

## MUSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND POSITIVE IDENTITY CHANGE WITHIN CRIMINAL JUSTICE SETTINGS

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### ABSTRACT

Drawing on three research projects undertaken in the UK, the US and Portugal, this chapter presents evidence that considers the relationships between music-making and development of both musical and positive learning identities, and in turn how music-making contributes to the rehabilitation of people in criminal justice settings.. First and foremost, the interventions discussed provide musical experiences and opportunities for people within specific contexts who might not otherwise have access to arts education, so that they can explore their own musicianship. However, in light of recent work in criminology concerning the change processes that lead to desistance from crime (Weaver & McNeill, 2010), we also consider how personal and social development occur within musical learning, and explore the links between musical development and positive identity change. Within this, the role of creative work in inspiring ownership, confidence, and renewed self- perception will be discussed in relation to developing personal attributes and individual agency. We explore how preparing and performing contributes to the development of social skills. Finally, we suggest that there is a case to be made for providing musical activities within criminal justice settings that foster musical development as well as support positive identity change.

*'I lack confidence. Dancing put a different part of me into reality'*



(Good Vibrations photo: GDA/Ed Moss)

## MUSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND POSITIVE IDENTITY CHANGE WITHIN CRIMINAL JUSTICE SETTINGS

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### MUSIC WITHIN CRIMINAL JUSTICE SETTINGS

Recent years have seen a rise in musical activities within criminal justice settings. A wide range of opportunities are provided, most recently including choral programs (i.e., Cohen, 2012; Cohen &

Silverman, 2013), orchestral activities (Warfield, 2010), Javanese gamelan projects (Henley *et al.*, 2012), Popular music-making and song-writing (Barrett & Baker, 2012), musical theatre (Palidofsky, 2010) and improvisation based programs using a range of voice, body-percussion and instruments (Mota, 2012). Many of these musical activities are aimed at achieving both artistic and musical outcomes as well as being embedded within therapeutic and rehabilitative regimes. Research has indicated multiple benefits from participating in ensemble and individual musical tuition within different educational contexts, and there is a growing body of evidence of how these manifest within juvenile justice settings and adult male and female prison contexts. For example, a rise in confidence and self-esteem as well as the ability to cope with anxiety and stress was reported after participation in Javanese gamelan projects in the UK (Caulfield, Wilson & Wilkinson, 2010). Research suggests choral singing with incarcerated females in Israel leads to increased social cohesion (Silber, 2005) and performance opportunities in Portugal have given rise to renewed relationships with social contexts outside of the immediate environment (Mota, 2012). Public performances in Alaska have provided a connectedness with the outside world, contributing to rehabilitation and re-entry into society (Warfield, 2010). Anderson & Overy (2010) report that participation in musical activities seems to increase engagement in other educational activities for incarcerated Scottish youth after the music project has ended. An Australian study of popular music-making and song-writing in a Juvenile Justice centre reported that these activities contribute to the development of a 'learning identity' in addition to generating musical and extra-musical learning outcomes (Barrett & Baker, 2012). This growing evidence base suggests that musical activities contribute to a regeneration of a 'learning self' for people in detention as well as fostering artistic and musical development.

#### MUSICAL PROGRAMMING IN UK PRISONS

In 2003 the UK government published its delivery plan for prison education 2003-2006 based on the following vision statement.

*Our vision is that offenders according to need should have access to education and training both in prisons and in the community, which enables them to gain the skills and qualifications they need to hold down a job and have a positive role in society, and that the content and quality of learning programs in prisons, and the qualifications to which these lead, are the same as comparable provision in the community. (DfES/PLSU, 2003, p. 2)*

Acknowledging that rehabilitating and preparing incarcerated populations to re-enter society is "critical in providing them with an alternative to crime" (p. 3), the delivery plan outlined the challenges of helping those described as the hardest to reach in the UK population. The delivery plan is based on partnerships with education providers, ensuring equality and diversity in provision and improving the quality of education within criminal justice contexts. In 2014 the vision statement published on the National Offender Management Service website ([www.justice.gov.uk](http://www.justice.gov.uk)) upholds this commitment to education as an opportunity to change, and a way forward towards employment. In the UK, music is a compulsory National Curriculum subject within mainstream schools up to the age of 14, contributing to a curriculum that "provides pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge that they need to be educated citizens" (DfE, 2013, p. 6). Although prison regimes also aspire to provide people with education and training in order to become educated citizens, music is not compulsory within prison education. Furthermore, in a survey of UK prisoners' views on their education programs "music was the course most desired, and least provided. Prisoners praised the music courses they had had at other prisons, and longed to have another chance." (Prison Reform Trust, 2003, p. 30).

Since 2003 there has been an increase in musical activities in UK prisons. An evidence library hosted by Arts Alliance<sup>1</sup> currently holds 82 evaluation reports involving 29 different arts organisations and 30 different academic institutions ([www.artsevidence.org](http://www.artsevidence.org)). Of these 82 evaluation reports, 21 are of specifically music-based programs. These programs are varied, including Javanese gamelan, musical theatre, songwriting and AfroReggae amongst others.

#### MUSICAL PROGRAMMING IN US PRISONS

According to the International Center for Prison Studies ([www.prisonstudies.org/sites/prisonstudies.org/files/resources/downloads/wppl\\_10.pdf](http://www.prisonstudies.org/sites/prisonstudies.org/files/resources/downloads/wppl_10.pdf)), in 2013 10.2 million people were incarcerated in penal institutions across the globe. In comparison to other countries, the US prison system incarcerates more people than any other country at a rate of 716 people per 100,000. The rise to incarceration through the 1980s was exacerbated by reductions in services for people with mental illness, a shift toward incarcerating youth as adults, and the inhumane increase of supermax facilities. Positive change, even if incremental, seems to be on the horizon for the US as the prison incarceration numbers (not including people incarcerated in jails) have decreased between 2010 and 2012, and Attorney General Eric Holder has announced efforts toward drug sentencing reform and restoring voting rights to formerly incarcerated people.

Because of the extreme number of prisons within the US, an exhaustive search of music programs occurring in facilities has not been completed since the rise to mass incarceration. However, steady efforts have been made to gain a more thorough understanding of types and examples music programs in US prisons. Efforts have focused on non-religious-based musical offerings facilitated by outside volunteers within prison contexts. With that in mind, a brief summary of music programs in US prison contexts include choral programs, guitar instruction, youth programming including musical theatre, and non-profit arts organizations that offer a variety of musical activities including performances and workshops.

#### MUSICAL PROGRAMMING IN PORTUGUESE PRISONS

In Portugal, on the 31st December 2013 the number of imprisoned population reached 14,133, with an overcrowding rate of 16%, i.e. over 1966 places more than the housing capacities of the institutions. From these, only 843 were women ([sol.sapo.pt/inicio/Sociedade/Interior.aspx?content\\_id=97167](http://sol.sapo.pt/inicio/Sociedade/Interior.aspx?content_id=97167)) revealing a steady decreasing tendency in what concerns women's imprisonment. Although the 1979 Law regulates educational programs in Portuguese prisons, Music Education is more or less left to chance, teachers' availability and administrative decisions. Conversely, volunteer work more than doubled in recent years, with "development of cultural and artistic activities" coming in second place ([www.dn.pt/inicio/portugal/interior.aspx?content\\_id=2437263&page=-1](http://www.dn.pt/inicio/portugal/interior.aspx?content_id=2437263&page=-1)). From these, the most significant part is promoted by the educational services of concert halls and museums, together with the contribution of alternative theatre and dance projects and post-graduate individual projects. For the moment there is no systematic account of musical programs running in Portuguese prisons. Anderson (2011) argues that conflicting views of the purpose of prison education have shaped the way that prison education programs are delivered. Furthermore, research and evaluation of music programs have emulated this conflict. This being the case, there is a need to bring together the growing evidence base of the impact that music programs have on both musical development and personal identity change so as to demonstrate how they can support pathways into employment and ultimately enable people to make positive contributions to society.

#### RESEARCH IN UK, US, AND PORTUGUESE PRISON CONTEXTS

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<sup>1</sup> Arts Alliance is a national body within the UK promoting arts in criminal justice contexts ([www.artalliance.org.uk](http://www.artalliance.org.uk))

This chapter brings together three research projects carried out in the UK, the US and Portugal. The UK-based project comprised a week long Javanese Gamelan program within a Young Offenders Institution. The program was delivered by the charity Good Vibrations ([www.good-vibrations.org.uk](http://www.good-vibrations.org.uk)). The aim of a Good Vibrations program is to provide opportunities for artistic expression through music-making, providing opportunities for hard to reach people to develop their life and work skills. The focus of the program is on learning traditional Javanese pieces alongside creative work involving improvisation and composition. Often Good Vibrations programs include elements of Javanese dance, puppetry and song, and participants have the opportunity to explore wider Javanese culture. Previous evaluations of Good Vibrations programs have found that participation in a program can lead to positive change (Caulfield, Wilson & Wilkinson, 2010; Wilson, Caulfield & Atherton, 2008). Highlighting the therapeutic benefits of the program as a catalyst for change, evaluation reports have also demonstrated how participation had empowered individuals who sought out further educational opportunities after the program had ended (Wilson & Logan, 2006) and had taken on more responsibility as a result of the program (Caulfield, Wilson & Wilkinson, 2010). Moreover, research has suggested that the processes leading to this reported positive change are a direct result of participation in social music-making (Henley *et al.*, 2012). Therefore the aim of the current research project was to understand the musical learning processes within a Good Vibrations program and how they contributed to this reported positive change.

In order to gain an insight into how the Good Vibrations program worked and enabled musical learning and social development, a qualitative methodology was adopted. The researcher carried out a systematic participant observation study where she embedded herself within the program taking on the role of a support tutor. The participant observation study was complemented by follow up semi-structured interviews six weeks after the project ended. Program participants (referred to as students) were aware of this dual role as researcher and tutor and the researcher was able to build a relationship with the participants that allowed an insight into the complexities of the musical and social interactions within the project. Furthermore, becoming part of the program enabled the researcher to integrate observations made *of* others with experience *with* others, thus providing a deep understanding of the program through experience rather than reporting from a purely observationalist perspective (Labaree, 2002).

The Oakdale Community Choir, comprised of an equal number of medium security incarcerated men (inside singers) and women and men from the community (outside singers), began in 2009 in Iowa located in the Midwestern United States. In addition to rehearsing and performing inside the prison, the group also incorporates reflective writing and songwriting components. At the conclusion of each concert season (two seasons per year), the group performs for an incarcerated audience and for an audience of approved outside guests. These guests include family members and friends of choir members, individuals interested in volunteering at the prison, employers who might reframe their thinking about hiring formerly incarcerated people, victims who are comfortable coming into the prison for concerts, people from the University of Iowa community including students, faculty, and administrators, and others curious about the program. Concert CDs are sent to approved friends and family members of the inside singers.

Quite often, original songs produced and performed at the concerts are heartfelt expressions of love for inside singers' family members. For example, one season an inside singer wrote a song for his new born daughter whom he had not seen yet. Another man who had not seen his family for 10 years wrote a song titled "My Love Always" asking for forgiveness and expressing his love for his family. One man reflected on the look his mother gave him in the courtroom when he was sentenced to prison and wrote "In My Mother's Eyes" expressing his sorrow for hurting his mother, and pleading for her love and support. Catherine Wilson (2013) researched the songwriting component of this choir, noting how songwriting involves a certain amount of psychological risk for

the songwriters. Wilson reported that songwriting provided a means for a personally expressive outlet for incarcerated men to convey a wide range of emotions including indifference, wonder, desperation, joy, love, love gone wrong, regret for the past, coping, and sadness. For example, men wrote about their family members they have been separated from. One man wrote a song for his infant daughter that he never met, another wrote about his five children he had not seen in ten years, another wrote about how his great grandmother is watching over him after her death.

In 2009 the educational service of *Casa da Música* (CM), the main concert hall in Porto, Portugal, started the program *Casa vai a Casa*. The program was aimed at communities that cannot attend the activities offered by its regular programming. The name of this program metaphorically plays with the word *Casa* that in the Portuguese language, according to the context, means either house or home. According to the nature of the visited institutions, the educational service promotes workshops with populations that have no access or limited access to a musical experience, including those in women's and men's prisons. This study takes place in a women's prison in the context of a research protocol between CM and the Research Centre in Psychology of Music and Music Education (CIPEM) from the College of Education of the Polytechnic Institute. Borrowing a theoretical background from music psychology and educational research and within a qualitative research design that takes a feminist standpoint, data gathering involves participant observation, individual and focus groups interviews, life stories, and field notes. It questions to what extent the concepts of resilience and thriving through adversity may be understood while taking into account the main targets of the CM's program: social inclusion, sense of community, and promotion of self-esteem. The object of the research was not to study the prison itself as an institution, but the impressions, memories, emotions, and meanings attributed by the imprisoned women to their participation in the music workshops and concerts. However, recognizing the role of the institution in the women's lives was part of the effort to understand and interpret the discourses that were produced during and after the music workshops and concerts. Therefore, to discover part of what has been produced in the domain of criminology studies in general and women's criminology studies in particular, both internationally and in Portugal (Carlen & Worrall, 2004; Carlen, 2007; Cunha, 2005; Foucault, 1977; Matos & Machado, 2007; Torres & Gomes, 2002; Wacquant, 2003; Wacquant, 2009) represented an enrichment that is shedding light and helping weave the reports and discussion of the collected data. So far, the research addresses the workshops that took place in April/May 2011 over a period of three weekends culminating in a presentation for the families of the involved women's prisoners, and between January and May 2013, leading to a major concert in CM in the context of the 100 years celebration of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. Ethical issues are crucial in this research. Concerned with giving voice to the people involved, the research approach acknowledges how participant lives are singular and fragile and is aware and sensitive to the potential for exposure to have a negative outcome. Considerations of people's time, privacy, and safety are fundamental ethical concerns that inform the research relationships.

These research projects share the aim of providing musical learning opportunities for hard to reach populations, attempting to understand the processes that contribute to musical, personal and social development. The discussion below presents themes arising from each research project demonstrating their respective contributions to exploration of musicianship, personal development and social development.

#### EXPLORATION OF MUSICIANSHIP

One of the common features of the three music programs is the opportunity to explore participants' musicianship. The research suggests that this musical exploration has resulted in musical development, particularly in terms of increased musical expression, ensemble and choral skills, compositional and improvisation skills, and performance skills.

## BUILDING AN UNDERSTANDING OF MELODY AND TEXTURE

The pedagogy underpinning the Javanese gamelan program supported a developing understanding of how melody and texture function alongside an increasing control of pulse, rhythm, and dynamics. The program was structured so that the opening activities allowed the students to explore the instruments and the sonic environment, acclimatising themselves to the sonic landscape. As the week progressed, the facilitator began to move the students' understanding of the individual pitches forward into an understanding of how melody functions. Participants learned about melody by breaking down the process of performing a traditional piece, i.e. everyone learnt the 'tune', then the structural instruments learnt their 'tune', and then the piece was put together through building up each layer at a time.

This process allowed the students to engage in different levels of understanding. At first, all students were focused on their individual melody by learning the sequence of pitches. They found different ways of doing this including using numbers representing different pitches given by the facilitator, following mallet patterns either by watching the pattern of the support tutor or by the facilitator deliberately showing them the pattern, and singing the tunes simultaneously to playing them. By concentrating on the shape of the melody in terms of the rise and falls of pitch, the students were able to learn, memorise, and to some extent internalise the melody. This internalization of the melody could be seen through the fluidity of movement in the students playing; moving from disjointed movements when students were focusing on individual pitches and working out where to go next, to a more fluid movement when the direction of the melody was understood.

Once this fluidity in melody had been accomplished, students were then able to look beyond their own melody to see and hear how the different elements of the piece contributed to the melody. A good example of this was in observing how one student gave advice to another student who struggled to put his structural part in the right place. The melody was constructed of four-note phrases. Each four-note phrase (*gâtrâ*) ended with a note from the kempul or kenong, the kempul and kenong alternating between *gâtrâs*. The advising student was playing the saron (tune part) and was seated between the kenongs and kempuls. He had mastered his melody and was listening to the other parts around him. He noticed that the student on the kenong was finding it difficult to place his note (occurring once every eight 'tune' notes) and he stopped what he was playing, told the kenong player to listen to the melody being played by the support tutor and then pointed out the sequence of kempul and kenong to him in relation to this melody. Once the kenong player understood this, the advising student returned to playing the melody loudly to help the other student decipher the sequence. This student had internalised his melody enough to work out where the other parts fitted in and then conveyed his understanding of the melody to another student, suggesting an understanding of the textural patterns within the music.

Throughout the week there were opportunities to build on this understanding of melody and the facilitator was keen to allow students to move onto progressively more complex parts. However, the facilitator was sensitive to the need for students to become very familiar with their own part before adding an additional layer into the mix.

Alongside this developing understanding of melody and texture, the ability to control pulse, rhythm, and dynamics emerged as a result of the program activities. One example can be seen through an *imbal* exercise. This activity required students to work in pairs and create a four-note ostinato, each student playing alternating notes. This exercise enabled students to engage with pulse as well as deepening their sense of melody and texture. Through a process of experimenting with the *imbal*, performing to each other and listening to each other's work, the students were able to make the connections between their own part and their partner's part. The overall effect of the ostinato could

be heard and the understanding of how pulse operates within gamelan music, and the need to control this, was consolidated through a discussion.

It is useful to note here that formative assessment underpinned the learning throughout the week. Formative assessment occurred through discussion, questioning (either directly 'did you find that easy/hard?' or through elicitation) and also the use of a digital audio recorder. Not only did this enable the facilitator to give appropriate support to those who needed it and provide challenge for the students who would thrive on it, it gave the students instant feedback and an opportunity for self- and peer-assessment.

#### CHORAL SINGING

Two unique components of choral singing compared to other types of musical learning are the word factor: texts are integral parts of choral singing; and the somatic factor: the musical agent and instrument are one in the same (Cohen, 2007a, pp. 17-23). Cohen (2007a) formulated a theory of interactional choral pedagogy in prison contexts based on Christopher Small's concept of musicking. As research in this area is still nascent, the underlying principle that measurable growth in desired personal and social behaviours can occur with appropriate musical facilitation, needs more testing. Nevertheless, research indicates examples of personal and social growth within choral singing contexts in prisons, including some outcomes that may not be considered desirable. In a combined volunteer-inmate choir, resulting phenomena of rehearsing and performing together generated five categories: (a) social connections, (b) joy, (c) increased feelings of self-worth, (d) frustration, and (e) sadness (Cohen, 2007b, pp. 66-68). With respect to social connections, an inmate reported that he is usually isolated, but after joining the choir, he spent most of his time interacting with others. Many inmates reported momentarily releases from stress. One incarcerated singer reported, "Although I am here physically, my spirit is let go through song" (Cohen, 2007b, p. 66). After seeing audiences give standing ovations at the end of concerts, the inmate singers reported strong feelings of accomplishment and positive self-worth. Concurrently, frustration was part of both volunteers' and inmates' experiences. Volunteers were frustrated with the bureaucracy of the prison system, passing through prison security, and hearing some inmates sing under pitch during concerts. Inmates described frustration with other inmates who came to practice late, did not learn material well, and who complained about the amount of work with the choir. Volunteers reported feelings of sadness for the prison situation in general, and empathized with inmates who were living apart from their families.

#### CREATIVE MUSIC-MAKING

Both intervention processes in the Portuguese project have been prepared including the four modules of the Recreational Music Program (RMP) promoted by *Casa da Música* (CM) since 2005. These modules are targeted to a group of young music-makers and practitioners that work usually under the leadership of two project leaders from the UK, in order to get an "effective experience of working with diverse communities either through the production of a musical performance or through the promotion of new groups involving original musical discourses" (taken from the advertising flyer of CM, October 2011). The researcher is involved in all activities and tends to participate in the final presentations and concerts.

At the beginning of each session everybody joins in a big circle, for body percussion, creative singing, shouting and speaking; the aim is to arrive at a better connection among all participants. There is time for small group work to create different patterns that will be later explored in the large group, at first with no concrete purpose, later on coming towards materials to be explored in the context of the final performance (small presentation or formal concert). The project leaders tend to suggest that several activities be linked to the women's life situations, which is immediately grasped by them as an opportunity to bring out personal feelings and modes of sharing. Taking different vocal and

instrumental explorations, the final work begins to emerge as a result of everyone's input. The role of the project leaders and of the young musicians is paramount in shaping the final product as something coherent and meaningful, albeit in different ways, for each participant.

Performance is a vital component of each of the projects. As with the Portuguese and US programs, the UK program also leads to a performance. This performance is recorded and a professional CD is made and sent to the students. The performance has been found to give a focal point for students to work towards, and program evaluations have demonstrated the key role that the performance plays in enabling students to realise what they have achieved during the program week (Henley *et al.*, 2012). Also, the CD has been reported by former students to give them a focus to help sustain the benefits felt during the program week after the program had ended (Caulfield, Wilson & Wilkinson, 2010). The current UK research project found that the performance gave students a concrete event that catalysed their achievements, and instilled a sense of ownership of the music created and pride in the performance. Moreover, reflection time afterwards provided students with the opportunity to identify the personal development that occurred as a result of their musical explorations (Henley, 2014).

#### PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

In the last forty years, theoretical understandings have developed with respect to the process of rehabilitation of those in criminal justice contexts. Current thinking now centres around the desistance paradigm; that is, education and interventions within criminal justice contexts should aim at engaging people in developing attributes that contribute to desistance from crime (Maruna, 2000). Moreover, desistance from crime, or reducing re-offending should also address the re-socialisation of offenders, and developing interventions that work to do so should be the focus of rehabilitation (McNeill, 2004). Alongside developing theoretical understandings of the process of desistance, there is a growing body of empirical evidence supporting effective interventions in criminal justice systems (Farrall & Maruna, 2004). Within this, a body of research is emerging focussing specifically on arts interventions and their potential for supporting transformative processes (Clennon, 2013; McNeill *et al.*, 2011; Tett *et al.*, 2012). Acknowledging the role that learning plays in identity change, McNeill *et al.* (2011) drew together research on arts interventions within criminal justice settings and desistance theory, demonstrating that successful interventions foster the development of attributes related to both personal development and social development. Furthermore, Eric Clarke's approach to musical consciousness and Tia DeNora's pragmatic understanding of music's role in consciousness appear to be seminal for the understanding of the importance of music activities for incarcerated people. Clarke's concern with the primary consciousness of music, "the kind of consciousness that is associated with immediate perceptual engagement with music, rather than with imagining, remembering, or reflecting upon music" (Clarke, 2011, p. 195), leads to the suggestion that "music has the capacity to convey, extend, express, and transform human subjectivity, and in doing so it becomes for many people one of the most richly fulfilling and psychologically important domains of their subjective and intersubjective experience" (p. 209). As for DeNora, the topic is presented in a mental health context, considering "consciousness as a medium for social relation, regulation, and self-presentation" (DeNora, 2011, pp. 309-310). It is an ecological model involving a *performative*, and *relational* understanding of health "which in turn understands health as *afforded* by ecological settings and materials" (p. 310).

#### MOTIVATION AND GRATITUDE

Research and current prison choir practices indicate that singing in a choir while incarcerated enhances participants' feelings of motivation. One singer wrote, "I've made some mistakes that aren't fixable, but I can learn from the wonderful opportunity to be part of something positive" (Gromko & Cohen, 2011, p. 111). Such positive feelings have inspired and motivated incarcerated choir members to participate in other educational programming within the prison. A number of men



in the Oakdale Community Choir have participated in Alternatives to Violence weekend workshops, writing workshops, and parenting class after they joined the prison choir. An incarcerated man from a different choir reported that his participation in choir motivated him to interact with people who are not addicts: "You have made me see there are wonderful people out there other than druggies. That will be the kind of people I want in my life from here on out" (Cohen, 2009, p. 58). Another, from still a different prison choir, announced that he had a new leisure skill to do rather than abusing substances (Cohen, 2007, p. 68).

After the Oakdale Choir had been established for two years, incarcerated men in this facility formally expressed their appreciation for volunteers. They cooperated with prison administration to organize an annual volunteer appreciation night where they set up tables in the gym with informational materials about other volunteer activities in the prison, serve refreshments, and award certificates to volunteers.

#### DETERMINATION TOWARD ACHIEVEMENT

The essence of Self-Determination Theory (Reeve, Deci & Ryan, 2004) is that a person strives to be autonomous and competent through interaction with their environment; the motivation being intrinsic as a kind of competition with oneself in order to achieve something rather than coming from external sources. Determination toward achievement was clearly seen within the Javanese Gamelan program. The students had never seen a gamelan before and for some, the way the instruments were played and the sound of the gamelan provided difficulties:

*It was quite frustrating. Sitting on the floor all the time, you need chairs. It was uncomfortable. And I had a headache. (reported six weeks after the program)*

For others, the music itself was removed from their own musical experiences:

*I'm not really into this sort of thing. I'm into bassline. I've given it a good go and I might get to like it. I might get better and better. At least I'm being honest. (reported mid-way through the program week)*

However, these two students provide interesting examples of the strength of motivation and self-determination shown during the program.

The first student above constantly reported having a headache yet along with a number of students, he found that he was able to sleep well during the program week. The effect that insomnia has on the mental health of prisoners has been well documented (Elger, 2009) and internal Good Vibrations evaluations consistently report that students have been able to sleep well during a program week. So, whereas the above student found the playing environment difficult, the benefits that he gained in terms of being able to sleep gave him the self-determination he needed to complete the program.

*That was the most [important] thing. I'd actually done something that I didn't think I'd do. I got out of bed to play these. (reported six weeks after the program ended)*

The second student above was adamant throughout the program that he did not like the music.

*I don't like the music, I don't see the point. I never thought, dreamt of doing something like that. It don't sound good to me. (reported during the first half of the program week)*

He found aspects of the program challenging and became very frustrated when he was not able to maintain a drum pattern, to the point where he asserted that he would not perform at the end of the week. However, he continued with the program, and he did perform. Six weeks after the

program he still maintained that he did not like the music, although he became very animated when talking about how he could use the instruments to amplify a bassline beat and have a wash of sound from the gamelan over the top. Immediately after the program he was able to reflect on how the program had helped him on a personal level.

*I normally spend 23 hours on the wing. I don't come out, I get very stressed. This has helped because I've been doing something constructive - I've been learning new skills and about a new culture; it's helped me keep my stress levels down. (reported at the end of the program week)*

Moreover, six weeks after he was able to articulate his reasons for continuing with the program even though he claimed not to like the music:

*If I don't stick to it now, it makes me think I can't stick [to a job] when I go out ... I want to go the right way about it this time. So I know I can stick at it when I go out. I really want to go out and get a job. (reported six weeks after the program ended)*

An example of a third student demonstrates how this combination of being able to sleep and being determined to complete the project week had an impact after the program ended. This student had admitted that he had only signed up for the program in order to get out of doing his work duties that week. However, as the program progressed his motivation to be part of the program increased, and he was very clear about what he took away from the experience.

*I am able to listen a lot more. What other people are saying, that was something that I struggled with before. I used to be 'I don't care, I'm here for one person and one person only'. You can't be like that. In order to get anywhere in this world you've got to listen. Good Vibrations taught me that. It made me appreciate life a lot more. I get up in the morning now and just sit in silence for a minute and listen. Listen to the birds and the keys and everything around me. I sit on my bed with a fag and a coffee and just listen. I don't switch the TV on any more. I used to sleep with the TV on, I don't do that now. I'm from the city, there's lights and sounds all the time through the night. I'm not used to silence so I had to have the TV on to go to sleep. Now, I don't do that. I've learnt to be myself and to listen more. (reported six weeks after the program ended)*

## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

This developing awareness of the importance of listening to others was also found to be fundamental in social development. The data suggest that relationships with peers developed as a result of the musical communication experienced during the programs. Moreover, there are suggestions that these programs also foster the development of relationships with the wider community.

## RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEERS

Experiencing the way the Javanese gamelan students, facilitator and support tutor interacted through both the music and the discussions during the program provided an insight into the way both the music and the structured discussion modelled positive peer relationships. The musical focus on melody and texture, and the way Javanese gamelan music naturally centres on the individual parts combining to make an over-arching melody, known as *lagu batin* or inner melody, requires students to listen and communicate musically in order for the music to work. This means a high level of co-operation. What is interesting is that as the music provided

the medium for co-operation, and this musical co-operation was not confrontational in a verbal way, students found that they could engage with their peers in a new way.

*There were these moments when playing, when everyone stopped looking and just listened and just played. It fitted together.* (reported during a discussion towards the end of the program week)

Moreover, removing the need for verbal interaction during the music-making produced an environment where people with personal histories did not need to confront these in order to work together. In fact, one student actively resisted confrontation during the program:

*There were people on that course that I couldn't stand. They knew I didn't like them. I avoided putting myself into a situation that could get me into trouble. I'd not do that on other courses.* (reported six weeks after the program ended)

This musical communication was in some way scaffolded by the free improvisation framework used from the beginning of the week. The facilitator uses a framework based on lead-follow-observe-oppose as a way of allowing students to experiment freely but maintain a sense of ensemble through constructive listening and action; students either led, followed or opposed with their musical contributions to the group improvisation, and they were encouraged to take some time to observe the music that emerged as a result. As the week progressed it became evident that this framework was also being used in discussions. Consequently, by the end of the week the students were able to engage in constructive discussion knowing that it was safe to disagree without the risk of confrontation. It was this constructive discussion that allowed the students to form professional working relationships with their peers and make joint decisions about their performance, giving them a sense of working together:

*Even though a lot of us didn't know each other, we were working together. [I listened to other people more]. Prisoners rarely do. You just shout a lot in here, that's what you do. It built a real sense of cooperation. Again, we worked together and pulled the performance off.* (reported six weeks after the program ended)

This positive outcome needs to be taken with caution and it would be naive to think that students would be able to maintain these professional relationships without the scaffolding of either the facilitator or the music after the program ended. However, what can be seen from the research findings is that the program may have provided the context to reopen a channel that students previously had not found in their environment.

*I've listened a lot more. For a while in prison I've not listened to people. This [Good Vibrations] has reopened that channel. It's only looking back now that I see that. It's one of those things, it may not seem significant at the time, but you take something with you. For me, it was cooperating with each other, which means listening.* (reported six weeks after the program)

#### RE-ENGAGING WITH SOCIETY

Within the Portuguese research, one of the most recurrently referred issues is the opportunity to be recognised even if it happens in one sole moment, in that concert in CM. This may be understood in the sense of the development of “an account of recognition that can accommodate the full complexity of social identities, instead of one that promotes reification and separatism (Fraser, 2000, p. 109).

*With this project that took us to CM the most rewarding thing was to have my son in the audience. And have people's recognition and applause that what we were doing had a value. (Reported 10 months later)*

In the US program, the option for inmates to rehearse with outside volunteers on a weekly basis provides regular opportunities for them to re-engage with society. This engagement is unique in that the two groups are working side by side as equals; the outside volunteer singers are part of the choir where the power dynamics between the two groups do not exist as the power dynamics between prison staff and inmates. It was a process for the two groups to feel like equals. Prior to the first rehearsal of the Oakdale Community Choir in Iowa, both groups of singers were nervous and not sure what to expect. One outside singer wrote, "I expected them to be in shackles and not interested in singing. I quickly learned that they were human beings, had feelings, and wanted to sing" (Cohen, 2012, p. 51). Inside singers also were concerned and uncertain what to expect prior to the first rehearsal: "Would they be afraid of me, since I'm an inmate? . . . As we walked about and talked to each other, I knew at that moment I would be accepted graciously" (Gromko & Cohen, 2011, p. 111). This choir's grounding framework, an African concept, "Ubuntu," means, "a person is a person through other people." It is closely aligned with aspects of Christopher Small's (1998) concept of musicking: who we are is rooted in how we relate to other people. Inmates live isolated from society at large, and they need opportunities to interact with non-inmates in positive ways. Choirs provide such opportunities, affording a positive sense of self: "I've learned through our practices and meeting people from the outside world that we are human and that is a very strong self-esteem builder" (Gromko & Cohen, 2011, p. 111).

#### ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES FOR MUSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The impact that access to opportunities for musical development had on the individuals within the music programs is evident. The effects include relief from stress, development of self-confidence, and new meaning and perspectives:

UK project:

*Yes, that week I wasn't stressed at all, which is rare in here. I stress about everything. I'm stressed all the time.*

*It's one of the best spent weeks I've had since I've been in this jail. The jail doesn't do enough things that lift you up or build your confidence. It's lifted me out of somewhere, not a very nice place that I was in.*

*It was an incredible break from such a horror - being trapped in here with no way of moving on. It lifts you up and gives you perspective.*

*Something better than the day to day. Something more meaningful than the day to day.*

Portuguese project:

*These are a real moments of happiness. I am happy to be able to tell my son and daughter that even here I have real moments of happiness.*

*Here, everybody has the same type of thoughts. But when we come in these projects we forget everything, we fly away, we are just here.*

US project:

*I've noticed myself becoming more outgoing and communicative.*

One man who had been incarcerated for 40 years said that he was surprised that he 'can relate to normal people without apprehension.'

*Since joining the choir I've noticed more self-confidence around other people.*

Also, opportunities to explore musicianship through choice in an individual and aesthetic way were given:

UK Project:

*This is a serious change between different activities. Different from prison activity. In prison, once you do something, you do it that way each time.*

*Wow! I want to do this because I like this. It was a chance to open my ears a bit more.*

Ultimately what these programs have done is to give the opportunity for people to engage in a shared musical experience.

UK Project:

*'It's lovely to see everyone sharing music together and everyone helping out'*

*'This is what life's about and music, sharing everything.'*

#### POSITIVE IDENTITY CHANGE

It could therefore be argued that the musical processes within the learning itself, as well as the process of preparing for and performing, provide a catalyst for personal and social development. Furthermore, McCulloch & McNeill (2008) explain that the desistance process involves creating new personal narratives around key events and changes. Although desistance is a deeply complex process that is highly individual and develops over a period of time, these personal and social developments found within the current research projects may contribute to positive identity change.

The focus group interviews with the women that participated in the workshops of CM, reveal a systematic awareness of what the arts in general and music in particular may bring to their lives.

*Everything was so fascinating. With my 50 years of life I have never been in contact with the arts. I realise now that if I had been maybe...everything is so fascinating. A mystery... I am learning every day. Speaking with people from the real world, being involved with things that are outside of the prison's system is to live. (Reported 10 months later)*

A similar finding emerged from the Javanese Gamelan workshop.

*I never thought I would be good at rhythm but apparently I am. I am much better at it than I thought I would be.*

One Good Vibrations student said that participating in the project had made him want to pick his violin back up again and another student said that it gave him the confidence to form his own band, something that he had wanted to do but did not have enough self-belief to do.

The overall data suggest that such programs may contribute to a different cultural life, as well as to the construction of resiliency pathways, a research domain that remains largely unexplored. It also indicates the emergence of a musical consciousness that goes beyond music itself, and may be explored in the context of other art forms. It also reveals that such interventions should be systematically addressed in order to understand how greatly they contribute to increasing self-worth, and opening doors for future opportunities. This includes a rigorous follow-up of the extent to which they might also foster post-incarceration self-sufficiency in the search for a possible enduring involvement with music.

The significance of this within a rehabilitation climate that is focussed upon helping people to re-engage with society and move into meaningful employment when re-entering communities is two-fold. Firstly, these opportunities to explore and develop musicianship may give people a new focus for their own aspirations for employment within cultural industries. Organisations that provide arts interventions within criminal justice contexts are developing pathways for people moving out of criminal justice contexts and into society. For example, Good Vibrations has a bursary fund to cover travel costs for ex-students who have re-entered society to enable them to attend community gamelans. On a different level, the theatre company Clean Break ([cleanbreak.org.uk](http://cleanbreak.org.uk)) has a graduate scheme that enables ex-students to take qualifications that can lead to both employment and higher education.

On a wider level, good practice within organisations that provide musical learning within criminal justice contexts is evolving. Emerging from this is the practice for organisations to make statements as to their theory of change. That is, what they hope to achieve by providing these opportunities for people who otherwise may not have access to musical learning. By being open about how different musical programs can develop life and work skills through music, and how this can support the transition into the community, there may be a shared understanding of how society can support people who have re-entered society, and in turn how people can be inspired to make a positive contribution to society.

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