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The composer as bricoleur: Notions of contemporary opera in the genesis of a short film

This thesis is presented in partial fulfilment of the degree of Master of Arts (Performing Arts)

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Chapter Three: Piecing the Research

I never made a painting as a work of art, it’s all research.

— Pablo Picasso (as cited in McNiff, 1998, p. 29)

Artistic research and artistic practice varies greatly from one researcher to another (Fenton, 2012; Haseman, 2006). Scriptwriters, composers and screen directors have different practices, and, even among people of the same discipline, methodologies and strategies vary greatly. Given these infinite variations and possibilities, and my aim of writing the script for, creating the music of and directing the short film, it was imperative to determine which methodological structure would best suit my research. I needed to determine which methodologies and strategies I should use, and how they should be applied.

This chapter explores what is meant by PLR, and how it applied to my enquiry. This chapter examines bricolage — a metaphor used to illustrate the process of gathering, repurposing and constructing ideas, and its application in this research. It then explores the creative process, uncovering how both conscious and unconscious observational study and the incubation of ideas led to inspirational moments and creative output. It also discusses strategies such as immersion in the practice and practice trials, as well as case studies, resonance meetings and microblogging. Finally, this chapter ends by exploring reflexivity in reflective writing.

Practice-led Research

PLR is a methodology that is initiated in practice (Fenton, 2012; Gray, 1996). PLR was appropriate for my methodology because it caters to action research — that is, areas of study that are non-numerical or worded, and are reliant on practice. The main focus of PLR is to “advance knowledge about practice, or to advance knowledge within practice” (Candy, 2006, p. 3). By engaging in
practice and producing a creative work, knowledge is generated or advanced. In this case, the script, film score and short film were the creative works that resulted from research into practice. The knowledge generated through the process of constructing and executing the creative work belies the reason and basis for the research, which was captured and reported through exegetical writing (Haseman, 2006).

PLR may be further categorised as (i) research for practice, (ii) research into practice and (iii) research through practice (Frayling, 1993). Research for practice requires the researcher to collect data that can inform the content of the creative project. Research into practice requires the researcher to learn and incorporate techniques that enable the researcher to undertake his or her practice. Finally, research through practice refers to the act of being in the practice itself, and discovering and generating knowledge about the practice. Table 4 presents a list of activities that influenced this research. The various activity pieces range from scriptwriting to collaborating on the edit, and are classified as either research for, into and/or through the practice. This chapter includes further elaboration on some of these activities.

Table 4: Research For, Into and/or Through Practice (Frayling, 1993)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Pieces</th>
<th>Research For, Into and/or Through Practice</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tumblr account: <a href="http://benyap.tumblr.com">http://benyap.tumblr.com</a> (September 2011)</td>
<td>For</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal (2011) and literature review</td>
<td>For</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scriptwriting short course at Polytechnic West (2012 March)</td>
<td>Into</td>
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<tr>
<td>Using Celtx for draft</td>
<td>For, into and through</td>
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<tr>
<td>Composed for multiple speakers: Spatialisation</td>
<td>For, into and through</td>
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<tr>
<td>Composed for dance: Collaboration with dancer Annabel Saies on Nautilus</td>
<td>For, into and through</td>
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<tr>
<td>London and New York trip (July to August 2012): Museums, musicals, opera and theatre</td>
<td>For and into</td>
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<tr>
<td>Xiapu photography (May 2012) — photography</td>
<td>For, into and through</td>
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<tr>
<td>Composition and lighting</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Volunteer for homeless: Homeless Connect (November 2012)</strong></td>
<td>For</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GroupMap for brainstorming ideas</strong></td>
<td>For</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thailand, Laos and Philippines — photography, stories and ideas (December 2012 to February 2013)</strong></td>
<td>For, into and through</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Video short: Sunrise/Sunset</strong></td>
<td>For, into and through</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>AFTRS short course — Intensive Film Making Course (July 2013)</strong></td>
<td>For, into and through</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Perth Actors Collective Acting Workshop #58</strong></td>
<td>For, into and through</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Perth Actors Collective Screen Workshop #112</strong></td>
<td>For, into and through</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Colloquium presentation</strong></td>
<td>For</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rehearsals with Giuliana and working with the artist (from August 2013)</strong></td>
<td>For, into and through</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Facebook Group for communication and collaboration</strong></td>
<td>For, into and through</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Audition</strong></td>
<td>For, into and through</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Writing the script</strong></td>
<td>Through</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Writing the music</strong></td>
<td>Through</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Directing the short film</strong></td>
<td>Through</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Collaborating on the edit</strong></td>
<td>Through</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Collaborating on sound</strong></td>
<td>Through</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Trial shoot</strong></td>
<td>For</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Rehearsal trials</strong></td>
<td>For, into and through</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dreams, movies, life and incubatory activities</strong></td>
<td>For</td>
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The multifaceted nature of this research required various approaches during varied and simultaneous stages. At times, these were planned and, at other times, these were unplanned. A method of navigating this type of research process is to consider how the research process is akin to bricolage, in which strategies are pieced together from a diverse range of resources and materials.
**Bricolage**

The word 'bricolage' comes from the French word 'bricoler' — a verb that roughly translates to 'do it yourself'. Bricolage encompasses the notion of tinkering — bringing odds and ends together to create, fix and produce as a method of working. This term was used by Claude Lévi-Strauss (1966) — a French anthropologist and philosopher whose interest in different ways of thinking among cultures and societies (structural anthropology) — particularly in the 'untamed' mind — led him to write *The Savage Mind*. In this work, Lévi-Strauss explored the notion of mythology in 'traditional' or 'developing' cultures, and contrasted them with scientific thinking in 'developed' cultures. He used the metaphor of a 'bricoleur' to illustrate the ways in which mythmakers (storytellers) and medicine men operate, and compared this with scientific thought, where he applied the metaphor of an engineer. For Lévi-Strauss, the 'savage' mind uses available resources (bricolage) to solve problems, in which the tools are the result of readaptation and repurposing, rather than invention. In contrast, the engineer considers the goals and purpose of a problem, and is able to create new tools and materials for this.

Jacques Derrida (1978), a French philosopher, argued that Lévi-Strauss had fallen into his own trap by enforcing the idea of an engineer in contrast to the bricoleur. For Derrida, the engineer is a myth created by the bricoleur to explain a concept that has difficulties in explaining its own origins. Derrida (1978) returned to the founding idea of a bricoleur and wrote:

> If one calls bricolage the necessity of borrowing one's concepts from the text of a heritage that is more or less coherent or ruined, it must be said that every discourse is bricoleur. The engineer, whom Levi-Strauss opposes to the bricoleur, should be the one to construct the totality of his language, syntax, and lexicon. In this sense the engineer is a myth. (p. 285)

The engineer, who is constructed via the bricoleur, makes the engineer an invention based on the 'tools' available to the bricoleur, and hence a myth in itself (Derrida, 1978). As suggested by Derrida (1978) and applied in this
research, all constructs are via the bricoleur — that is, “every discourse is bricoleur” (p. 285).

The notion of employing bricolage as a metaphor in any discourse has led to its use outside of philosophy and anthropology. Specifically, enquiries of a qualitative nature have embraced bricolage due its ability to include, connect and narrate the ideas and thoughts that are represented in multiple and sometimes conflicting methodologies, theories and positions (Denzin & Lincoln, 1999; Rogers, 2012). Matt Rogers (2012) explained:

Bricoleurs allow for dynamics and contexts to dictate which questions get asked, which methods to employ and which interpretive perspectives to use. This means bricoleurs have an aptness for creativity — they know how to artistically combine theories, techniques, and methods. Furthermore, they are able to create their own methodological tools when needed. (p. 6)

In this instance, Rogers (2012) drew on Lévi-Strauss’s bricoleur, as well as the ideas of Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln of using bricolage as a methodological approach. Here, the bricoleur may be categorised as a methodological bricoleur — a person who gathers methods that are readily available in order to solve a problem. This is just one of the five types of bricoleurs identified by Denzin and Lincoln (1999), which also include interpretive, narrative, theoretical and political bricoleurs. In this research, I identified strongly with the methodological, interpretive and narrative bricoleurs. The following section describes their differences.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1999), interpretive bricolage employs the belief that there are numerous interpretations of an event, in which “each telling, like light hitting a crystal, reflects a different perspective on [an] ... incident” (p. 6). Interpretive bricolage highlights the “interactive process [of research], shaped by his or her own personal history, biography, gender, social class, race and ethnicity, and by those of the people in the setting” (Denzin & Lincoln, p. 5). In this respect, interpretive bricolage requires the researcher to examine both the object of enquiry, and how the research process is affected by the researcher’s positioning — that is, it is reflexive (Rogers, 2012).
My role as researcher and practitioner required both tacit and newly acquired skills and knowledge. The tacit knowledge required in this research was built on my “personal history, biography, gender, social class, race and ethnicity” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1999, p. 5). This knowledge influenced both the writing of the screenplay, and the direction of the film and music. Examining this process in Chapter Four reveals the intentions and ideas that were presented for my audience to interpret. My style or voice is a reasonable way to illustrate how interpretive bricoleur influences both practice and research. Through reflexivity, this can be identified to allow further exploration. Rogers (2012) explained:

Reflexivity not only highlights how human positioning influences the research processes, it exposes how an object of inquiry can be interpreted from multiple vantage points. In this way, reflexivity adds depth and plurality to the inquiry process. While a researcher’s positioning is embraced, a phenomenon’s intertextuality, interconnectedness, and relationships with other phenomena can be explored. (pp. 4–5)

The narrative bricoleur examines representations in an enquiry, where the research text itself tells a specific story that is a contextualised interpretation of events (Denzin & Lincoln, 1999; Rogers, 2012). Denzin and Lincoln (1999) asserted that:

the gendered, narrative bricoleur also knows that researchers all tell stories about the world they have studied. Thus the narratives, or stories, scientists tell are accounts coached and framed within specific storytelling traditions, often defined as paradigms (e.g., positivists, post-positivist, constructivism). (p. 6)

Rogers (2012) notes that for Denzin and Lincoln (1999), “narrative bricoleurs appreciate that inquiry is a representation (i.e. narrative) ... [because] objective reality can never be [recorded] and texts are always representations of specific interpretations of a phenomenon” (Rogers, pp. 6-7). For this research, the narrative bricoleur is demonstrated in the presentation of Out of Sight, as a contemporary screen opera that employs surrealism in its narrative, and examines the notion of the composer as bricoleur. In this case, the research is framed by the ideologies of contemporary opera, contemporary screen opera, opera, operatic voice, surrealism and bricolage.
As a methodological bricoleur, I used pre-existing skills and knowledge to build my research. In addition, I developed old skills and acquired new skills in order to accomplish the research and project. Alongside extracurricular studies, the methods and strategies that I employed to construct the project included literature and practice reviews, observational study, immersion in the practice, practice trials, improvisation, case studies, resonant meetings, social media and reflective writing. The action of combining these various resources (methods, skills, knowledge and so forth) can be viewed as methodological bricolage.

In this research, I took a broad approach to bricolage, employing its various approaches and uses, as and when required. At times, I embodied the methodological bricoleur, and, at other times, I embodied the interpretive or narrative bricoleur. In my praxis, I adopted the positionality of a bricoleur who linked various methods and practices to piece together my research, while also applying bricolage in the narration of the research, and interpretation of its text. Thus, bricolage is more than just a metaphor for a method of practice — it is an approach to enquiry that indicates the context in which the enquiry is made.

**Sparking Creativity**

*The universe is real but you can’t see it. You have to imagine it. Once you imagine it, you can be realistic about reproducing it.*

— Alexander Calder (as cited in Kuh, 1962, p. 42)

Creativity in literature, science and the arts is often considered special because it appears to spring entirely from the imagination of the creator, filling what once was a creative void (Boden, 2005). Creativity — a phenomenon that has been studied in wide-ranging disciplines, from psychology to philosophy — can derive from multiple sources (Forceville, 2013). The creative spark is an event that culminates from interweaving thoughts and events, which is analogous to bricolage — where ideas and methods are pooled in order to
answer the enquiry (Byrne, 2012; Davis, 2004; Stewart, 2007). In this case, external and internal factors and the creator’s experience and knowledge are combined with multiple problem-solving pathways (or methods) to achieve a goal.

Contemporary theories on creativity owe much to Graham Wallas’s (1926) work, Art of Thought, which established a four-step model that has been the basis for understanding creativity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Davis, 2004; Kristensen, 2004; Sawyer, 2011). Although this has been adapted in more recent writings — such as in Cropley and Cropley’s (2010) stages model, I refer back to the original four steps proposed by Wallas: preparation, incubation, illumination and verification. I used these as a guideline to understand the process and phases of creativity.

Wallas (1926) outlined the four stages of creativity as follows:

1. **Preparation** — a conscious and deliberate stage in which the creator explores and clarifies the enquiry, reviews and acquires knowledge and skills, and develops potential solutions. In the current research, the literature review, case studies, tacit knowledge and embodied skills, as well as newly learnt knowledge and skills, formed the basis of the preparatory stage.

2. **Incubation** — in which the task is pushed out of the creator’s immediate attention, and the subconscious internalises the problem. Incubation has been described as “a period of preconscious, fringe-conscious, off-conscious or perhaps even unconscious mental activity that takes place” (Davis, 2004, p. 122). In the context of this research, I referred to the period of incubation as unconscious practice through unstructured observational study.

3. **Illumination** — the revelatory moment when the creator becomes conscious of a solution that has transpired from inspiration.

4. **Verification** — the pursuit or execution of the solution, such as writing a story or composing music. This includes reworking ideas and solutions to culminate in a final answer to the enquiry. In this PLR, I describe this
as immersive practice, and illustrate how this stage straddles both illumination and verification in my model in Table 4.

**Seeking Inspiration**

Inspiration — defined as the process of being mentally stimulated to do or feel something — may arise from playing, dreaming or simply observing nature, such as watching a sunset (Boden, 2005; Davis, 2004; Jung & Chodorow, 1997). Throughout my research period, sources of inspiration were sometimes consciously sought, and sometimes unconsciously gained. Incorporated into the literature and practice reviews are examples of activities that I consciously undertook to gain insight and inspiration in preparation for the research. The activities that unconsciously led to an inspired moment are described as activities for research. These were unconsciously sought, and subsequently straddle both the preparatory and incubation stages in the model proposed by Wallas (1926). This section details how I gained inspiration to produce my short film through conscious and unconscious observation.

**Observational Study**

Observational study, as a method of enquiry, is applicable in many areas of study, and central to all areas of practice (Jorgensen, 1989). In research where observation often requires quantifiable data gathered through strict and systematic procedures, observational study may be categorised as structured observation (McKechnie, 2008). In research where observations are often made with little or no regard for quantifiable data — but rather from qualitative assessment based on procedural or phenomenological outcomes resulting from a practice — such observations are categorised as unstructured (McKechnie, 2008). The observations from my various practices are classified as unstructured observational study. Unstructured observational study may be further divided into observations that are consciously sought, and observations that are unconsciously gained (Frayling, 1993).
The preparatory phase of my research required a literature review and case studies, which discussed and reviewed the history of opera on film and contemporary opera (Chapters One and Two). In this stage, observations of contemporary video operas — particularly Ashley’s Perfect Lives (1983-1987), influence the creation of Out of Sight and allowed the exploration of the operatic voice outside its traditional confines of opera. By microblogging and digitally scrapbooking images, music and films, I began to consciously observe and seek ideas for the short film. Similarly, resonance meetings, location scouting, volunteering for the homeless, auditioning actors and completing trial shoots enabled me to directly and consciously seek solutions to answer the enquiry. These activities prepared me for periods of incubation, and were observed in an unstructured manner, but with a conscious effort to learn and collect data that would allow me to resolve my enquiry. Thus, these activities can be categorised as research for practice via conscious and unstructured observation (Frayling, 1993).

The incubation stage allows the creator to indirectly deal with solving an enquiry by intentionally focusing away from the problem (Davis, 2004; Wallas, 1926). In this case, research occurs unconsciously as the subconscious seeks a solution to the problem (Davis, 2004; Wallas, 1926). Examples in this area include the ways I determined character flaws, how surrealism entered the script, and how I became inspired to shoot around twilight. All these epiphanies occurred as a consequence of researching into and for possible solutions, and then incubating the ideas in an unstructured manner. This shift in focus is an example of unstructured observational study.

Unstructured observations were important in this research because they worked as keys to ignite the creativity that became the data for the creation of the work. Without these unconscious observations, I would not have had the input to create solutions for my research. Thus, these incubatory activities are categorised as research for practice (Frayling, 1993) (see Table 4).
**Immersion in the Practice and Practice Trials**

In PLR, practice trials are often used as a problem-solving tool. In this research, script and musical drafts, trial shoots and rehearsals were used as practice trials to test ideas and limitations. By employing practice trials while being immersed in the practice, data and knowledge for the research were generated. This ultimately led to the creation and production of the short film, *Out of Sight / Out of Mind.*

Immersion in the practice is described as a “sustained personal ‘confrontation with the unconscious’” (Jung, as cited in McNiff, 1998, p. 13). This quotation from Carl Jung evokes a mental state in which practitioners are simultaneously conscious and unconscious of their actions. That is, when practitioners are immersed in practice, they are consciously forced to confront the work within the confines of their environment and practice, as they draw inspiration unconsciously and/or consciously from both learnt and absorbed experiences. Thus, immersion in the practice is *research through practice* (Frayling, 1993; Webb, 2013).

In my research, I became aware that there were two subcategories of immersive research through practice (Frayling, 1993; Webb, 2013). For my practice, immersive research occurred as either:

1. **Improvised** — in which the researcher feels his or her way through the practice, determining how to progress as situations arise
2. **trial and error** — in which the researcher goes back and forth in order to fine-tune the work (Fenton, 2012).

Through the course of immersive practice, the practitioner may also alternate between improvising and trial and error (Fenton, 2012). Thus, practitioners can be viewed as being in a constant flux between the conscious and unconscious realm when immersed in their practice.

The act of immersing myself in writing the script, composing music, familiarising myself with the compositional software or directing a scene were
examples of research *through* practice (Frayling, 1993). In these instances, it was through the practice that I generated knowledge. The diagram in Figure 5 explains how knowledge is generated when immersed in practice. It is adapted from Chris Argyris and Donald Schön’s (1978) idea of a double-loop for learning. In my model, the creator begins by confronting the practice’s question or problem. In my case, this can be applied to composing music, writing a scene or directing a scene in the short film. Next, the creator has the choice of either producing work by trial and error, where a system of checks and balances is used to review the work, or improvising, where the creator works in a stream-of-consciousness manner. Both these choices can be combined at any point, and their results can feed into one or the other. Once reasonably satisfied, the result at either stage leads to reflection on the outcome, where the creator can either keep or reject what is produced. There is an additional outcome in which the creator can further improvise beyond what has been produced, or restructure the material by further trial and error.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 5: Knowledge Generation through Immersion in Practice**

Note: Adapted from Argyris and Schön (1978).

*Learning*
In any research, learning plays an important role in helping the researcher further their practice. In this research, many practical aspects were new to me. In order to undertake the research, I took classes in scriptwriting, filmmaking, photography, acting and directing. These classes, with varying materials, scopes and technical knowledge, formed some of the pieces that were required for me to create the short film. As a researcher, they detailed the complexities of PLR in employing bricolage as a model.

In scriptwriting classes, I learnt and practised storytelling, script formatting and ways to generate ideas. In the filmmaking course, I explored film production and roles in filmmaking. In addition, I was able to direct a scene; work as a sound recordist; help dress the set; and edit my version of the short film, *Despondent*, based on the screenplay *Despondency* by Elise Tyson (2013). In the acting and directing classes, I was able to participate as an actor, learn lines and apply Constantin Stanislavski’s (1936) acting techniques, as well as write and direct a short scene. On a photography trip to the fishing village of Xiapu in China, an emphasis on twilight photography taught me the importance of lighting, composition, preparation and light sensitivity (camera ISO).

The various skills and knowledge that I had to learn to fulfil the research goal of the short film illustrate how bricolage was used to piece this PLR together. Many methods and strategies — each with their own learning curves, tools and knowledge — were required to feed into my research. A singular method or strategy would not have sufficed to enable me to create the short film. Rather, a combination of several different strategies and methods had to be adopted (and adapted), often with one following from the other.

**Other Pieces**

*Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world.*

— *Albert Einstein* (as cited in Viereck, 1929)
Case Studies

A case study is defined as an analysis of a particular event or document (Eisenhardt, 1989). In this research, the analysed events or documents were short films, staged operas and musicals, television shows and feature films. Some of the examined cases were:

- *Les Misérables* (Hooper, 2012)
- *Sweeney Todd* (Burton, 2007; Sondheim & Wheeler, 1979)
- *Spider-man: Turn Off the Dark* (Taymor, 2011)
- *Carousel* (Rodgers & Hammerstein, 1945)
- *Peter Grimes* (Britten, 1941-46, 2012)
- *Entwined* (Ford, 2011)
- *Kiss* (Murawski, 2011).

These case studies highlight the disparate and broad-ranging influences that provided both inspiration and direction for the short film, from script development through to filming, editing and sound editing.

The literature and multimedia review informing this research involved examining the history of operas on film, and literature on collaboration. This process helped identify gaps in the literature related to this research. The identified gaps included literature on interdisciplinary collaboration between opera and screen, and literature on creating a screen opera. The challenges associated with opera on screen discussed during my literature review included:

1. the realism of screen versus the artificiality of opera
2. the suspension of disbelief
3. the operatic voice.

These challenges were important and fundamental to the conceptualisation, composition and outcome of my project.
Resonance Meeting

Resonance meeting is a collaborative technique that was taught to me at the AFTRS in 2010. The aim of a resonance meeting is to allow collaborators to respond to a project by contributing their ideas and thoughts to the project as a reference. This reference is a reflection of the contributor's response to the project in a form other than general feedback. In past experiences, these contributions have ranged from referential pieces of poetry to photography, movies and music. The function of a resonance meeting is to create a multidimensional mood board where individual collaborators can express what resonates with them in relation to the project, using film, music, poetry, colours, paintings, literature, theatre, dance, fashion and more.

Resonance meetings provide a language for collaborators to communicate during the project. In this process, a non-musician may communicate a musical idea via images, while a cinematographer may use poetry to convey the same idea. In this manner, collaborators are not limited to expressing their ideas in the language of their field, but via references that may be understood by their peers. In so doing, it provides a way for collaborators to work cohesively because ideas can be explained in a tangible manner. In this project, these meetings were initially conducted as part of group meetings in person; however, as collaborators became time poor, a Facebook group became the arena in which the meetings were held.

Social media such as Facebook was not only used for sharing and communicating information. It was also used during all stages of the research, from scrapbooking ideas on Tumblr to creating a mood board with the help of Pinterest. In the next section, I detail how social media was used as a tool for microblogging — the digital era's form of journaling.
Microblogging via social media was a research tool used to gather and disseminate information. In my research, I used Tumblr, Facebook and Pinterest during various stages for different purposes. Tumblr, a microblogging site, allowed the creation of a digital journal where photos, links, quotations, music and videos could be sourced and shared. Tumblr allowed the scrapbooking of ideas and thoughts that generated data for the script, music and film. Tumblr was used mostly during the early stages of my research as I sought story ideas, clarity and inspiration. It served in both the preparation and incubation stages to generate inspiration for the final story.

As the screenplay became more developed, I began to build a team of collaborators to produce and film the short film. Facebook proved to be a popular medium for my collaborators. With Facebook, we could communicate instantly with each other, either as a group (in the private group that was created) or individually via personal messages. The ability to attach files in the Facebook group was particularly useful for dispersing the latest draft of the script, and for my collaborators to share their ideas and latest work. Thus, Facebook was used as a tool from the pre-production phase through to post-production. With its ability to keep track of changes, thoughts and ideas as the project evolved, Facebook can be regarded a digital journal or scrapbook for the collaborative team. Figure 6 presents images from our cinematographer, John Rousselet, who posted his compiled test shots, and used this to create a shot list for the outside shots required.
Figure 6: Screenshot from Facebook Group Production Page

Pinterest was another microblogging site used during pre-production. Pinterest allowed me to use a word search to look up specific images. Examples of keywords used in the searches include ‘homeless’, ‘sunset’, ‘scary park’ and ‘silhouette’. After sifting through images and copying the ones that resonated with me, I was able to create a visual mood board. Video Clip 4 presents this visual mood board as a montage, with additional photographs taken during location scouts, and with my musical composition ‘Light Reflection’ as the soundtrack.
Microblogging: Facebook, Tumblr and Other Social Networking Mediums as Digital Journaling

Microblogging is similar to traditional journaling, and may be considered a reflective and reflexive tool for research. Reflective journaling is a widely accepted method used extensively in research, such as feminism, constructivism and post-structuralism (Ortlipp, 2008). Its wide usage reflects its importance as a tool in research. By applying critical self-reflection via journaling, the researcher is able to uncover solutions to problems in the research, and implement changes to the research strategy, methods and approach. Having a reflective journal reveals the true research process — a process that is often nonlinear and messy, filled with “mistakes, obstacles and errors” (Boden, Kenway & Epstein, 2007, p. 70). It is a ‘warts and all’ documentation of the research journey that embraces both failure and success.

Journal writing is often both a reflexive and reflective process. In reflexivity, it explores the individual perspectives and positionality of the researcher (Griffiths, 2010). In this case, my gender, race, sexuality and age relate to my positionality, which can influence the way I view things. In addition, my
theoretical positions, such as my social and political leanings, may influence my decision-making process. Reflexivity requires researchers to be self-conscious of their positionality and theoretical positions in order to note how these affect the research in terms of its “design, execution and interpretation of the theory, data and conclusions” (Griffiths, 2010, p. 184). Reflective journal writing requires the writer to analyse and self-evaluate events and outcomes retrospectively (Ortlipp, 2008). Through reflection, the researcher is able to recognise paradigms — assumptions, frameworks and patterns of thought and behaviour. Above all, it allows the researcher to reflect by documenting ideas, feelings, observations and visions.

Thus, how does journal writing compare to microblogging — the digital era's form of journal writing? Digital journals such as Tumblr, Pinterest and Facebook do not necessarily attempt to analyse and evaluate the researcher’s experience critically, although they may reveal the researcher’s positionality and theoretical position. When microblogging, the reflexivity and reflectivity of journaling are condensed in the post. For example, posting a politically charged video can express the explicit thoughts and ideas of the blogger, with or without further commentary. Thus, digital journaling can be inconsistent in demonstrating the reflexivity that is required for this level of study, but may simply be a form of reflective journaling. Consequently, it may not be as useful as traditional journals, especially in terms of reflexivity.

While digital journals are not useful as reflexive journals, they do document the research process. In particular, the collaborative phase of the research process may be tracked via Facebook posts and messages within and between the Facebook group and its members. As per *modus operandi*, wall posts and private chats appear as and when a collaborator feels the need to communicate. Replies to wall posts can range from a semi-committal 'like', to feedback, or no reply.

My Facebook group tracked the collaborative process and revealed a nonlinear approach in collaboration. The flow of wall posts — emerging quickly as
events and decisions become more pressing — and breadth of topics indicated
the lack of linearity and the “muddled” (Boden et al., 2007, p. 70) process.
However, the Facebook group wall was not a place for critical self-reflection or
analysis of cause and effect. Rather, in the next chapter, I reflect critically on
the filmmaking process, including composing, script writing and
conceptualising the film.

Chapter Summary

As the composer as bricoleur, I employed several methods in the production
and creation of the short film in this PLR. To capture the complex and
multifaceted nature of this research, I used bricolage as a metaphor to
illustrate the staggered and interwoven nature of practice as research. In
analysing the creative process, Wallas's (1926) four stages of creative thought
resonated with me. These stages highlighted both conscious and unconscious
observational study as activities that generated inspiration during the creation
of the short film. Frayling's classification (1993) was further applied to this,
allowing each activity to be related as research into, for, and/or through the
practice.

This chapter discussed my use of immersion in the practice and practice trials
with a model based on trial and error, and the improvisation used to
specifically illustrate my immersive process. This chapter’s detailed
examination of the preparatory processes — such as case studies, resonance
meetings and microblogging — provided insight to aspects of research for
practice in my creative process. Finally, a comparison of digital and traditional
journaling revealed that, when microblogging, aspects of linearity in research
can be sustained, yet reflexivity and reflectivity in research can be reduced or
lost.

The next chapter outlines the creation of Out of Sight as a reflective discussion.
The topics discussed include the film’s themes, influences and ideas, as well as
my personal experiences. In addition, this chapter reveals the hidden and
double meaning behind the short film’s title.