

Music & Well-being

– *Music as Integrative Experience*⁺⁺

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Abstract

This article will examine the power of the liminal space as a transformative experience. It will also examine a holistic model of the musical experience that brings together the environmental, the expressive, the intellectual, the social and the intuitive within its very nature. It will link this with contemporary developments in the area of spirituality/liminality. It will illustrate this from three projects - a Singing for Well-being choir, the Space for Peace event in Winchester Cathedral and a local community pageant. It will draw on the work of John Dewey, Christopher Small, Victor Turner, Estelle Jorgensen, Heidi Westerlund and Richard Shusterman.

Keywords: *Advocacy, Encounter, Liminality, Freedom, Empathy, Paradox*

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Music and Community

Music creates and restores community – *communitas* (Turner 1969, Storr 1993, Boyce-Tillman 2000a and b). To illustrate this we will do a small exercise. Take your own pulse and we will see what happens to it at the end of the song that we will sing together:

The Song of the Earth

CHORUS: Sing us our own song the song of the earth,
The song of creation, the song of our birth,
That exists in belonging to you and to me,
To the stars and the mountains, the sky and the sea.

1. Listen! You're hearing the song of the earth,
They sing it who know of their value and worth,
For they know they belong with the sea and the sky,
To the moonshine at midnight, the clouds floating by.

CHORUS

2. It is not one song but patchworks of sound.
That includes all the pitches that people have found
That includes the vibrations of earthquakes and bees
Of the laughing fire's crackling and murmuring breeze.

CHORUS

3. All blend together to make the earth song,
Fragmented parts separated too long,
True notes and rhythms and colours and beat
Make sacred spaces where we all meet.

CHORUS

(June Boyce-Tillman 2006a)

Now when we take our pulses we find that they are coming together. That process is called entrainment. We become a single unit – sharing the same emotions and becoming bodily like one another. The need for advocacy is often formed from a breakdown in community. Milan Kundera shows how totalitarianism leads to this breakdown and the need for advocacy:

Totalitarianism is not only hell, but all the dream of paradise – the age-old dream of a world where everybody would live in harmony, united by a single common will and faith, without secrets from one another. Andre Breton, too, dreamed of this paradise when he talked about the glass house in which he longed to live. If totalitarianism did not exploit these archetypes, which are deep inside us all and rooted deep in all religions, it could never attract so many people, especially during the early phases of its existence. Once the dream of paradise starts to turn into reality, however, here and there people begin to crop up who stand in its way, and so the rulers of paradise must build a little gulag on the side of Eden. In the course of time this gulag grows even bigger and more perfect, while the adjoining paradise gets even smaller and poorer (Kundera (1989/90).

This keynote will look at ways of creating communities through music that are coherent but not totalitarian. The place of community is much debated in the literature (Boyce-Tillman 2007). Charles Darwin “was puzzled by a phenomenon that seemed to contradict his most basic thesis, that natural selection should favor the ruthless” (quoted in Kent 2013):

Altruists, who risk their lives for others, should therefore usually die before passing on their genes to the next generation. Yet all societies value altruism, and something similar can be found among social animals, from chimpanzees to dolphins to leaf-cutter ants.

Neuroscientists have shown how this works. We have mirror neurons that lead us to feel pain when we see others suffering. We are hard-wired for empathy. We are moral animals (Sacks 2012).

In some southern African cultures there is the concept of ubuntu which is in contrast to the individualism that has developed in Western culture:

Africans have a thing called ubuntu. It is about the essence of being human; it is part of the gift that Africa will give the world. It embraces hospitality, caring about others, being willing to go the extra mile for the sake of another. We believe that a person is a person through other persons, that my humanity is caught up, bound up, inextricably, with yours. When I dehumanize you, I inexorably dehumanize myself. The solitary human being is a contradiction in terms. Therefore you seek to work for the common good because your humanity comes into its own in community, in belonging (Ubuntu Age 2012).

A good method for strengthening relationships among people is to have them work together in pursuing goals they share. This can take place in many different settings, a symphony orchestra, the charitable work of many non-governmental organizations, or a business cooperative. Bonding among the participants can take place in the pursuit of virtuous ends, such as producing good music, or questionable ones, such as those pursued by the Ku Klux Klan or street gangs. This lecture will look at various projects involving music to encourage this bonding.

Forms of Advocacy

Advocacy appears in different shapes and forms in the literature. Most popular is social justice advocacy which is characterized by a desire for transformation. – changing what is to what should be. It encompasses the power relations set out in the Kundera quote above and embarks on the following strategies:

- Questioning the way policy is administered
- Encouraging participation in the agenda setting from the significant issues raised
- Targeting political systems which do not respond to people’s needs
- Embracing inclusivity and engagement
- Proposing policy solutions
- Opening up space for public engagement

These strategies occur in a number of different contexts and all of them can include music:

- In a political context, it is often an organized collection of people who seek to influence political decisions and policy, without seeking election to public office. So in Serbia performing artists challenged the government's war policy.
- In a social care context it is often network of interconnected organizations and projects which seek to benefit people who are in difficulty often in the context of disability and mental health. Here projects for people in UK which involve singing groups for people with memory loss are growing in number (Hallam et al. 2011).

In the context of inclusion, citizen advocacy programmes seek to cause benefit by reconnecting people who have become isolated, especially minority groups. The intention is often here not only to facilitate *communitas* but also understanding or empathy on the part of the dominant culture. It reverses negative relationships where empathy has broken down or been twisted into exploitative relationships such as those in which people benefit from others' misery, such as an employer who pays his workers as little as possible and a consumer who buys cheap products from ruthless manufacturers.

Germans have a special term, *Schadenfreude*, for "enjoyment obtained from the troubles of others (Merriam-Webster 2012)." We can include in this category the pleasure a general might feel in defeating an enemy, or a coach might feel when his team defeats an opposing team. Rapists and pornographers are exploiters. Exploiters draw benefits from hurting others (Kent 2012:5).

Arts practices can reduce indifference on the part of the wider community as in the first form of advocacy cited above. People can start to care about others' well-being. They can lead to genuine caring, in which people feel better off when other individuals are better off as in the African concept of *ubuntu* described earlier. Caring is about empathy that goes beyond merely cognitive understanding of how others feel to include an emotional impact:

It is feeling sad in response to another's sadness; joy in response to another's joy; fear in response to another's fear, and so on. So conceived, empathy transfers others from external objects into parts of ourselves; "different" consciousnesses not only interact, they interpenetrate. In this way empathy expands our identity to include others; what happens to them, in some measure, happens to us (Contri 2012).

Performances can probe a community's weaknesses, call political and community leaders to account, desecralise its most cherished values and beliefs, reveal its conflicts and suggest remedies for them. The arts generally reflect the state of a given society. George Kent goes on to say that it is about showing that solidarity is possible:

Even if caring gestures do not bring an end to armed conflicts, they can be helpful. For example, the West-East Divan Orchestra, created by Daniel Barenboim and the

late Edward Said helps to bring together young people from all sides of the Middle East conflicts. It has not had a huge impact, but it demonstrates the possibility of civility between the parties. This kind of thing is worth doing even if it does not resolve the underlying problems (Kent 2013:11).

Another approach is suggested in a YouTube video that advocates “outrospection,” in contrast to introspection, and suggestions the creation of a museum of empathy that would help visitors come to a deeper understanding of other people’s lives (Krznaric 2012). Rather than focus on conflict and violence, there is the alternative articulated by a group at Saybrook University:

We support the development of a culture of transformative personal, organizational, and social change that fosters and celebrates the highest human qualities and practices, including empathy, altruism, peaceful conflict resolution, and restorative justice (Schulman 2012)

Heidi Westerlund develops this in terms of music:

My intention was also to show that music could be a genuine way to create situations, to construct social relations in situations, to *communicate* in a holistic way that combines body and ethics, individual and community (Westerlund 2002:144).

In the area of social advocacy music therapists (Aldridge 1996) have been working in this area for some time but there is an increasing number of groups using singing for well-being including empowerment like the one I shall describe below (Bailey and Davidson 2003, Bailey and Davidson 2005, Bungay et al. 2010, Clift et al. 2000, Clift and Morrison 2011).

I have set out elsewhere the transformational possibilities of the liminal space created by musicking (Boyce-Tillman, 2009). George Kent expands it, as I have, to include a Gaian perspective, the view that “humanity constitutes a living system within the larger system of our Earth “(Sahtouris 1998):

Take the living system most intimately familiar to all of us: the human body. We’ve long known that our bodies behave as a community of cells, which are organized into organs and organ systems. The central nervous system functions as the body’s government, continually monitoring all its parts and functions, ever making intelligent decisions that serve the interest of the whole enterprise. Its economics are organized as an equitable system of production and distribution, with full employment of all cells and continual attention to their wellbeing. The immune ‘defense’ system protects its integrity and health against unfamiliar intruders. It can be thought of as a kind of global political economy with organs as bioregional units, their different tissues as communities, cells as families or clans, and the organelles within cells as individuals.

Physiologically we can see that the needs and interests of individual cells, their organs and the whole body must be continually negotiated to achieve the body’s dynamic equilibrium or healthy balance (Sahtouris 1998).

Meaningful Engagement

John Dewey's work (1934) asked artists to take on board the totality of an experience in order to understand its potential power:

An interaction of organism and environment which, when it is carried to the full, is a transformation of interaction into participation and communication (Dewey 1934/80:22).

In arts projects, the aesthetic aspect of the experience means a qualitatively different, fulfilling and inherently meaningful mode of engagement in contrast to the mechanical, the fragmentary, the non-integrated and all other nonmeaningful forms of engagement that can characterize the wider world. It is the type of engagement that I intend to set out as a way of initiating arts projects that are truly integrative of a community. For cities are like bodies and need ways to create a sense of mutuality.

From this perspective it makes sense to speak about the “metabolism of cities” and the ways in which cities meet their needs (Deelstra 1987).

The fundamental questions are:

- Is all music integrative?
- How can music and cultural advocacy be linked?
- How far can music empower?
- How far can music represent cultural minorities?

To answer these I am using Christopher Small's idea of musicking:

To music is to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing material for performance...or by dancing.... It is descriptive, not prescriptive.... It takes place in a physical and a social settingwe can ask the wider and more interesting question: What's really going on (Small 1998:19-23)?

Such a theory of musicking establishes a tight connection between music and Identity. Ruth Westheimer shows how she retained her Jewish identity after being separated from her parents by singing a Hebrew lullaby:

I sang that lullaby – which has a melody written by Heinrich Isaak back in 1490 – to my children. And maybe I mangled the melody, but I felt – and still feel –the sweetness of it in my bones (Westheimer 2003).

Cindy Cohen describes a project in which a woman of indigenous Peruvian origins finds her true identity by learning the music of that tradition (Cohen 2007).

Music as Encounter

The musical experience is one of encounter in a variety of different domains (Boyce-Tillman 2004, 2006a and b, 2009).

- Expression – another self
- Materials – the environment
- Construction – the world of abstract ideas
- Values – another culture

Expression

The expressive domain includes the generation of such virtues as – strength, compassion, the possibility of reminiscence, nurture/challenge, excitement/relaxation and vulnerability. It concerns the feelingful content of the music, the memories or images evoked by which can be intrinsic to the music or extrinsic (related to the performer or listener). This is well expressed in this poem and the way in which the piece played here will always recall this memory:

Bach and the Sentry by Ivor Gurney

1. Watching the dark my spirit rose in flood
On that most dearest Prelude of my delight.

The low-lying mist lifted its hood,
The October stars showed nobly in clear night,

2. When I return, and to real music-making,
And play that Prelude, how will it happen then?
Shall I fear as I felt, a sentry hardly waking,
With a dull sense of No Man's Land again?

Empathy is born here which we shall revisit later. In one project I set a text I had found in a black township in South Africa. A child singing this text in Song of the Earth said how:

I felt close to the people in Africa whose prayer we sang. Now I continue to sing it and think of them.”

The domain of Materials asks what is playing or who is singing and what is it made of. It asks questions about the nature of the space in which it is taking place. It deals with the relationship to the natural world. It asks for a renewed relationship with Gaia – one that is tune with indigenous belief systems:

Did you know that trees talk? Well they do. They talk to each other, and they'll talk to you if you listen. Trouble is, white people don't listen. They never learned to listen to the Indians, so I don't suppose they'll listen to other voices in nature. But I have learned a lot from trees; sometimes about the weather, sometimes about animals, sometimes about the Great Spirit (Tinker 2004).

It asks for seeing music as embodied as a form of embodied cognition as in the recent developments in Somaesthetics.

The use of the living body (or soma) as site of sensory appreciation (aesthesis) and creative self-stylization. ... To pursue these aims, somaesthetics is concerned with a

wide diversity of knowledge forms and discourses, social practices and institutions, cultural traditions, values, and bodily disciplines that structure (or could improve) such somatic understanding and cultivation (Shusterman 2008).

Participants rediscover their bodies in the act of singing as in this participant in PeaceSong:

I have sung for many years but it always meant working out if the next note was a G sharp or G natural and a crotchet or a quaver. Because you only asked me to sing a single note I was aware of the breath entering and leaving my body and it became a meditative experience (Participant comment 2009).

It draws on a spirituality based in the natural world – a Gaian spirituality.

Stones are not closed, my child. Stones are open to all that the wind brings them. Dead creatures, dust, sharp objects, knocks and stains...it a work of art that is themselves. ... Now I am "Dances the Bones, Sings the Stones." (Mar 2011).

In the domain of Construction musical ideas are debated and developed. It concerns how repetition is used in a particular style and how interest is held and arguments followed. Here orate and literate traditions diverge and the two need to develop a respect for the other's methods of debates and understanding. Written musical traditions literacy have for long been prized over orate ones. There are differences in construction between orate and literate traditions (Ong 1982). Here is a description of how the notated Western traditions were adapted by the black Christian traditions which were orate in nature:

Rather than retaining the Euro-American structure, hymns were reshaped or improvised or "blackened" as a means of contextualisation (Costen 1993:98).

Olu Taiwo describes the differences between the way the beat functions in literate (metric) and orate (return beat) traditions:

Comparing the metric beat, (a European perceptual flux) with that of return beat, (a West African perceptual flux), we may ask, what are the distinctive differences between these two paradigms of perception? ... My observations conclude that subjective experiences of points and spaces differ between metric and return beat perceptions (Taiwo 2012).

He goes on to describe the metric beat as linear and static and the return beat of the orate traditions as curved and dynamic and sees the literate beat as focussed on past and future and the return beat on the present. The structures are therefore more circular and repetitive and process and product more closely fused than in the notated traditions which tend to contrite more on past and future and a linear approach to time.

Classical forms have developed in more totalitarian ways with the notated score exercising a control over what happens; but later I shall set out forms that at-

tempt to fuse literate and orate elements in an effort to include diverse traditions within the same work. I am exploring different ways to put together pieces reflecting the valuing of diversity which move away from the musical structures of popular and classical worlds. It is a piecemeal beginning as described by Ulf Hannerz:

There is now one world culture; all variously distributed structures of meaning are becoming interrelated, somehow, somewhere. And people like the cosmopolitans have a special part in bringing about a degree of coherence; if there were only locals, world culture would be no more than the sum of its separate parts....As things are now, on the other hand, it is no longer so easy to conform to the ideal type of local. Some people, like exiles or migrant workers, are indeed taken away from the territorial bases of their local culture, but may try to encapsulate themselves within some approximation of it. ... Here, however, today's cosmopolitans and locals have common interests in the survival of cultural diversity. For the latter, diversity itself, as a matter of personal access to varied cultures, may be of little intrinsic interest. It just so happens that it is the survival of diversity that allows all locals to stick to their respective cultures. For the cosmopolitans, in contrast, there is value in diversity as such, but they are not likely to get it, anything like the present form, unless other people are allowed to carve out special niches for their cultures, and keep them. Which is to say that there can be no cosmopolitans without locals (Hannerz 1996:111).

This interface of various tradition types with construction leads to the **domain of Values**. The following questions relate to this domain:

- In what context is the music performed?
- Why is it being performed?
- How like the original context is this?
- Have people paid to hear it?
- What are the values of the culture in which the music originated and how is this reflected in the music?

In this area the relationship of particular pieces to their own culture are explored (Diamond 1996). In any culture certain ways of knowing are validated (Boyce-Tillman 2005) and others become subjugated and devalued. Figure 1 shows on the right hand side the dominant values of Western culture:

Often the subjugated groups within a community use music for what Foucault calls strategies of resistance (Foucault/Gordon 1980). They therefore use different musical strategies from the dominant culture. In these groups music can play a very significant part as with the Jews surviving the holocaust and the black slaves their servitude. The intention in this area is to create a better world:

A musical pedagogy relates to a lived life, and asks for matters of character, disposition, value, personality, and musicality to feature in pedagogical training so that teachers may “think and act artfully, imaginatively, hopefully, and courageously toward creating a better world.” (Jorgensen 2008).

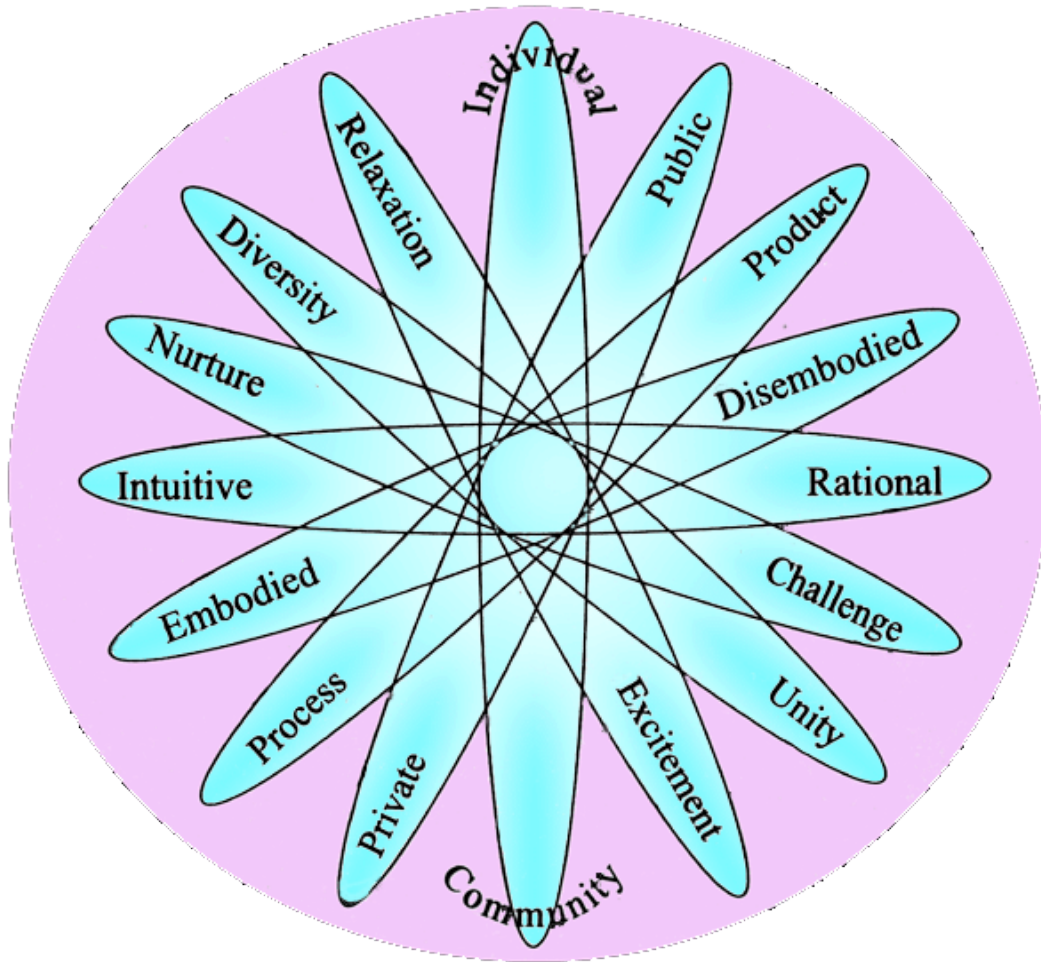


Figure 1. Value systems within a culture.

The use of music to validate the values of subjugated groups within a community is part of the philosophy of this paper.

The Liminal Experience

Music can take us into a liminal transformative place. This happens if we can negotiate a relationship with all these four domains as in figure 2.

We have looked at four domains of the musical experience. I am defining it as the ability to transport the audience to a different time/space dimension – to move them from everyday reality to ‘another world.’ The perceived effectiveness of a musical experience – whether of performing, composing or listening – is often situated in this area (Jackson 1998). Indeed some would see music as the last remaining ubiquitous spiritual experience in a secularised Western culture (Boyce-Tillman 2001b). Here, I have subsumed within my own thinking the following ideas:

- Flow, coming in from psychologists of creativity (Csikszentmihalyi M. and Csikszentmihalyi I.S. 1988, Csikszentmihalyi, 1993, Custodero 2002, 2005)

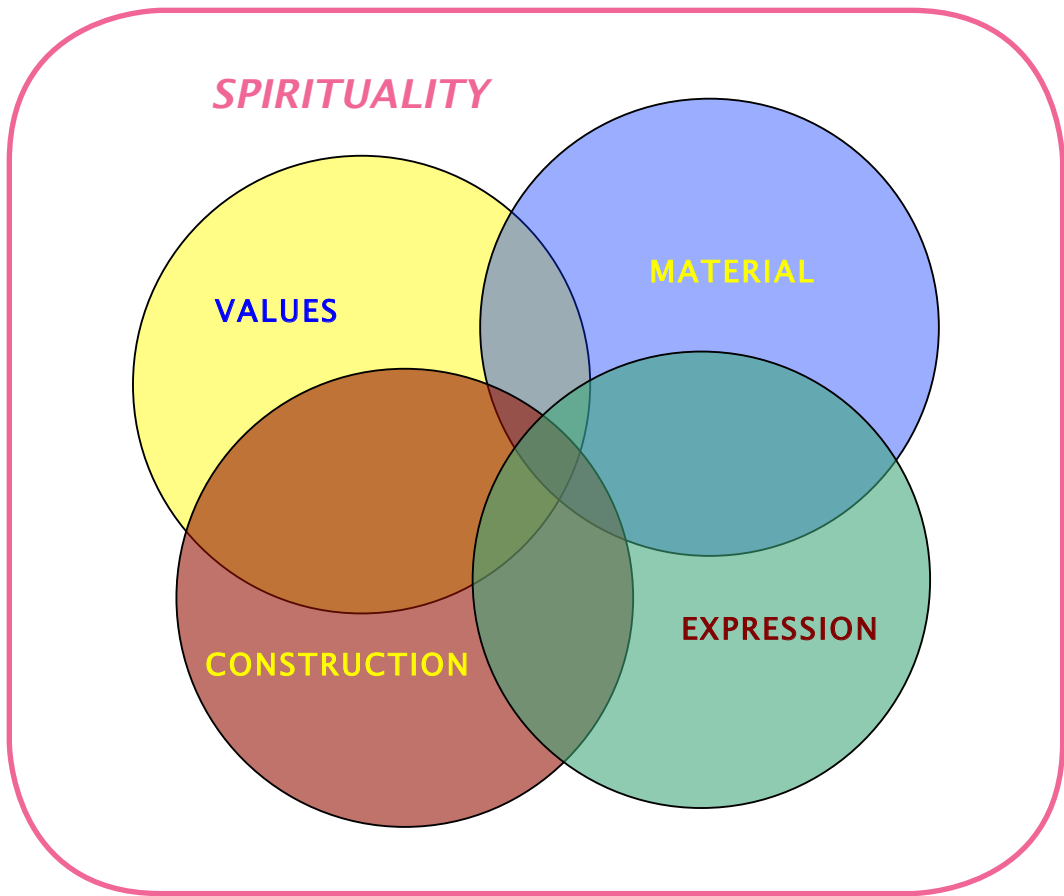


Figure 2. The domains of the musical experience.

- Ecstasy, often associated with idea of ‘the holy’ coming from the religious/spiritual literature (Otto 1923, Laski 1961)
- Trance coming from anthropological (Rouget 1987), New Age (Collin 1997, Goldman 1992, Stewart 1987) and psychotherapeutic literature (Inglis 1990)
- Mysticism, coming from religious traditions, especially Christianity (Underhill in Rankin 2005)
- Peak experiences (Maslow 1967)
- The religious experience (Rankin 2005)
- The spiritual experience of children (Hay and Nye 1998, Erricker, Erricker, Ota, Sullivan and Fletcher, 1997, Hay, 1982, Robinson 1977)
- Liminality (Turner 1969, 1974)

Characteristics of the Liminal Space

The literature reveals a variety of characteristics of this space (Boyce-Tillman 2009) that are potentially transformative:

- a limen that is crossed from ordinary knowing especially in the space/time dimension
- a sense of encounter
- a paradoxical knowing so that diversity can exist within it easily

- a sense of empowerment, bliss, realisation
- a sense of the beyond, infinity
- a feeling of an opening-up in the experiencer as boundaries start to dissolve
- a sense of transformation, change
- an evanescent and fleeting quality that cannot be controlled, which may result in a sense of givenness
- a feeling of unity with other beings, people, the cosmos
- respect for difference
- an understanding of the alterities within the self associated with the ability to use these creatively
- the encounter with a wider infinity through encounter with widely differing Others – which can be cultural and personal

The liminal/spiritual space appears to be outside of ordinary time – chronos:

Art uproots us into virtual reality. ... Time in the standard sense of khronos [author's italics] is suspended, and space is irrelevant because the viewer/listener/reader is encapsulated in the art, the virtual space provided by the artists (Galtung 2008:54).

Because of this, like the magical middle act of Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, it is potentially transformative (Boyce-Tillman 2009). Now we will look at some of these characteristics in more detail.

Freedom

Sometimes this is seen as belonging to a different realm:

Music is the echo of the glory and beauty of heaven. And in echoing that glory and beauty, it carries human praise back to heaven (From Scivias in Van der Weyer 1997:79).

In a reconciliation context this freedom leads to taking risks:

In the context of the mixed groups in Rostov, there was no time to mentally prepare for improvisation... Once the musicians started playing on their instruments, we saw mental concentration and playfulness in their faces. In other words, once the musicians started playing they instantly entered the zone of risk and uncertainty – this is the zone of dialogue par excellence (Jordanger 2008:13).

To create new relationships requires risk-taking and trying out new ways of being and renouncing old hardened emotional positions.

Intuition

This freedom can lead to other ways of knowing being accessed, particularly more intuitive ways:

Purposive rationality focuses on the survival of the individual organism, but the knowledge required for the survival of the whole group, or wisdom, is held in the non-conscious realms of the mind, accessible to conscious awareness through art and ritual (Cohen, 2008:4).

This means that aspects of a common humanity may be accessed that have been lost in purely logical/rational ways of knowing.

Empathy

The accessing of intuitive ways of knowing opens up the possibility of a deep empathy with other parts of the universe:

In music you can hear the sound of burning passion in a virgin's breast. You can hear a twig coming into bud. You can hear the brightness of the spiritual light shining from heaven. You can hear the depth of thought of the prophets. You can hear the wisdom of the apostles spreading across the world. You can hear the blood pouring from the wounds of the martyrs. You can hear the innermost movements of a heart steeped in holiness. You can hear a young girl's joy at the beauty of God's earth (Van der Weyer 1997:79).

This can also be with the deepest parts of the self:

What I do know is that the hopelessness I felt was so deep, I could admit it only in song (Westheimer 2003:64).

Felicity Laurence sets out a careful definition of empathy:

In empathizing, we, while retaining fully our sense of our own distinct consciousness, enter actively and imaginatively into others' inner states to understand how they experience their world and how they are feeling, reaching out to what we perceive as similar while accepting difference, and experiencing upon reflection our own resulting feelings, appropriate to our own situation as empathetic observer, which may be virtually the same feelings or different but sympathetic to theirs, within a context in which we care to respect and acknowledge their human dignity and our shared humanity.

Various and educable, cognitive and affective capacities are needed, whose level of advancement affects the quality of our empathizing. Antecedent factors also affect how, with whom, when and how well we empathize, while expressions of fellow feeling, including a feeling of oneness, and prosocial behaviour towards those with whom we empathize, may follow (Laurence 2008:25).

She makes the case that music is very effective way of entering this important area of human experience and one which is clearly of great relevance to cultural advocacy – in that it acknowledges where one is standing but enables a move across into understanding difference. It provides a route into comprehending and accepting difference without losing one's own position.

Paradox

This leads us to a central possibility in this experience – the ready tolerance, acceptance of and delighting in paradox (Clarke 2005):

Mystery can be defined as a known unknown. Mystery is “a mixture of certitudes and uncertainties; of probabilities, hypotheses, realities that surpass us, and fundamental questions to which we have no answers. ... It is one of those words that is indefinable, but that can in the final analysis be part of any definition (Gebara 1999:133).

In the area of cultural advocacy, truth is often paradoxical; it needs to be the joining of apparent opposites - different cultures, understandings, experiences. It sees that truth may well reside in the embracing of opposites as one. This could be the most profound truth of all – a place where we stop thinking the world into pieces and start thinking it together again. This was the poem I wrote that was the basis of one of my first interfaith pieces:

Between

Between the God and the Goddess
And the mosque and the synagogue

The bullet holes in the tumbled statues
The grass blades on the landfill,

The shaman and the cleric
The hysteric and choleric

The slaying and the praying
And the coping and the hoping

In the fractured rapture
In the hole in the soul

At the crack
The lack

Might
Bite

The Contradiction of ‘both’
Meets
The Paradox of ‘and’

Rebirth.

Expanded Discourse

The result of these characteristics is that it is a place of expanded discourse where people’s horizons are widened and broadened – an essential part of cultural advocacy:

[The processes of peace] involve learning new skills and expanding the meaning of concepts, often “unlearning” what was formerly believed to be true (Cohen 2007:31).

Through performance, communities are finding ways of seeking truth and also recognizing its multiple faces (Cohen 2008:3).

People often describe this as opening up inside of increased awareness.

Three Case Studies

I am now going to show three projects in which I have been involved to illustrate how these principles play out. They are examples of re-imagining the global community through musicking:

It is not enough to imagine the global community; new and wider forms of political association and different types of cultural community will first have to emerge....it is likely to be piecemeal, the disjointed and largely unplanned (Smith 1991:160).

This article documents three examples of this process which is piecemeal and disjointed, but planned on both a large and small scale. The first is an event called Space for Peace in Winchester cathedral which concerns advocacy in the area of multi-faith dialogue; the second is a village pageant designed in the area of advocacy within a rural community; the third is a Singing for Well-being choir which represents advocacy in the area of people with memory loss.

Space for Peace

The intention of this project is to look at how alterities can co-exist with integrity:

Allow the Other a distinct identity rather than making the Other the Same as the relating I (Levinas 1969:33).

It acknowledges the way in which individual cultures function in relation to otherness:

[Culture is] the essential tool for making other (Abu-Lughod 1991).

She also finds most [anthropological] conceptions of culture static and homogenising, and thus dehumanizing; moreover, given to exaggerating coherence; and also strongly inclined towards depicting cultures as bounded and discrete.

It seeks to counterbalance these tendencies. *Space for Peace* which has been carried out for the last four years in Winchester Cathedral (Hampshire Chronicle 2012). The date is Jewish holocaust memorial day. It has been interrogated in academic articles (Boyce-Tillman 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013). It concentrates on how to assess two aspects of the project – relationship with difference and empowerment (Derrida 1969, Levinas 1972, Buber 1970, Sacks 2002). This case study concentrates on the need for reconciliation and understanding for community well-being. An email concerning a recent keynote concerning the role of music in divided communities contains the following quotation and brings into the discussion the domain of the spiritual:

“We have to focus on the spiritual aspects of the agreement now, which is the message that ‘we can do better.’”

He [Professor Duncan Morrow, Dept of Social Sciences of the University of Ulster] also mentioned several times that what has been lacking in the last 15 years (since the signing of the Agreement on April 10, 1998) is a serious discussion in Northern Ireland concerning “what it means to be human.”

As a result, there are still many problems, lots of tensions, one cannot walk freely in some parts of Belfast if you are of the wrong group, and people still live with some sense of fear and insecurity. ...I [the author, Olivier Urbain] firmly believe that music and the arts can serve as catalysts to bring out our highest “spiritual virtues,” or “psychological virtues” in secular language, such as courage, wisdom and compassion, mutual respect and a sense of connectedness, and that the arts are an excellent means to explore the question of “what it means to be human” (Urbain 2013).

This music-making event has a strong interfaith dimension in so far as different faith communities are deliberately invited to participate. It is a radically innovative musical structure in that it includes sections which are united under a single conductor and others where diversity is valued. It include a range of groups from a variety of backgrounds both musical and faith. Some choirs use notation, some have no grasp of it and learn everything orally; some are older and some are singing for fun; some are ordinary faith congregations; some are skilled musicians; Hindus, Jews, Muslims, Baha’i and Christians from a range of denominations participate and some are declared atheists and humanists. The age range has been 7-85. The space is a meditative space able to contain and merge diversity in a way that accepted it without obliterating it. Each has chosen three pieces in advance that they wish to sing for peace. The third section is created by the participants on the basis of choice. Each group choose when to sing and can also be invited by the congregation to sing. The congregation move around the building, lighting candles, praying, being quiet, as they choose, but also participating in creating the musical sound. People become very sensitive to their surroundings and to one another. Some of the soundscapes are very complex as a number of pieces are performed simultaneously in various areas of the cathedral and sometimes it is quite simple.

The cathedral becomes a resonant meditative space. The groups are situated around the cathedral in various chapels and the transepts. In the middle section the choirs choose what they want to sing and also when they sing. They also have a set of short chants that they all share. This reflects a model for peace in which we all do our own thing but have to work out how it all fits together. The audience/congregation can also ask them to sing as well. The congregation and choirs will be able to move around the building, lighting candles, praying, being quiet, as they choose, but also participating in creating the musical sound. Some of the soundscapes would be very complex as a number of pieces are performed simultaneously in various areas of the cathedral and sometimes it is quite simple with few groups singing. At the end of this section all the choirs converge on a single note and sing peace in various languages on it. Over this single pedal note singers and

instruments improvise. The effect is quite magical as they walk in candle-lit processions from their positions round the cathedral back to the nave. From immense diversity, the choirs come into an impressive unity.

The Chants

These – which are sung at the opening and the end as well as from time to time in the middle section as people wish - reflect different aspects of peace-making. They fit together in a form called a Quodlibet in which each group has a different tune but they all fit together. Among the chants is a well-known prayer for peace:

- Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth
Lead us from despair to hope, from fear to trust
Lead us from hope to love, from war to peace
Let peace fill our hearts, fill our world, fill our universe
Peace, peace, peace, peace, peace, peace.

There is a move towards forgiveness in one chant:

- Where there is love and joy and peace, where there is love, forgiveness grows.

Some of them include peace with the earth:

- Come, flowing air, serving every part of earth, Bind us together in a unity.
- Walk gently, stand tall. For sacred is the earth.

Another uses the natural world as an example of respect for difference:

- As the water with the rock and the air with the sun, so we are drawing nearer with love and respect.

There is a Jewish chant for peace, slightly adapted:

- Shalom, my friends, salaam, my friends, shalom, salaam.
May peace, my friends, be with you today, shalom, salaam.

Another chant is based on the Wilfrid Owen poem *Strange Meeting* – in which a soldier meets the enemy he killed and considers that if they had met somewhere else they might have been friends.

- Sing of a place, a flowering field where divisions end, I'll meet you there.

Comments From Participants

The comments reflect how well these aims were fulfilled:

- I have been pondering on how to best describe my response to *Space for Peace*, the feeling of almost joy and the urge to follow those pure evocative sounds echoing through the spaces of the cathedral.
- Have you ever walked the pavements of a residential area of New Delhi or Dhaka or Hanoi in the evening? It's the hot season and the warmth of the evening air cloaks like velvet and every so often, as you pass the little urban gardens the heavy exotic scent of night-flowering shrubs wafts over the walls. The perfume is so wonderful you stop and backtrack, trying to find the source

of that heavenly perfume. That was how your choirs and soloists sounded. Please go on exploring these musical spaces.

- Will youth guitars, visiting choirs, sermons of deans and Handel's hallelujahs all combine with organ notes in one triumphant shout of praise before the world dissolves? For me the process began last night. Thank you.
- It was an incredibly brave and innovative venture which worked brilliantly. The acoustics in the Cathedral are not generous to choirs (I've performed in a choir there myself) but your inspired idea of removing the pews and placing individual choirs in different areas and having them sing spontaneously meant every nook, cranny and nave was filled with the most incredible music. I loved the fact that you could walk around, sampling different styles and interpretations and, along the way, enjoy the surprise of a lone voice suddenly appearing from a balcony or behind a pillar.
- A superb atmosphere of peace and the Cathedral almost seemed to come alive with the artists' presence.
- I loved being able to wander around and stop and listen as the mood took me.
- Kasam Sumra's Call to prayer from the Cathedral pulpit was a stroke of inter-faith genius!
- Pooja Rana created a wonderful devotional atmosphere in the small chapel.
- It was lovely to have the children's choirs there. They would have experienced a sense of togetherness and peace, which will be an experience which will stay with them I hope.
- The coming together at the end with the candles was very moving.
- And as a member of the audience I felt involved. I wasn't being sung 'to' or 'at'.
- The event allowed me to flow, so I was 'with' the artists. It was my choice to engage with their musical offering for peace.
- "Space for peace" was one of the high points of my life. ...The cathedral was cleared of chairs which was wonderful - one great echoing space. It was all about peace - calls for peace constantly mingling and changing. ...I was able to sit and meditate on the stone floor in the middle of the North Transept, one of the most beautiful parts. It came to me that "peace is possible". (Unpublished comment 2009)
- My favourite part was at around 8.25pm sitting in the (then empty) choir whilst the sounds and performances washed in and out. It reminded me of the 'offstage' singing of 'Praise to the Holiest' in Gerontius - I think that is what Heaven must be like!

The Singing for Well-being Choir

This is a project of the University of Winchester's Centre for the Arts as Wellbeing. This preliminary year has been funded by the Music Research Institute, managed by David Walters, Honorary Knowledge Fellow of the University. It has taken place in two venues in central Winchester. It is carried out in , partnership with the Live at Home Scheme. Of the singing facilitators one is a trained choir, dance and Singing for the Brain leader, and the other comes from a theatre background and is a piano teacher. The sessions are designed for people who are in the early to moderate stages of the memory loss associated with Alzheimer's and other dementias. Most of the clients come directly from the Alzheimer's Society in

Winchester. The sessions are attended by the client with a carer (often a spouse or family member), and a core set of volunteers, who note down attendance, contact details, background information (including whether they have been diagnosed with dementia) and also serve refreshments. There is first of all a half an hour of sociability round the tea-table, and as a familiar group has developed – a friendly and lively time.

This is a group of people who are marginalised by the prevailing culture. In the singing session they find some community and some empowerment. One member leads the same song each week and it is the last remaining place that he can claim his power. Others are moved out of their inertia and start to smile and laugh. The *communitas* includes both carers and cared-for in a single *communitas* in which all can share. For an hour they share on an equal footing. The session follows the lead of the participants as well as the leaders and includes some movement and instrumental accompaniment sometimes. It is a place of social advocacy where a group is empowered and given dignity.

The River is Flowing – A Local Community Pageant

This project sought to be build community from the diverse groups within a Hampshire village by celebrating its spiritual history. This brought different aspects of the village together in a search for a local identity. It was produced by co-operation between two university professors who live in it and whose specialisms are Music and Theology. It was in two sections. Scenes 1 to 7 take place in the garden of the local big house called the Priory where the medieval convent had been situated. Scene 8 was in the form of a procession from the Priory to the Church. Scene 9 was in the Church. The event included over 100 singers and performers of very mixed ages and expertise. Some of them were orate – a community choir and pupils from the local school. Others were musically literate singing a piece by John Tavener, and Tudor composers as well as plainchant from the psalter from the priory when it was a convent. The local silver band accompanied the parts that were outside and the organ took over in the church. I planned this around the repertoire of the various groups and built it up like a mosaic which meant that the groups retained their distinct identities and worked within their capabilities. They were directed by their respective leaders and I as the story teller welded these disparate elements together. Songs for communal singing in general were strophic pieces of a folk hymn type structure. It brought together a village made up of diverse groups of various classes and abilities. There was a real sense of *communitas* created by the co-operation and sense of shared ownership.

Conclusion

The place of music in cultural advocacy has been illustrated by three different case studies. One seeks to honour difference in faith communities. Another seeks to give dignity to a group that is entering the margins of a culture. The third looks at the creation of community spirit in a rural community which is potentially divided around lines of class and age. This is achieved by adopting a mosaic structure using where people are in their musical journey rather than composing something that requires everyone to learn something new. All three case studies

see music as a frame in which dignity and respect is given. The initiator of these projects challenges more totalitarian models of musicking and moves towards a more person centred model giving people a measure of choice in what they contribute and valuing both oratorical and literate traditions. The events use structures which bring together the local and the global – setting up a global model that consists of local traditions brought together without obliterating them under the banner of a single style. Music is well-placed to deliver a new model of integration that is truly person and community centred.

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