EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRIVATE PIANO TEACHERS' CREATIVE IDENTITIES AS MUSICIANS AND THEIR TEACHING PRACTICES

A Thesis submitted by

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For the award of

Doctor of Philosophy

2021

ABSTRACT

Echoing the broader educational agenda, many music educators advocate for the development of 21st century learners' creative abilities and capacities to be at the forefront of music education. Within the private piano teaching studio context, however, recent research shows that teaching and learning priorities remain focused primarily on developing students' technique and music reading ability. Repertoire and exam preparation receive the most attention in private piano lessons, while creative endeavours such as improvisation receive significantly less focus. These priorities are legacies of the western classical tradition of music teaching, learning, and performing. Research reveals that many piano teachers feel they lack sufficient knowledge or experience to explore creativity, and/or have concerns about how students may perceive them when they are teaching unfamiliar skills.

This study approaches the issue of creativity within the private piano studio from the vantage point of teachers' identities. Exploring the creative identities of private piano teachers, and the ways in which their creative identities influence their teaching practices has received little attention in the private piano teaching community. Guided by narrative inquiry methodology and informed by the researcher's own experiences, this study presents the lived and told narratives of four piano learners who became private piano teachers. Participant teachers' creative identity construction is explored through the lens of socio-cultural identity formation.

Findings detail various social and cultural factors which influence the construction of participant piano teachers' creative identities. Participants'

experiences reveal that “hands-on” experiences of creative music-making were paramount to the construction of their creative identities as musicians. Importantly, some participants’ sense of being creative was only crystallised when their “whole selves”—including their prior experiences, interests, and personalities—were engaged in the creative process and when their efforts fulfilled a need. These teachers’ experiences also showed that private piano teachers play a highly influential role in the identity construction process.

Importantly, teachers’ abilities to nurture the creative identities of their students were closely linked to having creative skills themselves, alongside tools to teach for creativity. These abilities and tools were acquired through teachers’ own “hands-on” experiences of creative music-making and experiencing a heightened awareness of the creative process. Teachers’ ability to foster their students’ creativity was also strengthened by being a creative teacher—that is, being sensitive and responsive to students’ individual learning needs, interests, and goals.

These findings contain important new knowledge for private piano teachers and music educators more broadly because they provide explicit direction for how to best nurture the creative identities of future piano learners and teachers. The study concludes with recommendations for the ways in which the private piano teaching studio and the role of the private piano teacher might be re-imagined to more closely align with the 21st century educational agenda.

CERTIFICATION OF THESIS

This Thesis is entirely the work of Bonnie Green except where otherwise acknowledged. The work is original and has not previously been submitted for any other award, except where acknowledged.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Mel and Bec, thank you for your ongoing support and guidance throughout my candidature. Mel, I have always appreciated your continual commitment to me and your enthusiasm for my research. Thank you for always being just a call away and giving me your undivided attention whenever we talk. Bec, I am grateful for your willingness to always help out whenever I needed it and your practical feedback with how I could improve my writing. I look forward to working with you both in the future.

To my family, I am immensely grateful for your ongoing support throughout my research journey, in both word and deed. Mum, thank you for all of the home cooked meals you have placed in my fridge and freezer over the last six months to take cooking off my plate—pun intended. Thank you also to my friends for your continual support, encouragement, and affirmation.

To my friend and housemate, Tahlia. Thank you for so willingly helping me to navigate Word. Thank you for also entertaining me with thinking that "BGreen working draft 300621" meant that it was my 300,621st draft. It was actually my 300,622nd!

I owe a huge debt of gratitude to Doug. Thank you for giving me your time and energy to reviewing both chapter drafts throughout my candidature, and my final thesis before submission. I have always appreciated your words of encouragement both in person and interspersed throughout my drafts.

Thank you to important others along the way, such as Andrew, Janet,

and Rhod, for your words of encouragement and guidance after my Confirmation of Candidature, Stewart, for reviewing my Ethics application, Patrick, for giving me your time to discuss the PhD journey, and Yvonne, for meeting with me to share your experience of being a narrative inquirer. I would also like to thank the Post Graduate Early Career Researcher Group (PGECR) at USQ for providing a safe space in which we could always gather together as a research community.

I would like to formally acknowledge and express my sincere gratitude to the University of Southern Queensland for awarding me a HDR Research Stipend Scholarship. This financial support has enabled me to dedicate myself to my research and learning.

Finally, thank you Jeremy, Amber, Samantha, and Eleanor, for sharing your stories with me.

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND TERMS

ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
AMS	Australian Music Schools
AMEB	Australian Music Examinations Board
APPC	Australasian Piano Pedagogy Conference
BMus	Bachelor of Music
NACCCE	National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education
One-to-one	A pedagogical model where students learn music, whether it be an instrument or any other musical endeavor from a teacher on an individual basis
QMTA	Queensland Music Teachers' Association

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS FROM THE THESIS

Green, B. (2018, June, 1-3). *A dash through memory lane: Snapshots of the history of improvisation in the Western art music tradition* [Paper presentation]. Australasian Jazz Improvisation Research Network Conference, Melbourne, Australia.

Green, B. (2019, August, 29). *Creative presenting* [Paper presentation]. University of Southern Queensland's Preparing for Confirmation Workshop, Toowoomba, Australia.

Green, B. (2017, November, 10). *Imagine, imagine, imagine: Using the imagination in music listening* [Paper presentation]. University of Southern Queensland's 20th Postgraduate and Early Career Researchers Symposium, Toowoomba, Australia.

Green, B. (2018, July, 27). I've got a story to tell: A presentation of a variety of vignettes illustrating the history of improvisation and composition within the one-to-one piano teaching studio [Paper presentation]. University of Southern Queensland's 21st Postgraduate and Early Career Researchers Symposium, Springfield, Australia.

Green, B. (2018). Creativity workshop [Paper presentation]. University of Southern Queensland's Postgraduate and Early Career Researchers Meeting, Toowoomba, Australia.

Green, B. (2019, July, 8-12). Promoting student creative identities: A conceptual framework for fostering creativity within the one-to-one piano teaching studio [Paper presentation]. The Australasian Piano Pedagogy Conference, Brisbane, Australia.

PUBLICATIONS FROM THE THESIS

Green, B. (2019, November). Musical creativity and creative identity. *The Piano Teacher: Student Take Over,* (16), 41-45. https://indd.adobe.com/view/d8e33b0c-f57c-45c3-8126-009623d1cebe

PROLOGUE

Am I Allowed to be Creative?

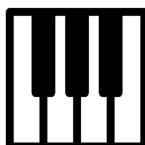
The sounds of books being piled, seats returning to their closed position, chatter between classmates, and footsteps making their way towards the exit from behind the stage wing signalled that the end of concert practice class was near. There remained, however, one more performance for the day—my own. My classmate Sam and I began to wheel not one but two upright pianos onto the stage. With each push, the age-old wooden floor below us creaked and moaned. Both the sight and sounds were enough for the class to realise that there was something more to come. I positioned my piano in a way that allowed the class to see my hands and allowed me to exchange glances with Sam and my classmate Ayden. Sam was playing the second piano and Ayden was added at the last minute to be our rhythm section by playing the cajon. Somewhat timidly, I turned to face the rows of velvet red chairs that were now re-occupied by my classmates and lecturers. I introduced myself, Sam, and Ayden. However, when it came to acknowledging the composer of the piece we were about to play, I mumbled. Unable to hear, a lecturer called out from the second row, "Who composed it?" Feeling self-conscious but bound to speak up, I replied "I did."

I took my usual position on the piano stool, but this time was different. I could see my own reflection in the glossy finish of the piano board rather than staring into the face of a musical score. The feeling was exciting. At the same time, however, it was nerve-wracking as I was about to showcase something of myself. With a quick glance at Sam and Ayden to cue the beginning of the piece, the performance was underway.

The performance seemed to last forever, but not in a bad way. I was present in, and enjoyed, every moment in time. The piece seemed to take me on a journey. I had never felt so immersed during a formal performance, nor had I ever felt so at ease.

With but a moment's silence after the sound of the last chord, the concert hall erupted with applause and resounding hollers. A sense of euphoria filled the room. Turning to face the audience, I was met with excited eyes and overjoyed smiles—a sight that was unfamiliar to me in a formal performance setting.

Despite the celebration that surrounded me, my heart did not know what to feel and my mind did not know what to think. Up until this point, I thought that my role as a pianist was to submit myself to the musical score and to seamlessly glisten over each ascending and descending arpeggiated passage and trill as a way of displaying my pianistic ability. This performance, however, the performance of my own composition that was inspired by a newly learned C# minor seven chord and created spontaneously one afternoon by simply "playing around" on the piano keys, was far from being technically difficult. Because of my deeply held beliefs about the value of "technical skill" I felt it was more of a "throw-away" performance. But the performance of my piece seemed to be acceptable to this audience—in fact, they loved it! Was it acceptable to be a composer—a creator—of music? Was I allowed?



I began learning the piano from age six through private piano lessons. Private piano lessons are a form of musical apprenticeship typically involving students undertaking one-to-one lessons on a weekly basis (Collens & Creech, 2013), often half an hour in length (Don et al.,, 2009), with a private piano teacher. Private piano teachers often have little to no teaching credentials or experience (Hallam, 2017) and are therefore asked to teach based on performance success (Gaunt, 2008; Gwatkin, 2004; Purser, 2005) and/or playing ability rather than teaching credibility (Gaunt, 2004; Gwatkin, 2013; Purser, 2005). A historical overview of the history of private piano teaching is provided in Chapter 2.

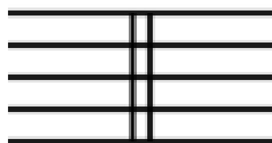
My mother was my first private piano teacher. She taught me via a piano method book, which as will be explained in Chapter 2, is a common way for private piano teachers to teach beginner students (Cathcart, 2013). The method book focused on developing my music reading ability and pianistic technique via learning short pieces of notated music. After a year or two of learning from my mother, I had two other private piano teachers—Miss M until I was approximately nine, followed by Miss T. I predominately learned Disney repertoire with Miss M and Miss T. I enjoyed my piano learning experience during these years because this repertoire was based on my musical preferences (i.e. Disney music). I was a Disney fan in general and I think I liked this music because it was filled with colour and character. I was good at playing this music too! I recently watched an old home video of myself playing *Cruella De Ville* as a duet with our family friend, Stu Q. I was quite taken back by my abilities at such a young age. Miss T also knew that I was skilled. She recently wrote to me saying: “From the first day I taught you piano, I knew you had a gift and the commitment.”

As my abilities progressed, Miss T recommended that my mother find me a more advanced piano teacher. Before finding another teacher for me, however, my mother asked me if I wanted to continue learning the piano, with my answer being yes. Based on her own piano learning experience, my mother looked for a teacher who could take me through the classical piano exams. She assumed that pairing me with such a teacher would be the most effective route to ensuring my success and development as a musician.

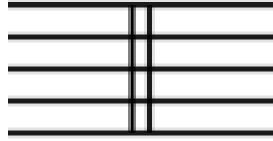
My new private piano teacher was a middle-aged Chinese man and classical pianist. He lived approximately four hours away. My mother drove me for a two-hour lesson with my new teacher once every three weeks. My learning experience with my new teacher was vastly different from that with Miss M and Miss T. My repertoire was now dictated by the Australian Music Examination Board's (AMEB) classical music curriculum. I had not even heard of this music before learning it! Most classical music did not resonate with me. For those pieces that I did like, they were typically in minor keys and sounded mysterious. For most of this music, however, I just saw it as dots on a page that I had to play correctly to pass my exams. Therefore I did not enjoy my learning experience as much as I did previously. On reflection, I never thought to speak up about the styles of music that I liked to play. I took my piano lessons for what they were and just did what I was told.

The focus on my lessons also shifted. Where previously, the goals of lessons seemed to be very open-ended (there were in fact no goals!), my lessons now seemed to revolve around fulfilling the requirements of the AMEB curriculum. I therefore had to learn and practise a set amount of scales and arpeggios, and master a set number of classical piano pieces for

the purpose of what I perceived to be, performing in eisteddfods and undertaking and passing classical piano exams. At age 12, my learning experience now seemed so serious. Consequently, my whole mentality towards piano learning changed. I no longer played piano to have fun, but rather, to “get it right”. Additionally, I developed a fear of my piano lessons during this period. There were now these expectations on me and I felt the pressure of that. What would happen if I did not meet my teacher’s expectations? Would he disapprove of me?



Outside of my piano lessons, I accompanied our school choir and regularly played *Tea for Two* as a piano duet with my father. My father is a musical man who, although he can read music, predominately improvises with chords. I remember him regularly playing this beautiful little piano piece when I was growing up. He never had the music in front of him, but just knew the piece off by heart. Not once did I think to ask him to teach me the piece nor was curious to ask what the chords were, despite them being so beautiful. Knowing what I do now, I know the piece was made up of major and minor seventh chords. I did not know what a chord was back then, however, so I was just captured by the sound. I experienced no fear in playing in these contexts like I did in my private piano lessons.



Due to a family relocation when I began high school, I began lessons with a new classical piano teacher. My lessons continued to be shaped by the requirements of the AMEB curriculum. I was introduced to new styles of music, such as ragtime music. I remember loving pieces such as *Golliwogs Cakewalk* and the *Maple Leaf Rag*. They were energetic and filled with character. For those pieces that I did not particularly like, however, I continued to see them as dots on the page that I had to play correctly.

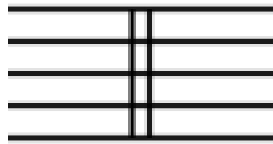
Outside of my private piano lessons, I had opportunities to engage in other ways of making music such as reading and interpreting chord charts in popular music ensembles, and composing the odd piece for a classroom music assignment. I learned these skills "on the job" with no formal training. I took naturally to these activities and thoroughly enjoyed them. When given the opportunity, I seemed to be able to easily make up a melody in my head and hear the harmonic movement under the melody (not that I knew any theory to explain the harmonic movement). My mother identified and nurtured my composition abilities, by buying me the music notation software *Finale*. Despite this, I did not pursue composition. This was because I did not see this activity as a valid musical pursuit nor even an option for serious study because composition was not the focus of my private piano lessons. Importantly, I do not think that my piano teacher even

knew that I could compose my own music—she never asked me to compose anything and I never thought to show her something I had composed.

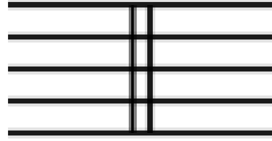
During high school, I was exposed to jazz music through being the keyboardist in my high school's jazz ensemble. I really liked the sound of jazz music. When I was in Grade 11, our band attended and competed in the *Generations In Jazz* festival in Mount Gambia. This was my first time being exposed to jazz improvisation. Although I played jazz music in our jazz ensemble, I primarily played this music via reading piano transcriptions, and even then, my part was primarily rhythmic (i.e. chordal accompaniment patterns). I had never seen someone improvise a solo on the piano within this style. When I did, I was amazed by, and in awe of, such musicians! Simultaneously, however, I compared myself to these pianists. Given that I had never seen someone do something like this before, I thought that they were gifted. Moreover, because I could not do what they could do and tied this to them being gifted, I therefore felt as much discouraged as I did in awe. I desired to play like them, but because this type of music-making was so far removed from my own music learning experience, I assumed that this way of making music was unattainable for me.

After finishing high school, I decided not to pursue a music degree at a tertiary education level nor choose music as a future career. This was because I thought that my musical future was destined to be a reflection of my own private piano learning experience—learning and mastering scales and difficult classical repertoire, and undertaking exams. In this way, my imagined possibilities for my musical future were bound to what my private piano learning experience offered me. This was despite, as previously told, having made music in different contexts and in other ways outside of my

private piano lessons, and taking naturally to and enjoying many of these activities. I enrolled in a dual Bachelor Degree at the University of Queensland (UQ)—a Bachelor of Journalism, to potentially enable me to work as a television presenter on a show such as *Saturday Disney* or *The Great Outdoors*, and a Bachelor of Arts, to keep music in my life to some extent. Before commencing my degree, however, I took a gap year and went on a student exchange to Denmark.

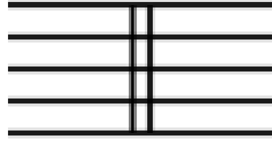


I continued to play in popular music ensembles in Denmark. I was placed in a class full of musicians—I mean, *everyone* studied music! It was lovely to be surrounded by people with similar interests and for friendships to be formed over music-making. Towards the end of my exchange, a funk band from the town's local music school came and gave a lunch time concert. This was my first time hearing this style of music. It immediately captured me. My ears were hooked. That day, I had planned to go home and email UQ to let them know that I was commencing my degree the following semester. After hearing this band, however, something within me compelled me to enrol in a music degree. I came home that afternoon, talked with my parents about my decision, and applied to study a Bachelor of Creative Arts (BCA) (majoring in music) at the University of Southern Queensland (USQ) at the Toowoomba campus. The following year, I auditioned for the degree, was accepted, and began my tertiary music education studies.



My university degree was vastly different from my private piano lessons throughout my formative and adolescent years of piano learning. I was able to learn pop, jazz, *and* classical music. I was also introduced to and learned styles within each of these genres, including Latin styles. I had never heard of a bossa nova before, but the rhythm captured me straight away. I immediately turned so many songs that I knew into bossa nova arrangements! I learned piano in one-to-one contexts as well as in ensembles. Learning piano in a one-to-one context at university was also a very different experience from my private piano lessons during my formative and adolescent years. My teacher was a beautiful and elegant woman (mid to late 30s) and one of the most inspiring pianists I had ever seen. Not only could she play classical music, but she could play jazz and could improvise. Although I had seen other pianists improvise in a similar way to her, it meant so much more to me now because she was my teacher. This meant that I could also become like her! On another note, I never actually saw my piano teachers play very much when I was growing up. I only saw them being teachers, namely demonstrating passages derived from the pieces I was learning. I did not see them making music for themselves outside of piano teaching. I was really inspired by my university piano teacher being a "working musician." Regarding leaning in ensembles, I particularly enjoyed these experiences because I was able to make music with, and learn from, my peers who were in the years above me.

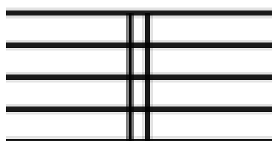
Not only did I have classes dedicated to developing my pianistic ability (i.e. one-to-one piano lessons), but I took classes in aural skills, music theory, and music history. I had no idea that music learning could be this enjoyable! In particular, I took a weekly two-hour lecture on developing aural skills through singing canons. I found this course incredible because I did not know that one could have an aural perception of sound. During high school, I would try to work out how to play the latest pop song by ear on the piano, but this was just through random note picking and trial and error. I was not aware that those notes belonged to a scale and that if I knew that scale and could recognise intervals, I could know what the notes were! Call me ignorant (and that I was!), but no one ever taught me that this was a skill that could be learned. Additionally, the course made me realise that I could make music in my head away from the piano. I had never been encouraged to step away from the music notation and to improvise a small ditty. Playing music via music notation was the primary way that I thought one made music. Now, however, I sang a lot more, both in my head and aloud, intentionally improvising melodies. For the first time in my life, it felt like I was hearing and making music. Developing my auditory skills also enabled me to give meaning to the notes that formed the melodies that spontaneously popped into my head. I could be anywhere, whether in the car or clearing plates from tables at the restaurant I worked at, and have a melody pop into my head and be able to know what notes they were, come home, and immediately play on the piano the melody I had heard.



During my first year at university, I made friends with one of my peers who was a few years ahead of me. He enjoyed jazz piano. During an informal jam session, he showed me how to play a minor seventh chord. Although I had most likely played this type of chord before in my high school jazz band, it was the first time learning a “jazz chord” with no reference to music notation. I immediately began experimenting with this chord, namely creating my own harmonic progression. I had also recently learnt the pentatonic scale. Drawing on and spending time experimenting with my new knowledge at the keyboard, I eventually created a piece! That was not my intention at the outset, but ended up being the result of the play and experimentation process!

At around the same time that I had created this piece, I was scheduled to perform in our cohort’s weekly performance class. This would be my second time performing in this class. For my first performance, I played the *Simpson’s Theme Song*. I choose this piece because I thought it would appeal to the audience and would display my technical proficiency as a pianist—the latter being what I thought was largely the agenda of performances in this type of environment. Typical of me, I did not practice enough (I definitely practised the sections that I was good at—over and over again!) and therefore fumbled my way through sections of the piece and walked away feeling disappointed with myself. For this next performance

therefore, I decided to perform my newly composed piece. I considered it a throw away performance, however, because the piece was not technically difficult and I actually enjoyed playing it. I did not consider playing for enjoyment to be a goal of music learning and performance. The narrative presented at the beginning of this Prologue captures this performance. This performance was a critical moment in my journey as it caused me to begin negotiating my identity as a creative musician. In many ways, it crystallised all my previous piano experiences, and inspired my PhD journey.



CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Picking up the threads regarding issues of identity which appear throughout the Prologue, this chapter defines identities in music and provides a brief overview of how identities in music develop. The researcher's own narrative then continues, telling of how she became a private piano teacher and her struggle with nurturing the creative abilities of her students within her teaching practice. Inspired by her own struggles and curiosities, the researcher then shares her motivation for the inquiry, namely to explore the ways in which private piano teachers' own creative identities influence their private piano teaching practices. The chapter proceeds to contextualise the inquiry within the literature regarding the influence of a teacher's identity on their teaching practice.

The chapter then outlines the research aim and research questions that explore how private piano teachers have experienced the construction of their creative identities as musicians, and the ways in which their creative identities influence their private piano teaching practices.

The chapter proceeds to outline the theoretical lens and methodological approach used for the research, namely the socio-cultural lens of identity formation and Narrative Inquiry methodology. A brief rationale for the chosen approaches follows. The chapter then discusses the significance of the research, including its timeliness and ability to add to the growing body of knowledge concerning this subject area both within the context of private piano teaching and learning and music education more broadly. This is followed by discussing the position of the inquirer, namely her use of constructionist epistemology and interpretivist ontology. The

outline of the inquiry is then presented.

1.1 Introduction to the Research

An identity in music refers to the different ways that individuals perceive and describe themselves as musicians (Barrett, 2017; Hallam, 2017). These identities are derived from socially defined cultural roles and categories (Barrett, 2017; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Hargreaves et al., 2017; Randles & Smith, 2012). These identities are not given at birth, but evolve over time, shaped by "place, culture, relationships, and social setting" (Barrett, 2017, p. 68; Baddeley & Singer, 2007; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014). Prior to my critical experience as portrayed in the opening sequence to the Prologue, I believed I had to be performer of music, meaning a musician who re-produces the musical works of others (Odena & Welch, 2009; Randles & Muhonen, 2015; Randles & Smith, 2012; Webster, 2002). This was largely because in my private piano lessons, this was the only musical role offered to me and therefore the primary musical role that I practised. After creating a musical work, showcasing this to a musical audience, and receiving social validation from my lecturers and peers within a formal music education context (Hallam, 2017), I began to contemplate whether I could be a creator of music.

Soon after this experience, I began teaching the piano at a local high school. Prior to this, I had never considered teaching the piano. I entered the profession young and while still a student myself. As is commonly the case with piano teachers, I had no teaching credentials or experience (Hallam, 2017). I was moving into teaching based on my playing ability rather than teaching credibility (Gaunt, 2008; Gwatkin, 2004; Purser, 2005). Due to a

lack of pedagogical experience and training, I turned to my own learning experiences as the model for my teaching practice (Daniel & Bowden, 2008). My own experience had been focused exclusively on developing pianistic technique and the ability to master classical repertoire, and it provided me with little guidance on how to incorporate creative activities into lessons.

For several years, I struggled with nurturing the creative abilities of my students within my teaching practice. I also found it difficult to bridge the gap between the traditional skills taught within the private piano teaching studio (e.g. scales and music reading) and creative skills (e.g. improvisation and composition). It felt like I could either choose one or the other. Fuelled by this struggle, I undertook research at the Honours level to explore how to introduce scales as melody (Green, 2016) in an attempt to approach teaching a traditional skill in a creative way. I decided to continue researching after this project—this time, seeking to discover underlying reasons as to why private piano teachers struggle with nurturing the creative abilities of their students. I began to wonder, is this struggle based on a lack of creative identity on the part of piano teachers? Was I struggling to incorporate creativity into my piano lessons as a teacher because I did not see myself as creative?

Since the 2000's, the topic of *identity* within music research has risen to prominence, and can be seen as falling into two broad categories:— "music in identities" and "identities in music" (Hargreaves et al., 2002; Hargreaves et al., 2017). The former refers to an individual's use of music to develop other facets of their personal identity, including national identity, gender identity, and youth identity (Hargreaves et al., 2002; Hargreaves et

al., 2017). The latter refers to the different ways individuals perceive and describe themselves as musicians (Barrett, 2017; Hallam, 2017). Within this category, scholars have begun to explore how a teacher's own identity as a musician, namely their creative identity, influences the extent to which they can nurture the creative abilities of their students (e.g. Randles, 2009, 2010; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Randles & Muhonen, 2015; Randles & Smith, 2012; Randles & Tan, 2019). This research has primarily examined the lives of pre-service music teachers (Randles, 2009; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Randles & Smith, 2012) and classroom music teachers (Randles, 2010). Randles and Smith (2012) hypothesise:

> It seems logical to assume that, if teachers do not possess identities as creative music makers, and of course, the skills that go along with those identities, they will not value the fostering of a creative identity in their students. (p. 177)

They further argue that music teachers who have experience as composers, improvisers, and arrangers of popular music covers and original songs are more likely to develop those same creative skills in their students (see also Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Randles & Muhonen, 2015). This is because having experience in creating music can lead teachers to feel comfortable introducing students to music composition (Randles, 2010; Randles & Muhonen, 2015; Randles & Smith, 2012). These findings suggest that the extent to which piano teachers' creative identities in music have been developed may influence the degree to which these teachers include creative activities in their private piano teaching practice.

1.2 Research Motivation

With these findings in mind, I considered whether my struggle with nurturing the creative abilities of my students was connected to not having

an established identity as a creator of music. Although I had dabbled in creativity, it was not my specialty nor my primary musical endeavour. Moreover, given that other piano teachers, like me, desired to include creative activities within their lessons yet lacked confidence in doing so (Sowash, 2013) (as will be further discussed in Chapter 2), I wondered if their struggle was also to do with not having an established creative identity as a musician. These "wonderings" shaped the "research puzzle" for this inquiry (Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin & Caine, 2013).

1.3 Research Aim and Questions

Exploring the creative identities of private piano teachers, and the ways in which their creative identities influence their teaching practices, has received little attention in the private piano teaching community. In fact, despite the topic of creativity receiving much focus, the subject of creative identity is rarely discussed within this field. Importantly, my attendance at conferences, and discussions within my own professional networks revealed that this was indeed a topic of interest to other piano teachers, and therefore, worthy of exploration. In 2019, I was asked to write an article for the Piano Teacher Magazine on the topic of creative identity. Piano pedagogues acknowledged that the creative identities of teachers are rarely discussed.

This inquiry therefore aims to explore how private piano teachers have experienced the construction of their creative identities as musicians, and the ways in which their creative identities influence their private piano teaching practices. This is to better understand the relationship between the piano teacher's creative identity and their teaching practice.

This research is guided by the following two research questions:

1. How have private piano teachers experienced the construction of their creative identities as musicians?
2. In what ways do private piano teachers' own creative identities influence their private piano teaching practices?

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The socio-cultural lens of identity formation is used as the theoretical lens for exploring and interpreting how private piano teachers have experienced the construction of their own creative identities as musicians, and the ways in which their creative identities influence their private piano teaching practices. This lens was chosen given that identities are shaped by "place, culture, relationships, and social setting" (Barrett, 2017, p. 68; Hargreaves et al., 2002, 2017; Randles & Smith, 2012). Hallam (2017) identifies a range of influences on the way in which identities in music (including creative identities) develop: love of music, opportunities, self-beliefs, musical preferences, friends, family, educational environment, and cultural environment. This inquiry explores the ways in which these influences shape piano teachers' sense of being creative.

1.5 Methodological Overview

Narrating my own story (presented in the Prologue) was necessary for me to make meaning of my experiences and to identify the factors that had influenced the construction of my identity as a musician. With its emphasis on in-depth examination of human experience, I chose Narrative Inquiry methodology to guide this research. Situated within the social sciences, narrative inquirers study human experience in terms of actions and events, through individuals lived and told stories (Bruner, 1990; Clandinin &

Connelly, 2000; Polkinghorne, 1995). Narrative inquirers then work with participants to co-construct a narrative account of participants' experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In the context of this inquiry, participants' narratives are an account of how they have experienced the construction of their creative identities as musicians, and the ways in which this identity influences their private piano teaching practices.

Narrative inquirers adopt a pragmatic philosophy of experience (Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Dewey, 1938). They view every human experience as resting on the principles of:

(1) continuity, meaning that each experience, wholly independent of desire or intent, lives on in further experiences (Dewey, 1938; see also Clandinin & Connelly, 2000);

(2) interaction, which points "toward the simultaneous concern with both personal and social conditions" (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, p. 69); and

(3) setting, meaning both where the inquiry takes place (Clandinin & Caine, 2013; Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007), and where an individual's episodes or events occur (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007).

The narrative inquirer stays attentive to these three "commonplaces" when engaged in the conduct of the inquiry (Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Four private piano teachers participated in this inquiry. The small participant pool allowed me to attend to the intricacies of meaning, the variability, the fine details, and nuance of individual human experiences

(Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). As to be expected, participants were required to be private piano teachers as this was the demographic of focus for this inquiry. Additionally, however, given that a narrative inquirer's stories are "always in relation to or with those of our participants" (as will be further explained in Chapter 4) (Clandinin et al., 2010, p. 82), participants also needed to hold this job title to enable me to "live alongside" participants and develop empathy and close relationships with them (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, 2006; Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin et al., 2010).

1.6 Significance of the Research

Despite music education's move towards developing creative skills and promoting the creative identities of 21st century learners, research conducted about the private piano teaching studio shows that teaching and learning priorities remain largely focused on developing students' technique and music reading ability. Repertoire and exam preparation still receive the most attention in private piano lessons while creative endeavours receive significantly less focus (Bridge, 2005; Cathcart, 2013; Daniel & Bowden, 2008; Gwatkin, 2004; Lennon & Reed, 2012). Knowing more about the ways in which private piano teachers' own creative identities as musicians influence their studio practices provides alternate explanations as to why the nurturing of students' creative abilities continue to be sidelined in the private piano teaching studio. This is important knowledge for private piano teachers, and for music educators, including higher music educators, who teach the future generation of private piano learners.

As outlined previously in this chapter, "musical identities" research is

a relatively recent phenomenon. Importantly, it is a topic that is receiving increased interest (for reasons that will be explained below) both within music education and across other domains (Culpepper, 2018; Glăveanu and Tanggaard, 2014; Isbell, 2008; Jaussi et al., 2007; Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017). This inquiry adds to the growing body of knowledge concerning this subject area both within the context of private piano teaching and learning and music education more broadly. In particular, it "provides an opportunity to improve our understanding of the principles governing the reali[z]ation of creative potential as well as initiating and pursuing creative activity" (Lebuda and Csikszentmihalyi, 2017, p. 215) as it relates to the domain of music and piano teachers specifically. This includes yielding insights regarding experiences that promote, deny, or make problematic (Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014) the construction of creative identities in music, both within and outside of the private piano teaching studio. Bearing this in mind, inquiry findings reveal principles that lead to the formation of a creative identity that can be transferrable to a variety of formal, informal, and non-formal music education contexts (Creech et al., 2020b). Additionally, via exploring the creative identities of private piano teachers through a socio-cultural perspective, the findings of this inquiry increase our awareness of specific socio-cultural factors that are paramount to the identity construction process.

Promoting students' creative identities is part of the broader educational agenda to prepare students to meet the challenges of the 21st century (Ewing, 2011; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; McWilliams, 2009; McWilliams & Dawson, 2008; NACCCE, 1999; Sawyer, 2006). In music

education in particular, many students now seek to develop creative skills such as the ability to improvise, compose, and arrange music (Baker-Jordan, 2003; Daniel & Bowden, 2008; Elliot, 1995; Jaussi et al., 2007; Odena, 2012; Randles, 2009, 2010; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Randles & Smith, 2012; Woodward & Sikes, 2015) to meet the changing demands of professional work in the 21st century and succeed as functional musicians (Gaunt, et al., 2012; Forbes, 2020; Forbes, 2016a; Forbes, 2016b; Gearing & Forbes, 2013; Young et al., 2019). A variety of non-musical benefits for the inclusion of creativity in music teaching, learning, and participation also exist, including facilitating self-actualisation (Callahan, 2015). In light of the above, this inquiry is timely and has led to a variety of personal and professional benefits for myself, participants, and readers.

1.7 The Position of the Inquirer

As will be further detailed in Chapter 4, I approached this inquiry through the lenses of social constructionist epistemology and interpretivist ontology. My epistemological and ontological stance are typical of narrative inquiry research (Crotty, 1998). Given my stance, I aimed to understand and interpret the subjective meaning participants constructed from their experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Lincoln et al., 2011; Schwandt, 2007; Silverman, 2006). This contrasts with setting out to discover generalisable laws that can lead to predication and control, as is the approach within a positivist ontology (Crotty, 1998; Schwandt, 2007). I also positioned myself within the inquiry process using my past experiences to inform the interpretation of the findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). I did this by presenting my own narrative in the Prologue. Researcher reflexivity is characteristic of this inquiry. Bearing this in mind, I do not

present my findings as objective truth or reality. Rather, I offer my findings as my own unique interpretation of the data based upon my own personal, cultural, and historical experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Denzin & Lincoln, 2017).

1.8 Outline of the Inquiry

The *Prologue* has presented a detailed narrative regarding my piano learning experiences and how these experiences shaped my identity in music, namely my performer identity. These experiences provided the impetus for the current inquiry.

Chapter 1 contextualises the inquiry within the field of musical identities research and identities in music research. It outlines the research aim and questions alongside the theoretical framework used to explore the creative identities of private piano teachers and how their creative identities influence their piano teaching practices. The chapter gives an overview of the methodology used to guide the research design as well as discusses the significance of the inquiry and my position as researcher.

Chapter 2 contextualises the research questions within the broader literature about musical identities and identities within the western classical tradition and piano teaching and learning.

Chapter 3 presents the socio-cultural framework of identity formation which serves as the theoretical lens for interpreting how private piano teachers have experienced the construction of their identities as musicians, and the ways in which their creative identities influence their private piano teaching practices.

Chapter 4 discusses the methodology underpinning this inquiry, namely narrative inquiry methodology. It outlines the epistemological and ontological positions that I bring to this inquiry. The chapter concludes with the conceptualisation of narrative inquiry as *resonant work* which provides a credibility framework through which to assess the quality of the research.

Chapter 5 details the research design conducted within narrative inquiry methodology. This includes presenting the participant pool and outlining the participant recruitment procedure. I discuss the ethical considerations that were identified prior to conducting the inquiry and how these were managed throughout the research process. The chapter explains the narrative inquiry process in three phases: (1) generating field texts; (2) moving from field texts to interim and final research texts; and (3) moving from research texts to resonant threads. Chapter 5 concludes by outlining the procedures used to ensure the qualitative validity of the research findings and discusses the limitations of the inquiry.

Chapters 6-9 are participants' narrative accounts resulting from the narrative analysis procedure and the co-construction process between me as researcher and each participant. A chapter is dedicated to each participant's narrative account.

Chapter 10 presents and discusses the findings from this inquiry that answer the research questions. The findings are presented as resonant threads, meaning themes that resonated across participants' narrative accounts and that resonate or reverberate with my own experiences as shared in the Prologue.

Chapter 11 presents the conclusions drawn from this inquiry and

demonstrates how the findings fulfilled the aim of this research. It also discusses implications for both practice and future research drawn from the conclusions.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter contextualises the research questions within the broader literature about musical identities, and identities within the western classical music tradition and within piano teaching and learning. The chapter begins by positioning this inquiry within the broader field of musical identities' research (MacDonald et al., 2002, 2017) and examines the distinction between "music in identities" and "identities in music" (Hargreaves et al., 2002; Hargreaves et al., 2017). It then discusses how identities in music develop. The chapter then outlines the types of identities in music that have been typically promoted throughout history within the western classical tradition of piano teaching, learning, and performing. This is followed by a more in-depth historical overview of private piano teaching, learning, and performing within the western classical tradition to highlight cultural changes—typically fuelled by advances in technology—that shifted the types of identities in music promoted within the teaching studio. This discussion provides the reader with background understanding of the waxing and waning of the presence and promotion of creativity within the private piano teaching studio over time.

The chapter then proceeds to discuss how 21st century music educators are advocating for the development of student's creative identities in music, namely their improvising, composing, and arranging identities. It outlines contemporary private piano teachers' keen interest in adapting their studios to promote the creative identities of their students while also presenting research findings that show that despite this interest, creative activities remain sidelined in the private piano teaching studio. Reasons for

the marginalisation of creative activities within the private piano teaching studio are then explored. At this point, the literature review will demonstrate the need for more research which explores the ways private piano teachers' individual creative identities as musicians influence the extent to which they are able to develop these identities in their students.

2.1 Constructing Identities in Music

This inquiry is positioned within the broader field of musical identities' research. In both *Musical Identities* (MacDonald et al., 2002) and the *Handbook of Musical Identities* (MacDonald et al., 2017), Hargreaves et al. (2002, 2017) make the distinction between "music in identities" and "identities in music." Music in identities refers to an individual's use of music to develop other facets of their personal identity, including national identity, gender identity, and youth identity (Hargreaves et al., 2002, 2017). Identities in music refers to the different ways that individuals perceive and describe themselves as musicians (Barrett, 2017; Hallam, 2017). These identities are derived from socially defined cultural roles and categories (Barrett, 2017; Hargreaves et al., 2002, 2017; Randles & Smith, 2012). Additionally, identities in music are distinctions between broad categories of musical activities (Hargreaves et al., 2002). Types of identities in music include "musician," "composer," "music listener," "performer," "improviser," "music teacher," and "critic" (Hallam, 2017; Hargreaves et al., 2002, 2017; Randles & Smith, 2012). These identities can be context or situation-specific, such as "church guitarist" or "pedagogical composer," or domain, instrument, or genre-specific, such as "classical pianist," or "jazz improviser" (Hallam, 2017; Hargreaves et al., 2002, 2017). Having an identity in music is the way in which an individual sees themselves in

relation to these socially and culturally defined roles and categories (Hargreaves et al., 2002, 2017).

A creative musical identity in particular is conceptualised as a representation or defining of oneself in relation to creative ways of being musical (Randles, 2010). Types of creative identities include the music "improviser," "composer," and "arranger" identities (Elliot, 1995; Jaussi et al., 2007; Odena, 2012; Randles, 2009, 2010; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Randles & Smith, 2012), or any other musical role that requires the individual to think creatively—divergently and imaginatively with sound (Randles, 2010; Randles & Muhonen, 2015; Randles & Smith, 2012). Conceptualising musical creativity as "thinking creatively with sound" will be further discussed in the following chapter.

Given that identities in music are socially learned cultural roles, these identities are not given at birth, but evolve over time (Barrett, 2017; Culpepper, 2018; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014; Randles, 2009; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018). Additionally, they are not "fixed or monolithic" (Barrett, 2017, p. 68), but are flexible, adaptable, ever changing, and renegotiated as they are shaped differently by "place, culture, relationships, and social setting" (Barrett, 2017, p. 68; see also Baddeley & Singer, 2007; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014). The ways in which these factors (i.e. place, culture, relationships, and social settings) shape identity will be explained in the following chapter. Identities are also contested and challenged throughout the lifespan (Hallam, 2017; Juuti & Littleton, 2010; Lamont, 2002) as there may be differences in the cultural rules from one social context to another, such as in one's home and school (Lamont, 2002). Moments of tension or struggle are therefore inherent in the identity

construction process (Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014).

"Hands-on" opportunities to perform these musical roles within the individual's various social contexts is necessary to the construction process (Barrett, 2017; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014; Hagstrom, 2005; Hallam, 2017; Jaussi et al., 2007; Randles, 2009). The absence of hands-on experiences to perform a certain identity, such as a creative role, therefore, restricts the identity construction process. Given that an individual may perform multiple musical roles, they may develop and hold multiple identities in music at any one time (Barrett, 2017; Hallam, 2017). Musicians may consider some of these identities as their primary identities, such as a music "performer" or music "teacher," and others may be less central identities, such as music "improviser" or music "composer" (Hallam, 2017). Primary identities are likely to reflect the types of musical activities that the individual has engaged in the most. This was the case in my own experience (i.e. identifying as a performer of music because that was the activity I had engaged in the most) as shared in the Prologue.

Identities in music are also mediated and constructed via acquiring the skills and techniques needed to perform the identity (Randles & Smith, 2012). A variety of skills or tools are needed to perform creative musical roles. These include immediate musical materials, emotional and cognitive processing ability, and creative process strategies. Immediate musical materials are an aural perception of sound to hear or imagine melodies and/or harmonies in one's head before penning actual notes (Green, 2019; Katz & Gardner, 2012; Webster, 1990), and knowledge of the musical language including music styles and genres (Green, 2019; Webster, 1990). This is so that one's theoretical knowledge can inform and guide their

creations and allow them to create appropriately (e.g. drawing on musical idioms common to the musical genre) (although theoretical knowledge is not always necessary as one can imagine melodies in their head without understanding what those notes mean). Tools extend to include instrumental technique (Green, 2019; Webster, 1990) to execute one's creative ideas on an instrument as well as engage in play and experimentation at an instrument. As will be discussed below, one's own domain and non-domain interests and personal experiences are tools to be used within the creative process (Katz, 2016; Katz & Gardner, 2012). These natural facets of students allow an individual's creative works to exude uniqueness given that every individual's interests and life experiences are unique and diverse.

Emotional and cognitive process strategies are aesthetic or emotional sensitivity (Webster, 2016) and creative thinking strategies (Webster, 2002, 2016). Aesthetical or emotional sensitivity involves tapping into one's emotions to shape musical ideas to convey the most appropriate emotional meaning. Without this tool, one is in danger of producing musical ideas that are devoid of human feeling or emotion. Creative thinking is an umbrella term that encompasses two main cognitive processes—the partnership of divergent and convergent thinking, alongside imaginative thinking (Guilford, 1950, Runco, 2004; Stein, 1953; Webster, 1990, 2002, 2016). Divergent thinking reflects idea fluency—rapidly producing a large number of musical responses—and flexibility—producing musical ideas that display variety in pitch, rhythm, dynamic, and tempo (Runco, 2004; Sovansky et al., 2016). Idea originality—producing different ideas —and elaboration—elaborating on a musical idea so that it becomes a finished musical product—are also characteristic of divergent thinking (Runco, 2004;

Sovansky et al., 2016). Convergent thinking partners with divergent thinking at the beginning of the creative process in that it provides the information such as rhythmic and tonal patterns which the musician draws upon to brainstorm their musical responses (Webster, 1990). It also partners with divergent thinking once all musical responses have been generated to determine the most effective or accurate response.

Imaginative thinking can be conceptualised in two ways: (1) internally imagining sound such as a melodic line, a harmonic progression, or an accompaniment (Webster, 1990; Katz & Gardner, 2012); and (2) to break with the ordinary, the routine, the taken for granted, and the given (Greene, 1995). In regards to the latter, Creech et al. (2020a) note that instrumental playing need not be confined to traditional instruments. They suggest that "classroom objects, materials found in outdoor spaces, self-made instruments and digital technologies could offer unique opportunities for creative experimentation, exploration and discovery" (p. 54). Importantly, the ability to think creatively is not exclusive to the domain of music, but is used to generate creative ideas across the domains (Baer & Kaufman, 2017; Eagleman & Brandt, 2017; Kaufman et al., 2017). Creative process procedures include knowledge of the stages of the creative process that occur in a linear or non-linear manner—preparation, incubation, verification, and illumination (Webster, 1990). Scholars argue that understanding stages of the creative process is necessary for one to become more sensitive to their creative practice (NACCCE, 1999).

For myself and other private piano teachers who have been trained within the western classical tradition, the development of our aural skills has been sidelined in favour of developing our music reading ability.

Additionally, due to strictly adhering to the musical score, this has not given us the opportunity to exercise our creative thinking ability. Given that the ability to create music is predicated on our ability to think creatively with sound (as will be later discussed) (Odena & Welch, 2012; Webster, 2002), we are immediately at a disadvantage to construct a creative identity in music because we do not have the tools needed to perform the identity.

Identities in music are also negotiated through the social comparison process which involves an individual comparing themselves to others (Hargreaves et al., 2002; Juuti & Littleton, 2010; Lamont, 2002; Miller & Baker, 2007). Comparisons may be made with others including mentors, role models, and peers (Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017). Lebuda and Csikzentimahayli (2017) contend that individuals compare themselves with those they admire. They explain: "By comparing themselves to others, they signal a connection with people they admire—members of their own group" (p. 229). Comparative dynamics between self and others can cause individuals to re-negotiate their musical identities (Juuti & Littleton, 2010). Juuti and Littleton (2010) interviewed ten classical solo piano students about their experience of re-negotiating their identities in music as they entered and progressed through higher education with the goal of entering into the profession. They found that the comparative process is a key mediator of students re-negotiating their identities. During the social comparison process, however, many students were frequently self-deprecating and highly self-critical, highlighting the potential psychological dangers of the social comparison process. Rogers (1961, as cited in Hargreaves et al., 2002) also touches upon this point, asserting that comparisons giving rise to incongruity between either ideal self and self-

image, or between self-image and actual behaviour can cause psychological distress. An accomplished musician trained within the western classical tradition, for example, may feel worried if asked to improvise in informal situations, given that improvisation is not typically part of the classical musician's skill-set (Hargreaves et al., 2002).

During the construction and negotiation of an identity in music, an individual also compares their behaviour to their *ideal* or *possible selves*—a self that is ideal and hoped for (a type of future self) or what an individual expects of themselves on the basis of their self-image (Creech et al., 2020a; Hallam, 2017; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Markus & Nurius, 1986). Importantly, societal expectations provide much of the raw material for one's identity in music (Baddeley & Singer, 2007). Creech et al. (2020a) similarly explain: "Possible selves are located within social and cultural contexts" (p. 13; see also Erikson, 2007; Hargreaves et al., 2002). Considering this, a person's ideal musical self may be a projection of the social group's ideal self. Tension may occur when the individual's ideal self does not align with the social group's ideal self. Additionally, possible selves may therefore be extrinsically motivated.

As will be discussed in the following chapter, role models, such as teachers, contribute to the construction of possible selves (Ibarra, 1999; Randles, 2010) whereby one imagines their future self as similar to their role model/s (Freer, 2009). From a motivational perspective, possible selves are critical to the development of one's identity as they can provide one with a sense of direction and a "conceptual scaffold from which we can develop" (Hallam, 2017, p. 475; see also Markus & Nurius, 1986). They also guide one's actions and decisions regarding the types of activities an

individual chooses or does not choose to engage in (Creech et al., 2020a; Smith & Freund, 2002). Given that identities in music are constructed through one's hands-on experience of performing the identity and that one's decision to perform an identity is influenced by their possible self, possible selves are an important variable in constructing an identity in music.

Summary

Identities in music are derived from socially defined cultural roles and categories (Barrett, 2017; Hargreaves et al., 2002, 2017; Randles & Smith, 2012). Having an identity in music is the way in which an individual sees themselves in relation to these socially and culturally defined roles and categories (Hargreaves et al., 2002, 2017). Given that identities in music are socially learned cultural roles, these identities are not given at birth, but evolve over time (Barrett, 2017; Culpepper, 2018; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014; Randles, 2009; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018) shaped by "place, culture, relationships, and social setting" (Barrett, 2017, p. 68; see also Baddeley & Singer, 2007; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014). Hands-on opportunities to perform these musical roles within the individual's various social contexts is necessary to the construction process (Barrett, 2017; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014; Hagstrom, 2005; Hallam, 2017; Jaussi et al., 2007; Randles, 2009). One's identities in music are likely to reflect the types of musical activities that the individual has engaged in the most. Identities in music are mediated and constructed via acquiring the skills needed to perform the identity (Randles & Smith, 2012). These identities are also constructed via the social comparison process where one compares themselves to others (Hargreaves et al., 2002; Juuti & Littleton, 2010; Lamont, 2002; Miller & Baker, 2007) or to their possible selves

(Creech et al., 2020a; Hallam, 2017; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Markus & Nurius, 1986). Importantly, understanding the nature of identities helped me to see that I was not destined to be a performer of music, but this was merely the result of my upbringing, namely the ways in which culture had taught me to see myself. It was reassuring to know that given the right conditions, my identity could shift and change.

The following section examines in more detail the types of identities which have traditionally been favoured within the culture of western classical music education.

2.2 Favoured Identities in Music within the Western Classical Tradition

Western classical music education, particularly from 1850 onwards, has typically favoured (and often exclusively promoted) the development of musicians' "performer" identities (Allsup & Westerlund, 2012; Green, 2019; Randles & Smith, 2012; Regelski, 2008). The music performer identity has been promoted above other identities that have a more creative flavour such as the "composer," "improviser," and "arranger" identities (Jaussi et al., 2007; Randles, 2010; Randles & Smith, 2012). In this context, a performer of music implies a musician who re-produces the musical works of other creators, namely the musical works of eminent composer such as Beethoven, Mozart, and Debussy (Odena & Welch, 2009; Randles & Muhonen, 2015; Randles & Smith, 2012; Webster, 2002). This tradition has been passed down through conservatory models of teaching (Regelski, 2008; Allsup & Westerlund, 2012) to private instrumental teaching studios, including the private piano teaching and learning space (Bridge, 2005).

The music "performer" identity has not always been the favoured identity in music within the western classical tradition. Prior to the 19th century, the music "improviser" identity was that which was promoted within the private teaching and learning studio and celebrated among music listening audiences. A range of historical advancements, however, led to a change in the social roles of the pianist. Consequently, this shifted the priorities of keyboard tuition. The following section in this chapter presents a historical overview of private piano teaching, learning, and performing within the western classical tradition. This overview provides the historical context to enable a better understanding of the nature of the learning and teaching environment we find in today's private piano studio.

2.3 Identities in Music within the Western Classical Tradition: A Historical Overview

2.3.1 Promoting the Music "Improviser" Identity

During the 16th and 17th centuries, keyboard learning was typically reserved for men who were preparing to gain employment as professional musicians (Burkholder et al., 2010; Parakilas, 2002). The term "keyboard" will be used when discussing those historical periods preceding the invention of the pianoforte. Men commonly received keyboard training through a musical apprenticeship (Burkholder et al., 2010). The apprenticeship was regarded as a craft whereby knowledge was passed down orally through generations (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; McPherson & Gabrielsson, 2002) and was a serious musical study with a master teacher (Gellrich & Sundin, 1993; Davidson & Jordan, 2007; Ehrlich, 1990; McPherson & Gabrielsson, 2002). The training typically involved daily lessons for the first year of tuition (Gellrich & Sundin, 1993; Davidson &

Jordan, 2007; Ehrlich, 1990; McPherson & Gabrielsson, 2002). After students had completed their musical apprenticeship, they often journeyed to visit other masters of their craft in various towns and cities (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; Gellrich & Sundin, 1993).

The master teacher was an older artist of exemplary skill who held performance prestige (Ehrlich, 1990; Davidson & Jordan, 2007; McPherson & Gabrielsson, 2002; Gellrich & Sundin 1993). The master teacher's aim was to pass on his acquired knowledge to the apprentice student, develop the student's ability to fluently speak the musical language in an improvised manner, and help the student to progress to work independently (Hallam, 1998, as cited in Davidson & Jordan, 2007; Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; Gellrich & Sundin, 1993). The apprentice student aspired to emulate their master and reproduce, elaborate, and invent new rules to be added to the craft (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998).

The master teacher equipped the apprentice student with the necessary tools to improvise music—the role of the music performer during that time. This included the common vocabulary of the musical language (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; McPherson & Gabrielsson, 2002) comprising scales, broken chords, and arpeggios (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998) and common improvisation techniques such as embellishment (Burkholder et al., 2010). Tools extended to include the "rules" of the craft (McPherson & Gabreilsson, 2002; Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; Gellrich & Sundin, 1993) encompassing technique, familiarity with four-bar and eight-bar form, the rhetorical and declamatory aspects of the musical language, cadences, sequences, and modulatory passages (Gellrich & Sundin, 1993; Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; McPherson & Gabrielsson, 2002).

Students acquired these tools in an integrated manner through passage work which are short pieces of music, often eight bars of sequential repetition, ascending then descending in pitch, and concluding in a final cadence (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; Gellrich & Sundin, 1993; McPherson & Gabrielsson, 2002). Passage work was most often learned aurally by repeated hearing or singing (developing students' auditory skills) or through students rote learning pieces by imitating the master teacher's model (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; McPherson & Gabrielsson, 2002). The focus on passage work within the musical apprenticeship was also used as a means for students to familiarise themselves with musical idioms that would appear in keyboard literature. Moreover, this equipped students with a repertoire of melodic material and physical and expressive techniques that they could use as seeds for their own improvisations and compositions.

Passage work was often improvised by the master teacher and then formalised into short compositions for the apprentice student's study (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; Gellrich & Sundin, 1993). As an apprentice student's skill level developed (e.g. technical skill and knowledge of musical idioms) the master teacher encouraged the student to invent their own passages (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; Gellrich & Sundin, 1993). Hands-on opportunities to improvise and compose therefore (i.e. perform the creative identity), was inherent in students' learning processes, facilitating the identity construction process (Barrett, 2017; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014; Hagstrom, 2005; Hallam, 2017; Jaussi et al., 2007; Randles, 2009). The student often drew upon their master teacher's invented passages as a starting point and a source of inspiration for their own passages (Doll, 1987, as cited in Gellrich & Sundin, 1993) and would then spend time playing and

experimenting with the rules of music, such as melody and harmony, to generate their own musical ideas (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; Gellrich & Sundin, 1993). Bearing creative thinking in mind, I interpret improvised passage work as exercising divergent and convergent, imaginative, and flexible thinking. Students were expected to practice passage work for sometimes up to six hours a day (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998). Through moments of play and experimentation, new melodic and harmonic figures arose that were established as new rules and were added to the craft (Gellrich & Sundin, 1993). This led to the overall development of music (Gellrich & Sundin, 1993).

Students would formalise their improvised passages into compositions. Notated musical ideas were therefore "a compact record of living performance practice" (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998, p. 8). Passages would often be the seed for other and sometimes larger musical works and activities such as variations, studies, and inventions (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; McPherson & Gabrielsson, 2002).The primary purpose of music notation at this point in time was to record one's own musical ideas or to study the musical ideas of others.

The musical apprenticeship promoted the creative identities of apprentice students to equip them to fulfil their social roles when employed as a professional musician. During this period, keyboardists commonly assumed service roles such as accompanying other artists or realising the "thoroughbass" in an orchestra (Burkholder et al., 2010; Parakilas, 2002). Thoroughbass or "figured bass" is a system of notation where the player is given limited notation such as a melody and a bass line that they are then required to fill in, with appropriate chords and inner parts, in an improvised

way (Burkholder et al., 2010; Parakilas, 2002). Keyboardists also performed in formal contexts such as in church services or on the performance stage (Burkholder et al., 2010; Dolan, 2005; Randel, 2003; Woosley, 2012) where they were required to improvise (Brown, 1999; Ferand, 1961). Hands-on opportunities to improvise therefore (i.e. perform the creative identity), were inherent in the keyboardist's social roles as musicians (Barrett, 2017; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014; Hagstrom, 2005; Hallam, 2017; Jaussi et al., 2007; Randles, 2009).

The keyboardist's social roles were largely dictated by the technology at the time, namely the crude music printing technology available, which meant there were few printed scores during these centuries (Gellrich & Sundin, 1993; Burkholder et al., 2010). When performing, therefore, rather than being given a fully notated musical score, keyboardists played from a basic musical score that acted as a melodic and harmonic skeleton. They were required to improvise on the given musical material using the wide range of improvisatory techniques such as embellishment, variations, and free improvisation (Brown, 1999; Burkholder et al., 2014; Ferand, 1961; Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; McPherson & Gabrielsson, 2002; Moore, 1992; Randel, 2003) which the master teacher taught the apprentice student within the musical apprenticeship (Burkholder et al., 2010). Keyboardists were also familiar with the music conventions of the time, including composers' stylistic and notational conventions, which allowed them to fashion their improvisations accordingly (Brown, 1999).

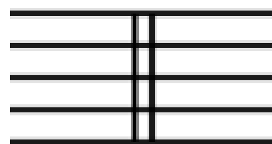
Composers anticipated that performers would elaborate on their musical text in ways that best displayed their abilities, with the performer's musical freedom considered a right (Brown, 1999). Additionally,

performers were able to substitute ornamentation signs for others' ornamentations that might display their abilities to best advantage (Brown, 1999). Bayly (1771, as cited in Brown, 1999) explains:

> Many composers insert appoggiaturas and graces, which indeed assist the learner, but not a performer well educated and of good taste, who may omit them as he shall judge proper, vary them, or introduce others from his own fancy and imagination. (p. 47)

Keyboardists therefore had a large degree of autonomy over how the musical score was to be interpreted. Additionally, they were able to continue exercising their creative thinking ability on the stage.

Improvisation was a vehicle for showcasing various facets of the keyboardists including their individuality and originality encompassing their taste and skill, alongside their spontaneity and risk-taking (Brown, 1999; Burkholder et al., 2010). As will be later discussed, these attributes all contribute to the "creativeness" of a product. Such things were highly valued by musical audiences (Brown, 1999; Burkholder et al., 2010). It was also a vital part of the musical experience for both the performer and listener (Brown, 1999) as it entertained both parties with fresh and interesting musical ideas (Burkholder et al., 2010). Improvisation was so highly valued within music culture to the extent that if it was absent from a recital, it was considered a poor and uncouth performance (Brown, 1999).



2.3.2 Promoting the Music "Performer" Identity

During the 18th and 19th centuries, advances in technology, namely the invention of high-speed printing machines (Burkholder et al., 2010; Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; McPherson & Gabreilsson, 2002) significantly changed the social roles of the keyboard (Randel, 2003). The invention of the lithograph allowed composers to publish, mass-produce, and sell their musical compositions to a wider market (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; McPherson & Gabrielsson, 2002; Stewart, 2016). Composers received a greater monetary return for selling their notated musical works than for improvised performances (Stewart, 2016). Over time, the social status of the music "composer'" increased to supersede the music "improviser" (Cathcart, 2013; Burkholder et al., 2010). This cultural shift had ripple effects, changing the focus of the musical apprenticeship. Where learning to improvise music was once at the centre of the musical apprenticeship, mastering the musical works of the eminent composers became the focus of keyboard study (McPherson & Gabrielsson, 2002; Parakilas, 2002) with the end goal of performing the solo repertoire of the virtuosos (Parakilas, 2002). Although keyboardists were still entitled to some musical freedom, including incorporating improvisation techniques such as embellishment, composers now notated much of the musical material.

Within the musical apprenticeship, keyboardists were now equipped with the tools needed to perform their new social role. This was primarily their ability to read music notation. The prevalence of notated musical works also meant that students were no longer required to learn passage by ear or by singing leaving their aural skills underdeveloped. Importantly, as will be outlined later in this chapter, an aural perception of sound is the most important tool one needs to create music (Katz & Gardner, 2012;

Webster, 1990). Additionally, due to keyboard learners no longer needing to invent their own passage work, play and experimentation were removed from the apprentice student's daily practice regime. Consequently, teachers nor students no longer exercised their creative thinking ability. Although both piano teachers and piano learners still possessed the capacity to create music, cultural changes outside of the musical apprenticeship meant that they were no longer expected to create. Additionally, times of play and experimentation were responsible for the discovery of new rules that were added to the craft. This meant that the everyday student had no opportunity to contribute to the musical conversation and to the development of music.

The invention of the pianoforte (or simply, "piano" as it has become known) (Ehrlich, 1990; Sandved et al., 1954) also changed the social roles of the keyboardist (Randel, 2003). Where previous keyboard instruments typically took on service roles such as accompaniment or realising the thoroughbass in an orchestra, the piano featured on the concert stage as a solo instrument at the hand of only those capable of virtuosic prowess. It was prized as an instrument among music listening audiences due to its ability to produce dynamic contrasts through the newly invented weighted keys—an inherent technical limitation of pre-existing keyboard instruments (Ehrlich, 1990). Due to the invention of music printing machines as noted above, many dynamic contrasts [e.g. "pia." (piano or soft), "for." (forte or loud)] were predetermined and marked by the composer on the musical score (Wright & Simms, 2006).

With the addition of weighted keys alongside pedals, keyboardists required a different playing technique to the largely universal technique that could be applied to previous keyboard instruments (Parakilas, 2002; Wright

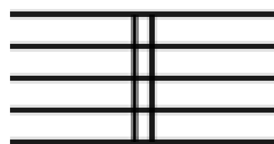
& Simms, 2006). Keyboardists had to learn to control their touch to exhibit both dynamic and articulation nuances. Those who played the piano quickly assumed a status equal to that of the recently celebrated music composer (Cathcart, 2013). Consequently, developing students' pianistic technique alongside mastering the works of the composers (as outlined above) became the focus of pianistic study (McPherson & Gabrielsson, 2002; Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; Gellrich & Sundin, 1993).

In response to cultural changes outside of the musical apprenticeship driven by advances in technology, keyboard tuition during this period moved away from developing the creative facets of keyboardists' identities in music, to developing their identities primarily as "performers" of music. It is interesting to note that prior to this cultural shift, the "improviser" identity was inherent in the "performer" identity. This shows that the characteristics of identities themselves can shift and change with culture.

Towards the end of the 19th century the public's growing obsession with virtuoso pianists and the increasing availability of pianos and published piano works of the master composers saw the emergence of the music conservatorium (Parakilas, 2002). In line with the cultural times, conservatories were primarily concerned with the training of performers of music (Randles & Smith, 2012; Regelski, 2008; Westerlund, 2008) which involved equipping students with technical facility and expressive skills (Don et al., 2009). Thus, conservatory models of teaching focused on helping students to achieve purely performative outcomes—the mastery of repertoire or of an instrument (Allsup & Westerlund, 2012; Regelski, 2008).

Conservatories employed maestro performers as teachers (Don et al.,

2009; Persson, 1996). Aspiring pianists attending a conservatorium admired and sought out maestro performers to train them in the craft (Persson, 1996). Where once the musical apprentice comprised daily lessons with the master teacher, the musical apprenticeship morphed into student-teacher meetings on a weekly basis (Collens & Creech, 2013), often half an hour to an hour in length (Don et al., 2009), for the total duration of the student's study (Collens & Creech, 2013). Additionally, the maestro musician was the authoritative figure in the relationship who used a transmissive model of teaching (Gaunt, 2011) leading students to learn by authority—students being directed what to learn. Teachers went on to become a source of identification for the student (Gaunt, 2011; Jørgensen, 2000). Don et al.'s (2009) description of the "typical lesson" exemplifies the transmissive model of teaching used within the apprenticeship: "[During the lesson] the student demonstrates the repertoire and/or exercises previously assigned. The master teacher critiques the performance, providing immediate feedback on the student's application of technique and musical expression" (p. 90). Over time, the one-to-one musical apprenticeship designed and modelled within the conservatorium was established and accepted as the primary and most effective pedagogical model for training and educating musicians within the western classical tradition (Gaunt, 2008; Gaunt, 2011).

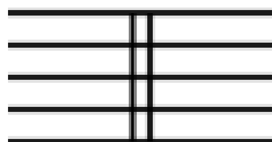


2.3.3 The Rise of Unqualified Private Piano Teachers

Prior to the invention of the piano, keyboard instruments within households were considered luxury items that symbolised wealth and high social status (Cathcart, 2013; Parakilas, 2002). Shortly after the piano was invented, however, piano makers multiplied and the piano soon became an affordable instrument for the middle-class, making it the keyboard instrument of choice for domestic music-making (Cathcart, 2013; Ehrlich, 1990; Moore, 1992). Consequently, the popularity of learning the piano increased the demand for teachers (Cathcart, 2013). Where formal musical apprenticeships existed within upper-class circles, less formal musical apprenticeships arose within middle-class circles (Cathcart, 2013). Teachers with no qualifications or limited experience in both teaching and performing began contracting themselves as teachers to the middle-classes for a small wage (Ehrlich, 1990). These teachers typically taught using method books (Cathcart 2013) that were often based on improvised musical exercises which were then formalised by composers (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; McPherson & Gabrielsson, 2002). They taught these exercises to develop students' music reading ability and pianistic technique (Cathcart, 2013).

Toward the end of the 20th century, the decline in teaching and playing standards within less formal musical apprenticeships led to the emergence of teaching associations and examination syllabi designed to raise musical standards in private piano lessons as well as to impose uniformity (Cathcart, 2013; Gwatkin, 2004). Over time, exam systems became so popular that examination requirements dominated the private piano teaching studio and teaching became focused on preparing students for exams and performances (Cathcart, 2013; Chappell, 1999; Gwatkin, 2004). Despite examination boards achieving their purpose of raising

teaching and playing standards, exam requirements reinforced the technical aspects of playing and prioritised the learning of repertoire by eminent composers (Cathcart, 2013). Additionally, teachers' success was judged by the number of exam certificates their students achieved (Green, 2016).



2.3.4 Promoting the Music "Creator" Identity

The one-to-one model passed down from conservatory models of teaching to the private piano studio (Regelski, 2008; Allsup & Westerlund, 2012) has become increasingly criticised in recent times for presenting students with few opportunities to assume roles as creators of music, and thus denying students opportunities to form creative identities in music (Randles, 2010; Randles & Smith, 2012). Music educators agree that "music education should be multi-faceted, offering more than simply performance-based experiences with music" (Randles & Muhonen, 2015, p. 66; see also Randles & Smith, 2012, p. 177; Elliot, 1995; Reimer, 2003). Such modern demand echoes the philosophies of Emile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865-1950) and Carl Orff (1895-1982) and eminent music educator John Paynter (1931-2010), all of whom long advocated for music education to foster students' creative skills such as improvising and composing (Burke, 2005).

Importantly, as highlighted in the previous section, the one-to-one model passed down from conservatory models of teaching has denied students the opportunity to develop the tools needed to perform this identity,

namely their aural perception of sound and creative thinking ability. This disadvantages learners from constructing a creative identity given that identities in music are mediated and constructed via acquiring the tools needed to perform these identities (Randles & Smith, 2012). Importantly, The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) (2021) states: "music is uniquely an aural art form" (para. 1) and "Learning in Music is aurally based" (para. 2). In light of this, neglecting the development of students' aural skills not only restricts the identity construction process, but denies them the opportunity to truly learn music. Additionally, the arts in particular are recognised as being a vehicle for developing students' critical and creative thinking abilities (Ewing, 2011). These thinking capacities are inherent in the broader educational agenda to prepare students to meet the challenges of the 21st century (Ewing, 2011; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; McWilliams, 2009; McWilliams & Dawson, 2008; NACCCE, 1999; Sawyer, 2006). Given that the model detailed above has restricted the extent to which learners can exercise their creative thinking ability, music education fashioned around this model is not doing justice to the ways in which the arts should serve.

It is today's piano learners (much like their 16th and 17th century counterparts) who are championing the development of students' creative identities within the private piano teaching studio. Many students now seek to develop creative skills such as the ability to improvise, compose, and arrange music (Baker-Jordan, 2003; Daniel & Bowden, 2008; Elliot, 1995; Jaussi et al., 2007; Odena, 2012; Randles, 2009, 2010; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Randles & Smith, 2012; Woodward & Sikes, 2015) to meet the changing demands of professional work in the 21st century and

succeed as functional musicians (Gaunt et al., 2012; Gearing & Forbes, 2013; Forbes, 2016; Young et al., 2019). Like keyboardists in the 16th and 17th centuries, keyboard learners require creative skills to fulfil their duties when employed as musicians. While the piano still features on the concert stage and in the orchestra (Daniel, 2005), it has also returned to being an accompaniment instrument (Daniel, 2005). The piano or keyboard is commonly used in popular or "new music" ensembles (Hallam, 2017; Randles, 2012; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Randles & Muhonen, 2015; Randles & Smith, 2012; Young et al., 2019) such as rock, jazz or pop bands. In present-day accompaniment contexts, keyboardists commonly play from and interpret chord charts or lead sheets in an improvised manner as they see fit. In some contexts, they require skills in arranging such as taking a song originally arranged for a band and adapting it to be played on the piano. Additionally, "instrumental sections" often appear in today's popular music requiring keyboardist to compose or improvise a solo.

The expanded social roles of the keyboard have been made possible through advancements in technology, namely the invention of the electronic keyboard (Daniel, 2005). Twenty first century keyboardists have to be competent in using music technology, particularly in popular or new music ensembles. In these contexts, keyboardists commonly play the electronic keyboard where they make use of a variety of sounds outside of the piano, including the sound of the organ and a synthesiser. Keyboardists may also have to use music applications such as *Mainstage* in performance contexts. In my own experience, the use of such programs requires another set of skills on top of overall musicianship. In light of this, advances in technology have also increased the options for student creative expression (Hallam,

2017; Hargreaves et al., 2002, 2007; Randles & Smith, 2012).

Alongside creative capacities facilitating students' success as functional musicians in the 21st century, a number of other reasons exist as to why it is necessary to nurture students' creative abilities. Some see creative music-making as a necessary approach to connecting with the needs of students in the current generation (Topham, 2020) and as a way of making piano learning exciting, fun, and inspiring (Callahan, 2015; Faber, 2013; Topham, 2020). Traditional music education, namely that embedded within the western classical tradition, is becoming less appealing to students and students are not continuing with music education (Kratus, 2007).

Others see the value of creative skills such as improvising, arranging, and composing in building strong musicianship (Creech et al., 2020a; Sowash, 2017) and as vehicles for learning as they encourage student experimentation and exploration of new territory (Baumgartner, 2019). Similarly, creative activities enhance students' agency and ownership in the music learning process (Creech et al., 2020a). Hargreaves (2009) puts forward that improvisation in particular "motivates children to use their imagination and their decision-making to create music that is original and… displays an analogous level of musical structure" (p. 253). From a broader perspective, Beal (2017, p. 328, as cited in Creech et al., 2020a) reminds us that "two crucial aspects of a student's journey towards becoming musical are the creation of their own music and learning to improvise," for these activities allow learners to find or discover and develop their musical and individual artistic voices (see also Gaunt, 2008; Jørgenson, 2000). Considering this, if creative activities are not included in one's music learning experiences, this restricts the extent to which they can develop

agency and ownership over their musical life, their individual artistic voice, and their ability to become musical.

Some adopt a more humanistic view towards the inclusion of creative music-making in the private piano teaching studio seeing creativity as a path to self-expression (Kennedy, 2016). In a similar vein, a variety of non-musical benefits for the inclusion of creativity in private piano teaching and learning include enhancing trust and communication between musicians, increasing students' enjoyment of music, and facilitating self-actualisation (Callahan, 2015; Koutsoupidou & Hargreaves, 2009; Woosley, 2012). As such, being creative goes well beyond composing and improvising.

Several themes emerged in the historical overview that also speak to the advantages of creative music-making. New musical ideas lead to the development of music (Gellrich & Sundin, 1993). The absence of creative music-making, therefore, restricts the extent to which the craft continues to develop and evolve. Creative music-making is also a vehicle for showcasing various facets of an individual, including their individuality and originality encompassing their taste and skill (Brown, 1999; Burkholder et al., 2010). It also displays one's spontaneity and risk-taking (Brown, 1999; Burkholder et al., 2010). These factors combined can enrich the musical experience for both performers and listeners (Brown, 1999). Both parties can be entertained with fresh and interesting musical ideas (Burkholder et al., 2010).

2.4 Twenty-first Century Private Piano Teaching

The higher education sector has responded to these cultural shifts and the new social roles of the piano (and electronic keyboard) and has adjusted

its teaching practices accordingly. It is now embracing a variety of musical genres within curriculums outside of western classical music (see e.g. Forbes, 2020). Additionally, it is familiar with the concept of the "portfolio" musician (Bennett, 2008), and educators understand that musicians will combine several types of work and spend considerable time inventing new ways to create and present their own original music (Randles & Smith, 2012).

Some present-day private piano teachers have also adopted these modern trends by placing students' creative music-making centre stage. Internationally recognised piano pedagogues advocating for, and supplying private piano teachers with, a well of ideas and resources for developing students' creative skills within the private piano teaching studio include Tim Topham (https://topmusic.co/), Nicola Cantan (https://colourfulkeys.ie/), Nancy and Randal Faber (https://pianoadventures.com/), Philip Keveren (https://phillipkeveren.com/), and Bradley Sowash and Leila Viss (https://88creativekeys.com/). Additionally, magazines including *The Piano Teacher* and *Piano Perspectives: The Magazine for Piano Teachers*, and online journals such as *Clavier Companion* and *American Music Teacher* are a hub for articles and teaching ideas concerning musical creativity from the perspectives of everyday private piano teachers, seasoned pedagogues, and eminent musical composers. The importance of developing students' creative skills in the 21st century private piano lesson is mirrored in new examination syllabi such as the AMEB's Rock School syllabus which sees the inclusion of creative activities. Organisers of keyboard pedagogy conferences such as the Australasian Piano Pedagogy Conference (APPC) now include various sessions and workshops dedicated to the topic of

fostering students' creative skills in the private piano teaching studio (Green, 2019).

Despite music education's move towards developing creative skills and promoting the creative identities of 21st century learners, 21st century research conducted within the private piano teaching studio shows that teaching and learning priorities remain largely focused on developing students' technique and music reading ability. Repertoire and exam preparation still receive the most attention in private piano lessons while creative endeavours such as improvisation receive significantly less focus (Bridge, 2005; Cathcart, 2013; Daniel & Bowden, 2008; Gwatkin, 2004; Lennon & Reed, 2012).

There are several reasons why the development of piano students' creative skills remains a marginalised activity within the private piano lesson. The stronghold of the tradition of teaching using only notated music and the requirements of traditional examination syllabi (Bridge, 2005; Cathcart, 2013) leaves creative activities commonly sidelined. This is despite teachers having an abundant supply of resources at their fingertips (available at the platforms aforementioned) designed to integrate creative music-making with the learning of fundamental piano concepts such as technique and note reading. Where preparing for exams and recitals are the focus of lessons, teachers feel constrained by the typical weekly 30-45 minutes lesson (Daniel & Bowden, 2008; Sowash, 2013). For these teachers, the limited lesson time leaves creative activities as an "add-on" activity only if time permits. When placed against the original musical apprenticeship where students had daily lessons (Gellrich & Sundin, 1993; Davidson & Jordan, 2007; Ehrlich, 1990; McPherson & Gabrielsson, 2002)

and would spend up to six hours a day improvising (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998), it is understandable that teachers feel constrained by the weekly 30-45 minute lesson. I currently teach a student who is preparing for her Grade 8 AMEB Piano for Leisure exam. Due to her choice, I only see her every Friday for 35 minutes. Although I try to stimulate her creative thinking within the context of her exam pieces, there is no time for creative activities within our lessons once we have covered her repertoire.

Time is also required to equip students with the tools needed for creative music-making. Creative activities are typically open-ended (Webster, 2016) and require the resource of time to engage in the creative process and explore creative possibilities (Baer & Kaufman, 2017; Wiggins & Espeland, 2012; Webster, 1990). This contrasts with activities embedded within traditional examination syllabi requirements such as the learning and performing of scales and repertoire, which are discrete tasks, and more readily confined to a set amount of time within a lesson.

The exclusion of creative music-making from the private piano teaching studio is also the result of private piano teachers having a limited understanding of the extent of musical creativity. Many private piano teachers assume that creative activities are reserved for musicians who specialise in jazz and popular music (Cantan, 2020; Woosley, 2012). Somewhat paradoxically, this is despite keyboard improvisation having roots in the western classical tradition as shown in the historical overview (Brown, 1999; Burkholder et al., 2010; Ferand, 1961; Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; Gellrich & Sundin, 1993). Although many private piano teachers specialise in teaching western classical music, these findings suggest these teachers are unaware of the tradition's historical emphasis on improvisation.

The backgrounds and experiences of private piano teachers may provide further explanation for the ongoing marginalisation of creative practices within the private piano studio. Private piano teachers often enter the profession with little teaching experience and formal teacher training (Hallam, 2017). Many seamlessly slide into the role of piano teacher when they are young (some as young as 12!) (Cathcart, 2013) and still students themselves (Haddon, 2009). Although some teachers have had a long-standing desire to teach (Cathcart, 2013; Daniel & Bowden, 2008), teaching may not be an initial vocation choice (Gaunt, 2008; Gwatkin, 2004; Purser, 2005) but rather the result of being asked to teach by others (Haddon, 2009; Taylor & Hallam, 2011). Many gain teaching positions based on performance success (Gaunt, 2008; Gwatkin, 2013; Purser, 2005) and/or playing ability rather than teaching credibility (Gaunt, 2008; Gwatkin, 2014; Purser, 2005). Consequently, many teachers learn to teach "on the job" (Cathcart, 2013). Additionally, it is common for teachers to refer to their own piano learning experiences as the model for their teaching practice (Daniel & Bowden, 2008). For those who themselves were trained within the western classical tradition, as was my experience, this model has sidelined the inclusion of creative activities. It therefore provides little guidance on how to nurture students' creative abilities. Additionally, aspiring pianists who enter the teaching profession during or after majoring in performance at an undergraduate level tend to continue the same performance-oriented model in their teaching practice. Due to their limited teaching expertise, they rely heavily on teaching via tutor books and design their lessons around the instrumental exam system (Haddon, 2009). Importantly, due to their oftentimes limited educational training, piano

teachers are often under-resourced to effectively manage the pedagogical facets of their role (Collens & Creech, 2013) which may include strategies to promote students' creative identities. As will be outlined in the following chapter, teaching for creativity is an art in itself.

Despite research establishing that creative activities do remain sidelined in the private piano teaching studio (Bridge, 2005; Cathcart, 2013), many private piano teachers express a keen interest to adapt their studios to meet the needs of 21st century piano learners. Sowash (2013) learned this when chairing the Pop/Jazz track of Pedagogy at the 2013 Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) conference in Anaheim. He describes his experience:

> As we began our early morning presentations, my fellow panelists and I were delighted to find the conference room already full of teachers eager to learn from experts on the subject of teaching popular music styles, improvisation, and creativity, alongside traditional reading skills. As the day progressed with more teachers cautiously peeking in the door only to find themselves hooked and unable to leave, we had to call for additional chairs not once, but twice. By the end of the nine-hour day our ranks had swelled to standing-room-only, overwhelming the posted maximum occupancy guidelines and the capacity of the air conditioner alike. At that close-quartered moment, all involved collectively sensed a palpable and historic change in the wind. The high level of interest and attendance seemed to indicate that the modern cycle of "read-only" teachers teaching read-only students had subtly shifted. A return to a much older teaching philosophy that balances eye and ear skills was being ushered in—or as one attendee quipped, 'the Queen Mary' (of music education) has slowly begun to turn. (p. 42)

I also observed this keen interest in the return to creative practices among private piano teachers when attending the 2019 APPC in Brisbane. Taking all of these factors into account, if private piano teachers are willing to include creative music-making in their private piano teaching studios yet commonly do not, what else may be hampering them?

2.5 Private Piano Teachers' Construction of Creative Identities in Music

The previous question provides the stepping off point for the current inquiry. In addition to his observations that piano teachers are willing to include creative music making in their teaching practice, Sowash (2013) discovered a barrier: "[M]any teachers feel they lack sufficient knowledge or experience to get started in the area of creativity. Some also expressed concerns about how they would come across to their students when teaching unfamiliar skills" (p. 43). As noted in the Introduction, this was one of my barriers to including creative activities in my private piano teaching practice. As Hallam articulates (2017), most music teachers have been trained as performers in the western classical tradition. Within this tradition, creative skills have not been prioritised. Very few teachers have backgrounds in popular or jazz music (Hargreaves et al., 2007) which are the genres creative music-making is now predominately explored. Moreover, teachers find it difficult to adapt to learning new skills required for creative music-making (Hallam et al., 2011) such as aurally perceiving sound (Green, 2019; Katz & Gardner, 2012; Webster, 1990). Teachers also find it challenging to facilitate their students' self-set objectives, such as modelling skills, offering help, support, and guidance, where students' objectives are far removed from their own sometimes narrow skill sets (Hallam et al., 2011).

These findings suggest that the extent to which piano teachers' creative identities in music have been developed influences the degree to which these teachers include creative activities in their private piano teaching practice. Identities are important to teaching because they influence

behaviour and action and individuals act in ways that reaffirm their identities (Jaussi et al., 2007). Randles and Ballantyne (2018) explain the implications of one's identity on their teaching practice:

> Identities influence preconceptions about what it is to be a music teacher, are related to what they [music teachers] value in the profession, inform the ways that they [music teachers] interact as music teachers, and, crucially, inform what and how they teach. (p. 231)

Considering this, if being a teacher means being creative, and therefore ascribing to a creative identity, then exploration of the ways in which private piano teachers' own creative identities as musicians influences their private piano teaching practice is crucial.

Randles and Smith (2012) infer: "It seems logical to assume that, if teachers do not possess identities as creative music makers, and of course, the skills that go along with those identities, they will not value the fostering of a creative identity in their students" (p. 177). They further argue that music teachers who have experience as composers, improvisers, and arrangers of popular music covers and original songs are more likely to develop those same creative skills in their students (see also Randles & Ballantyne 2018; Randles & Muhonen, 2015). This is because having experience in creating music can lead teachers to feel comfortable introducing students to music composition (Randles, 2010; Randles & Muhonen, 2015; Randles & Smith, 2012). Experience in creative music-making can also lead to "subject matter competence" (Randles & Smith, 2012, p. 183) which is needed to teach creative activities successfully (Randles & Smith, 2012).

As previously discussed, many private piano teachers, including

myself, do not identify as creative and lack experience in creative music-making. Given the above arguments made by Randles and others, this would imply that I and other private piano teachers need to step away from piano teaching and first tend to building and burnishing our own creative identities as musicians before working to promote the creative identities of our students. I argue that further research is needed, however, to explore the relationship between private piano teachers' creative identities as musicians and their private piano teaching practices. This current research project seeks to fill this gap as further understanding of this relationship provides myself and other private piano teachers with a sense of direction as how to positively move forwards towards nurturing both our own and our students' creative identities as musicians.

2.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter positioned the inquiry within the field of musical identities' research and specifically, identities in music research. It provided a historical overview of the identities in music that have been favoured throughout the history of private piano teaching and learning within the western classical tradition. The chapter discussed how music education in the 21st century has advocated for the development of the creative facets of identities in music and the rationale behind this support. It then explained that although piano teachers are interested in promoting the creative identities of their students, research findings indicate that creative activities remain marginalised in the private piano teaching studio. Possible reasons for the sidelining of creative activities within the teaching studio include the stronghold of the tradition of teaching using only notated music and the requirements of traditional examination syllabi, the time constraints of the

typical weekly 30-45 minute lesson that leaves creative activities as "add-on" activities only if time permits, teachers' limited understanding of the extent of musical creativity, and the background and experience of private piano teachers, namely those that have been trained within the western classical tradition. The chapter then outlined the rationale for the current inquiry, namely, that little is known about the ways in which private piano teachers' own creative identities as musicians influence their private piano teaching practices. The following chapter presents the socio-cultural framework of identity formation that was used as the theoretical lens for exploring and interpreting how private piano teachers have experienced the construction of their own creative identities as musicians, and the ways in which their creative identities influence their private piano teaching practices.

CHAPTER 3. THE SOCIO-CULTURAL LENS OF IDENTITY FORMATION

This chapter discusses identity formation as the socio-cultural framework and theoretical lens that was used to explore and interpret how private piano teachers experience the construction of their own creative identities as musicians, and the ways in which their creative identities influence their private piano teaching practices. I specifically discuss socio-cultural factors that promote, deny, or make problematic the construction of creative identities (Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014). This provides the specific socio-cultural factors that I emphasised when analysing and interpreting participants' stories of experience.

3.1 The Socio-Cultural Lens of Identity Formation

This inquiry uses the socio-cultural lens of identity formation to investigate how private piano teachers have experienced the construction of their creative identities as musicians and the ways in which these identities influence their private piano teaching practice. Despite all being born with the capacity to create music (Davis, 2004; Gardner, 1999; Koutsoupidou & Hargreaves, 2009; Maslow, 1982; Reimer, 2003; Sawyer, 2012), not all will necessarily construct or fully realise the music creator identity, given that some socio-cultural conditions may not be as conducive to the formation of these identities as others (Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014). The following section outlines socio-cultural factors that promote, deny, and make problematic the construction of creative identities in music (Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014). The terms "promoted," "denied," and "problematic creative identities" are used to capture how "a creative identity is both

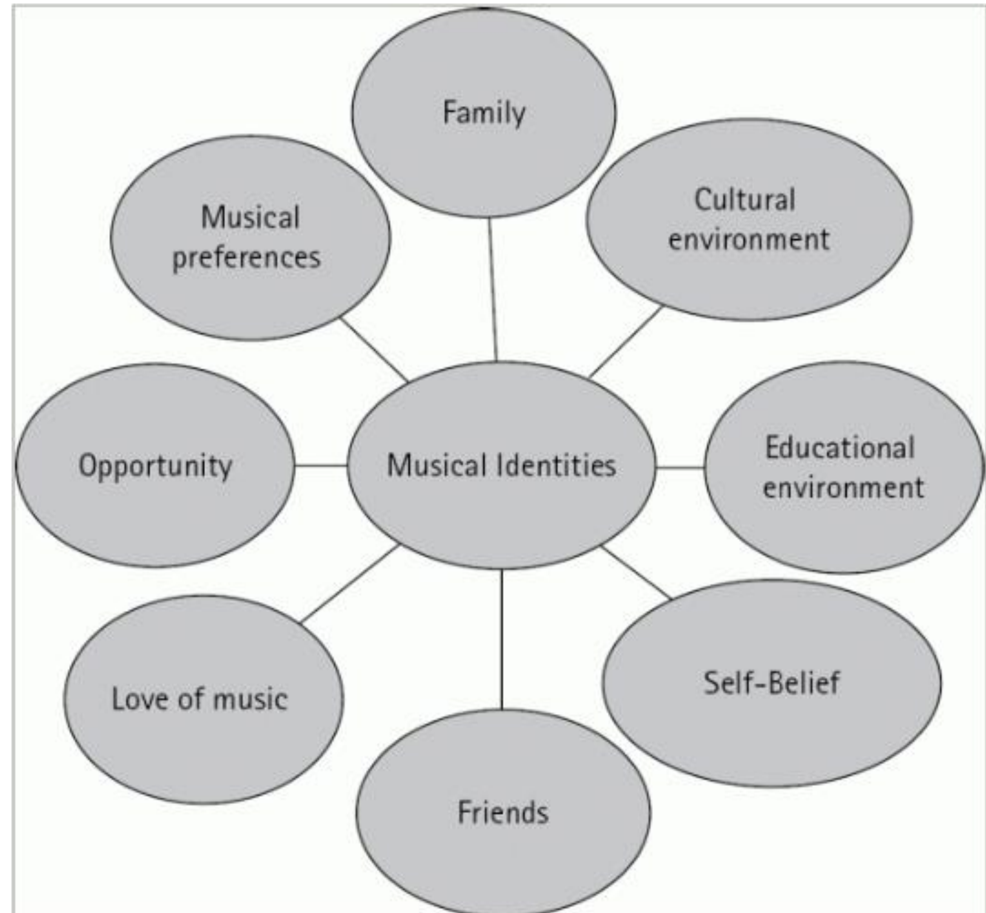
acquired and maintained in a social context that can be more or less favourable to its formation" (Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014, p. 15). I will return to these socio-cultural factors in Chapters 10 when I analyse participants' narratives of identity construction to understand how these factors in promote, deny, or make problematic the construction of piano teachers' creative identities in music.

The development of identities in music is frequently understood in the literature from a socio-cultural perspective which focuses on the specific social and cultural influences on the shaping and expression of identities in music (Culpepper, 2018; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014; Hargreaves, et al., 2002, 2017; Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Randles & Muhonen, 2015). The social nature of identity development makes the development of identities in music mutual rather than individual constructions (Hargreaves et al., 2002) and means that identity construction is understood as an interactional and relational process (Juuti & Littleton, 2010). As creative identity researchers Glăveanu and Tanggaard (2014) articulate: "The creative person therefore, far from existing as an isolated unit, is a *social actor* able to co-construct his or her own sense of creative value in communication with others and in relation to societal discourses about what creativity is" (p. 13).

Hallam (2017) identifies a range of influences on the way in which identities in music develop: love of music, opportunities, self-beliefs, musical preferences, friends, family, the educational environment, and the cultural environment. Each of these influences can vary in their level of importance throughout the life span (Hallam, 2017). The ways in which these socio-cultural factors contribute to the development of creative

identities in music can be discussed in terms of social contexts, cultural environments, societal discourses and ideologies surrounding creativity, social interactions, and educational environments.

Figure 1: Influences on Musical Identities (Hallam, 2017)



3.2 Social Contexts and Cultural Environments

The social dimension of identity formation emphasises the social contexts or the immediate physical environments where an individual learns, develops, and performs their identities in music (Lamont, 2002, 2017). Lamont (2002) refers to these social circles as microsystems. Social places include the home, school, workplace, conservatoires, and the private instrumental teaching and learning studio (Culpepper, 2018; Lamont, 2002). Hallam (2017) articulates three types of learning environments in which

identities in music typically develop: formal, informal, and non-formal environments. She explains the distinctions between these learning environments as follows:

> Formal learning is viewed as taking place within an educational establishment, has a predetermined curriculum and accredited assessment. Informal learning takes place within the home or workplace, while non-formal learning may take place within an educational establishment, but in an informal context, for instance, a workshop, or seminar (OECD, 2010). (p. 477)

The large variety of different social learning contexts (e.g. educational establishment, home, or workplace) shows that although much discussion has been concerned with the ways in which the private piano teaching studio influences the construction of one's creative identity in music, there are many social places outside of the private piano teaching studio where individuals can develop their creative identities as musicians.

Cultures exist within every social context; within nations, families, educational environments, workplaces, churches, and peer groups (Hallam, 2017). Cultures are made up of socially shared "rules" including beliefs or ideologies, values, attitudes, and traditions (Burton et al., 2019). A cultural environment conducive to the formation of one's creative identity, whether it be the culture of a family, workplace, or private piano teaching studio, should be fun, psychologically safe, free from negative criticism, and a culture in which innovation is celebrated and failure does not have dire consequences (Hickey & Webster, 2001; Edwards, 2006; Brinkman, 2010; Riga & Chronopoulou, 2014). The cultural environment is to be free from competition and restricted choices (Runco, 2004). The cultural environment also requires freedom (Amabile, 2012; Baer & Kaufman, 2017). Stein (1961/1963, as cited in Sawyer, 2012, p. 17) explains:

> To be capable of [creative insights], the individual requires freedom—freedom to explore, freedom to be himself, freedom to entertain ideas no matter how wild and to express that which is within him without fear of censure or concern about evaluation. (p. 119)

Freedom does not imply "letting go" or a lack of inhibitions or constraints (NACCCE, 1999). Rather, there is a mutual dependence of freedom and control (NACCCE, 1999).

Obstacles that deny or make problematic the construction of creative identities include harsh critique of new ideas, emphasis on the status quo, low risk attitudes, and excessive time pressure (Davis, 2004; Amabile, 2012). Obstacles also extend to include habits, or well-learned and customary ways of thinking and responding, punishment for errors, rules and tradition that hinder or inhibit creative expression, fear of being different, and conformity (Davis, 2004). Davis (2004) further explores the concept of fear of being different:

> It is simply uncomfortable to be different, to challenge accepted ways of thinking and behaving. We learn that it's good to be correct. But [*sic*] by making mistakes, being wrong, or behaving 'badly' will elicit disapproval, criticism, or even sarcasm and ridicule. One does not wish to be judged foolish, incompetent, or plain stupid. (p. 24)

A culture that promotes the construction of an individual's creative identity fosters dispositions or traits—emotional, cognitive, and behavioural tendencies or habitual patterns (Burton et al., 2019)—conducive to creative production. Karwowski (2014) claims that these mindsets are ultimately comprised of an individual's beliefs about "the fixed-versus-growth-nature of creativity" (p. 62; see also Dweck, 2012). These dispositions are also characteristic of self-actualised people (Davis, 2004). One's dispositions are crucial to creative endeavours given that these mindsets influence behaviour (Burton et al., 2019). Dispositions conducive to creative identity formation

that should exist within cultural environments include a willingness to learn and try new things, an orientation towards new ideas, seeing possibilities or new perspectives on problems, and taking up positively the challenges and joys experienced as part of one's life (Amabile, 2012; Barron, 1995; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014; Webster, 1990). Culpepper (2018) found that important to the construction of artists' creative identities is "the ability to view mistakes as a path toward innovation… [and] the idea of creating uncertainty as a catalyst for new directions" (p. 232). Dispositions conducive to creative identity formation extend to include being open to and having an innocence to experiences, possessing a capacity for fantasy, risk-taking, flexibility, spontaneity, freshness, imagination, curiosity, open-mindedness, and adventurousness (Webster, 1990; Burton et al., 2019).

The cultural environment should also celebrate independence, discipline, persistence, and resilience in the face of adversity (Amabile, 2012; NACCCE, 1999). It is known that it is worth persisting through some less-than-satisfying experiences (Culpepper, 2018). Scholars acknowledge that creative development takes places through intellectual development, learning, practice, and experience (Koutsoupido & Hargreaves, 2009). Cultural environments, therefore, should champion these forms of creative development.

Although some of these dispositions can be linked to personality types that are sometimes genetically inherited (Burton et al., 2019), they are largely shaped by cultural norms (Burton et al., 2019). Psychologists use the term "enculturation" to describe the process by which one subconsciously absorbs and internalises the rules of a culture (Burton et al., 2019). As outlined above, cultural rules can promote, deny, or make problematic the

construction of one's creative identity. Despite dispositions conducive to the development of creative identities being largely shaped by cultural norms, being aware that some of these dispositions are innate, however, may show significant others— teachers or family members, for example—individuals who may have an elevated creative capacity. Ken Robinson (1999), author of The National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE) report argues that the first role of any educator committed to promoting individuals' creative identities should be to identify students' creative abilities or strengths. Knowledge of traits typically associated with "the creative person" such as curiosity and a capacity for fantasy (Burton et al., 2019) can assist educators to identify those with high creative abilities or strengths. These individuals may go on to change their field.

Cultural norms, whether they are conducive to creativity or not, come to affect one's perceived ability, understanding of music, the development of expertise, and motivation (Hallam, 2017). They also influence an individual's self-rating, self-efficacy, self-esteem, self-beliefs or perceptions, ideal selves, and possible selves (Creech et al., 2020b; Dweck, 2012; Hallam, 2017; Hargreaves et al., 2002). Authors argue that self-perceptions of one's own creative abilities is a product of their experiences with being creative with music over their life trajectories (Odena & Welch, 2012; Randles & Muhonen, 2015). These facets are all related to the development of identities in music (Hallam, 2017). In this way, identities in music are multifaceted constructs.

Research has revealed that creative music-making self-efficacy (a person's sense of skill in an area) or self-perceptions of creative abilities is closely tied up with one's creative identity (Randles, 2009, 2010; Randles &

Ballantyne, 2018; Randles & Muhonen, 2015; Randles & Smith, 2012; Randles & Tan, 2019). Culpepper (2018) found: "How people perceive their creative abilities has a substantial bearing in their motivations and how they act on them" (p. 157; see also Karwowski, 2012, 2014). Likewise, in regard to the construction of possible selves (which is inherent in identity formation), Erikson (2007) notes: "current conceptions of abilities and limitations affect the probabilities of possible selves" (p. 353). Self-efficacy statements relating to creative abilities include: "I can compose my own music" and "I can improvise on my primary instrument" (Randles & Tan, 2019, p. 204; see also Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Randles & Muhonen, 2015; Randles & Smith, 2012). Importantly, a teacher's self-perception about their own abilities to compose and improvise music (and the like) likely affect their abilities to teach in these areas (Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Randles & Muhonen, 2015; Randles & Smith, 2012; Randles & Tan, 2019). As noted in the previous chapter, this may be because teachers lack confidence in teaching unfamiliar skills (Sowash, 2013).

Randles and Ballantyne (2018) also discovered that creative music-making self-efficacy does not always align with the actual abilities of teachers. They explain:

> Although identity influences actions and likely actions in the classroom, and although associated with self-efficacy (which also influences activities undertaken by teachers in the classroom), it is not necessarily aligned with the actual abilities or skills of the teachers, in undertaking creative pursuits with students. (p. 240)

Such findings suggest that inaccurate self-perceptions regarding a teacher's own creative abilities may restrict the extent to which they nurture the creative abilities of their students. Importantly, however, although creative

self-efficacy may influence the extent to which a teacher nurtures creativity in their studio, it does not mirror the value they place on creative activities and their willingness to include creative activities in lessons (Randles & Ballantyne, 2018).

3.3 Societal Ideologies Surrounding Creativity

Cultural norms and expectations in relation to creative music-making are often fashioned around societal discourses and ideologies surrounding musical creativity (Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014; Hagstrom, 2005; Jaussi, Randel & Dionne, 2007). Social ideologies relating to creativity include the meaning ascribed to creativity (Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014), beliefs regarding who and who cannot create (Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014; Sawyer, 2012), and the value given to creativity as a construct (Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014). These ideologies that promote, deny, or make problematic creative identity formation will now be discussed.

3.3.1 The Meaning Ascribed to Musical Creativity

When interacting with others belonging to a specific social group, creative system, or given domain, there is a public perception of what it means to be creative (Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017). Importantly, it is from interacting with others within a specific social group or given domain (Lena & Lindemann, 2014) that one derives their meaning of what it means to be creative (Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017). Odena and Welch (2009) state that two general conceptions of creativity in music co-exist. They refer to these as the "traditional" conception and the "new" conception. The traditional conception of musical creativity is exclusive, ascribed to only those who contribute significantly to a field and whose contributions are

recognised by the community (Koutsoupido & Hargreaves, 2009). The traditional conception of musical creativity has been criticised for having exceptional standards of creativity that are difficult to reproduce (Brinkman, 2010; Odena & Welch, 2009). As Brinkman (2010) states: "Musicians trying to be creative tend to be intimidated by the inevitable comparisons with Beethoven, Stravinsky, or Bach" (p. 48).

The "new" conception of creativity focuses on the psychological notion of "imaginative thinking" or "creative thinking," highlighting the value of creativity as a desirable thinking style (Hickey & Webster, 2001; Odena & Welch, 2009; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Webster, 1990, 2002, 2016). Understanding these metacognitive strategies involved in creative thinking is a necessary component of the creative process as it helps us to understand our ways of thinking to produce creative outcomes (Webster, 1990, 2002, 2016).

Considering the above, Peter Webster (2002; see also 1990, 2016), a leader in musical creativity research, argues for creativity in music to be conceptualised as "creative thinking" as he views creativity in music as:

> The engagement of the mind in the active, structured process of thinking in sound for the purpose of producing some product that is new for the creator. This is clearly a thought process and we are challenged…to better understand how the mind works in such matters—hence the term 'creative thinking.' (p. 26)

Where Webster (2002) noted the criteria of newness to the individual for the product to be creative, others have added that for products such as an improvisation, composition, or arrangement to be considered creative, it must fulfil three criteria: (1) originality, uniqueness, or newness (Barron, 1955; Elliot, 1995; Guilford, 1950; Kaufman, 2009; Reimer, 2003; Runco &

Jaeger, 2012; Simonton, 2016; Stein, 1953) either to the individual or to both the individual and the wider community (Sawyer, 2012); (2) appropriateness, usefulness, effectiveness, or value (Kaufman, 2009; Runco & Jaeger, 2012; Simonton, 2016; Stein, 1953); and (3) surprise (Boden, 2004; Simonton, 2016) or nonobvious (Simonton, 2012).

With this new conceptualisation of musical creativity in mind, it is interesting to note that creativity is rarely discussed as creative thinking within private piano teaching literature. Rather, private piano teachers typically refer to creativity in music as improvising, composing, arranging, and playing by ear (Baumgartner, 2019; Sowash, 2013, 2017). Such conceptualisations reflect a product perspective of creativity (i.e. a definition of musical creativity that only names the types of products produced via the creative process) and do not specify what makes improvisations, compositions, and arrangements indeed creative. As Elliot articulates (1995), these activities can be done inadequately or badly. Without knowledge of the criteria that deems a musical product creative, pianists may be improvising in a way that is uncreative, such as improvising a solo that purely imitates pre-existing musical phrases. Knowledge of the creative criteria (as discussed above) is therefore important for the development of one's creative identity as it enables one to be creative in its truest sense. In my own experience, "acquiring a holistic understanding of what musical creativity is has been invaluable in developing my own creative identity" (Green, 2019, p. 42).

Scholars have also distinguished between the tiers of creative efforts, from "little c" creativity to "big C" creativity (Brinkman, 2010; Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009; Sawyer, 2012). "Little c" creativity (or "everyday" or

"ordinary" creativity) refers to creative efforts that are small, such as a short, improvised melody, or a new 4-chord harmonic progression, that is new to the individual, but not new to or impactful on society (Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009; Sawyer, 2012). "Big C" creativity (which is inherent in the traditional conception of musical creativity), refers to creative efforts that change a field (Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009; Sawyer, 2012). Brinkman (2010) describes "big C" creators in music as "those composers that are icons in our study of music" (p. 48) such as Beethoven and Mozart.

Understanding the various tiers of creative efforts is important for creative identity construction as it allows one to envision being creative (Brinkman, 2010). As aforementioned, musicians who only understand creativity from a "big C" perspective "tend to be intimidated by the inevitable comparisons with Beethoven, Stravinsky, or Bach" (Brinkman, 2010, p. 48). Knowledge of the tiers of creative works also makes way for one to count or value their creative efforts, even when their efforts are small. Importantly, every small creative episode builds a creative identity (Culpepper, 2018). Additionally, as Sawyer (2012) articulates, creative works that reflect "big C" creativity have first passed through the other tiers of creativity (e.g. "little c" creativity).

Odena and Welch (2009) state that despite advances in thinking on creativity, the traditional conception of musical creativity persists. If private piano teachers subscribe to the traditional conception of creativity, they may see small creative efforts such as improvising using only two notes, as insignificant or uncreative. In turn, private piano teachers might not see themselves as creative which denies them the opportunity to form a creative identity.

3.3.2 Beliefs About Who and Who Cannot Create Music

Due to the demise of improvisation within the western classical tradition, creative music-making has come to be viewed as an activity exclusive to those who specialise in jazz or popular music (Cantan, 2020; Woosley, 2012). Exclusively associating creativity with particular personal profiles, such as "jazz" or "popular" musicians, denies the construction of creative identity for those who do not play these types of music (Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014). As outlined above in the historical overview of identities in music, the demise of creativity from the teaching, learning, and performing of western classical music was the result of advances in technology (i.e. the lithograph and the piano) that shifted music teaching, learning, and performing culture. The notion that creativity is the domain only of certain music or types of musicians, therefore, is not correct, but is perhaps reinforced by creative music-making being predominately explored in these musical genres and not in classical music. Additionally, I argue that promoting understanding of what it means to be creative in music as discussed above would assist musicians to see that the ability to create is not exclusive to a particular musical genre or style.

3.3.3 The Value Placed on Creativity as a Construct

Creative identity is tied to the value one places on musical creativity, including creative musicianship areas, composing and improvising music, and popular music listening and performing (Hagstrom, 2005; Jaussi, Randel & Dionne, 2007; Plucker & Makel, 2010; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Randles & Muhonen, 2015; Randles & Tan, 2019). It extends to include one's willingness to leave a prescribed lesson plan to explore a

student's creative musical ideas and listening to students' creative musical works (Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Randles & Muhonen, 2015; Randles & Tan, 2019).

As outlined in the historical overview, creative engagement is valued in multiple ways. The value placed upon creativity within a culture often mediates the extent to which one will receive opportunities to engage in creative music-making. Opportunities to engage in creative music-making is an inextricable part of creative identity formation given that the development of creative identities is mediated by one's hands-on experiences of performing that creative identity (Hallam, 2017; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014; Hagstrom, 2005; Jaussi et al., 2007; Randles, 2009). For example, the value placed on musical creativity within formal learning environments such as musical institutions (e.g. schools and universities) can influence the extent to which opportunities for creative activities are included within their curricula (Hargreaves et al., 2002, 2017; Lamont, 2002). Formal learning environments powerfully reinforce musical identities through the types of musical skills and activities that they include within their curriculum (Hargreaves et al., 2002. 2017; Lamont, 2002). Randles and Smith (2012) found: "Based on what was valued in their music education experience, students formed identities as musicians that did or did not include being a music creator as a part of the school music program" (p. 183). This is due to the socialisation process (Randles & Smith, 2012)—the process by which an individual unintentionally internalises the values, beliefs, behaviours, and skills of a social group without necessarily knowing that they have done so (Creech et al., 2020b). Randles and Smith (2012) (see also Campbell, 2010) conclude that one's identity as a creator of music

is largely influenced by the socialisation process, particularly during the primary and secondary schooling years. They argue that “the teacher’s role in the process of sociali[z]ation is to model what is important in the teaching and learning of music” (p. 183).

Considering the above, depending on the musical activities that receive the most focus, individuals can be socialised to see themselves a specific way in music. If performance-based skills (e.g. music reading and technique) and performance activities (e.g. performing repertoire) are the focus of the tuition, individuals can be socialised to see themselves as “performers” of music. On the other hand, if creative based skills (e.g. aural perception of sound, knowledge of music theory, aesthetic sensitivity, technique) (Green, 2019; Katz & Gardner, 2012; Webster, 1990) and creative activities (e.g. improvising and composing) are the focus of tuition, individuals can be socialised to see themselves as “creators” of music (Randles & Smith, 2012). My own private piano learning experiences as presented in the Prologue ring true to these arguments. Additionally, the time spent on music activities that teachers like and value positively influence students’ preferences of this activity, too (Vincente-Nicolás & Mac Ruairc, 2014).

Importantly, the socialisation process can affect one’s confidence in their abilities to create music, their level of comfortability in teaching creative music-making, and their plan to foster students’ creative music-making in their teaching practice (Randles & Smith, 2012). Randles and Smith (2012) argue that if one has not been socialised to see themselves as a creative music-maker, including having not received instruction in creative music-making:

> They feel less confident about their abilities to compose music, they feel less comfortable teaching composition, and they plan on 'teaching students to compose/improvise their own original music when [they] get a job as a music teacher' to a lesser extent [than others who have]. (p. 183)

3.3.4 Social Interactions

Identities in music are developed in response to feedback received from interactions with others (Hallam, 2017). Interactions include those between, for example, the individual and teachers, family members, peers, and friends (Hallam, 2017). Social interactions can have a large effect on one's self-esteem (Hargreaves et al., 2002). As noted above, self-esteem can influence the development of an identity in music (Hallam, 2017; Hargreaves et al., 2002). Research has shown that lower levels of self-esteem are particularly apparent when others comment directly on an individual's abilities and general behaviour. Hargreaves et al. (2002) further explain:

> Such judgments are particularly influential when they are made by significant others—for a child, this would mean parents and siblings primarily, but could also include teachers. Family and school contexts can therefore be crucially important for a child's developing sense of self and particularly for their self-esteem (p. 8; see also Borthwick & Davidson, 2002).

Of particular importance for current purposes is the role of social affirmation in creative identity construction.

3.3.5 Social Affirmation

Social affirmation—noticing and acknowledging or affirming one's creative abilities—is paramount to the formation of one's creative identity (Culpepper, 2018; Hallam, 2017; Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017). Moeran (2014) makes the case: "If there is a single overriding theme in

creative people's discussions of their work, it is the role played by other people, specifically by social connections, in the numerous projects that plot their careers" (p. 51). Social affirmation can come from a variety of people including family members, peers, mentors, causal contacts on social media platforms, and successors (Culpepper, 2018; Hallam, 2017; Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017). It can even extend to include the general public (Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017). Public reception helps to build creative identity as it "comprises not only expressions of respect and acknowledgement, but also feedback about how significant one's work is to other people. Experiencing the product's impact shapes the sense of identity and meaningfulness of creative endeavours" (Lebuda & Csikszentmihayli, 2017, p. 226).

Lebuda and Csikszentmihalyi (2017) found that positive appraisal from specific social actors during specific life stages are strongly influential on the development of an individual's creative identity. Positive appraisal can inform ongoing creative efforts which in turn, continue to build creative identity (Culpepper, 2018). At the beginning of one's journey, relationships with and affirmation from role models or mentors such as experienced representatives of the field are particularly important to creative identity formation (Getzels & Csikszentmihalyi, 1976, as cited in Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017). The relationship can manifest in the form of direct communication with the mentor or the mentor's interest in the individual's creative efforts (Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017). Positive appraisal of one's creative abilities from significant persons who are authorities in the domain signifies that one is a "promising" artist (Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017, p. 225). Lebuda and Csikszentmihalyi (2017) found

that teachers' acknowledgement of an individual's creative abilities is a valued source as it helps spark students' interests alongside leading students to persist with and develop their interests. Mentors can also facilitate relationships with other important authorities in the field and introduce the individual to the "unwritten rules of the domain" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996, p. 185).

The influence of esteem (i.e. feeling accepted, approved, and acknowledged) and the opinions among one's social group for building creative identity increases over time (Lebdua & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017; Stuhr, 2006 as cited in Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017; Gruber & Wallace, 1989). Stuhr (2006, as cited in Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017) summarises his experience:

> It is not good reviews, not prizes for the young and talented, and not autographs that are important, but the approval of the community, encouragement from directors, not letting them down as an artist and – which is probably the most important – as a person, as a partner in the creative process. (p. 187)

One's social group is considered a "reference group" (Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017). At the time when esteem from one's social group becomes paramount in creative identity development, creators tend to emphasise their social identity more—"their being part of a particular artistic movement or school of thought" (Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017, p. 229)—above their individual identity.

In later adulthood, affirmation from successors such as students and proteges comes to the forefront in building identity (Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017). Lebuda and Csikszentmihalyi (2017) explain: "Their [successors'] will to collaborate or learn together is proof of the

relevance of one's resources and mastery in the domain" (p. 226). Confirmation from successors motivates one to continue to engage in creative endeavours (Stuhr, 2000, as cited in Lebuda & Csikszentmihayli, 2017).

3.4 Educational Environment

Much research and discussion has been dedicated to identifying the conditions of formal educational environments that promote creative identity formation (NACCCE, 1999; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004). I posit, however, that given that every social context presents an opportunity for one to learn and develop their creative identities (Culpepper, 2018; Hallam, 2017), these principles can be applied to any social environment, including the home, the workplace, and places where friends meet (Culpepper, 2018). The following section discusses educational environment conditions that promote creative identity formation.

3.4.1 Creative Teaching

Authors have made the distinction between *teaching creatively* and *teaching for creativity* (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; NACCCE, 1999). The former is defined as using imaginative or innovative approaches to teaching, including the development of new teaching and learning materials, ways of explaining existing concepts, and approaches to tasks (Brinkman, 2010; Ewing & Gibson, 2015; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; NACCCE, 1999; Rinkevich, 2011; Topham, 2020). This form of teaching is designed to make learning more interesting and effective for students, and teaching more interesting for teachers (Brinkman, 2010; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; NACCCE, 1999; Topham, 2020). Creative teachers are known to possess traits associated

with creative individuals such as a sense of humour and having a wide range of interests (Brinkman, 2010). In addition to being a means to inspiring students' creativity, teaching creatively is concerned with effective teaching and learning (Jeffrey & Craft, 2001, as cited in Jeffrey & Craft, 2004). Brinkman (2010) asserts that the creative teacher is one who "can inspire, motivate, and develop students that can function at various levels of engagement in the multiple roles that musicians have, including performing, listener, critic, composer, director, conductor, improviser, and producer" (p. 48).

Teaching creatively encourages "hands-on" learning (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; NACCCE, 1999). This type of learning (alternatively termed as experiential learning (Dewey, 1938)) involves students practically engaging with rather than reading about material (Dewey, 1938; Fosnot & Perry, 1996; Webster, 2016). According to the constructivist theory of knowledge and learning, students learn best in this way (Dewey, 1938; Fosnot & Perry, 1996). Teaching creatively also makes learning experiences relevant to the student. Learning experiences include the design of the overall curriculum, learning strategies, tasks, materials, methods, and assessment pieces for the student (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004). Teachers do this by tapping into students' personal interests and experiences (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; NACCCE, 1999). Wiggins (1999) argues that prescriptive creative activities—for example, asking pupils to compose or improvise on three notes or create a piece that uses a specific rhythmic pattern—that are not made relevant to students' lives, in fact hamper creative expression. This is because they "can cause students to focus on extramusical, nonexpressive aspects of a project" (p. 31).

One's interests include their musical (such as musical preferences (Hallam, 2017)) and non-musical interests (Katz, 2016; Katz & Gardner, 2012). Katz (2016) found that composers "draw heavily from non-musical content domains to which each composer had been attracted long before they began composing" (p. 177). This can include domains such as photographs, paintings, animals, the weather, and sculptures (Katz, 2016; Katz & Gardner, 2012). Like composers, piano students (encouraged by their teachers) can also draw on such extra-musical sources to build a wealth of knowledge and experience to fuel creativity and inspiration. Considering the above, inspiration from people and places has some bearing on creative identity formation in the way that it can fuel one's ideas and projects to come (Culpepper, 2018).

Shaping learning experiences around students' interests leads to several benefits. It motivates learning as it taps into their intrinsic motivation—the type of motivation that typically fuels creative engagement (Amabile, 2012). Intrinsic motivation is described as "passion: the motivation to undertake a task or solve a problem because it is interesting, involving, personally challenging, or satisfying" (Amabile, 2012, Task motivation section, para. 1). It is different to extrinsic motivation, where one may perform a task to gain a reward, such as acknowledgement or affirmation (Amabile, 2012). Importantly, the activities in life that one finds inspiring and interesting, and that bring them joy and fulfilment, are often connected with their creative strengths (NACCCE, 1999). Researchers acknowledge that we all have creative strengths or talents in particular fields or activities (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; NACCCE, 1999). Individuals experience higher levels of performance when working in the areas of their

talents (NACCCE 1999). Indeed, the NACCCE (1999) argues that the whole process of education needs to connect people with their talents.

Shaping learning experiences around students' interests also leads to ownership of knowledge as students' learning is directly related to their 'interests at hand' (Pollard, 2004). Additionally, it can result in innovative responses (i.e. creative products) given that these are facets unique to each student (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; Lin, 2011). Drawing on these facets of each student is therefore a way to "personalise the piece" (Faber, 2013. p. 33). It can also lead to an emotion reaction. As Faber (2013) recommends: "A story, a colourful analogy, or reference to something in the student's own life is an easy and effective way to elicit an emotional reaction" (p. 33). The above bears witness to the fact that if given the opportunity, individuals can bring in the totality of their life experiences when engaged in the creative musical process. Creative endeavours undoubtedly become more personal and meaningful to the creator when connected to their everyday lives (Katz & Gardner, 2012). Importantly, contemporary music philosophers argue that the value of music education ought to be more strongly anchored in learners' experiences, namely experiences which contain personal desires and interest (Allsup & Westerlund, 2012; Regelski, 2008; Westerlund, 2008). Such experiences may lead to a life-long interest in learning music (Westerlund, 2008).

The above also demonstrates that the creative process involves our whole selves, including our mind (i.e. theoretical knowledge, creative thinking), body (i.e. aural perception of sound, instrumental technique), and soul (i.e. interests, personality). Bearing this in mind, I argue that although musical creativity is a thought process and we are to better understand how

the mind works in these matters (Webster, 2002), it is a “whole self” project and we should strive to understand how the whole self works in the creative process. Additionally, the extensive and diverse repertoire of tools needed for creative music-making reinforces that conceptualising musical creativity as improvising and composing music is inadequate for capturing the complexity and richness of the creative process.

Teaching creatively is inherent in teaching for creativity (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004). Moreover, it often leads to this form of teaching (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004). Teaching for creativity is conceptualised as forms of teaching designed to develop learners’ creative thinking and behaviour (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; NACCCE, 1999). It is concerned with learner empowerment (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004). Principles inherent in this style of teaching (NACCCE, 1999, p. 90) are:

- encouraging young people to believe or have confidence in their creative potential,
- identifying young people’s creative abilities or strengths, and
- nurturing common capacities and sensitives of creativity including risk-taking, resilience, and curiosity, becoming more knowledgeable about the creative process to foster creative development and production, and providing opportunities to be creative.

Teachers teach for creativity by first making learning relevant to students (i.e. teaching creatively) (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004). They then encourage “possibility thinking” (Craft, 2002) regarding the task at hand. Possibility thinking involves problem finding and problem solving,

including posing questions, exploring possibilities, and identifying problems and issues (Cremin et al., 2006; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004). Craft (2000) argues that possibility thinking is centred on posing, in multiple ways, the question 'what if?' It involves shifting from 'what is this and what does it do?' to 'what can I do with this?'. Cremin et al. (2006) add that possibility thinking is imagining what might be. Questions that can stimulate this type of thinking include: "Imagine how the composer might have changed the ending to sound more tentative. How could this be done?" and "Can you think of another accompaniment pattern for that melody? Play it for me." (Webster, 1990, p. 23). Students generate many possibilities during times of possibility thinking, both affirming and contradictory (Fosnot & Perry, 1996).

Creative music-making activities are vehicles for possibility thinking as they are hands-on, open-ended activities that encourage student experimentation and exploration of new territory (Baumgartner, 2019). Importantly, as noted in the historical review, experimenting with the rules of music, such as melody and harmony, in the context of passage work, resulted in the generation of students' own musical ideas (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; Gellrich & Sundin, 1993). Moreover, students' own musical ideas (that arose through experimentation), such as new melodic and harmonic figures, were established as new rules and were added to the craft (Gellrich & Sundin, 1993). This led to the development of music (Gellrich & Sundin, 1993). The process of experimentation therefore, is crucial to the development of any field.

Wiggins and Espeland (2012) identify four critical issues in planning creative activities that require attention:

- Creative efforts require *time* (see also Baer & Kaufman, 2017; Brinkman, 2010; Culpepper, 2018; Webster, 1990). Time is needed to work through the protracted creative process (Baer & Kaufman, 2017; Webster, 1990) such as to "conceive ideas, share them with peers, make decisions about how they will be merged into a collaborative work, and bring the work into some cohesive form that can be shared publicly" (Wiggins & Espeland, 2012, pp. 347-348). Importantly, time is also needed to develop enabling craft skills.
- Preliminary *groundwork* (Wiggins, 2009) needs to be made—that is, students need to understand the parameters of the task.
- *Artful teacher scaffolding* is required. Once the appropriate ground work has been laid, teachers need to step out of the way and give students space to think and work. During this process, the teacher is more of a coach who stands on the sideline and intervenes only when required (Webster, 2016). This speaks to the teacher's facilitator style (Creech et al., 2020b). The facilitator ought to therefore have extensive and insightful awareness of the musical and learning processes involved in a creative task.
- It requires the provision of ample opportunity for *peer scaffolding* or peer interactions where students can learn from their common or similar experiences and understandings.

The above demonstrates that teaching for creativity is an art in itself. As Brinkman (2010) states: "We know that a good teacher must combine musical artistry with the artistry of teaching" (p. 48).

In reference to the last critical issue identified by Wiggins and

Espeland (2012) (i.e. peer scaffolding), beyond one-to-one lesson formats in the piano studio, collaborative or social learning models are also being used to foster students' creativity. This is underpinned by the theory of social constructivism that emphasises learning as taking place through interactions with other people (Fosnot & Perry, 1996). As social beings, when we are with others, we ask questions, brainstorm and defend ideas, and elaborate our thoughts (Fosnot & Perry, 1996). Students also value highly the opportunity to learn from peers (Forbes, 2020; Wiggins & Espeland, 2012). Randles contests that "it may be important to reali[z]e that student identity growth resulting from peer influence can be more powerful than a teacher's personal modelling" (2010, p. 3). Teachers within the tertiary sector have embraced group teaching and collaborative models as a part of their teaching practice (Daniel, 2005; Forbes, 2016, 2020).

Bearing the above in mind, teaching creatively also refers to the teacher's ability to be flexible and adaptive, improvising in the moment to respond to students' individual needs (Brinkman, 2010; Forbes, 2016; Sawyer, 2004). Sawyer (2004) argues that creative teaching from this perspective would be better conceptualised as "improvisational performance" (p. 12; see also Forbes, 2016). Sawyer (2004) further explains:

> Conceiving of teaching as improvisation emphasi[z]es the interactional and responsive creativity of a teacher working together with a unique group of students. In particular, effective classroom discussion is improvisational, because the flow of the class is unpredictable and emerges from the actions of all participants, both teachers and students. (pp. 12-13)

Improvisation performance, however, is disciplined as it is enacted within the plans and goals teachers and students have for each lesson. In this way,

disciplined improvisation is “a dynamic process involving a combination of planning and improvisation” (Brown & Edelson, 2001, as cited in Sawyer, 2004). Creative teaching in this light also demonstrates that teachers not only have “pedagogical content knowledge but also creative performance skills—the ability to effectively facilitate a group improvisation with students” (Sawyer, 2004, p. 17).

3.4.2 Role Models

The presence of role models in any educational environment is paramount to creative identity formation because “young people’s creative abilities are most likely to be developed in an atmosphere in which the teacher’s creative abilities are properly engaged” (NACCCE, 1999, p. 103). Creative role models are those who model creative behaviour such as risk-taking, enthusiasm, playfulness, use of the imagination, and divergent thinking, and who display their creative talents such as improvisation and composition abilities (Brinkman, 2010; Cropley, 2001; Hickey & Webster, 2001; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; Lin, 2011; Riga & Chronopoulou, 2014). Role models, among others, may be teachers (NACCCE, 1999) and family members (Culpepper, 2018). Teachers are particularly important because of the transfer of identity from music teacher to music student (Randles, 2010). As Randles (2010) argues: “Important, and perhaps essential, is the influence of the teacher as a role model of the kind of musician that she desires her students to become” (p. 2). He continues: “The music teacher can consciously strive to model what a musician is, if the students are to learn to develop their own musical identity from the teacher’s example (p. 3).”

The absence of teachers as creative role models for students who have learned within the western classical tradition (post 18th century) suggests that their access to musical possible selves as creative has been constrained. This is important to note given that possible selves are a motivational force—they provide one with a sense of direction in regard to the ways they aim to develop as a musician (Hallam, 2017; Markus & Nurius, 1986). Creative role models are therefore important to creative identity development as they can provide creative types of aspirational possible selves.

Brinkman (2010) posits several ways in which teachers can model creative behaviour:

> We can teach and model techniques for generating ideas, for being sensitive to personality traits that might encourage creative expression and risk-taking in their work…. We know that 'incubation' is a part of the creative process. We can structure teaching and creative situations so that the student will understand to the value of letting an idea simmer. (p. 48)

Modelling creative behaviour (in the various ways outlined above) is important to creative identity formation as learners model themselves on their teacher's approach (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004).

3.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the socio-cultural conditions identified in the literature which promote creative musical identities. The socio-cultural lens of creative identity formation forms the conceptual framework for exploring and interpreting participants' experiences of the construction of their creative identities as musicians and the ways in which creative identities influence their private piano teaching practices. The following chapter

discusses why and how narrative inquiry methodology was used to explore participants' experiences of creative identity construction.

CHAPTER 4. COMING TO NARRATIVE INQUIRY

The previous chapter outlined the results of my examination of the literature. This enabled me to build an understanding of the history and evolution of private piano teaching and learning, and to examine my chosen theoretical lens, namely creative identity formation from a sociocultural perspective. The review of the literature demonstrated that since the dawn of the piano itself, the role of the piano teacher—and the role of creativity within the learning and teaching and playing of piano—has changed in response to various factors. In a similar vein, for piano teachers in the private studio, identity formation is an ongoing and reflexive process, and from a sociocultural perspective, is influenced by numerous factors (Hallam, 2017).

This chapter discusses the methodology underpinning this inquiry, namely narrative inquiry methodology. With its emphasis on in-depth examination of human experience, I chose narrative inquiry as the appropriate research methodology for this study. The chapter begins by outlining the epistemological and ontological positions that underpin this inquiry. I then provide an overview of narrative inquiry, outlining the three different ways in which narrative is viewed within the methodology. I describe the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space. The chapter then explains the ways in which narrative inquiry is a relational methodology. The chapter concludes with narrative inquiry as resonant work which provides a credibility framework through which to assess the quality of the narrative inquiry. Throughout this thesis the terms "inquirer" and "researcher" are used interchangeably.

4.1 The Inquirer's Stance

Narrative researchers are required to "reflect upon their inquiry dispositions and the set of values and beliefs that are brought to the inquiry process" (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b, p. 10). This specifically refers to identifying and interrogating the ontological and epistemological stance that I bring to this inquiry in my search for new knowledge (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b; Schwandt, 2007). I approach this inquiry through the lenses of social constructionist epistemology and interpretivist ontology. My epistemological and ontological stance are typical of narrative inquiry research (Crotty, 1998). The following section will outline the assumptions that belong to constructionism epistemology and interpretivist ontology.

4.1.1 Constructionism

This inquiry is based on the epistemological stance of constructionism or more specifically, social constructionism. Constructionist inquirers see that human beings desire to understand the world in which they live and work (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In an individual's attempt to make sense of, or interpret their experiences in the world, they build meaningful knowledge constructions or cognitive structures (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Schwandt, 2007). Among other constructions, an individual's knowledge constructions include their ideas, such as conceptions, beliefs, theories, and attitudes, and their truth and reality (Schwandt, 2007). The current inquiry will explore participant's constructions or ideas regarding their identity as a creative musician.

Social constructionist inquirers see knowledge and meaning as socially constructed (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Crotty, 1998; Schwandt,

2007). They understand that an individual develops knowledge of the world in which they live in a social context, meaning through their social interactions and social and cultural norms that operate in their lives (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Crotty, 1998). Individuals do not construct meaning in isolation, but, as Crotty (1998) articulates: "We are all born into a world of meaning…. For each of us, when we first see the world in meaningful fashion, we are inevitably viewing it through lenses bestowed upon us by our culture" (p. 54; see also Schwandt, 2007). From this perspective, an individual's knowledge constructions are "viewed as social artefacts, and are therefore seen as social, cultural, moral, ideological and political" (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 30).

People develop subjective meaning of their experiences or make sense of reality in different ways (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Crotty, 1998). To account for a research participant's subjective meaning, the social constructionist inquirer does not adhere to the belief that there is one objective truth. Rather, they believe that multiple versions of reality exist, even within the individual (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Within the context of narrative inquiry, for example, findings are similarly not defined by exactitudes (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). Rather, as with social constructionist inquiry, the social constructionist inquirer embraces tensions, contradictions, and hesitations and invites "conspiratorial conversations" (Barone, 2000, 2008, as cited in Stauffer & Barrett, 2009, p. 20; see also Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). Conspiratorial conversations are those that aim at "resisting those master stories that dominate current socio-political discourse about education, the arts, and the people involved in education and the arts" (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009, p. 20). Within the field of music

education and education more broadly, these conspiratorial conversations act positively to challenge and potentially bring change and improvement to mainstream education, the arts, and the people involved (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2017).

During the inquiry process, the social constructionist inquirer seeks to be aware of the specific social contexts in which participants live and work (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This is to understand the historical and cultural backdrop of participants' life experiences and to ensure that they are producing knowledge that is reflective of participants' realities (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Lincoln et al., 2011). In the context of this inquiry, as will be explained in the following chapter, I will remain attentive to the social contexts that have influenced the construction of each participant's creative identity as a musician.

According to the constructionist theory, meaning-making is a conscious or active process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Crotty, 1998; Schwandt, 2007). Knowing is not passive—a simple imprinting on one's mind—or inherent in an object, merely waiting for someone to come upon it and discover it (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Crotty, 1998; Schwandt, 2007). Rather, the constructionist theory adheres to the belief that meaning emerges only when the individual's consciousness engages with the object or experience (Crotty, 1998). Schwandt (1994) puts it succinctly stating: "knowledge and truth are created, not discovered by the mind" (p. 236).

4.1.2 Interpretivism

Interpretivism is a philosophical worldview that aims to understand and interpret the subjective meaning individuals construct from their

experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Lincoln et al., 2011; Schwandt, 2007; Silverman, 2006). Like qualitative inquiry in general, interpretivist research seeks to “discover and to describe narratively what particular people do in their everyday lives and what their actions mean to them” (Erickson, 2017, p. 36). Schwandt (2007) articulates that the term interpretivism denotes an approach to inquiry that assumes that “the meaning of human action is inherent in that action, and that the task of the inquirer is to unearth that meaning” (p. 160). The interpretivist approach was birthed out of the philosophical thoughts of German social philosopher Wihlem Dilthey (1833–1911). Dilthey argues that the purpose of inquiry in the human sciences (in contrast to the natural sciences), is understanding (verstehen) rather than the discovery of generalisable laws that can lead to prediction and control (Crotty, 1998; Schwandt, 2007).

Interpretivism is predicated on a variety of assumptions. Inquiry is sparked by the need to explore a social or human problem, or a certain phenomenon that has been collectively experienced by all participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In the context of this inquiry, the specific phenomenon explored is how private piano teachers have experienced the construction of their creative identities as musicians and how their creative identity has come to influence their private piano teaching practice. The interpretivist ontology allows for an inductive approach to inquiry and the collection of multiple sources of both empirical and qualitative data (data based on observation and experience) (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). Empirical and qualitative methods include interviews, journals, and observations (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2017; Schwandt, 2007). These methods

are characterised by “soft data,” such as the words of inquiry participants (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Schwandt, 2007).

Interpretivist inquirers adopt a naturalistic approach to conducting research, meaning that they collect data and/or study participants in their natural settings rather than in contrived settings (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Rather than using a wide-angled lens or taking a panoramic shot of the problem under investigation, the interpretivist inquirer pays attention to the intricacies of meaning, the variability, the fine details, and the nuance of individual human experience (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). The inquirer then presents a rich description of the participant’s world (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2017; Schwandt, 2007). To allow for the in-depth analysis of participants’ meaning of the phenomenon, the interpretivist researcher chooses few cases with many variables (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Like all qualitative inquiry, the interpretivist inquirer is a key instrument in the inquiry process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The researcher uses their past experiences to inform the interpretation of the findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Interpretivist inquirers therefore, in contrast to positivist researchers, do not present their findings as objective truth or reality (Crotty, 1998; Flinders & Richardson, 2002). Rather, they offer their findings as their own unique interpretation of the data based upon their own personal, cultural, and historical experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). Inquirer reflexivity therefore is characteristic of interpretivist research (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This is not to advance the inquirer’s own biases and

values, but to acknowledge how the inquirer's own background shapes the direction of the study (Creswell, 2014). The subjectivity that the inquirer brings to the research is seen as a strength rather than a weakness (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

4.2 Overview of Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry methodology emerged from a turn in social science research around the 1960s away from a focus on proof and prediction towards gaining an understanding of human experience (Crotty, 1998). It also emerged when storied narrative became a legitimate form of reasoned knowledge rather than mere poetic discourse and emotive expression (Bruner, 1986; see also Polkinghorne, 1995). Brought forward by the work of Bruner (1986), narrative knowing (explained below) became accepted as a legitimate form of reasoned knowledge alongside paradigmatic knowing. Paradigmatic knowledge is considered knowledge that can be categorised as belonging to a specific category and is concerned with establishing universal truth conditions (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b; Polkinghorne, 1995). The narrative inquirer can use both narrative and paradigmatic cognition within the inquiry.

Situated within the social sciences, narrative inquirers study human experience in terms of actions and events, through individuals' lived and told stories (Bruner, 1990; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Polkinghorne, 1995). Narrative inquirers study individuals' experience in the world by "listening, observing, living alongside another, writing and interpreting texts" (Clandinin, 2006, p. 46). Within narrative inquiry, stories or narratives (the distinction between story and narrative will be made clear

below) are viewed in three distinct ways. Narratives are viewed as the phenomenon under investigation, the method or process of the inquiry, and the product of the inquiry (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006; Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b).

4.2.1 Narrative as the Phenomenon of Study

Narrative as the phenomenon under study refers to the relationship between humans and stories. It is predicated on three assumptions. The first assumption is that humans are naturally story-telling beings (Clandinin, 2006; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Polkinghorne, 1995). As stated above, story-telling is seen as an ordinary way in which a person communicates their life experiences or actions (Polkinghorne, 1995). Stories in this context are understood as "an account to self and others of people, places, and events and the relationships that hold between these elements" (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b, p. 7). During the story-telling process, people select details of their experience from their consciousness (Seidman, 2006). Stories are seen as "sequential" (Bruner, 1990), featuring plotline/s, character/s, setting/s, and action/s (Bal, 1997, as cited in Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b). Barrett and Stauffer (2009a) contend that we tell stories to connect with others, and we "find connection in and through stories" (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009a, p. 2). Connelly and Clandinin (1990) conclude that "the study of narrative, therefore, is the study of the ways humans experience the world" (p. 2).

Story-telling is also viewed as a mode of knowing (Bruner, 1990). Viewing narrative in this way demonstrates that narratives are not just "stories presented" but are a "form of and instrument for meaning-making."

Polkinghorne (1995) explains:

> While paradigmatic knowledge is maintained in individual words that name a concept, narrative knowledge is maintained in emplotted stories. Storied memories retain the complexity of the situation in which an action was undertaken and the emotional and motivational meaning connected with it. (p. 11)

This perspective of humans as story-telling beings also shows that narrative inquiry is an appropriate methodological underpinning to explore identity construction. McAdams et al. (1997) explain: “Identity, therefore, may itself be viewed as an internali[z]ed and evolving life story, a way of telling the self, to the self and others, through a story or set of stories complete with settings, scenes, characters, plots, and themes” (p. 678). Through stories that take into account such influences, the complexity of creative identity construction can be revealed and appreciated.

The second notion underpinning narrative as the phenomenon under investigation is that humans by nature, individually and socially, lead storied lives (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2; see also Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 477; Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). Connelly and Clandinin (1990, 2006) explain: “People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are” (p. 477). Narrative inquirers understand that the stories that individuals live by are shaped by larger social, cultural, and institutional narratives that have been or are at work in their lives (Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). King (2003, as cited in Clandinin, 2006) explains: “We are living stories planted in us early or along the way, or we are also living the stories we planted—knowingly or unknowingly—in ourselves” (p. 153).

Importantly, however, many individuals do not see the narrative

structures that shape their lives (Bruner, 2002). They are not aware of the stories they live by, or the narrative that shapes their everyday actions. Bruner (2000) comments that the key concern that prevents people from seeing the narrative structures that characterise their lives is: “They don’t look, don’t pause to look” (p. 8). Clandinin (2006), in response to Bruner’s remarks, posits: “Perhaps this is a reason we can give for engaging with others in narrative inquiry, that is, so we can, by slowing down lives, pause and look to see the narrative structures that characteri[z]e ours’ and others’ lives” (51). Drawing on Clandinin’s suggestion, this research gives participants a moment to pause to uncover the narratives, both those that liberate them alongside those that oppress them, that may be operating in the background shaping their lives and their everyday musical actions.

This reason for narrative inquiry—"pausing to look”—resonates with me as both musician and researcher. In my own experience, I chose to embrace story-telling as a way of understanding and making sense of my own musical experiences and the construction of my creative identity as a musician. I essentially became a participant in my own inquiry. Working within Clandinin and Connelly’s (2000) three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (explored in more detail below), I travelled back through my own music learning journey to articulate experiences that promoted, denied, or made problematic the construction of my creative identity as a musician. Informed by my reading on creative identity formation and creativity in general, I was able to articulate the narrative structures of those experiences. Additionally, I was able to see how these narrative structures shaped my everyday musical actions.

The final assumption underpinning narrative as the phenomenon

under study is that humans use the stories they live by to interpret their past and make sense of their experiences (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). Connelly and Clandinin (2006) explain: “Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which his or her experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful” (p. 477). Although narrative inquirers collect participants’ lived or told stories (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006), their ultimate goal is to provide the means for participants to re-tell and re-live their life through new stories. Narrative inquirers desire to make way for participants involved in the inquiry to change the stories that they live by. As King suggests (2003, as cited in Clandinin, 2006): “If we change the stories we live by, quite possibly we change our lives” (p. 153). Connelly and Clandinin (2006) use the four terms—living, telling, retelling, reliving—to structure the process of self-narration. As outlined in the next section, the narrative inquiry process begins by participants living and/or telling their stories to the inquirer (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). The process proceeds, however, to involve participants having the opportunity to re-tell their stories, that is: “To interpret their lives as told in different ways, to imagine different possibilities” (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 478). From there, participants receive the chance to re-live their narratives. This task involves participants “reliving in terms of the new, retold, narrative…. to live out the new person” (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 478). The task of re-living—living out the new person—is viewed as the most difficult task of them all (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006).

In the context of this inquiry, viewing narrative as the phenomenon of study meant that I adopt the view that participants, due to their natural way

of being, will tell of their musical life experiences in storied form. As participants tell stories of their experiences, I will be cognisant of the narrative structures participants hold/held in regard to being musically creative. This is because these narrative structures influence/d participant's daily musical lives, namely their everyday musical actions. Additionally, participants' narrative structures make clear the lenses through which they interpret their past, present, and future experiences. During this process, I will be conscious of the larger social, cultural, and institutional narratives regarding musical creativity that had operated in participants' lives. It is these social, cultural, and institutional narratives that shape the stories participants live by.

4.2.2 Narrative as the Process of the Inquiry

Narrative as the process of inquiry refers to the methods used for the inquiry (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Narrative inquirers collect stories of peoples' lives, or more accurately termed, peoples' stories of experiences, and this forms part of the process of the inquiry (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, 2006; see also Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b). Connelly and Clandinin (2006) articulate that the narrative inquiry process begins with the living or with the telling of stories. The narrative inquirer, however, not only listens or observes participants living out or telling their stories, but exchanges their own stories (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990).

Narrative inquirers collect people's lived or told stories of experience using a variety of methods (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). Different field texts (or data) are generated dependent on the data collection method used (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). Participant observation is a common data

collection method involving observation of the individual living out their stories in their field or natural setting (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). In this context, the inquirer often takes field notes which become field texts. Interviewing is another common data collection method that involves participants telling aspects of their life (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, 2006; Mishler, 1986). In this context, interview transcripts are generated as field texts. Other forms of field texts produced from the living or telling of stories are field notes of the shared experience, journal records, conversations, and autobiographical writing (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, 2006; Polkinghorne, 1995). A detailed discussion of the methods used in this inquiry is presented in Chapter 5.

4.2.3 Narrative as the Product of the Inquiry

Narrative as the product of the inquiry refers to the final research text that is produced through the inquiry process (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006; Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b). During the collection of data and the generation of field texts, field texts are used to draft a narrative of each person's living (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, 2006). Narrative, in this context, refers to a narrative explanation of the phenomenon under investigation. Narrative inquirers "live alongside" participants throughout the entire inquiry process to co-construct the final research texts—participant's narratives of experience (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Clandinin, 2006). Narratives may be re-storied multiple times as the research proceeds (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). The narrative inquirer uses analytic procedures commonly used in narrative inquiry such as narrative analysis and critical event analysis to construct the final research texts (Polkinghorne, 1995; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). A detailed discussion of the analytic process used in this

inquiry is outlined in Chapter 5.

The co-construction process means that the narrative inquirer moves beyond the simple “telling” of stories. The co-constructed narratives reflect that the inquirer is not the scribe of others’ experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 1990). Rather, they are a “story-teller” and “story-liver” alongside research participants (Clandinin & Connelly, 1990). The final research texts are a narrative explanation of the phenomenon being studied (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). They are interpretive, explanatory texts and not merely descriptions, but rather interpretations informed by the researcher’s knowledge and analytical skills (Clandinin, 2006; Polkinghorne, 1995).

In summary, within the field of narrative inquiry, narratives are viewed variously (and sometimes confusingly for the unititated!) as the phenomenon under investigation, the process of the inquiry, and the product of the inquiry. Narrative as phenomenon is predicated on the assumptions that: (1) people are naturally story-telling beings; (2) people lead storied lives; and (3) people make sense of their experiences in relation to the stories that they live by. Narrative as process refers to the methods used during the inquiry process, which primarily involves the inquirer collecting participants’ stories using various methods. Data collection methods generate a variety of field texts from field notes to interview transcripts. Narrative as product refers to the final research text which is produced through the inquiry process. The final research text is a narrative co-constructed between the researcher and participants that explains participant’s experiences.

4.3 The Three-Dimensional Narrative Inquiry Space

As outlined earlier in this chapter, narrative inquirers, like other interpretivist researchers, study human experience (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Lincoln et al., 2011; Schwandt, 2007; Silverman, 2006). A narrative inquirer's view of experience is underpinned by John Dewey's (1938) pragmatic philosophy of experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin, 2006). Dewey's (1938) philosophy of experience views every human experience as resting on the principles of continuity, interaction, and setting. Based on Dewey's theory of experience, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) developed a metaphorical three-dimensional narrative inquiry space. They refer to these three dimensions as the "commonplaces" of temporality, sociality, and place. Each dimension is viewed as a key factor within each person's life narrative.

From the beginning to end, therefore, the narrative inquirer is conscious of and considers the commonplaces of: (1) temporality, mirroring Dewey's principle of continuity; (2) sociality, reflecting Dewey's principle of interaction; and (3) place, reflecting Dewey's notion of setting. The following section will outline these commonplaces in more detail.

4.3.1 The Principle of Temporality - Continuity

The principle of temporality - continuity proposes that each experience, wholly independent of desire or intent, lives on in further experiences (Dewey, 1938; see also Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Dewey (1938) explains: "Every experience both takes up something from those which have gone before and modifies in some way the quality of those which come after" (p. 35). Similarly, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) summarise the principle of temporality saying: "Experiences grow out of

other experiences, and experiences lead to further experiences" (p. 2). The principle of temporality reflects the longitudinal and lateral aspects inherent in every experience (Dewey, 1938).

Based on the criteria of temporality, a positive experience may result in a positive enduring change in the way a human responds to future experiences (Dewey, 1938). On the other hand, a negative experience may result in a negative enduring change (Dewey, 1938). This way of understanding the temporality of experience reflects Dewey's (1938) contention that what a person "has learned in the way of knowledge and skill in one situation becomes an instrument of understanding and dealing effectively with the situations that follow" (p. 44).

4.3.2 The Principle of Sociality - Interaction

Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) regard the principle of sociality – interaction as pointing "toward the simultaneous concern with both personal and social conditions" (p. 69). They contend: "Stories are the result of a confluence of social influences on a person's inner life, social influences on their environment, and their unique personal history" (p. 41). The principle of sociality captures the truth that we do not exist within a void; rather, we live in social and cultural contexts. Dewey (1938) posits that we live in interaction with our environment, and that environment includes specific people in specific situations. Drawing on Dewey's criterion of interaction, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) write: "People are individuals and need to be understood as such, but they cannot be understood only as individuals. They are always in relation, always in a social context" (p. 2). Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) add that while the starting point for a narrative inquiry is an

individual's experience, it is also "an exploration of the social, cultural and institutional narratives within which individual's experiences were constituted, shaped, expressed and enacted" (p. 42). Similarly, Baddeley and Singer (2007) make the point: "Narrative research documents how parents, peers, and intimate partners in combination with societal scripts and templates guide individuals' life stories in certain normative directions" (p. 178). They also state: "Cultural scripts influence not just the way we live our lives but also the ways that we remember and feel about our past" (p. 183).

4.3.3 The Principle of Place - Setting

The principle of place – setting refers, in fact, to two places. First, place relates to where the inquiry takes place (Clandinin & Caine, 2013; Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). Within the context of narrative inquiry, this is referred to as the "relational space" (Clandinin & Caine, 2013, p. 171). It is within the relational space that the inquirer either listens to participants' stories or observes participants living out and telling their stories (Clandinin & Caine, 2013; Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). As will be outlined in Chapter 5, the relational space is commonly called the field in narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). Second, place refers to where an individual's episodes or events occur (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). Place in the second sense is the contextual backdrop or the physical boundaries of where a person's experiences occur (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). Connelly and Clandinin (1990) refer to place as the "place where the action occurs, where characters are formed and live out their stories and where cultural and social context play constraining and enabling roles" (p. 8).

The impact of places on people's lived and told experiences is crucial. This is because places can evoke different feelings for people. As Basso (1996, as cited in Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007) writes:

> As places animate the ideas and feelings of persons who attend to these same ideas and feeling animate the places on which attention has been bestowed, and the movements of this process—inward toward facets of the self, outward toward aspects of the external work, alternately both together—cannot be known in advance. When places are actively sensed, the physical landscape become wedded to the landscape of the mind, to the roving imagination, and where the latter may lead is anybody's guess. (p. 107)

Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) conclude: "As an inquiry proceeds temporally, place may also change and narrative inquirers need to stay awake to how place shifts the unfolding stories of lives" (p. 70).

In summary, Dewey's conceptualisation of experience has come to form the metaphorical three-dimensional sphere of narrative inquiry—temporality (continuity), sociality (interaction), and place (setting)—developed by Clandinin and Connelly (2000). In the context of this inquiry, I work within this three-dimensional space to come to understand how private piano teachers have experienced the construction of their creative identities as musicians and the ways in which this identity influences their private piano teaching practice.

With Dewey's conceptualisation of experience underpinning narrative inquiry methodology, it is ideally suited to the current research. As detailed in Chapters 2 and 3, identities are formed over time (Barrett 2017; Culpepper, 2018; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2015; Randles, 2009; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018) shaped by "place, culture, relationships, and social setting" (Barrett, 2017, p. 68; see also Baddeley & Singer, 2007; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014). Exploring the construction of

private piano teachers' creative identities therefore requires in-depth investigation of human experience. Narrative inquiry methodology, with its concern with the continuity between an individual's experiences (Dewey, 1938; see also Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), the personal and social conditions (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007), and the places where an individual's episodes or event occur (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007), therefore is the ideal methodological approach to explore this inquiry's aim and research questions.

4.4 A Relational Methodology

Narrative inquiry is distinguished as a relational or collaborative methodology (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b; Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Craig & Huber, 2007). This is based on the premise that the narrative inquirer not only uses the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space outlined above to understand participants' experiences, but enters into this matrix themselves (Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Clandinin (2006) explains:

> The idea of working within the three-dimension narrative inquiry space highlights the relational dimension of narrative inquiry. Narrative inquirers cannot bracket themselves out of the inquiry but rather need to find ways to inquire into participants' experiences, their own experiences as well as the co-constructed experiences developed through the relational inquiry process. This makes clear that, as narrative inquirers, inquirers, too, are part of the metaphorical parade (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998). They too live on the landscape and are complicit in the world they study. (p. 47)

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) similarly state:

> [Narrative inquiry is] a collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus. An inquirer enters this matrix in the midst and progresses in the same spirit, concluding the inquiry still in the midst of living and telling, reliving and retelling, the stories of the

> experiences that make up people's lives, both individual and social. (p. 20)

Narrative inquiry methodology is also defined as a relational methodology in the way that it is "shared relational work" between the inquirer/s and those being inquired (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b). The concept of shared relational work speaks directly to the role of the narrative inquirer within the research process. Rather than objectively listening to and standing outside of the lives of participants, the narrative inquirer "lives alongside participants" and becomes deeply involved in the research process (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b; Clandinin et al., 2010). The inquirer does this by inquiring into the stories shared by participants alongside interacting with participants by exchanging their own stories "through conversation and communion" (Bateson, 1984, p. 292-293, as cited in Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b). Clandinin et al. (2010) explain this process:

> As narrative inquirers, our lived and told stories are always in relation to or with those of our participants…. As narrative inquirers, we study the lives of participants as we come alongside them and become part of their lives and they part of ours. Therefore, our lives and who we are and are becoming on their and our landscapes is also under study. (p. 82)

Stauffer and Barrett (2009) describe the relationship process as "transactional—a negotiated quality among all parties that affects everyone and functions on multiple levels" (p. 21). It is the process of "getting to know" and "becoming known" to the other (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009, p. 21). Barrett and Stauffer (2009b) contend: "What distinguishes narrative inquiry is the way in which 'story' can operate as a 'relational' mode of constructing and presenting meaning" (p. 10). They add: "In this process, narrative inquiry becomes to varying degrees a study of self, of self alongside others, as well as of the inquiry participants and their experience

of the world” (p. 12).

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) argue that the fruitfulness of a narrative inquiry study is in fact predicated on the relationship formed between the researcher and participants. Clandinin and Connelly (1988) discuss the research relationship in the following way:

> We have shown how successful negotiation and the application of principles do not guarantee a fruitful study. The reason, of course, is that collaborative research constitutes a relationship. In everyday life, the idea of friendship implies a sharing, an interpenetration of two or more persons’ spheres of experience. Mere contact is acquaintanceship, not friendship. The same can be said for collaborative research which requires a close relationship akin to friendship. Relationships are joined, as MacIntyre implies, by the narrative unities of our lives. (p. 281)

The ways in which this relationship was managed in this inquiry (including ethical considerations) will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

4.5 Narrative Inquiry as Resonant Work

Considering the above epistemological and ontological assumptions which I make as a narrative inquirer, it is important to outline the criteria by which this research is to be judged as credible or valid (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Rather than relying on notions of data validity or the generalisability of results (which stem from a positivist tradition), the criteria for credibility within narrative inquiry have been articulated by narrative inquirers as research which is resonant work. This means that the findings are credible if they resonate or evoke “sympathetic vibrations” with both themselves and readers (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009a, p. 3; see also Bowman, 2009). Clandinin (2009) alternatively conceptualises resonant work as work that evokes remembering or pondering with readers. Clandinin (2009) experienced this when reading narrative accounts in

Narrative Inquiry in Music Education: Troubling Certainty (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009). She (2009) reflects:

> When I read each chapter on its own, I could see what I could learn from each experience. Each chapter called forth resonant rememberings of my own experiences, experiences I have rarely storied as strong threads in my life. I recalled country dances where local bands played…. I recalled carol singing at the community hall…. Each chapter called forth much I could learn about my own knowing of music education and perhaps about the thread of music in my stories to live by. (p. 202)

The following section will discuss narrative inquiry as resonant work.

Stauffer and Barrett (2009) define resonant work as "work that reverberates and resonates in and through the communities it serves" (p. 20). They add that narrative as resonant work also "seeks communication beyond the immediate or surface meanings, and reverberation past the present moment" (p. 20). Resonant work has four qualities: it is respectful, responsible, rigorous, and resilient (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009).

4.5.1 Respectful

Resonant work is respectful to others by acknowledging "that what and how each person knows has worth, merits space and time, and has the potential to inform" (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009, p. 22). Similarly, Dillon (2007) explains respect as a form of recognition or regard that is "a mode of attention to and perception and acknowledgement of an object as having a certain importance, worth, authority, status, or power" (p. 202). In this light, respectfulness in resonant work is an attitude that the inquirer possesses and a quality that they embody towards all involved in the inquiry process (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). Resonant work as being respectful is intrinsically tied, as it is with all qualitative research, to the relationship between the

inquirer and participants (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). Managing this relationship is attended to within the ethical considerations section of the following chapter.

Respect or recognition in resonant work captures the spirit of interpretivism. Informed by the interpretivist paradigm, narrative inquirers accept as a fundamental premise that "multiple realities, multiple ways of knowing, and multiple ways of coming to know exist" (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009, p. 22). If the inquirer does not act respectfully towards participants, namely recognising that what and how participants know has worth and deserves the time to be heard, the inquirer is therefore not operating within the true spirit of interpretivism.

4.5.2 Responsible

Resonant work is responsible to three parties: the public, the individuals participating in the inquiry, and the inquirer themselves (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). Narrative work is deemed responsible to the public good when the inquirer's own motivations for the inquiry align with broader critical conversations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). The work must be politically interested and benefit society (Barone & Eisner, 2011). As McLaren (1989) argues, the aim of narrative work is "to transform existing social inequalities and injustices" (p. 160). The ways in which my own motivations for conducting this inquiry align with broader critical conversations, namely the international education agenda that places students' creative thinking and behaviour centre stage, were made explicit in the introduction.

Resonant work is also responsible to inquiry participants. Broadly

speaking, narrative research aims to provide an opportunity for voices to be heard (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). Stauffer and Barrett (2009) make explicit, however, that this is not enough to satisfy the criteria of responsibility to inquiry participants. For narrative work to be responsible to those participating in the inquiry, the inquiry process and product must benefit participants in the way of "new levels of self-awareness, possible changes in life-style, and shifting priorities of living" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 163). Cahnmann-Taylor and Siegesmund (2008) add that the enactment of responsibility throughout the research process has the potential to enable "personal agency: autonomous individuals who have the capacity to imaginatively shape their own lives by having the courage to write their own stories" (p. 244). Participant's self-transformation is made possible through the inquiry process, where participants can tell and re-tell, live and re-live, their stories (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). It is in the reliving of the "new person" (as discussed in the Narrative as the Phenomenon of Study section above) that the inquiry begins to satisfy the criteria of being responsible to participants. Much like respect, responsibility in resonant work is enacted by creating a relational space during the inquiry process (Irwin & Springgay, 2008; Stauffer & Barrett, 2009).

For narrative research to comprise resonant work, I am also responsible to myself as the inquirer (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). Like other narrative inquirers, my motivation for engaging in this inquiry emanates from an array of diverse personal, professional, and social concerns and curiosities (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). These concerns and curiosities are both musical and educational. Importantly, my motivations are considered "worthy" and are important to the inquiry (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009, p. 22).

I need, however, to take care that my enthusiasm for the inquiry process and my desire for change and transformation within the music education community—my research agenda—"does not dominate the narratives of the research participants and *their* meanings" (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009, p. 23). Stauffer and Barrett (2009) explain that "when this occurs, the researcher enacts a power relationship that can overwhelm and subvert the participants' voices to serve ends that are neither individually nor collectively responsible" (p. 23). During the inquiry process, I therefore need to balance being responsible to the public good, the participants, and myself.

Josselson (2007) comments on the difficulty of the balancing act—balancing responsibility to the public, inquiry participants, the inquirer—that the inquirer must perform:

> The essence of the ethical conundrum in narrative research derives from the fact that the narrative researcher is in a dual role—in an intimate relationship with the participant… and in a professionally responsible role in the scholarly community. Interpersonal ethics demand responsibility to the dignity, privacy, and well-being of those who are studied, and these often conflict with the scholarly obligation to accuracy, authenticity, and interpretation. (p. 538)

Like participants, resonant work is also responsible to the inquirer in the way that the inquiry process can entail personal growth for the inquirer (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). Van Manen (1990) articulates that the process can result in "a form of deep learning [for the inquirer], leading to a transformation of consciousness, heightened perceptiveness, increased thoughtfulness and tact" (p. 163).

4.5.3 Rigorous

Rigorous narrative work reflects a certain quality of the work. In research carried out under positivist paradigms, rigor hinges on

"conventional notions of precision and generalisability" (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009, p. 23; Josselson, 2007). Rigor in narrative work, however, reflects transparency and accountability, and an underpinning of ethics involving "trustfulness, openness, honesty, respectfulness, carefulness, and constant attentiveness" through the research process (Davies & Dodd, 2002, p. 281; see also Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). Stauffer and Barrett (2009) contend that rigor in resonant work is, in part, the means through which respect and responsibility are enacted. Rigor in narrative work is also tied to the subjectivity that the inquirer brings to the inquiry. The inquirer is rigorous by continuing to be conscious of how their own story and subjectivity influences the research process (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009).

4.5.4 Resilient

The quality of resilience in resonant work emerges towards the end of the inquiry. It can begin to emerge only when inquirers choose to "write it up," turning participants' narratives of experience, narratives which are dynamic and filled with tensions and complexities, into "community property" (Shulman, 2004, p. 305, 457, as cited in Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). Narrative scholarship can only move towards being resilient work when the inquirer makes participants' narratives available to be "shared, discussed, critiqued, and exchanged" and "used again and again in the building and rebuilding of knowledge" (Shulman, 2004, p. 305, 457, as cited in Stauffer & Barrett, 2009).

Narrative scholarship, however, is not deemed resilient if only the above is achieved. Narrative scholarship embodies resilience when it aims to trouble certainty (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). Troubling certainty, in this

context, does not suggest a desire to agitate, to disturb, or to disrupt (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009a). Rather, as clarified by Barrett and Stauffer (2009a), the notion of troubling:

> is to provide alternative accounts of why, when, where, and how people engage in music experience… and, in that process, to prompt our readers… to consider other ways of engaging with people in and through music. In doing so, we hope to make a space in the discourse of inquiry in music education, one in which 'troubling' may give pause for thought and prompt the community to consider the many ways in which we know and come to know. (p. 2)

Addressing the many qualities of resilient work, Stauffer and Barrett (2009) explain:

> It speaks to multiple audiences and is open to multiple interpretations. It rests on the principles of respect and responsibility. It is rigorous inquiry, conducted with methodological and theoretical integrity. It retains its appeal and persuasiveness across time and contexts through honest and critical storytelling directed at matters of social justice, educational equality, and human dignity. At its best, resilient narrative builds autonomy, independence, and resolve so that readers and those who participate in the inquiry are moved to take on resonant work themselves. (p. 26)

In summary, resonant work in narrative inquiry is four-faceted. It is respectful, responsible, rigorous, and resilient. In the context of this inquiry, I aim to produce resonant work in the following ways. I approach the inquiry with a recognition that the stories each participant shares in regard to the construction of their creative identity as a musician "has worth, merits space and time, and has the potential to inform" (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009, p. 22; see also Dillon, 2007). I will choose to act responsibly in the interests of the public good, the participants, and to myself. I will act responsibly for the public good by producing work that is politically interested, namely aligning inquiry findings with current critical conversations surrounding musical and general creativity. I will act responsibly towards participants by

allowing participants to tell and re-tell, live and re-live, their stories, where they will "make evident… *their* interpretations of lived experience and *their* situated constructions of reality" (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009, p. 23). In doing so, participants may experience "new levels of self-awareness, possible changes in life-style, and shifting priorities of living" regarding being musically creative and teaching for musical creativity (Van Manen, 1990, p. 163). I will act responsibly toward myself by balancing my own motivations for this inquiry with the public good and participant's voices, and will allow the inquiry process to potentially result in "a form of deep learning" for myself "leading to a transformation of consciousness, heightened perceptiveness, increased thoughtfulness and tact" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 163). I aim to produce work that is rigorous, namely work that is transparent and true to participant's meaning, and work that aims to trouble certainty, providing alternative accounts of experience that is resonant with others.

Returning to Barrett and Stauffer's (2009a) conceptualisation of resonant work as work that resonates or evokes "sympathetic vibrations" through the communities it serves, it is also my aim that the findings of this inquiry evoke sympathetic vibrations in readers who may have either a close or distant connection with music. Clandinin (2009) experienced this when reading the narrative accounts in *Narrative Inquiry in Music Education: Troubling Certainty* (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009). Describing herself as "someone with little knowledge of music and music education," Clandinin shares that as she read the narrative accounts in the book, she found herself "caught into the stories of the lives represented on the pages" (p. 201). She describes feeling "filled with wonder" (p. 201) about what it means to live a life as a musician, as a preservice teacher learning to teach music, and as a

choir member. As outlined in the literature review, creativity is not exclusive to the domain of music. The same thinking processes used to create music are the same as those used across other domains (Eagleman & Brandt, 2017). Similarly, the same environmental conditions required to create music are those recommended from field to field (NACCCE, 1999). Narratives should constitute an "invitation" to participate and to be "read, and lived, vicariously by others" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 8). Regardless of background, all readers are invited to engage with the narratives presented later in this thesis and it is my hope that findings resonate with music-makers as much as they do with other artists, business people, parents, school principals, and scientists. It is also my aim that the findings of this inquiry become transferrable to individuals' personal, professional, and civic lives.

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined the epistemological and ontological positions that underpin this narrative inquiry. The chapter provided an overview of narrative inquiry, outlining the three different ways in which narrative is viewed within the methodology—as the phenomenon of study, as the process of inquiry, and as the product of the inquiry. It described the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space developed by Clandinin and Connelly (2000) that is underpinned by Dewey's (1938) paradigmatic philosophy of experience. It then explained the ways in which narrative inquiry is a relational methodology. The chapter concluded with narrative inquiry as resonant work which provides a credibility framework through which to assess the quality of the narrative inquiry. For narrative inquiry to be resonant work it must display the qualities of respect, responsibility,

rigor, and resilience. The following chapter outlines how the research was designed and conducted within narrative inquiry methodology.

CHAPTER 5. THE “DOING” OF NARRATIVE INQUIRY

The previous chapter discussed the methodology underpinning this inquiry, namely narrative inquiry. This chapter details the inquiry design conducted within narrative inquiry methodology. It then presents the participant pool and outlines the participant recruitment procedure. It then discusses the ethical considerations that were identified prior to conducting the inquiry and how these were managed throughout the inquiry. The chapter explains the narrative inquiry process in three phases: (1) generating field texts; (2) field texts to interim and final research texts; and (3) research texts to resonant threads (each term will be discussed in detail below). The chapter concludes by outlining the procedures used to ensure the qualitative validity (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) of the research findings and discussing the limitations of the inquiry. This includes outlining the twelve qualitative “touchstones” for narrative inquiry as proposed by Clandinin and Caine (2013).

5.1 Participants

Four private piano teachers—Jeremy (age 27), Amber (age 35), Samantha (age 51), and Eleanor (age 75)—participated in this inquiry. Jeremy is a private piano teacher who lives in America, and Amber, Samantha, and Eleanor are private piano teachers who live in different locations in Australia. Inquiring into the lives of only four private piano teachers allowed me to manage the time-consuming process of data collection and analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). As stated in Chapter 4, it also enabled me to attend to the intricacies of meaning, the variability, the fine details, and the nuance of

individual human experiences (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2017).

Participants were required to be private piano teachers as private piano teachers were the “actors” to be interviewed for this research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Participants also needed to hold this job title as a narrative inquirer’s lived and told stories are “always in relation to or with those of our participants” (Clandinin et al., 2010, p. 82). Sharing similar experiences to inquiry participants, as explained in the previous chapter, allowed me to “live alongside” participants and develop empathy and close relationships with them (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, 2006; Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin et al., 2010). Participants were also required to be over the age of 18. This was to minimise the complexities in gaining ethical clearance when participants are under the age of 18.

Early in the inquiry process, participants were asked a series of questions relating to both demographic and biographical information alongside teaching information (see Appendix A). Questions concerned demographic and biographical information such as town/city of residency, year of birth, and nationality. Questions regarding teaching information included teaching location such as private studio or school, years in the teaching profession, lesson content, and qualifications. A summary of this information is presented at the beginning of each participant’s narrative as a way of introducing the private piano teacher.

Amber, Samantha, and Eleanor were recruited online through a “research pitch video” that I created with the university’s media team. Jeremy was recruited through word of mouth, which will be explained

below. I chose to create audio-visual material for my research pitch as a creative way of making this research project appealing. The research pitch video was posted in the Australasian Piano Teachers Facebook group, of which I have been a member since 2015. This platform was chosen as it is a 'hub' for private piano teachers where teachers regularly post questions and comments surrounding private piano teaching and learning. At the time of posting the research pitch, there were approximately 2000 private piano teachers from the Australasian region as members of this group. Prior to posting this video, permission was sought and granted by both group administrators. If teachers voluntarily wished to participate in the research project, they were asked to contact me directly via email.

As noted above, Jeremy was recruited through word of mouth. Approximately nine private piano teachers originally registered their interest to participate in the inquiry. After follow-up emails, however, only three confirmed their willingness to participate. When I was needing one more participant for this inquiry, Samantha offered to contact Jeremy in America as she thought that he would be interested in being a research participant. Samantha organised an online chat between me and Jeremy which resulted in Jeremy volunteering to participate in the inquiry.

The very fact that so few teachers volunteered to participate (out of a large potential pool of around 2000) adds weight to one of the central arguments of this research, namely that the majority of private piano teachers lack confidence in their creative identities as musicians. This reluctance may be due to self-consciousness or not identifying as creative. Moreover, studio teachers may be fearful of being scrutinised or of having their teaching evaluated (even though this was not the purpose of the

research). Other teachers may simply be disinterested in the research because they do not see the value of creativity. Such teachers may adhere to the stronghold of the tradition of teaching using only notated music and the requirements of traditional examination syllabi (Bridges, 2005; Cathcart, 2013). On a practical level, other teachers may not have volunteered simply because of the time required for participation.

5.2 Establishing Researcher Role

After participants had been confirmed, I called each participant to begin to establish researcher-participant rapport, and formally introduce myself, explain my research project in further detail, and give details on my background, as required for interpretivist research (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Clandinin & Caine, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly, 1988, 2000; Craig & Huber, 2007; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). I also discussed possible times when participants and I could meet to exchange stories in the form of a semi-structured interview.

5.3 Managing Ethics

Prior to commencing the research, ethical clearance for this inquiry was gained (see Appendix B). As outlined by Clandinin (2006), ethical considerations permeated this inquiry from my own narrative beginnings through managing relationships with participants to writing and sharing interim and final research texts (see also Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Huber & Clandinin, 2002). Rather than viewing ethics as merely filling out required forms for institutional ethics boards, I followed Clandinin's (2006) advice and imagined ethics "as being about negotiation, respect, mutuality and openness to multiple voices" (p. 52; see also Davies & Dodd, 2002).

Two primary ethical concerns considering the above were identified, and ways of managing these sensitive ethical issues were proposed. The first ethical issue involved the possibility of participants disclosing something within the interview that they did not wish to be included in the final research text. The first risk was managed by providing participants with the primary field texts—the transcript of their interview—and drafts of interim research texts and the final research text. This allowed participants to amend or delete information that they did not wish to be included in their final narrative account. The final research texts that appear in the following chapters were approved by each participant.

The second ethical issue involved the high likelihood that participants would share difficult stories and disclose sensitive information (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). Alongside not backing away when participants told stories that were uncomfortable as a way of enacting respect to participants (which will be explained further below), participants were provided with a list of referral services if they required professional support (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009).

Expected benefits to the participants were also acknowledged when requesting ethical clearance. As outlined in the previous chapter, resonant work is research work that is responsible to inquiry participants (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). It is also responsible to participants beyond simply allowing their voices to be heard, but in potentially leading to "new levels of self-awareness, possible changes in life-style, and shifting priorities of living" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 163; see also Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). Expected benefits for research participants included participants gaining insight into the impact of their own music learning experience on their creative identity,

and having a “voice” that is heard and contributes to the improvement of pedagogical practices more broadly. I hoped that if these benefits were achieved, participants would gain greater satisfaction in their roles as music teachers and music makers.

Prior to conducting the research, participants were emailed the participant information sheet (PIS) (see Appendix C) and the consent form approved by the research ethics committee at USQ. The PIS addressed the issues outlined above alongside the matters of what participants would experience during the inquiry process, voluntary participation, confidentiality, conflict of interest, contact details and privacy. All participants signed and returned the consent forms, either via email or in person.

5.4 Narrative Inquiry Process Phase 1: Generating Field Texts

5.4.1 Interviews

Narrative inquirers articulate that the two starting points for narrative inquiry are listening to individuals tell their stories and living alongside individuals as they live and tell their stories (Clandinin & Caine, 2013; Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). I listened to participants’ stories in the context of a semi-structured interview (Clandinin, 2006; Connelly & Clandinin, 2006; Van Manen, 1990). Interviews were conducted with participants either in person, over the phone, or via zoom, dependent upon the location and personal preference of each participant. The length of each interview ranged from an hour to two hours. Semi-structured interviews are “a qualitative data collection strategy in which the researcher asks informants a series of predetermined but open-ended questions” (Ayres,

2008, p. 810).

Interviews were chosen as the data collection method for a variety of reasons. As Connelly and Clandinin (1990) state, the narrative inquirer chooses a research method that elicits data that suits the temporal locale in which they are studying. In the context of this inquiry, I required data primarily located in the past given that I was exploring the construction of participants' creative identities over their life trajectories. Story-telling through interviewing tends to be located in the past (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990).

I also chose interviewing as the research method as interviews are the most frequently used starting point for telling stories (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). Mishler (1986) contends that during interviews, interviewees' responses will commonly be given as stories. Reflecting on Mishler's (1986) belief, Polkinghorne (1995) writes:

> People frequently understand and recapitulate their experiences in storied form. If the interviewer will not suppress the interviewee's responses by limiting the answers to what is relevant to a narrowly specified question, a storied answer will be provided. (p. 13)

Based on the premise that collecting participants' told stories is inherent in the research procedure, I determined that interviews would facilitate the form of data (i.e. participants' stories) that I required. Interviews were also chosen as they would serve "as a vehicle to develop a conversational relation with a partner (interviewee) about the meaning of an experience" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 66).

Semi-structured interviews were chosen over structured or unstructured interviews for several reasons. The semi-structured style

allowed me to use an interview guide which gave me freedom to explore questions in a different order (Morgan & Guevara, 2008) and to varying degrees dependent on the participant's response, and enabled me to use open-ending questioning. In contrast to an unstructured style, the semi-structured interview allowed me to shape the interview around a topic-based interview guide—a guide that consists of a list of topics to be covered during the interview (Ayres, 2008; Morgan & Guevara, 2008; Van Manen, 1990) (see Appendix D). Although the interview guide was topic-based, I did include a series of questions under each topic heading as a prompt for myself, namely a reminder of the specific information I needed to collect to answer my research questions. Importantly, however, the semi-structured style, in contrast to the structured style, also gave me "the freedom to… allocate more time to some questions than to others depending on what is most appropriate for discussing the research topic with each individual participant" (Morgan & Guevara, 2008, p. 469; see also Ayres, 2008). This flexibility was important as it allowed me to intuitively follow the leads of participants.

Although open-ended questioning can be used in other interviewing styles, open-ending questioning is characteristic of semi-structured interviews (Ayres, 2008). Open-ended questioning rather than close-ended questioning was necessary to answer the research questions for a number of reasons. Open-ended questioning is a form of questioning that can trigger multiple responses rather than a limited amount response (Ayres, 2008). In this way, open-ended questioning allowed participants to give "a more considered response" and provided "better access to interviewees' views, interpretation of events, understandings, experiences and opinion[s]"

(Byrne, 2012, p. 182). Accessing participants' subjective views was inherent in the research agenda. Open-ended questions also enabled participants to freely voice their experience unconstrained by any perspectives of myself as the researcher (Creswell, 2014; Silverman, 2006). This prevented a power relationship (i.e. myself over participants) from developing (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). Open-ended questioning also allowed participants to engage in the knowledge construction process and make meaning of their experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In the context of this inquiry, some open-ended questions asked for relatively concrete information such as: "What did your piano teacher say to you?" Other open-ended questions asked for more narrative information such as: "How did you come to be a piano teacher?"

Throughout the semi-structured interviews, I also made use of the established interview technique of probes or prompts (Ayres, 2008; Olsen, 2012). Probes were used strategically to elicit further information, build rapport through enacting active listening skills, and assist the continuity of narration by encouraging the interviewee to go into more detail (Ayres, 2008; Olsen, 2012). Prompts included: "Why was that?," "Really?," and "What happened then?" (Olsen, 2012, pp. 33-34).

5.4.2 The Interview Procedure

The narrative inquirer enters "into the midst of stories. Participants' stories, inquirers' stories, social, cultural and institutional stories" (Clandinin, 2006, p. 47). These are past, present and unfolding stories (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). Within the semi-structured interview, participants and I shared stories with one another of our experiences (Barrett

& Stauffer, 2009b; Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin et al., 2010). Each interview, began by the participant telling their story (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). This approach to the interviews enacted respect towards participants—a characteristic of resonant work—by seeing participants' stories as having "importance, worth, authority, status, or power" (Dillon, 2007, p. 202; see also Stauffer & Barrett, 2009).

I shared my own stories of experience when participants' experiences either resonated with me or bumped up against my own. As clarified by Clandinin (2006): "Narrative inquirers cannot bracket themselves out of the inquiry but rather need to find ways to inquire into participants' experiences, [and] their own experiences" (p. 47). This is a part of the inquirer living within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space and is a part of the collaborative nature of the methodology (Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Through this sharing, participants' and my own spheres of experience began to converge which resulted in a friendship rather than an acquaintanceship forming (Clandinin et al., 2010). The building of this close relationship akin to a friendship was necessary to ensure the fruitfulness of this inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988).

Sharing my own stories with participants, however, was not only a way of connecting with and/or developing a deeper rapport with participants. It was also a way of me becoming more self-aware and learning from participants' experiences. As outlined in the previous chapter, narrative work is considered resonant work when the inquiry process leads to personal growth for the inquirer (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). I found that by hearing participants' stories I naturally began reflecting on my own stories of experience and sometimes, understood my experiences in a new

light based on what participants shared.

Each topic was informed by the research questions and relevant literature (Ayres, 2008; Olsen, 2012). The first topic concerned participants' current views of musical creativity including how participants currently see or do not see themselves as musically creative. An example of note-taking done during participants' interviews is provided in Appendix E to show participants' thoughts in answer to written questions and to show how conversations and thoughts developed. Exploring this topic primarily elicited synchronic data from participants (Polkinghorne, 1995). Synchronic data "are framed as categorical answers to questions put by an interviewer (Mishler, 1986b) and provide information about the present situation or belief of an informant" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 12).

I needed to unearth the current subjective stories that participants "live by" in terms of being musically creative. As Polkinghorne (1995) articulates, the final narratives produced through the narrative analysis process are to be a narrative explanation of how events and happenings link together to culminate in the denouement or the outcome. I viewed participant's current perceptions of themselves as creative—their current creative identities—as the denouement. Knowing the denouement of each participant's narrative assisted me during the first data analysis phase—narrative analysis—where I sifted through the generated field texts to select events to be included in participant's narratives of experience that led to this denouement.

The first interview topic also explored the ways in which participants understand or conceptualise musical creativity. One of the assumptions

underpinning narrative as the phenomenon of study is that humans use the "stories that they live by" to interpret their past and make sense of their experiences (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). It was important to unearth the meaning participants ascribed to musical creativity as their current "story of musical creativity" formed the interpretive lens of their experiences (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006).

The second topic of the interview investigated participants' music learning experience over their life trajectories. It also explored how participants became piano teachers alongside the development of their private piano teaching practices. During this part of the conversation, participants predominately elicited diachronic data—data that describes when happenings occurred and the effect the happening had on subsequent events (Polkinghorne, 1995). Diachronic data is often in the form of autobiographical accounts of personal episodes and "include reference as to when and why actions were taken and the intended results of the actions" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 12).

The aim of this part of the interview was two-fold: (1) to discover experiences that led to how participants currently see themselves as creative; and (2) to unearth the ways in which the development of their creative identities influenced their private piano teaching practices. Participants intuitively selected experiences from their memory that they considered important to the construction of their creative identity as a musician. They also shared experiences that they thought promoted their creative identities (whether the experience looked creative at the outset or not!) as well as experiences that they thought denied or made problematic their creative identities as musicians. Participants also told stories of their

private piano teaching practices and the ways in which their creative identity influenced their teaching.

During these interviews, I probed participants for more information on the three commonplaces of continuity, sociality, and place where necessary (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I asked participants to share how they thought certain experiences changed them (continuity) or asked for them to tell me about the other actors who played a key part in the event (sociality). At other times, I asked participants to describe in more detail the place in which the episode took place (place). Additionally, alongside the stories that participants naturally elicited, I inquired into spheres such as participants' family lives, educational environments, musical preferences, and peers—socio-cultural factors established as influencing identity formation (Hallam, 2017). In doing so, I was able to discover the social, cultural, institutional, and familial narratives that shaped the stories participants lived by (Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin & Caine, 2013; Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). Again, this approach was underpinned by remaining attentive to the commonplaces of continuity, sociality, and place.

Importantly, throughout the inquiry process, I was respectful to participants by not backing away or turning away too early when participants told stories that were sensitive, difficult or uncomfortable (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). During moments where the conversation was leading towards participants disclosing sensitive information, I reminded participants that they were not obligated to discuss anything that made them feel uncomfortable. Participants, however, did not withhold sharing their memories and thoughts, despite some stories being difficult. While listening to these stories, I enacted deep listening and prolonged engagement with

humility and perseverance (Clandinin et al. 2006). Participants' vulnerability and willingness to share these sensitive stories cued that they felt comfortable within the relational space.

There was a second reason why I did not back away or turn too early when participants shared stories that were difficult. Glăveanu and Tanggaard (2014) articulate that identity is "built over time in interactions that are often marked by struggles and acts of resistance" (p. 13). I saw participant's sensitive stories as embryonic moments—key moments that potentially influenced the development of their creative identities as musicians. These experiences may have given birth to stories that participants began to live by, whether the stories were liberating or oppressive. It was important, therefore, not to back away from these sensitive moments as they could prove to be critical events that influenced the construction of participants' creative identities as musicians.

5.4.3 The Generation of Field Texts

In agreement with all participants, each interview was audio recorded on both my personal iPhone and iPad (pin protected) using a voice memos application. Two recording platforms were used as a precautionary measure in case anything was to go wrong with either of the devices during the conversation or between the recording and downloading the recording to my computer. In accordance with the approved data storage plan for the study, the recordings are saved in three locations—QRIS Cloud storage, my PhD workstation, and my personal USB.

The interviews were transcribed by an approved provider of transcription services. An example of one of the transcripts is listed in

Appendix F. The interviews were transcribed orthographically or verbatim which focuses on transcribing spoken words and other sounds such as laughter (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Saldaña, 2018). Including normal parts of spoken language such as laughter in the transcriptions was necessary to capture participant tone. Although I chose to delegate transcription to save time (Saldaña, 2018) I found that as I verified the transcribed interview with the original recording, I experienced cognitive ownership of the data (Saldaña, 2018, p. 1707). Analytical reflection and insights also occurred through the verification process.

The interview transcripts became the field texts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin & Caine, 2013). The term field text is used rather than "data" because the texts composed in narrative inquiry are "experiential, intersubjective texts rather than objective texts" (Clandinin & Caine, 2013, pp. 166-167). Field texts were shared with participants for proof reading and approval. Where I sought to clarify or ask participants to elaborate on what they shared, I also commented on and questioned parts of participants' stories. Once each participant had agreed on the accuracy of the transcripts and answered the follow-up questions, I incorporated insights from participants' responses into the primary field texts (i.e. interview transcripts). I then moved into phase two of the inquiry with participants, which was turning the field texts into interim and final research texts.

5.5 Narrative Inquiry Process Phase 2: Field Texts to Interim and Final Research Texts

Having the field texts finalised, I began composing an interim narrative account of participants' experiences. I named the accounts

narrative accounts because each participant's life story was held together by narrative threads that stretched back to their early life stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988). In line with Bochner's (2001) thinking, I approached the field texts as "the life being expressed not merely as data to be analy[z]ed and categori[z]ed but as a story to be respected and engaged" (p. 132).

I used narrative analysis to guide my first analytic process (Polkinghorne, 1995). The narrative analysis procedure involved organising and synthesising each field text into a coherent whole to create the interim and final research texts—participants' narratives accounts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Polkinghorne, 1995). In the context of this inquiry, the narrative analysis procedure involved organising and unifying the events and happenings within the field texts to create accounts that narratively explain the construction of participants' creative identities as musicians and the ways in which their creative identities have shaped their private piano teaching practices (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Polkinghorne, 1995).

Importantly, as articulated by Polkinghorne (1995): "The analytic task requires the researcher to develop or discover a plot that displays the linkage among the data elements as parts of an unfolding temporal development culminating in the denouement" (p. 15). A plot is alternatively termed a thematic thread (Polkinghorne, 1995). As noted earlier, the denouement in the context of this inquiry is participants' current creative identities and the ways in which their creative identities influence their private piano teaching practices. Through the narrative analysis procedure, the task was to discover individual plotlines that explain how participants currently see themselves as creative and the ways in which this identity shapes their private piano teaching practice.

5.5.1 Step 1: Re-Storying Participants' Told Experiences

I began the narrative analysis process by re-storying participants' told experiences (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002). Ollerenshaw and Creswell (2002) describe this procedure as "the process of gathering stories, analy[z]ing them for key elements of the story (e.g., time, place, plot, and scene), and then re-writing the story to place it within a chronological sequence" (p. 332). This re-writing process is also referred to as forming temporal coherence among events (Bluck & Habermas, 2001). Participants did not narrate their life experiences in strict chronological order within the interview. Often while participants were discussing a specific experience, other experiences (that to them were causally linked) were brought to their mind. When this occurred, they often departed from the story that they were telling to tell another story. The nature of the semi-structured interview allowed me to flow with the order in which participants chose to tell their experiences. As a result of the "to-ing and fro-ing" of stories, participants' experiences were scattered within the field texts. My first job as narrative analyst, therefore, was to re-story participants' experiences.

Re-storying participants' told experiences was necessary for the narrative analysis process for a number of reasons. First, through the process of re-storying participants' told events, happenings, and actions, participants' experiences began taking on narrative meaning (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Polkinghorne, 1995). This is where participants' events, happenings, and actions began to make known their contribution and influence on participants' creative identities as musicians and the influence of this identity on their private piano teaching practices (Polkinghorne, 1995). This is similar to the principle of forming causal coherence among

events. Causal coherence "explains individual episodes in the life story by drawing links between these episodes" (Baddeley & Singer, 2007, p. 183). Baddeley and Singer (2007) add that causal coherence can also be the process of "connecting episodes to personal beliefs, traits, and preferences" (Baddeley & Singer, 2007, p. 183). For example, one participant explained her fear of improvisation as her preference for "getting things right" and being "an approval junkie." Another participant linked his decision to study jazz at college to the performance opportunities he was receiving.

Second, by re-storying participants' experiences, narrative threads or plotlines began to develop or be discovered (Polkinghorne, 1995). Clandinin and MacIntyre (1981) refer to this as narrative unity—"threads in people's lives that help account for the way in which they construct the stories that they live both in their personal lives and in their [professional lives]" (p. 671). This process is also known as thematic coherence. Thematic coherence "pulls together multiple episodes of the life story under the auspices of an overarching value or principle…. It requires the ability to summari[z]e and interpret and synthesi[z]e multiple episodes from one's life story" (Baddeley & Singer, 2007, p. 183). Themes that ran through participants' lives included pursuing musical preferences and overcoming a fear of failure.

I attended to the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space while re-storying participants' experiences. As I identified specific events in the field texts, I sifted through details of where participants had elicited further information on the commonplaces of continuity, sociality, and place. I often used the navigation pane in Word to search for words that I thought or remembered that participants had used to refer or return to discussing the

experience. I looked for where participants had discussed how the experience had changed them (continuity), other actors involved in the experience (sociality), whether they be teachers, family members, peers, and/or friends, and the place (place) where the event or action had occurred, such as “where characters are formed and live out their stories and where cultural and social context play constraining and enabling roles” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 8). Attending to the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space included positioning participants’ experiences within the larger social, cultural, institutional, and familial narratives that shaped their ”stories to live by” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p.2).

Where I felt further attentiveness to the commonplaces was necessary yet absent from the field texts, I added comment boxes to particular sections within the narrative accounts and asked participants questions that would elicit such information. Participants would attend to these questions when they received the interim research text—the first draft of their narrative account. As will be noticed when reading participants’ narrative accounts (Chapters 6–9), information is included that is not in the original interview transcription. This information was largely derived from participants answering the follow-up questions in comment boxes or by email correspondence. By attending to the commonplaces throughout the entire inquiry process, I remained true to my narrative view of experience.

Alongside attending to the commonplaces, I was aware of the subjective meaning participants ascribed to their experience, their thoughts or views at the time, and/or their autobiographical reasoning—moments where the participant stepped back and drew inferences and lessons from the stories they told (Bluck & Habermas, 2001). I added comment boxes and

questions to participants where necessary that would help to further reveal what participants' actions meant to them (Erikson, 2017; Schwandt, 2007). I also included comments such as "is this true?" "Is this you?" "Do you see yourself here?" "Is this the character you want to be when read by others?" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Clandinin and Caine (2013) state: "Often interim research texts call forth the telling… of additional field texts, that is, they call forth further experiences to be told" (p. 172). Through the process of asking specific questions in order to seek clarification, I developed a greater understanding of participants' narratives (Carrillo & Baguley, 2011). Sections of participants' own words from the field texts were selected and included in the narrative accounts to highlight their voices and their meanings.

5.5.2 Step 2: Sharing Interim Research Texts with Participants

Once I had completed the narrative analysis procedure, I shared the interim research texts with participants via email. This allowed participants to attend to the additional questions I had asked and for participants and me to engage in the co-construction process of their narrative accounts (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Clandinin, 2006). I also asked participants questions in the email that did not relate to a specific experience they had told, but to other questions that I wished to explore (see Appendix G). Participants' responses to these questions became part of the field texts.

5.5.3 Step 3: Revising Interim Research Texts

Once participants had made their amendments to the interim research texts, I drafted a second version of their narrative accounts. I incorporated their requests and responses from the first draft of their narrative accounts

into the overall re-storying of their experience. I shared and discussed the second interim research texts within relational response communities, namely my research supervisors and the university's Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Learning Advisor. Clandinin and Caine (2013) articulate that "response communities are critical elements within the inquiry, as they help inquirers recogni[z]e how they shape both the experiences of the participants and their research puzzles (p. 173). My response communities pointed out: (1) where my voice was dominating the voices of participants; (2) sections within each narrative account that could be more attentive to the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space and ways in which I could ask for this information; and (3) where causal coherence was not clear. The developing research texts were enriched by my relational response communities based on the premise that these parties were marked by diversity (i.e. two communities were outside of the domain of music). Sharing and discussing the interim research texts with relational response communities influenced the shaping of each narrative account and informed how I proceeded in the co-construction process of the narrative accounts with participants.

Clandinin and Caine (2013) articulate: "Moving from field texts to interim and final research texts is a complicated and iterative process, full of twists and turns" (p. 172). I went through many re-writes of participants' narrative accounts (and sharing narrative accounts with participants and my response communities) until the accounts reached a point where they were an accurate representation of participants' told experiences. Plotlines were "continually revised as consultation [took] place over written materials, and as further field texts [were] composed to develop points of importance in the

revised story" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 132). Through time and by "repeatedly asking questions concerning meaning and significance" I looked for "the patterns, narrative threads, tensions either within or across an individual's experience and in social setting" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 132). The continual revising of the narrative accounts meant that the analysis was done slowly and thoughtfully over time.

Additionally, I sought to write the final research texts in a way that could be accessible to non-academic and public audiences (Clandinin & Caine, 2013) with this first and foremostly being private piano teachers. Clandinin and Caine (2013) note that "while final research texts include traditional academic publications, dissertations, theses, and presentations, often participants, and our attention to practical and social implications, call us to also write final research texts for nonacademic audiences" (p. 173). I found, however, that because the inquiry participants were non-academic, remaining true to their voices throughout the inquiry process meant that the final research texts were inherently accessible to non-academic audiences.

Narrative accounts were considered finished when each narrative account "represented something of who they [participants] were and were becoming" (Clandinin et al., 2018). The accuracy of each narrative account presented in the following chapters was confirmed by participants.

During each revising of the narrative accounts, I engaged in the process of narrative smoothing (Spence, 1986, as cited in Polkinghorne, 1995). Polkinghorne (1995) explains that:

> as the plot begins to take form, the events and happenings that are crucial to the story's denouement become apparent. The emerging plot informs the researcher about which items from the gathered data

> should be included in the final storied account. Not all data elements will be needed for the telling of the story. Elements which do not contradict the plot, but which are not pertinent to its development, do not become part of the research result, the storied narrative. (p. 16)

As plotlines became more apparent on each revision of the narrative accounts, I removed events or happenings that did not directly impact the final denouement. On some occasions, it was not clear to me whether certain events or happenings influenced the construction of participants' creative identities as musicians and if participants' creative identities influenced their private piano teaching practices. When this was the case, I simply asked participants if they considered a certain event of happening to be influential on the denouement.

The timescale for the interviews and the co-construction of the narratives is presented in the below table.

Table 1: Timescale for the Phases of the Research

• Phase	• Timescale
• Phase 1: Generating field texts	• November 2018–September 2019 (timescale included conducting the interviews, interviews being transcribed, participants checking the accuracy of the transcriptions, and participants answering the follow-up questions)
• Leave of absence	• October–December 2019
• Phase 2: Field texts to interim and final research texts	• January–December 2020

5.6 Narrative Inquiry Process Phase 3: Research Texts to Resonant Threads

Once the narrative analysis procedure was complete, I then conducted a paradigmatic analysis of the four narrative accounts (Polkinghorne, 1995). The paradigmatic analysis involved uncovering and identifying commonalities that existed across the four narrative accounts (Polkinghorne, 1995). I conducted the paradigmatic analysis both deductively and inductively. The deductive analysis used the sociocultural lens of creative identity formation to identify where sociocultural influences played a sculpting hand in the shaping and expression of participants' creative identities as musicians. I coded the field texts (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Clarke & Braun, 2017) manually according to the broad categories of educational environments, cultural environments, peers, family, musical preferences, and opportunities (Hallam, 2017). I proceeded to conduct the analysis inductively. This involved building general themes from these particulars that were not imposed by previous theoretical structures (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Polkinghorne, 1995). Themes are presented as resonant threads—threads or patterns that reverberate and echo across accounts (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b; Clandinin et al., 2018) and that resonate with my own experience.

Resonant threads were chosen based upon: (1) their ability to evoke sympathetic vibrations or some kind of resonant rememberings in myself and potential readers; (2) their alignment with broader critical conversations; (3) their ability to challenge "taken-for-granted notions of the nature of life and learning in and through music" (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b, p. 16); (4) their capacity to trouble certainty (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009a;

Bowman, 2009; Clandinin, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003); and (5) their ability to stretch what is already understood. In this way, my inquiry findings enact responsibility to the public (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009).

I interpreted these resonant threads based upon my own idiosyncratic personal, cultural, and historical experiences alongside the literature informing the research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). I used a rich, thick description to present the findings, offering multiple perspectives about a theme derived from participants' narrative accounts (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). I also presented negative or discrepant information—information that runs counter to the themes or where stories bumped up against each other (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). I used these procedures to ensure the validity of the research findings.

5.7 Procedures Used for Qualitative Validity

Creswell and Creswell (2018) discuss the need for qualitative researchers to use procedures to ensure the validity of their inquiry findings. Although the term "validity" has been a word typically used within positivist research, Creswell and Creswell (2018; see also Creswell, 2014) also use the term in the context of qualitative research. I used several widely accepted procedures throughout the inquiry process for validating my research findings. To ensure qualitative validity, I clarified my bias that I brought to the study, used extensive member checking to guarantee the accuracy of my findings, and spent prolonged time in the field (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). I clarified my bias to both readers and participants. I outlined my bias to readers, namely how my personal background would shape the inquiry direction, at the beginning of this thesis. Echoing Stauffer

and Barrett (2009) on resonant work, Creswell and Creswell (2018) articulate that this self-reflection “creates an open and honest narrative that will resonate well with readers” (p. 202). I clarified my bias with participants during the initial phone call I made to them prior to conducting the semi-structured interviews. I consistently employed member checking with participants from the generation of field texts to the creating of the interim and final research texts. This was through producing the narrative accounts in collaboration with participants and continually exchanging drafts of the narrative accounts via email until they reached an accurate representation of participants’ experiences. Based on the premise that the narrative accounts were constructed over an extended period of time, I spent prolonged time in the field living alongside participants which meant that “I developed a deep-understanding of the phenomenon under study and can convey detail about the site and the people that lends credibility to the narrative account” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 202).

I also ensured qualitative validity of my research findings by using a rich, thick description to convey the findings and presenting negative or discrepant information (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). I used a rich, thick description to discuss the findings by offering many perspectives about a theme (Crewell & Creswell, 2018). By doing so, the research findings became “more realistic and richer” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 202). I also presented negative or discrepant information as findings—information that runs counter to the themes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Creswell and Creswell (2018) outline the strength of presenting negative or discrepant information:

> Because real life is composed of different perspectives that do not always coalesce, discussing contrary information adds to the credibility of an account. A researcher can accomplish this by discussing evidence about a theme. Most evidence will build a case for the theme; researchers can also present information that contradicts the general perspective of the theme. By presenting this contradictory evidence, the account becomes more realistic and more valid. (p. 202)

Alongside the procedures aforementioned, I passed through the twelve qualitative "touchstones" for narrative inquiry proposed by Clandinin and Caine (2013) to ensure the excellence of genuineness of the research findings (p. 169). The twelve touchstones are:

1. *Relational responsibility.* As outlined in Chapter 4, narrative inquiry is distinguished as a relational methodology (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009b; Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin & Connelly, 1988, 2000; Craig & Huber, 2007). Managing the relational responsibilities or the relational ethics inherent in the methodology is at the heart of narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Caine, 2013).
2. *In the midst.* During the narrative inquiry process, the researcher enters various lives in the midst. This includes their own life and participants' lives, alongside the social, cultural, institutional, linguistic, and familial narratives that envelope researchers' and participants' lives.
3. *Negotiation of relationships.* This is also enacting respectfulness which is inherent in resonant work (Stauffer & Barrett, 2009). This means acknowledging the ways in which both parties can be affected by the research process, alongside the researcher establishing their goals of the inquiry process

and the ways in which they can be helpful to participants.

4. *Narrative beginnings.* The researcher's own story or autobiographical narrative is the starting point for the inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This is the personal justification for the inquiry (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). My own narrative beginnings was presented at the outset of the inquiry, in the Prologue and in Chapter 1.
5. *Negotiating entry to the field.* Narrative inquirers enter into the relational space where the inquiry takes place. In the context of narrative inquiry, the "field" refers to the relational space between the researcher and those being researched (Clandinin & Caine, 2013).
6. *Moving from field to field texts.* During the narrative analysis process, the researcher turns participants' stories, told in the field, into written texts (i.e. field texts). In the context of this inquiry, field texts were interview transcripts.
7. *Moving from field texts to interim and final research texts.* The second step during the narrative analysis procedure is re-storying participants' told stories into narratives of their experiences.
8. *Representing narratives of experience in ways that show temporality, sociality, and place.* This refers to the written narratives as being attentive to the three-dimension narrative inquiry space that was outlined in Chapter 4.
9. *Relational response communities.* During the narrative inquiry process, the narrative inquiry shares the research texts with

trusted others for feedback.

10. *Justifications—personal, practical, and social.* This means the ways in which the research discusses the personal, practical, and social implications of the inquiry findings.
11. *Attentive to audience.* This describes the researcher's sensitivity to the audience which they present their findings to.
12. *Commitment to understanding lives in motion.* At the conclusion of the inquiry, the inquirer understands that participants' stories are not an end in themselves but are the launchpad for which participants can re-tell and re-live their lives.

5.8 My Learnings as a Narrative Inquirer

In hindsight, there are two things that I would have done differently in this inquiry: (1) paid greater attentiveness to the commonplace of settings or place; and (2) had more in-person contact with participants. Although I was attentive to the commonplace of setting or place throughout the inquiry process, I consider the level of detail given to setting within each narrative account to be limited. As articulated by Basso (1996, as cited in Clandinin & Rosiek), "places animate the ideas and feelings of persons" (p. 107). Greater attention to the places in which participants' experiences occurred may have elicited more of participants' ideas and feelings. Regarding the second limitation, as outlined in the inquiry process, participants only took part in one semi-structured interview. From there, participants and I collaborated, whether it was confirming the accuracy of the interview transcripts (i.e. field texts) or engaging in the co-construction process of the narratives, via email exchanges. Participants' living locations, besides from

Eleanor's residency, meant it was not feasible to meet with them in person. In hindsight, however, the co-construction process could have benefited from discussing participants' narrative accounts with them online via zoom or telephone. This may have enabled a closer rapport to be established with participants. The relational aspect of this inquiry, therefore, is limited. This is a limitation inherent in the inquiry given that the fruitfulness of a narrative inquiry is predicated on the researcher-participant relationship that is formed (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988). I connect this limitation to my journey of still becoming familiar with narrative inquiry methodology while conducting the inquiry. Despite this limitation, I do not consider the final research texts to be lacking multiple layers of "complexity, intellectual richness, [and] purpose/meaning" (Carrillo & Baguley, 2011, p. 64) of participants' told experiences. This is due to the multiple revisions of participants' narrative accounts conducted by me and participants.

5.9 Chapter Summary

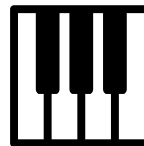
This chapter explained how the inquiry was designed and conducted within narrative inquiry methodology. The chapter began by briefly introducing the participants, outlining the participant recruitment method, explaining how my role as researcher was established, and describing the ethical sensitivities that were identified and prepared for prior to commencing the inquiry. It went on to explain the three phases of the narrative inquiry procedure: (1) generating field texts; (2) field texts to interim and final research texts; and (3) research texts to resonant threads. The chapter concluded by outlining the criteria by which this research is to be judged as credible and the limitations inherent in the inquiry. The following chapters present the narrative accounts of the four participants—

Jeremy, Amber, Samantha, and Eleanor.

CHAPTER 6. JEREMY'S NARRATIVE ACCOUNT

Introducing Jeremy

Jeremy is a 27-year-old private piano teacher living in Fullerton, California. He holds a Bachelor degree in Jazz Performance and Music Theory from the Eastman School of Music. Jeremy began learning the piano at age six and began private piano teaching when he was in his second year of university. He has now been teaching piano professionally for approximately nine years. In his private piano teaching practice, Jeremy mainly specialises in teaching jazz piano. He teaches a wide range of ages and levels, from piano prodigies, to professional instrumentalists who desire to learn jazz piano, to high school students auditioning for top conservatories. Outside of his private piano teaching studio, Jeremy teaches a variety of courses at Fullerton College including improvisation, jazz piano, song-writing, and piano ensemble. Alongside his impressive music credentials, Jeremy has a Masters degree in English Comparative Literature. He has also been the chair of the creative track for the National Conference for Keyboard Pedagogy (NCKP) for the past three years.



The Perfect Place for Me

Jeremy began learning the piano at age five at the Yamaha Music School. Describing the Yamaha School as "diverse," Jeremy shared that the school had a focus on "general music-making" rather than developing

specifically classical or specifically jazz musicians. During his time at the Yamaha School, Jeremy learned to listen, sing, play, read, and compose music. He studied classical piano pieces while also learning about improvisation, music theory, and keyboard harmony. Jeremy experienced what it was like to learn in a one-to-one context alongside learning in groups, including playing in ensembles. Although Jeremy learned the basics of piano technique at the Yamaha School, mastering pianistic technique was not the goal of the Yamaha curriculum. Rather, the keyboard was used as a learning tool for acquiring holistic musicianship.

Jeremy described the Yamaha School as the "perfect place" for him. Alongside helping him to develop as a holistic musician, Jeremy shared that the teachers at the Yamaha School nurtured his "innate curiosity." Describing himself, Jeremy disclosed: "I was always the student who teachers just could not control because I was doing it my own way, doing the wrong thing or adding what I shouldn't be adding or subtracting what I shouldn't be subtracting." Jeremy's way of being was not seen as negative by his teachers. Rather, Jeremy felt that he had "understanding teachers" who "valued" his "skillset." Nurturing students' creative ability, however, was what the Yamaha School was all about. Still, on reflection, Jeremy considers himself "fortunate" to have had teachers of the "mindset" of valuing his creativity.

Jeremy's teachers valuing his unique way of being did not mean that they gave him free rein and allowed him to play whatever he wanted whenever he wanted. Rather, they met him half-way and balanced what he desired to do with what he was required to do. Recalling how one of his teachers would do this, Jeremy shared: "He would make me play it [the

piece] the correct way first and then say, ‘Ok. Now let’s hear your way. Now you can play it any way you want after the correct way.’”

Improvising and composing were part of Jeremy’s day to day music-making at the Yamaha School. They were not optional activities, but compulsory activities embedded in the curriculum. This suited Jeremy as improvising and composing music was “the most natural way” for him to create music. Jeremy added that he did not consider improvising or composing to be “something that people didn’t do.”

Jeremy’s compositions were often inspired by his personal interests at the time, such as his love for bugs. When composing a song about bugs, Jeremy composed using his “ear,” “theory knowledge,” and “innate curiosity.” He included lyrics that rhymed and used the piano to make grasshopper sound effects. Jeremy was also given opportunities at the Yamaha School to compose for “a certain kind of ensemble or in a certain style” and the ensemble or style would act as his inspiration.

Jeremy shared that, alongside improvising and composing at the Yamaha School, he was also encouraged to enter local and national composing competitions—this was “a given.” Jeremy began entering composition competitions at age nine and started travelling and performing his compositions in competitions all over the country. The recognition that Jeremy received at competitions “bolstered my confidence.” Continuing to share of the effects of these competition experiences, Jeremy added, “Big performance opportunities led me to push myself.”

Jeremy discovered his love of jazz music during his time at the Yamaha School. Jeremy’s family did not listen to jazz music, therefore he

remains “very thankful” that he had good teachers at the Yamaha School who introduced him to this musical genre. This was mostly in his “private lessons.”

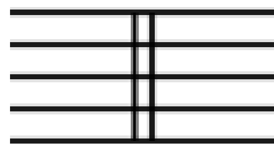
As Jeremy became interested in specialised music subjects like jazz and composition, his Yamaha teachers referred him to specialist teachers for lessons. Some of these specialist teachers were connected to the Yamaha School and others were not. Jeremy commented that throughout his time at the Yamaha School, there would be “communication” between the Yamaha teachers and the specialist teachers. Approaching his adolescence, Jeremy’s private piano teacher at the Yamaha School was committed to pairing him with a teacher who would be able to continue nurturing and developing his composition and jazz pianistic ability. Describing his teacher as “generous,” Jeremy recounted that this teacher passed him on to one of their former students who was a professional composer and jazz pianist outside of the Yamaha School. “She [Jeremy’s private piano teacher at the Yamaha School] saw that that was a more appropriate path for me,” Jeremy explained.

Jeremy’s parents were on board with him commencing piano lessons with this new teacher who specialised in composition and jazz. Discussing his parents’ general attitude towards his musical endeavours, Jeremy shared: “my parents… had [no] preconceived notion about what they wanted me to do with music at all…they were all just ignorant enough [laughs]. They were like, ‘Sure, go for it. Whatever you want.’”

Jeremy dedicated himself “relatively seriously” to jazz in his early teenage years. He engaged in various music-making endeavours related to

jazz including private jazz piano lessons, playing in his high school's jazz band, and he continued to enter, and was successful, in both local and national competitions. Alongside genuinely taking a liking to jazz music, Jeremy also knew that he "didn't want to be a classical pianist." Jazz, therefore, was "always the alternative," Jeremy explained. This was not because Jeremy did not like classical music. Rather, as he further illuminated: "playing the same thing over and over again [as it was in classical piano practice] just seemed dull to me. I wanted to make something truly new, truly my own, and different each time." Jeremy's decision to specialise in jazz music was also swayed by knowing that he didn't have the "discipline or rigor to become a truly great classical pianist."

Despite thoroughly enjoying his jazz endeavours, composition remained Jeremy's love throughout his adolescence. He was in fact leaning towards applying to be a composition major at college and had begun to create a composition portfolio for his college application. After some time, however, Jeremy realised that he "romanticized composition" more than he "actually enjoyed it." Meanwhile, "performance opportunities" were pouring in and he was receiving a lot of "social validation" for his performances. This "helped to incentivise" Jeremy to apply, and be accepted, as a jazz performance major at the Eastman School of Music.



How do I Know When I'm Doing it?

During his junior year at Eastman, Jeremy developed a love for analysing classical music. Prior to beginning college, Jeremy considered music theory, namely in the context of classical music, to be "boring." Studying music theory at a university level therefore was not on Jeremy's agenda. Shortly after commencing his degree, however, Jeremy met a fellow music student who was a music theory major at Eastman. Jeremy found out that they had "great music theory teachers." With great teachers being the major draw card for him, Jeremy decided to add music theory as another major.

Jeremy began "falling in love with music theory" when he "realised that analysing other musicians' work helped me to imitate their style." All throughout his musical life to that point, Jeremy delighted in imitation. He also considered imitation to be "the way that you learn." Jeremy explained that he was always imitating musical ideas and then in line with his curious nature, "pushing slightly beyond" the theoretical concept. Jeremy added that his music theory teachers played a "very important" role in fostering his interest in music theory. He noted, however, that he was also "independently interested in studying the music of the greats" so that he "could take it apart and make it my own."

Jeremy took two courses where he was required to improvise in the style of Debussy's Preludes and improvise fugues. This required him to deconstruct the music theoretically. Jeremy learned to "look under the hood of the car." He began taking classical pieces apart and learning how they worked. Jeremy expressed that by doing so, classical music meant "so much more" to him. His eyes were opened to "the level of artistry with which they're [the composers] putting those things together." He referred to those

courses as “the most valuable courses” that he took and described his “respect” for those composers as growing “exponentially” throughout the duration of the courses.

Jeremy’s performing abilities stood out at the Eastman School of Music. Towards the end of his time at Eastman, Marian McPartland—host of the long-running radio show, *Marian McPartland’s Piano Jazz*—visited the school and heard him play. She later invited him to perform on her show. Jeremy described feeling a “mixture of honoured… and unworthy given the history of the show and also nervous about my playing!” “It was great validation for the recognition I was getting locally but on a national scale,” Jeremy shared. He continued: “At the same time, it was terrifically scary to go on this show that so many of my heroes had been on.” Jeremy explained that Marian had had “every famous jazz pianist on the show. Bill Evans, you name it.”

Soon after his performance on *Marian McPartland’s Piano Jazz* radio show, Jeremy had a piano lesson in New York City with one of his “heroes and absolutely favourite jazz pianists”—Fred Hersch. Jeremy explained that although he was still nervous during this first encounter with Fred, he also did have something of a “swagger” coming to the lesson after just having done Marian’s show. Fred had listened to a recording of Jeremy’s performance on Marian’s show. At the beginning of Jeremy’s lesson with Fred, Fred shared his thoughts on Jeremy’s playing. Paraphrasing Fred, Jeremy recollected that Fred commented:

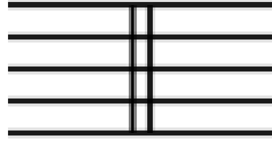
> You’re very talented. You got a lot of technique. You got a lot of skill, but you basically sound like you took a bunch of famous great jazz pianists, put them in a blender, and you’re playing basically what they’re playing. I don’t hear any of your own real input. I don’t hear

> anything new. I don't hear you really expressing what's in the song in a deep way.

Fred's comments made Jeremy's mood drop like "a hot air balloon." Importantly, however, Fred left Jeremy feeling confused as to what it meant to be creative. Prior to Fred's comments, Jeremy thought that to be creative primarily meant to imitate other artists. Jeremy was now hearing, however, that he was to have his own musical ideas. Jeremy did not know "how" to progress from imitating other artists to a place of having his own musical ideas. Jeremy explained his thoughts at the time: "If the process of learning is doing imitation, how do I get to that other place? And how do I know when I'm doing it? What's the standard for that?"

Jeremy shared that Fred's comments were a real turning point for him in questioning what it meant to be creative. Additionally, Jeremy expressed: "it was a process of many years studying with him [Fred] to feel somewhat comfortable that when I went to perform somewhere, I actually had something to offer that was really actually unique."

Jeremy began teaching piano privately while he was a sophomore (second year student) in college. A large portion of his students at this time were young beginners. Jeremy shared that he didn't particularly "push creativity on these students." Explaining his reasoning, Jeremy stated: "That's partly because I was a young teacher and wasn't too thoughtful about these things." Jeremy added, however, that it was also because he "realiz[s]ed" that "it [creativity] wasn't for everyone." With the students who were really excited about composition, however, Jeremy "helped them to be creative" and found that "really rewarding."



Pursuing my Interest in Creativity with Words

After finishing college, Jeremy “stepped away” from studying music and moved to New York City to complete his Masters in English and Comparative Literature. One of the reasons for the move was that Jeremy was “frightened”: “I had no idea what came next. And I wanted to get some experience in something that seemed to offer more ‘steady’ work,” Jeremy explained. He added, however, that it was also because he was “passionate about language and was curious to see what I could learn about literature.”

Jeremy started writing his own lyrics during his English studies. He explained that he was “super interested in creativity with words in addition to music.” Alongside composition and improvisation, songwriting soon became another of Jeremy’s “creative output[s].” Importantly, studying English and Comparative Literature gave Jeremy the “confidence” and “the tools” to start writing lyrics. As Jeremy shared: “It’s [lyric writing] something that I had always wanted to do, but having a bit more training and authority pushed me to actually have the confidence to do it.”

To this day, songwriting takes more “courage creatively” for Jeremy than improvising or composing. He described the feeling of putting a lyric out there as “scary”: “I mean, it’s so much more concrete to put a lyric out there than to do something musically. You’re saying something about yourself,” Jeremy explained. Contrasting his feelings of songwriting to

improvising and composing on the piano, Jeremy explained that when he solely performs music on the piano, he walks out onto the stage with "all of these qualifications" including the "degrees" he has and the "competitions" that he has won. Jeremy stated that is reflected "in the type of repertoire that I'm able to play." When writing lyrics, however, Jeremy explained that he has "no qualifications." He feels that people either think that his lyrics are good or they are not, and that their judgement is really a judgement of him. He shared thoughts that come into his mind: "Well, is this good? Is this not? Is it me? Maybe I'm not good at it at all."

To help ease his worries about songwriting, Jeremy runs his lyrics past a vocalist that he regularly works with. Jeremy described her as "kind of my first guard." Jeremy knows that if she "really likes it, it's going to be cool." Jeremy shared that his "first guard" gives him her honest feedback. He explained: "There have been a couple of times when I gave her a song and she was like, 'I don't really want to sing this.' I was like, 'Okay, noted, let's not let more people hear it.'" Generally, however, Jeremy feels that if he "like[s] it" and if he is "proud" of it, he "really want[s] to share it with people."

When writing songs, Jeremy loves to write about the "sad, nostalgic side." Jeremy shared that most people who know him, including his girlfriend, find this amusing because they know that he doesn't "seem like a sad or nostalgic person at all." Jeremy shared: "[There is] something about that emotion that I find really interesting and beautiful and I love writing about it." He added: "It's so much more interesting to write about that than happiness I guess, or joy. That's so boring [laughter]."

Outside of his masters degree, Jeremy continued studying jazz and composition. He continued to have lessons with Fred Hersch as well as starting lessons with Sophia Rosoff. Reflecting on Fred's contribution to his playing, Jeremy shared that Fred pushed him "so far in terms of creativity" "beyond" what he had experienced at Eastman. Jeremy explained that Fred demanded "a higher level… of artistry" from him by expecting that "every performance" should be "something new and individual that hasn't been done before." Jeremy noted that Fred's demands were "really meaningful to me at that point in my career." Further explaining Fred's teaching contribution towards his playing, Jeremy stated:

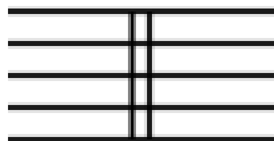
> Fred was key for me in terms of pushing me towards being individualistic (he would chastise me if my performances seemed like they were following in the footsteps of other artists) and authentic (he wanted me to have a really deep understanding of any piece before performing it in a lesson).

Fred also nurtured Jeremy's creativity by encouraging Jeremy to be "more thoughtful." On some occasions, Fred did this by guiding Jeremy to "play a piece in a way that evoked a particular emotion." Jeremy added: "Fred was known for giving recitals where he would take a list of pieces and then a list of emotions and mix and match the emotions with the piece." Above all, however, Jeremy asserted that the "example" that Fred provided was "his most valuable contribution" to him as a musician. Jeremy noted that role models in general are "huge" for him. This is because Jeremy understands that learning how to be creative is "imitating a lot of other people and then trying to synthesise a lot of different approaches to create your own approach."

Jeremy's additional piano teacher Sophia Rosoff, who "was known as

the classical teacher who taught all the best jazz pianists," developed Jeremy's artistry at the piano in the context of classical music. Jeremy shared that Sophia was the last living student of Abby Whiteside and that Sophia brought the Abby Whiteside philosophy to life in her teaching studio. Discussing the Abby Whiteside philosophy, Jeremy explained: "she believed that the teacher has to be creative in order to really address student needs." Jeremy described Sophia as "amazing." He continued to say: "She made me take music apart in all these different unexpected ways… that got me thinking about standard repertoire in very creative ways."

During Jeremy's initial years in New York City, Jeremy had a "certain urgency of emotion to be creative." He shared that his own musical creations were largely motivated by needing an "emotional outlet." For Jeremy, emotional things included "break-ups, certainly romantic things, but also really searching to find yourself." He added: "Moving to a new place, as a freelance musician, trying to figure out what your path is going to be," came with a lot of "uncertainty" for him.



Teaching all These Things that I've Been Learning

After four years in New York City, Jeremy received a number of teaching positions across the country. When Jeremy reached the age of 25, he began teaching music full-time at Western Michigan University where he taught "all these things that I've been learning." This included jazz piano,

improvisation, songwriting, jazz theory, and jazz history. Teaching improvisation really stimulated Jeremy's thinking about creativity because he considered it "hard to teach." This made Jeremy think deeply about the various aspects involved in creating music. He came up with "four aspects of music-making." Jeremy explained these:

> One is technique. The second is… I call it brain or inferior knowledge. The third is the ear, and then the fourth I call it the heart, and that's emotional input, musical charisma or whatever you want to call it.

Jeremy feels that creativity "really comes in… when you can draw connections between those four elements." He shared: "You know that you've reached a good place when your technique can respond to what your emotion is, or when you can take a theory input and use it for emotional purposes." Jeremy sees those four skills as necessary to be a "great improviser." He believes that if any of those things are "missing," one will most likely not be "very successful as an improviser." He added that someone probably needs all four to be "any kind of musician."

Jeremy referred to the uniting of these four aspects as "moments when we do that thing that the robot can't do." He in fact discussed how one of the ways that he thinks about creativity is as "that thing we could never really truly teach a robot to do":

> We can get pretty close to getting a robot to know when to slow down or when to speed up or how to do dynamics but that true interpretation, that true real creativity with repertoire, I feel like it's something, it takes the soul, whatever.

Jeremy saw the expression of the "soul" as "bringing in the totality of your experience." This includes bringing in "other parts of your personality and your character and your upbringing." He added that it's also "doing what

your teachers told you, what your teachers told you you couldn't do." Jeremy noted, however, that he also sees the "ear" as "really key," in terms of an individual's response to the sound that they are producing. He explained: "because with robots it's all output, but when we're playing music, we have the input too and we're responding to the sound that we're making."

As a teacher, Jeremy uses his four aspects of musical creativity as a way of "explain[ing] some of my students' problems." He shared that sometimes he will explain this to a student as follows: "Well, you're doing really well with your brain element, but you really need to strengthen your muscle memory, your technique development." To Jeremy, this way of understanding and explaining music-making "is just really important as a teacher."

To assist students in focusing on some of the four aspects, Jeremy will give tasks. He explained:

> I do it kind of as a last day activity for improvisation class. I have these little stories that I give out to students and I tell them not to share, and then they have to perform the emotion of that story and try to get the rest of the class to guess it. For me, that one's all about the heart, they're not using any theory or anything.

Jeremy shared that he often received comments from students such as: "I really didn't consider trying to play… from an emotional place when I improvise."

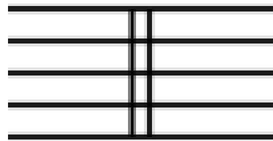
Alongside teaching, Jeremy began composing pedagogical works which "inspired" his creativity even further. "When you have to deal with certain limitations based on students' ability level, it forces you to compose differently," Jeremy shared. "Limitations," as Jeremy continued, "always

make for interesting composition projects, in my opinion." He further added that he really enjoys "thinking out how to write something that meets my standards for being fresh and interesting and musical but also playable or whatever I'm going to write for."

Teaching full-time began to limit Jeremy's time to experience creative epiphanies and focus on his own creative endeavours. "The level of investment in students," Jeremy explained, "definitely takes practically a lot of musical time and a lot of emotional energy." Having the "energy" and the "time to sit down on the piano" is the part that Jeremy really "miss[es]." Jeremy also misses having a creative "community." When in New York City, Jeremy was around people who were being musically creative and presenting their musical creations all the time. Additionally, people were encouraging him and hiring him. He felt creatively inspired by "walking the streets of New York… on a snowy day" and "going to a museum." He reminisced: "There's just all that energy that's pushing you towards the piano." If he had "something to say," he wanted to "express it." Now living in the small-town university environment, and despite having great colleagues and great students, Jeremy feels that he does not have that same sense of this "big community," this "all in this artistic thing together" feeling. He shared feeling a sense of "repetition" where he currently lives and works: "It's the same few venues, the same few musicians, that sort of repetition." Being surrounded by like-minded people and having that "creative energy" all around was important to Jeremy's creative production. Jeremy added that, when he was in New York, he regularly "associated with people who were creative too and always had an easier time relating to creative people."

In hindsight, Jeremy thinks that he was “too young” to take on a full-time teaching load at 25:

> I think a career can kind of be like a start-up company in that you want to be scrappy and make lots of connections and gain lots of experiences at the beginning and then cash in with a regular job later. I think I missed a lot of opportunities to be young, creative, and broke [laughs].



Creativity is About Putting Yourself Into It

Today, Jeremy considers himself primarily as a jazz pianist and composer. He is currently involved in a number of creative endeavours. These include being the group leader of a chamber jazz trio called the Housewarming Project where he writes most of the songs, playing a lot of jazz including solo piano jazz, accompanying vocalists, and playing in traditional jazz groups. In many of these music-making contexts, Jeremy collaborates with other musicians. Jeremy shared that he experiences “a lot more surprises” when making music with other people compared to making music on his own. When making music with others: “people push you in different directions,” Jeremy explained. He continued: “It’s just like the conversation is going to go somewhere very different than your past conversations, just because we have different inputs.” Jeremy also finds it “so fun” to get together with musicians after some time apart and “seeing what the other musicians are bringing to the table that’s new, and also to see what you’re bringing to the table that’s new because everybody has changed

so much in the past three months." He further shared:

> We might play a run of 12 concerts and then, by the end of those concerts… I don't want to say things are getting stale, but we're having to maybe make a conscious effort to continue to push out of our normalcy. We come back a few months later and it's fresh again. It's got to be all the practice that we've put in for the 12 months, [and it] was also about the surprise of not having dealt with people for a little while. That's one of my favourites—going away and coming back and everything is seamlessly new.

Jeremy sees creativity as being about "self-expression." "It's about… putting yourself into it. It's about not doing it the same way every time. It's about freshness," he shared. He continued to explain: "Creating is about having something new to say that everybody needs to hear that is going to make a difference… [or] that's really different than what anybody has done before." Additionally, Jeremy finds it "rewarding" to have "something that's really your own." He shared that creating a piece of music feels "very different" to just "playing well."

When explaining what makes his musical creations "different" from anyone else's, Jeremy expressed:

> I think it's just different just because it's mine. It's the result of my weird amalgamation of experiences instead of someone else's. Sometimes, I'll set out to make something really new, but sometimes it just comes out because I'm a different person than anyone else.

In line with these thoughts, Jeremy explained creating as typically a "subconscious" process rather than a conscious process. Unpacking this viewpoint, Jeremy shared that he does not ever think: "I've been practicing this Charlie Parker solo and now I'm playing with the Charlie Parker solo." Jeremy considers it like "something marinating." He explained this idea further by saying: "you put the musical ideas on the stove and then it starts to bubble and then you come back to it and it's different. It's not

intentionally different, it just happens naturally." Jeremy also described this process as being like "seeing an old friend that you haven't seen for six months. You have all these other things to talk about."

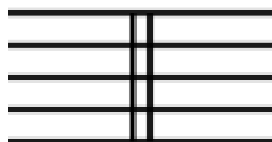
Jeremy added that due to having elite aural perception and perfect pitch during his performances, creating is about "taking a chance." When discussing his aural skills, Jeremy explained:

> That's one of the good things and bad things about getting your training to a really high level is that actually you do surprise yourself less and less when you know what's going to come out. As someone who's always had perfect pitch, in that sense, there's not a lot of necessarily big surprises of like, 'Oh, I didn't know how that was going to work out.' There are moments when something just works out much better than you would have thought. For me it's sometimes more about taking a chance.

Although having an established creative identity, Jeremy struggles with disciplining his creative urges. Jeremy shared that when creating, his "strongest tools" are his "ear," his "good theory knowledge," and his "innate curiosity". His "struggle," however, "has actually been finding the other side of the path of being able to rein it in when necessary, being able to do the same thing twice, having that other side of the scale." Jeremy feels like he's spent a lot of time "playing catch-up, trying to strengthen those kinds of core skills" such as technique, scales and arpeggios, sight-reading, and reading music notation: "Everything where I couldn't rely on my ear," Jeremy explained. Like when he was a child, Jeremy still sees himself as unable to "do the same thing twice." He shared that "it's not just in music, [but] in other aspects of my life. It's just how it goes for me."

Jeremy's "urgency of emotion" to create has "settled a bit" now compared to when he first moved to New York City to study his Masters. He now has different motivations to create. Sometimes the motivation is

“professional” while other times “it’s that I know it will make me feel more happy/satisfied than to not create something new.” Jeremy sometimes still experiences, however, those “strong emotional feelings” to create “that prompted his creativity originally.”



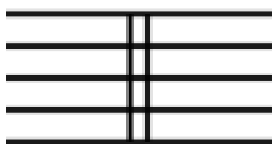
Teaching Creativity Requires a Creative Teacher!

In terms of his private piano teaching practice, Jeremy mostly teaches jazz piano students. Many of his students come to him for lessons already “familiar with my playing/teaching.” The age and level of Jeremy’s students are wide-ranging, with him teaching “everything from piano prodigies… to a professional guitarist in Hong Kong who wants to learn jazz piano, to a student at a local arts high school who is auditioning for top conservatories.”

Jeremy reflected that he is still very much working on the “how” of fostering students’ creativity. He develops the “how” through the help of his own teachers’ ethos and through research. Summing up the comments of one of his own teachers on the teaching/learning of creativity, Jeremy said that “the question ‘what if’ is at the heart of everything.” Reflecting on this comment, Jeremy stated: “It’s hard to do better or be more concise than that!”

Ultimately, however, Jeremy considered that “teaching creativity

requires a creative teacher!” Explaining his belief, Jeremy said, “Every student arrives with a massively different skillset, different goals, and seems to respond to different cues.” He added that some students “learn much slower” than he would like or who “have far too many gaps in their training to fill.” Jeremy reasons that the teacher is required to be a “creative teacher” because teaching is “so student-dependent,” meaning that the teacher is required to respond to each student’s individual needs.



Summary

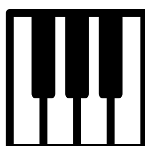
During Jeremy’s formative and adolescent years, socio-cultural factors important to the construction of his creative identity included developing the necessary tools to be creative, including an aural perception of sound and music theory knowledge; having opportunities to creatively make-music, including performance opportunities; receiving social affirmation for his creative works; and discovering and working in the area of his musical preference. These factors continued to influence the construction process in Jeremy’s young adult years. Coming into his young adult years, socio-cultural factors that promoted the construction of Jeremy’s creative identity as a musician were creative role models, including one of his piano teachers. Factors that made the construction process problematic during Jeremy’s young adult years were notions surrounding what it meant to be musically creative.

Currently, socio-cultural factors that continue to develop Jeremy's creative identity as a musician include collaboration with other musicians. Jeremy's creative identity influences his teaching practice in the way that he is/was able to pass on the same creative skills that he possesses to his students. His ability to effectively nurture the creative identities of his students, however, is largely due to becoming more thoughtful about creativity, being objectively aware of the value of creative music-making, and being a creative teacher in the sense of being responsive to students' needs and goals.

CHAPTER 7. AMBER'S NARRATIVE ACCOUNT

Introducing Amber

Amber is a 35-year-old piano teacher who has been teaching piano for approximately ten years. She teaches full-time from her private studio in the afternoons and in schools during certain days where students come out of their usual classes. Outside of piano teaching, Amber regularly collaborates with other musicians. She plays in trios, bands, and accompanies choirs. Amber's real-world musical endeavours are always in collaboration with other people.



The Self-Sufficient Girl

Amber grew up in the small coastal town of Merimbula in southern New South Wales, Australia. Her mother surprised her with a keyboard when she was six, hoping that the instrument would become some sort of "friend" to Amber, given that she was an only child. Amber strongly recalls trying to work out how to play *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* by ear the day that she was given the keyboard. Her mother, was very supportive of her efforts, making comments like: "You're an expert at *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*!"

When considering a piano teacher for Amber, Amber's parents did not know what to look for. Although Amber's mother played the guitar and sang, Amber explained that her parents had "no traditional music training."

Amber's parents did, eventually, find a local piano teacher. As for the teacher's qualifications, Amber shared that she was "unsure of his qualifications" but knew that he "had no secondary music qualifications."

Reflecting on her formative years of piano learning, Amber shared that she had a "little bit of a rocky start." She added: "Of course at six, you don't really realise." Although her teacher introduced her to music reading via learning mnemonics such as FACE and Good Boys Deserve Fruit, she didn't learn how to read music or to play by ear. Amber explained that she learned to play piano solely through "copying" her teacher. She "bumbled along for a couple of years" but once the music she was learning started to become harder, Amber could no longer rely on copying her teacher or "hearing the piece in the lesson once and then having to remember how it goes for the rest [of the week]." Amber remembers feeling "frustrated" by this and "breaking down in tears" around age ten and saying to her mum: "I can't read the notes." Unaware of what Amber was supposed to be learning, her mother replied: "Are you meant to?" Amber answered: "Yes." Reflecting on her question, Amber said: "they [parents] just weren't aware of what I was supposed to be learning."

Through word of mouth, Amber's parents heard about a piano teacher named Alan, who lived north in Moruya, one and a half hours' drive from Merimbula. Amber shared that Alan was a "qualified" teacher. "He held a Bachelor of Music and was also a qualified school teacher and previously held a high school principal position," Amber explained. Although Alan was retired from school teaching when Amber commenced lessons with him, "he still maintained a busy piano teaching studio and was still a prolific performer and accompanist in his local community." Amber shared that her

and Alan "got along great" and "bonded." "I still keep in touch with him," she added.

Amber's parents "faithfully" drove her to Moruya once a fortnight to have a lesson with Alan. "I'm very glad my parents made a sacrifice," Amber expressed. Amber remembers her mother and father strongly supporting her involvement in piano studies. She explained: "They just saw it as part of my education because I didn't go to school and have classroom music so… [it] was part and parcel—something I was going to do like committed work." Amber added that her parents "saw that I probably had ability and I was fairly committed." Referring to her parent's attitudes toward the four-hour round trip once a fortnight, Amber shared: "We just made it a nice day out, piano lesson day."

From the very first lesson, Alan introduced Amber to an "intervallic approach" to music reading. "Suddenly it all made sense, and it clicked from that day, I would start reading fine from day dot one," Amber reminisced. Amber progressed "really, really quickly" from that day. She described herself as one of those students who "whizzed through their repertoire quite quickly."

Alan guided Amber through the Alfred piano method books. Amber had the Alfred lesson book, repertoire book, technique book, and theory book. She had "every single one they had," Amber explained. Amber felt that this provided her with "everything I needed, frankly. All the concepts." Further explaining Alan's approach to music teaching, Amber shared that Alan had "that traditional sight-reading approach to teaching." This "worked well" for her. Additionally, Amber realises that Alan had a

"repertoire rich approach" approach to teaching and learning. She explained: "I never just learned my exam pieces. I always learned masses of music." Amber added: "I don't remember us spending a lot of time doing any kind of separate exercises or anything. He gave me a few later on for dexterity but mostly we just worked through… the method books." Amber claimed that the repertoire rich approach to learning was "great for sight reading and just general musical experience and knowledge." Amber added that later in her time learning from Alan, Alan set her up with her first music library. He ensured that she had "a good collection of music, sheet music, proper big companions, the big Beethoven Sonatas."

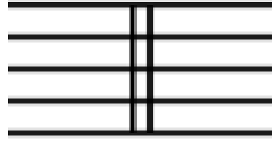
While learning from Alan, Amber completed exams and participated in master classes offered by music associations. Amber recalled: "I don't think my teacher [Alan] was too big on competitive music making." Amber, therefore, did not enter many competitions such as eisteddfods.

Although lessons were scheduled as 30 minutes, Amber's lessons with Alan were typically two hours long. "Chuffed" that Amber and her parents would make the long trip to Moruya, Alan would never charge extra for the lessons. Amber's flexibility in her home-schooling schedule also allowed for two-hour lessons to be feasible. Amber described the lesson length as "very beneficial." This was not only because the lessons were often only once a fortnight, but because this period allowed them to "cover a great deal of repertoire and other aspects such as theory work." It also permitted for Alan to assign Amber with "plenty to work on until the next lesson," although, as Amber claimed: "I was a fairly self-sufficient student and would simply go onto new pieces as needed." Commenting on Alan's teaching methods, Amber explained: "He involved me in discussions and

used questioning but also taught me skills directly when needed."

Between lessons, alongside practising the songs she had been assigned to learn from her last lesson, Amber would relish learning additional repertoire. She strongly recalls eagerly flipping through the next pages in her method books, choosing the pieces that "resonated" with her, learning them, and skipping over the rest. Amber claims that she was able to do this because she could sight-read. Additionally, as Amber was home-schooled and because playing piano was "what I enjoyed doing in my spare time," fitting in time for practice was never an issue for Amber.

Overall, Amber explained that her music learning experience with Alan gave her a "very good grounding." Alan's teaching "had a strong focus on promoting my musicality [including expressivity and technique], my aural skills and a practical understanding of music theory." Amber strongly remembers "always" doing "harmonic analysis of everything." She explained: "Under his tutelage, I quickly learned to look at any place in a score and be able to tell, without playing it, what was occurring in the underlying harmony." Amber considers that this was a skill that was "really amazing" to have. Alan also allowed Amber's "instincts" to guide her original interpretation of pieces, "as long as it made sense musically." Amber described Alan's great goal in teaching was "to help me develop my musicality." She added: "He quickly identified that I had musical ability and always strove to help me develop those skills." On reflection, Amber describes Alan as "just a fantastic solid music teacher". She is aware, however, that she had "very traditional piano lessons."



Learning to Improvise on the Job

Approaching her adolescence, Amber became involved in music activities at her church. Amber had grown up going to church music practices with her mother and father. She recalled watching and listening to the youth band and thinking that they were “very, very cool.” Amber joined her church’s music group as their keyboard player at age 11. She described having to “quickly” learn how to play in a band.

Amber explained that being a Pentecostal church, the youth band played a diverse range of genres, including “rock band style” music. The musicians were able to read from chord charts or leads sheets and were skilled in improvisation. Now being in the church music team meant that Amber had to do the same. These were not skills, however, that Amber possessed at the time. Amber’s ability to read music, however, provided her with a starting point. Laughing at herself, Amber shared:

> No one ever taught me how to play chords or inversions or read a chord chart or a lead sheet. I learned by reading the full music… like a pop style worship song which is like with all the repeats… 10 pages long of like the same four chords [laughs].

To begin the learning process, Amber would read fully-notated piano sheet music of the pop style worship song and study the piano score, analysing how it was arranged. This included analysing how chord inversions were arranged. Amber described “the level of understanding of

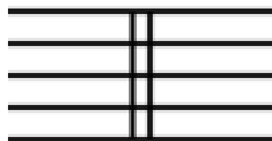
chords and harmonic relationships" that she developed in her private piano lessons as being "very helpful" when she came to experiment with "chord playing." Over time, Amber "pared it down and pared it down" until she was "just reading words with chords written above them." She explained that the transition of moving away from the full music score to reading words with chords written above them as a "gradual process" where she "weaned off the really big scores within 6-12 months." This was "out of necessity because they're rather unwieldy!" Amber explained. She described what she was doing as "still fairly basic… because… no one ever really showed you."

Amber acquired many skills through this process. She shared that although she did not realise it at the time, by analysing the scores, she was "actually learning all the standard pop style accompaniments." Additionally, she could eventually "play melodies by ear" and "just very naturally learned to harmonise them [melodies] with the right chord inversion to keep the melody note at the top." Amber also learned to improvise in the instrumental sections in church songs. The guidance she received from the other musicians in the church music band was: "Anything over these chords, you just work it out." Amber's understanding of "chords and harmonic relationships" helped her with "improvisation." Ultimately, Amber learned through doing. Amber continued playing in the music team until age 18.

Amber explained that the way that she made music in church (playing by ear, reading and interpreting chord charts and lead sheets, and improvising) was "never something that crossed over into my piano lessons." Amber shared that at the time, however, she "didn't think of it," meaning she did not think if it could be beneficial for the two music-making

contexts to overlap. “They were naturally very separate,” Amber explained. Describing her thinking at the time, Amber shared: “This is what I do when I play with the band… This is what I do because they don’t have a piano player except for me.” Amber continued: “When I’m in my music lesson and doing my piano exams, I do this other thing. That’s the real music-making [laughs].”

Amber also saw the two music-making contexts as fulfilling different functions. Amber saw that playing in church was “filling a need as a functional musician.” She saw the ability to play melodies by ear, read chord charts and lead sheets and harmonise melodies more work-like or functional, work that filled a need in the community. On the other hand, she saw her piano lessons as being more for her “development as a musician.” Amber shared that she didn’t think that making music via improvisation was something that she would ever do in her piano lessons, nor did she feel like she was missing out on anything in her private piano lessons. Amber added: “The term ‘creative’ wasn’t mentioned when I was learning the piano.”



We Were Supposed to do Things Differently!

During high school, Amber took on a few piano students of her own. She taught them the way in which she was taught. “I taught piano privately, both in my own studio at home and in schools. I taught the private piano lessons in schools alongside teaching music classes as a part-time school

music teacher," Amber shared.

After eight years of piano tuition with Alan, Amber moved to Canberra to pursue tertiary music studies at the Australian National University (ANU) School of Music. There she enrolled in the Bachelor of Music (BMus) degree and majored in classical piano. Although her degree was embedded within the western classical tradition of music teaching, learning, and performing, Amber explained that the School of Music did not hold the "traditional view that you have to adhere exactly to the score." Rather, as Amber shared, the School "encouraged us to play with freedom, explore our own ideas and play new music." Describing the school as "broad-minded" and "forward thinking," Amber continued to share that the school held the belief that:

> What they've [composers] written down is just what they wrote down in the moment and that a piece of music is something that still continues to evolve. It's not something set in stone. It's not something static. It's something alive that can continue to evolve. Our job as performers is not to be an automaton, simply replicating what we see on the dots because a pianola can do that. Our job was to bring it to life in a new way which was very cool.

Amber shared what the school's ideas looked like in practice. Although the notes and the rhythms were fixed, teachers at the school would be open to "improvising… in ornamentation and cadenzas," changes to fingering to make it "practical," and changes to "pedalling and often articulation, either to make it historically informed or to make it work with the piano, a modern piano."

Amber described it as a "great environment to learn in as a classical musician." Additionally, Amber shared that it was the first time that she was "introduced to the idea that we were supposed to do things differently. We

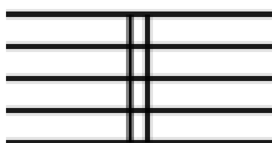
were supposed to compose, improvise," and that historically, "it was considered extremely inappropriate to play a repeat without changing something." Amber explained that she "didn't realise that when I was a young person learning." Amber added that it was also the first time where she was "introduced to the idea that we could change the interpretation to make it work for us in terms of how we felt the music should go. Of course, it always had to make sense logically and make sense with the music still."

The school's ideas regarding classical interpretation permeated through all of Amber's lessons. One of her teachers was so in favour of original interpretation that he did not like students to listen to a recording. He wanted students to come up with "their own interpretation first of the piece" so that the recording would not impede a student's natural instincts or natural interpretation. Amber described moving from playing only the dots on the page to "chang[ing] the interpretation" as "a smooth transition." She explained that her main teacher Geoffrey Lancaster "gave detailed guidance on articulation and ornamentation… so I didn't find it to be a problem." She also added, however: "Because again, my first piano teacher [Alan]… wasn't prescriptive with interpretation of those works anyway," she didn't find it difficult to "bring it [the composition] to life in a new way."

Although Amber learned a lot about historically informed improvisation practices, she shared that "there wasn't time to exactly go into, 'Here's a piece of music. Here's how you could improvise on a repeat or here is how'—in terms of like transferring it to your own playing, is what I mean." Amber stated that her training was only "brief" and "unless you sought him [Geoffrey Lancaster] out and had lessons just on how to

improvise in a Haydn Sonata or something… there wasn't time to exactly go into [it]." Amber explained: "Unfortunately, probably in the rush of getting ready for recitals and things, I probably didn't get much time to actually go into how one then does improvise in a historically informed way." Amber said: "There just wasn't time, unfortunately, I would have loved to have done more of that."

During her studies at university, Amber continued to teach a few students on the side. Amber had opportunities to collaboratively make music during her bachelor degree. Amber's collaborative music-making experiences helped her to see "the possibilities of the piano, beyond solo performance."



Studying all I Can About Education

After completing her BMus, Amber decided to further her qualifications and enrolled in a Diploma of Education (DipEd). Amber "wanted to study all that I could about education." She did her DipEd at the University of Wollongong through a remote campus located in Bega Valley in New South Wales. During her DipEd, Amber taught both in the classroom and in the private instrumental studio, teaching a variety of instruments. She was working a "1/2 to 2/3 private teaching load while doing the DipEd." Amber taught piano, voice, guitar, and bass. She taught "whatever kids needed." Amber simultaneously taught from her own private

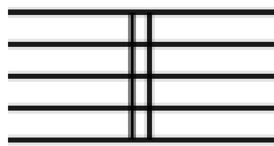
studio at home and in schools. “I did immediately get a job straight after my DipEd, at one of the schools where I did my main practicum placements,” Amber explained.

Amber taught classroom music for approximately two to three years and loved this time. Her teaching demographic was predominately primary school children—kindergarten up to Year 8. Although Amber had completed her DipEd, she did not find that the diploma helped her private piano teaching. On the other hand, she felt that her actual practical experience of teaching in classrooms did, although the transfer of skills took some time. Classroom music teaching was Amber’s only class.

After teaching classroom music for a few years, from 2010 to mid-2013 on the far south coast, Amber moved from New South Wales to the Australian Capital Territory in 2014. For work options, she contemplated either re-registering as a classroom music teacher, or setting up her own private piano studio. Amber chose to set up her own full-time private piano teaching studio. This was an easier process than re-registering as a classroom music teacher and although she loved teaching music to students in the classroom setting, she “missed taking children to that very advanced level on an instrument.” The process of setting up her own studio happened very easily and quickly, and in the end, Amber decided that she was happier working for herself. Eventually, Amber returned to full-time teaching one-to-one in her own private studio.

Although Amber was happier working for herself, there were aspects of her experience in classroom music teaching that she missed, such as “that energy that is generated when young musicians work together.” As Amber

expressed: “As difficult as it is sometimes to corral all those kids and get them working together in the class, I did find… I missed some of that [energy]. Going solely back to one-to-one, felt a bit one-dimensional.” Amber recalled that her mentor who was one of the aural professors at the Australian National University (ANU) said: “Why don’t you just have two kids for 45 minutes instead of one kid at a time for the 30 minutes?” Wanting the best of both worlds—“the energy in collaboration and ensemble music-making while also retaining the rigor of the one-to-one format”—Amber decided to offer both group and one-to-one piano lessons in her private studio.



Sharing Creativity with my Students

Creativity plays a large role in Amber’s current private piano teaching practice. Alongside teaching “performance, healthy technique, scales/modes and technical studies, theory… aural, sight-reading… [and] rhythm drills,” Amber also teaches “realising chord charts/lead sheets… composition, improvisation, and harmonic analysis.” Additionally, Amber incorporates songwriting into her lessons.

Creative activities are embedded within Amber’s private piano lessons for various reasons. Although in Amber’s own learning experience, her private piano lessons and playing on the church music team did not overlap, Amber shared: “Now as a teacher, it makes me realise that students who

perhaps don't get the opportunity to play in a band and like that, it does make me stop and think, how will they ever learn those functional skills if I don't teach them in the lesson?" She continued:

> Because if I hadn't had that experience, then I never would have learned them in my traditional piano lessons, I suppose, in my formal lessons. It makes me think, what if these kids finish their lessons with me and they go to uni and they get an opportunity to go play with a band or do a gig… I don't want them to have to say, 'Do you have the sheet music?' I want them to be able to not miss out on an opportunity to play music with others because I never taught them how to read a chord chart. This has made me aware that I need to include that in the lesson. At the time, I never would have said that I was missing out on anything in my piano lesson.

Following on from this, Amber views creativity as inextricable to what it means to be a functional musician. Explaining her thoughts, Amber said:

> I think the freedom to explore, make your own music, improvise… ties in very closely with your ability to be a functional musician, able to create music from not very much, for example, like a chord chart, that takes a lot of creativity… A different type of skill to being able to read music.

Amber also includes creative music-making in piano teaching and learning as she sees it as a means to ensuring that students stay "addicted" to music-making. She considers creativity to make children addicted to music making "because children are inherently creative! Encouraging this breathes life into their piano studies," she explained. Continuing this line of thought, Amber hopes that through creative music-making, music will be:

> Something that they're encouraged to do for the rest of their life, not necessarily as a career, but I hope that they keep on making music, for themselves and with other people, because I think these kinds of creative skills do enable you to collaborate more easily, with all types of different musicians.

Amber highlighted that creativity in her private piano teaching practice entails giving students "freedom." By freedom, Amber means:

"giving them the freedom to improvise, compose and make their music, arrange their own pieces." Amber mentioned using improvisation as a tool to encourage students to "explore music beyond just written sheet music." Amber alternatively explained freedom as:

> I allow them to choose their own path. Whether they wish to do exams or not is up to them. Repertoire choice and styles are up to them, classical, jazz, pop, composing, improv. I support them to follow whatever inspires them.

Amber in fact claimed that giving students freedom to "drive the lesson quite a bit and choose their own repertoire" has fostered creative exploration in her private piano teaching practice "more than anything." Using the example of composing, Amber shared that when she is asked by others: "How do you get them to do all this composing," Amber responds, "I just let them pretty much… with most, it just sort of happen[s]." Amber connected this to intrinsic motivation. She believed that:

> Unless you intrinsically motivate them, they're not going to do anything. That's just where we are with education, which is a good thing. No 'play this because you have to because I told you to.' That's just not where things are anymore.

Amber noted that to encourage creativity in her students, she needs to be a "flexible" teacher, being "flexible in the moment" to "go with their [students'] ideas… and the things that have popped into their heads." To do so, Amber has "to be willing to let go of a lesson plan." She also talked quite extensively about not letting her own "limitations as a musician and a teacher" "get in the way" of what her students want to learn. Explaining her thoughts in further detail, Amber shared:

> I'm not jazz-trained… but I made a commitment that if my student wanted to pursue that avenue, then I would just learn what I needed to do to support that… I've never studied jazz formally, but if that's

> where my students need to go, then sure, we talk about modes and play modes and improvise and talk about how I build ninth chords and whatever they need. We work it out together. I don't want to be the one that stands in their way.

Broadening her musical horizons has also been "absolutely" necessary for Amber to keep up with her students. She describes this process as being "really quite fun" as it keeps her "practicing, keeps me learning." When she cannot stay ahead of them, however, she says: "It doesn't matter. I'm like, 'You're awesome. Go for it. That sounds great.'"

Amber's own creative experiences, such as actualising chord charts and improvising on the keyboard in her church music team growing up, has "impacted my life as a teacher." This is because she's been able to "share" creativity with her students. "I had that experience, and I think if I hadn't had that experience of being—just learning music other than the classical kind of repertoire, I might not have been as confident," Amber explained.

Amber's own experience of learning chords through playing pop worship songs at church also influences the way that she teaches these same skills today. Amber shared: "I try to be aware of that, that actually how I learned was a little on the job." This means that Amber teaches chords in context. She explained:

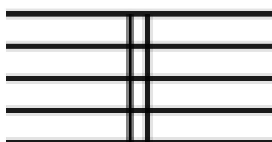
> Rather than just learning random chords, 'Let's play all the major chords: C, C-sharp major, D,' which you're probably never going to do in a song. Let's work within one key signature and see what are some of the standard progressions. It's probably going to be much more useful to them in the long run.

She also noted that:

> When students come to you and say, 'I want to do this song', and I can't find the sheet music, I'm like, 'We don't need the sheet music. Look at what we can do. Let's have a listen to it. You've got the chords there. Let's make our own arrangement just by listening to it.'

Amber stated: “I wouldn’t have probably had those skills as much if I hadn’t had that experience [in the church band].”

Creative exploration brings “satisfaction” to Amber’s teaching. This is because: “every single lesson is different so I never get bored.” Amber hopes that improving, chord playing, and jazz playing is “inspiring” for her students as well. She also noted that her conceptualisation of creativity that she brings to life in her teaching practice has “evolved, especially as I have learned and grown as a teacher and learned from professors and mentors, pretty much.”



I am Very Much a Beginner Creator

Amber, to date, sees herself as very much a “beginner” creator. She views creativity as freedom—not to be a “slave to the dots,” but free to “explore music beyond just written sheet music.” Through making music in church contexts, Amber sees herself as creative through on the spot arranging and improvising. Teaching inspires Amber’s own musical creativity. She shared: “my students inspire me to do things I wouldn’t do just for myself, such as arranging pieces and creating new resources.”

Amber understands that having a creative practice is a disciplined practice. Amber expressed:

You still need to practice just as strictly, you just practice in a slightly

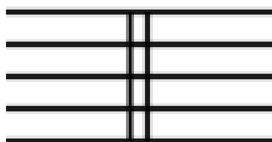
> different way. You practice ideas that can be rearranged on the spot for your improvisation… Rather than practicing notes in one particular order, you practice all these different ideas and know that they're all going to come together in a completely different way on the day, or maybe just possible have nothing to do with how you practised [chuckles].

Amber sees creative abilities, including being able to go across genres, as "open[ing] other doors wider as well." She explained:

> Now I'm learning a little bit more of those skills myself—so far my formal accompanying gigs have been more rooted in the classical tradition, but now I think if some singer needed me to go and do a jazz style accompaniment for them, I could do that now as well.

Time limits Amber's ability to pursue her own creative development. "Unfortunately," as Amber explained, "it's all just time. I can't devote as much time to it as I would like." This is because she now runs "a multi-teacher piano studio and most of my time now goes into admin and staff development, plus I'm studying masters. (I've even less time now I have newborn twins!)" When she does find time, however, Amber is not drawn to improvising or composing. "Composing for its own sake doesn't interest me," Amber shared. Rather, Amber enjoys playing something that sounds impressive that isn't too hard to learn. She also enjoys "arranging music for students, particularly for duets and ensemble piano." Amber is interested in creating resources for "ensemble playing, for aural studies, for two and three part singing etc." She mentioned that she in fact finds it difficult to separate her piano playing from her teaching and to "do something that's purely for me." This is because she constantly comes back to thinking about her teaching practice and students, such as: "Oh, that worked really well. Oh, this is a great piece. Oh, so and so would really like this [laughs]." She always has the idea "that I'd love to go back… maybe do another performance diploma or something, just to get me playing again. A little bit

later after masters… I’ll come back to perform again, after all this academia.”



Summary

During Amber’s formative and adolescent years, socio-cultural factors important to the construction of her creative identity as a musician included acquiring the tools to be creative, receiving opportunities to engage in creative music-making, and having creative role models. Coming into her young adult years, factors that promoted the construction process included musical collaboration and being exposed to liberating ideologies surrounding the purpose of music notation. Time and a lack of guidance on how to improvise, however, specifically within her formal piano lessons, restricted the extent to which Amber could explore creative music-making in the context of pre-existing repertoire.

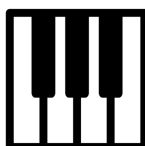
Amber’s creative identity influences her teaching practice in that she is able to share creative skills with her students. Her ability to effectively nurture the creative identities of her students is also tied to valuing creative music-making, having a holistic view of music creativity, and being a creative teacher. This is in the sense of shaping students’ learning experiences around their individual desires and needs, alongside being a flexible teacher who is able to run with students’ ideas in the moment. Factors that currently promote the continual development of Amber’s

creative identity include opportunities to create pedagogical resources for students. Factors that deny or make problematic the construction process include time and mindset, namely a struggle to focus on her own music-making rather than her teaching practice. Amber, however, is not drawn to creative music-making when she has the time but would rather play something that sounds impressive that is not too hard to learn.

CHAPTER 8. SAMANTHA'S NARRATIVE ACCOUNT

Introducing Samantha

Samantha is a 51-year-old Australian private piano teacher who lives in Sydney. She began playing the piano at age five and began teaching the piano privately at age 16. Samantha holds an Associate in Music, Australia (AMusA), awarded by the AMEB, Licentiate in Music, Australia (LMusA), awarded by the AMEB, and Bachelor of Music (BMus). Outside of her private piano teaching studio, Samantha has taught group piano tuition at the Yamaha Music School which later became Australian Music Schools (AMS). She is also the esteemed author and publisher of the *BlitzBooks* series' with her most recent publication being the *BlitzBooks Rote Repertoire series* (BBRR). In addition to her teaching and writing, Samantha currently enjoys playing arrangements of old songs at a nearby nursing home.



A Classical Upbringing

Samantha was born into a family who owned various keyboard instruments. Her parents owned a piano as her father played, but Samantha does not remember him playing much when she was growing up. Both of her grandmothers also owned keyboard instruments. One grandmother had an organ while the other owned a piano. Samantha only remembers one of her grandmothers, namely the one who owned the piano, tickling the ivory

keys while she was growing up. "She could play by ear. She used to do the stride piano accompaniments and make up—She would just play songs," Samantha recalled. Samantha was not "inspired" by her grandmother's playing however. "I just knew she could do it," Samantha stated.

Samantha's parents were the ones who decided Samantha should start piano lessons at the age of five. During her first year of piano lessons, however, Samantha "refused to practice." Her mother, thinking that: "Well, she's clearly not interested if she's not practicing," therefore took piano lessons away from her. Commenting on her mother's reasoning, Samantha claimed that that was "so not true." After only a short spell from piano learning, Samantha began showing "interest again" towards the piano simply by "tinkling" away at the keys. Her mother asked her: "Would you like your lessons back?" and Samantha said: "Yes." Samantha resumed learning the piano at age six.

When Samantha restarted piano lessons, she learned from an elderly Russian woman who Samantha described as "lovely." Reminiscing about her piano lessons, Samantha shared: "I think I loved my piano lessons because she gave me Mars Bars and Milo. She loved me. I know that she loved me." Samantha's teacher taught her using the Russian piano method. "So, fully notation based, never did one single second of improvisation or composition ever in my life," Samantha reflected.

Coming into adolescence, Samantha began attending the Conservatorium High School in Sydney. Reminiscing on her teenage self, Samantha remembers herself as a "conscientious" student who was always "self-motivated" to practice. She enjoyed "getting things right," right down

to the most minute detail on the musical score. She also liked "winning eisteddfods." Describing the Conservatory environment, Samantha declared that it was: "very classical, classical teachers, classical degree, classical high school." Samantha had various classical piano teachers throughout her time at the Conservatorium. All her teachers taught in accordance with the requirements of the AMEB classical syllabus. Reflecting on her experience with one particular teacher, Samantha shared that the focus of her lessons was on preparing her for "the next AMEB exam, the next recital. Just guiding me through all the standard classical repertoire." Samantha completed her AMusA in Year 10 and her LMusA in Year 11. During her time at the Conservatorium, Samantha also became competent in music theory.

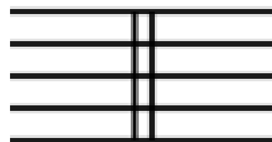
Although Samantha now sees shortcomings in aspects of her classical music upbringing, she does not remember being "disappointed" with her music learning experience. She continued: "I think that I just did what I was told," Samantha shared. "I don't remember saying, 'I like this piece,' or, 'I don't like that piece.' I don't remember actually thinking, 'I wish I could play X and Z.'….I just kind of did what I'm told."

During her time at the Conservatorium High School, Samantha engaged in music-making opportunities outside of her formal piano lessons. This included accompanying her friends for various musical projects that they were working on. Samantha developed a love for and proficiency in sight-reading through her accompanying experiences. "That's where my sight reading went through the roof," Samantha declared, because she was constantly given new music to learn. "Now, I always found that fun. I like sight reading," Samantha added. She continued: "I get a kick out of being

musically literate."

There were also opportunities for Samantha to be a part of various musical groups and bands that were active at her high school. Although Samantha was somewhat interested in being a part of these groups, she shared: "I didn't have the skill set to do it because I couldn't really read a chord chart and I couldn't improvise." She added: "I would've felt out of my comfort zone," due to her dependence on music notation.

Attending the Conservatorium High School meant that Samantha was required to enter the school's annual *Composer's Day* competition. This was Samantha's first foray into composition. It was "compulsory" for every student to enter, Samantha explained, whether the student submitted a large composition or simply a perfect cadence. Samantha strongly remembers feeling "terrified" of this task. "I didn't know how to compose," she shared, "So, I just didn't want to go in." Samantha was also surrounded by peers who had just won national composing competitions which seemed "amazing" to her. At that time, Samantha also did not see the relevance of composing. "I dismissed this [composing] as ever being relevant to my skill set," Samantha shared.



I Want the Music in Front of Me!

Soon after finishing high school, Samantha chose to audition to be a

teacher at the Yamaha Music School. Samantha knew that she “needed to make a living” and that she “wouldn’t cut it as a concert pianist!” To audition as a Yamaha teacher, Samantha was required to sing *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* and improvise an accompaniment on the piano. This was Samantha’s “first foray” of having to improvise. Samantha found this task “very confronting.” She explained: “[Improvisation] was not a skill set that I had.” Samantha was given time to prepare for her audition. She “worked super hard on it and did it well, but it did not come naturally to me,” she shared. Her success was more because she just “had to do it!”

Samantha was also required to improvise a classical piece based upon a given motif. Samantha found this task “very hard.” She was having lessons to help with her improvisation but she still found it difficult. “I had no idea what I was doing. I just wanted the music in front of me,” Samantha shared. It was also hard for Samantha because she liked to “get it right.” “I do like to do things right. I just didn’t know if it was right and I guess I didn’t give it the time to sit down and experiment,” Samantha explained. She continued to share that no one had given her “any good advice” like: “If you want to get good at it, you just have to do it.” Overall, however, Samantha did not invest much time in sitting down and experimenting with different improvisation ideas for this audition task because she was not that interested in it. “I wasn’t interested in this; no-one had fostered an interest [in improvisation] for me in my education,” Samantha expressed.

Despite her struggle with improvisation for her audition, Samantha was successful and received a teaching position at the Yamaha Music School. Samantha was trained to teach improvisation and composition at the School and thus taught improvisation and composition to students in

accordance with the Yamaha syllabus.

Samantha learned to improvise classically "quite well" during her time teaching at the Yamaha School, which became Australian Music Schools (AMS). "At AMS, I was always having to make up accompaniments for pieces just oomcha oomcha [rhythmic pattern], make up solfege things, all very key-based… just keeping to I, IV, and V7 at first!" Samantha shared. She continued: "I had to do it as part of my job so I got good at it." Samantha also recalled playing in the pit for *The Lion King* around this time where she "had to improvise some synthesized flute" in *Hakuna Matata*. "I did enjoy that," Samantha shared. More broadly speaking, however, she explained that:

> There were two keyboard players, me and another girl that I got to come in and she was like the person who could do the improv solos and I was the person who followed the score that I had created for myself [laughs]. There was no way that I could do that [improvise].

As well as teaching group tuition at the school, Samantha taught piano privately. In Samantha's private teaching, she considered herself "purely classical" and a purely classical teacher. Samantha explained that throughout her years of piano learning, she had developed an identity as a classical musician and a classical musician only. She saw herself as "not at all creative" and placed herself in a "classical box." In Samantha's eyes, being in a "classical box" meant strongly adhering to the beliefs of: "I don't compose. I don't improvise. I don't read chord charts. No, I'm classical." Continuing to explain her thoughts at the time, Samantha shared that she always perceived the performers—"people like myself," Samantha added—as "reproducers of the creativity." She further explained: "Beethoven was the creator of music and we're reproducing that." Samantha disclosed that

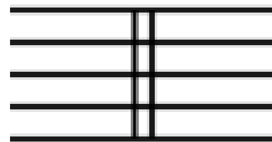
she had this classical identity as a student and for the first 32 years of her teaching.

Although Samantha did not always take students through exams, she did teach in strict accordance with the requirements of the AMEB curriculum. That meant that creative music-making activities such as composition and improvisation were absent from her teaching studio. Samantha shared that she adhered so strictly to the requirements of the AMEB syllabus that she would turn students away if they wanted to compose or write songs. Samantha would think: “I’m not the teacher for you.”

During her young adult years, Samantha enjoyed listening to jazz music and had “always admired jazz pianists.” Samantha perceived jazz music, however, as only something that she listened to, not something she played. Samantha immediately connected jazz playing to playing by ear. Samantha expressed: “I did wish that I could play by ear but I’d never tried. No one ever told me, ‘You could just sit down and try it.’” Samantha shared that she felt “envious” of people who could play by ear and thought that such musicians were “gifted,” rather than it being a skill that they had developed. Samantha had tried to play by ear, but she was not always successful. Samantha recalled an experience where she was trying to work out the theme to *Ice Castles*. “I just could not get—It starts with an F major chord and then it goes for F major seven. I couldn’t get it. I couldn’t figure out what that chord was. I knew there was something moving.” Despite Samantha being unable to play by ear and unable to compose, it did not bother Samantha that she “wasn’t creative.” In Samantha’s eyes, the “creators in music” were “the composers or the jazz pianists.” Similar to her

thinking during high school at *Composer's Day*, Samantha did not see how such skills were relevant to her skill set.

During her years of private piano teaching alongside teaching at AMS, Samantha began developing *BlitzBooks*. *BlitzBooks* continue to be sold today. *BlitzBooks* is a series of music education resources that targets a range of skills including teaching beginning music theory, sight reading, sight singing, general knowledge, and AMEB theory and musicianship. Samantha, however, did not "see that [developing and producing the book series] as creative." Rather, she saw it as "an assemblance of a discipline." "I guess there are some things that I did in those books that are creative, like the way I tried to present material. But I would never use creative as an adjective to describe myself," explained Samantha.



Becoming a Composer of Music

Over Samantha's teaching years, Samantha looked at the pedagogical works of other competent composers and thought that "some of their material could do with a bit more excitement." In 2017, Samantha attended a Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) conference in Baltimore and attended a session called "Rote is Not a Four-Letter Word" given by Julie Knerr and Katherine Fisher. While listening to this presentation, Samantha thought about one of her students who was struggling with the piano. Sharing the struggles of this student, Samantha said: "He enjoyed

playing piano but hated reading… He did not enjoy practising and whilst he was a very capable pianist once he got going, learning pieces was always a slow and laborious process."

Describing it as "going against my grain," Samantha said that she began teaching her student some parts of his pieces by rote. "Boy did his progress go through the roof!" Samantha explained. To compliment what she was teaching him, Samantha would use flashcards. This student "flew through them all." When Samantha said to this student: "You can sight read really well!" he shook his head and responded: "Yeah, but those cards aren't real music they're just patterns."

Samantha was taken back that this student did not know that "reading music is all about reading patterns." Samantha then thought of all the other students who potentially had not made this connection in their heads.

Sparked by this experience, Samantha "threw" herself into the "composing arena" and began writing short pieces, eight-bars in length, that were "entirely based on patterns." Samantha shared: "I taught a simplified version of the piece to him by rote, and then got him to recognise the patterns in the more advanced version. This worked!"

Describing the process as "just a fluke," Samantha explained that she was "mucking around at the piano," and would use the voice memos app on her phone which she thought was "so cool," to record bits and pieces that she thought "sounded ok." She would then "go and type it out and that would be the level three piece, the one that sounded—That was the final composition." Samantha's "solid knowledge of figurative analysis" helped her to be creative because she had a "basic understanding of what might

work and why."

As part of this process, Samantha shared that she had to:

> Give myself permission to fail and know that, 'All right, not everything you compose is going to be fantastic. There's going to be some good ones. There's going to be some really bad ones. Then others will be a work in progress.'

Samantha was fearful of peoples' response to her compositions. She chose, however, to run her compositions by a few people close to her whose opinion she "really respect[ed]." She continued: "I just said, 'Just tell me. If this stuff is terrible, just tell me. I want to know.'" The critiques were positive. One of these people said: "These are good. My adult student will love this." The positive feedback gave Samantha a "head start" and made her think: "Okay, this isn't too bad," and empowered her to keep on going. Reflecting on the significance of this approval, Samantha emphasised: "This goes to the heart of me being the type of person that wants to 'get it right.' I needed approval before I had the confidence to continue creating!" Reflecting on the composition process, Samantha said: "That was fun."

Samantha felt vulnerable while sharing her own musical ideas. She shared that she would think: "Will anyone like this?" Disclosing thoughts about herself, Samantha shared: "I am a bit of an approval junkie. I didn't like the thought of putting something out there and people were thinking my pieces were shit."

After a little while, Samantha had an idea. She thought: "If students had just done level one, two and three, I could ask them to create their own version, which would become level four." She continued to explain: "Due to the preparation phase during levels one, two and three, I was confident that

students would not feel at all confronted by this task and would be competent to make up their own version." When testing this idea, Samantha found that "students did not even blink, because they had already played three iterations of the piece."

From these compositions and the idea for students to create their own versions of her compositions, Samantha created the *BlitzBooks Rote Repertoire* (BBRR) series. Explaining her method, Samantha stated:

> [My method is] a weird and wonderful confluence of my exposure to three very significant philosophies/methods in the music world: Piano Safari, Taubman and Suzuki, and how I have combined these with three decades of my own teaching experience to create what I think is a unique approach to repertoire and sight reading.

Samantha described her BBRR series as "totally a way to teach composition" that is "non-threatening for teachers" who have not had experience in composing themselves or teaching composition.

Samantha expressed that it was only when she threw herself into the composing arena that she began to see herself as creative. She explained: "[This was] probably because I was creating something that wasn't there before." Samantha continued: "I never saw myself as a composer and wouldn't have had any confidence that I could even do it, but I just started doing it." She added that it was not until she had written a large portion of the BBRR series that she began considering that she could be a creator of music. Additionally, composing BBRR made Samantha realise: "It [creativity] can be for everybody." Samantha credits the pedagogical need for these resources for teasing out her own creativity.

During the creation of the BBRR series, Samantha shared that one of her dear friends said to her: "It's like you've reinvented yourself." In

response to her friend's statement, Samantha thought: "Well, yes… I've gone down a road I never, ever thought I'd go down, like I have literally invented a new product that I feel very proud of." Continuing to explain why she feels "proud" of her product, Samantha shared: "Because it's not by ear playing. It's not a composition. It's not rote pieces. It's not sight reading. It's just a combination of all of those things." She continued:

> I feel proud to have come up with something unique, from scratch, and because they're not arrangements of other peoples—because they are literally my compositions and they're almost like arrangements of my own compositions, because it's like a little set of variations of level one, two, three… I guess, it still comes from an idea that's all mine and then on the website, all the materials are all mine.

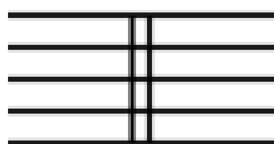
Creating the BBRR series was the first time that Samantha had experienced a feeling of "pride" in her creative endeavours because "it's something so far removed from what I ever thought I'd do."

Samantha heard Simon Tedeschi perform around the same time that she developed the BBRR series. Explaining her thoughts at the time, Samantha shared:

> I was… so in awe that he had that skill set [jazz], in addition to his classical skill set, because you don't see that very often… I was amazed that he had that extra skill set… I found that amazing, just incredible.

Samantha was "envious" but on the other hand, she knows that she never really invested the time to see if she could do it herself. Samantha explained: "I did understand that it took a lot of practice for these artists to become proficient in the skill of improvisation." Samantha now appreciates the skill these artists had to create music. She is more amazed at good improvising than a performance of Rachmaninoff *Piano Concerto No. 2 Op. 18* or Tchaikovsky *Piano Concert No.1. Op. 23*. She now holds in higher

esteem the people that are creating their own music than those who purely exhibit great technique. She noted that she only developed this appreciation through trying to create music herself. She also noted: “When students try it, and they can’t do it and just to understand that everybody started like that. You just don’t realise that you can just do it. Anyone can do it.”



Not Liking any Lesson to go by Without Composition or Improvisation

Since composing herself, musical creativity now plays a “much bigger role” in Samantha’s teaching practice than it did prior. Describing creativity in her lessons, Samantha shared: “I don’t like a lesson that goes by without any sort of composition or improvisation activity.” She continued:

> I’ve been doing it with my students… I’ve been getting into it. Just the whole, getting them to compose, just the more you do, the more you get comfortable with suggesting things to students. So, I now think that creativity constitutes a much bigger part of my lessons.

Samantha shared that she began including creativity in her lessons because she had built confidence in herself through composing. For Samantha, this confidence started with feeling she had the tools to teach creativity and this made her “see it as more important and want to do it more.”

Samantha mentioned that she is “much more confident now with arranging things” for her students. She explained: “That also comes from feeling the confidence to change things, if they can’t manage it technically.”

By arranging, Samantha means: "changing things up on the page if it doesn't suit the physical limitations of the student… Things such as re-voice the chord." Samantha would not have dreamed of doing such things before she came to feel that she was creative. Giving the example of having to change a chord due to a student's physical hand limitations, Samantha shared: "I think previously I would've thought, 'You can't do that. That's not what's on the page. Go play what's on the page.' Now I think, 'No you don't [have to play what's on the page] [chuckles]. Who says?!'" Samantha shared that her change in thinking has come from "just giving myself permission to say, 'Of course you can change this.' Even if it's Chopin!"

Samantha teaches students to be creative because:

> It gives them access to music for life… I think they have a choice. They can choose to play other people's music or play their own music. The ones who have never been taught how to make up something on their own or try out something different, I think they are the ones who are far less likely to join a band, like if there's a keyboard in a band or to just get together and jam with other people, [these students are] far less likely to participate in recreational music-making.

Samantha also sees creative music-making as "the thing that's going to give them [students] the most—Make them pumped to perform a piece that they composed themselves in a concert." She continued:

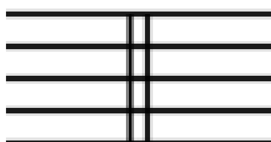
> That's so much better than performing somebody else's piece. That's what they'll remember when they're old. That's what's going to make them bother to play the piano as an adult, if they can even have the confidence to make up their own stuff and realise that their stuff is not less valuable than anybody else's. It's also a piece of them that comes out in the music.

Samantha also thinks that creative activities are sometimes what students need to be given in order for them to "keep going."

Samantha's desire for the lessons she now teaches are different from

those of her teachers when she was growing up. Samantha explained: “I think my greatest desire would be to be able to have fun in all lessons whenever I wanted them with students and try not to get bogged down in perfecting pieces.” Samantha also credits this to having “developed new and better skill sets” through teaching at AMS for 25 years. “[I] practice doing things that I was never ever taught to do with the student,” she added.

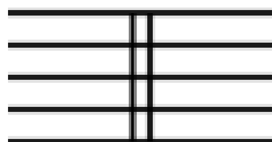
Samantha describes creativity in music as “the creation of music. Creation is by improvising and composing. I guess I’ve always thought of the creatives in music as the composers or the jazz pianists. Probably not the classical people, which is a bit mean.” She continued: “I think I see it more as literally the raw creation of something that wasn’t there before, rather than interpretation or recreation… or changing something that was there.”



I am a Work-in-Progress

Samantha now identifies as a composer. She considers, however, her creative identity to be “evolving” and describes it as a “work-in-progress.” Samantha composes primarily for content for her BBRR series. Samantha added: “The pieces that I’m making up, they are really short. We’re talking eight bars. It’s not like I’m writing a symphony.” Although Samantha identifies as a composer, her greatest joy remains in sight-reading. When Samantha sits at the piano just for fun, which is not often, she just feels like doing some sight reading. She continued: “I start grabbing books and sight

reading through repertoire and I will tend to buy those books like Jazz Disney arrangements or Jazz Cocktail arrangements or just playing things that might be suitable for a nursing home. Playing nice arrangements of old songs."



Summary

During her formative and adolescent years, socio-cultural factors that denied the construction of Samantha's creative identity included a lack of tools for creative music-making, namely the ability to aurally perceive sound, the absence of opportunities to be creative, adopting social ideologies that creative music-making is an exclusive activity, and limiting ideologies surrounding the purpose of music notation. Coming into her young adult years, socio-cultural factors important to promoting Samantha's creative identity as a musician included acquiring the tools needed for creative music-making and having opportunities to creatively make music. Despite this, however, Samantha's dependence on music-notation and fear of making mistakes restricted the extent to which she saw herself as creative. During her adult years, socio-cultural factors that promoted the construction process were opportunities to creatively make music, namely a creative music-making opportunity that drew on her interests and experiences and allowed her to fulfil a pedagogical need. Other factors that contributed to Samantha seeing herself as creative included social

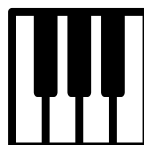
affirmation, understanding that creative music-making is an inclusive activity, and being willing to make mistakes.

Samantha’s creative identity influences her teaching practice in that she is able to equip students with the same skills that she possesses. Her ability to effectively nurture the creative abilities of her students, however, is also dependent on having the tools to teach for creativity, such as having a method to teach composition, and valuing creativity.

CHAPTER 9. ELEANOR'S NARRATIVE ACCOUNT

Introducing Eleanor

Eleanor (pronounced El-en-a) is a 75-year-old private piano teacher who lives in Toowoomba, Australia. She began learning the piano at age five and began teaching the piano privately when she was 18 years old. In her private piano teaching studio, Eleanor teaches both classical and contemporary music. She teaches repertoire, singing, aural perception, music theory, scales, and improvisation. Alongside being a private piano teacher, Eleanor has been a primary classroom teacher, and a primary and secondary classroom music and English teacher. She holds a Diploma of Education (Music) (DipEdMus), a Piano Teacher's Accreditation from the Sydney Conservatorium, and a Primary Teaching Certificate from Wollongong Teachers College. Outside of her teaching, Eleanor has extensive accompanying, composing, and performing experience. Additionally, among other impressive achievements, Eleanor has composed choral and piano pieces, published children's songs, original musicals (lyrics, staging and songs), and has been president, programme designer and concert manager for an 80-member choir and orchestra. She currently plays piano with a flautist friend.



Counting the Notes on the Piano

Eleanor's first time popping up onto the piano stool was when she was

a young child. A piano was already a part of the family's furniture as her father had purchased a piano for a very cheap price during the Depression. Although both Eleanor's father and mother could press down a few keys and make a nice sound, the piano's lid largely remained closed. Eleanor, however, wanted to know what it would feel like to make music on the piano. It was her mother, however, supposedly after a conversation with someone else, that suggested to Eleanor: "Eleanor, you know, you should learn the piano." Despite Eleanor's family struggling to make ends meet during her early years of childhood, piano lessons were cheap at that time. This made way for Eleanor to take piano lessons.

Eleanor learned piano from Miss Small, a "friendly" piano teacher who lived a short bike ride away from Eleanor's school in Ulmarra in northern New South Wales, Australia. Eleanor would approach and knock on Miss Small's front door once a week and leave again exactly half an hour later. Eleanor was the curious type from her very first piano lesson. Reminiscing about her first interaction with Miss Small, Eleanor strongly remembers being "desperate to tell" Miss Small that she had counted the number of notes on the piano. Miss Small was not overly interested in exploring this with Eleanor. She was more invested in teaching Eleanor music theory, which for Eleanor, was going in one ear and straight out the other. "All I wanted to tell her was how many keys were on the piano. I had counted them," Eleanor recollected.

Eleanor's appetite for exploration and her love of learning in general was fuelled by her captivation with music, particularly classical music. Eleanor was first exposed to classical music while listening to the radio in her family home. Eleanor would tune into the radio to escape from her

difficult home life. She remembers being captivated by classical music—in particular "orchestral music"—the moment it first entered her ears. She considered her attraction towards classical music to be "genetic." While learning from Miss Small, Eleanor learned through the *Magic Land of Music* piano method book. Eleanor described her piano lessons as being "to the book." This meant: "play these exercises, five finger exercises… do some theory, and then here's a new piece, look at the notes." Eleanor shared, however, that the book "had those beautiful pieces" in it which "was the motivation" for sitting at the piano every day. She remembered asking her mother to play certain pieces from the book for her. When her mother would play the piece for her, Eleanor would think: "Oh, I like the sound of that." Eleanor revealed: "I was motivated to learn because I wanted to be able to play those pieces and even… beginner songs, *Patter Cake* or something. I wanted to do it." Eleanor also reminisced about the times when the headmaster's wife would play "gorgeous, strong music" on school assemblies. She shared" "I would hear this [music] and I would tune into that. It would have meaning for me."

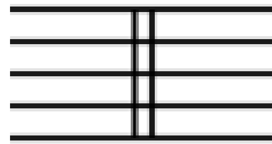
Alongside being innately curious, Eleanor was attracted to musical challenges. She remembered working through the *Magic Land of Music* book with her first piano teacher Miss Small and aspiring to play the simple versions of classical pieces at the end of the book such as *The Bridal Chorus*. Recalling her thoughts at the time about the pieces at the end of the book, Eleanor shared: "I thought, 'Oh, how wonderful to be able to play those one day.'…. It [playing those pieces] was something I aspired to be able to do." Eleanor also relished how each piece in the book became quickly more difficult. She disclosed: "Because of that, I wanted to play

that, I wanted to explore that…. I liked the challenge." Similarly, referring to her singing experience at school, Eleanor said: "To sing those more complicated songs, I relished all that. I love all that." Eleanor considered that her desire to explore was to do with her own "nature" and thinks that that desire is the "nature of the child."

Eleanor remembered being able to easily learn and play complex music during her early youth. She spoke of an experience in kindergarten: "There was a very good piano player. She used to teach the whole school. The songs were probably English folk songs, but they weren't geared to young children. They were geared really to years [grades] five or six." Eleanor recognised that she was able to pick up such melodies very quickly. She explained: "I learned… so easily just by hearing it, there was nothing written." She also recalled playing in a voluntary recorder group "under the great big pine tree" at school when she was in year one. The recorder group was open to children up to year six, Eleanor shared. Importantly, however, Eleanor revealed that she considered herself to be a "gifted" and "unusual child"—"Looking back and knowing more about gifted children, I think I was [a gifted child]," Eleanor stated. Eleanor reflected on another formative musical experience where she sang with a friend of hers in Ulmarra. Eleanor's friend was three years older than her. Eleanor shared: "She was learning singing, and we would sing quite a complicated round together… a six year old today, being able to sing those rounds, I think would be unusual."

Outside of her music-making endeavours, Eleanor loved to read alongside teaching others to read. This was fuelled by her love of language. Eleanor fondly recalled having a teddy and a couple of plants as her

students when she was three years old. She shared how her Grandfather made her a blackboard, and she would teach her furry and spiky students how to spell and pronounce London. “It’s not ‘o’ [as if pronounced London] it’s ‘a’ [as if pronounced Lundon],” Ellie re-enacted. She also shared of the times where she would have to teach the boys at school to read when she was six.



I Didn’t Realise that you Could do That!

Eleanor and her family moved to Grafton when she was around seven years old. Eleanor continued learning the piano from a new teacher named Miss Short. Miss Short was a single lady living in an old historic family home that featured a frangipani. Eleanor fondly remembers waiting for her lesson while listening to the previous student and taking in the perfume of the frangipani. Like Miss Small, Eleanor had a weekly half-an-hour lesson with Miss Short. While learning from Miss Short, Eleanor undertook and did well in her second-grade piano exam but Eleanor noted: “She wasn’t teaching me theory at all.”

Eleanor’s passion for exploration and experimentation that was evident in her formative years continued into her adolescence. She recalled an experience of changing one of Miss Short’s piano transcriptions. Eleanor explained: “[I] went into the eisteddfod to play the national anthem, *God Save the Queen*.” She continued: “[Miss Short] had written it out by hand,

and I learnt it. I said, ‘No, I want to play octaves in the left hand. Octaves.’ She [Miss Short] said, ‘All right.’ Now, I could, just to make it more grand.”

After doing her second-grade exam with Miss Short, Eleanor heard from a girl in her class that the nuns, where this girl was learning the piano, taught music theory. Eleanor decided for herself that she would change piano teachers and start learning from the nuns. She then found herself riding her bike to the convent every Saturday morning for two hours. Describing it like “school on Saturday morning,” Eleanor had two half-hour practical lessons and two half-hour theory lessons. Eleanor was “told” that she would do AMEB and Trinity exams every year, and exam preparation was the focus of her lessons. “There was no creativity whatsoever there, which was the norm,” Eleanor shared.

During her time with the nuns, Eleanor completed seventh-grade music perception which was an aural comprising a large load of “melodic dictation.” She also learned “a lot of harmony” and about the “Famous Five” Russian composers. Comparing the examination syllabi of today to when she learned, Eleanor claimed: “If you go back into the… syllabi… they are much, much tougher than they are now.”

Learning from the nuns was a “shock” for Eleanor. Recalling her thoughts at the time, Eleanor explained: “They were so strict and they were frightening. They wore the black and the wimple and the whole thing. They were very old. They weren’t at all friendly.” It was a large “cultural shock” for Eleanor as she had to get used to the very “heavy” catholic culture, including the images of Jesus with a heart outlined with thorns. Eleanor

further shared that there were very high expectations at the school. Describing these expectations, Eleanor explained:

> It was expected that you would get 100 percent [in your theory exams]…. you would be ashamed if you only got 95…. You would be expected to at least receive honours in your practical exams…. The rigor was such that you had to do absolutely more than your best.

Eleanor continued: “It wasn’t, ‘Do your best dear.’ It was, ‘we expect you to get high marks.’ It was the pride of the music school there.” The expectations of the school were so high that as Eleanor recalled, there would be “a wallop over the back if there was a mistake.” Eleanor shared that these high expectations carried a “fear factor”, namely “that you didn’t want to let yourself down.” Eleanor did, however, learn to aim for “the best possible” and hold “the expectation of excellence.” Eleanor added that she developed “resilience” through this period.

During her last two years at the convent, Eleanor began learning piano from Sister Cecilia. Eleanor reflected on Sister Cecilia as “a very good music teacher, beautiful lady. She was just thoroughly musical, perfect pitch, the whole wonderful thing. She didn’t hit. She told me, ‘Well done dear’. I thought that was unbelievable to get good praise.”

Eleanor struggled with the workload at the convent. “The exams were big-time stress levels… It was a very big course,” Eleanor explained. “Because I came from the high school, I had to travel on my bike probably about two kilometres to get to there, and I always missed part of the lesson. It was a really big struggle,” she shared. Eleanor also remembers having to jump from fourth-grade theory to seventh-grade music perception to meet the requirements of achieving her grade-six piano certificate. “That was difficult,” Eleanor recalled. Eleanor, however, said that she had “very good

aural skills" because she "naturally" had a "good ear." She remembers being able to "naturally harmonise" when she was six years old. Eleanor always achieved high marks in her aural exams. "I think that [aural] got me through [my grade-six exam]," she shared.

Despite the adversity Eleanor faced from the nuns and her struggling to meet the work demands at the convent, Eleanor stayed with the nuns and worked herself to the bone for a number of reasons. First, as Eleanor shared: "the music held me there… I loved my pieces so much, they were all classical in those days." Second: "I had to prove to myself that I could do a bit," she continued. In general, Eleanor "studied really hard at school subjects." "I was way younger than everyone else… My thoughts of my ability was that I wasn't very smart because I was never complimented, never told I was smart," Eleanor disclosed. She further shared that she assumed that being poor meant that she was not smart. Third, Eleanor wanted to get out of Grafton. "I desperately wanted to pass and get music as a subject because it was my ticket to get out of Grafton and go to teachers college… My need to leave home was because I was so unhappy," Eleanor shared. She continued to explain: "I was the oldest of five children. My father had a basic wage. It was poverty and no money. I think there was tension always because there was no money for anything. There was always difficulty."

Eleanor did not have the most harmonious upbringing. She made clear that music, alongside being her love, was her escape from home life. Eleanor shared: "[I was] criticised very heavily, my father and [I] didn't get on… There were awful things, I just had to get out…. Music… was my escape." She continued: "I would go under the house, it was on stilts

because of floods. A car was under the house. I would go and sit in the car in the dark and listen to concerts on the radio. That was my own therapy." She further unveiled: "My parents were musical but they weren't interested in my playing really. It was just something that I did. There was no praise." She described those cultural times as not "the era for praise." Eleanor further disclosed that her parents were not interested in her playing because home life was "chaotic" and that there was "too much [for Eleanor's parents] to think about" outside of Eleanor's piano endeavours.

Outside of her piano lessons with the nuns, Eleanor took ownership of her own learning. She claimed that she actively sought out opportunities "without having to be told" and that she was "defining the opportunities." Eleanor regularly listened to the one radio station available in Grafton which was her way of knowing what concerts were on. "I needed those sorts of things just for my own self-education," Eleanor shared. Eleanor was not aware of it at the time, but on reflection, claimed: "I was gathering my own personal bank of knowledge." She considered that the urge to learn was "inherent." "That's something that you are born with," Eleanor asserted.

Eleanor's grandmother also played an active role in exposing her to performances, musical and beyond, by regularly taking her to concerts. Concerts included eisteddfods, musicals, and plays. Reflecting on these experiences, Eleanor shared: "I think that was very important because I could see adults performing and what adults were doing. The Sydney Symphony came to Grafton once a year, so I'd go to that. It was mesmerising for me." Eleanor considered that her grandmother, who had been an apprentice teacher, recognised that she was musically inclined. She continued to share that her grandmother also considered her to be an

"unusual child" and saw that she was "curious to learn." Eleanor explained: "She would have watched my attention span, how I was listening to what she had taken me to." "I would have been totally absorbed in it," she reminisced. Eleanor also disclosed that she thinks her grandmother would have taken her to these cultural events to allow her some respite from her difficult home life. Reflecting on her grandmother's actions, Eleanor stated that her grandmother "did her bit" to enrich Eleanor's "knowledge of the arts."

Eleanor continued to adore classical music during her adolescence, sharing that she loved Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. Eleanor explained that this was because it "satisfied" her. Like her inclination towards musical challenges in her formative years, Eleanor liked the complexity of classical music. "I like good vigorous—I liked hard pieces," she declared. Despite her love for classical music, Eleanor shared that her musical preference which was different to her peers made her often feel "different." This was not in a negative way, however.

During her adolescence, Eleanor began having opportunities to make music outside of her piano exams. She would play the organ for small country churches. During these experiences, Eleanor became a competent sight-reader. Eleanor shared that sight-reading would be her "dessert… my reward" after her usual stipulated practice time which was very "regimented." "Sight reading… I loved it because I was exploring. I was exploring compositions," Eleanor explained.

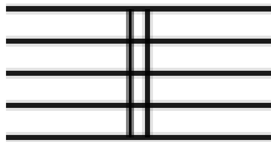
Eleanor's sight-reading ability gave her access to a wide variety of repertoire, including challenging classical repertoire. She once rose to the

challenge of learning Beethoven's *The Pathetique* that she found in her mother's collection of old music books from when she was a teenager. Re-living the experience, Eleanor shared: "It was way beyond my grade level… [I had] never heard it played by anyone, but I wanted to learn it … [I] taught myself to play it because I wanted to learn it." Eleanor explained that she would work on it when her parents went out for a Sunday afternoon drive. "As soon as they went out the driveway, I was on the piano," Eleanor explained. She continued: "It was a nuisance when I was practicing, [my family] didn't like it much. It was too noisy."

Eleanor's first experience of hearing someone create their own music was hearing an organist improvise at an Anglican church in Grafton. Reminiscing about this experience, Eleanor shared: "Between the voluntaries, he would… change the key by making a little bridge air passage of chords to go into the next key to play the next piece without a break." To Eleanor, the fact that "someone could just change from an E major into a B minor, for example, and be able to manipulate the chord so it sounded as if it was a natural flow" was "astounding." Eleanor referred to seeing this organist improvise as "a memorable moment of creativity." This experience inspired her own playing later in life. She would improvise on the organ in the same way when she was the organist for school services.

Eleanor expressed that seeing the organist improvise was the moment where she discovered that "you could do that [create your own music]." She "didn't even think of it [being creative]" before this moment. Thinking about the cultural beliefs at the time, Eleanor explained: "It was something that, if you were a superhuman that you could create a piece of music, you had to be someone. It was such an elevated brain." Prior to this, the only

pieces that Eleanor played "were for exams." Although "I love[d] my exam pieces," as Eleanor highlighted, "there was no freedom or sense of freedom to make up something yourself because it was never assumed that a student could do that."



Queen of the Room

After completing high school, Eleanor attended and completed teachers' college and went on to be a primary school teacher at age 18 at a school on the Victorian border. She taught full time in various schools up until she was in her early 30s. Eleanor felt like she was in her element when she was teaching. In contrast to the adversity of her home life, the nuns, and loneliness, life in the classroom was different, "because I was my own… queen of the room… I could create until my heart was content." "I would follow the syllabus, but I could almost create my own syllabus," Eleanor expressed.

Simultaneous to classroom teaching, Eleanor began teaching the piano privately when she was 18. When asked how she came to teach the piano, Eleanor shared: "Because I could play the piano, and this was a very small country town way out in the middle of nowhere… one of the parents asked if I could teach their daughter… so I did." Eleanor continued to say: It was just… very easy for me to teach piano." This was because Eleanor "didn't think twice" about how to do it. "I'd just say these are the notes, listen to

this," Eleanor explained. Eleanor shared that her students would have a method book and they would go through the book, but Eleanor would "expand upon the book" or "go beyond" the book. She would sometimes ask her students to "close the book and find some notes that you like, just try some notes together." Eleanor desired to foster a wonder for discovery and a curiosity towards further exploration in her students. She engaged students in music listening to make them listen, truly listen to music.

In her early 30s, Eleanor won a scholarship to study University English, Music Education, Piano, Psychology, Philosophy, and Drama/Theatre at the NSW State Conservatorium of Music in Sydney. During her time at the Conservatorium, Eleanor made the most of educational opportunities. She therefore now regards herself as "very well educated." Eleanor studied Eurhythmics and completed Carl Orff and Kodaly courses. "It was adding to my own training and the opportunities were there," Eleanor explained. Additionally, Eleanor learned various instruments as part of the course including the saxophone, trumpet, guitar, and cello. Learning various instruments broadened Eleanor's repertoire knowledge. Later in her career, she was able to suggest to students of various instruments repertoire to listen to what she considered to be important for their own musical knowledge. During her time at the Conservatorium, Eleanor also learned musical theatre and was in a choir conducted by Richard Gill. Watching Richard Gill teach really inspired Eleanor's creativity. She shared that watching "a real teacher teaching" or watching a "teacher in action" taught her that "high quality, rigorous teaching lifted the educational process possibilities for even less able students." Eleanor continued to relish musical challenges in her adult years.

She spoke about her time in the choir at Wollongong Teacher's College: "I always love singing alto because I love singing the harmony. Hearing the soloist follow the score and all of that sort of thing. That was an experience and I just loved it. Doing serious hard music."

Eleanor taught in primary and high schools for the next 35 years. One of Eleanor's early teaching positions was teaching at a disadvantaged cluster of schools. Eleanor's primary role was to demonstrate to other teachers how to teach art, music, and drama. The process involved teachers bringing their class into Eleanor's classroom and the teachers observing Eleanor teach their class. Eleanor always had a heart for the disadvantaged. She was committed to getting the best out of each student and showing them that they could do it. Eleanor emphasised the "acknowledgement and encouragement" that is needed from "someone in the background or a good teacher" to help students' creativity. She added, however: "It's not absolutely necessary because I didn't have any encouragement."

Eleanor revealed that during these teacher observations, she would "very unsubtly… try to show what those children could do." She referred to there being "a terrible thing called the expectation of underplaying what it possible." She was also passionate about demonstrating that creativity is "not for 'other people,' it is for everyone."

Eleanor prioritised creative teaching in her teaching practice. She described creative teaching as teaching that "expands and goes beyond the curriculum and introduces things that are out there. They have to be brought into the mindset of the student or the parent." She continued: "Creative teaching… shows the student what is possible and it is developing a creative

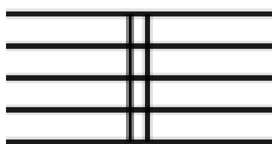
ear that it's just making that up on the spot. They observe that this sort of thing can happen just on the spot without music." To Eleanor, creative teaching is "teaching the student how to be creative by example." This type of teaching provides "those little sparks or those little moments of experience thrown out and some of them will run with them." Additionally, creative teaching "shows them that they can do things they wouldn't have thought of and they can do things that others might have thought were too hard."

Eleanor shared further examples of creativity in her teaching: "When I was a teacher at high school, I would go to the ballet in Sydney… I'd take a busload to the six o'clock youth performances of ballet." Eleanor reasoned that she did this "because otherwise, they wouldn't experience ballet." It was also important to Eleanor for her students "to see adults performing" because it "starts the creative urges, or the instincts happening, to hear how the voices are used in a play, and it shows how it involves the senses." Additionally, Eleanor would give students recordings to listen to knowing that if she did not: "It's like going to a library and not knowing which book to take out because you don't know any of the authors." Eleanor reflected on her own vast knowledge of repertoire being because of the listening she had done over the years.

Eleanor recalled that she taught creatively in a number of ways. For example, she would invent games. Describing a movement game that she made up: "I'd have them in groups of four with us doing a scarf dance to music. Things that I didn't read anywhere, I made them up because I thought they'd extend the experiences of the students in a social setting." Eleanor would also often "write little songs for the kids". She was always

"making up little things to do creatively." She would encourage students to make up "ostinato routines" to proverbs that she had written. "I was teaching them to be creative saying, 'Here are the words. Make up a movement to go with it.'" When asked if she thought of herself as creative at that point, Eleanor responded: "I didn't… really call it that. I didn't give it a name. I just did it. I was just making up things."

Reflecting on her years of classroom teaching, Eleanor stated: "I think teaching, class teaching, made me creative… because I was making it interesting for me to teach my students and for them to love what they were learning." She also said that she had to create, namely improvise: "because it was easier." Eleanor "had to watch what they [the students] were doing" in the middle of the classroom while she sat at the piano. Eleanor's fingers "just knew where to go" and she could "hear in my head what I wanted and I'd just do it." Her ability to do so was because she had knowledge of the keyboard she had learnt over the years. "I had control of sound and being able to transfer that sound from my head producing them through my fingers," Eleanor asserted.



Awakening an Aspect of Myself.

As years went on in her teaching practice, Eleanor grew in her teaching ability. Eleanor took delight in introducing into her teaching, other art forms, such as poetry, drawing, and movement, and combining it with

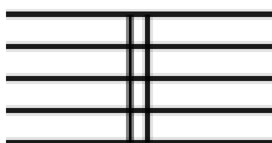
music. In regard to poetry, English or literacy were not only one of Eleanor's interests, but also one of her teaching niches. Eleanor shared: "I love writing my own poetry and that sort of thing too… I think, 'Oh. That would go well as a tune.'" Eleanor further combined poetry and music with movement. "It's not just saying the poem, you've got the movement, the rhythm, the beat and then putting melodies and writing melodies to poetry," explained Eleanor. Eleanor highlighted this art trio as "just a natural combination." Eleanor's teaching was exciting and colourful. She knew that in doing so, "the better the outcome." She used a variety of creative teaching strategies. She would use the weather as an inspiration, such as "wild weather, [a] wild day, rainy day and playing the *Raindrop Prelude* of Chopin."

Eleanor's first realisation that she was creative happened during her years of teaching in the classroom. The school where Eleanor was working at the time expected a class musical. "The plays that were commercially available, I didn't like and they didn't suit my needs. I wanted to have things that blended the science with music, with movement and speech," Eleanor shared. Eleanor thought: "I'm going to write my own… I can do this… I could do a better job… It was my first realisation that I could write music because it hadn't ever been mentioned. I loved writing lyrics and poems, and the words found their own tune." Knowing that she could write songs was a real "realisation" for Eleanor. Eleanor enjoyed the creative process so much that she kept on going. "That's when I started writing melodies and tunes and songs." Eleanor gained "equal enjoyment" out of both writing the scripts and the songs for the musicals.

Writing class musicals felt different for Eleanor in terms of being

creative than sitting and "doodling" at the piano. "Seeing things on the stage and seeing kids doing the play that I had written and having the applause was very satisfying." Eleanor described the experience of writing the musical: "[It's] discovering that that's an aspect of yourself you hadn't realised and there it was and you've… awoken it."

Eleanor was commissioned to write a year five/six multicultural musical to please the Principal, and because she did not want to pay a huge copyright for a commercial musical. She would often write songs with lyrics fitting to the cultural times and issues close to her heart such as "We need to treasure our world… and we love our Australia." One of the pieces that she wrote was a "homage to the country and homage to the people."



Not Having to Think Twice about Teaching the Piano

Eleanor taught in primary and high schools until retirement at the end of 1999 and then moved to Coffs Harbour. The local Regional Conservatorium needed a piano teacher and Eleanor assumed this position, teaching beginnings through to Grade 8 where she taught in line with the AMEB examination curriculum. Simultaneous to teaching at the conservatorium, Eleanor taught several piano students privately. If the parents so desired, Eleanor would take students through exams. Eleanor liked exams because "It gave them something as a benchmark." If Eleanor was teaching for exams, she focused on "intense exam work" but she would

also “put in… listening” or “play something for them or sing a song” at the end of the lesson to make “a good closure of the lesson.” “It could just be a few minutes and that could sow the seed for them to explore themselves,” Eleanor shared. She also added that it was important:

> Just to give them a taste of… works that they should know [outside of the exam repertoire]. Every music student should know a certain amount of repertoire pieces, the great pieces of art because it’s too small if they’re just doing their exam pieces, it’s too… narrow, it’s too restricting. They need to know what the wider world has to offer.

Eleanor would make an effort to include students’ parents in their learning experience. She explained:

> I’d encourage a dad or a mum to come in and sit in the lesson… I would say, ‘Could you come over and just play this note here? I want you to count four on each note. Just play it evenly.’ I’d get them involved with the child because otherwise the child is just left on their own… Unless the parent understands what’s involved, it’s not going to work very well… I think that’s probably creative teaching as well… I enjoy making up things like that… making up ideas to… try and teaching… getting them involved.

Eleanor credited her 35 years of experience and six-year training prior to becoming a piano teacher as being “absolutely” important for her private piano teaching practice. These years of training gave Eleanor “the skills to use creative methods and child psychology, understanding of how to motivate, how to practise, how to listen to what they were producing.” She highlighted “the psychology of it,” as being important to her teaching. She also added that she focuses on creative teaching because: “It comes from that… love of something… you want to share it… because it’s such a wonderful experience, you want to help others find that, that they have that. I would love watching their faces light up to hear something.”

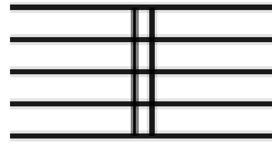
When teaching piano, Eleanor included teaching singing to

developing students' aural skills. Reminiscing on her own experience of her aural skills helping her to pass her exams during her adolescence, Eleanor shared: "that's why in my teaching… I'd have children, five, six, seven-year old's, singing and listening to each other." She also recommended to her piano students to sing in a choir. "The more [musical avenues] the better the learning palette," she continued.

Eleanor's support of developing students' aural skills is because she considers a part of musical creativity to be "the ability to hear melodies and harmonies in the head… [and] hear the accompaniment. All the harmonic parts that would go with that melody." She further explained: "To be able to hear in your head the intervallic difference between notes so that you can plot tunes." Continuing her thoughts on the topic, she said: "To be able to perhaps hear a simple melody or like a nursery rhyme and in the head, compose variations on that. Almost orchestrally even." Eleanor imagined that her own ability to do the above is the result of her experience of singing in choirs and listening to a lot of orchestras from an early age.

Eleanor remembered thinking "Oh, that was very creative," when hearing Beethoven's variations. Describing Beethoven variations, Eleanor shared: "That's what creativity is. It's taking a little cell and developing it in such a way that every avenue was explored." For Eleanor, hearing Beethoven, Mozart, or Brahms variations showed her "what's possible." She commented that it allows one to put their "foot in the door a little bit and try exploring your own ideas, even if it's at the bottom rung of this very high ladder of possibilities." She continued: "At least you start to change your brain in many ways because you're thinking not in the straight path, but of all the little byways and little tracks that haven't been discovered.

You find them."

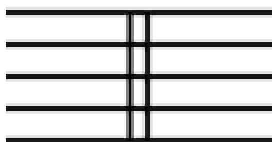


Making Nice Bouncy Chords to Make People Exit the Back Door

Not long after completing her Music Education course, Eleanor was asked to play the organ for the Catholic masses. Eleanor shared that hearing the organist improvise in Grafton during her adolescence inspired her to improvise on the organ. "I enjoyed improvising where organ music was required rather than silence to establish a mood of restfulness and contemplation." Eleanor also liked making her improvisations "very fast" at the end of the service to make the people exit the back door. "I could control if they lingered or if they went out quickly by the music," Eleanor commented. "I made nice bouncy chords… and allegretto [laughs] and out they went," she continued. Eleanor was always starving by the time the second service ended and just wanted to go home to eat. Knowing that she had control over the audience made Eleanor feel "Wow." Eleanor's improvisation abilities were acknowledged by the deputy Principal at the school where she was teaching. Eleanor remembers him saying that he did not know how she did that.

Reflecting on her experiences of improvising on the organ, Eleanor described the organ as "friendly" for improvisation. She explained: "The notes are sustained, so you can hang on to one and you can change things around and you can linger if you want to while you're working it out."

Eleanor concluded: “That [improvising on the organ] was when I really felt that I, in public, I could improvise.”



Not like Broccoli!

Eleanor shared that her sheer love of “melody and harmony” has been what has kept her creative over all her years. “If I hear something, and it stops me in my tracks, I have to hear it. I have to listen to it… I find it so exhilarating,” Eleanor stated. For Eleanor, creating is “exploring the imagination.” Eleanor sees creativity as meaning different things to different people. She emphasised, however: “First of all, there has to be a bank of knowledge. The more you know about a topic or art form, the better you’re able to be creative.” Overall, Eleanor believes: “the more you learn, the better your background musically,” and the more you can draw upon this knowledge to create your own music.

Today, Eleanor spends a lot of time simply “doodling at the keyboard.” She further explained: “And that’s without any preconception… Just playing, maybe an interval… then thinking, ‘What can I do with that?’” Eleanor explained that creating is not something she does “because it’s good for me. It’s not like broccoli or something.” Rather, it’s “something that… draws you there. You have to have it… for the sheer pleasure of discovery… [of] what’s possible.” She continued to share: “I’ll sit down sometimes and I’ll play something that I used to be able to play and can’t

play it anymore, then I just doodle and I just have a great time, just creating and just playing and Roger [Eleanor's husband] says, 'Who wrote that?'"

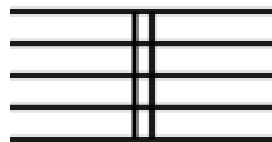
Eleanor finds creating music today "not daunting." Explaining this further, Eleanor said:

> Writing it down now with the computer… is so much easier than by hand… and you can hear it on the spot… being creative is more accessible to people these days because of the advance in computers. To write something by hand, which I did with these musicals because it was a long time ago… but the beauty of computers of course is that you can hear it and you can test that bar. You say, 'Oh, I think I can do a better note there, and you can hear it'… The composers used to compose at the piano so they'd have to try something out and then have to write it down.

She continued: "The modern situation now, with all the facilities and that people can afford to buy, of course they have all these things that make it possible to write your own pieces, write your own musicals."

Eleanor also considered that the media helps to facilitate peoples' creativity in today's culture. She explained:

> People I also think, because of the media, they can see so much more on television, they don't have to physically go to a—or live in a city to be able to hear an opera, go to an art gallery, see a play… it's more accessible… so the general population is hearing more music perhaps then they used to… It can be cheaper now. You can just listen to it on Netflix… So all of that is very nourishing, musically for people who are that way inclined and there are many more people now being more creative than there used to be.



Summary

During her formative years, socio-cultural factors important to the construction of Eleanor’s creative identity included having the tools to be creative, namely strong aural skills, music listening opportunities, and having a love of music. Socio-cultural factors that denied her creative identity during these years included social ideologies surrounding who can create music, the absence of opportunities to creatively make music, and a lack of social affirmation. Coming into her adolescence, socio-cultural factors that promoted the construction of Eleanor’s creative identity included exposure to others creatively making music. During her adult years, opportunities to engage in creative music-making built Eleanor’s sense of being creative. Importantly, it was a creative music-making opportunity that drew on her interests and experience, was showcased on stage, and enabled her to fulfil a need, that crystallised Eleanor’s sense of being creative.

Eleanor’s creative identity influences her private piano teaching practice in the way that she is able to pass on creative skills to her students. Eleanor understands that her ability to effectively nurture the creative identities of her students is dependent on being a creative teacher in terms of using imaginative or innovative approaches to teaching and being a creative role model.

CHAPTER 10. RESONANT THREADS

This chapter presents and discusses the findings from this inquiry that answer the research questions:

> (1) how have private piano teachers experienced the construction of their creative identities as musicians? and
>
> (2) in what ways do private piano teachers' own creative identities influence their private piano teaching practices?

Findings are presented as *resonant threads*, meaning themes that resonated across participants' narrative accounts and that resonate or reverberate with my own experiences as shared in the Prologue and Chapter 1. As I walked alongside and learned from participants' experiences, I myself experienced "a transformation of consciousness, heightened perceptiveness, increased thoughtfulness and tact" (Van Vanen, 1990, p. 163). Reflections on these experiences are interspersed throughout the chapter. Participants' names (including the author's own name—Bonnie) are included in brackets to show where findings refer to their specific experiences. Sections of participants' own words from the field texts have been periodically included that speak directly to the finding being presented and discussed. As will be evident, some of the threads discussed relate more to some participants than others.

The resonant threads weaved in and out of each research question. They are therefore presented holistically in response to both questions, but where a finding especially relates to a particular research question, this is noted in Table 2. With a focus on RQ1, threads one through to seven discuss

the socio-cultural factors (Hallam, 2017) which have influenced, promoted, or hindered teachers' creative identities as musicians, but do also touch on teaching practice. Threads eight through to ten focus more on teaching practice and specifically relate to RQ2. The resonant threads are as follows:

1. Exposure to others creatively making music.
2. Exposure to musical genres and styles.
3. Understanding what it means to be creative.
4. Having the tools for creative music-making.
5. Opportunities to engage in creative music-making.
6. Engaging the "whole self" in the creative process.
7. Opportunities to showcase one's creative works to public audiences.
8. Teaching experience and training.
9. Creative teaching.
10. Valuing creativity.

Table 2: Resonant Threads

Resonant Thread	Research Question 1	Research Question 2	Quotes
1. Exposure to others creatively making music	• Made way for participants to realise that creative music-making is available to everyone, even themselves. This broke down restricting social ideologies. regarding who could create music. • Started participants' creative urges which inspired their own creativity. • Built participants' knowledge banks. Teachers then drew upon their knowledge banks to create their own musical ideas. • Showed participants what was possible in terms of music-making. This allowed teachers to put their foot in the door and begin to explore their own musical ideas.	By students seeing their teachers creatively making music, it: • Shows students what is possible and can spark their own creativity. • Can contribute the construction of students' creative types of possible selves.	"That was a small spark for me, that you could do that" (Eleanor). “[T]o see adults performing—[it] starts the creative urges, or the instinct happening, to hear how the voices are used in a play, and it shows how it involves the sense” (Eleanor). "I think so much of learning to be creative is imitating a lot of other people and then trying to synthesize a lot of different approaches to create your own approach" (Jeremy). "It shows what's possible. If you see what's possible, at least you can put your foot in the door… and try exploring your own ideas" (Eleanor). “Shows the student what it possible and it is developing a creative ear that it’s just making that up on the spot” (Eleanor).

Resonant Thread	Research Question 1	Research Question 2	Quotes
			"Probably the example he provided was his most valuable contribution to me as a musician" (Jeremy).
2. Exposure to musical genres and styles	• Allowed participants to discover their musical preference/s. By working in the area of their musical preference/s, some teachers were intuitively motivated to engage in creative music-making. Additionally, it motivated/s their overall musical engagement.	Teachers are important to introducing students to musical genres and styles because: • Students may otherwise not know that certain genres exist. Teachers play an important role in allowing students to pursue their musical preference/s because: • Teachers can hinder or liberate the sense of "permission" to pursue one's musical preferences, alongside one's imagined possibilities for their musical future.	"[T]he music held me there… I loved my pieces so much, they were all classical in those days" (Eleanor). "[Jazz was] always the alternative…. Playing the same thing over and over again [as it was in classical piano practice] just seemed dull to me. I wanted to make something truly new, truly my own, and different each time" (Jeremy). "[I] was introduced to the idea that we were supposed to do things differently. We were supposed to compose, improvise." (Amber).
3. Understanding what it means to be creative	• Influenced participants' self-beliefs regarding their creative abilities. This was dependent on the extent to which their own musical behavior aligned with what they understood as being creative. • Influenced how teachers approached creative music-	Teachers' understanding of musical creativity influences: • How they aid their students to engage in the creative process.	"You basically sound like you took a bunch of famous great jazz pianists, put them in a blender, and you're basically playing what they're playing. I don't hear any of your own real input. I don't hear anything new" (Jeremy).

Resonant Thread	Research Question 1	Research Question 2	Quotes
	making.		"Beethoven was the creator of music and we're reproducing that" (Samantha). “That’s what creativity is. It’s taking a little cell and developing it in such a way that every avenue was explored” (Eleanor). "[Creativity is] the creation of music. Creation is by improvising and composing. I guess I've always thought of the creatives in music as the composers or the jazz pianists. Probably not the classical people" (Samantha).
4. Having the tools for creative music-making	• Gave some participants confidence to creatively make music. • Somewhat mediated the extent to which participants could participate in creative music-making opportunities. • Having the full repertoire of tools needed for creativity allows teachers to engage in creative music-making in all its richness.	• Having creative skills themselves influences teachers' confidence to equip students with these same skills. • Knowing the full repertoire of tools needed for creative music-making allows teachers to assist students' creative development.	"Having a solid knowledge of figurative analysis, it helps to be creative because I have a basic understanding of what might work and why" (Samantha). "First of all, there has to be a bank of knowledge. The more you know about a topic or art form, the better you're able to be creative" (Eleanor). “It’s [lyric writing] something that I had always wanted to do, but having a bit more training and authority pushed me to actually

Resonant Thread	Research Question 1	Research Question 2	Quotes
			have the confidence to do it" (Jeremy). "[Incorporating creativity into my lessons] started with me feeling confident I had the TOOLS to teach creativity that made me see it as more important and want to do it more" (Samantha). "I think if I hadn't had that experience of… learning music other than the classical kind of repertoire, I might not have been as confident [nurturing my students' creative abilities]" (Amber). I feel like where the creativity really comes in is when you can draw connections between those four elements…. When your technique can respond to what your emotion is, or when you can take a theory input and use it for an emotional purpose" (Jeremy).
5. Opportunities to engage in creative music-making	• Allowed participants to make music in ways that came naturally to them. • Made way for participants to discover musical activities that they enjoyed.		"[It's] discovering that that's an aspect of yourself you hadn't realised and there it was and you've… awoken it" (Eleanor). "People were asking me: 'How do

Resonant Thread	Research Question 1	Research Question 2	Quotes
	• Allowed teachers to discover an aspect of themselves that they did not know was there. • Made way for participants to become skilled and develop expertise in creative music-making. Opportunities for creative music-making within the formal education environment: • Normalised creative activities. • Influenced the extent to which participants valued creative music-making. • Influenced the extent to which teachers were interested in creative activities.		you get them to do all this composing…?' Well I just let them pretty much" (Amber). “I never saw myself as a composer and wouldn’t have had any confidence that I could even do it, but I just started doing it” (Samantha). "It [creative music-making] was just something we did as part of the Yamaha system! I didn't consider it ever to be something people didn’t do" (Jeremy).
6. Engaging the "whole self" in the creative process	• Instilled in participants a sense of being creative. • Made way for participants' products to reflect originality. • Participants also experienced a sense of being creative when their product fulfilled a need.		"[Creativity involves] bringing in the totality of your experience…. other parts of your personality and your character and your upbringing" (Jeremy). "[My method is] a weird and wonderful confluence of my exposure to three significant philosophies/methods in the music world: Piano Safari, Taubman and Suzuki, and how I have combined these with three

Resonant Thread	Research Question 1	Research Question 2	Quotes
			decades of my own teaching experience to create what I think is a unique approach to repertoire and sight reading" (Samantha). "I have literally invented a new product that I feel very proud of" (Samantha). "The plays that were commercially available, I didn't like and they didn't suit my needs. I wanted to have things that blended the science with music, with movement and speech" (Eleanor).
7. Opportunities to showcase one's creative works to public audiences	• Led participants to receiving social validation which bolstered their confidence as a creator and motivated them to pursue creative music-making. • Promoted networking. • Lead to further creative opportunities.		"Being recognized in competitions really bolstered my confidence, and having big performance opportunities led me to push myself" (Jeremy). "I was getting lots of opportunities and social validation for my performing, which helped to incentivize a performance major" (Jeremy). "Seeing things on the stage and seeing kids doing the play that I had written and having the applause was very satisfying"

Resonant Thread	Research Question 1	Research Question 2	Quotes
			(Eleanor).
8. Teaching experience and training		• Caused participants to become more thoughtful about nurturing students' creativity. • Strengthened teachers' ability to nurture their students' creativity.	"For the year that I inherited a studio of young beginners, I didn't particularly push creativity on these students. That's partly because I was a young teacher and wasn't too thoughtful about these things" (Jeremy). "[My teacher training gave me] the skills to use creative methods and child psychology, understanding how to motivate, how to practice, how to listen to what they were producing" (Eleanor).
9. Creative teaching		• Enabled participants to be sensitive and adapt to students' learning needs, interests, and goals. • Enabled teachers to be flexible in the moment such as let go of lesson plans to run with students' ideas.	"Teaching creativity requires a creative teacher! Every student arrives with a massively different skillset, different goals, and seems to respond to different cues" (Jeremy). "I allow them to choose their own

Resonant Thread	Research Question 1	Research Question 2	Quotes
			path…. Repertoire choice and styles are up to them, classical, jazz, pop, composing, improv. I support them to follow whatever inspires them" (Amber).
10. Valuing creativity		• Mediated the extent to which teachers included creative activities in their teaching practices.	"I think knowing what I know now if I found myself in the same position, I'd try to incorporate slightly more creative activities…. I'm exposed to a lot of research about the value of engaging students' creative side…. I'm objectively aware of the value" (Jeremy). "[Creative skills allow you] to collaborative more easily, with all types of musicians" (Amber). "The ones who have never been taught how to make up something on their own or try out something different, I think they are the ones who are far less likely to join a band" (Samantha). "It comes from that… love of something… you want to share it… because it's such a wonderful experience, you want to help others find that" (Eleanor).

10.1 Resonant Thread: Exposure to Others Creatively Making Music

Participants' narrative accounts revealed that exposure to others creatively making music influenced the construction process in multiple ways. These findings will now be discussed in light of participants' experiences.

Eleanor's narrative account revealed that exposure to others being creative made way for her to realise that creative music-making was available to everyone, including herself. Seeing the organist improvise at an Anglican church in Grafton was the moment where Eleanor discovered that "you could do that [create your own music]." She "didn't even think of it [being creative]" before this moment. This experience challenged social ideologies regarding *the meaning ascribed to creativity* and *beliefs about who and who cannot create music* (see Chapter 3) (passed down from cultural ideologies) that were murmuring in the background of Eleanor's formal music education environment. As Eleanor noted: "It was something that, if you were superhuman that you could create a piece of music, you had to be someone. It was such an elevated brain." Eleanor's experience also demonstrates how these ideologies shaped the educational curriculum. As she noted: "There was no freedom or sense of freedom [in lessons] to make something up yourself because it was never assumed that a student could do that." Seeing the organist improvise gave Eleanor a sense of "permission" to create. She noted: "That was a small spark for me, that you could do that." Moreover, this experience inspired Eleanor's own creative music-making later in her life, namely when she would improvise on the organ during Catholic masses.

Eleanor's experience also revealed that seeing others creatively making music "start[ed] the creative urges." Eleanor said: "To see adults performing starts the creative urges, or the instinct happening, to hear how the voices used in a play, and it shows how it involves the senses." Importantly, when discussing her own teaching practice, Eleanor emphasised that opportunities to see others being creative does not need to be limited to the domain of music. When discussing seeing others create, she noted that going "to the ballet" and to the "theatre" all start the creative urges.

Exposure to others creatively making music built Eleanor's musical knowledge bank in which she drew/draws upon to create her own music. When attending concerts during her adolescence, Eleanor said: "I was gathering my own personal bank of knowledge." She later remarked that to be creative: "There has to be a bank of knowledge. The more you know about a topic or art form, the better you're able to be creative." Jeremy touched upon a similar point, tying this to the importance of creative role models: "Role models are huge for me. I think so much of learning how to be creative is imitating a lot of other people and then trying to synthesize a lot of different approaches to create your own approach."

In the last few years, pianists such as Diana Krall, Rai Thistlethwayte, and Sarah Bareilles, to name a few, have become types of creative piano role models for me. Reflecting on my private piano tuition, my piano teacher did not introduce me nor encourage me to listen to other piano players. I consider this unfortunate, given that these artists now inspire my own creative music-making through learning from their musical ideas. A lack of exposure to other creative music-makers, therefore, can limit the

expansion of one's knowledge bank and repository of musical ideas that can inspire their own creative music-making. But for this exposure to occur, particularly for younger students, it is incumbent upon piano teachers to explicitly identify such role models and discuss how they embody creativity. If this poses a challenge for piano teachers, then they may need to spend some time reflecting on identifying *their own* creative role models first. Through not having this exposure within my formal piano lessons and now understanding the importance of knowing these artists, I intentionally introduce students to artists who I think may inspire their own playing. Excitingly, my students also introduce me to new artists! Amber also experiences this. She noted that broadening her musical horizons is "absolutely necessary" to keep up with her students and their learning desires. She described this as "really quite fun" as it "keeps me learning."

My own experience demonstrates how exposure to others creatively making music can show one what is possible in terms of creative music-making. As shared in the Prologue, I did not know that jazz improvisation existed until I was 15 years old and attended the *Generations In Jazz* festival in Mount Gambia. I therefore did not engage in this way of music (either in my private piano lessons or in my own time) because I did not know that it was a way of making music. This moment was important to the construction of versions of my possible musical self which is inextricable to the identity construction process (Creech et al., 2020c; Hallam, 2017; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Marcus & Nurius, 1986). Eleanor also touched upon the importance of knowing the possibilities of music-making. She referred to hearing Beethoven's, Mozart's, or Brahms' variations as showing her "what's possible." Importantly, she commented: "If you see

what's possible, at least you can put your foot in the door a little bit and try exploring your own ideas, even if it's at the bottom run of this very high ladder of possibilities." Her remark makes me think that hearing others create fuels creative and possibility thinking (Craft, 2000, 20002), namely in the sense that it can show us what is possible and consequently, broaden our way of thinking!

Amber's experience also hints at how seeing others create can be important to the construction of creative types of possible selves (Creech et al., 2020c; Hallam, 2017; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Marcus & Nurius, 1986). Amber had creative role models during her formative and adolescent years. These were the musicians in her church's youth band. She described these musicians as "very, very cool." Not only did these musicians show Amber creative ways of making music, namely through interpreting lead sheets and improvising solos, but also allowed her to partake in these activities. I can imagine at her young age, playing alongside creative role models would have done wonders for her self-esteem and instilled a feeling of excitement and possibility in her as a young musician.

On the contrary, however, Samantha's and my own experience demonstrate how exposure to others creating music is not solely responsible for the construction of creative types of possible selves. In fact, exposure to creative role models *without* the opportunity to engage in creative music-making oneself, can restrict or hamper the construction process. In Samantha's and my own experience, we both had exposure to creative role models such as those who improvised music within the jazz genre, yet we did not receive opportunities within our piano lessons or outside to engage in such music-making. A lack of opportunities for creative music-making

could be a reason behind why we both developed the belief that creative music-making was exclusive to those who were "gifted" or jazz musicians, rather than being inspired by such musicians. Samantha's and my own experience placed against Amber's experience suggest that having creative role models coupled with the opportunity to engage in creative music-making is necessary for the construction of creative types of possible selves. On the other hand, the absence of one or the other can restrict or hamper the construction of one's creative types of possible selves.

Importantly, the presence of creative role models without the opportunity to participate in creative music-making can do more than restrict or hamper the construction of one's creative types of possible selves. In my own experience, it caused me to develop restricting and negative self-beliefs regarding my own musical abilities. After seeing others create, I engaged in the social comparison process (Hargreaves et al., 2002; Juuti & Littleton, 2010; Lamont, 2002, Miller & Baker, 2007) and thought less of myself, namely that I was not one of the "gifted." My experience supports the notion that during the social comparison process, individuals can become self-deprecating and highly self-critical (Juuti & Littleton, 2010). My experience adds weight to the argument that having creative role models alongside opportunities to engage in creative music-making is necessary to creative identity construction. Without these two factors working in partnership, individuals can form limiting beliefs surrounding who and who cannot creatively make music, and furthermore, develop negative beliefs regarding their own abilities.

Comparing myself to these musicians was largely a product of my admiration for them (Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017). Through these

comparisons, I experienced the incongruity of my ideal self and my actual behaviour (Rogers, 1961, as cited in Hargreaves et al., 2002). The social comparison process restricted the extent to which jazz improvisers could be my creative role models in terms of inspiring my own creative music-making (NACCCE, 1999). Although I was initially inspired by them, I spent most of my time comparing myself to them rather than seeking to learn all I could learn from their musicianship.

Jeremy's narrative account spoke to the importance of seeing teachers create or teachers acting as creative role models. Discussing his teacher, Jeremy stated that the "example" that his teacher provided was the "most valuable contribution" to him as a musician. Jeremy further discussed how his teacher was a source of inspiration for his own music-making: "[Learning how to be creative is] imitating a lot of other people and then trying to synthesise a lot of different approaches to create your own approach." His experience shows that teachers are not only role models in the sense of modelling creative behaviour (i.e. risk-taking, enthusiasm, and playfulness (Brinkman, 2010; Cropley, 2001; Hickey & Webster, 2001; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; Lin, 2011; Riga & Chronopoulou, 2014)), but are a direct learning source for students in terms of their unique creative music-making. This adds weight to the argument that teachers are to display their own creative talents such as improvisations and compositions (Brinkman, 2010; Cropley, 2001; Hickey & Webster, 2001; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; Lin, 2011; Riga & Chronopoulou, 2014). In doing so, as aforementioned, they are a direct learning source for students in terms of their unique creative music-making.

As established in Chapter 3, creative role models are paramount to

creative identity formation. This is because "young people's creative abilities are most likely to be developed in an atmosphere in which the teacher's creative abilities are properly engaged" (NACCCE, 1999, p. 103). Eleanor experiences this as a teacher. She stated: "I think there has to be those little sparks or those little moments of experience thrown out and some of them will run with them." Importantly, by being a creative role model, Eleanor is modelling "the kind of musician that she desires her students to become" (Randles, 2010, p. 2). As Randles (2010) articulates: "The music teacher can consciously strive to model what a musician is, if the students are to learn to develop their own musical identity from the teachers' example" (p. 3). Eleanor views "teaching the student how to be creative by example" as also important as it "shows the student what is possible and it is developing a creative ear that it's just making that up on the spot. They observe that this sort of thing can happen just on the spot without music." She continued: "[It] shows that they can do things they wouldn't have thought of and they can do things that others might have thought were too hard."

Summary—Resonant thread 1

In summary, participants' experiences suggest that exposure to others creatively making music influences creative identity formation as it can show one that improvising and composing (and other similar activities) are ways of making music. Without this exposure, individuals can remain unaware that one can make music in such ways which can deny them from engaging in creative music-making. As discussed in Chapter 2 and as will be further argued in Resonant thread 5, hands-on opportunities to create music are necessary for the construction process to occur (Barrett, 2017;

Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014; Hagstrom, 2005; Hallam, 2017; Jaussi et al., 2007; Randles, 2009). Furthermore, seeing someone create music in a live context can allow one to see that creative music-making is available to all, rather than reserved for a type of "superhuman." This exposure can also awaken an individual's creative urges, inspire their creative practice, and lead to the construction of one's creative types of possible selves. Seeing others create music without having the opportunity to do the same, however, can restrict or hamper the construction of one's future creative types of possible selves. Individuals can think that creative ways of making music are exclusive to musicians who are "gifted" or musicians who play a particular genre of music, such as jazz. Furthermore, such ideas can lead individuals to developing restricting self-beliefs regarding their own musical abilities.

Participants' experiences further reveal that students seeing their teachers create can be important to the construction process. This is because an individual can look to their teacher for the example of the type of musician they are to become and can even be inspired by their teacher's creative music-making. This stresses the need for private piano teachers to develop and boldly display their creative identities as these contribute powerfully to showing students how to create. The absence of teachers as creative role models in formal music education contexts can deny students the construction of creative types of possible selves, particularly as the teacher can influence "the kind of musician that she desires her students to become" (Randles, 2010, p. 2).

10.2 Resonant Thread: Exposure to Musical Genres and Styles

Participants' experiences revealed that exposure to musical genres and styles contributed to the construction process in multiple ways. These findings will now be discussed in light of participants' experiences.

Exposure to musical genres and styles made way for some participants to discover their musical preference/s (Hallam, 2017). Moreover, for some participants such as Jeremy, this has resulted in him continually creating music within this genre and furthermore, develop expertise as a jazz musician. In Eleanor's experience, her preference for classical music ignites her curiosity, intuitively motivating her to engage in exploration. Eleanor stated that she loved sight reading classical music, such as Beethoven's *The Pathetique,* "because I was exploring. I was exploring compositions." She added that her sheer love of "melody and harmony," has been what has encouraged her creativity over the years. In my own experience, being exposed to and taking a liking to Latin music, caused me to naturally engage in the creative process. As I shared in the Prologue, I immediately turned so many songs that I knew into bossa nova arrangements. A lack of exposure to musical genres and styles, therefore, can prevent one from developing a musical preference/s, which may result in a lack of motivation to creatively make music.

Eleanor's experience further revealed that discovering her musical preference not only fuelled her creative engagement but has motivated her overall musical engagement over her life trajectory. During her formative years, Eleanor shared that the "beautiful pieces" in her method book "was the motivation" for sitting at the piano every day. Continuing into her adolescence, "the music held me there… I loved my pieces so much, they were all classical in those days." Our collective experiences show that

discovering one's musical preferences can light the fuse for creative music-making, alongside keep one engaged in music learning. It can also lead to a love of music which is a socio-cultural factor influencing creative identity formation (Hallam, 2017). Echoing modern educational philosophy, connecting students' learning experiences to their musical preferences is a principle of teaching creatively (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; NACCCE, 1999).

Interestingly, participants' experiences revealed that the development of their musical preferences was influenced by the ways in which they experienced learning musical styles. When discussing reasons why he decided to pursue jazz music, Jeremy shared that although he genuinely liked jazz music, he also knew that he "didn't want to be a classical pianist." Jazz, therefore, was "always the alternative." This was not because Jeremy did not like classical music, however. Rather, it was because: "Playing the same thing over and over again [as it was in classical piano practice] just seemed dull to me. I wanted to make something truly new, truly my own, and different each time." He also connected music theory to learning classical music, and thought that theory was "boring." At college, however, Jeremy developed a love for classical music when he learned to deconstruct the music or "look under the hood of the car" and began learning how they worked. Jeremy expressed that by deconstructing classical music, this music meant "so much more" to him and his eyes were opened to "the level of artistry with which they're putting those things together." Moreover, he began "falling in love with music theory" when he "realised that analysing other musicians' work helped me to imitate their style." Importantly, Jeremy noted that his teachers played a "very important" role in fostering his interest in classical music and music theory. The ways in which Jeremy

experienced learning classical music, therefore, influenced the extent to which he could enjoy this music and use it as a source of inspiration for his own creative music-making.

I resonate with Jeremy's experience. As I shared in the Prologue, during my formative and adolescent (and into my young adult years) of piano learning, I largely saw the classical score as notes on the page that I was to play correctly to pass my AMEB exams. Reflecting my ignorance, I did not understand that there was a human creator behind those notes (perhaps because the composers and I did not share worlds), and that the musical score was a transcription of their musical ideas. Once becoming informed of this through researching the history of the development of music notation (See Chapter 2), I developed a new appreciation for classical music. This manifested in being intrinsically motivated to study classical music and to see it as a means to an end—that is, to learn from the musical ideas of other composer to inspire my own creative music-making. Moreover, I encourage my piano students to view the musical score in the same way. Jeremy's and my own experience speak to the need for teachers to present content, such as musical genres, in engaging ways in order for individuals to develop an interest or preference for this area.

Importantly, other participants' experiences revealed that social and cultural notions of the role of music notation (as discussed above) can also hinder or liberate the sense of having "permission" to create music. This is perhaps not unexpected, due to the prominent role music notation plays in piano pedagogy. Amber mentioned that when attending her university, the School of Music did not hold the "traditional view that you have to adhere exactly to the score." On the contrary, the School "encouraged us to play

with freedom, explore our own ideas and play new music." Additionally, it was at the School that she was first "introduced to the idea that we were supposed to do things differently. We were supposed to compose, improvise." Amber described the school as "broad-minded" and "forward thinking." Considering the information presented in Chapter 2, however, I argue that the School was simply informed of the original purpose of music notation.

Informed by this more liberal understanding of the role of the musical score in music-making, namely that it can be changed, influenced how Samantha now teaches her students to view and use music notation. Giving the example of having to change a chord due to a student's physical hand limitations, Samantha shared: "I think previously I would've thought, 'You can't do that. That's not what's on the page…. Now I think, 'No you don't [have to play what's on the page] [chuckles]. Who says?!'" Samantha shared that her change in thinking has come from "just giving myself permission to say: 'Of course you can change this.' Even if it's Chopin!'" Thus, transcending pervasive limiting social and cultural narratives regarding the permission to create—be they from broader notions of creativity, or something as seemingly benign as music notation—was important for these piano teachers' creative understandings.

My experience (as shared in the Prologue) also demonstrates how a music notation approach to music learning can restrict the musical "ear" from being engaged and moreover, the ear from guiding the creative process. As I shared in the Prologue, I played jazz music during high school, but never played (nor thought to play) "away from the page." When I was shown how to play a "jazz chord" with no reference to music notation,

however, it was as if I was hearing the sound of the chord for the first time. By loving this sound, I immediately began experimenting with minor seventh chords, namely creating my own harmonic progression. With no music notation and no real knowledge of jazz harmony, my ear primarily guided my creative music-making. My experience reminds me of something Jeremy mentioned. Jeremy noted that creative music-making involves “technique,” “the brain,” “the ear,” and “the heart.” He highlighted the “ear” as “really key,” in terms of an individual’s response to the sound that they are producing. He explained: “Because with robots it’s all output, but when we’re playing music, we have the input too and we’re responding to the sound that we’re making.” Considering this, a music notation approach to music learning restricted the extent to which I could respond to the sound that I was making.

Jeremy’s and Eleanor’s experiences revealed that their teachers were important social actors in introducing them to musical genres and styles. This was because their teachers were the primary gatekeepers for introducing them to genres that they may not have otherwise heard (or only heard at a later date). Jeremy mentioned that he was introduced to jazz mostly through his private piano lessons: “My parents didn’t listen to jazz or anything like that—I just had good teachers who introduced me.” In my own experience, I was only first introduced to Latin music at university. Importantly, this was by my piano teacher. Eleanor takes it on as her responsibility as a teacher to “introduce” students to “things that are out there,” including composers. “They have to be brought into the mindset of the student,” she explained. Eleanor would do this by giving students recordings to listen to knowing that if she did not, “it’s like going to a

library and not knowing which book to take out because you don't know any of the authors." She continued:

> Just to give them a taste of… works that they should know [outside of exam repertoire]. Every music student should know a certain amount of repertoire pieces, the great pieces of art because it's too small if they're just doing their exam pieces, it's too narrow, it's too restricting. They need to know what the wider world has to offer.

Moreover, participants' experiences revealed that their teachers were important social actors in allowing them to pursue their interests. Jeremy's teachers made way for him to pursue jazz by pairing him with a teacher who would nurture his jazz pianistic ability. "She [Jeremy's private piano teacher at the Yamaha School] saw that that was a more appropriate path for me," Jeremy explained. As I shared in the Prologue, I was introduced to jazz music primarily outside of my private piano lessons. Moreover, I liked this genre. Due to taking my piano lessons for what they were, however, I was not aware that I could learn and pursue jazz music within the context of my formal piano lessons. Moreover, I was not aware that I could pursue this genre beyond my piano lessons, including at a tertiary education level. My experience demonstrates that private piano teachers can hinder or liberate the sense of having "permission" to pursue one's musical preference alongside one's imagined possibilities of their musical future. From a practical standpoint, this has restricted the extent to which I have developed expertise in jazz (in terms of the time I have not spent studying this genre). Moreover, I am having to spend time playing catch-up, such as learning stylistic, harmonic, and melodic idioms of this genre, which takes away time I could be spending creating music within this genre.

Summary—Resonant thread 2

In summary, exposure to musical genres and styles is important to creative identity construction as individuals can come to develop musical preferences. These preferences can intrinsically motivate one to create music within a specific musical style. Additionally, it can drive one to explore pre-existing music within these genres and styles as a source of inspiration for their own creative music-making. Working within the area of one's musical preference can contribute to a love of music, resulting in life-long musical engagement. On the other hand, a lack of exposure to musical genres and styles can prevent one from developing a musical preference/s, which, as aforementioned, may result in a lack of motivation to creatively make music.

Importantly, the development of musical preferences can be influenced by the ways in which a genre is taught, learned, and performed. If taught in a non-engaging way, this can result in an individual not pursuing this genre of music, or not considering using music from this genre to inspire their own music-making due to disinterest. Consequently, this restricts the expansion of an individual's melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic palette. Teachers, therefore, must present content in an engaging and informative manner and in a way that invites students' creative exploration for students to develop unique musical preferences. Furthermore, teachers should allow students to pursue their musical preferences and be clear in communicating this to students. Without this, students may remain unaware that they can pursue a particular genre. This can have quite damaging flow on effects, restricting one's sense of "permission" to pursue their musical preference/s alongside one's imagined possibilities, such as tertiary education options, for their musical future. Moreover, due to the time not

spent specialising in one's area of musical interest, this restricts the level of expertise one can develop in a specific genre.

10.3 Resonant Thread: Understanding What it Means to be Creative

Participants' narrative accounts revealed that their understanding of musical creativity influenced the construction process in multiple ways. Additionally, their understanding has bearing on the ways in which they nurture students' creative abilities. These findings will now be discussed in light of participants' experiences.

Participants' experiences revealed that the meaning they ascribed to musical creativity influenced their self-beliefs (Hallam, 2017) regarding their own creative abilities. This was dependent on the extent to which their own musical behaviour aligned with what they understood as being creative. Up until his young adult years, Jeremy understood creativity to be centred on the notion of "imitation." He therefore thought that by imitating other jazz pianists, he was being creative. This was until his teacher said: "You basically sound like you took a bunch of famous great jazz pianists, put them in a blender, and you're basically playing what they're playing." Although Jeremy considered himself creative in terms of his definition, he was in fact improvising in an uncreative manner and moreover, had constructed a false sense of what it meant to be creative. His experience speaks to the weakness of conceptualising musical creativity as improvisation and composition—these activities can be executed in an uncreative way (Elliot, 1995). Importantly, this inaccurate definition restricted him from being truly creative. As his teacher further commented: "I don't hear any of your own real input. I don't hear anything new."

What I find interesting about Jeremy's experience is that he was the only participant whose formal music learning environment, both at the Yamaha School and at college, prioritised improvisation and composition. Based on the premise that these activities were included in his formal music learning experience, one would assume that he was naturally being creative. His experience suggests, however, that even when creative activities are included in an educational curriculum, students may not fully understanding creativity in music and moreover, not actualise their creative potential. Through now understanding that creating is about "having something new to say…. It's about… putting yourself into it. It's about not doing it the same way every time. It's about freshness," Jeremy now improvises and composes music in creative ways. Jeremy's experience speaks to the need for teachers to start conversations with students regarding what it means to be creative. Importantly, for this to happen, teachers themselves require a holistic understanding of musical creativity.

Samantha's and my own experience further demonstrate how an individual's understanding of musical creativity influences their self-beliefs regarding their own creative abilities. For the first 32 years of private piano teaching, Samantha held the belief that Beethoven and other composers of the same league were exclusively the creators of music—her definition reflecting the "traditional" conception of musical creativity (Odena & Welch, 2009). Because Samantha was not producing work of this kind, she saw herself as "not at all creative." During a large portion of my young adult years, I understood musical creativity to mean elite jazz improvisation—my definition also reflecting the "traditional" conception of musical creativity, alongside a genre-specific understanding (Odena &

Welch, 2012; Cantan, 2019; Woosley, 2012). My narrow view of musical creativity contributed to me engaging in the social comparison process (Hargreaves et al., 2002; Juuti & Littleton, 2010; Lamont, 2002; Miller & Baker, 2007) (see Resonant Thread 1), comparing myself to elite jazz improvisers.

Importantly, my limited understanding of the extent of musical creativity meant that I dismissed any of my other musical efforts as being creative when in fact, when placed against the creative criteria, they were creative. Put in another way, I was so preoccupied with the comparison process that I overlooked and discredited my own interests and creative strengths. My experience suggests that one's beliefs about what it meant to be creative, particularly a narrow view of musical creativity, can restrict an individual from acknowledging and taking ownership over their creative abilities. In my own experience, I have experienced this as being a necessary step towards building my identity as a creative musician. Importantly, I overlooked my own interests and strengths despite my creative works being affirmed by others around me, including teachers, peers, family, and friends. My experience suggests that for some, positive self-beliefs (Hallam, 2017) regarding one's creative abilities is more paramount to the identity construction process than social affirmation.

Eleanor's experience revealed how her understanding of musical creativity influences the way that she engages in creative activities. Eleanor focused on exploration and discovery when explaining musical creativity. She described creativity as "exploring the imagination" and "taking a little cell and developing it in such a way that every avenue was explored." Her definition reflects the "new" conception of musical creativity (Odena &

Welch, 2009) that focuses on the psychological notion of imaginative thinking or creative thinking (Hickey & Webster, 2001; Odena & Welch, 2009; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Webster, 1990, 2016). She also mentioned creating "for the sheer pleasure of discovery… [of] what's possible." Because of her definition of musical creativity, Eleanor spends a lot of time "doodling at the keyboard" "without any preconception… Just playing, maybe an interval… then thinking, 'What can I do with that?" In contrast to Jeremy, who emphasised creativity being about "newness" or "freshness," Eleanor did not focus on nor mention these facets of creativity. Due to conceptualising musical creativity as "exploring the imagination," her focus is more on the process of exploration, rather than being about "having something new to say that everybody needs to hear that is going to make a difference," as it is for Jeremy.

Eleanor's experience showed how her understanding of musical creativity influences how she aids her students to engage in the creative process. When first becoming a private piano teacher, Eleanor would encourage her students to engage in exploration by asking them to "close the [method] book and find some notes that you like, just try some notes together." Eleanor would also encourage students to engage in music listening: "I'd just say these are the notes, listen to this." Due to also conceptualising musical creativity as "the ability to hear melodies and harmonies in the head… [and] to hear the accompaniment. All the harmonic parts that would go with that melody," Eleanor focuses on developing students' musical ears. As previously established, the ability to aurally perceive sound is the key tool needed to creatively make-music in its most organic sense (ACARA, 2019; Katz & Gardner, 2012; Webster, 2002,

2016). Understanding musical creativity as “the ability to hear melodies and harmonies in the head,” or as Eleanor also noted, “to be able to hear in your head the intervallic difference between notes so that you can plot tunes,” is therefore, inextricable to effectively nurturing students’ creative abilities.

A further narrative thread that emerged across participants’ narrative accounts was that there was a lack of discussion with others about what it means to be creative. This could be because as mentioned in Amber’s narrative account: “The term ‘creative’ wasn’t mentioned when I was learning the piano.” Bearing this in mind, I noticed that individuals construct their own meaning regarding creativity based upon the ways in which they see creativity manifest (Samantha, Bonnie). This supports the notion that from interacting with others within a specific social group or given domain (Helson, 1990; Lena & Lindemann, 2014), one derives their meaning of what it means to be creative (Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017).

In both Samantha’s and my own experiences, the ways in which we saw creativity manifest in the formal educational environment (Hallam, 2017) strongly contributed to the way we understood musical creativity. Samantha saw creativity manifest in the classical musical scores that she was reading and playing within her private piano lessons. She therefore came to see Beethoven as being *the* creator of music. My experience suggests that individuals can construct their own meaning of what it means to be creative based on the ways in which they see their teachers create within the formal educational environment (Hallam, 2017). For example, many of my university lecturers, including my private piano teacher at university, were jazz musicians and therefore modelled jazz improvisation.

Through seeing them create in this way, I built the assumption that to be creative meant to be an elite jazz improviser. Although I had seen creativity manifest in different ways in different contexts, such as peers taking solos in popular music ensembles, I derived my meaning of what it meant to be creative based on the ways I saw my teachers create. My experience suggests that teachers within formal educational environments play a powerful role in modelling and/or discussing what creativity is.

Interestingly, participants' narrative accounts revealed a relationship between the meaning they ascribed to musical creativity and the musical activities and genres that they enjoy—the latter synonymous with their musical preferences (Hallam, 2017). This somewhat touches upon personality differences, which is outside of the socio-cultural framework of identity formation. Jeremy loved imitation and therefore assumed that to create meant to imitate. In the same vein, I enjoyed jazz improvisation, and therefore assumed that to create meant to improvise within jazz genres. For Eleanor, the way that she conceptualised musical creativity (i.e. with a focus on play, exploration, and discovery) seems to be the natural way that she experiences music learning and participation. Although having an interest in an area can lead one to engage in creative music-making (Amabile, 2012), our experiences suggest that we need to take care that our interests or natural inclinations do not hinder us from truly being creative, or from understanding what it means to be creative. Importantly, it does direct us towards the creative activities or genres that one likes. This is important to nurture as it is important for creative engagement.

Participants currently hold different views of what it means to be creative. Samantha has a product and genre-specific view of creativity

seeing it as “the creation of music. Creation is by improvising and composing.” She added: “I’ve always thought of the creatives in music as the composers or the jazz pianists. Probably not the classical people.” Like Samantha, Amber understands creativity from a product perspective, seeing it as “mak[ing] your own music, improvise.” She also touched upon the process of creativity, however, noting that creativity involves “the freedom to explore” and to not be a “slave to the dots,” but to go beyond the dots. Similar to Amber, Eleanor emphasises creativity as being about exploration, namely “exploring the imagination.” Importantly, Eleanor highlighted the ear’s role in the creative process, conceptualising musical creativity as “the ability to hear melodies and harmonies in the head… [and] hear the accompaniment. All the harmonic parts that would go with that melody.” She also discussed creativity as “to be able to perhaps hear a simple melody or like a nursery rhyme and in the head compose variations on that.” When discussing musical creativity, Jeremy emphasised what *makes* something creative, namely “It’s about putting yourself into it. It’s about not doing it the same way every time. It’s about freshness.”

Teachers’ notions of creativity all touch upon different facets of creativity, including but not limited to types of creative products (e.g. improvisations and compositions) (Samantha, Amber), elements of the creative process such as exploration (Amber, Eleanor), and what makes something creative (Jeremy). Combined together, participants’ definitions provide a rich and holistic explanation of musical creativity. When viewed singularly, however, these teachers’ individual definitions do not capture the complete richness and complexity of musical creativity. Importantly, participants did not refer to thinking strategies involved in creative thinking

such as divergent and convergent thinking alongside imaginative thinking (Guilford, 1950; Runco, 2004; Stein, 1953; Webster, 1990, 2002, 2016). This resonant thread has discussed the weaknesses of a narrow view of creativity. Importantly, a product perspective of musical creativity in particular, does not capture the process of creative thinking or imaginative thinking with sound (Randles, 2010; Randles & Smith, 2012; Odena & Welch, 2009), which scholars argue as being the thinking that leads to the generation of a creative product (Webster, 2002). Additionally, as Webster (2002) argues, musical creativity "is clearly a thought process and we are challenged… to better understand how the mind works in such matters" (p. 26). A product perspective, therefore, does not guide us on how to be more efficient as creators. In my own experience, understanding musical creativity as thinking creatively with sound has demystified the creative process. Additionally, focusing on becoming a better creative thinker rather than a better improviser and composer has naturally led to the latter. For these, reasons, I argue that private piano teachers are to adopt a process perspective of musical creativity, namely that to be musically creative is to think creatively or imaginatively with sound (Hickey & Webster, 2001; Odena & Welch, 2009; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Webster, 1990, 2002, 2016) alongside understanding and employing creative thinking strategies when engaging in creative activities. Explicit direction for how private piano teachers can focus on becoming better creative thinkers rather than better improvisers is given in Chapter 11.

Summary—Resonant thread 3

In summary, participants' experiences reveal that understanding what it means to be creative influences the creative identity construction process.

A holistic understanding of musical creativity makes way for individuals to develop the positive self-beliefs necessary to construct a creative identity, alongside acknowledging and celebrating their own creative abilities. A narrow view of musical creativity—say, understanding creativity to be centred on the concept of imitation—can lead one to develop a false sense of being creative. Moreover, this can cause an individual to practice improvising and composing in a way that is in fact *un*creative, namely performing others' musical ideas rather than generating one's own musical thoughts. Similarly, a narrow view of musical creativity—say, a product perspective or seeing creativity as exclusive to a style—can result in negative self-beliefs regarding one's creative abilities, if their own behaviour does not align with what they see as creative. Moreover, this can cause individuals to dismiss their own efforts as being creative when in fact, when placed against the creative criteria, they *are* creative.

Participants' experiences further reveal that how one understands musical creativity goes on to impact how they engage in the creative process. For example, if one sees musical creativity as being centred on the concept of imitation, their practise sessions will largely involve imitating others' musical ideas, rather than stimulating their own creative thinking ability. On the other hand, if an individual understands musical creativity to encompass exploration, their time at the piano will be dedicated to exploring melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic possibilities. Importantly, one's understanding of musical creativity goes on to influence how they teach students to engage in the creative process. A holistic understanding of musical creativity is therefore needed to guide teachers, alongside students, into true creative music-making.

10.4 Resonant Thread: Having the Tools for Creative Music-Making

Participants' experiences revealed that having the tools for creative music-making had bearing on the construction process in multiple ways. These findings will now be discussed in light of participants' experiences.

In line with previous research discoveries, findings revealed that these participants needed tools to engage in creative music-making (Randles & Smith, 2012). As established in Chapter 2, tools include an aural perception of sound, aesthetic sensitivity, theoretical knowledge, and instrumental technique (ACARA, 2019; Green 2019; Katz & Gardner, 2012; Webster, 1990). For 21st century musicians, tools extend to include reading chord charts. During his formative years of piano learning and playing, Jeremy drew upon his pre-existing toolkit, namely his aural perception of sound and theory knowledge to compose music. These are the tools that he continues to use today when engaged in creative music-making. In Samantha's experience, her "solid knowledge of figurative analysis" enabled her to have a "basic understanding of what might work and why" when composing pieces for the BBRR series. Like Samantha, Amber's understanding of "chords and harmonic relationships" helped her to teach herself to improvise in a popular music ensemble. Eleanor also understands that creative music-making requires tools: "First of all, there has to be a bank of knowledge. The more you know about a topic or art form, the better you're able to be creative."

Jeremy's experience revealed that having the tools for creative music-making gave him confidence to engage in creative activities. He captured this point when discussing song-writing. He noted that studying English and

Comparative Literature gave him the “confidence” and “the tools” to start writing lyrics. He continued: “It’s [lyrics writing] something that I had always wanted to do, but having a bit more training and authority pushed me to actually have the confidence to do it.” This finding suggests that for private piano teachers to feel confident to engage in creative music-making (which is needed for creative identity construction) (Barrett, 2017; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014; Hagstrom, 2005; Hallam, 207; Jaussi et al., 2007; Randles, 2009), they must first acquire the tools for creative music-making, such as an aural perception of sound.

Importantly, having these tools resulted in Samantha, Amber, and Jeremy feeling confident in nurturing their students’ improvisation and composition abilities. This increased Samantha’s desire to encourage students’ creativity. As Samantha mentioned: “It started with me feeling confident I had the TOOLS to teach creativity that made me see it as more important and want to do it more.” Amber similarly noted that if she had not had the experience of actualising chord charts and improvising in popular music ensembles while she was growing up, “I wouldn’t have probably had those skills” and “I might not have been as confident [teaching these skills].” Samantha also credits her ability to foster creativity in her teaching studio to having “developed new and better skill sets” through teaching at Australian Music Schools (AMS) for 25 years. Participants’ experiences demonstrate that their ability to nurture the creative identities of their students is closely linked to having creative skills themselves.

Interestingly, and somewhat counter-intuitively, having the tools to teach others to create music enabled Samantha to foster students’ creativity, even when she did not see herself as a creative musician. Samantha was

trained to teach improvisation and composition to students at the Yamaha School, at a time when she did not see herself as creative. Her experience shows that a teacher's ability to foster students' creativity is not dependent on their own creative identity. It is as if the very *doing* of creativity for Samantha trounced the need to see herself as creative.

Participants' experiences revealed that tools for creative music-making can be acquired in a variety of contexts including "on the job" such as through playing in a popular music ensemble (Amber, Bonnie), in other music participation contexts such as singing in choirs (Eleanor), through self-made opportunities' such as engaging in music listening (Eleanor), and in formal music education contexts (Jeremy, Eleanor, Samantha, Amber, Bonnie). For example, through playing in a popular music ensemble, Amber could "play melodies by ear" and "just very naturally learned to harmonise them with the right chord inversion to keep the melody at the top." Eleanor developed her aural perception of sound partly through singing in choirs and listening to a lot of orchestras from a young age. She also developed her musical ear within her formal musical tuition. Jeremy acquired a variety of skills at the Yamaha School, including the ability to listen, sing, play, read, and compose music. These experiences suggest that the private piano teaching studio is not the only teaching and learning context in which students can develop the skills needed to be creative.

For those participants who received formal music education (which was all), some participants' private piano teachers played a paramount role in introducing them to, and equipping them with, the tools required for creative music-making. As I shared in the Prologue, because developing my aural skills was not the focus of my private piano learning experience, I was

unaware that one could aurally perceive sound and therefore did not even know that I could work on this skill in my own time. In Samantha's experience, due to a lack of focus on aural development within her private piano lessons, Samantha formed the assumption that auditory skills were reserved for "gifted" musicians or those who play a specific genre of music, such as jazz music. Moreover, this restricted Samantha from even trying to develop her musical ear, despite being motivated to do so: "I did wish that I could play by ear but I'd never tried it. No one ever told me, 'You could just sit down and try.'" Samantha's and my own experience suggest that private piano teachers play a crucial role in introducing students to the tools needed for creative music-making, alongside giving them opportunities within the formal teaching and learning space to develop these tools.

By not acquiring the tools within the context of the private piano lesson, students can feel daunted when presented with opportunities to creatively make music outside of the piano studio. Furthermore, this can decrease their motivation to participate, as was the case for Samantha. Samantha mentioned that she was "terrified" of composing tasks (in her case it was for a school competition) because "I didn't know how to compose." She therefore "just didn't want to go in." Samantha's limited tool kit also influenced the extent to which she felt that she could take up creative opportunities, such as playing in popular music ensembles. Samantha explained that she "didn't have the skill set to do it because I couldn't really read a chord chart and I couldn't improvise."

Amber's narrative account reveals that the growth mindset (Dweck, 2008) could have allowed Samantha to take up creative opportunities despite not having the needed skill set. During her formative years, Amber

played in a popular music ensemble and learned how to play by ear and read and interpret chord charts "on the job." In contrast to Samantha, Amber did not feel intimidated by this unknown territory but rather, positively took up this challenge and taught herself these tools. Importantly, however, Samantha mentioned that one of the reasons that she was reluctant about participating in creative music-making opportunities was due to her fear of making mistakes—a mindset that hinders creative development (Davis, 2004; Dweck, 2008). Reflecting on improvisation tasks, Samantha shared: "I do like to do things right. I just didn't know if I was right." To step into the space of being a creator of music, it was important for Samantha to:

> Give myself permission to fail and know that, 'All right, not everything you compose is going to be fantastic. There's going to be some good ones. There's going to be some really bad ones. Then others will be a work in progress.

Samantha's change of mindset was so large that one of her friends commented to her: "It's like you've reinvented yourself." In light of the constructivist theory of knowledge and learning, it is important to note that mistakes are inherent in the learning process (Fosnot & Perry, 1996). Additionally, Culpepper (2018) found that important to the construction of artists' creative identities was "the ability to view mistakes as a path toward innovation" (p. 232).

Further reviewing Samantha's narrative account, however, she noted that she was an "approval junkie." She "didn't like the thought of putting something out there and people were thinking my pieces were shit." Samantha's fear of failure echoes Davis (2004) (see Chapter 3):

> We learn that it's good to be correct. But [*sic*] by making mistakes, being wrong… will elicit disapproval, criticism, or even sarcasm and

> ridicule. One does not wish to be judged foolish, incompetent, or plain stupid. (p. 24)

Such supressing ideologies were apparent within Eleanor's narrative account. She shared that while learning from the nuns, there would be "a wallop over the back if there was a mistake."

I resonate with Samantha's experience. I remember the first time I learned how to play a walking bass line on the piano (taught by a friend) and later accompanied this friend on the piano for a performance. I had no fear going into this performance. I was excited from having learnt this new and appealing skill. After the performance, however, a person significant to me came up to me and commented on my playing. They almost laughed sarcastically at my attempt to do a walking bass line. This largely deflated my confidence and made me nervous and self-conscious about my playing—nerves that were not there before. From then on, I remember being fearful of making mistakes, primarily to avoid rejection and as Davis (2004) states, "sarcasm" from others. My experience supports the notion that "judgements are particularly influential [on one's self-esteem] when they are made by significant others—for a child, this would mean parents and siblings primarily, but could also include teachers" (Hargreaves et al., 2002, p. 8). Moreover, this had a "snowball effect" and somewhat hampered me from taking ownership over my creative abilities as I was preoccupied with desiring approval from others about the tools I was trying to add to my tool-kit.

There appears to be benefits for one's teaching practice by acquiring tools "on the job" or teaching oneself the tools needed for creative music-making. For Amber, learning how to read and interpret chord charts "on the

job" made way for her to understand how chords are used in "real-life" music-making contexts. Furthermore, this means that she teaches chords in contexts. As she explained:

> Rather than just learning random chords, 'Let's play all the major chords: C, C-sharp major, D,' which you're probably never going to do in a song. Let's work within one key signature and see what are some of the standard progressions. It's probably going to be much more useful to them in the long run.

Amber's experience suggests that understanding how creative skills are applied in everyday music-making contexts is important to how teachers teach these skills to students.

Participants' experiences revealed that in the process of teaching themselves the tool needed for creative music-making, they often devised their own methods or innovative approaches for learning creative skills (Samantha, Amber, Jeremy). Perhaps this is because they themselves engaged in experiential learning (Dewey, 1938) to learn how to create, which has led to the construction of new knowledge for them. They then used their invented methods when nurturing their students' creative abilities (Samantha, Amber, Jeremy). As demonstrated in Amber's narrative account, she taught herself to read and interpret chord charts "by reading the full music." Over time, Amber "pared it down and pared it down" until she was "just reading words with chords written above them." Through this process, Amber learned "all the standard pop style accompaniments." Amber equips her students with these same skills using this same method. Like Amber, Samantha encourages students to engage in creative exploration in the same way that she has engaged in this process. Samantha learned to explore creativity via composing variations on her own pieces for

her BBRR series. She encourages her students to be creative by creating "their own version" of her pieces.

In Jeremy's experience, he needed to think more deeply about creativity because he considered it "hard to teach." He contemplated about various aspects involved in creating music which led him to come up with "four aspects of music-making." Moreover, he has developed an activity which he uses to nurture his students' creative abilities:

> I have these little stories that I give out to students and I tell them not to share, and then they have to perform the emotion of that story and try to get the rest of the class to guess it. For me, that one's all about the heart, they're not using any theory or anything.

These findings demonstrate that the ways in which teachers have experienced learning how to be musically creative can have a direct impact on the methods they use to foster the creative identities of their students. Bearing this in mind, I posit that the more ways in which a teacher experiences different approaches to composition, improvisation, and arranging, the more this expands the ways in which they can guide their students in approaching these activities. Narrow experiences of being creative may restrict teachers from guiding students to approach musical creativity from different directions.

When discussing their creative endeavours, some participants did not mention all of the repertoire of materials for creating music. For example, Jeremy and Eleanor were the only participants to highlight the role that the ear plays in the creative process, such as "the ability to hear melodies and harmonies in the head… [and] hear the accompaniment. All the harmonic parts that would go with that melody" (Eleanor). Eleanor further explained creativity in music as the ability to "hear in your head the intervallic

difference between notes so that you can plot tunes." Jeremy and Eleanor were the only participants to emphasise the role of aesthetic sensitivity within their creative processes. Jeremy described aesthetic sensitivity as the "soul" or "emotional input." In fact, Jeremy shared that during his young adult years, his musical creations were largely motivated by needing an "emotional outlet." For Jeremy emotional things included "break-ups, certainly romantic things, but also really searching to find yourself." Jeremy conceptualised the "soul" as "bringing in the totality of your experience… other parts of your personality and your character and your upbringing." Eleanor's use of aesthetic sensitivity was evident when she discussing improvising organ music for Catholic masses. She shared that she enjoyed improvising organ music "to establish a mood of restfulness and contemplation." She liked making her improvisations "very fast" at the end of church services to make the people exit the back door. "I made nice bouncy chords…and allegretto [laughs] and out they went," Eleanor shared. I find it interesting that other participants did not touch upon the "emotional" aspect of creative music-making when discussing musical creativity, given that creative production is commonly associated with self-expression (Kennedy, 2016), which would imply tapping into these aspects of the self.

As aforementioned, participants' experiences revealed that teachers do not use (and presumably do not have) the full repertoire of tools needed for creative music-making. This influences the ways in which they engage in the creative musical process. For example, if one understands that aesthetic sensitivity is a tool used during the creative process, teachers will likely utilise this tool when engaged in the creative process. On the other, if one is

unaware of a specific tool used during the creative process, such as the musical ear, this restricts teachers from using this tool when creative music-making. Importantly, underdeveloped aural skills restricts the extent to which an individual can produce creative musical outcomes, given that musical creativity is the process of thinking creatively with sound to produce new and appropriate musical ideas (Hickey & Webster, 2001; Odena & Welch, 2009; Randles, 2010; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Randles & Muhonen, 2015; Randles & Smith, 2012; Webster, 1990, 2002, 2016). Having and utilising these tools is paramount to creative production and development because these are the tools that enable one to be musically creative in all its richness. Jeremy captured this point when he said:

> I feel like where the creativity really comes in is when you can draw connections between those four elements…. When your technique can respond to what your emotion is, or when you can take a theory input and use it for an emotional purpose.

In my own experience, understanding musical creativity is about having the right tools and knowing how to use them has demystified the creative process. I was largely oblivious to the tools needed to be a creative music maker when I commenced this research journey. Additionally, having the necessary tools for creative music-making and knowing how to use them has been key to gaining confidence as a creative music-maker. Importantly, Jeremy noted that these tools are necessary to be a "great improviser" and that if any of those things are "missing," one will most likely not be "very successful as an improviser." Even more importantly, however, Jeremy further said that people need these skills to be "any kind of musician." Amber also hinted at this when she said that "the freedom to explore, make your own music, improvise… ties in very closely with your ability to be a

functional musician." Not having these tools, therefore, restricts our development as musicians.

Becoming more knowledgeable about the various facets of musical creativity is paramount to promoting students' creativity as it made way for some teachers to explain students' struggles or gaps when students are engaged in the creative process (Jeremy). It also enabled them to nurture these different aspects in students. For example, Jeremy understands musical creativity to involve technique, the brain, the ear, and the heart or the emotional input or musical charisma. Based on this knowledge, Jeremy can explain to his students: "Well, you're doing really well with your brain element, but you really need to strengthen your muscle memory, your technique development." Additionally, Jeremy's experience demonstrates that teachers can be responsible for helping students to be aware of and access the various tools involved in creative production. As Jeremy shared, after giving students activities such as those discussed above (little stories to improvise from), he would often receive comments from students such as: "I really didn't consider trying to play… from an emotional place when I improvise."

Summary—Resonant thread 4

In summary, having the tools for creative music-making influences one's confidence to participate in creative activities when presented with the opportunity. Moreover, having creative skills oneself influences the teacher's ability to share these same skills with their students. This reinforces previous research findings, namely that teachers lack confidence in teaching unfamiliar skills (Sowash, 2013). Teachers therefore need these

skills to pass on these skills to their students.

Participants' experiences reveal that teachers are important figures for equipping students with the tools for creative music-making. Not doing so can result in students being unaware that certain tools exist or students thinking that these tools are reserved for those who are "gifted." Consequently, this can prevent students from acquiring these tools in their own time. Additionally, developing the tools for creative music-making in the private piano teaching studio can equip students for creative music-making activities, such as playing in recreational music ensembles, outside of the formal teaching and learning space.

10.5 Resonant Thread: Opportunities to Engage in Creative Music-Making

Participants' experiences revealed that opportunities to creatively make music influenced the construction process in multiple ways. These findings will now be discussed in light of participants' experiences.

As established in Chapter 2, identities in music are built through one's hands-on experiences of performing the identity (Barrett, 2017; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014; Hagstrom, 2005; Hallam, 2017; Jaussi et al., 2007; Randles, 2009). Jeremy, Samantha, and Amber's experiences supported this notion with them forming creative identities that reflected the creative musical roles that they had performed most frequently. Echoing the types of creative roles he had performed the most, Jeremy primarily identifies as a jazz pianist and composer. Through predominately engaging in composition over other creative activities, Samantha identifies as a composer. Based on her creative music-making experiences in a popular music ensemble, Amber

identifies as creative in terms of being an on the spot arranger and "improviser." Individuals need to perform the role of music improviser or music composer, therefore, to see themselves as an improviser or composer.

Additionally, Samantha's and Jeremy's experiences demonstrated that the construction process was not instantaneous, but occurred over time (Barrett, 2017; Culpepper, 2018; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014; Randles, 2009; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018). As revealed in Samantha's narrative account, it was only after she had composed a large portion of the pieces for her BBRR series that she began to see herself as creative. Additionally, Jeremy mentioned that "it was a process of many years studying with him [Fred] to feel somewhat comfortable that when I went to perform somewhere, I actually had something to offer that was really actually unique."

Jeremy's and Eleanor's narrative accounts revealed that opportunities to engage in creative music-making allowed them to make music in ways that comes naturally to them. Jeremy noted that improvising and composing, even from his formative years of piano learning, were his "most natural way[s]" of making music. Like Jeremy, I was able to easily improvise and compose music when provided with the opportunity, despite receiving no formal training on how to do these activities. In her own teaching practice, Amber has experienced learners' natural ability to creatively make music. Using the example of composing, Amber shared that when she is asked by others: "How do you get them to do all this composing?" Amber responds: "I just let them pretty much…with most, it just sort of happen[s]." Our collective experiences demonstrate that by presenting ourselves and others with creative music-making opportunities, we may discover that these are

natural ways in which we make music. Our experiences also reinforce the importance of giving students the opportunity (Hallam, 2017) to engage in creative music-making—individuals can naturally create music!

This is not always the case, however. Some participants' narrative accounts revealed that teachers sometimes needed to know *how* to apply tools in order to generate their own musical ideas. Despite having a rich repertoire of tools needed for creative music-making during his young adult years, Jeremy wrestled with the question: "How do I get to that other place?" namely to a place of being able to produce and offer new musical ideas when he realised that that was what creativity was about! Amber also hinted at needing this guidance after being introduced to the idea that "we were supposed to compose, improvise." She shared: "There wasn't time to exactly go into, 'Here's a piece of music. Here's how you could improvise on a repeat or here is how'—in terms of like transferring it to your own playing."

Opportunities to create music can lead to one discovering an aspect of themselves or capacities that they did not know they possessed. This was particularly the case in Eleanor, Samantha, and my own experience. As Eleanor noted after writing songs for a class musical: "[It's] discovering that that's an aspect of yourself you hadn't realised and there it was and you've… awoken it." Like Eleanor, Samantha said: "I never saw myself as a composer and wouldn't have had any confidence that I could even do it, but I just started doing it." I resonate with both Eleanor and Samantha's experiences. I composed my first piece of music when I was 15 years old through a classroom music assignment. Prior to that experience, due to not receiving the opportunity, I was unaware that I could compose music.

Knowing that one can create music can have positive flow on effects, initiating a lifetime of engaging in these activities. After writing the class musical, Eleanor said: “It was my first realisation that I could write music…That’s when I started writing melodies and tunes and songs.” Like Eleanor, I have not ceased to create music since the moment I composed my first piece.

Opportunities allow individuals to become skilled in creative music-making (Samantha). Samantha mentioned: “I had to do it [improvisation and composition] as part of my job so I got good at it.” Amber understands that creative practice is disciplined practice: “You still need to practice just as strictly, you just practice in a slightly different way. You practice ideas that can be rearranged on the spot for your improvisation.” Importantly, engaging in creative music-making allows one to understand and appreciate that it takes “a lot of practice for… artists to become proficient in the skill of improvisation” (Samantha). Samantha explained: “When students try it, and they can’t do it and just to understand that everybody started like that. You just don’t realise that you can just do it. Anyone can do it.”

Seeing and understanding that creativity takes discipline and practice was important to the construction of my own creative identity. As aforementioned, when I first saw jazz improvisation on stage, although I was amazed by, and in awe of, jazz piano improvisers, I simultaneously compared myself to these pianists. Consequently, because I was not in the same league, this lowered my levels of confidence as a musician. I have thought deeply as to why I thought less of myself rather than being inspired to become more like these musicians. I reason that it is because this type of music-making was so far removed from my own music learning experience

(which at that time, was embedded in the western classical tradition) that it made jazz improvisation seem unattainable. I think that it is also important to note that these musicians were highly skilled in their craft, adding to why this way of music seemed out of my reach. Consequently, I assumed that such musicians were gifted rather than their talent being largely the result of discipline and practice. My mindset reflects the closed mindset, namely that I saw talent or skill as being something that people have or do not have, rather than something that can be developed (Dweck, 2008).

Participants' experiences revealed that opportunities for creative music-making can take place in informal music-making contexts, such as playing in a community based popular music ensemble, in the workplace, in the private piano teaching studio, and in one's spare time. Participants' experiences showed that for individuals who receive formal music education (which was all), opportunities for creative music-making within the piano teaching and learning studio can be paramount to the identity construction process. None of the participants (except Jeremy) received opportunities to do so during their formative and adolescent years of private piano learning. Eleanor said: "There was no creativity whatsoever there, which was the norm." Like Eleanor, Samantha said: "never did one single second of improvisation or composition ever in my life." Amber also had "very traditional" piano lessons which meant that creative activities were not included in the curriculum.

Opportunities within the formal teaching and learning space normalise creative music-making and show individuals that creative music-making is an inclusive activity. As Jeremy said: "It [creative music-making] was just something we did as part of the Yamaha system!.... It didn't feel like a

choice…. I didn't consider it ever to be something people didn't do." His first statement demonstrates that he did not improvise and compose music within his formal music education experience because he was a "gifted" child. Rather, all children who attended the Yamaha School were required to engage in creative music-making. On the other hand, the absence of opportunities can lead one to view creative music-making as an exclusive activity. Samantha came to see that "Beethoven was the creator of music and we're reproducing that." Moreover, because Samantha was not an elite composer like Beethoven, she interpreted this as meaning she was "not at all creative." Eleanor took on a similar narrative to Samantha, saying: "It was something that, if you were a superhuman that you could create a piece of music, you had to be someone. It was such an elevated brain." Additionally, the absence of opportunities for creative music-making from the formal teaching and learning space can cause one to think that creative music-making is genre-specific, such as only for those who make music within the jazz genre. "I've always thought of the creatives in music as the composers or the jazz pianists. Probably not the classical people," Samantha shared. Opportunities for creative music-making, therefore, need to be prioritised in the private piano teaching studio to both normalise and make inclusive, these creative activities.

The absence of creative music-making from the formal teaching and learning space can also lead an individual to develop fixed and narrow views regarding their identity as a musician. Through her formal piano learning experience, Samantha developed a "purely classical" identity. This meant that she solely saw herself as a "performer" of music, meaning one of the "reproducers of the creativity." She placed herself inside a "classical

box" and strongly adhered to the beliefs of: "I don't compose. I don't improvise. I don't read chord charts. No, I'm classical." Samantha's beliefs remind me that "the extent to which we are able to access salient and elaborate musical possible selves may be promoted or constrained by the ways in which we and others perceive our musical potential or limitations" (Creech et al., 2020b, p. 18; Erikson, 2007). Additionally, this confirms the notion that "teachers' perceptions of themselves as creative music makers are a product of his or her experiences with being creative with music over their history" (Randles & Muhonen, 2015, p. 15; see also Odena & Welch, 2012). Importantly, Samantha carried this identity into her first 32 years of private piano teaching. This was to the extent that she would turn students away if they wanted to compose or write songs. Samantha would think: "I'm not the teacher for you."

Samantha's experience also suggests that this can go on to influence the types of musical futures that an individual can construct. After finishing her classical degree, Samantha knew she "needed to make a living" and that she "wouldn't cut it as a concert pianist!" Her statement implies that becoming a concert pianist, in her mind, was her only career option. In my own experience, I initially decided to not pursue music at a tertiary education level and as a career because I thought that my musical future was destined to be a reflection of my own private piano learning experience—learning and mastering scales and difficult classical repertoire and undertaking classical exams. Considering this, the opportunities presented within the studio, whether involving creative music-making or not, can shape how one perceives the possibilities for their musical future.

Formal creative music-making opportunities are paramount to creative

engagement because they can influence the value one places on creative activities. This value can go on to impact an individual's motivation to engage in creative music-making outside of the formal studio. Due to the absence of creative music-making from her private piano learning experience, Samantha "dismissed this [composing] as ever being relevant to my skill set." In my own experience, it mediated the extent to which I felt I had permission to pursue these types of activities, both as an activity of leisure and professionally. Despite enjoying these creative activities and taking naturally to them, I did not consider (nor was given the opportunity to consider!) to make these activities an integral part of my daily musical endeavours and aspirations due to these activities not being valued in my formal piano learning experience. This shows that the value placed on creative music-making within the formal teaching and learning space can shape the value that students place on creative music-making outside of the teaching and learning space.

Opportunities within the formal teaching and learning space also nurture one's interest in creative activities. Interest is important because it can motivate one to dedicate time to pursuing these activities. As Samantha said about coming to improvise: "I wasn't interested in this; no one had fostered an interest [in improvisation] for me in my education." This meant that when she was given the opportunity to improvise, she "didn't give it the time to sit down and experiment." This aligns with the notion that the time spent on music activities that teachers like and value, positively influence students' preference for this activity, too (Vicente-Nicolas & Mac Ruairc, 2014, as cited in Creech et al., 2020b).

Summary—Resonant thread 5

In summary, opportunities for creative music-making are necessary for individuals to develop identities derived from these musical roles. Additionally, opportunities for creative music-making allow some individuals to create music in a way that comes naturally to them and can lead one to discover an aspect of themselves that they did not know they possessed. Moreover, this can result in a life-long engagement with creative musical activity. Opportunities for creative music-making are also necessary for individuals to become skilled in activities such as improvising and composing and can lead to the realisation that creative music-making takes time and practice. Importantly, some individuals require guidance on how to apply the tools needed for creative music-making to generate their own musical ideas. This suggests that opportunities for creative music-making alone may not be sufficient for creative identity construction but may need to be coupled with guidance on how to creatively make music.

Participants' experiences demonstrate that opportunities for creative music-making within the formal teaching and learning space can be paramount to creative identity formation. Opportunities within this context can normalise creative music-making. On the other hand, an absence of opportunities leads one to think that creative music-making is an exclusive activity reserved for those who are "gifted," a "superhuman," or who make music within a particular genre. The absence of opportunities can also cause one to develop a fixed and narrow view regarding their identity as a musician and the types of musical activities that they can perform. This also goes on to influence the types of musical futures that an individual can construct. Moreover, a fixed identity can flow on to influence the types of activities teachers allow their students to perform. The absence of

opportunities within the formal teaching and learning space can also cause students to lack interest in or not value creative activities. This can affect their overall motivation to participate in creative music-making outside of the formal educational environment, such as in a recreational music-making ensemble. Finally, if creative activities are not offered, this can affect one's sense of permission to pursue creative activities, both as an activity of leisure and professionally.

10.6 Resonant Thread: Engaging the "Whole Self" in the Creative Process

Participants' experiences revealed that their opportunity to draw on their "whole selves"—including their prior experiences and domain and non-domain interests—had bearing on the construction process. These findings will be discussed in light of participants' experiences.

Jeremy's, Eleanor's, and Samantha's narrative accounts revealed a specific type of experience that made them feel creative—that is, they experienced a sense of being creative when their "whole selves"—including their prior experiences, domain and non-domain interests, and personalities—were engaged in the creative process and reflected in the final product. While composing during his formative years, Jeremy's compositions were inspired by his love for bugs (non-domain interests). Moreover, his experience revealed how he combined his non-domain interests with his musical interests. Jeremy was "super interested in creativity with words in additional to music." Similar to Jeremy, Eleanor took delight in introducing into her teaching other art forms, such as poetry, drawing, and movement, and combining it with music. Eleanor shared: "I

love writing my own poetry and sort of things too… I think, ‘Oh, that would go well as a tune.” Eleanor further combined poetry and music with movements: “It’s not just saying the poem, you’ve got the movement, the rhythm, the beat and the putting melodies and writing melodies to poetry.”

Jeremy also mentioned his creations being fuelled by his personality—creating involves bringing in “other parts of your personality and your character and your upbringing.” When writing songs, Jeremy loves to write about the “sad, nostalgic side.” “[There is] something about that emotion that I find really interesting and beautiful and I love writing about it,” Jeremy shared. He added: “It’s so much more interesting to write about that than happiness I guess, or joy. That’s so boring [laughter].” Funnily, Jeremy is not known by his family and friends to be a sad or nostalgic person (adding yet another complexity to understanding creativity!). Participants also mentioned how their previous experiences inform their creations. Samantha mentioned:

> [My method is] a weird and wonderful confluence of my exposure to three very significant philosophies/methods in the music world: Piano Safari, Taubman and Suzuki, and how I have combined these with three decades of my own teaching experience to create what I think is a unique approach to repertoire and sight reading.

Importantly, Jeremy noted how the merging of all of the above (i.e. domain and non-domain interests, personality, experiences) is what makes one’s work “different” or unique:

> I think it’s just different just because it’s mine. It’s the result of my weird amalgamation of experiences instead of someone else’s. Sometimes, I’ll set out to make something really new, but sometimes it just comes out because I’m a different person than anyone else.

Producing something that was different or unique was paramount to

some participants seeing themselves as creative. Importantly, this is the other characteristic (alongside value) that marks something as creative (Barron, 1955; Elliot, 1995; Guilford, 1950; Kaufman, 2009; Reimer, 2003; Runco & Jaeger, 2012; Simonton, 2016; Stein, 1953). Samantha and Jeremy used the terms "unique," "new," "different," or "fresh" in relation to moments that they saw themselves as creative. Moreover, having a sense of being unique evoked feelings of ownership in individuals. This was a narrative thread in Samantha, Eleanor, and Jeremy's experiences. Samantha shared in relation to her product:

> I feel proud to have come up with something unique, from scratch, and because they're not arrangements of other peoples—because they are literally *my* [emphasis added] compositions…. [it] comes from an idea that's *all mine* [emphasis added] and then on the website, all the materials are *all mine* [emphasis added].

Jeremy similarly mentioned that it is "rewarding" to have "something that's really your own." Eleanor shared that seeing the kids perform the musical that she had written was "very satisfying." Participants' experiences reveal the personal benefits of producing something creative (i.e. unique), namely the sense of ownership, pride, and/or reward that can be felt.

If one's domain and non-domain interests, personality and/or character, and experience are what leads to a product being unique, and being unique makes one feel creative, I posit that we need to tap into and draw upon these natural resources or tools when engaging in creative music-making. In this way, we and others bring "our whole selves" into the creative music-making space. Given that self-expression "putting yourself into it" as explained by Jeremy, is often identified as being at the heart of creativity, these aspects—our experiences, personality and/or character,

interests—cannot be overlooked as vitally important tools when improvising, composing, and arranging music.

Participants' narrative accounts further revealed that they experienced a sense of being creative when their efforts fulfilled a need or made a difference. For example, Samantha and Eleanor were improvising and composing music within their work roles well before they came to see themselves as creative. Their musical creations during that time, however, were primarily "everyday" or "little c" moments of creativity (Brinkman, 2010; Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009; Sawyer, 2012), such as regularly "mak[ing] up accompaniments for pieces just oomcha oomcha [rhythmic pattern]" (Samantha) and "making up little things to do creatively" in the classroom (Eleanor). It was only when Samantha and Eleanor generated a type of musical product that reflected their uniqueness and fulfilled a need, that they experienced a sense of being creative. Eleanor spoke to this point, sharing that writing the class musical felt different in terms of being creative than sitting and "doodling" at the piano. When asked if she thought of herself as creative when she was "making up little things to do creatively" in the classroom, she also said: "I didn't… really call it that. I didn't give it a name. I just did it. I was just making up things." This finding suggests that although "little c" moments of creativity contribute to the construction process (Brinkman, 2010; Culpepper, 2018; Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009; Sawyer, 2012), larger moments of creativity need to be experienced for one to have a sense of being creative. I will now discuss the characteristics of these larger moments of creative experiences, namely that the tasks were purpose or problem orientated and resulted in a musical product that achieved what the creator set out to do.

Characteristic of these types of experiences were that they were purpose or problem orientated. For Samantha, it was needing a resource to help her student understand that reading music is all about patterns. Samantha claimed that this pedagogical need (i.e. problem or purpose) in fact teased out her creativity. Samantha also shared that she started composing because over her teaching years, she looked at the pedagogical works of other competent composers and thought that "some of their material could do with a bit more excitement." For Eleanor, it was needing to write a school musical because: (1) a class musical was expected; and (2) the school plays that were commercially available did not suit Eleanor's needs or desires: "The plays that were commercially available, I didn't like and they didn't suit my needs. I wanted to have things that blended the science with music, with movement and speech."

The need for a purpose behind creating was also evident in Amber and Jeremy's accounts. Amber shared: "Composing for its own sake doesn't interest me." Amber enjoys, however, creating resources for students, such as for aural studies and for two and three part singing. Jeremy's purpose behind creating music is "having something new to say that everybody needs to hear that is going to make a difference." Interestingly, in these larger creative moments, improvisation and composition were a means to an end, namely fulfilling a need and/or contributing something to society. This expands our view of our motivation behind nurturing our own and students' improvisation, composition, and arranging abilities. We do so to help people fulfil their desire to contribute something to society through their creative music-making.

Characteristic of these experiences was also generating a product. It

was not just any product, however, but a solution to a problem. Importantly, appropriateness, usefulness, effectiveness, or value is one of the creative criteria (Kaufman, 2009; Runco & Jaeger, 2012; Simonton, 2016; Stein, 1953). For Samantha it was producing compositions for the BBRR series (product) that was an approach to repertoire and sight-reading (solution). In Eleanor's case, the product was her musical performed on the stage.

Summary—Resonant thread 6

In summary, participants' experiences reveal that engaging the "whole self" in the creative process is needed for some to begin to establish a creative identity. In this way, pianists are able to generate a product that is different or unique, based on their idiosyncratic backgrounds and interests. Importantly, generating a product that reflects an individual's uniqueness results in feelings of satisfaction, pride, and reward. These are benefits that add value to individuals' overall well-being. Importantly, opportunities to create a work that fulfils a need or makes a difference is important to one seeing themselves as creative, such as creating a pedagogical resource. Having something to show for one's creative efforts, such as a performance on stage, is also important. This can further instil a feeling of satisfaction.

10.7 Resonant Thread: Opportunities to Showcase One's Creative Works to Public Audiences

Participants' experiences revealed that opportunities to showcase their creative works to public audiences influenced the construction process in multiple ways. These findings will now be discussed in light of participants' narrative accounts.

Jeremy's, Eleanor's, and Samantha's experiences revealed that opportunities to showcase their creative works to public audiences was important to the creative identity construction process. This was due to the social validation that they received. Social validation or affirmation is established in the literature as a contributing factor to the construction process (Culpepper, 2018; Hallam, 2017; Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2017). Social validation of these participants' creative works built their confidence as creators of music and caused them to pursue their own creative music-making. Jeremy noted that "getting lots of opportunities and social validation for my performing" were factors "which helped to incentivi[z]e a performance major." Receiving validation also led to feelings of satisfaction. As Eleanor shared: "Seeing things on the stage and seeing kids doing the play that I had written and having the applause was very satisfying." In my own experience, receiving social validation from peers and teachers after my performance of the *C# minor jam* (see Prologue) led me to contemplate that I may have potential as a creative music-maker.

Participants showcasing their improvisations, compositions, and/or arrangements also led to further opportunities that continued to build their creative identities. Through hearing Jeremy perform at university, Marian McPartland—host of the renowned radio show, *Marian McPartland Piano Jazz*—invited Jeremy to perform on her show. In this sense, showcasing his creative works to public audiences led to future creative opportunities through Jeremy being scouted. This boosted Jeremy's confidence: "It was great validation for the recognition I was getting locally but on a national scale." After composing the class musical, Eleanor was commissioned to write a year five/six multicultural musical. In my own experience, sharing

my creative works with public audiences has also led to other creative opportunities, including performance and composition opportunities. In other words, sharing creative works with others has a positive “snowball effect” which continues to build and strengthen the creative identity.

Jeremy’s and Samantha’s experiences revealed that social validation increased their confidence. Jeremy shared that the recognition he received at competitions “bolstered my confidence.” For Samantha, receiving positive feedback on her compositions for her BBRR series gave her a “head start” and made her think, “Okay, this isn’t too bad,” and empowered her to continue. Reflecting on the significance of this approval, Samantha emphasised, “This goes to the heart of me being the type of person that wants to ‘get it right.’ I needed approval before I had the confidence to continue creating!”

Eleanor’s narrative account demonstrates the negative effects of one not being affirmed: “My thoughts of my ability was that I wasn’t very smart because I was never complimented, never told I was smart.” Importantly, Eleanor described those cultural times as not “the era for praise.” Eleanor, however, used this lack of affirmation to fuel her commitment to finishing a task. Her experience suggests that a lack of something, or a supressing socio-cultural factor, can provide the impetus for us to keep on going. Throughout her teaching, Eleanor has been committed to getting the best out of each student and showing them that they can do it. Eleanor emphasised “the acknowledgment and encouragement,” that is needed from “someone in the background or a good teacher” to help students’ creativity. She added, however, that “It’s not absolutely necessary because I didn’t have any encouragement.” Her experience shows that teachers may teach, or have the

motivation to teach, what they were not themselves given as students.

Summary—Resonant thread 7

In summary, participants' experiences reveal that opportunities to showcase one's creative works to public audiences can build a creative identity due to the social validation an individual can receive. Social validation of creative efforts can strengthen an individual's confidence as a creator of music, and furthermore, can cause them to continue pursuing their own creative music-making. Presenting creative works to public audiences can also lead to further creative music-making opportunities, such as performances and/or commissions, that continue to build an individual's creative identity. The absence of opportunities to showcase creative works, therefore, denies the opportunity to receive social affirmation. In turn, individuals may not receive the encouragement that they need to continue creative music-making, nor pursue a career as a creative music-maker. Further, not showcasing one's creative works to public audiences may restrict the extent to which they are presented with more opportunities to create music. Participants' experiences reveal that a lack of social affirmation on the whole can lead to restricting self-beliefs regarding their abilities, such as their actual capacity to perform or achieve a task. This lack of affirmation, however, can also motivate some to strongly commit to a task to prove to themselves that they are capable.

Summary of Findings so Far

Participants' experiences revealed factors important to the construction of creative identities in music—exposure to others creatively making music, exposure to musical genres and styles, understanding what it

means to be creative, having the tools for creative music-making, having opportunities to engage in creative music-making, engaging the "whole self" in the creative process, and having opportunities to showcase one's creative works to public audiences.

The following section presents the findings that answer the second research question, namely in what ways do private piano teachers' own creative identities as musicians influence their studio practices? These threads are intentionally placed last as these discuss factors outside of these teaches' own creative identities as musicians that influence/d their private piano teaching practices.

10.8 Resonant Thread: Teaching Experience and Training

Participants' narrative accounts revealed that teacher experience and training influence the extent to which these teachers can effectively nurture the creative abilities of their students. These findings will now be discussed in light of participants' experiences.

Findings revealed that Jeremy's, Amber's, and Eleanor's ability to promote the creative identities of their students was influenced by their teaching experience and training. Supporting previous research findings (see Daniel & Bowden, 2008), Amber initially taught piano in the same way that she was taught. This meant that due to creative activities not being prioritised in her own learning experience, Amber did not foster students' creative skills in her own teaching practice. The construction of Amber's creative identity, however, was in motion outside of her formal piano lessons through playing in a popular music ensemble. This would suggest that despite holding a creative identity (or the early stages of one), Amber

still deferred to her own learning experience as the model for her teaching practice (see also Daniel & Bowden, 2008).

Amber completed her Diploma of Education (DipEd) and taught classroom music for a number of years. Interestingly, Amber mentioned that she did not find that her Diploma helped her private piano teaching. On the other hand, she felt that her actual practical experience of teaching in classrooms did, although the transfer of skills took some time. Like Amber, Eleanor credits her 35 years of experience as being "absolutely" important for her private piano teaching practice. Eleanor also emphasised how her six years of teacher training prior to becoming a piano teacher was also "absolutely" necessary for her studio practice. These years of training gave Eleanor "the skills to use creative methods and child psychology, understanding how to motivate, how to practice, how to listen to what they were producing." She highlighted "the psychology of it" as being important to her teaching. Both Amber and Eleanor's narratives demonstrate how experience and training in teaching, just as is the case for creative music-making, assist one in becoming a better teacher.

Eleanor's reflections about the necessity of her teacher training coupled with what I have learned about education throughout this inquiry, assist me to understand why I struggled in my confidence as a teacher when I first entered the private piano teaching profession. Due to having no formal teaching training, I struggled with teaching as much as I did with creative music-making. I feel that I lacked both the skill-set of a teacher alongside the skill-set needed to be a creative musician. Moreover, learning about educational philosophy and the constructivist theory of knowledge and learning has been vitally important to my teaching practice, and in a

way, has allowed me to nurture the creative abilities of my students. Because I now understand that play and experimentation are inherent in the learning process, I encourage these activities, whether it be in the context of playing pre-existing music or in solos, without necessarily treating them as improvisation and composition activities. Since viewing these activities as part of the learning process, I have been able to bridge the gap between creative activities and traditional skills—something I had previously struggled with a great deal.

Jeremy, who appeared to have the most established creative identity of all participants when entering the teaching profession (during his second year at university), did not particularly "push creativity on… students" at the time of becoming a private piano teacher. He explained that this was partly because he was "a young teacher and wasn't too thoughtful about these things." Jeremy's experience suggests that a lack of thoughtfulness about teaching, for young teachers in particular, is another reason why teachers may not include creativity in their private teaching practices, separate from their own creative identity as a musician. His experience could also support the notion that due to some teachers having limited educational training when entering the profession, teachers are often under-prepared to effectively manage the pedagogical facets of their role (Collens & Creech, 2013) which may include strategies to promote students' creative identities.

Eleanor also mentioned the benefit of watching "a real teacher teaching" or watching a "teacher in action" to her own teaching practice. Referring to watching Richard Gill teach, Eleanor said that this showed her how "high quality, rigorous teaching lifted the educational process

possibilities for even less able students." Jeremy develops his ability to teach creativity through his own teachers' ethos.

Importantly, Jeremy mentioned that he is still very much working on the "how" of creativity in regards to his teaching practice. This emphasises that teaching for creativity is a different art form to creating music and something separate from the teacher's own identity as a creator of music (given that Jeremy has an established creative identity). Referring to the comments of one of his own teachers on the teaching/learning of creativity, Jeremy said: "The question 'what if' is at the heart of everything." This is a statement that represents "possibility thinking" (Craft, 2002). Importantly, as articulated in Chapter 3, it is the process of creative or possibility thinking that leads to the generation of creative products. Understanding how to stimulate creative or possibility thinking, therefore, needs to be the goal of teachers who are motivated to nurture the creative abilities of their students.

Summary—Resonant thread 8

In summary, teacher training, including learning about the psychology of teaching and creative teaching methods, and teacher experience, such as teaching in classrooms, can enable teachers to develop their ability to nurture the creative identities of their students. On the other hand, a lack of teacher training and experience upon entering the teaching profession can restrict the extent to which teachers can nurture the creative abilities of their students. As a result, teachers may refer to their own learning experience as the model for their teaching practice. Additionally, a lack of teaching training and experience can mean that educators are not overly reflexive

about the art of teaching, which can hamper their ability to promote the creative identities of their students.

10.9 Resonant Thread: Creative Teaching

Participants' experiences revealed that being a creative teacher has bearing on the extent to which these teachers can effectively nurture the creative identities of their students. These findings will now be discussed in light of teachers' narrative accounts.

The importance of being a creative teacher to nurture the creative abilities of students was evident in all participants' narrative accounts. This was in the sense of using imaginative and innovative approaches to teaching (Brinkman, 2010; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; NACCCE, 1999; Rinkevich, 2011; Topham, 2020) and shaping students' learning experiences around their personal interests and needs (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; NACCCE, 1999). These teachers teach creatively in the first sense by creating learning resources and methods for students. Amber is regularly "arranging pieces and creating new resources" for "ensemble playing, for aural studies, for two and three part singing etc." Samantha creates compositions for her BBRR series. Similar to Amber and Samantha, Jeremy composes pedagogical works. Creative teaching was also evident in Eleanor's narrative account. She taught creatively when she would draw connections between non-domain elements such as the weather, and performing repertoire: "wild weather, [a] wild day, rainy day and playing the *Raindrop Prelude* of Chopin." Eleanor would also invent and incorporate games into her teaching practice. Describing a movement game that she made up: "I'd have them in groups of four with us doing a scarf dance to music."

Participants' narrative accounts demonstrate their creative thinking ability, namely their capacity to innovate educational resources and/or solve educational problems.

Like other advocates of creative teaching (Brinkman, 2010; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; NACCCE, 1999; Topham, 2020), Eleanor and Amber see it as a way to make learning and teaching more interesting, enjoyable, and satisfying. Eleanor stated: "It was interesting for me to teach my students and for them to love what they were learning." Amber similarly noted: "It's… given me really good career satisfaction because every single lesson is different so I never get bored." Eleanor also expresses that the more creative the teacher, "the better the outcome" for the student.

Participants' experiences have made me aware of the various contexts in which individuals can employ, and are motivated to employ, their creative thinking. Currently, Amber and Samantha, are motivated to create primarily in the context of their teaching practice, namely creating teaching resources. Amber noted that "composing for its own sake doesn't interest me." Rather, she enjoys "arranging music for students, particularly for duets and ensemble piano." Samantha similarly shared that when she sits at the piano for fun, she is not drawn to creative music-making. As aforementioned, she primarily composes pieces for her BBRR series. In contrast to Amber and Samantha, Eleanor enjoys creating for its own sake. She spends a lot of time simply "doodling at the keyboard…. for the sheer pleasure of discovery." Jeremy's narrative account revealed another motivation behind creating: "[to have] something new to say that everybody needs to hear that is going to make a difference."

Moreover, through reviewing participants' narrative accounts, I have become aware that motivations to create can change over one's life span. This was particularly apparent in Jeremy's experience. During his initial years living in New York City, his creations were largely motivated by needing an "emotional outlet." Now, however, his "urgency of emotion" to create has "settled a bit." Sometimes his motivation is "professional" while at other times "it's that I know it will make me feel more happy/satisfied than to not create something new." When I began this inquiry, I thought that people created primarily "for its own sake." This made think that this was the end goal of nurturing students' creative abilities—to help them enjoy creating music for its own sake. Importantly, I still enjoy composing for this reason, as does Eleanor. I feel that to intrinsically motivate students, however, which is needed for creative engagement (Amabile, 2012), we need to be mindful of their motivation to create, even at different stages in their lives. Some may enjoy "doodling" at the piano, while others may enjoy re-harmonising a popular song. Understanding an individual's motivation/s behind creating is part of shaping learning experiences around their individual desires and interests.

Being a creative teacher in the second sense (i.e. shaping students' learning experiences around their individual interests, desires, and needs) was particularly apparent in Jeremy and Amber's narrative accounts. Jeremy claimed: "Teaching creativity requires a creative teacher!" because "every student arrives with a massively different skillset, different goals, and seems to respond to different cues… it's so student-dependent." Amber teaches creatively by allowing students to "choose their own path. Whether they wish to do exams or not is up to them. Repertoire choice and styles are up to

them, classical, jazz, pop, composing, improv. I support them to follow whatever inspires them." Amber sees that she needs to do so to "intrinsically motivate" students: "Unless you intrinsically motivate them, they're not going to do anything." Importantly, she added that giving students freedom to "drive the lesson quite a bit and choose their own repertoire" has fostered creative exploration in her private piano teaching practice "more than anything." Connecting students' personal desires and interests, both musical and non-musical, also makes sense given that these factors fuel students' creative endeavours. Moreover, tasks that are connected to these facets of students can lead them to feel creative. Jeremy and Amber's experiences confirm that to nurture students' creative abilities, one must be a creative teacher.

Amber noted that broadening her musical horizons is "absolutely necessary" to keep up with her students and their learning desires. Additionally, she shared that she does not let her own "limitations as a musician and teacher" "get in the way" of what her students want to learn:

> I'm not jazz-trained… but I made a commitment that if my student wanted to pursue that avenue, then I would just learn what I needed to do to support that… I've never studied jazz formally, but if that's where my students need to go, then sure, we talk about modes and play modes and improvise and talk about how I build ninth chords and whatever they need. We work it out together. I don't want to be the one that stands in their way.

Amber explained what happens, however, when she cannot stay ahead of her students: "It doesn't matter. I'm like, 'You're awesome. Go for it. That sounds great.'"

Amber's experience suggests that some private piano teachers may not be concerned if they lack sufficient knowledge or experience in

creativity to nurture their students' creative abilities. Additionally, some teachers may not be fearful of teaching unfamiliar skills. As highlighted in Chapter 2, these were two observations that Sowash (2013) made of teachers who were willing to, yet fearful of, nurturing students' creative abilities. Amber's experience suggests that being a creative teacher in the sense of allowing students to drive the lesson and being willing to learn alongside students (or even step out of the way!), may be more necessary to nurturing students' creativity than having sufficient knowledge and experience in creativity.

Reflecting Sawyer's (2004) notion of "improvisational performance" (p. 12; see also Forbes, 2016a), Amber said that she needs to be a "flexible" teacher, being "flexible in the moment" to "go with their ideas…and the things that have popped into their heads." She needs "to be willing to let go of a lesson plan." Leaving a prescribed lesson plan to explore students' creative musical ideas is an indication of valuing creativity (Randles & Ballantyne, 2018).

Importantly, Amber was the only teacher to mention using collaborative or peer learning in her teaching practice. Eleanor obviously would have experienced this when teaching in the classroom. Eleanor did not mention this, however, when discussing her private piano teacher practice. As established in Chapter 3, collaborative learning is inherent in creative teaching (Daniel, 2005; Forbes, 2020; Fosnot & Perry, 1996; Randles, 2020; Wiggins & Espeland, 2012). Amber prioritises peer learning by offering group lessons in her studio practice. She highlighted that one of the benefits of this form of learning was the "energy that is generated when young musicians work together." Alongside group lessons, Amber still

offers one-to-one piano lessons. She finds that the latter can be more rigorous and allows her to take students to that very advanced level on an instrument.

Jeremy and Eleanor were the two participants to emphasise the notion of "possibility thinking" (Craft, 2002) when nurturing students' creative abilities. Possibility thinking is centred on the question 'what can I do with this?' (Craft, 2000). As established in Chapter 3, possibility thinking is inherent in teaching for creativity (Cremin et al., 2006; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004). Jeremy noted that "the question 'what if' is at the heart of everything." Eleanor encourages possibility thinking by asking students to "close the book and find some notes that you like, just try some notes together." This mindset seems to be inherent in the way that Eleanor experiences music participation. When she spends time "doodling at the keyboard," she does so "without any preconception…. Just playing, maybe an interval…then thinking, 'What can I do with that?" She talked about the process of "chang[ing] your brain in many ways." She explained it as the brain not thinking in the "straight path," but exploring "all the little byways and little tracks that haven't been discovered." She described creativity as the ability "to be able to perhaps hear a simply melody or like a nursery rhyme and in the head, compose variations on that." She similarly stated: "It's taking a little cell and developing it in such a way that every avenue was explored."

Creative teaching in the ways discussed in this section reflects the teacher's facilitator style (Creech et al., 2020). This is largely independent of participants' creative identities as composers, improvisers, and arrangers of music. It speaks more to participants' overall values and beliefs regarding

music teaching, learning, and participation (Creech et al., 2020). Additionally, such beliefs (i.e. that place students' personal desires and interests centre stage) reflect a modern music education philosophy (see Regelski, 2008; Westerlund, 2008). If teachers are not shaping students' learning experiences around their personal desires and needs, this not only hampers students' creative development, but also their entire music learning experience.

Summary—Resonant thread 9

In summary, participants' experiences reveal that being a creative teacher is necessary to nurture the creative abilities of 21st century piano students, through imaginative and innovative approaches to teaching and learning, creating learning experiences around students' individual needs and interests, and being flexible in the moment to run with students' ideas. Importantly, creative teaching reflects the teacher's facilitator style and is largely independent of a teacher's identity as composers, improvisers, and arrangers of music. This finding demonstrates that for 21st century piano teachers to promote the creative identities of their students, they must not only gain creative skills themselves, they must *become* creative teachers.

10.10 Resonant Thread: Valuing Creativity

Participants' narrative accounts reveal that the value they place on musical creativity influences the extent to which they include creative music-making in their teaching practices. These findings will now be discussed in light of participants' experiences.

As articulated in Chapter 3, the value placed on creativity within

formal education environments can influence the extent to which opportunities for creative music-making are included within a curriculum (Hargreaves et al., 2002, 2017; Lamont, 2002). All participants' experiences revealed a relationship between valuing creativity and the extent to which they include/d creative activities in their teaching practices. Jeremy's experience supported this notion with his narrative accounts revealing a relationship between the value he places on creativity and the extent to which he nurtures students' creative abilities. Jeremy shared that creativity now constitutes a larger part of his teaching practice than when he first began teaching. Through being "exposed to a lot of research about the value of engaging students' creative side," he is "objectively aware of the value." Reflecting on his early years of private piano teaching, Jeremy said: "I think knowing what I know now if I found myself in the same position, I'd try to incorporate at least slightly more creative activities." Jeremy's experience suggests that aside from a teacher's own creative skills, valuing creativity can influence the extent to which teachers nurture students' creative abilities.

These teachers value creativity in a number of ways. Reflecting broader notions of creativity, Amber sees creative skills as being necessary for students to succeed as "functional musicians" in the 21st century (Gaunt et al., 2012; Gearing & Forbes, 2013; Forbes, 2016; Young et al., 2019). She shared: "the freedom to explore, make your own music, and improvise… ties in very closely with your ability to be a functional musician." She also sees creative skills as enabling students "to collaborate more easily, with all types of musicians." Samantha similarly stated:

> The ones who have never been taught how to make up something on their own or try out something different, I think they are the ones who are far less likely to join a band, like if there's a keyboard in a band or to just get together and jam with other people.

Amber and Samantha's narrative accounts revealed multiple other ways in which they value musical creativity. Amber hopes that improvising, chord playing, and jazz playing is inspiring for students. Amber also sees creative exploration as being important for students to stay "addicted" to music-making. Like Amber, Samantha views creative activities as being what some students need to keep motivated or "keep going." Samantha also noted that it "gives them access to music for life…. That's what's going to make them bother to play the piano as an adult, if they can even have the confidence to make up their own stuff." She also sees creativity as "the thing that's going to give them the most—Make them pumped to perform a piece that they composed themselves in a concert. That's so much better than performing somebody else's piece. That's what they'll remember when they're old."

Importantly, participants value creative music-making because they see creativity as being for everybody. Explaining a reason why she includes creative music-making in her teaching practice, Amber put forward: "Because children are inherently creative! Encouraging this breathes life into their piano studies." Like Amber, Eleanor also understands that creativity is "not for 'other people," it is for everyone." Continuing to explain why she nurtures students' creative abilities, Eleanor said: "It comes from that… love of something… you want to share it… because it's such a wonderful experience, you want to help others find that." Importantly, realising that "it [creativity] can be for everybody," most importantly

herself, was a contributing factor to Samantha beginning to include creative activities within her teaching practice.

Samantha also values creative music-making because it is "fun." When reflecting on composing pieces for her BBRR series, Samantha shared that "that was fun." Experiencing the joy of creative music-making has changed Samantha's lesson goals. Different from her own learning experience, Samantha shared: "I think my greatest desire would be to be able to have fun in all lessons… and try not to get bogged down in perfecting pieces."

Despite the relationship between the ways in which these teachers valued creativity and the extent to which they nurtured their students' creative abilities, Amber's experience suggests that the function or goals of the private piano teaching studio can still mediate the extent to which creative activities are included in a curriculum. During her university degree, although the School of Music valued creative exploration, "unfortunately, probably in the rush of getting ready for recitals and things, I probably didn't get much time to actually go into how one then does improvise in a historically informed way." Amber's experience demonstrates that the goal of lessons can dictate the extent to which creative activities are included in a curriculum, regardless of the value placed on creative music-making. Where lesson time is also limited, this can further marginalise creative activities. As highlighted in Chapter 2, where preparing for exams and recitals are the focus of lessons, teachers feel constrained by the typical weekly 30-45 minute lesson (Daniel & Bowden 2008; Sowash, 2013). The goals of lessons and restricted lesson time, therefore, continues to limit the extent to which creative identities can be developed.

Summary—Resonant thread 10

In summary, participants' narrative accounts reveal that the value teachers place on musical creativity mediates the extent to which they include creative music-making in their teaching practices. If lesson time is limited, however, and if the goals of the piano lesson and not primarily concerned with developing students' creative abilities—even if creativity is valued—creative exploration can be sidelined. Lesson time and the goals of the private piano teaching studio, therefore, may play a large part in the extent to which creative music-making is prioritised in the piano lesson than valuing creativity.

10.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented and discussed the findings from this inquiry that answered the research questions: (1) how have private piano teachers experienced the construction of their creative identities as musicians?; and (2) in what ways do private piano teachers' own creative identities influence their studio practices? Socio-cultural factors that influenced the construction of these teachers' creative identities as musicians included:

- Exposure to others creatively making music
- Exposure to musical genres and styles
- Their understanding of musical creativity
- Having the tools to be musically creative
- Opportunities to engage in creative music-making
- Engaging the "whole self" in the creative musical process
- Showcasing one's creative works to public audiences

Participants’ experiences revealed factors that were largely independent from their identities as creative music-makers that influenced the extent to which they could and do nurture the creative abilities of their students. These factors included:

- Teaching experience and training
- Being a creative teacher
- Valuing creativity

The following chapter will discuss the implications of the research and propose pathways for future research and practice. The findings and conclusions of this inquiry therefore provide explicit direction for how to best nurture the creative identities of future piano learners and teachers.

CHAPTER 11. CONCLUSION

This inquiry aimed to understand how private piano teachers experienced the construction of their creative identities as musicians, and the ways in which their creative identities influenced their private piano teaching practices. The inquiry came from my own struggle with nurturing the creative identities of my piano students in my private studio practice while I was only beginning to engage in creative music-making myself. As I delved into the literature on private piano teaching and became an active member of the piano pedagogy community, my own struggles were validated. I realised that despite the topic of creativity receiving much attention across many disciplines, including music education more broadly, the lens of creativity had not been fully applied to explore the creative identities of private piano teachers and how their creative identities influenced their teaching practices. My attendance at conferences and discussions within my own professional networks revealed that this was indeed a topic of great interest to other piano teachers, and therefore, worthy of exploration. Guided by narrative inquiry methodology, I sought answers to my research questions through the lived and told narratives of four piano learners who had become private piano teachers.

In summary, I have drawn nine key conclusions from the resonant threads or findings of this inquiry. The first six conclusions seek to extend what we know regarding ways in which piano teachers can experience the construction of their creative identities as musicians. The last three conclusions articulate the ways in which piano teachers' creative identity can influence their studio practices. This is important new knowledge for

private piano teachers, and for music educators across the board, who teach the future generation of private piano students. The conclusions are organised as follows:

1. The need for a holistic (and multi-disciplinary) perspective of creativity
2. The importance of having the tools for creative music-making
3. The need for hands-on experiences of creating music
4. The importance of engaging the "whole-self" in the creative process
5. The importance of fulfilling a need or making a difference
6. The need to showcase one's creative works to public audiences
7. The importance of teacher education, training, and experience
8. The need to be a creative teacher
9. The importance of valuing creativity

The conclusions have been presented in an order that reflects a "roadmap" for private piano teachers to promote their own creative identities as musicians alongside the creative identities of their students. Recommendations for future research regarding each conclusion, where necessary, are given. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the potential barriers facing the piano teaching profession when enacting these recommendations alongside offering constructive ways forward.

11.1 A Holistic (And Multi-Disciplinary) Perspective of Musical Creativity

As discussed in Chapter 3, musical creativity is a thought process, namely the process of thinking creatively with sound to produce new and appropriate musical ideas (Hickey & Webster, 2001; Odena & Welch, 2009;

Randles, 2010; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Randles & Muhonen, 2015; Randles & Smith, 2012; Webster, 1990, 2002, 2016). Highlighting musical creativity in this way was largely absent from participants' narrative accounts (see Chapter 10, Resonant thread 3). Moreover, the terms divergent and convergent thinking, imaginative thinking, and possibility thinking—metacognitive strategies involved in creative thinking—were not overly apparent in all teachers' narratives. Importantly, not conceptualising musical creativity as thinking creatively with sound is not specific to these teachers' experiences, but as noted in Chapter 3, *is* common to the wider piano teaching community given that teachers typically refer to creativity in music as improvising, composing, arranging, and playing by ear (Baumgartner, 2019; Sowash, 2013, 2017). Based on the premise that musical creativity is to be appreciated as thinking creatively with sound to better understand how the mind works to produce creative outcomes and therefore become better creative thinkers (Webster, 1990, 2002, 2016), piano teachers and students should adopt this perspective of creative music-making.

Importantly, although there are some idiosyncrasies to the creative musical process (Baer & Kaufman, 2017; Kaufman et al., 2017), such as the use of auditory skills, which are inherent in a domain-specific view of creativity (Webster, 1990, 2002), the same cognitive strategies (e.g. creative thinking) are needed for creative production across domains (Baer & Kaufman, 2017; Eagleman & Brandt, 2017; Kaufman et al., 2017; NACCCE, 1999). Additionally, stages of the creative musical process—including but not limited to preparation, incubation, verification, and illumination (Webster, 1990)—(which notably, participants' did not

mention!) are the same from one domain to another. Considering this, private piano teachers would benefit from adopting both a domain-specific and domain-general view of creativity (Baer & Kaufman, 2017; Kaufman et al., 2017) and are encouraged to consider how these principles can be applied to studio practices. There is so much more to being creative as a musician than improvising! Drawing on a broad understanding of creativity from across multiple domains is liberating, and I argue, absolutely necessary to nurture private piano teachers' and their students' creative capacities.

Industry-style publications and academic literature are both important, and therefore synergy is one obvious way to promote broader thinking about creativity within the piano teaching community. As gleaned from Amber's experience, discussing the concept of creativity with experienced teachers and mentors is another means to understanding musical creativity. Jeremy's narrative account suggests that simply thinking more deeply about creativity can further promote more holistic thinking about creative music-making.

11.2 Having the Tools for Creative Music-Making

Alongside adopting a multi-disciplinary perspective of musical creativity, piano teachers and students must become aware of and utilise the full repository of tools needed for creative music-making. As outlined in Chapter 2, these tools include an aural perception of sound, aesthetic sensitivity, musical knowledge, and instrumental technique (Green, 2019; Katz & Gardner, 2012; Webster, 1990, 2016). Not all participants acknowledged the full repository of tools needed for creative music-making (see Chapter 10, Resonant thread 4). I argue that this restricts the extent to which teachers and students can be creative in all its richness. Importantly,

from a teaching perspective, Jeremy's narrative account indicates that educators must understand the various facets of musical creativity to nurture each of these aspects in students' creative music-making.

My own and participants' experiences reveal a variety of ways in which piano teachers and students can acquire and develop the tools needed for creative music-making, both within and outside of the private piano studio. As discussed in Chapter 10, Resonant thread 4, however, introducing students to and allowing them to develop the tools needed for creative music-making within the private piano studio can be paramount to creative development. In not doing so, students may remain unaware that certain tools exist (Bonnie) or come to think that some skills are reserved for those who are "gifted" (Samantha, Bonnie). Further flow-on consequences were presented in Chapter 10, Resonant thread 4. Strategies for developing an aural perception of sound and increasing one's musical knowledge bank will now only be discussed further as these were the tools emphasised in participants' experiences.

Teachers and students can develop their musical ear through taking a course in aural perception (Bonnie), singing in choirs (Eleanor), or, as it was in the 16th and 17th centuries (see Chapter 2), learning music aurally in the piano lesson through repeated hearing or singing (Gellrich & Parncut, 1998; McPherson & Gabrielsson, 2002). To increase their knowledge bank, teachers and students can study pre-existing repertoire (Eleanor, Jeremy), namely looking for melodic and harmonic ideas to inspire their own creative music-making. For example, one can discover a harmonic progression or accompaniment pattern that they would like to compose a melody over. For teachers and students who predominately make music via reading music

notation, taking something familiar (i.e. a musical score) is a non-confrontational way for them to begin exploring creative music-making. For teachers, taking lessons themselves is another way to expand and diversify their knowledge bank (Jeremy). This is one of the reasons why it is important for teachers to have creative skills themselves (as discussed below) and to showcase these skills to their students. Similarly, skill sharing sessions with other musicians is a way for individuals to trade their "bag of tricks" with another.

In a similar vein, collaborating with other musicians, such as through playing in a band, enables teachers and students to discover new territory through being pushed in "different directions" (Jeremy). Additionally, I imagine that the energy in the collaborative space would make individuals respond differently in the moment than if they were creatively making music in private. Being pushed in different directions inherently develops one's: (1) creative behaviour, such as their flexibility and spontaneity (Webster, 1990; Burton et al., 2019); (2) emotional sensitivity, as individuals have to be sensitive and responsive to others' creative ideas in the moment; and (3) aural skills, given that individuals respond to what they are hearing from other musicians in the moment.

Ways to broaden teachers' and students' musical palette (alongside developing their aural perception of sound) extend to include music listening experiences (Eleanor). Streaming music and going to live music performances are two ways that teachers and students can engage in music listening. When doing this activity, one can listen for unusual and interesting melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic ideas. After identifying an interesting or new elements, they can work out what that element is, either

by ear or accessing the score, whether it be a chord progression, rhythmic groove, lick, or accompaniment pattern, and use this idea as a starting point to explore their own musical ideas. This could be composing a melody to go over the chord progression or creating a harmonic figure that can be comped using the rhythmic groove. Importantly, the more diverse and expansive one's listening and therefore knowledge palette, the more ideas the individual has at their disposal to blend and create something unique. In this light, Resonant thread 2 (Exposure to musical genres and styles) is important for one to build and diversify their musical knowledge bank.

11.3 Hands-on Experiences of Creating Music

As established in Chapter 2, identities in music are built through one's hands-on experiences of performing the identity (Barrett, 2017; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014; Hallam, 2017; Jaussi et al., 2007; Randles, 2009). Participants' narrative accounts supported this notion with them forming creative identities that reflected the creative musical roles that they had performed most frequently (see Chapter 10, Resonant thread 5). Considering this, private piano teachers must engage in hands-on experiences of creative music-making, and different types of experiences from composing to improvising, to begin to construct creative identities as musicians. To do so will in most cases require the teacher to be comfortable with adopting a novice or learner mindset, which may admittedly be a challenge for many teachers. Importantly, some participants' experiences showed that the construction process was not instantaneous, but occurred over time (Barrett, 2017; Culpepper, 2018; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014; Randles, 2009; Randles & Ballantyne, 2018) through successive moments of being creative. This demonstrates that one-off occurrences of being

creative will not facilitate the construction of private piano teachers' creative identities. Rather, in order for piano pedagogues to construct these identities, they must engage regularly in composing, improvising, and arranging, or more adequately, frequently thinking creatively with sound. In other words, it is vital for teachers to make a commitment to continuous learning in order to construct creative identities.

As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, appreciating musical creativity as thinking creatively with sound means that piano teachers and students can begin to engage in creative music-making immediately. Teachers and students can develop their creative thinking by taking an existing musical idea and posing to themselves the question: "What could I do differently with this musical phrase?" This may involve changing the rhythm of the melody, or even its contour. Other examples include taking a melody and thinking: "How could I reharmonize this?" Then again, as Eleanor stated, it could be "just playing, maybe an interval…then thinking, 'What can I do with that?'" As stated by Jeremy in relation to nurturing the creativity of his students, the question "what if" should be at the centre of piano teachers' and students' creative music-making. Jeremy's remark echoes the literature that places possibility thinking—thinking centred on posing, in multiple ways, the question "what if?"—at the centre of teaching for creativity (Craft, 2002; Cremin et al., 2006; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004). Recent research presents improvisation as a metaphorical "choose your own adventure," where musical interaction opens new vistas of possibility for creative music-making (Forbes & Cantrell, 2021). This metaphorisation accords with participants' experiences of creativity as exploration and Jeremy's advice to search for possibilities to generate new ideas.

Creative thinking activities can be an end in themselves, to exercise one's creative thinking ability, explore possibilities, experiment with different ideas, and discover different pathways one did not know existed. I encourage teachers and students to develop an appetite for play, exploration, and discovery! Enjoying the process of exploration can *be the goal*! On the other hand, creative thinking activities can be means to an end, meaning one chooses to formalise their discovered and fashioned ideas into larger musical works, such as compositions. This may not happen immediately, but these musical ideas can be stored to later use as seeds for such works. Similarly, teachers and students can draw on these ideas when they engage in other hands-on experiences of creating music, such as collaborating with other musicians in a jam session. When creating a composition, I encourage piano teachers and students to set themselves parameters, as did Samantha, such as composing short pieces that are eight-bars in length. This may help creative music-making to not feel quite so daunting! Importantly, engaging in creative thinking prevents piano teachers and students from falling into routine patterns, such as improvising using the same melodic idioms or composing using the same rhythmic groove. As stated in Chapter 3, habits are obstacles to creative development (Davis, 2004).

Participants' experiences further revealed that hands-on experiences of being creative not only built their own self-assurance as a creative music-maker, but enabled them to feel confident to nurture their students' creative abilities. As Amber stated: "I think if I hadn't had that experience ...I might not have been as confident [nurturing my students' creative abilities]." Samantha similarly mentioned: "Just the whole, getting them to compose, just the more you do, the more you get comfortable with suggesting things

to students." Moreover, for Samantha, this confidence was the motivation to include creativity in her teaching practice. She followed the above statement by saying "So, I know that that creativity constitutes a much bigger part of my lesson." Piano teachers need hands-on experiences of being creative not only to fuel the construction of their own creative identity, but also to pass on these same skills to their students (Randles & Ballantyne, 2018; Randles & Muhonen, 2012).

Considering the above, however, alongside having creative skills themselves, some participants felt more confident to incorporate creative exploration in their studio practices when they had the tools to teach for creativity, including methods for chord chart reading and interpreting and composition. Samantha's BBRR series is an example of a method that private piano teachers can use to nurture the creative abilities of their students. However, many participants developed their own method for teaching creativity when learning to be creative themselves (or thinking about how to teach others to be creative). This suggests that in the very doing of creativity, teachers will devise ways of teaching these skills to others.

It is imperative that private piano teachers provide students with opportunities for creative music-making in their studio practices because a failure to do so may have limiting consequences for learners. Such consequences include students not knowing that composing and improvising are ways of making music (Bonnie), or, for those students who have never created music within or outside of the formal teaching and learning space, believing that these activities are reserved for those who are "gifted" (Samantha, Bonnie), a type of "superhuman" (Eleanor), or musicians who

play a specific genre of music (Samantha). Further flow-on consequences were presented in Chapter 10, Resonant thread 5.

11.4 Engaging the "Whole-Self" in the Creative Process

During creative activities, some participants' sense of being creative was only crystallised when their "whole selves"—including their prior experiences, interests, and personalities—were engaged in the creative process (see Chapter 10, Resonant thread 6). Moreover, it was only when these teachers' whole selves were engaged in the doing of creativity that they generated something they felt was truly unique and different—one of the creative criteria (see Chapter 3) (Barron, 1995; Elliot, 1995; Guilford, 1950; Kaufman, 2009; Reimer, 2003; Runco & Jaeger, 2012; Simonton, 2016; Stein, 1953). Given these finding and in line with modern educational philosophy (see Creech et al., 2020b; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; NACCCE, 1999; Regelski, 2008; Westerlund, 2008), private piano teachers must draw upon and nurture the natural resources they and their students bring to the creative music-making space. If piano teachers fail to do so, they jeopardise their and their students' opportunity to construct a creative identity alongside generating something that is truly creative.

As both teachers and students, we can draw on an immense well of personal experience and knowledge to support and nurture creativity. Questions to help draw on these personal influences include: "What am I interested in? Is it cooking, outdoor activities such as hiking, animals, and/or beauty?" Teachers and students can then consider ways in which their creative endeavours could be inspired by or connected to their interests. Could they compose a chord progression that reflects their mood

when cooking, or write a song about their most recent hike?

Participants' experiences revealed that after creating something truly "unique" and "different," they felt a sense of reward, pride, and satisfaction. Considering this, if piano teachers do not draw upon the natural resources that both they and their students bring to the teaching and learning space, they will prevent themselves and their students from experiencing these positive emotions from their work.

11.5 Fulfilling a Need or Making a Difference

Participants felt creative when their efforts fulfilled a need or made a difference (See Chapter 10, Resonant thread 6). For Samantha, it was developing a resource to help her student understand that reading music is all about patterns. For Eleanor, it was needing to write a school musical because: (1) a class musical was expected; and (2) the school plays that were commercially available did not suit Eleanor's needs or desires. For Jeremy, it was "having something new to say that everybody needs to hear that is going to make a difference." This demonstrates how these participants use creative music-making as a means to a much bigger end, namely fulfilling a need and/or contributing to society. Beyond merely teaching students to improvise, in fact findings revealed that our motivations for nurturing our own and students' improvisation, composition, and arranging abilities achieves something far deeper—we gain a sense of meaning from these acts, a sense of contributing to something bigger than ourselves. It is therefore important for piano teachers to reflect often on the broader purpose of teaching and learning the piano. This includes looking beyond merely musical ends towards the ways in

which these activities—and being creative whilst engaged in them—provides a sense of purpose for individuals.

Considering the above, piano teachers can consider what needs there are to be fulfilled. For example, could they compose a piece of music for a student that allows them to practice a difficult passage of fingering or compose a piece of music for a friend's birthday? Is there an opportunity for them to take a solo during a section of a piece? Alongside identifying opportunities already available to them, I implore private piano teachers to think creatively about how they can create their own opportunities and use their creations in their own lives, or the lives of those in their communities. For some teachers, thinking of creative endeavour as a service to their students or their community may help overcome feelings of inadequacy or lack of confidence regarding their creative abilities.

11.6 Showcasing One's Creative Works to Public Audiences

Participants' experiences revealed that showcasing one's creative works to public audiences is key to the construction process (Jeremy, Eleanor, Samantha) (see Chapter 10, Resonant thread 7). This was due to the social affirmation that these teachers received that in turn, bolstered their confidence (Jeremy), gave them a feeling of satisfaction (Eleanor), and gave them confidence to continue creating (Samantha). Putting their creative works on display also led to further creative opportunities that continued to build participants' creative identities. Such opportunities included performing on a highly regarded show (Jeremy) and being commissioned to write a year five/six multicultural musical (Eleanor).

Considering this, I recommend private piano teachers showcase both

their own creative works and the creative works of their student to others. In other words, don’t hide your light under a bushel! Our creative works are not to be hidden within the teaching and learning space but are to be shared with others and contribute positively to society. Showing our creative works to others may begin by presenting creations to someone one trusts or respects, such as a family member or colleague, as Samantha did, knowing that these individuals will provide respectful, honest, and helpful feedback. From there, teachers can look at presenting their works in live performance settings, such as at gigs, or online, such as on one’s social media account/s. Importantly, I urge piano teachers and students to be pro-active and create their own opportunities. This includes reaching out to people in the industry. Teachers may look at sharing their or their students’ work with an authority in the field to increase connections and gain work. By not presenting our or our students’ creations to others, we may deny ourselves the social affirmation needed to motivate continual creative music-making alongside diminishing our opportunities for future creative opportunities. We also deny the opportunity to learn and improve our work.

Teachers may go one step further by having *others* perform their or their students’ creations. This may further encourage teachers’ sense of being creative, as it did for Eleanor. As Eleanor stated: “Seeing things on the stage and seeing kids doing the play that I had written…was very satisfying.” I have had similar experiences to Eleanor which has boosted my confidence as a musical creator. Additionally, I have found that other musicians, due to their expertise and different musical approaches, bring works to life in ways that are truly inspiring and broaden the possibilities of my creations. It also reinforces that those creations are not set in stone but

can continue to evolve. This maintains flexibility in the initial creator, which is needed for creative efforts. For example, teachers may play their students pieces and vice versa. One may explore possibilities for a small ensemble to arrange and perform one's creative work. This can be another way of showcasing one's music to public audiences. One can also look to bring their creative works to life in new ways, such as asking a guitarist to play the piece. Importantly, all of these factors increase the social interactions of the creator which play a part in the forming of a creative identity in music (Hallam, 2017).

Summary

In summary, factors paramount to the construction of a creative identity in music are acquiring a holistic and multi-disciplinary perspective of musical creativity, having the tools for creative music-making, and engaging in hands-on experiences of thinking creatively with sound. Factors extend to include engaging the whole-self in the creative process, generating works that fulfil a need or make a difference, and showcasing one's creative efforts to public audiences. The following section discusses factors that were largely independent from participants' identities as creative music-makers that influenced the extent to which they could and do nurture the creative abilities of their students.

11.7 Teacher Training and Experience

Participants' experiences revealed factors that were largely independent from their identities as creative music-makers that influenced the extent to which they could and do nurture the creative abilities of their students. These factors were teacher training and experience, being a

creative teacher, and valuing creativity. These factors will now be interrogated and recommendations for future practice will be made.

As outlined in Chapter 1, private piano teachers typically enter the profession with little to no teaching credentials or experience (Hallam, 2017), usually when they are young (Cathcart, 2013). Therefore, teachers often refer to their own learning experiences as the model for their teaching practices (Daniel & Bowden, 2008). Additionally, due to their oftentimes limited educational training, piano teachers are often under-resourced to effectively manage the pedagogical facets of their role (Collens & Creech, 2013) which, as I argue, should include strategies to promote students' creative identities. Participants' narratives aligned with these previous research findings (see Chapter 10, Resonant thread 8).

Given that teacher training and experience were key influences on these teachers' ability to nurture the creative identities of their students, future action needs to be taken to train piano pedagogues for their role as educators. Although this inquiry has outlined principles and strategies for teaching for creativity that could be offered as a valuable resource for educators, teaching (as noted by Eleanor) requires multi-disciplinary training. Multi-disciplinary training must be considered for current and future piano pedagogues. Training opportunities include attending conferences and drawing on the well of resources provided by present-day piano teachers advocating for creativity in the piano lesson (see Chapter 2). Participants' experiences revealed a number of additional means to undertake teacher training. These include teaching degrees (Eleanor, Amber) and peer observation of teaching colleagues (Eleanor). The latter approach would be particularly helpful for teachers to see how the principles

of teaching for creativity, as discussed in this inquiry, can be actualised in the private piano teaching studio. For example, it would be beneficial to observe how other pedagogues tap into and nurture students' needs and interests, how they are responsive to students' cues in the moment, and the types of questions teachers ask students to engage students' creative thinking.

Inspired by Eleanor's experience, training opportunities could extend to include mentorships between experienced teachers and those new to the profession. Local branches of teaching associations, such as the Queensland Music Teachers' Association (QMTA), could initiate these mentorships. A potential barrier to this idea, however, is that these "experienced teachers" are only familiar in teaching the tradition of using only notated music and the requirements of traditional examination syllabi (Bridge, 2005; Cathcart, 2013). Future research could explore the possibility of these mentorships, and the demographic of teachers who could be involved.

11.8 Being a Creative Teacher

Participants' experiences revealed that their ability to nurture their students' creative identities is tied to their ability to be a creative teacher (Jeremy, Amber) (see Chapter 10, Resonant thread 9). In Jeremy's and Amber's experience, this was in the sense of being sensitive and responsive to, and by the same token, flexible and adaptive to, students' interests in needs. As established in Chapter 3, this is a principle inherent in creative teaching (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; NACCCE, 1999). As Jeremy noted, this style of teaching is needed because "every student arrives with a massively different skillset, different goals, and seems to respond to different cues." In

light of Resonant thread 6 in Chapter 10, creative teaching is a must to allow students to draw on their domain and non-domain interests to produce something truly creative, and moreover, crystallise their sense of being creative. Importantly, Eleanor and Samantha did not mention the necessity of shaping educational experiences around students' individual desires and needs. Although both teachers include creative activities within their lessons, drawing on learners' interests and needs would further burnish their students' sense of being creative.

The above are curriculum matters and intimately connected to the teacher's overall beliefs about the nature of music teaching, learning, and participation (Creech et al., 2020b; Folkestad, 2006). These above factors speak directly to the teacher's "facilitator style" (Heron, 2002; Creech et al., 2020c). Teachers are encouraged to adopt an open-ended view of their role as educators, and the role of the private piano teaching studio (Allsup, 2016). Whilst these suggestions for practice are not necessarily new in the world of creativity, or indeed, even within music education, the tradition of teaching only using notated music and the requirements of traditional examination syllabi (Bridge, 2005; Cathcart, 2013) suggest that they are not routinely applied to the private piano teaching community. Due to a lack of teacher training, it is possible that private piano teachers are not overly reflexive about the philosophy underpinning their practice. Alongside the type of training previously recommended, informative sessions on contemporary music philosophy that supports creative music-making need to be part of private piano teachers training.

Given the paramount role that creative teaching plays in facilitating the identity construction process, greater attention needs to be given to *how*

private piano teachers can actualise creative teaching in their studio practices. To shape learning experiences around students' passions, teachers can ask students to name their domain interests, whether it be a particular genre or style or even artist/s, and then source repertoire that aligns with students' interests. Importantly, perhaps particularly for students in their formative and adolescent years, it will be necessary for teachers to introduce learners to different genres and styles alongside artists (see Chapter 10, Resonant thread 2). Eleanor mentioned this point when discussing creative teaching. She gave the following analogy: "It's like going to a library and not knowing which book to take out because you don't know any of the authors". Teachers can expose students to different genres, styles, and artist by giving them specific listening material, pointing them to artists on Youtube, taking them to concerts, or where possible, personally introducing students to music-makers that could lead to future mentoring or collaboration. Jeremy's and my own experiences reveal that private piano teachers may be students' primary gatekeepers for introducing them to what exists in the world. Exposing students to various genres and styles, therefore, must be prioritised by private piano teachers. As highlighted in Resonant thread 1 in Chapter 10, exposure to others creatively making music is also a means to inspire and broaden the possibilities of teachers' and students' creative music-making.

Teachers need to be well-versed in "music happenings" both on a local and national (and perhaps international) scale and build networks with other musicians and teachers in their community and beyond. Joining local music associations or social media groups is an accessible way for teachers to become knowledgeable about opportunities available for their students,

and to create connections with other musicians and teachers. Becoming isolated as a studio-based piano teacher is death to well-informed, up-to-date, contemporary creative teaching!

Future research might explore the broader environment in which piano teachers teach and create to best support the development of students' creativity. As gleaned from Jeremy's experience, living in a location that was energic, vibrant with natural beauty, and alive with cultural experiences, inspired his creativity. He noted that working in an environment with others who were creatively making music stimulated his own creativity. There was creative energy in that space, and it made him feel part of a creative community. Reflecting on my own experience, living location and work environment also have bearing on available opportunities for creative music-making.

11.9 Valuing Creativity

Participants' experiences revealed that teachers valuing creativity mediated the extent to which they included creative activities within their studio practices (see Chapter 10, Resonant thread 10). For example, Jeremy noted that through being "exposed to a lot of research about the value of engaging students' creative side," he is "objectively aware of the value." As a result, he considers that if he knew this information when he began piano teaching, he would have tried to incorporate more creative activities into his piano lessons sooner. Valuing creativity motivated other participants to include creative music-making in their lessons. For example, Amber understands creative skills as being necessary for students to succeed as "functional musicians" (see Gearing & Forbes, 2013). Moreover, she

includes creative music-making because if students get the opportunity to engage in creative music-making outside of the studio, she does not want them to miss out on these experiences because she did not equip them with the creative skills they need. Samantha sees creative activities as giving students "access to music for life…. That's what's going to make them bother to play the piano as an adult, if they can have the confidence to make up their own stuff." Perhaps by informing teachers of the value that creative music-making holds, this will provide the impetus needed for teachers to nurture students' creative abilities in their lessons.

11.10 Barriers Facing the Piano Teaching Profession

This section acknowledges that for many teachers, implementing the recommendations above is no straightforward matter. Potential barriers facing piano teachers who desire to implement the above strategies include finding it difficult to think creatively, or even feeling fearful to begin. I encourage teachers to see the unknown as an opportunity to learn, rather than something to be feared. Additionally, it is important for private piano teachers to realise that it is perfectly fine to ask for help. Speaking from my own experience and as reflected in Samantha's narrative, I envisage that some teachers may feel like "giving up" quickly or become easily discouraged when creating is difficult or feels unnatural. As Samantha mentioned in her narrative, it did not come naturally to her. I encourage teachers to acknowledge their feelings of discomfort, but to not let these emotions hinder their commitment to the process and therefore, their creative growth. Reminding oneself that creative ability develops through practice and experience may help teachers to keep their expectations in check (Koutsoupido & Hargreaves, 2009). As Samantha mentioned:

"Everyone started like that." Acknowledging this reality can assist teachers to develop positive self-beliefs regarding their creative abilities. Additionally, understanding stages of the creative process is also necessary to cultivate patience when embarking on creative endeavours.

Other potential barriers facing the piano teaching profession include teachers lacking time to commit to building their own creative abilities. As was the case for Jeremy and Amber, it is likely that many private piano teachers have a full-time teaching load. This not only limits the time they have to build their creative skills, but also impacts their energy to do so (Jeremy, Amber). Additionally, teachers presumably have family and other social commitments to tend to, alongside financial obligations. As demonstrated in Amber's experience, and as I have also found, it can be difficult to shift the focus away from one's teaching practice to oneself, in terms of developing one's creative abilities foremostly for their own enjoyment and/or growth, rather than primarily for the sake of their students. These factors present barriers, in terms of available time, energy, finance, and mentality, to teachers developing their creative abilities. Working through these barriers, however, is necessary for teachers to build their own and their students' creative identities as musicians. To bring hope to the situation, the recommendations above, specifically those relating to how to stimulate creative thinking in the context of pre-existing repertoire, are designed to be easily and gradually integrated into teachers' existing music-making practice, and therefore do not require excessive time commitment.

Another potential barrier facing the private piano teaching profession moving towards a more creative-focused pedagogy is resistance to changing

or diverting from the musical score. Like the uncomfortable emotions piano teachers and students may experience when beginning to create, going beyond the musical score may feel very unnatural or even scary. I hope that the strategies presented earlier in this chapter, namely asking the question “what if?” in the context of pre-existing repertoire, provide private piano teachers with incremental steps towards going beyond the musical score. Other teachers may struggle to re-imagine what is on the page due to cultural ideologies surrounding music notation that restrict their sense of “permission” to do so. To work through this barrier, private piano teachers must become informed of the history of music notation, such as the historical information presented in Chapter 2. Piano teachers need to understand that “what they’ve [composers] written down is just what they wrote down in the moment and that a piece of music is something…. alive that can continue to evolve” (Amber). The design of classical examination curriculum that currently exclusively requires students to perform only what is written could embody the above by asking students to perform repertoire firstly as written, and then in students’ own re-imagined way. This reminds me of how one of Jeremy’s teachers nurtured his creative abilities while also balancing what the curriculum required students to do. As Jeremy shared: “He would make me play it the correct way first and then say, ‘Ok. Now let’s hear your way.’”

The current most-commonly used format for private piano lessons is also a potential barrier to implementing the recommendations above. As noted in the literature review, the 21st century musical apprenticeship is typically conducted as student-teacher lessons on a weekly basis (Collens & Creech, 2013). These lessons are often half an hour in length (Don et al.,

2009). This timeframe does not leave much room for teachers to equip students with the tools needed for creative music-making alongside opportunities to engage in creative music-making. An increase in lesson time may better facilitate students' creative development in the one-to-one piano lesson. Focusing on exploring additional, alternate, and complimentary music education experiences for students to further develop their creative skills, both formal and informal can also create a richer and more holistic musical journey for students. Importantly, within broader music education (generalist classroom teachers and specialist music teachers) there is recognition for formal school curricula to complement rather than mirror students' out-of-school music experiences (Davis, 2013, as cited in Creech et al., 2020a).

Considering this, future research might explore how private piano teachers can draw on other informal and formal music education contexts to nurture the creative identities of students more effectively. Perhaps we should look for what the student needs, and curate a suite of musical educational experiences accordingly? As reflected in Jeremy's experience, educational opportunities could include having multiple piano teachers concurrently who focus on developing different facets of students' musicianship. Additional music education experiences, as have already been outlined, include group lessons, summer schools, jam nights, and being in an ensemble. In this way, the private piano lesson is not considered the primary source of all musical development for students, but rather, is understood as only one context in which a student can learn and engage with music.

It is not only important to consider alternate music education

experiences for students because of the time limitations of the one-to-one lesson, but because of the different benefits that diverse learning experiences can offer students. For example, as explained by Amber, the one-to-one lesson offers "rigor." Additionally, the nature of the one-to-one lessons facilitates student-centred learning. Collaborative learning experiences, on the other hand, bring "energy" into the learning space (Amber). As has already been mentioned, collaborating with others can push one in "different directions," expanding an individual's music-making possibilities alongside developing their flexibility, spontaneity, and emotional sensitivity. Collaborative learning also brings opportunity for peer-to-peer learning which students may find extremely valuable (Forbes, 2020). Importantly, this type of learning is inherent in teaching for creativity (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; NACCCE, 1999; Wiggins & Espeland, 2012). It is becoming increasing favoured by higher education sectors (Daniel, 2005; Forbes, 2016a, 2016b, 2020) and piano teachers would benefit from modifying models used in tertiary education settings to suit the private piano studio.

Finally, it is possible that this call to action will continue to be met with resistance from teachers who value performance orientated skills over creative skills. Whilst I, alongside other well-known piano teachers, will continue to advocate for a place for creativity in the 21st century piano lesson, it is perhaps the responsibility of music teaching boards and teaching associations to place a greater emphasis on musical creativity in curriculum, competitions, workshops, and conferences. This may help to revitalise the private piano teaching profession, and change cultural assumptions, even those that exist within families, regarding successful music education.

Additionally, it is hoped that this inquiry has presented many possibilities for what the 21st private piano teaching studio could be, and that this vision of the future inspires teachers to re-invent their practice, alongside exploring their fullest potential as creative learners, musicians, and people.

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APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANT GENERAL INFORMATION

Participant General Information

Where do you live?

What year were you born in?

Where do you teach (e.g. home studio, school)?

What instrument/s do you teach?

What style/s of music do you teach?

What do you typically teach in your lessons (e.g. repertoire, theory, scales, improvisation etc.)?

How many students do you have and what ages are they?

How long have you been teaching?

What music related qualifications do you hold if any (this can include any teaching qualifications)?

What nationality are you (as written on your passport)?

What musical activities/endeavours are you currently involved in (e.g. accompanying, publishing books, composing, performing etc.)?

APPENDIX B: ETHICS

Dear Bonnie

I am pleased to confirm your Human Research Ethics (HRE) application has now been reviewed by the University's Expedited Review process. As your research proposal has been deemed to meet the requirements of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007), ethical approval is granted as follows.

Project Title: H18REA113 - A Trip Down Memory Lane: Exploring the Creative Identities of Piano Teachers
Approval date: 27/07/2018
Expiry date: **27/07/2021**
USQ HREC status: Approved with conditions

(a) responsibly conduct the project strictly in accordance with the proposal submitted and granted ethics approval, including any amendments made to the proposal;
(b) advise the University (email: ResearchIntegrity@usq.edu.au) immediately of any complaint pertaining to the conduct of the research or any other issues in relation to this project which may warrant review of the ethical approval of this project;
(c) promptly report any adverse events or unexpected outcomes to the University (email: ResearchIntegrity@usq.edu.au) and take prompt action to deal with any unexpected risks;
(d) make submission for any amendments to the project and obtain approval prior to implementing such changes;
(e) provide a progress 'milestone report' when requested and at least for every year of approval;
(f) provide a final 'milestone report' when the project is complete.
(g) promptly advise the University if the project has been discontinued, using a final 'milestone report'.

Additional conditionals of approval for this project are:

(a) Nil.

Please note that failure to comply with the conditions of this approval or requirements of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018, and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, 2007 may result in withdrawal of approval for the project.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to make contact with an Ethics Officer.

Congratulations on your ethical approval! Wishing you all the best for success!

Kind regards,

Human Research Ethics

University of Southern Queensland
Toowoomba – Queensland – 4350 – Australia
Ph: 07 4687 5703 – Ph: 07 4631 2690 – Email: human.ethics@usq.edu.au

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APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (PIS)

Project Details

University of Southern Queensland

Participant Information Sheet for USQ Research Project

Title of Project: A Trip Down Memory Lane: Exploring the Creative Identities of Piano Teachers

Human Research Ethics Approval Number: H18REA113

Invitation Requesting Participation

I formally invite you to participate in a semi-structure interview to discover the impact of your own experience of learning the piano on your creative identity.

Research Team Contact Details

Principal Investigator Details	**Supervisor Details**
Miss Bonnie Green	Dr Melissa Forbes
Email: bonnie.green @usq.edu.au	Email: melissa.forbes @usq.edu.au
Telephone: 0400 246 773	Telephone: (07) 4631 1153
Mobile: As Above	Mobile: 0414 490 195

Description and aim of the project

This research project is being undertaken as part of my Doctor of Philosophy degree. The aim of this study is to discover the impact of piano teachers' own experiences of learning the piano, and musical experiences more broadly, on their creative identities as musicians.

Creative identity in music refers to one's defining of themselves as creative in music. This identity is not given at birth, but is formed over time through one's unique background and experience and formative opportunities to be creative in music. My project seeks to discover how you see yourself, or do not see yourself, as creative in music. I desire to hear the story of your own musical journey, to uncover those experiences that have impacted the way you see yourself, or do not see yourself, as creative in music.

It is important for piano teachers to understand the ways in which teaching processes can foster creativity within the one-to-one piano studio. This informs piano teachers of how they can mould their own teaching practice to foster their students' creativity, and thus promote their students' creative identities. I request your assistance in this research because I believe your experiences can give insight into this area of study and can help to improve piano teaching practices more broadly.

Participation

Participation in this project is exclusive to private piano teachers 18 years of age and over, who were taught in a one-to-one context and who currently teach in a one-to-one context. Teachers do not have to exclusively teach in a one-to-one context, but the research project specifically concerns one-to-one teaching contexts.

Your participation in this project will involve taking part in a semi-structured interview held and conducted privately with myself as the key researcher. The interview will be conducted at a time mutually arranged between myself and yourself, preferably in person (if accessible) or over online video, where face to face communication can be made. This interview will seek to gain insight into your own experience of learning the piano and the impact of your learning experience on your creative identity. It is anticipated that this interview will take 60-90 minutes. Within this interview, you are free to not answer any particular question where you don't feel comfortable. A follow-up interview may be requested if the researcher (myself) wishes for additional information. It is anticipated that follow-up interviews will take approximately 30 minutes.

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary, therefore there is no obligation to participate. If you decide to take part in the research and later need to withdraw from the project due to personal circumstances or other, you are free to withdraw with no consequence. You may also request that any data collected from you be destroyed. If you do wish to withdraw from this project or withdraw data collected from you, please contact myself or my supervisor who are the Research Team for this project (contact details at the top of this form).

Your decision to take part, not take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will in no way impact your current or future relationship with the University of Southern Queensland.

Expected Benefits

As a result of participating in this research, you may experience benefits that include insight into the impact of your own experience of learning the piano on your creative identity, understanding how piano teaching

processes either hinder and foster creative development in students, and having a "voice" that is heard and contributes to the improvement of piano pedagogical practices more broadly. I hope that if such benefits are achieved, this will result in a greater satisfaction in your work as a teacher.

Risks

There are two minimal risks associated with your participation in this project. Firstly, you may intentionally or unintentionally disclose something within your semi-structured interview that you wish to not be included in the data gathering. Secondly, the interview may touch upon sensitive issues. To minimise these risks and any potential harm to yourself, I will provide you (and all participants) with a transcript of each interview and drafts of any written work discussing the collected data. These documents will be provided to you for your approval before anything is formally written, communicated publicly, and/or submitted. Participants will be required to submit any formal requests to remove/re-interpret data by a certain date. Additionally, a list of referral services has been included below if you wish to further discuss any sensitive issues with a professional.

Referral services

Life Line: 13 11 14

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636

Privacy and Confidentiality

All collected data will be treated confidentially unless required by law. Any data collected as a part of this project will be stored securely as per University of Southern Queensland's Research Data Management policy. Data will be stored in individually identified formats during the study, and will only be accessible to myself, to protect your privacy and confidentiality. After all data is collected, aggregated data will be written up in a thesis. This data will appear in re-identified formats—meaning that your name will have been removed and replaced by a code, but it is possible to re-identify you through using that code—unless there is a mutual agreement between myself and *all* participants that data will appear as individually identifiable. If this happens, written consent will be requested and required from all participants. All participants will be provided with a summary of the research results via email after the thesis has been graded.

Following the study, data will be stored in re-identified formats and securely stored in a data repository. This data will be made openly accessible to researchers for future research purposes. Data will be stored for a minimum of five years.

Consent to Participate

If you would like to participate in this research project, please sign the written consent form (enclosed) to confirm your agreement to participate. Please return a copy of your signed consent form to myself via email prior to the commencement of the research project/*date offered*.

Questions or Further Information about the Project

Please contact myself or my supervisor (contact details at the top of the form) if you have any questions or request further information regarding this project. Additionally, please contact myself or my supervisor if you have any questions regarding your rights as a participant.

Concerns or Complaints Regarding the Conduct of the Project

I am to assure you that the project will be carried out in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007). If you have any concerns or complaints however about the ethical conduct of the project you may contact the University of Southern Queensland Manager of Research Integrity and Ethics on +61 7 4631 2214 or email researchintegrity@usq.edu.au. The Manager of Research Integrity Ethics Manager is not connected with the research project and can facilitate a resolution to your concern in an unbiased manner.

This research project has been formally approved by the University of Southern Queensland's Ethics' Office.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this research project. I look forward to hearing from you. Please keep this sheet for your information.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW TOPICS

Topic 1: Creativity in music

- Description of creativity in music
  (How do you describe creativity in music?)
- Self-perception of being creative in music
  (How do you see yourself as creative in music?)
- Beliefs about creativity and music
  (What are your beliefs about creativity, people, and music?)
- Role of musical creativity in your life (at a personal and professional level)
  (In what ways do you currently engage in musical creativity?)

Topic 2: Exploring the construction of your creative identity in music

The beginning of the journey

When and why did you start learning the piano?

Within the piano lesson

Can you tell me about:

- Teachers
- Lesson logistics (e.g. location, duration, frequency)
- Lesson content
- Lesson environment
- Exams and eisteddfods etc.
- Personal value of lessons

Outside of the piano lesson

Can you tell me about:

- Performances attended
- Music at school (i.e. classroom music)
- Other musical endeavours (e.g. school/garage/church bands, gigs)

Social and cultural factors

Can you tell me about:

- Social factors (e.g. family environment, influence of friends, mentors and other role models)
- Cultural factors (i.e. relationship between creativity and music culture)

Topic 3: Becoming a private piano teacher

Coming into the profession

Can you tell me about how and why you became a private piano teacher?

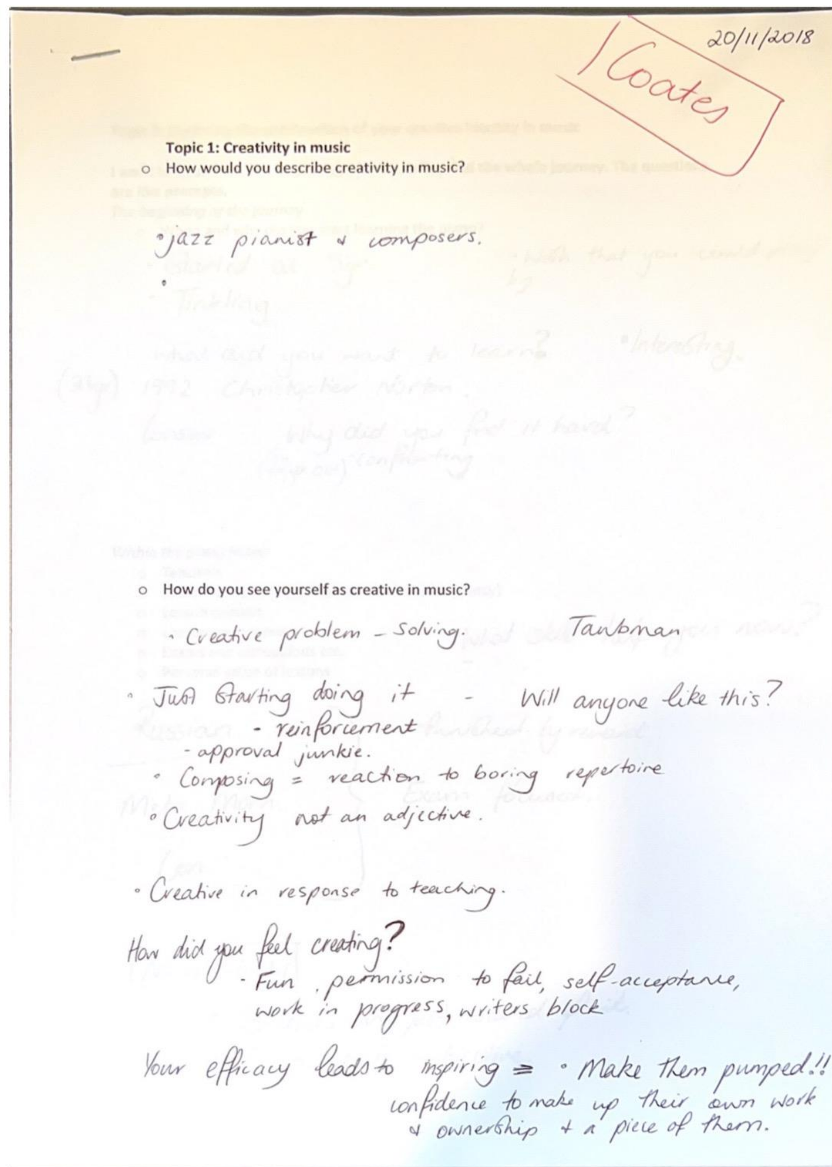
Teaching practice

What did your lessons look like when you first started teaching?

How has your teaching evolved over the years?

Anything else to add

APPENDIX E: EXAMPLE OF NOTE-TAKING DURING INTERVIEW



20/11/2018

Coates

Topic 1: Creativity in music

- How would you describe creativity in music?

• jazz pianist & composers.

•

- How do you see yourself as creative in music?

• Creative problem – solving. Taubman

• Just starting doing it – Will anyone like this?

- reinforcement

- approval junkie.

• Composing = reaction to boring repertoire

• Creativity not an adjective.

• Creative in response to teaching.

How did you feel creating?

- Fun, permission to fail, self-acceptance, work in progress, writers block

Your efficacy leads to inspiring ⇒ • Make them pumped!! confidence to make up their own work & ownership + a piece of them.

APPENDIX F: EXAMPLE TRANSCRIPTION

Interviewer: Cool. Well just for ethical purposes, I just wanted to remind you that I will be recording this interview. Do you still consent to that?

Amber: That's fine. Yes.

Interviewer: Wonderful. Thank you. Do you mind, just before I go on, I hit record when you picked up the phone. I might just listen back to see that it can pick up your voice. Is that alright?

Amber: Sure.

Interviewer: Sure. I'd hate to get to the end of it and, "Oh! I can't hear some bits!" Have you got a microphone or are you just-

Amber: I'm just using my laptop actually.

Interviewer: Your laptop? Cool. Yep. No, that's fine. Sometimes it's a bit louder than others and it-

[Listening back to recording]

Interviewer: Oh, I'm very loud. [Listening back to recording] No, that will be no problem at all. Cool. All righty. Are you good to go?

Amber: Good to go.

Interviewer: Wonderful. Thank you. The first thing, I'd just like to know a little bit about you, Amber. You're obviously a piano teacher. How long you've been teaching for and if you are involved in any other kind of musical endeavors outside of your teaching?

Amber: I probably started with just a few students in high school, like many of us do, so that was about 15 years now.

Interviewer: Yes, wonderful.

Amber: Always had a couple of students there through high school and through university where I did a Bachelor of Music and Classical piano and had a few students, but it wasn't until I suppose I left university and properly started my own studio. I'd probably say it's been about full time more like 8, 10 years, I suppose, more like that. I also did go on to get a Diploma of Education as well and taught in classrooms for a few years, about two, three years. Throughout that time, I was still working and still teaching my own private students at home and also at the schools. I was doing a bit of everything. Doing the classroom and taking some private students, a bit of everything. Even teaching a bit of guitar and a bit of whatever the kids needed, a bit of voice, bass [chuckles].

Now, I kind of found I missed taking children to that very advanced level on an instrument when I was working with the children in the classroom. That was teaching kindergarten up to Year 8 I think I was doing. Eventually, I returned to just teaching completely in the private studio full time working

for myself. That's what I'm continuing to do with a lot of changes to my teaching philosophy as it has evolved over time, but yes, I basically do that and some accompanying when I can as well.

Interviewer: Wonderful. Your studio is at home, or do you have a venue outside of your house?

Amber: No, I don't have a commercial premises. However, I do go to some schools, and the kids come out of their class for their piano lesson. I do that a few days a week, so I can get some work during the day.

Interviewer: Yes, it's hard with those hours, isn't it, always having to teach after school.

Amber: [crosstalk] Seeing my husband. Otherwise, I'd be like some of my colleagues who start at three and teach till nine o'clock at night and all weekends as well.

Interviewer: It's a lifestyle for some, not for others.

Amber: No, that wouldn't work for me.

Interviewer: Yes. Very cool. Thank you for that because I'll probably do just a little profile on you as I'm writing up the thesis, so that's wonderful to know. Just in terms of your Diploma of Education, do you think that really helps your teaching?

Amber: Not the diploma itself but teaching in classrooms, I did really enjoy that. I think it took a while, but it did eventually impact upon my own private teaching practice because I found once I returned, I stopped classroom teaching and went solely to private, good old one-on-one piano lessons, I missed some of that energy that is generated when young musicians work together. I actually found that I missed that somewhat. As difficult as it is sometimes to choral all those kids and get them working together in the class, I did find, yes, I missed some of that. Going solely back to one-on-one, felt a bit one-dimensional, I suppose.

I think eventually it did lead me to try to change things up so I could have a little bit of the best of the both worlds, still have some energy in collaboration and ensemble music-making while also retaining the rigor of the one-on-one lesson format as well.

Interviewer: Do you think that ‘missing the classroom interaction and energy’, that contributed to your research as well? To your topic?

Amber: Yes, it did because I eventually found a mentor who sort of said, "Why don't you try this? Why don't you just have two kids for 45 minutes instead of one kid at a time for the 30 minutes?" It's funny, just that small idea just did spark something, and I kind of dove in and tried this pair-- It's not really group teaching. It's probably more like a shared private lesson, I suppose. Yes, that kind of just evolved from there. Now, I teach most of my lessons, either I have a shared private lesson or they have a little bit of crossover group time in between, sandwiched between their one-on-one lessons and things like that. It's still weirdly unusual in Australia to teach

like that, although quite common practice in America and even the UK.

Interviewer: Okay. Good on you. I always had a one-to-one lesson, but then at uni, I had a few group lessons, there might have been three or four of us. I loved it. I went to a music summer school a few years ago. I think there might've been six or seven of us in the piano class. Just loved it. I loved how you're all there on the same page, and being able to make music with someone else is wonderful. I highly support what you're doing. I think it's great.

All right. Wonderful. Well, my next topic is just looking at how you would describe creativity in music. Would you mind sharing with me how you see creativity in music?

Amber: Yes. I suppose I'd like to encourage-- For me, it's very hard to separate the word creativity from the idea of being a functional musician as well. I know its two kind of separate ideas, but I think they kind of have a lot of crossover. To encourage creativity for my students, it's the usual sorts of things, which would be encouraging them to explore music beyond just written sheet music through improvisation, which is-- I find so important to do from very early on otherwise it tends to terrify them, which is kind of a shame, isn't it?

Interviewer: It tends to what? Sorry?

Amber: Improvisation can scare a lot of students if they haven't experienced it from early on, which is a shame. Children start out so free and so uninhibited, and then, somehow along the way, they tend to get quite nervous about straying from a score and making up their own music. I know I have some advanced transfer students who have been taught very traditionally, and getting them freed up to do any kind of improvisation or chord-playing, chord-composing, they really struggle with it. I think the freedom to explore, make your own music, improvise, I think it ties in very closely with your ability to be a functional musician, able to create music from not very much, for example, like a chord chart, that takes a lot of creativity, and also a lot of-- A different type of skill to being able to read music.

Interviewer: Yes. Most definitely. Cool. Thank you. I love hearing-- All the interviews I've had so far, all three of them [laughs], have been very insightful for me. I love how you said that-- Just the freedom to explore beyond the written notation.

APPENDIX G: EXAMPLE OF FOLLOW-UP EMAILS

Email communication with Jeremy

Date 09/07/2020

Interviewer: You have said that you knew you didn't want to be a classical pianist so jazz was always the alternative. Why did you not want to be a classical pianist?

Jeremy: Playing the same thing over and over again just seemed dull to me. I wanted to make something truly new, truly my own, and different each time. Plus, I never had the discipline or rigor to be a truly great classical pianist.

Interviewer: You said that you really wanted to go into music composition after high school. Why did you choose a jazz major over a composition major?

Jeremy: I started trying to compose pieces to create a portfolio to apply to study composition…and realized that I romanticized composition more than I actually enjoyed it. Meanwhile, I was getting lots of opportunities and social validation for my performing, which helped to incentivize a performance major.

Email communication with Samantha

Date 01/01/2021

Interviewer: First, I interpret that creating the BBRR series bolstered your creative identity. Second, as a result of the BBRR series, you started included [*sic*] creativity in your lessons a lot more. I am just wondering if you started fostering students' creativity more in lessons because you saw yourself as creative or if it is because you had a method to teach creativity. Maybe it's both☺

Samantha: It's definitely a bit of both, once I'd been doing it for a while, but it started with me feeling confident I had the TOOLS to teach creativity that made me see if as more important and want to do it more.