

Abstract

The term ‘intercultural’ (as in ‘intercultural creativity’) acknowledges the complexity of locations, identities, and modes of expression in a global world, and the desire to raise awareness, foster intercultural dialogue, and facilitate understanding across and between cultures. In a globalized world faced with unprecedented challenges, intercultural communication and dialogue is considered key to facilitating possibilities that, previously, might not have been available to us. In this chapter, we identify how intercultural creativity can be recognized and evaluated in the practice of community musicians. The notion of ‘translation’ is related to the interrogation, not only of what intercultural creativity is, but also how it is experienced. This chapter features the work of Netherlands-based *Musicians without Borders* and UK-based *Music Action International*, and the voice of a Malaysia-based composer working in an intercultural environment. We examine collaboration between diverse communities and musicians. The chapter concludes with implications for educating and developing the community musician.

Keywords: interculturality, intercultural creativity, community music improvising and composing, singing, songwriting

TRANSLATING INTERCULTURAL CREATIVITIES IN COMMUNITY MUSIC

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Introducing the role of interculturality in community music practice

In a globalized world in which cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue are key levers for strengthening consensus on the universal foundation of human rights, there is a pressing need to engage with what constitutes ‘interculturality’. The term ‘intercultural’ acknowledges the complexity of locations, identities, and modes of expression in a global world, and the desire to facilitate awareness, dialogue, or understanding across contexts. ‘Interculturality’, in community music practice resides both in a location—whether geographical, spatial, or corporeal—and in an in-between space, among and within individuals, milieux, social constructs, and cultures (Lauder et al., 2006). Intercultural creativity refers to possibilities, as well as practices of making and creating. Intercultural creativities produce possibilities for intercultural translation.

Researchers have observed how cultures are not self-enclosed or static entities, and yet one of the fundamental obstacles to intercultural dialogue remains our habit of conceiving cultures as fixed, as if fault lines separated them. As Ruitenberg and Philips (2012) remind us, ‘interculturality’ takes place in a dialectic of ‘resistance and accommodation’, which is what Pickering terms ‘the mangle of practice’ (Pickering, 2010, p. 10). Multiple perspectives are consistently engaged (overtly and covertly). The complexity and multidimensionality of interculturality *in practice* requires agreement to privilege a multispectival approach *to practice*. This approach would embrace the diverse ways of knowing which emerge from new perspectives on, and respect for, what intercultural arts practice *is* and *does*. Yet, making visible how the arts translate intercultural creativities and distinct experiences of them remains hugely problematic.

As we will illustrate in this chapter, the use of singing and songwriting, improvising and composing, can embed intercultural creative sites in social, cultural, and geo-political discourses. The political, social, cultural, and personal construction of songs, as with constructions of space (encompassing components of social, physical, or mental practices) in culture, education, and community (feeling and finding ‘at-homeness’ and belonging) is characterized by social systems of meaning and representation (Bharucha, 2000). Songs transport us. Songs surround us.

Songs can embrace the past with their power of story and identity; they can invoke the imagination and allow us to speculate on who we are and can be, or enable us to share with others; their repetitions can open doors into diverse creativities and related practices (Bennett, 2015).

For Cante, interculturalism ‘represents a broader programme of change, in which majority and minority communities think of themselves as dynamic and outward looking, sharing a common objective of growing together and overcoming institutional and relational barriers in the process’ (Cante, 2013, pp. 80–81).

This chapter suggests several ways in which community music practices can (1) activate intercultural creativities as a means of providing and supporting a mutual reciprocity and mutual inclusion of needs and respect; (2) require a shift of perspective and the realization that the ethics of intercultural creativity, like the ethics of care, underpins community music practices; and (3) facilitate new community music practices by attending to the cultural dimensions.

Concurrently there is a further realization, as identified by Martha Nussbaum (2000) that *care-related factors* such as love, empathy, collaboration, reflexivity, power, empowerment, and voice, are central human capabilities that practices *of* and *for* social justice need to promote. The link with ‘intercultural creativity’ and this emphasis of empowerment and voice in research is clear. Like research, intercultural creativity, as

practiced by community musicians, identifies the intercultural space as a possibility. When intercultural differences are not made explicit and recognized, opportunities to activate and encourage diverse creativities are lost, along with opportunities to bring about improvements in social justice in distinctive community music practices.

This chapter presents an exploration of intercultural creativity that emerges in the songwriting, improvisation, and compositional practices of *Music Action International*, *Musicians without Borders*, and a renowned intercultural composer. *Musicians without Borders* (UK) was established as an independent charity in 2010, inspired by the methods and approach of *Musicians without Borders* in the Netherlands. *Music Action International*, founded in the United Kingdom by director Lis Murphy, represents organizations that work to develop and implement intercultural community projects that use the power of music to bridge divides, connect communities, and heal the wounds of war and conflict. The practices of intercultural creativity, elaborated and evaluated as narratives by these founders and project leaders, highlight how intercultural creativity, along with ‘affective equality’ (‘caring’), are inspired and embraced as a manifestation of social justice. How these different conceptions and practices of intercultural creativity inspire interpersonal processes and dialogues between peoples, cultures, and contexts, in ways that build participants’ capacity for transcendence, openness, empathy, mutuality,

and generosity, are elaborated through reflections on practice. In this way, experiences and practices of diverse musical creativities are categorized and positioned in ways that are not removed from lived realities.

Identifying/articulating/evaluating?/translating?

Intercultural creativity

The social and cultural context of *intercultural creativity in practices of community music* is significant. Culturally related meanings are embedded within our life history and act as cultural layers. These layers are interdependent and help us to identify ourselves. Contrary to a Western position, *intercultural creativity* involves non-hierarchical and intersubjective relationships that are not grounded in the politics of difference, or the commodification of culture. Interculturality advocates and enables the feeling of ‘respect’, ‘belonging’, or ‘inclusion’. It is linked to indeterminate transitional spaces that lie in between cultural certainties and misrepresentations of otherness (Burnard, 2012, 2013).

The *practice of intercultural creativity* acknowledges the complexity of locations, identities, and modes of expression. The practice resides both in a location—whether geographical, spatial, or corporeal—and within an in-between space, among and within individuals, milieux, social constructs, and cultures. At the intersections of *intercultural creativities*, there is an openness and respect for cultural understandings of

time (that is, temporal awareness of event time and cyclical processes rather than chronological time), and for identity and diverse readings of our relationships with multiple spaces and pathways made by our own and others' communities and ancestors. Intercultural creativities produce possibilities and new arts practices, and therefore entail thinking not only about music practice but also about the role of the artist and memory (within intercultural dialogue, the act of recollection and cultural memory also plays a role).

Intercultural creativity is characterized as, and promotes, co-participation, reciprocity, openness, mutuality, intercultural understanding, and 'affective alignment' (Cross, Laurence, & Rabinowitch, 2012, p. 341). Creating music together leads to one's own feeling responding to the other's experienced feeling, a kind of symmetry of everyone's relation to one another (Rabinowitch, Cross, & Burnard, 2013). According to Jourdan (2013), when community musicians play with, and encounter, music from other sound worlds, cultures, and communities, the orientation in this encounter needs to be argued from a perspective where 'the other' is. In other words, the aim is not to encounter it as a primarily stylistic phenomenon, but one into whose face we have looked, whose voice we have heard, and whose ethical call we have heeded, rather than for us to simply 'come to know', be enriched by, or 'collect' experiences' (p. 208). Empathy is a process in which music can be viewed as a way to promote

diverse creativities that enhance intercultural understanding, mutual tolerance, self-identity, and peace-building.

If, as we evidence and argue, intercultural creativity engages and connects diverse groups of people, then the educational possibilities of broadening and deepening the relationship between creativities and practice in education could serve as a container that stimulates insight and social justice in teaching and learning music. Here, then, we explore ways in which the arts and the music education sector can address the teaching of diverse and distinctive musical creativities as a practice of social justice, by nurturing appropriate teaching spaces for diverse musical creativities.

Understanding cultural variation in approaches to learning and social justice—that is, how to characterize regularities of individuals’ approaches according to their cultural background, and how to develop a nuanced understanding of new practices—has been a continuing and complex dilemma in the social sciences. The persistent surge in immigration globally makes understanding these questions more urgent as the intercultural nature of people’s everyday lives has increased, and members of different cultural communities come into contact with one another with more regularity.

The potential role intercultural creativity plays, as a powerful practice in community music, is both underestimated and under-theorized.

With the unquestionable significance of public concern for the health, well-being and welfare of society—to which the arts make an essential contribution—there is a pressing need for academic and researcher communities, in partnership with arts and cultural communities, to establish and share how arts translate intercultural experience (Lederach & Lederach, 2010). To this end, collaboratively working together in enacting intercultural dialogue is crucial if we are to help a globalized world grasp that intercultural translations are co-constructed through collaboration.

Evaluating intercultural creativity in community music practices

The UNESCO (2010) World Report 2 foregrounded the importance of ‘intercultural dialogue’, making clear the need for a shift in the politics and positioning of social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, using dialogue to co-create and communicate symmetrical relations. Negotiating and mediating musical borders through collaborative music-making and establishing new musical creativities to translate and explore cultural interfaces emphasizes equal opportunity. Developing ways to explore intercultural dialogue in music and the interrelations between varieties of music through intercultural creativity could itself support the idea of intercultural musical creativities as a practice of social justice. This idea remains under-theorized and under-

applied. Time, space, presence, and education are needed for converting theory into practice and policy change (Pavis, 1996).

Despite the importance of intercultural dialogue for human survival, there is a deep ambivalence in Western society about ‘the forms and amount of nurturing capital’. Being deprived of the capacity to develop supportive ‘affective relations’ or of the experience of engaging in them when one has the capacity, is therefore a serious human deprivation and injustice; it is a form of ‘affective inequality’ (Lynch, Baker, & Lyons, 2007, p. 2). Lynch and colleagues (2007) invite a reconceptualization of the dimensions of love, care, and solidarity.

Questions of justice inevitably arise from conflicts of interest. Understanding the issue of *translation* is therefore essential when researching the phenomenon of ‘interculturality’. Translation problems arise from the boundary crossing that occurs as people move across the activities and settings of everyday life, and encounter different forms of culturally organized practices. Musical creativities foreground conversations and collaborations between artists, where intercultural dialogue is built into the collaborative arts space. Where there is an avoidance of exploitation of marginalized cultures or inequalities, and a concern for equality of opportunity, status, and power, they have a significant role to play in addressing *translation* concerns. New forms of practice can result in new creativities depending on the histories of the

participants in particular cultural communities, with sources of variation arising from and across individual and community practices. How are differences addressed? How do we expose and redress unequal power relationships between cultures? The determination of intercultural meaning and representation in the arts requires academics and non-academics (particularly artists developing new practices) to collaboratively take into account and reconcile the politics of representation and the possibility of disparity in the relationship. All of this may well play out in a highly ambivalent light with broader issues of performance and performativity, and thus we ask a fundamental question: How do music and musicking function as technologies of translation that allow us to understand and conceptualize practices of diverse musical creativities as a (trans)formation of experience, knowledge, and action in the context of manifestations of practices of social justice?

Three exemplars of intercultural creativity in community music practice

What forms the core of this chapter, then, are findings of ongoing research presented as a layered story, a narrative research technique which can reflect different voices containing fragments of information, reflections and remembrances of practice and reflexive experiences.

Exemplar 1: Laura Hassler and Musicians without Borders

Laura Hassler is the founder and director of Musicians without Borders, an international network organization that uses music to bridge divides, build community, and heal the wounds of war. Musicians without Borders cooperates with local musicians and partners on behalf of people suffering the effects of war and conflict. Its projects include rock music schools for youth in divided Balkan cities, community music training projects in Palestine and Rwanda, rap and samba percussion projects for human rights and social change (Palestine), and the therapeutic application of singing and movement for war-traumatized adults (refugees in the United Kingdom, genocide survivors in Bosnia and Rwanda). For example, Musicians without Borders (2013) has trained 90 young people as community music workshop leaders in Palestine, where it now brings music to more than 5,000 marginalized children.

Musicians without Borders started almost fifteen years ago with a new idea—that music could be a powerful tool for reconciliation and healing in the very places where people suffer most from war and conflict. Today, Musicians without Borders is one of the world's pioneers in using the arts for social change and peace-building. It is a growing community of musicians, trainers, local workshop leaders, organizers, project managers, fundraisers, volunteers, and supporters of many kinds. Musicians without Borders has proven that where war has divided, music can connect.

In the following paragraphs, Laura Hassler, founder of Musicians without Borders, reflects on how its practice involves crossing borders and, despite facing barriers to communication, working collaboratively on intercultural projects, negotiating the making and translating of meaning:

Music's capacity to create empathy is at the heart of Musicians without Borders' vision and work. As musicians, we know, from experience, what recent research has begun to explore and explain: that sharing musical experiences reduces aggression, fear, and anxiety, and increases people's ability to connect and to heal. Long-haired youths in a heavy metal garage band, children using sticks to tap rhythms together in a refugee camp kindergarten, old women sitting in a circle, remembering a lost lullaby, or torture survivors writing their stories in songs—all can find connection, comfort, and community in making music together. The music taps into our common human sense of being and allows us to share it with others and feel it radiating back to us.

However, tapping into that space with people who have survived the trauma of war and violent conflict, or who

grow up living in its shadow, requires a combination of skills, intuition, and empathy on the part of the practitioners. A fine-tuned empathic capacity, along with highly developed musical, didactical, and communications skills, is an essential quality for every Musicians without Borders' trainer. The capacity for empathy is perhaps difficult to define or measure, but it is easy to recognize. In the context of our work, the capacity for empathy may be recognized in practice by firstly a trainer's ability to honor all participants, whatever their level of musical competence, and to stimulate and value musical progress—both of the group and its individual members—based not on arbitrary standards, but on the group or individual's willingness to enter the shared musical space and move creatively within it. Secondly, a trainer's sensitivity to the overlapping dynamics of the participants' context—such as traumatic past experiences, physical or psychological health issues, domestic or community problems, stress or depression—that may influence participants' ability to engage in the process. Trainers must be prepared for complications and be able to navigate the complexities they encounter or intuit when not completely known or

understood. This requires a high degree of flexibility and improvisational talent on the part of the trainer. Thirdly, a trainer's sense for the right moment to 'step back and let them shine their own light', the ability to be a leader who encourages leadership and guides the process of empowerment, whose ego is sufficiently satisfied by the success of his/her teaching, rather than needing to be the central point of attention.

For Musicians without Borders, empathic sensitivity is also critical to the organizational and management functions behind the actual music-making.

While we often work in places that have been divided along 'ethnic' or 'cultural' lines, 'intercultural dialogue', as it is usually understood, is not part of the practice of Musicians without Borders. The idea of 'intercultural dialogue' assumes and implies that the problems of post-war communities have their roots in cultural differences and can be addressed by bringing representatives of the different 'cultures' into contact and engaging them in dialogue—conversation—with each other. Musicians without Borders

grounds its approach to peace-building in the conviction that, while cultural differences often come to play a role in war and armed conflict, they are more often the tools of political or economic forces than the real root of the conflict. Local and/or global political and economic interests are almost always involved, and hidden agendas frequently manipulate both the real and contrived differences between people to incite the wars that lead to power or land grabs, at the expense of ordinary people of any and all cultural backgrounds.

In most regions where Musicians without Borders works, people of different cultural backgrounds have, throughout most of their history, devised mechanisms to deal with those differences and have lived, more or less peacefully, as neighbours on shared space. A war which becomes defined along ethnic or cultural lines means that people of mixed families are forced either to choose one 'ethnicity' or to flee; that geographical territory once shared becomes divided into pieces identified with one or the other group, forcing members of the minority group to leave their homes and move to 'the other side'; and that those in the society

who never saw themselves as members of one particular ‘ethnic group’ lose their voices within the society.

By the time the violence ends, of course, most people have become divided along those ‘cultural’ lines, whether they chose to be or not. So finding ways to re-connect across those divides is essential to any long-term peace-building process. But, for it to be meaningful, that process of re-connection must also address common needs, such as breaking out of post-war isolation, making up for lost time in skills learning and education, and providing handles for professional development and career aspirations.

To support processes of re-connection without identifying people by ethnic or cultural labels, Musicians without Borders works to create a neutral musical space in which participants can both identify (themselves) and relate (to each other) primarily as musicians. We take their talents, passions and potentials seriously and offer them real chances for musical growth and creative development, contact, and connection to other young musicians (often through the social media) and, where possible, a path to

employment. We then trust the music to do its work and leave it to them to choose whether, and how, to meet ‘the other’ outside the musical space. What we invariably see is friendships emerging, along with empowerment and a feeling of relief at not being primarily defined by ethnicity or culture. In fact, these same principles apply to our projects which do not bring people of different backgrounds together, but rather work to build resilience and a culture of nonviolence and participation for youth and children suffering from the effects of conflict in their own ‘monocultural’ communities (e.g., Palestine).

It is this fine line of balancing between the real divides that have been created or greatly exacerbated by war, and the ability to tap into shared passions and creativities that is definitive of Musicians without Borders’ vision and programme. That music can provide the space on which this fine line can be navigated, has everything to do with its quality of creating a place of empathy.

The initiatives and approaches explored in this chapter are based upon the same ideals articulated by Hassler and were developed by a team of practitioners.

Exemplar 2: Lis Murphy and *Music Action*

International

The director of Music Action International, Lis Murphy, is a creative music facilitator, and international trainer who has pioneered the use of singing and songwriting to help war and torture survivors overcome trauma through personal expression and collective experience. She spent two years in Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina, in the early 2000s, running an outreach music programme for traumatized children, for *Warchild* and *The Pavarotti Music Centre*. She visited Palestine in April 2014, where she worked with Musicians without Borders project manager Fabienne van Eck, delivering training to Palestinian women in isolated villages in South Hebron. In summer 2015, she was one of two trainers to set up a music and dance programme in Bosnia-Herzegovina for women survivors of the 1995 genocide in Srebrenica. Lis established Music Action International in Manchester, supporting refugee/asylum seeker adults and young people through creative music projects to reduce trauma and isolation. In partnership with Freedom from Torture NW musicians Aidan Jolly, she has created a groundbreaking music project *Stone Flowers*, where music

facilitators work with torture survivors to write poems, song lyrics and melodies, learn new instruments, sing, and perform in each other's languages. Lis Murphy had this to say:

It has always amazed me that a human expression of love, anger, fear, or hope that was expressed by someone we have never met, who doesn't speak the same language, or who lived hundreds of years ago, can still make us want to dance, make us laugh, move us to tears, and reach our souls. The work I do and the music I play is never intercultural art for its own sake; it has become a natural consequence of being passionate about how human beings communicate and respond to music, as well as working with people from many different cultural backgrounds affected by war. I trained as a classical musician, and, growing up in Manchester, was inspired by the vibrant music scene there, playing in Irish, rock, funk and Indy bands. After hearing the beautiful folk music of Bosnia-Herzegovina (Sevdah) I was inspired to move there.

The approach to music-making I experienced there was about removing the barrier between the elitist performer and silent audience, creating a completely inclusive

environment where it doesn't matter how good you are or whether you can sing in tune; the most important thing is that you're there in that moment with those people, expressing your emotions, nobody is judging, everyone just wants you to be part of that energy, of solidarity. You sing because it feels good and because you need to. My work since then has developed from a combination of the different approaches to music I have experienced, whilst still allowing an open space for new approaches.

My aim is that anyone who comes to music sessions can begin by feeling that uplifting, collective experience.

Through the next phase of sharing songs, improvising, and collaboratively creating new material to express and communicate emotions and personal stories, the incentive develops to want to give those expressions the best chance of being effectively communicated to audiences. The desire to rehearse, to craft skills and develop performance technique is therefore driven by the need to realize the creative potential to its highest level, to share the energy and message with the audience through the music, creating empathy and connection with the listener.

Stone Flowers is a project created in response to the use of music as a form of torture around the world. In partnership with Freedom from Torture, Music Action International delivers weekly music sessions for refugee/asylum seeker, torture survivors now living in the United Kingdom who have been subjected to unbearable extremes of physical and psychological pain, or who have sustained serious injuries. Members of Stone Flowers write and perform songs in English, Lingala, Farsi, Kurdish, French, Swahili, Tamil, and Kikongo, blending traditional and modern instruments with musical influences ranging from folk, jazz, classical, spoken word, roots, and hip-hop.

Lis reflects on her practice and describes instances of her own practice:

Inclusive, creative music-making starts with exploring the interest, taste, and musical experience of the individuals in the group. In this way, meaningful contribution to the content and development of the group sessions is given to the group members, who as a result invest more of themselves, as they understand that their individual contribution influences the end group result. In Stone Flowers, the participants do not begin the process as a group, but as individuals from completely different social,

cultural, educational, religious, and musical backgrounds, who have the traumatic experience of torture in common.

The unique structure, facilitation, and management in place are key to making the project work. The facilitation team is made up of specialized musicians—half of whom are themselves refugees and/or torture survivors, and a clinical psychologist musician. The facilitation team collectively leads the process and begins by creating a safe environment, where endorsing respect and recognition informs and equalizes trusting relations. The importance placed on equal leadership roles of musicians from different cultural, language, and musical backgrounds immediately reinforces the aims of the project and enables a deeper, more informed process of exploring the music being produced, alongside a considered approach, influenced by personal understanding, within the team, of the trauma experienced by the survivors.

The facilitators role is literally that: to use their own skills and experiences to collectively facilitate the participants in creating their own music to the highest level, as they want

to say it, and to guide the collaborative process to ensure each individual is cared for, their voice is heard and they contribute and realize their own potential, within the space they feel comfortable with. The emphasis on individuals' own experiences, language, and musical influences creates a situation where participants become group leaders, as they teach and share with the group, as they become more experienced in their own language, musical approach, and personal experience. The leaders within the group at points become the participants, placing value on the shared learning and experiences from everyone within the group.

What has developed from the performance aspect of the work is an understanding from participants, many of whom were persecuted for being activists in their own country, that the music acts as a vehicle for spreading a message of peace and hope and for raising awareness about human rights abuses. Group members begin to feel their own sense of personal responsibility to speak out for others who are in their situation and who don't have a voice. Many of the songs written by Stone Flowers participants have now been

taught and performed by school children and musicians in Manchester and internationally.

Exemplar 3: Valerie Ross, an intercultural composer

Valerie Ross speaks in the voice of an intercultural composer and collaborator in many intercultural projects in Malaysia and abroad. She specializes in crafting works which combine Eastern and Western aesthetics and philosophies, and she is particularly interested in the neuroscience of creativity and how people learn. Valerie reflects on her work.

As a composer and researcher of intercultural communities, I have worked extensively with musicians from many parts of the world for more than two decades. With a distinctive voice in creating new intercultural works which embody the performative practices of participating cultural traditions, I have consciously strived to make each work an art-piece, often writing for musicians and dancers from Indian, Malay, Chinese, and Western musical traditions. In 1992, I undertook a major project in which I was commissioned by the Commonwealth Foundation to write an intercultural score (*Tathagata*) for musicians from

Europe, Africa, and Asia in celebration of the 40th Anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II as Head of the Commonwealth. The piece was dedicated to HM the Queen and premiered at Lancaster House.

One of the biggest challenges in working with musicians from different cultures is the need fully to comprehend the performative practices of each cultural milieu from the ‘inside’—that is to say, how, why, when, and to whom music is played. An effective bridging of the gulf between the flexibility of orality and the specificity of notation is paramount to the successful design and transmission of new musical messages. Over the years, I have continued to collaborate with musicians trained in the Western and non-Western traditions, creating a system/theory to notate musical expressions that transcend the complexities of multiple musical cultures within the intricacies of time, timbre, tone, and construct. Living in Malaysia’s multicultural environment and travelling extensively to the Far East and Europe have enabled me to capture the nuances of cultural preferences, practices, and tastes while

working with diverse communities and community musicians.

Additionally, as a researcher, interdisciplinary collaborations in music neuroscience at a Malaysian university have spurred my interest in how music affects neuroplasticity (Ross et al., 2014). I also create electro-acoustic music for occupational therapists working in clinical rehabilitation programmes for children with autism spectrum disorder.

How then do I see my creative output as a reflection and enabler of intercultural communication, interconnectivity, and change? A recent piece of mine, ‘MuSIT’ or *Music for Sensory Integration Therapy*, which premiered on 23 November 2015, serves as an example. This work was performed by a Spanish pianist, a German percussionist, a Korean cellist, and conducted by an American guitarist who manipulated the electronic soundscape I earlier created. As a group, we only met up for rehearsal a day before the performance. We all spoke in one language but ‘thought’ through many. As an intercultural composer, I

reflect upon the need to communicate intrinsically and extrinsically ‘within the self’ and ‘to others’. How may we engage ‘culturality’ from a different perspective and can we no longer speak of differences in cultural input but emphasize the cohesiveness of (inter)culturality through sonic expressivity?

I believe music can enable new ways of social and cultural communication and musicians have the mandate to rise to the challenge for change. Here I am reminded of a quote by a Semai (aboriginal) musician during an ethnographic study which explored the transmission of indigenous musical traditions in a community setting: ‘I have to climb higher and higher up the mountain to find the perfect wood to make my “pensols” (bamboo nose flutes) because the forest is being cleared’ (Semai musician) (Chan & Ross, 2015: 695) .

Placed in the role of a ‘teacher’ for the first time, the Semai musician conducted music lessons for fifteen Semai children, aged six to nine years, from his village hut/home in Tapah, Perak, Malaysia (Chan & Ross, 2015). Although

the children had music classes in state schools, they had little to no knowledge of singing traditional Semai songs nor had they any experience of playing Semai instruments.

The study demonstrated how the freedom of musical choice, engagement, with intuitive responses, flexibility, and adaptability posited key components in bringing discourse, culture, creativity, and tradition into the modern classroom. Discussions with the Semai musician on environmental issues, caused by deforestation, which destroyed wildlife and that inspired much of Semai songs manifested dark passages in an electro-acoustic composition, ‘Synergies of Breath’.

These stories highlight some emergent formulations and outcomes of intercultural creativity and connectivity through collaborations with intercultural/international partners, novel action, and innovative research in-and-through practice.

Evaluating intercultural creativity as a community music practice

This chapter has explored interlocking elements of interculturality in theory and intercultural creativity in practice. We have related it to issues of healing, reconciliation, and social justice through community music

within the context of, and as facilitated through, distinctive practices. Each element addresses a particular organization, such as *Musicians without Borders* and *Music Action International*, along with the unique voice of an intercultural composer. All of this evidences the power of community music and the community musician's practice to connect communities but, crucially, emphasizes the role of 'interculturality' and new forms of practice that arise from intercultural creativity, which to support the development of a healthy society, must be guided by moral and social values.

Approaches to studying these caring spaces and practices (for different ways of being, for playing with diverse constellations of creativities in the arts, for engaging with counter-hegemonic discourses, and the possibilities made available through intercultural-creativity) have been explored.

The inherent quality of community music in enhancing social justice is its potential to reveal and inform (amongst other things) a mechanism to open and touch constructive dynamics that help us 'feel' the spiritual and healing elements of intercultural communication. This process may involve as much clashing as synthesizing of culturally divergent matter. For community musicians, working on the performance of new music in the *intercultural space* could be both an aesthetic and a political choice. If there is to be a second wave of interculturality

performance theory which manages to negotiate the vagaries of all things such as the marketplace, community regeneration, and creative and cultural education, we believe it will emerge from and through community music practices that shape the indeterminate, transitional spaces that lie between cultural certainties and that explore the complex relationships between relational and participatory types of musical creativities. The participatory activities of ‘improvisation’, ‘songwriting’ and ‘singing’, ‘drum circles’, and the contingencies of space, time, and relationships are vital components of these practices of community music.

Reflective questions

1. We know that music has tremendous capacity to support people with overcoming trauma and to connect divided communities, but music has also been used as a tool for torture in places such as Guantanamo Bay. What are the essential methods of working with music and creativity to support refugees and asylum seekers—some of whom have never played music before—to be welcomed into a safe space of equality, creative expression, and powerful communication of emotions?
2. Refugees and asylum seekers have had to develop tremendous resilience in order to survive horrifying

experiences, both physically and mentally. How can music support this resilience?

3. Reflecting on your own practice as a community musician, identify how intercultural creativities vary and differentiate in participatory and presentational performance settings?
4. How may cultural variation be characterized? In what ways will community music practices foster intercultural understanding and communication, and co-create symmetrical relationships?
5. How can issues of translation resulting from boundary-crossing be deconstructed and theorized?

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