearsal strategy, as suggested by Lisa Moore, is to practise playing after a lengthy silence (interview, May 22, 2013). In rehearsal, conversation is often prevalent up to immediately before playing. Obviously this would not happen in a concert situation, and so incorporating the experience of starting together from stillness can create a more 'real' opportunity from which to analyse apparent problems. Moreover, it can prepare players in how they will be starting together with the appropriate character or momentum in concert.

In rehearsal, there are also those aspects, such as breathing and tuning, that are priorities for other instrumentalists besides the pianist. Being part of the group, the pianist must cater for these. For instance, they will need to use rehearsal time to clarify their colleagues' primary breathing points, and will need to be patient when other players discuss and rehearse matters of tuning, or, in the case of string players, bowings. In relation to breathing points, noting these can enable player comfort and improve group togetherness. A pianist can then adjust the dynamic level and tempo of the succession of notes leading to a break to enable the interruption to sound more organic. Without such planning, a pianist might maintain or even accelerate speed into the breath, thus making the punctuation a surprise or shock, depending on the intensity of the manoeuvre (Loft, 2003, p.194). As regards tuning or bowing matters, if players are taking too much of the rehearsal time for these, sometimes it might be fruitful to request that the other instruments meet before the pianist attends or that they stay after rehearsal to clarify related concerns. Considering that the pianist is often required to dedicate more of their private time to the practising of their usually considerable part, perhaps such a request should be met with understanding. Indeed, I have experienced this, when the wind or string collaborators have been sensitive enough to schedule a separate time to meet without me.

Another strategy that can be beneficial is for the pianist to occasionally play extremely softly when rehearsing to facilitate improved listening to the other parts. Playing extra softly is also a technique I use if there is a section of the music in which achieving togetherness is particularly difficult. For instance, I used this when I was playing as one of four pianists the Heinrich von Bocklet arrangement of Gustav Mahler's Symphony No.2 (for 8 hands, 2 pianos)[20]. In certain places in this work, where the dynamic level was to be very loud, the exact synchronisation of four pianists was

[20] Creative Portfolio: Symphony No.2 "Resurrection" (1888-1894) by Gustav Mahler, 78min, arranged for 4 pianists, 8 hands, by Heinrich von Bocklet.

difficult to achieve. To help manage this, sometimes in rehearsal I played at a softer dynamic than would be required in performance to assist the music to align. I found that I could do this subtly by looking as though I was still playing loudly when I was not, or by carefully selecting which ‘problem’ notes to play more softly than others.

As a final point regarding rehearsal techniques, my experiences have underlined repeatedly that in rehearsal, the pianist must always remember to be alert, malleable and responsive. As mentioned previously, they must retain an awareness that the way they have been practising is not the only way the piece should go (Spillman, 1985, p.359). Pianists must remain flexible and be able to adjust their playing to fit in with the other parts. Sometimes this will mean that they will have to sacrifice their own viewpoint for the greater good of the ensemble. After all, there is ultimately no point persisting with one’s convictions if it means that the music does not work well as a whole or that the result sounds as though parts are ‘competing' with each other. As Spillman remarks, “We can all live with a little compromise and a sense of exploration of the new and untested without betraying our principles or becoming marshmallows” (1985, p.360).

iv. Verbal discussion

The verbalisation of some thoughts, opinions and preferences is essential to chamber music rehearsals, and aspects of this have already been previously discussed in Chapter One. Indeed, discussion in rehearsal is useful, even though I agree with Jan Nelleke, who observed that musical problems can often simply resolve themselves “just by playing it through a couple of times” (interview, April 30, 2014). Conversation can be effective, for example, if a section or sections emerge which demand a more detailed examination of alternative interpretations or approaches. At this point in the rehearsal, verbalisation can be used to clearly identify the problem and to determine how it might be resolved. Alternatively, there may be a section in which it is unclear which instrument should be leading. The decision as to who will lead might be dependant not only on musical importance, but also on how the ensemble might work best as a unit. A discussion at this point too can help towards finding the solution, and it can encourage players to think along the same lines.

In addition, verbalisation can be used to allow one to clearly inform other players of difficulties in one’s part. These may require their awareness, sensitivity and accommodation. Such difficulties may be specific to the piano, and explaining the challenges involved in such sections can lead to finding solutions.

Further, a verbal ‘summing up’ can be useful. It can be effective, for example, for someone to take the initiative to summarise what just happened in the rehearsal’s last ten minutes and what was

decided. This can aid in the solidification of the work, and act as a way to clarify and lock in decisions. It can also be practical after the group has spent some time rehearsing and developing an interpretation of a piece. It can be useful too for the ensemble to sit back, and, as a break from playing, discuss how they think the work is generally developing. Once again, verbalisation at this point can solidify the work already done, and allow players to clearly indicate what they think needs to be prioritised in future rehearsal.

v. Group morale

Working to maintain a good group morale is also important when rehearsing. It can protect group dynamics and co-players' trust, and, as levels of cohesion rise in the group, so might the group's performance (Warner, Bowers & Dixon, 2012, p.54). Ultimately, the morale of the group can affect the impression felt by an audience when the group performs.

A major part of maintaining group morale is making sure that everyone demonstrates an openness and willingness to consider each others' ideas. As Lisa Moore suggested, players should remember to say, "hey, let's try that, let's do that" instead of, "oh no, I won't try that" (interview, May 22, 2013). Klickstein agrees with this approach and recommends that one's primary response should be to attempt proposed suggestions, not to criticise (2009, p.117). When such experimentation and free expression is encouraged, not only is group morale kept intact, but, according to Klickstein, creativity is stimulated (p.118). Alternatively, if a member of the ensemble is closed to ideas and disrespectful, I have experienced that the rehearsal will be less productive, the musical work unlikely to be as effective in performance, and the ensemble's chances of surviving long-term, doubtful.

vi. Body language

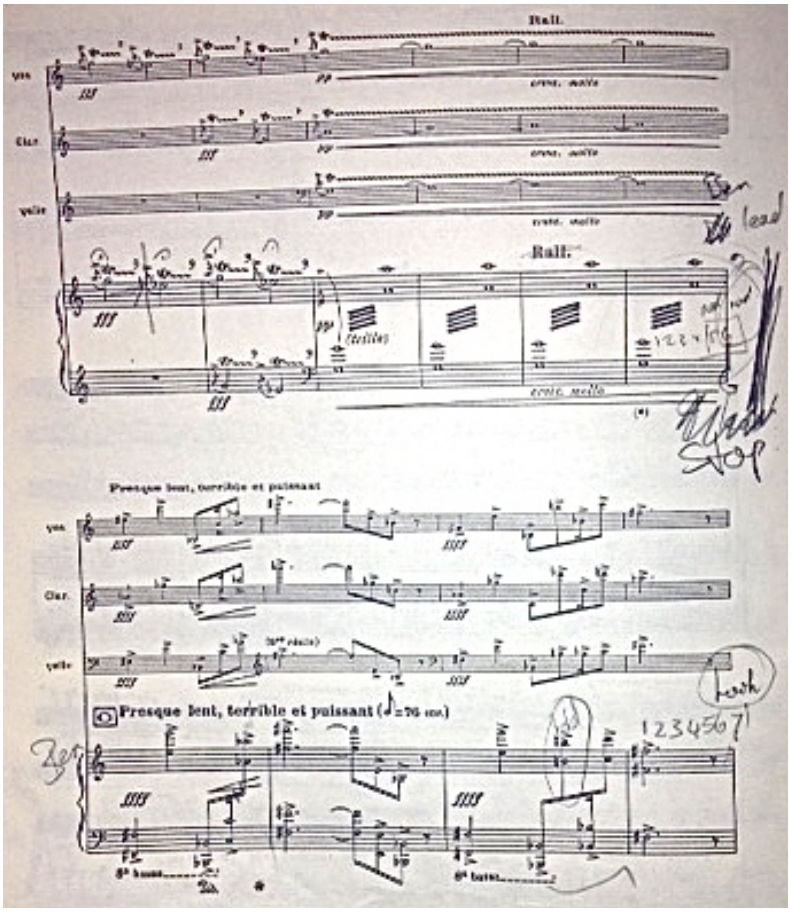
Body language is an important non-verbal means of communication between humans, for body movements help observers extract information about the course of action, or the intent of a person (Dahl & Friberg, 2007, p.433). A great part of the chamber music experience for the players can be the "unspoken dialogue" (Montparker, 1998, p.142), largely because chamber music performance requires musicians to perform their individual parts without a conductor. Therefore, players must coordinate their own actions and interpret others' movements in order to realise their common musical goal.

As many musicians have realised, body movement can add clarity of intention to music making in rehearsal, especially when it is used actively to lead fellow ensemble players. It can enhance the energy in the rehearsal and also encourage others to be equally engaged with the music. Meaningful eye contact can be useful, especially when accompanied by precise arm or head

movements. This can be practical when negotiating entries and togetherness on particular chords, and when encouraging other players to listen more closely to a particular passage.

For an example, in Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time*[21], the changing textures and tempi, octave unison playing, and extreme dynamics make for difficulties in relation to togetherness. When I was rehearsing and performing this, very active, planned body movement proved beneficial to our group. In the example below, you can see that at the end of the first line, I have marked out the *rallentando*. The group had decided not to feel this organically and intuitively, but for the sake of togetherness and precision to instead realise it by adding two extra beats to the last bar and a complete stop. I was to indicate with two nods the two extra beats, and then the violinist was to purposefully lead the start of the next line at the new tempo. This was all combined with much eye contact throughout and active 'listening' body language.

Example 8. Olivier Messiaen, Quatour Pour La Fin Du Temp, p.34. Durand edition



[21] Creative Portfolio: *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* (Quartet for the End of Time) (1945) by Olivier Messiaen, 48min. Studio recording, *Flashpoint.*

C. Performance

As is the case for all types of music, a chamber music performance requires an interdependence of both musical and social factors (Blank & Davidson, 2007, p.231). This research proposes that the experience of performing as part of a chamber ensemble presents differing considerations than when performing solo. In live performance, aspects including memory skill, heroism, reliability, virtuosity, charisma and courage could be considered central to the soloist. To contrast, perhaps skills that draw more on insight, empathy, rapport, responsiveness and compromise might better characterise the chamber musician. For when performing in a chamber ensemble, pianists need to not only take care of themselves and to concentrate on their own playing, they also need to consider how their playing, behaviour and needs affect their fellow collaborators. They are now reliant not just on themselves, but on others' reactions to the performing environment, the accuracy of others under pressure and, to have a peak performing experience, they are reliant on all in the group being collectively 'in the zone'.

In this section, skills that I have drawn on in my performing experiences are discussed, and these have been arranged into the following sections: heightened awareness and listening, body language, studio recording, and finally, some further aspects to consider.

i. Heightened awareness and listening

Pianists in a chamber ensemble are required to adjust to the idiosyncrasies of each instrument, hall, and audience; to provide a feeling of freshness and spontaneity in their musical part; and they are expected to recover quickly and efficiently from any unexpected events, these being an inevitable aspect of any live performance. To negotiate these challenges, they might benefit from a heightening of awareness and listening responses. Indeed, in the live performance situation, these skills, I find, need to be intensified beyond those used in rehearsal, for it is absolutely critical that spontaneous variations are noticed and responded to immediately (Davidson, 1997, p.220). Being able to hear and act quickly is imperative, for no matter how carefully rehearsed, a fellow player's interpretation of a musical line will inevitably reflect their feelings and reactions to a particular moment (Morton, 2002, p.112).

ii. Body language

Body language has been previously discussed in relation to rehearsing. Nonetheless, it deserves further consideration here, for in performance situations, it needs to become intensified and even exaggerated, similarly to awareness and listening. Hand and arm gestures, meaningful eye contact, smiles of understanding, and mannerisms indicating general alertness are used to communicate musical intentions to other members of the group. Such movement is necessary, for

the protocols governing classical concert performance prevent players from stopping and discussing matters as they did in rehearsal (Davidson, 1997, p.220).

Body language also serves to communicate players' enhanced energy levels, for they can signal to fellow players their vigilance and readiness. This is important, for if a co-performer instead presents as stationary and introverted backstage and onstage, this can drain the group's energy levels, and when a player has failed to indicate and communicate through their movements that they are alert, players can feel a loss of confidence. In my experience, this can result in my performing in a 'safe' manner, for I feel unsure as to whether this collaborator is aware of their surroundings, listening appropriately and cognisant of what we have previously rehearsed.

Observing the movements of one's co-performers on stage is also crucial. Sometimes string, woodwind and brass players have to change instruments during the music, occasionally a string might snap, at intervals a vocalist will reach for a glass of water. On such occasions, assisting musically and/or visually is relevant. For instance, I might confirm that I have seen their movements with eye contact and gesture, indicate with a head nod an upcoming entrance if playing is continuing, or I might communicate with eye contact and head nodding that I am aware that the group needs to stop and start again. I have felt that a responsibility for such actions mostly falls to the pianist. This might be because, as discussed previously, pianists will usually be playing the more comprehensive musical part. Moreover, they will be the only musician onstage playing from a full score. Therefore, if there is a problem, it is largely up to the pianist to take whatever quick and clever remedial action is required to restore musical flow and to bring the ensemble back to the right course of action (Kokotaski, 2007, p.658).

Additionally, careful control of one's body language can be beneficial to manage the appearance of one's performance anxiety. I believe that this is necessary both onstage and offstage, for, as the pianist and a member of the group, I have felt the need to inspire confidence in my co-performers by displaying self-confidence, even if one is "quaking with nerves" (Katz, 2009, p.279). Controlled body language might also be more important for pianists to consider because of the supportive role expected from them, as discussed previously. This also needs to be managed whilst being presented with the extra backstage pressure of being without their instrument, for unless they are performing with a fellow pianist or pianists, the pianist will usually be the only player backstage who will not be warming up their fingers on their own instrument.

To further assist in the alleviation of co-performers' performance anxiety, of particular value is arriving at the concert venue at the agreed time, ready for the performance. This may sound obvious, but doing this can help to soothe backstage nerves. Therefore, usually a group will plan to

be in attendance with enough time to settle appropriately, discuss some last minute issues, confirm some plans, and to engage in the essential pre-performance backslapping for morale boosting. If this plan is not adhered to, players can become agitated. Indeed, I have noted in my journal a particular performance when the violinist in our quartet had to walk straight from their car onto the stage due to poor time management. This deeply unnerved me. After the performance I felt somewhat upset, for I had been required to adjust my playing to cater for this player's resultant unsettled and distracted approach to the music we were performing. Another journal entry noted a further experience with this same player, this time when he arrived at a venue close to the performance time again, and now with his music not arranged. This too was unsettling for me and the group, for as we were preparing to walk onstage, this player was still busy sticking his music together with tape. From such experiences it has confirmed to me that even if a player is personally comfortable arriving late or leaving music arrangement to the last minute, they need to consider the effect that these actions might have on their colleagues. As a soloist, this would not be a matter of contention, but as a chamber musician, such tardiness and disorganisation, with the accompanying body language, can increase the group's performance anxiety. It should therefore be avoided.

iii. Studio recording

A live performance is ephemeral, unlike a recorded performance which endures (Coessens, Crispin & Douglas, 2009, p.152). Therefore, different considerations need to be addressed to adjust to the fundamentally distinct nature of playing for a studio recording. The primary consideration is usually accuracy, and gaining this without becoming over-cautious. When aiming for this as part of a chamber group, considerable patience is required because of the extended amount of time required to achieve simultaneous note accuracy from all members of the group. Patience is also needed when handling further togetherness issues, such as achieving accuracy at the ends of phrases, at cadential points, on pauses and at tempo changes. These matters present a minefield of ensemble issues in the studio, and they require persistence and close ensemble teamwork for accurate resolution.

However, well before the group enters the studio and has to encounter these challenges, I have found that it is important to clarify certain matters through group discussion so that all members of the group are informed and in agreement. Even though this is time-consuming, this team process is advantageous, for much can be gained on a project from having the experience, expertise and enthusiasm of many, instead of one. As an example of the various questions to be considered, below are selected points that were discussed by ensemble members prior and during the recording process of one of the recordings presented as part of my Creative Portfolio. Arriving at

answers to these questions in an amicable way led to the group's continued cohesion and our ability to successfully jump the hurdles encountered throughout the recording process:

- Why are we making a recording?
- When should the recording be made?
- How are we funding this recording?
- Which venue should we record in?
- Should we listen to other recordings of the works we will be recording? If so, which ones?
- What is the role of the producer in our project?
- Should we prepare sections for the upcoming session, or the whole piece?
- How do we feel about capturing the accuracy over other aspects, such as tempo, balance and expression?
- What are the microphones capturing compared to what we are hearing when playing?
- How can we assist the microphones to capture an appropriate balance and the sound we want?

The question, "Which venue should we record in?" unexpectedly became an issue for this group. The decision was initially made, and the venue organised, by two players in the group with the consent of the other two. However, after one day of recording, and the listening back of the day's takes, we realised that the acoustics of the venue were not going to be suitable. Much discussion and reorganising ensued, and eventually we decided upon and arranged an alternative. Money and time were lost due to this change, and therefore frustrations were felt. However, because discussion was inclusive, empathetic and sensible, all players felt included in the process and the recording project continued on in relatively good spirits.

Alternatively, finding answers to such questions can also reveal differing opinions, thus demanding compromise and even the altering of one's standards. I experienced this with another recording project which is also included as part of my Creative Portfolio. The largest consideration in this project for me became the question, "When should the recording be made?" In this scenario, two members of the group expressed a wish to make the recording with a very short preparation and rehearsal time. I expressed that I felt this timeframe unwise because of the gravity of the musical works involved and my having never played them before. Because the fourth member of the group was a self-confessed 'fence sitter', the power of the decision fell to the two players who were insisting on the brief timeframe. It was at this point I had to consider my options: to continue with the project in a manner unsuited to me and my priorities, or leave the project and the group. I decided to continue with the project, and to treat it as an interesting experience and challenge. Therefore, I had to concentrate on learning and understanding many notes in a very brief timeframe. I had to compromise and alter my standards for the good of the group and project.

iv. Some further aspects to consider

In addition to the above, there are also two further aspects that I have found useful to consider when performing in the chamber music arena. Firstly, there is the skill of arranging and adjusting to the ever changing seating of musicians on stage. For some chamber ensembles, there are traditional places to seat certain groupings for performance. However, flexibility is often required. For instance, in duo combinations, the instrumentalist might wish to seat themselves either in the curve of the piano, a little behind the pianist's right hand side, or completely out of visual contact behind the pianist on their right hand side. This last arrangement was preferred by a violinist with whom I was playing Schumann's Violin and Piano Sonata No.1 Op.105 in A minor. I noted in my journal that he preferred this arrangement because "it separated the instrumental sounds." He thought it diminished the possibility of the piano overpowering the violin and that it allowed him to hear his own playing more accurately. I was not sure if this set up was successful from the audience's perspective. However, for me, even though I was challenged because I could not see my duo partner, this arrangement did enable to me to hear the violin part with a particular clarity.

As well, different venues, pianos and repertoire require the seating arrangements to change. Some venues might be cramped or the audience could be unusually placed; one might be presented with an upright piano, instead of the expected grand, and it might be positioned at an unusual angle; and some repertoire might require musicians to change places - in one piece the clarinetist might need to be closer to the piano, in other pieces the singer. Recording for video can also demand adaptation from the pianist, as noted by David Kuyken, "Once I was very disappointed because they [the instrumentalist] had to be on the *other* side of the piano because of a television recording, and that was ridiculous" (interview, April 30, 2014). Therefore, one needs to be flexible, for such changes to the seating require the pianist to modify their expectations as regards how they view their fellow performers, how they are seated in relation to the audience, and what they will be able to hear best.

Once a seating arrangement has been decided upon in the warm up, I have found that it is then imperative that positions and seating are adhered to accurately in the performance. If, for example, a chair is casually moved when players are settling themselves onstage for the performance, this can mean an inability to make appropriate eye contact when the crucial moment comes for the group to achieve togetherness on an important chord. Consequently, the synchronisation on the chord might be mismanaged, possibly resulting in the group feeling unsettled for the remainder of the performance.

As a second, and last, consideration, there is the action of other players tuning to the piano. This is the common practice, for the piano is usually the only instrument onstage which has the tuning set

and beyond the control of the performer. Because of this, pianists need to learn each instrumental partner's preference for tuning. As well, I have found that it is useful to enquire backstage as to when my performance companions might wish to re-tune during the program, for, if playing a multi-movement work, co-performers might wish to re-tune in-between movements (Katz, 2009, p.273). I have even found it advantageous to re-establish this conversation before each performance, as tedious as this may be, for venues, pianos, reeds, wood, strings, levels of humidity and performer mind-sets are always changing. The afore-mentioned heightened vigilance and body language plays a part here too, for the unexpected may occur onstage: perhaps a cello string might slip or a woodwind instrument might warm up unexpectedly. One's co-performers will then look to the pianist for a few unplanned tuning notes when a break in the music allows. One needs to be ready for these looks, communicate understanding, and organise the re-tuning process so that it does not draw unnecessary attention or break the flow of the performance.

In this chapter, further skills left undiscussed in Chapters 1 and 2 have been explored. By dividing the work carried out by chamber music pianists into three basic categories, the occupation of this type of pianist was considered in greater depth. Here, as in the previous chapters, my own experiences led the inquiry, and data drawn from this project's interviews clarified and supported information which emerged. Here also, chapter contents supported this project's propositions, that there are distinct skills that are inherent to the chamber music pianist, and that skills, processes and situations key to this role deserve due consideration.

As a final point, readers are reminded to consider this chapter's contents in the way intended: as an attempt to make the invisible more visible. An acknowledged risk of having such an objective is that certain information included in this chapter might be considered innate by some readers. However, this research proposes that what might be obvious to one musician might not be so to another. It therefore conceives that there is value in articulating and considering such aspects. It is even possible that this chapter's content might encourage some readers to reconsider what they had previously thought to be 'obvious'. Aspects of their creative practice, that they might have been taking for granted, may actually be worthy of being treated as specialist knowledge.

CONCLUSION

The skill set of classically trained pianists is extensive because of the complexity and breadth of repertoire they play, the highly detailed work they do, and the various working roles they inhabit. Through a practice-led enquiry and by drawing on action based creative practice, this research has discussed the skills drawn on by the pianist specifically working as a chamber musician. This was challenging due to the vulnerability required to make the invisible aspects of creative practice visible. Nevertheless, the objective remained throughout, for inspiration was found in the proposition that it is often the invisibility of the knowledge encoded in creation that manifests as a major cause of problems and divided opinion (Coessens, Crispin & Douglas, 2009, p.8). Perseverance was also bolstered by an awareness that music scholarship in the form of artistic research is increasingly valued as primary material that illuminates music performance from the inside (Tomes, 2004, p.xiii).

Data for this project was drawn from my own practical experiences, a selection of these demonstrated in the co-submission of a Creative Portfolio comprised of audio recordings. From my practice, notes were taken in an artistic journal. These in turn led the content shown in this paper's three chapters. To complement this reflective content, further data was gathered from written sources and fourteen interviews held with experienced pianists from differing backgrounds and diverse age groups. This triangulation of data was planned from the outset to enable this project scope and to prevent it from becoming too personalised.

Overall, this project has outlined that there are skills of particular use to the chamber music pianist's context, and that effectiveness for pianists in this role can depend on how they develop these skills and how they face and resolve the issues intrinsic to their work.

Chapter One suggested that collaborative skills are integral to the chamber music pianist. It proposed that these skills might include having an awareness of the pianist's nature; an understanding of how teams work; and an appreciation of and ability to implement interpersonal skills, including those demonstrating emotional intelligence and relating to communication.

Chapter Two proposed that chamber music requires a pianist's listening skills to reach beyond that of the solo performer, for the listening scope must encompass not only the production of one's own sound, but additionally that of fellow collaborators and the group as a whole. Inspired by my own practice, related considerations were discussed, such as the development of appropriate spontaneous reaction to interpretative variations and unexpected occurrences within the group; accurate discernment of when to lead and when to follow; knowledge of how to balance with

different instrumental sounds and musical lines; and judgment of when and how to match or contrast with a group's sound.

Chapter Three was structured in relation to three proposed stages of work undertaken by a chamber music pianist. This offered a means to explore further skills. The first category was the preparation of music before the rehearsal to allow for the correlation of work with upcoming group practice. The second discussed the work undertaken in the rehearsal situation in which the innate democratic environment calls for all involved to be decisive and accountable. The final stage involved the performing of chamber repertoire. It explored skills more related to insight, empathy and compromise, instead of the memory skills, self-reliance and courageousness perhaps more central to performing solo.

In relation to this project's research contributions, it provides a range of insights into a largely neglected topic. Its content adds to the currently limited information available on the subject and it supports the suggestion that distinct study and teaching of chamber music should be seen as an indispensable part of any pianist's education.

Additionally, the thesis content hopefully provokes readers to appreciate the complex and demanding role of the chamber music pianist and to comprehend that there are particular skills required to master it. This is in accordance with many of the experienced musicians I interviewed, including Jan Nelleke who stated most explicitly, "definitely there is a different set of skills as opposed to solo playing - that I feel very strongly" (April 30, 2014).

The general status quo for pianists in conservatories arguably features an inadequacy as regards the teaching of the complex skills required for future professional-level chamber music work. That this occurs is suggested by my own experience, the written sources consulted for this research and by anecdotal evidence offered by many of this project's interviewees. Perhaps it is thus because piano departments share the opinion offered by Yale-based pianist Boris Berman who suggests that qualities important to a chamber musician "are best developed in solo work" and that "one should first become as good a performer as one can, and only later decide on an area of specialisation" (2000, p.203). Alternatively, maybe this is the case because such institutions fail to be fully aware of the complexities involved for pianists working as chamber musicians or they are perhaps reticent to acknowledge the repercussive benefits of gaining knowledge and situational awareness in relation to this area of expertise.

If this paper is able to successfully demonstrate both the chamber music pianist's skill set and the value of having knowledge of its intricacies, it could well motivate a slight shift to occur in favour of

chamber music training for pianists. Such an adjustment might be considered especially favourable in light of possible resultant negative attitudes attributed to a lack of chamber music tuition, such as those indicated by Deckert who believes that when chamber music training does lead a "backstage" existence, "music is no longer able to bring us together, and all our musical efforts crumble under a tendency towards, at best, indifferent camaraderies, or, at worst, outright competition" (1981, p.3). This shift might also be advantageous considering the professional ramifications suggested by the European Association of Conservatories: that the prioritisation of professional music training in chamber music can be incredibly valuable by way of pedagogical, artistic, and financial benefits; that chamber music is one of the most effective tools in community music-making; and that the ability to be a competent chamber musician can contribute to increased employability ("Team work", 2007).

However, the altruistic reasons which motivated this research, and which led to these conclusions, have existed alongside inevitable selfish incentives. As a pianist and chamber musician, naturally I wished to develop clarity, awareness and understanding through my research for my own benefit. I hope to achieve enlightening experiences and to realise true and transcendent performances of the repertoire. I aspire to make such music with empathic collaborators that I can influence and who will energise me in return. I search for opportunities to be criticised and changed by like-minded individuals. I desire abilities that will enable me to feel the freedom to be playful in the act of creating so that I can experience the exhilaration of live music performance and the satisfaction of sharing my learnings and efforts with colleagues and audiences. Thus, since the outset of this project, I have sought to deepen my understanding and familiarity with the extensive skill set involved with my occupation. Now at the end of this project, I like to think that my doctoral exploration has indeed assisted me to further access the set of skills required. Nevertheless, as my life and career continue, so too will my enquiries. As with all of the creative arts, I remain ever appreciative that there will always be more to discover, learn and understand about piano practice and the specialised work of the chamber music pianist.

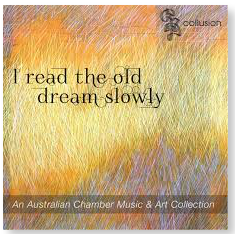
APPENDIX - The Creative Portfolio

A collection of audio recordings from my time as a doctoral candidate.

Studio Recordings:

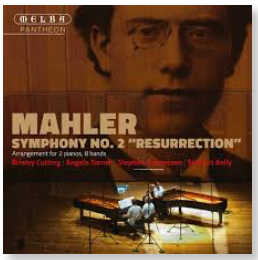
1. *Flashpoint*: The chamber music master-pieces of Messiaen & Hindemith
(2012). Length: 74min
Performers: Collusion Musical Arts Australia
Repertoire:
Quartet for Clarinet, Violin, Cello and Piano - Paul Hindemith (1895 - 1963)
Quartet for the End of Time - Olivier Messiaen (1908 - 1992)

2. *I read the old dream slowly:* An Australian chamber music & art collection
(2012). Length: 70min
Performers: Collusion Musical Arts Australia and guests
Repertoire:
Three Years Beginning Again - Thomas Green
I Read the Old Dream Slowly - Susan Hawkins
Brisbane Songs - Robert Davidson
Clockwork Ghost - Andrew Ball
Kazan Votives - Gerard Brophy
Sonata for Violin and Piano - Nigel Sabin
Le Tombeau De Monk - Joseph Twist
Inner-City Counterpoints, Meditation - Nigel Sabin



3. *Artico Ensemble*: Chamber music of Spohr, Cooke, Mendelssohn & Rutter
(2012). Length: 62min
Performers: Artico Ensemble
Repertoire:
All Things Bright and Beautiful ; For the Beauty of the Earth - John Rutter (1945) arr. P.Kopetz
Three Songs of Innocence - Arnold Cooke (1906-2005)
An Australian Backyard Suite, selected movements - Paul Kopetz (1968)
Concert Piece No.2 Op.114 - Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809-1847)
Ave Maria - Charles Gonoud (1818-1893)
Six German Songs Op.25 - Louis Spohr (1784-1859)
Puttin' on the Ritz - Irving Berlin (1888-1989)

4. *Mahler Symphony No.2 "Resurrection":* Arrangement for 2 pianos, 8 hands
(2014). Length: 78min
Melba Records
Performers: Stephen Emmerson, Angela Turner, Stewart Kelly and Brieley Cutting (pianos)



Selected Live Performances:

Sonata for 4 hands in C major K.521 (1787) by Wolfgang Mozart, first movement. 6:58min. (2011).
(recorded on a handheld device) (Primo part performed by Brieley Cutting)

Piano Trio in B major Op.8 (1854) by Johannes Brahms, fourth movement. 6:32min. (2011).
(professionally recorded by Graham Badcock)

Piano Quartet in G minor Op.25 (1859) by Johannes Brahms, fourth movement. 8:49min. (2012).
(recorded on a handheld device)

Piano Trio in D minor Hob.XV: 23 (1795) by Joseph Haydn, second movement. 5:58min. (2013).
(professionally recorded by David Spearritt)

Sonata for Violin and Piano in G minor by Vasilije Mokranjac (1923-1984), second movement. 6:51min. (2013).
(professionally recorded by David Spearritt)

Piano Trio in E minor Op.90 "Dumky" (1890) by Antonin Dvorak, second movement. 6:56. (2013).
(professionally recorded by David Spearritt)

Piano Trio in C minor Op.1 No.3 (1793) by Ludwig van Beethoven, first movement. 9:56min. (2014).
(professionally recorded by David Spearritt)

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