Towards interaction: Combining jazz techniques and idiomatic writing for Varied ensembles. A collection of musical works -and- An exegesis This

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Towards interaction: Combining jazz techniques and idiomatic writing for Varied ensembles

A collection of musical works

-and-

An exegesis

This thesis is presented in partial fulfilment of the degree of

Master of Arts (Performing Arts)

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Edith Cowan University
Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts
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Abstract
This practice-led research project has produced musical works that bring together ensembles from the Western Classical tradition that only read notation, and, jazz soloists who improvise. Three works ‘Standing Ground’, ‘The Journey’ and ‘Matt versus the Zombies’ were composed for three ensembles each with an improvising soloist. These ensembles included a British style Brass Band, Brass Quintet and a double Saxophone quartet.

The project built on the work of Andy Scott and Eddie Sauter, both of whom wrote for non-jazz ensembles and an improvising artist without including a jazz rhythm section. The accompanying non-jazz ensemble was written in such a way as to provide interactive possibilities to assist the improviser in their creativity.

The works in this project included elements found in the jazz rhythm section that I believed could be notated idiomatically. These elements were: call and response; interjection and setting and sustaining the groove. Data was collected through journaling and audio recording of the process from composition, to rehearsal and through to the performance. The compositions were recorded and the works analysed in this exegesis. The exegesis is written in a way to take the reader through the journey I have undertaken to produce these works, hence it is exploratory in nature.

Broadly speaking, injecting the elements from the jazz rhythm section into notated parts for a variety of musicians, both amateur and professional, was a successful and viable approach. The recordings, coupled with the analysis herein, shows that there were moments, where the elements of call and response, and interjection, notated in the accompanying musicians’ parts, created moments of dialogue, and the improvising artist used these to assist them in their improvising creativity. Feedback from all concerned (soloists and groups) was positive and supports the notion that community and professional ensembles, jazz and classical stylistic worlds can coexist, and learn from one another and make music that transcends style and notation constraints. This project adds to the scope of methodologies within creative music research practice. It also stands as an example of one that specifically addresses ways of notating for reading ensembles that will allow them to engage with improvising musicians.
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Introduction.
My aim in this practice-led research project is to explore and combine my two great musical interests: notated composition and improvisation. In this project I wrote three compositions for three different ensembles - Brass Band, Brass Quintet and Saxophone Ensemble. Each work featured a soloist who is an improviser. The ensemble accompaniments included elements of interaction commonly found within the jazz rhythm section. These elements were: ‘call and response’; offering unexpected rhythmic, melodic or harmonic ideas (referred to from now on as Interjection); and setting and sustaining the ‘groove’.

Call and response can be defined as
...a technique where one musician offers a phrase and a second player answers with a direct commentary or response to the offered phrase. The musicians build on each other’s offering and work together to move the song along and create a sound that’s inventive and collective. (Meazell, 1999)

It is important to state that this working concept of ‘interaction’ in this portfolio is actually a pre-compositional technique – that attempts to simulate live musical interaction and create new and different results from this particular element of jazz performance.

This submission comprises of a portfolio of three compositions of almost 60 minutes of music, 881 bars of fully notated music for three ensembles, and four soloists and audio/video documentation of the musical performances. The exegesis explores the compositional and rehearsal process including any problems that have arisen, along with the accompanying solution. An analysis of the compositions will show how the three elements: setting and sustaining the groove, interjection and call and response, were used in practice. In theory I had aimed to use the elements in the following way (these percentages refer to the ensemble parts as accompaniment):

- 40-50% of the piece including grooves/ostinatos
- 10% call and response
- 5% interjection.
- The rest of the roughly 35% will be made up of idiomatic writing for the ensemble i.e. tutti passages where the soloist rests and where the ensemble drives the musical narrative.
Further, I will also analyse where the soloist has responded to these elements and any interaction that may have taken place.

**Musical Background.**

My background as a musician is built on two foci; playing as a trombonist in the Western Classical tradition, and as a pianist in the jazz tradition. It is anticipated that this experience in both the jazz and classical idioms will help in creating a conduit or vehicle via the written notation to facilitate the interplay of a jazz soloist with non-traditional jazz instrumentation. This performance background affords me the technical knowledge base to achieve this aim.

My jazz compositional output to date has been four albums featuring my original music for jazz trio, quartet and quintet featuring soloists on trumpet, flugel horn, saxophones, double bass and vocals.¹ My music has often been stimulated by exploring structured composition that includes elements of Western Classical music (Concerto, written notation) with improvisation. A concerto in the Classical style is defined as a piece containing "three movements – the two fast outer movements and a slow lyrical middle movement. The Classical concerto introduced the cadenza, a brilliant dramatic solo passage where the soloist plays and the orchestra pauses and remains silent". (BBC, 2019)

In 2014 I had the great fortune of performing as pianist with UK composer Andy Scott (born UK, 1966) who is one of the contemporary exponents exploring structured composition and improvisation. In addition to writing for many ensembles, Scott has written for one of the leading Brass Bands in the UK, the Fodens Band. On the CD ‘Spirit of Fodens’ (Doyen, 2013), Scott’s piece *Molecular Cocktail Party* incorporates improvising trombone and piano by principal trombonist John Barber. In this piece Barber plays Scott’s written thematic material as well as improvising using a given harmonic sequence or set of chords. In addition, Scott gives Barber rhythmic or melodic ensemble cues to let him know where there are gaps in the work for him to solo and when to rest. This is akin to the feeling one receives from listening to the album ‘Focus’ (Verve, 1961), featuring string arrangements by Eddie Sauter² with

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¹ For more information please see www.youtube.com/glynmacdonald for videos
² More in depth analysis is given in the following literature review.
improvising soloist jazz saxophonist Stan Getz, where space is made within the accompaniment for the soloist to create their improvised solo’s.

Placing a jazz improviser within non-jazz instrumentation presents an interesting challenge for the composer. For instance, British style Brass Bands do not have a history of including improvisation in their music. ³ It is also uncommon within this canon of musical works to include a swing-feel. Within this project, the undertaking was to meet the Brass Band where they are most idiomatic and comfortable, whilst allowing the jazz soloist the musical landscape to improvise rich, coherent musical ideas.

The term idiomatic can be defined in a number of ways. The largely accepted definition seems to be that a composition defined as idiomatic is “a style appropriate for the instrument for which particular music is written,” Harvard Dictionary of Music (Apel, 2003). Huron and Berec in their paper Characterizing Idiomatic Organization in Music: A Theory and Case Study of Musical Affordances say:

> In music, the concept of idiom has been applied to a wide variety of phenomena; however, the term is commonly associated with the use of distinctive instrumental resources. The mechanics of musical instruments commonly influence how the music itself is organized. Like spoken utterances, musical passages can be characterized as more or less idiomatic depending on the extent to which the music relies on instrument-specific effects. The most distinctive instrumental idioms include gestures that are unique to a particular instrument. For example, a well-known solo trumpet passage at the end of Leroy Anderson’s Sleigh Ride imitates the sound of a neighing horse. No other Western orchestral instrument can produce this sound so convincingly and so the effect may be said to be idiomatic to the trumpet. While idiomatic properties can be regarded as opportunities, in music, it has also been common to describe idiomatic properties as limitations. Perhaps the foremost idiomatic concern (encountered by musicians around the world) relates to the pitch range of an instrument or voice. When studying orchestration, composers first learn and memorize the ranges of various instruments. While idiomatic properties may be unique to a specific instrument, these properties are frequently shared by several instruments, and so a wider notion of instrumental idiom can also be identified. A given passage may be playable on a variety of musical instruments, but may be better suited to one particular type or class of instruments. For example, certain musical passages may be especially suited to plucked instruments such as the guitar or harp. (Huron & Berec, 2009, p. 103)

³ Some exemplars of this idiom are Black Dyke Mills Brass Band, Cory Band and Grimethorpe Colliery Band.
They also make the distinction that idiomatic principles apply to other fields such as design,

...Good design can tell an inexperienced user how to correctly use an object without explicit instruction. For example, depending on how a door is designed, a looped handle might tell a user to “pull,” whereas a horizontal bar might tell a user to “push.” Written labels, such as “push” and “pull” are tacit acknowledgments of design failure, since the structure of the door itself should afford the appropriate action”. (Huron & Berec, 2009, p. 104)

Vasquez, Tahioglu and Kildal in their paper Idiomatic Composition Practices for New Musical Instruments also point out that,

Quite often in the past, idiomatic writing also pushed the boundaries on how a performer approaches an instrument. The idiomatic possibilities of a solo voice explored by composers in the early baroque ultimately crystallised in the refined methods of the Italian ‘bel canto’, introduced an entirely new aesthetic approach to lyric singing. (Vasquez, Tahioglu, & Kildal, 2017, pp. 174-175)

Using these ideas, for the purposes of this paper idiomatic composition can be defined as:

- music written in a way that suits the instruments in terms of the instrumental effects and range available on that instrument
- music that needs as little explicit instruction to perform as possible as described in the idiomatic design example
- composition that may push the boundaries and create new idiomatic possibilities not considered previously.

I believe my compositions hold true to these main principles of idiomatic composition: range, available instrumental effects, and musical notation that needs little explicit instruction. In addition, by exploring the combination of these three jazz elements with a reading ensemble and an improvising soloist I believe I may be adding to and ‘pushing (and challenging) the boundaries’ of the idiom.

Scott’s ‘Molecular Cocktail Party’ represents an archetypal work that includes both structured written notation idiomatically written for Brass Band, whilst allowing an improvising soloist space and sufficient harmonic and melodic material to creatively improvise. Scott's work was one of the main catalysts for this research project, and my compositions will be, at least conceptually, informed by this idea. Furthermore, the instruments of the soloist and ensemble for one of my pieces will be the same as
found in ‘Molecular Cocktail Party’, as is the presence of ‘call and response’ and ‘grooves’ set up with the band without the jazz rhythm section. Groove is defined in the Grove dictionary of music as:

…the result of a musical process that is often identified as a vital drive or rhythmic propulsion. It involves the creation of rhythmic intensity appropriate to the musical style or genre being performed. Groove is created within a piece of music by shifting timing and dynamic elements away from the expected pulse or dynamic level. A musician’s sense of pulse is subjective, not objective; musicians interpret and perform the passage of time and the presence of the pulse in slightly different ways. As musicians perform, the push and pull of those subjective interpretations adds tension to a performance and produces a sense of groove. (Whittall, 2015)

I will be building on Scott’s work incorporating these three elements usually found within the rhythm section, which I believe could be a unique compositional approach. These elements will be applied to all three works and not just the composition for Brass Band.

I will now turn to defining these various musical elements that will make up my compositional framework.
Conceptual Underpinnings of the Compositional Project:

This idea of bringing a classical ensemble and jazz soloist together is very close in idea to ‘Third Stream Music’, the idea proposed by Gunther Schuller (1925-2015).

In the first half of twentieth century, prior to Schuller’s 1957 [Third Stream Music] announcement, classical music and jazz composers had begun to use ideas and elements from both classical and jazz repertoires. These works culminated in creating musical precedence from which Schuller seems to have drawn his idea. (Styles, 2008, p. 13)

Schuller had one of his initial experiences, of what he later went on to term ‘Third Stream Music’, through a unique nonet known as the ‘Birth of the Cool’ band. Miles Davis (1926-1991) together with Gil Evans (1912-1988) and Gerry Mulligan (1927-1996) formed the nonet to combine jazz and classical musicians and instruments to record the album ‘Birth of the Cool’ (Capitol, 1957). As Joyner states, “the seed for third stream was planted in New York, particularly in the mind of French hornist Gunther Schuller, who played his first jazz gig with the Birth of Cool band.” (Joyner, 2000, p. 70).

Third Stream Music is defined in Joyner’s work ‘Analyzing Third Stream’ as,

…a type of music, which, through improvisation or written composition or both, synthesizes the essential characteristics and techniques of contemporary Western art music and various ethnic or vernacular music’s. At the heart of this concept is the notion that any music stands to profit from a confrontation with another; thus composers of Western art music can learn a great deal from the rhythmic vitality and swing of jazz, while jazz musicians can find new avenues of development in the large-scale forms and complex tonal systems of classical music. (Joyner, 2000, p. 63)

Another artist interested in the concept of Third Stream was the pianist from the ‘Birth of the Cool’ sessions, John Lewis (1920-2001). Lewis was interested in creating works where the form was not the prevalent 12 to 32 bar forms he had found most widely used in jazz. Lewis wanted to use more formal Western Classical structures and this is evident in pieces such as ‘La Cantatrice’ and ‘Piazza Navona’ (Lewis, 1960). Francis Davis comments:

I think too, that the same conservative lust for simplicity of forms that draws Lewis to the Renaissance and the Baroque draws him inevitably to the Blues, another form of music permitting endless variation only within the logic of rigid boundaries (F. Davis, 1996, p. 232).
In particular, the ensemble Lewis wrote for, The Modern Jazz Quartet, included vibraphonist Milt Jackson (1923-1999). Jackson’s improvisation style came from the Bebop tradition, whereas Lewis was writing within Western Classical forms and structures. Audiences listening to the group felt that Jackson wasn’t allowed the improvisational freedom to simply ‘blow’ or improvise in his own style because of the forms imposed on him by Lewis. “Audiences grew so tense from this aesthetic friction that in concerts they would heckle "Let Milt blow!" (Joyner, 2000, p. 80)

Joyner sums up the criticism concerning Third Stream in the following quote.

Jazz fans view formal orchestral presentations of jazz as stuffy. Classical audiences view a bopping jazz tenor Saxophone soloist standing in the middle of a symphony orchestra as quaint. Even the most sympathetic observer of third stream rarely regards the effort as much more than heartwarming diplomacy between two musical cultures. (Joyner, 2000, p. 85)

Therefore, I want to draw from the spirit of Third Stream, which brings together ideas and elements from both classical and jazz. I plan to use classical forms, classical ensembles and improvising soloists, yet allow more freedom and space for improvisation than the Lewis approach within the Modern Jazz Quartet. The outcome of this can be observed by considering the length of time each soloist is allocated improvisation time without interruption.

The musical relationship of the ensemble to the improvising soloist is key to this project. British composer Mark-Anthony Turnage’s (1960) composition “Blood on the Floor” is a nine-movement work for ‘3 jazz soloists and large ensemble’ and includes jazz improvisation, classically-based structures and a mix of traditional and non-traditional classical instruments.” (Styles, 2008, p. 53)

In my own compositions, I intend to present the ensembles within their idiom- writing music akin to what they would normally perform and with which they are familiar. I am not adding rhythm section instruments to these ensembles, as was the case in ‘Blood on the Floor’, but am retaining the instrumentation idiomatic to the chosen ensembles.

It is intended that this portfolio will fit between works like ‘Blood on the Floor’ ‘Molecular Cocktail Party’, and will utilise concepts espoused by the Third Stream
concept, along with the classical concerto format. My research builds on foundations laid by these works and ideas, and seeks to view them from a different perspective, where not only is there a joining of musical styles but also there is an attempt at addressing both ensemble and improvising soloist where they are best situated. In practicality, the new works will provide a set-score for the accompanying ensembles and opportunities for an improvising jazz soloist.

This represents a personal challenge. I am quite at home writing for a jazz quartet or quintet and I have written works for Brass Band, but I have never written for Brass Quintet or Saxophone ensemble. Through the rehearsal process mentioned earlier, I will expand my understanding of idiomatic writing for these instruments and ensembles. I believe this is a significant development for me as an artist, and my compositions will be a meaningful contribution to the field. I intend to use this compositional approach to write for other non-jazz ensembles such as wind orchestra, choir or orchestra and jazz/improvising soloists in the future.

Other benefits of this project include local community involvement through use of the WA Brass Band. Furthermore, the musicians involved in all groups will have works that can be used professionally and can also be performed by any soloist providing they have experience within the jazz and/or improvising tradition.
Literature Review

Creative works combining ensembles that only read notation within a western classical tradition with an improvising soloist have been important in the development of the area I am researching. Of the many works found in this area from 1950 to present day a pattern has emerged. It can be summed up in the following way:

1. To best support the improvising soloist, the ensemble includes the rhythm section.
2. The ensemble accompanies the soloist during the delivery of the melody and in small fragments during the improvisation.
3. Generally speaking, the non-jazz ensemble acts as an augmentation to the jazz rhythm section, which continues to actively accompany throughout the entire composition (melody and improvised sections).

One of the earliest occasions where written orchestration and improvisation were combined was the album ‘Charlie Parker with Strings’ (Verve, 1950). Bebop innovator and saxophonist Parker and arrangers Neal Hefti, Joe Lipman and Jimmy Carroll combined a small string section, oboe, harp and a jazz rhythm section with Parker as soloist. All of the songs chosen were standard works from the Jazz canon. Joe Goldberg writes in his liner notes,

> No matter how many times he went on to perform these arrangements, the strings played exactly the same thing – at least they’d better. So, Parker could not count on the unexpected phrase from a Dizzy Gillespie or a Miles Davis that would spur him to greater flights of improvisation. It would all have to come from him. The strings were a carpet for him to walk on. (Goldberg, 1994)

This work seemed to establish the pattern for the way the accompanying non-jazz ensembles would be employed by composers for years to come. The strings were, as Goldberg points out, written as ‘a carpet’. Much of the accompaniment by the strings is subordinate when contrasted to the way the jazz rhythm section accompanies Parker. Generally speaking, the strings play long tones and some short melodic fragments\(^4\), but there is no sense that they are written to ‘interact’ the same way the jazz rhythm section does on the recordings.

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\(^4\) Refer to to *Just Friends* and *April in Paris* for examples of this style of string writing.
This recording led to other jazz musicians using string arrangements such as ‘Clifford Brown with Strings’ (EmArcy, 1955), and Billie Holiday’s ‘Lady in Satin’ (Columbia Records, 1958). These albums incorporate improvisation and written ensemble accompaniments and feature a jazz rhythm section. Each album contains arrangements of existing songs but do not include any original works. The accompaniments themselves do not interact with the soloists in the same way as the rhythm section on the recording does. Ake, Garrett and Goldmark note the scathing reviews:

...the backing textures (the “with strings” part) of these releases have been routinely characterized by critics as extraneous, dispensable, irrelevant, or embarrassing facets of these recordings—not something worthy of the jazz canon or of serious critical consideration... (Ake, Garrett, & Goldmark, 2012, p. 143)

Later examples of strings augmenting a jazz rhythm section but retaining a more subordinate role include ‘Bill Evans Trio with Symphony Orchestra’ (Verve, 1966) and ‘Cityscape’ (Mosaic Contemporary, 1982), with saxophonist Michael Brecker (1949-2007) both with strings arrangements by Claus Ogermann (1930). Further examples include trumpeter Wynton Marsalis (1961) and the album ‘Hot House Flowers’ (Columbia Records, 1984) with string arrangements by Robert Freedman (b. 1934) and Pianist Hank Jones together with the Meridian String Quartet on the album of the same name (LRC, 1997) with string arrangements by Manny Albam (1922-2001). All of these follow the pattern set by the ‘Charlie Parker with Strings’ album. They all include the jazz rhythm section and in each case, the accompanying ensemble only plays a minor role during the improvised sections. This responsibility is left to the jazz rhythm section.

An album that breaks that mould and is much more aligned with this research is ‘Focus’ (Verve, 1961). Stan Getz (1927-1991) recorded the album featuring string arrangements by Eddie Sauter (1914-1981). Except for the track ‘I’m late, I’m Late on which Getz’s drummer at the time Roy Haynes plays as a soloist, the tracks do not feature the jazz rhythm section. Getz is given no thematic material to use but is left to freely improvise over the string section. In the original liner notes Sauter is quoted as saying:

I hated the idea of a rhythm section with strings and I also hated the sound of flat backgrounds with no meaning in themselves. ... What I wanted to do was
write like a string quartet with space to move things. … and I always left, in
the back of my mind, a space for another part to be added. (Cerulli, 1961)

Sauter’s view strongly aligns with the intentions of this creative project.

Whereas the albums previously reviewed treat the strings as an addition to the
rhythm section, Sauter wanted music that:

…had enough thematic strength to hold together almost in their own right.”
The opening track entitled ‘I’m late, I’m late’ is the best example of this ideal.
The strings set up a kind of call and response that sounds very jazz. This take
is actually a combination of the two takes recorded and it makes for a
“constantly changing version of the track…” (Cerulli, 1961)

The other element demonstrated by this track is the concept of setting and sustaining
a groove. If you took away the drum kit, the strings part alone would supply enough
musical material to sustain the groove.

This piece is a strong example of orchestrations that allow some freedom for the
improviser, giving them room to improvise, whilst writing music that is stimulating for
the jazz soloist. This album also includes call and response and setting and
sustaining a groove without the inclusion of the entire jazz rhythm section.

The second work most closely aligned with this research is Andy Scott’s ‘Molecular
Cocktail Party’ (2013). His work, as previously stated, includes a trombone/piano
soloist (Barber) with a Brass Band (Fodens Band). Scott has been artist in residence
with this ensemble since 2008 (Scott, 2015), and has purposely built into his work
some jazz features within the accompaniment.

One such example is the inclusion of rhythmic notation without any pitch. This
creates a feeling of chaos and open harmony. Scott also wrote a section in the music
where the timpanist uses the foot-pedal to glissando from one written pitch to another
whilst listening and reacting to the soloist (first movement Riffs & Changes bar 112).
The tempo at this point in the piece was free and dictated only by the timpanist and
soloist as there was no other instrument playing in this section.

Similar to this technique of changing notes out of time, the 1st E-Flat bass is directed
in the second movement Free & Written letter A, B and C to change notes, which is
copied by the 2nd E-flat bass as they move. This creates a kind of glissando effect
that would be difficult to notate but is delivered with conviction using this technique. Scott also allows the musicians to choose their own mutes in this movement at bar 42 (cornets and tenor horns), bar 49 (flugel horn), bar 52 (cornets and flugel). This means that the timbre can be different each time the piece is performed. Scott also gives the soloist ensemble cues (rhythmic or melodic), so that the soloist can interact with the ensemble (for example: *Riffs & Changes* bar 52 and 53, 58 and 59, 80 and 81, 84 and 85).

Alvin Curran (1938) is one of the few composers who writes for Brass Band that includes improvisation. The composition ‘*Oh Brass on the Grass Alas*’ (Curran, 2006) for 300 amateur brass-band musicians includes improvisation (although is devoid of a dedicated soloist) via ‘free’ improvisation, chance music and physical movement. Curran writes group improvisation, rather than focussing on a soloist and accompaniment (Curran, 2015). The result is music that is not idiomatic for Brass Band, but contains improvisation akin to the ‘free-jazz’ school.

After an extensive review of the available literature, the following two papers seem to be the closest in nature to this research topic.

(E)Merging Idioms: Integrating Jazz and Classical Ensembles by John Aué (Aué, 2010) is a Masters of Composition paper that analyses music in the jazz idiom for small jazz ensemble (the rhythm section) augmented with one or two small classical chamber ensembles. The smallest element of the rhythm section is the incorporation of drums and double bass in his piece ‘*Into the Wood*’ (2008). The largest rhythm section includes electric guitar, electric piano, electric bass and synth drums. Aué’s focus is in notating the score for the classical musicians in such a way that they can participate in the rhythmic groove set by the jazz rhythm section. Aué draws his influence from albums such as Stan Getz’s ‘*Focus*’ and ‘*Officium*’ by saxophonist Jan Garbarek and the Hilliard Ensemble (1993).

In contrast, the aim of this research is to set and sustain the groove without the use of a jazz rhythm section. Like Aué, musical notation will be written in a way that can be interpreted by reading musicians, but that includes stylistic traits representative of Jazz.

Charles Lwanga in his article ‘Bridging Ethnomusicology and Composition in the First Movement of Justinian Tamusuza’s String Quartet, *Mu Kkubo Ery’Omsaalaba*’
(Lwanga, 2013) analyses Tamusuzza’s music and finds elements that merge Western Classical elements with Gandan musical practices. This concept is similar to the goal of this research, combining elements of the rhythm section with Western Classical ensembles and their notation. Lwanga sites four main compositional procedures or codes of interaction that lead to the integration of the Western Classical with Gandan practices. These are;

…(1) the use of call-and-response patterns in the main theme and the secondary thematic materials, (2) fragmentation of these materials and their use in building repetitive imitative passages, (3) juxtaposition of the counter-melodic material either below the main theme or the secondary theme, and (4) the use of “pure rhythmic” passages whose neutralizing character denied any melodic implication but, in turn, directed our attention to the contributory nature of interaction within the collage texture. (Lwanga, 2013, p. 114)

The use of call and response and also the ‘pure rhythmic’ figures from Gandan music within a Western Classical format is the closest writing found in the literature search to this research. There are obvious differences, such as the inclusion of different jazz elements within different instrumental forces.

The following paragraphs outline other works less closely related but still relevant to the research discussed above. This will be done in the style of an annotated bibliography.

Bruno Nettl in his article ‘Thoughts on Improvisation: A Comparative Approach’ (Nettl, 1974) treats improvisation and composition as a continuum rather than polar opposites. Nettl’s continuum is built on the density of form, with the small musical ornamentation or cadenzas of the baroque musician at one end, and the open form and more improvised music of an Indian “Alap” at the other. It informs this research in as much as it philosophically supports the notion that composition and improvisation can co-exist if treated in the right way. Conceptually, thinking of these two ideas as a continuum supports the ideal of bringing together musicians that read and soloists that improvise.

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5 The musical structure for all the genres of [Indian] classical music are remarkably similar. The performance of a musical piece often begins with an unmetered introduction known as the alap (or alapam in Carnatic). This is an important element in the musical form—it is pure improvisation over the raga in which the piece is written; there is no composed material in the alap. (College, 2013)
Thom Lipiczky agrees with Nettl and builds on his findings in his article ‘Tihai Formulas and the Fusion of ‘Composition‘ and ‘Improvisation‘ in North Indian Music’ (Lipiczky, 1985). Lipiczky suggests that the concept of improvisation is unnecessary. Instead he views all music in terms of what he terms ‘macro-units’. Examples of macro-units according to Lipiczky are songs or pieces, modes, *ragas*, *maqamat* or *dastgahs*. It is the conception, culture and the question of how much freedom the musician(s) give themselves, which changes these basic building blocks or how these building blocks are used.

Lipiczky sums this up by stating “…this approach is novel only insofar as it allows us to think of all musics as having basic musical entities which exist and are performed, rather than dividing music into ‘fixed’ and ‘improvised’ types.” (Lipiczky, 1985, p. 171)

This article strengthens Nettl’s assertions and shows that in combining improvisation and composition one is (from Lipiczky’s point of view) manipulating the macro-units of music making.

For this portfolio one musician (the jazz soloist) has a certain concept and cultural outlook on the way those units will be expressed. The reading ensemble also has theirs; the works created simply bring them together.

Derek Bailey supports the notion that discussing and defining improvisation is “…a misrepresentation, for there is something central to the spirit of voluntary improvisation which is opposed to the aims and contradicts the idea of documentation.” Like Nettl and Lipiczky, Bailey supports the notion that there is no difference between composition and improvisation, stating “…musical creativity (all creativity?) is indivisible; it doesn’t matter what you call it, it doesn’t matter how you do it. The creation of music transcends method and, essentially, the composition/improvisation dichotomy doesn’t exist.” (Bailey, 1993, p. 140). As a composer/performer I feel this represents my own view of the composition/improvisation dichotomy.

Lukas Foss in his article ‘Improvisation versus Composition’ (Foss, 1962) discusses the music he writes for his improvisation chamber ensemble where he likes to place composition side by side with improvisation, but doesn’t mix them together. Foss unlike Stockhausen feels that “…chance, in my opinion, becomes musically interesting only when it rubs against the will, when musical selectivity enters into the picture correcting the chance formations.” (Foss, 1962, p. 2)
Foss gives his players a blueprint of ideas so that ‘musical selectivity’, and not chance, play a part in their group improvisation. Much like the dialogue discussed earlier, Foss says “…the player listens critically to his fellow players and to himself. His task is to find the correct note, phrasing, dynamics and register on his instrument at a moment's notice.” (Foss, 1962, p. 3) Through recording and listening the ensemble chooses those things they like and do not like, thereby filtering chance through the musicians' will. Works in this nature that combine: - albeit side by side -, composition and improvisation are pivotal in breaking down the divide between them, and therefore allowing successive and progressive musicians to attempt these types of research.

Ivan Arteaga in his article 'Improvisation Generated Composition' (Arteaga, 2013) builds on the work of Foss by using free improvisation as the means for generating composition. Arteaga does not impose any limits on the improvisation and he also does not offer any pre-composed elements for his musicians. He uses a through-composed form and allows the musicians to compose in the moment. Research such as this questions the notion of what is composition and what is improvisation. This research is different to Arteaga’s in that written accompaniment is used and the soloists are given chords and ensemble cues. Both the accompanist and soloist are not using free improvisation. The only element that is close to free improvisation is where the accompanying ensemble is given rhythms and may choose any pitch to play to that rhythm. The soloists are given freedom during their respective cadenza’s to freely play what they wish outside normal tempo and harmonic constraints.

In summary, this project’s focus on combining jazz elements within idiomatic writing for non-jazz ensembles, without the addition of the jazz rhythm section but including a jazz soloist, has very little precedence both in musical works and written articles on the topic. Nettl and Lipiczky discuss improvisation as a continuum and also as units of freedom and structure, but not in how best a non-jazz ensemble might accompany a jazz soloist. John Aué comes closer in writing for non-jazz ensembles and in trying to notate jazz elements for Western Classical instrumentalist, but he retains the rhythm section in order to support the groove and feel of the music. Lwanga comes closest by discussing African musical elements found in Tamusuza’s music. The biggest difference is that Tamusuza’s music was for an ensemble alone and not accompanying a jazz soloist. This project also uses different elements to Tamusuza. In short, it is believed this project may conceptually be a significant addition to the academic field, given it has very little precedence in literature or in musical works.
Research questions

This project therefore examines the following core research questions,

1. What techniques can the composer employ when writing accompaniments for non-jazz ensembles and an improvising soloist, and how can these accompaniments include jazz elements yet also be idiomatic?

2. How will these jazz elements work in practice in a balanced way that will engage or enhance and supports the soloist’s improvised solo’s?

Discussion of Central Research questions

Regarding question one, I feel the rehearsal process was an excellent benchmark as to whether the compositions were easily assimilated by each ensemble and therefore idiomatic in nature. The rehearsal process was brief and the music was well performed which suggests an inherent idiomatic nature to the music. One of the main ways I dealt with the balance between jazz elements and idiomatic writing was to ensure I used many different grooves (these are analysed later) from many styles of jazz for each ensemble and I only used swing sparingly. ‘Swing’ is difficult to teach and I therefore made it only a small portion of the grooves. I believe this helped the assimilation of the grooves by the accompanying groups.

The second question is answered through the analysis of the works. The analysis states where the jazz elements (call and response, interjection, setting and sustaining the groove) have been used in the works, and also the percentage of the work within which they occupy. This will then be compared with my initial prediction. The jazz rhythm section grooves that were transferred will then be examined. This groove analysis will discuss instrument combinations and how these combinations take on the role of groove creation. The points where call and responses and interjections were written in will be located, along with an examination of where the soloist uses these to ‘interact’ with the rhythmic or melodic material at those points.

The jazz elements of call and response and interjection can seem very similar. For the purposes of this research, it is the intent behind how and where these elements are written that defines whether they are one or the other. I have identified where I have used these in the chapter ‘Use of the jazz elements in the compositions’.
Methodology

This research project is practice-led, and has drawn inspiration from H Smith and R T Dean’s book ‘Practice-led research, research-led practice in the creative arts’ (Smith & Dean, 2009) and ‘A manifesto for performative research’ (Haseman, 2006). Haseman gives some useful examples of research strategies taken from the qualitative research tradition:

“For example practice-led researchers have used interviews, reflective dialogue techniques, journals, observation methods, practice trails, personal experience, and expert and peer review methods to complement and enrich their work-based practices.” (Haseman, 2006, p. 9) Andrea Meagher in her article ‘The Symbiosis of Improvised and Rehearsed Elements in the Creation of Contemporary Jazz Ensemble Music’ (Meagher, 2010) and John Aué (Aué, 2010) both used journaling and audio recording for rehearsals and performances. They then analysed their composition for the elements they were researching.

A model of ‘action research’ as cited in Action Research Principles and Practice by McNiff & Whitehead (1988) will be utilised to structure the reflective journal. The action research reflective journal uses the Plan-Act-Observe-Reflect model as indicated in Figure 1 (Original simplified action research cycle, as cited in McNiff & Whitehead, 1988, p. 22).
The combination of Meagher and Aué together with the Plan-Act-Observe-Reflect model will help ground the approach in this creative project. I believe this model helps give intuitive words to what is a process I have used as a performer and composer. I am constantly planning compositions or practice sessions of performances. I then carry out the writing or performing process. Throughout this process I am constantly taking in the many stimuli (auditory, visual) given to me in the performance of the composition or whilst performing. I then reflect on the outcome of the performance and see what might need to be changed and what might have gone well and then the cycle continues as I plan to act out any changes I might make to my performance or the composed material from observations.

**Analysis and Development**

The process was documented and each aspect composition, rehearsal and performance was reflected upon as in the Haseman model.

To document the compositional process, the difficulties encountered and solutions found I used a journal (Haseman). Some of the compositional hurdles I had expected included:

1. Groove creation without rhythm section
2. Orchestration balance (soloist to ensemble)
3. Balancing musicality with the inclusion of the jazz elements
4. Balancing idiomatic writing with the jazz elements
5. Balancing engaging writing for both band and soloist

The rehearsal Process

The first group to rehearse and record was the Brass Quintet with ‘The Journey’. This occurred on the 21st and 28th of November, 2017. The second group to rehearse was the Brass Band with both Joshua Davis and the composer as soloists for ‘Standing Ground’ for a recording on the 7th of December 2017 but that recording didn’t turn out as well as hoped so it was rerecorded again on the 29th March 2018. The final group to rehearse was the Saxophone Octet with Dr Matthew Styles. I led two rehearsals with this group, December 4th and 5th and the group was recorded on the 7th of December 2017. All of this falls under the banner of Planning and Acting within my methodology model.

The Plan, Act, Observe, Reflect model was employed to ground the analysis in a methodology that is highly effective for this type of exegesis. The rehearsal process was recorded, and I reflected on the problems as the pieces were rehearsed with the ensemble and the soloist. Notes were made so that any changes to notation, balance or directions that needed clarity could be actioned on the next rehearsal. This is from the observe, reflect part of the model.

Finally, compositions were analysed (which falls under the banner of Observe and Reflect) to see how the three elements from the jazz rhythm section were used in practise. In theory, (to recap) the aim was to use the elements in the following way:

- 40-50% of the piece includes grooves/ostinatos
- 10% call and response
- 5% interjection.
- The rest of the roughly 35% was intended to be made up of idiomatic writing for the ensemble i.e. tutti passages where the soloist rests and the ensemble drives the musical narrative.

The analysis of the compositions was completed in the following way using the methodology model.
Plan – As I am composing I am explicitly writing the three elements into the accompaniment notation.

Act - Then I will count the bars that include these elements and then make them a percentage out of the total number of bars in the piece.

Observe – I will then see what percentages each element is given in terms of bars in the piece and as a percentage and then make an observation on what that might mean.

Reflect - I reflect on the outcome and make a judgement or comment on the findings of that outcome, thus seeing the cycle through as I analyse the three jazz elements.

The process of critical reflection (which falls under the banner of Observe and Reflect) will also be used to identify examples of:

- Grooves that were possible with the exclusion of the jazz rhythm section written for ensembles of this kind.
- Examples where the predicted call and response or a passage of interjection seemed to work with the soloist’s improvisation i.e. the soloist seemed to interact rhythmically or melodically with the written material.

I will also draw conclusions on how this project has made an impact on my writing for and understanding of instrumentation and what rehearsal techniques I have learnt. I will also draw conclusions on what impact this might have on the musicians involved and the wider musical community and what might be gained from other projects such as this.

A well as the above methods I have also spent countless hours listening to works as listed in the literature review and the discography as well as spending time in consultation with the Brass Band conductors prior to any rehearsals with the band. This also falls under the Plan, Act, Observe and Reflect headings in the methodology model.

Limitations

The artistic intent of this project is to create works that sound interactive even though they are pre-composed. However, it is entirely possible that a listener may not experience the interactive elements sounding in a way that appears interactive. This is considered limiting, although somewhat inevitable. Ultimately this may be inconsequential, given the research aim to ‘cause’ interaction, and further to create
new works (with an improvising soloist) that haven’t been conceived for these types of ensembles.

To expand further, music is very subjective. The core elements have been intentionally included, but may not translate into audience, ensemble player or soloist hearing much of a difference between this work and other works of this kind. Other limitations may include:

1) The ensembles may not effectively play the grooves as I have imagined them.

2) There may be a lack of rehearsal time given the busyness of schedules and ensemble availability.

3) In the case of the Brass Band, the conductor may not fully understand how to impart the jazz elements to the ensemble.
The Musical Elements of the Compositional project

Accompaniment versus ‘Comping’.
In this project, coexisting side by side are accompanying ensembles and the improvising soloist. To clearly define what type of accompaniment I am writing, I have included this section to outline the main differences between Accompaniment in the Western Classical sense and ‘Comping’ in the jazz sense and why the distinction is important to understanding this project.

Accompaniment according to the New Grove Dictionary of Music is defined as, “…the subordinate parts of any musical texture made up of strands of differing importance”. (Sadie & Tyrrell, 2001, p. 55) The definition includes examples such as clapping hands to a song, a church organist keeping the congregation in tempo and tune and the left hand accompanying the right hand on the piano. This definition refers to notated accompaniment in the Western Classical sense. In contrast, the word for accompanying in jazz is ‘comping’. Mark Gridley in his book ‘Jazz Styles’ gives a very clear definition of this term.

Comping is an improvised activity intended to enhance the solo line. Sometimes it inspires the soloist, suggesting chords and rhythms for his improvisation. Comping also involves responding instantaneously to changes in direction taken by the soloist. When the direction of a soloist’s improvisation suggests a particular sequence of chords, the pianist must follow suit, even if that progression is not standard for the piece and was not discussed beforehand. (…) The members of the rhythm section are providing an accompaniment for the ever-changing melodic and rhythmic directions of the soloist’s improvisation. (Gridley, 2011, p. 25)

Monson also tackles this concept well:

In jazz improvisation, as we have seen, all of the musicians are constantly making decisions regarding what to play and when to play it, all within the framework of a musical groove, which may or may not be organized around a chorus structure. The musicians are compositional participants who may "say" unexpected things or elicit responses from other musicians. Musical intensification is open-ended rather than predetermined and highly interpersonal in character—structurally far more similar to a conversation than to a text.
(Monson, 2009, p. 71)

In order to understand how the mechanics of the jazz rhythm section are generated, the role of this accompaniment style is discussed in more detail below.
The role of the Rhythm Section

The core of the accompanying ensemble in jazz is the rhythm section, usually made up of bass and drums but also piano and / or guitar. The role of the rhythm section is vital to jazz music as it supplies the accompaniment that supports a jazz soloist, which, as stated previously, helps make a distinction between Western Classical accompaniment and jazz comping or accompaniment. Jazz improvisation from around 1935 to the present has had at its heart, the rhythm section (Owens, 1995, pp. 138,167). The rhythm section ‘comps’ by picking up on melodic and rhythmic ideas that the soloist is offering in a sort of musical dialogue. The rhythm section, in turn, also offers new rhythmic, melodic or harmonic ideas (interjection).

The soloist, or the accompanying rhythm section, can initiate changes within this dialogue. One helpful example is the scenario of double time. The soloist may imply to the rhythm section that they wish to play in double time by performing a double time passage - moving from quaver subdivisions to semi quaver subdivisions. The rhythm section will hear this rhythmic idea and will often follow the soloists’ idea by moving the underlying beat to a double time ‘feel’. Alternatively, the rhythm section may feel that in order to ‘lift’ the solo they need to initiate the double time feel. In this scenario, the soloist is still playing in ‘regular’ time, but hears the rhythm section players shift the underlying rhythmic feel. The soloist then will often play double time passages ‘in agreement’ with this change in groove. These kinds of reactions and interactions are intended to spur the soloist on to greater intensity and to offer up new stimuli, allowing further invention and development in the improvised solo. As Monson puts it, “…there is a great deal of give and take in such improvisational interaction, and such moments are often cited by musicians as aesthetic high points of performances”. (Monson, 2009, p. 70)

On most occasions a rhythm section will be presented with chord symbols (i.e. C7), with no indicated rhythms or ways to interpret these chords. It is up to each performer in the rhythm section to understand and interpret what is required in playing that chord in the musical style and context. In other words, they will be listening to what the soloist is doing, and noticing what the other members of the rhythm section are doing in order to successfully join the musical conversation.

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6 “If a group so desires, they might also incorporate a double time feel into any performance, in which the tempo seems to speed to twice as fast as it was previously”. (Meeder, 2012, p. 33) A great example of double time can be found on the album ‘Mingus Ah Hum’ and the composition Fables of Faubus (Columbia, 1959).
In conclusion, each accompanying rhythm section player has a dual role:

1. To sustain the groove of the music, whether swung or straight
2. To interact with the soloist through elements such as call and response and interjection.
3. All of this is done in order to not only accompany but also compliment the soloist making them (the soloist) the focus of their efforts.
**Discussing the three ensembles: Brass Band, Brass Quintet and Saxophone Ensemble.**

I will now briefly discuss the three ensembles I wrote for to contextualise my compositional response and ensure that the reader is clear on the typical mechanics and instrumentation of each.

Within this composition project three ensembles types have been chosen to write for: Brass Band, Brass Quintet and Saxophone Ensemble. Through rehearsal and performance, the aim is to access the musicians’ inherent knowledge of their stylistic idiom. Much will be gained from exploring this with established groups and receiving feedback after the first rehearsal on the quality and playability of the compositions and arranging techniques. This feedback will be informal in nature but will aid in identifying any areas that need modification to ensure the music is idiomatic prior to the next rehearsal.

There are also interesting differences between ensemble types to exploit. Brass instruments, for example, are capable of using different mutes and articulation effects, whilst Saxophones have their own set of unique articulation and tonal effects at their disposal.

The different sized ensembles will provide a contrasting number of possibilities both harmonically and texturally. The twenty-five voices in the Brass Band can be dense or open sounding and will have a greater harmonic palette due to the amount of available voices. The eight voices within the Saxophone ensemble, and five voices within the Brass Quintet will serve to balance this larger compositional density and harmonic palette within the larger portfolio. The smaller ensembles will therefore require thoughtful orchestration to achieve the same kinds of complex harmonic ideas available more readily in a larger ensemble (Brass Band).

The instrumentation, and considerations of timbre and range for each of these three groups are discussed in more detail below.
**Brass Band**
The British style Brass Band\(^7\) normally consists of about 25 players comprising of eight cornets, three tenor horns, one flugel horn, two baritones, two euphoniums, three trombones, four tubas (called Basses) and three to four percussionists. There are a number of differences between the Brass Band and Brass Quintet. The role and quality of each instrument will be further explained in score order. The first difference is that in the Brass Band, cornets are used instead of trumpets. Cornets are mellow in sound than trumpets, which are normally found within the orchestra and Brass Quintet. The flugel horn is a close relation to the trumpet, but has a larger ‘bell flare’, than a trumpet and is overall a much mellower instrument than either the cornet or trumpet. Tenor horns are mellower in timbre than a French horn in the orchestra. They have an upward facing bell whereas the French horn bell directs the sound to the side. Baritones are larger in size than the tenor horn, and have an upward facing bell and play in a range very similar to trombone. They are mellower in tone than the trombone. The trombones are exactly the same as ones found in Orchestras and Brass Quintets. The euphonium - also known as the tenor tuba, as it looks very similar to a small tuba - is treated much like the cello is in an orchestra, and is a featured solo instrument in many pieces. The basses or tubas are made up of one in E flat and one in B flat. The E-flat bass is smaller in size. Finally, the percussion section is typically the same in make up as an orchestral percussion section.

**Brass Quintet**
There are a number of differences between the Brass Band and Brass Quintet\(^8\) as stated earlier. But to recap, the first difference is that in the Brass Band, cornets are used instead of trumpets. French horn is used instead of tenor horn. Most Brass Quintets are made up of two trumpets, one french horn, one trombone (sometimes euphonium) and one tuba. Sometimes, the bass trombone replaces the tuba, as is the case in the Australian Brass Quintet.\(^9\) The main difference between the Brass Band and Brass Quintet therefore is tone colour (Trumpets instead of cornets, French horn instead of tenor horn), number of performers and therefore

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\(^7\) For further reading on this ensemble see Trevor Herbert’s book ‘The British Brass Band: A Musical and Social History’ (Herbert, 2000)

\(^8\) For further reading on this ensemble see ‘Brass Instruments: Their History and Development’ by Anthony Baines (Baines, 1993) and ‘Intimate Music: A History of the Idea of Chamber Music’ by John H. Baron (Baron, 1998)

density, and the exclusion of percussion in the Brass Quintet. For my composition for
Brass Quintet I decided to use 2 trumpets, 1 French horn, 1 euphonium and 1 Tuba.

**Saxophone Ensemble**

The Saxophone quartet\(^{10}\) includes the soprano Saxophone, alto Saxophone tenor
Saxophone and baritone Saxophone. In this work, a double quartet will be used,
which includes two of each instrument.

**Timbre and range**

This is a short discussion on the differences between the Saxophone octet and the
Brass Band. I am using these two as juxtaposition and also to show the limitations
and possibilities between these two distinctly different groups.

The Saxophone ensemble is very different in tone colour to the brass groups.
Saxophones also have a more flexible apparatus and a larger range than the brass
instruments.

Cottrell speaks of Saxophones in this way:

> The instrument’s range of a little more than two-and-a-half octaves is not especially large when compared to others such as the clarinet or the violin, although skilled players can extend the upper limit … by the use of special fingerings, together with consequent changes in embouchure tension and position. These force higher harmonics out of the overtone series, allowing the range of each instrument to be extended by a fifth or so in the case of the soprano, to more than an octave in the case of the baritone. “…its versatility and timbral flexibility have made it adaptable for a range of musical uses.”

(Cottrell, 2012, pp. 24, 287)

On writing about Brass Bands and brass instruments, Ray Steadman-Allen, one of
the leading composers in the idiom, states:

> The most serious limitation [in the Brass Band] is not colour but pitch range, especially upward, having a compass of something less than five octaves. Effects made possible by instrumental characteristics, dynamic variants (volume, modes of attack), mutings and register-intensities all yield variety-potential even in the case of a single brass instrument. (Steadman-Allen & Army, 1980, p. 5)

\(^{10}\) For further reading see Jay Eastons book ‘Writing for saxophones: A guide to the tonal palette of the saxophone family for composers, arrangers and performers’ (Easton & Washington, 2006)
The following figures 2 and 3 outline the ranges for Brass Band and Saxophones showing these differences. For the Brass Band, I am showing a composite range figure as a definitive range for these instruments is up for discussion. The outer most ranges can be stretched when a virtuoso brass player is involved but figure 2 shows the most commonly used ranges.

Figure 2 – Brass Band ranges compiled from Shaun Humphries “Writing for Brass Band – Starting Out” (Humphries, 2014), “Writing for Brass Band” Nigel Horne (Horne, 2018) and Ray Steadman Alan “Colour and Texture in the Brass Band score” (Steadman-Allen & Army, 1980, p. 8 and 9).
Figure 3 – Saxophone ranges taken from Jay Easton “Writing for Saxophones”. (Easton & Washington, 2006)

While the Brass Band includes percussion, drum kit will not be used, as it will be too easy to fall back into creating known ‘grooves’ that utilise the drum kit. However, this will allow for experimentation with alternate rhythmic elements and a vast array of tone colours. These range from concert bass drum to glockenspiel, tam-tam (a type of gong), snare drum and many other tuned and un-tuned instruments. These are not available to be explored in normal iterations of the Saxophone ensemble or Brass Quintet.

It can be said then, that, when writing for the brass groups and the Saxophone group, in an idiomatic way, one must understand the range and tone constraints, and also the possibilities inherent within each ensemble and work within and capture these.

To summarise. In this research thus far, I have identified a gap in the currently available literature, for ensembles that only read notation and that include an improvising soloist. The pattern since the 1950’s has been that the added ensemble (such as the case of the ‘with strings’ albums) on the whole form a more subordinate
role, and the jazz rhythm section fulfilled the majority of the interactive accompaniment for the improvising soloist. Artists such as Sauter and Scott utilised the accompanying ensembles in a way that make them both the groove creators and gave them interactive elements even though these are pre-composed and notated.

My plan is to build on the work of composers like Sauter and Scott and intentionally write into the accompanying ensemble three jazz elements; setting and sustaining the groove, call and response and interjection without the addition of a jazz rhythm section. I will also use a program or story to focus the compositional narrative and will also write for different ensembles to Sauter and Scott.

I will now set out to describe the creative works and the main ideas and musical processes I have used.
Composition Portfolio

The use of narratives to drive compositional creativity.

Inspiration has often been gained from music written to a narrative. Compositions written in this way are known as ‘programme music’. Examples of these composers are Edvard Grieg and his ‘Peer Gynt Suite’ (Grieg, Maksymiuk, & Studt, 1997) and Debussy’s ‘La Mer’ (Cox, 1974)\(^\text{11}\). Frederick Niecks in his book ‘Programme Music in the Last Four Centuries’ states:

> It is a mistake…to say that programme music is music with an explicit verbal programme prefixed to it. …In fact you may have programme music without even as much as a title. If the composer had a programme in mind while composing, the composition is programme music, whether he reveals his programme or not…Three main divisions are easily distinguishable-the predominatingly descriptive, the predominatingly emotional and the predominatingly symbolical. (Niecks, 1907, p. 3)

In my use of narratives, I am drawing on at least two divisions as listed by Niecks. The music I have written does seek to describe the story or poem and it also desires to express the emotions of characters and scenes within these stories. In order to focus my musical creativity, I used stories, poems, people and events. Therefore, the first place I started before composing was in finding these stories or poems that would help the creative process. This section outlines those narratives and how they were used to drive my musical creativity. The hope is that listeners can use this narrative outline as a guide as they listen to the work and read the score.

For the Brass Band composition ‘Standing Ground’ the news story of the battle between New Hope Coal Company and resident of rural town Acland, Glenn Buetel, was chosen. Buetel stood up to the coal company and saved his childhood town.\(^\text{12}\) The following table outlines the narrative and gives corresponding bar numbers so the listener can see where that part of the story is represented in the music.

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\(^{11}\) Further examples of programme music include, Hector Berlioz ‘Symphony Fantastique’, Richard Wagner ‘The Flying Dutchman’, ‘Tannhäuser’ and the prelude to ‘Lohengrin’. Franz Liszt ‘Twelve Symphonic Poems’ the ‘Two Symphonies (Goethe’s Faust and Dante’s Davina Commedia)’. (Niecks, 1907, pp. 262,295,336)

Table 1 - The narrative breakdown for ‘Standing Ground’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement One</th>
<th>Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bars 1-56</strong></td>
<td>This represents Mr Buetel as a young man growing up in Acland and how a small town can be a wonderful place for a young person. Different voices enter over the course of these 56 bars representing the growth in the town, new people arriving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bars 58-95</strong></td>
<td>The small town is now a thriving place. The triplet figure symbolises the coming of age of both the town and Mr Buetel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bars 96-111</strong></td>
<td>This transition leads us to the <em>Hymn for all</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bars 112-186</strong></td>
<td>This includes the Hymn <em>Jobs for all</em>. This is where the New Hope Coal company promises jobs for all in the town of Acland. A feeling of security and prosperity enters. The Brass Band takes over the piano soloist in a forward moving and very uplifting choral.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bars 186-End</strong></td>
<td>There is a realisation that the coal company is not going to provide jobs for all and that there is actually a plan for the coal mine to spread and wipe out the town.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement Two</th>
<th>Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bars 1-35</strong></td>
<td>Mr Buetel is watching his town die as people leave under threat of the coalmine wiping out the town. More and more people sell their properties to New hope coal and leave. The future he (Mr Buetel) had planned for himself has been changed dramatically and he is powerless to do anything.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bars 36-65</strong></td>
<td>Stage 3 development is announced and this will engulf the town of Acland and see Mr Buetel and other farmers in the area evicted. The Brass Band builds to a climax in bar 65.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bars 65-79</strong></td>
<td>The E flat bass cadenza represents the feelings of those that have already left the town. Sadness prevails here. The euphonium cadenza uses material from Movement One when things were more positive but this time in a minor mode. The trombone soloist answers in solidarity of good times seemingly lost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bar 79-End</strong></td>
<td>The music now portraits a feeling that all is lost. The music is stark and melancholy in feeling. Mr Buetel is now the last resident of his beloved town. Stage 3 expansion seems inevitable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Brass Band is featured representing the relentless corporate machine as New Hope coal seeks to take the land of Mr Buetel and farmers in the region. Mr Buetels’ wish to simply remain in his hometown is slipping away against a tsunami of money and power.

The town is once more full of people as many return for the annual Anzac day service at Acland. The familiar hymn *O God our help in ages past* is heard as a focal point for the community.

Stage 3 expansion is thrown out by the court and Mr Buetel has single headedly saved his town by standing his ground. The uplifting choral from the first movement is heard as the future seems a little more secure for Mr Buetel and the other farmers in the area of Acland. A final uplifting chord and cadenza finishes the piece on a powerfully positive note.

For the Saxophone octet – ‘Matt versus the Zombies’ - I used humorous elements for part of the narrative. The short periods of humour in this work balances the more serious nature of the other two works written for this research project. Inspiration came from the group, *Minozil Brass* (Brass, 2018), who include significant amounts of humour into their performances. The topic of zombies was chosen, borrowing inspiration from the show ‘The Walking Dead’ (Kirkman, 2011). I was taken by the idea of my colleague, Dr Styles using his Saxophone as a weapon to defeat the zombies (the humorous aspect). Apart from the Saxophone as a weapon the rest of the narrative and the music depicted is some of the darkest music I have written in sound and mood. I also believe the second movement bars 16-39 to be one of the most moving performances of this project. This shows that although there are humorous aspects to this piece it is not light or humorous in nature throughout.

### Table 2 - The narrative breakdown for ‘Matt versus the Zombies’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement One</th>
<th>Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bars 1-10</strong></td>
<td>Dr Styles wakes up and realises that there are zombies surrounding his office at the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bars 11-14</strong></td>
<td>He makes a noise and the zombies hear him. The end of bar 14 is</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
like a call to action for the soloist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bars</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>This momentary transition leads us to the first fight that the soloist is required to take part in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-46</td>
<td>The soloist has to build up the courage to face the zombies. The tension is built to its height as the tenor is taken into its uppermost limits against the weight of the whole ensemble.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47-End</td>
<td>The soloist has his first fight with soprano one. The exchanges begin with the soprano answering in quavers, then semi-quavers, semi-quaver triplets and then phrases that blur across beats. The second last phrase is very complex, utilising chromatics and fourth intervals. The last phrase is four bars long to symbolise the last try by our zombie to kill the soloist. The last musical sound is the soloist as he betters the zombie adversary.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Movement Two**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bars</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-13</td>
<td>The soloist has found a place to rest after his first fight. Ambulances and cars crashing can be heard in the background.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>The zombies make a sound all at once as if another person has been spotted. Silence for a moment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-39</td>
<td>The realisation begins to sink in that life will never be the same. Are any of his friends and family alive? The melody represents the rising anxiety and the feeling of great loss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-47</td>
<td>The soloist plucks up the courage to survive and begins to psych himself up for the eventual fight he must face.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48-55</td>
<td>The sound of the zombies begins to overpower him once again as the gravity of the situation unnerves him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-end</td>
<td>He knows that he must face and defeat the zombies if he is to survive but he is very afraid.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Movement Three**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bars</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-13</td>
<td>This movement begins with the phrase heard at the end of the second movement but this time in 5/4. Hesitant at first the soloist uses this phrase as a cue to begin the piece at bar 6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-25</td>
<td>Our reluctant hero must pluck up the courage needed to face not just one but many zombies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-42</td>
<td>The zombies are spotted and are heading towards the soloist. A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
macabre waltz represents the shuffling walk of the zombies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bars 43-58</th>
<th>The first fight happens between the second alto and the soloist. Each player trades four bars in a musical battle.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bars 59-66</td>
<td>Alto one has a quick fight with the soloist over a moving harmonic landscape of suspended harmonies moving in minor thirds and augmented fourths. The two tenors take over the fight on beat four of bar sixty-six.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars 67-82</td>
<td>The two tenors trade four bars back and forth with the soloist much like the alto fights before them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars 83-85</td>
<td>This transition leads us to the final showdown between our soloist and the zombies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars 86-101</td>
<td>The soloist now faces each zombie one after another in fast paced one bar trades. The one bar trades start with the two tenors and then back to the uppermost sound (soprano one) and then down to the second alto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars 102-End</td>
<td>The soloist has four bars to build up to his final move. The cadenza in bar 105 beat 4 finishes on top G, which he plays at each player in a final blow to kill each zombie. The zombies all fall down finally dead (bar 106) and a final stomp of victory for the soloist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk off music</td>
<td>This piece has many twists to it, with some movement from the soloist and some humour, as well as moments of sadness and empathy for the soloist. It was seen as fitting to finish with some playing off music. On the live recording the audience response to the humour and pathos of this piece can be seen in the applause and cheers as well as the musicianship on display.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘The Journey’ - the Brass Quintet piece within the portfolio - takes narrative inspiration from a poem by Lawson Fusao Inada of the same name (Young, 2006). I divided the poem into three sections corresponding to the three movements selected for each work.
Table 3 - ‘The Journey’ narrative breakdown. Words in quotations are taken directly from the poem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement One</th>
<th>Narrative drawn from the words of the poem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bars 1-9</td>
<td>“Miles was waiting in the dock,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>his trumpet in a paper bag.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lady was cold –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wind lashed the gardenias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I stole for her hair”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars 10-36</td>
<td>“We were shabby, the three of us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No-one was coming so I started to row.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It was hard going-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stagnant, meandering…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars 36-end</td>
<td>“The city moaned and smouldered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tin cans on banks like shackles”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement Two</th>
<th>Narrative drawn from the poem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bars 1-11</td>
<td>“To be discovered, in the open…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar 12-24</td>
<td>“But Miles took out his horn and played.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lady sang.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(Miles is represented by the trombone soloist. Lady is represented by the French horn solo last beat of bar 21 to bar 24)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars 25-27</td>
<td><em>Short transition into a key change.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar 28-39</td>
<td>“A slow traditional blues”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar 40-51</td>
<td>“The current caught us-horn, voice, oar stroking water…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar 52-end</td>
<td>“I don’t know how long we floated-our craft so full of music,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the night so full of stars”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement Three</th>
<th>Narrative drawn from the poem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bars 1-7</td>
<td>“When I awoke we were entering an ocean,”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars 8-33</td>
<td>“sun low on the water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>warm as a throat,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gold as a trumpet”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars 34-46</td>
<td>“We wept”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars 47-end</td>
<td>“Then soared in a spiritual. Never have I been so happy”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The tables above serve to demonstrate how intrinsic and embedded these narratives are in the compositions and how much they helped me in my creative output.

**Writing the compositions**

In writing the compositions I used a combination of manuscript and then transferred the parts to Sibelius (computer scoring software). I found it easiest to write at the piano (my main instrument) and write straight to the manuscript.

I had already decided to use a three-movement outline for each piece in line with the idea of the Classical Concerto. Then the narratives allowed me to drive and focus my creativity. On the whole each piece was written in a through-composed format but I did re-use material from an earlier movement in ‘Standing Ground’ to support the narrative. The slow ¾ theme written in Movement One of ‘Standing Ground’ found in bar 160-180 was re-used and transposed in Movement Three bars 62-78. This follows closely to the narrative of the piece. The ¾ theme depicts Mr Buetels’ younger days in Acland, which were positive and fulfilling. The theme returns in Movement Three because the town is saved from the coal mine and a sense of a future returns for Mr Buetel and his beloved town.

The first composition undertaken was ‘Standing Ground’, the Brass Band work, as I felt this would be the biggest task. It was composed on a composing retreat in Albany¹³ over the course of 4 days. The story was strongly emotive, and I was deeply moved by this story, this lead to the music flowing seamlessly and in quite a rapid time frame. I didn’t find this time frame unusual, as in my experience if I feel creative, and I have space to write for long stretches (as in a retreat), then the music often flows without interruption.

The next piece written was ‘The Journey’ for Brass Quintet. Again, a strong connection was felt to the poem with its wonderful word painting and imagery, aiding the compositional process. I had read this poem a year or so earlier and had loved it from the moment I read it. Even upon that first reading I could see images and fragments of music or ideas that would suit this poem. So, when I chose to use this for my Masters project I already had some ideas that I could use to write this work.

¹³ Albany is on the southwest tip of Western Australia and its where I grew up.
Elements such as using a well-known Miles Davis groove to represent him in the music, how the row boat might sound in *Movement One*, the “spiritual” and lines like “our craft so full of music, the night so full of stars”, help me greatly in creating music. Familiarity with brass instruments, as with ‘Standing Ground’, helped to see this composition completed in about three weeks.

The last piece written and the one that took the longest was ‘Matt versus the Zombies’. This is due in part to having to learn how to write for Saxophones, a task not previously attempted by the author. The final movement, where the vision was for almost every player to perform in a call and response with the soloist, was difficult to write because I had to come up with all of the calling phrases played by the ensemble and this took some time. However, the final result achieved the aesthetic aimed for, in both the combination of grooves and the call and response nature of much of the composition.
The Rehearsal Process

In this projects proposal, it was predicted that one of the limitations might be player availability and rehearsal time. This was certainly the case with the rehearsals for this project. All three groups had tight schedules that I had to work within. Even the community band, with its majority amateur membership, had a busy calendar of events.

The first group to rehearse and record was the Brass Quintet with ‘The Journey’. This occurred on the 21\textsuperscript{st} and 28\textsuperscript{th} of November, 2017. The group was made up of professional players, which meant that the reading aspect was straightforward, although they had never performed together as a quintet. Many of the players had experience with both classical and jazz or musical theatre, which meant there was already some stylistic understanding from the players. The majority of the time was spent running sections so that the trombone soloist, Jeremy Greig, felt comfortable, especially between tempo and style changes.

There was an awareness that after this initial rehearsal rescoring parts or fixing note errors may be required, but there were no issues identified. I should point out here, that I was acutely aware of the need for the music I presented to the musicians (for all the ensembles) to be note perfect so that rehearsal time was not taken up correcting notes. That is why I spent many hours editing and reviewing all the parts before I handed them out to any of the ensembles in the first rehearsal. There was great satisfaction in the fact that at no point did the musicians point out any note errors nor did any of the music take very much explaining. This leads to the conclusion, that the music was written in a very idiomatic way. Comments following this first rehearsal from the musicians and the soloist were very positive.

The hardest section for the players was the opening bars of the third movement. This only took a few repetitions before it began to feel more secure. From the first playing, the music was working the way it was envisioned. Greig was able to continually come up with new rhythmic and melodic ideas as rehearsals progressed or sections were repeated. This suggests the musical setting (the way the accompaniment supported the soloist) was sensitive and encouraging of improvisational creativity.
The second gathering of the quintet on the 28th November was a half rehearsal / half recording. This meant that we had only 1hr to record the entire three-movement work. The first half was spent just rehearsing some of the tempo transitions and then allowing Greig to play over any sections he felt he wanted to hear again. Movement two was the only movement that a second take was required for, the rest were one take. This is a testament to the player’s ability and the idiomatic and playable nature of the music.

All of the musicians were thrilled with the piece and each suggested that it be performed in a concert setting. The group also reflected they would be happy to do a similar project with the composer again. Greig reported that he felt comfortable throughout the recording and that his improvising and idea generation was not impeded but in fact strengthened by the way the accompaniment was written. He was able to play fresh ideas over the course of the two rehearsals and the recording, and it is believed that this responds to the question of whether music written in this manner can support idea generation for the improviser.

The second group to rehearse were the Brass Band with both Joshua Davis and the composer as soloists for ‘Standing Ground’. There were three rehearsals planned in November 2017, leading to a concert December 7th 2017, where the Saxophone octet and Brass Band performances were recorded together, saving money and the time of the musicians involved. Unfortunately, on the evening of the concert Davis was very ill and the band missed a number of entries in the second movement as well as playing some wrong notes. This was also due to a lack of time to rehearse and the complexity of putting the music together with such a large group. Dr Lourens and WA Brass kindly agreed to rerecord ‘Standing Ground’ on April 5th, 2018 with rehearsals in March of 2018. Dr Lourens was not able to attend this recording session so Dr Paul DeCinque conducted the band. The two soloists met together prior to the second recording session to practise sections together to give Davis a better sense of the harmonic movement and give him adequate time with the material. The Brass Band also benefitted from extra time and it is felt that the outcome reflects what I intended of the music.

The majority of the piece was unproblematic for the ensemble to perform, and discussion and rehearsal revolved around matters of familiarity and ensemble balance. The greatest difficulties in rehearsal with the Brass Band were:
• Note length and therefore how that affects the style (mostly in movement three)
• Clapping section, Movement One, bar 58
• The answering dotted crotchets in movement three bar 92

These will be described and reflected upon below.

Dr DeCinque had to train the ensemble to play all the quavers long so that passages like Movement three bar 26-31 in the horns and the answer by the euphoniums and baritones worked within the given tempo. If the ensemble plays these short, it loses a sense of phrase and feels broken up into small parts of the bar rather than a two-bar phrase.

The clapping section Movement One bar 58 was problematic (Figure 4). The quaver rest in the figure was being measured correctly by some players and not by others. The result was almost a round of applause! The solution for this came through only having a few players clapping. This sounded together and had the desired affect anyway. This was advantageous to learn as a composer wishing to take these elements and use them in different contexts.

![Clapping figure from Movement One Bar 58](image)

The next most difficult aspect of rehearsal with the Brass Band was the answering dotted crotchets in movement three bar 92. Interestingly, these are played in their entirety by the lower brass four bars earlier. When the horns and cornets answered the lower brass, they struggled to play this together and in time. Perhaps the rests, as in the triplet-clapping in figure 3, are difficult to measure by some players and this results in a passage that is not quite together. It didn't take too many practises to get this in rhythmic unison. WA Brass is a very talented A Grade Brass Band but they needed some repetition to manage these rhythmic figures. In writing for community bands, a more explicit introduction at the beginning of rehearsing this type of music
in the types of rhythms in the piece would be appropriate and would make for an expedient rehearsal.

The final group to rehearse was the Saxophone Octet with Dr Matthew Styles. I led two rehearsals with this group, December 4\textsuperscript{th} and 5\textsuperscript{th}. The music, its orchestration and arrangement came together in the way envisioned in that the music was performed the way I had heard it in my head. This was the only group that I had little experience of working with, and the group had never played together either.

The most difficult part of the rehearsal process was balancing the eight voices, or rather, teaching them where the musical focus at any given moment was. Sometimes, it was the soloist but other times it was the 1\textsuperscript{st} Soprano Saxophone or the 2\textsuperscript{nd} tenor or the 1\textsuperscript{st} Alto. The second most difficult aspect was teaching the groove that incorporated the quaver rest in it (Figure 5). This issue was similar in some respects to that experienced with the Brass Band clapping and the answering rhythms.

![Figure 5](image)

**Figure 5** – Movement three bar 18 and 19 showing quaver rest rhythm

The other compounding issue with this rhythm is that the syncopation is released on beat 5, which also makes this a difficult rhythm. The way this was solved was by taking the groove apart and letting the tenor Saxophone 2 and baritone Saxophone 1 hear the other parts and then hear how their parts fitted into the overall groove.

Another interesting note from the rehearsals is where I had given the players the freedom to choose any note to a given rhythm (Figure 6) I was actually getting the same note repeated from many of the players, when in fact I desired an indeterminate musical outcome or a more chaotic sound. When I brought this to their attention they were surprised as they hadn’t noticed this occurring. When we worked
on ‘creating chaos’, (the intended effect in the piece), the result was better. Yet even in the final concert recording, having rehearsed a more chaotic sound, there were some players who chose to play almost one note repeated, especially in the answer phrase from the low end of the ensemble, which are the tenor Saxophone and baritone Saxophone.

Perhaps upon reflection one could say that players when reading musical notation and asked to suddenly change track and improvise, struggle with this task. One could also make this a rehearsal point and practise playing in a more random/chaotic way or have been more explicit in instruction (as with the Brass Band) about what sound that section is looking for rather than waiting to see what the musicians will do.

Figure 6 – Movement two bar 14 ‘Matt Versus the Zombies’
Analysis of the Compositions

Use of the jazz elements in the compositions

In this section I will be analysing the compositions for the three elements (setting and sustaining the groove, call and response and interjection).

Firstly, I stated the sections (using bar numbers) where I wrote each element into the composition. I then counted the number of bars of each element in each section. I then made each element a percentage by dividing the number of bars of the elements section against the total number of bars in the piece.

In ensuring that the three elements (setting and sustaining the groove, call and response and interjection) were used in the compositions, it was important to avoid the impression that they were forced into the pieces in a contrived way. This was accomplished by reflecting on my experience as a jazz pianist, and writing the accompaniment figures in a similar way to how I would ‘comp’ for an improvising soloist.

To reiterate, I aimed to use the elements in each of the pieces in the following way:

- 40-50% of each piece to include grooves/ostinatos
- 10% call and response
- 5% interjection.
- The rest of the roughly 35% to be made up of idiomatic writing for the ensemble (i.e. tutti passages where the soloist rests, ensemble features that drive the musical narrative etc.)

The following tables identify where these elements were written, and what proportion of a piece or movement they occupied.

Table 4 - ‘The Journey’ Mvt One – 72 Bars long

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Bars</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting and sustaining the groove</td>
<td>10-25 and 38-69</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call and response</td>
<td>14 to 24</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interjection</td>
<td>53-56, 61-64</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensemble tutti, soloist rest/other</td>
<td>1-10, 26-38, 69-72</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 - ‘The Journey’ Mvt Two – 98 Bars long

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Bars</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting and sustaining the groove</td>
<td>28-48, 52-63</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call and response</td>
<td>Letter C has call and response written into the parts for band and soloist. Trumpet 1 and horn play 2 bars indicated in soloist’s music, which the soloist will hopefully use as a call and response. 8 bars long. Bars 61 and 63 ensemble lines indicated in soloist music as a rest with ensemble cue. 4 bars.</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interjection</td>
<td>56 and 58.</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensemble tutti, soloist rest/other</td>
<td>All other bars</td>
<td>65.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improvised sections</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 - ‘The Journey’ Mvt Three – 67 Bars long

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Bars</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting and sustaining the groove</td>
<td>10-31, 34-42.</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call and response</td>
<td>25, 1st beat of 28 and 29.</td>
<td>0.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interjection</td>
<td>3rd beat 22 and 23 26 and 27.</td>
<td>0.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensemble tutti, soloist rest/other</td>
<td>All other bars</td>
<td>56.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improvised sections</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Below is a table showing the averages over all three movements in ‘The Journey’ for the use of the jazz elements.

Table 7 - ‘The Journey’ Jazz element Averages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Expected Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting and sustaining the groove</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>40-50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call and response</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interjection</td>
<td>0.19%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensemble tutti, soloist rest/other improvised sections</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, percentages were in line with those predicted, except for interjection, which was well below anticipated usage. A possible reason for this could be that as an accompanist, I do not tend to utilise interjection as much as supporting the groove, and then utilising call and response elements (between self and soloist). As an accompanist, Interjection sits as a lower priority, which is why its usage was predicted as only 5% overall and that's also possibly why it has come out so low overall.

I will now go through the jazz elements percentages for ‘Matt versus the Zombies’.

Table 8 - ‘Matt versus the Zombies’ Mvt 1 – 75 Bars long

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Bars</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting and sustaining the groove</td>
<td>16-21, 27-74.</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call and response</td>
<td>Between sop 1 and soloist from 47-74</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interjection</td>
<td>59-60, 67-68.</td>
<td>0.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensemble tutti, soloist rest/other improvised sections</td>
<td>All other bars</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9 - ‘Matt versus the Zombies’ Mvt 2 – 63 Bars long

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Bars</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting and sustaining the groove</td>
<td>24-52</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call and response</td>
<td>43 I’ve placed a rest where the 2 sops have a triplet figure which finishes the interjections started at 40. My hope is that the soloist picks this up and responds to it. 47-49 can also be seen as chance of call and response as again I have asked the soloist to rest at various points in order that they may hear and respond to the triplets again in the ensemble.</td>
<td>0.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interjection</td>
<td>40-42 2 sops. 47 (triplets beats 4 and 5). 48 Octave leaps in sops. 49 beat 3 tenors.</td>
<td>0.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensemble tutti, soloist rest/other improvised sections</td>
<td>All other bars</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 - ‘Matt versus the Zombies’ Mvt 3 – 107 bars long

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Bars</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting and sustaining the groove</td>
<td>6-25, 27-101</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call and response</td>
<td>39-42 using rests again to aid the soloist to listen to the ensemble. 43-62 call and response with alto 2. 67-82 call and response with both tenors. 86-93 trading a bar at a time. 94-101 the soloist trades 1 bars in call and response from 1st sop down to 2 alto.</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interjection</td>
<td>21-25 last time in sops. Bar 30-31 ensemble straight feel suddenly. 47-49 semis in the sops. 55-57 sop 1, alto 1, ten 1 semi figures.</td>
<td>0.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensemble tutti, soloist rest/other improvised sections</td>
<td>All other bars</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Below is a table showing the averages over the three movements in ‘Matt versus the Zombies’ for the use of the jazz elements.

Table 11 - ‘Matt Versus the Zombies’ Jazz element Averages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Expected Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting and sustaining the groove</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>40-50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call and response</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interjection</td>
<td>0.07%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensemble tutti, soloist rest/other improvised sections</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Predictions for the jazz elements were quite close for ensemble tutti’s. Again, interjection is significantly lower than anticipated, likely due to the emphasis that the author places on this element when accompanying a soloist as stated previously. It is believed that this is balanced by the use of much more call and response which is greater than what was expected.

Similar analysis can be applied to the last remaining piece:

Table 12 - ‘Standing Ground’ Mvt 1 – 191 Bars long

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Bars</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting and sustaining the groove</td>
<td>9-56, 62-95,165-180.</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call and response</td>
<td>64-65, 78-83</td>
<td>0.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interjection</td>
<td>34,37,41,48,70-71,73,76-77</td>
<td>0.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensemble tutti, soloist rest/other improvised sections</td>
<td>All other bars</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 13 - ‘Standing Ground’ Mvt 2 – 104 Bars long

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Bars</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting and sustaining the groove</td>
<td>36-63, 86-92.</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call and response</td>
<td>48 and 54 cornets.</td>
<td>0.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interjection</td>
<td>36, 42 and 46 “ and horns, 48 cornets, 51 cornets and horns, 60 cornets, 63 and 64 cornets to trombones.</td>
<td>0.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensemble tutti, soloist rest/other improvised sections</td>
<td>1-36, 63-86, 92-104</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14 - ‘Standing Ground’ Mvt 3 – 104 Bars long

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Bars</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting and sustaining the groove</td>
<td>50-98</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call and response</td>
<td>40-41 and 43-44 Euphonium to piano, 79-86</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interjection</td>
<td>47-50 Euphonium under piano.</td>
<td>0.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensemble tutti, soloist rest/other improvised sections</td>
<td>1-49, 99-104</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Below is a table showing the averages over the three movements for 'Standing Ground' in the use of the jazz elements.

Table 15 - 'Standing Ground' Jazz element Averages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Expected Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting and sustaining the groove</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>40-50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call and response</td>
<td>0.05%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interjection</td>
<td>0.02%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensemble tutti, soloist rest/other improvised</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sections</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both call and response and interjection are well below the expected percentages but, again, it is felt that this is balanced by the inclusion of greater ensemble tutti’s. On reflection, it was realised that because this is the biggest ensemble, there was an attempt to ensure the musicians were not only playing accompaniment roles, but included in some of the major parts of the musical narrative. This is important because one of the project’s aims was to incorporate the ensemble in a more holistic sense not just as a subordinate accompaniment role. The call and responses and interjections present did yield some excellent examples of responses from the soloist. This is analysed under the section Call and Response and Interjection.

Table 16 below shows the averages over all three pieces for the use of the jazz elements.

Table 16 - Jazz element Averages across the three compositions

While very interesting and insightful in showing possible trends in my composing, these figures do have limitations. The major limitation is the subjective way that call and response and interjection can be perceived by different listeners. These elements were intentionally written into the music by the composer to perform their respective roles therefore it is the intention not the perception that is felt is important for this project. Regardless of the limitations it is felt this final summary serves as a helpful close to this part of the analysis.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Expected Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting and sustaining the groove</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>40-50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call and response</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interjection</td>
<td>0.09%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensemble tutti, soloist rest/other improvised sections</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percentage outcome for two of the four elements were very close to those predicted, and it is felt that the goal of using these stimuli in the project was achieved overall. Setting and sustaining the groove was 2% above prediction, call and response was only 1% above prediction. As stated earlier (and seemingly supported by these figures), my preference as an accompanist is to support the groove, then use call and response (between self and soloist), and lastly interjection as an accompaniment technique. The increase of 10% above prediction for ensemble tuttis again strengthens the aim of incorporating the accompanying ensembles in a more holistic and meaningful way.

**Examples of grooves used in the compositions**

Across the three compositions different kinds of grooves were utilised. These include ‘swing feels’, ‘straight feels’, ‘odd time feels’ (5/4) and grooves that are cooperative rhythmic feels played by several parts together. A few examples of each kind of groove are further discussed below. By adding these different styles and time signatures it gives the music more interest and hopefully engages the soloist in new ways. It is also felt that these are effective tools for generating the variety of accompaniment I was striving for.

**Example of swing grooves**

Below (figure 7) is a groove from the first movement of ‘The Journey’ (Bar 39) in piano reduction. This is a swung groove using a ‘two feel’. ‘Two feels’ are generally used in the beginning of a solo and then the rhythm section moves to a ‘four feel’ if they wish to promote further forward motion. This groove was employed at the beginning of the solo section:
Below (figure 8) is an example of a swing groove with a ‘four feel’ from the same piece. As the feel moves from a ‘two feel’ to a ‘four feel’ it gives the impression of having more forward motion. In both instances the notated musical idea enables the soloist to continue soloing; without the literal need of a constant rhythmic drive supplied by incorporating a drum kit.

Below is an example of a more traditional, or Dixieland, ‘jazz feel’ that employs a technique called ‘stop time’ (Fig 9). This is taken from the 2nd movement of ‘The Journey’. G & J Collier in their book, ‘A study of timing in two Louis Armstrong solos’ explains;
... stop-time”, a device frequently used during the period, (1920’s-30’s) in which the band, or some members of it, played only on certain selected beats, leaving the soloist free to go as he wished. In fact, during stop-time passages soloists almost invariably followed the chord patterns and rhythmic structure of the original piece… (Collier & Collier, 2002, p. 4).

This technique was used in ‘The Journey’ to stay true to the narrative where the poet Fusao Inada talks about Miles and Billie playing a traditional blues. Utilising Grooves from different periods of jazz history demonstrate that grooves written in this way can be from any period in jazz, and do not need to have a constantly moving crotchet beat to feel as if they are continuing in a forward motion rhythmically.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Blues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( \frac{3}{4} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \frac{3}{4} )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ensemble plays three beats together and leaves the fourth beat free for the soloist as stated in the description above.

A ‘swing feel’ was also used with a 3/4 time signature (Figure 10). This groove is taken from a Miles Davis’ composition ‘All Blues’ (M. Davis, 2000). In using this musical quote, it draws the reader back to the poem (see the chapter ‘Compositional Portfolio’ pg 41 and ‘The use of narratives to drive compositional creativity’ pg 41) and it allows the employment of a three four ‘swing feel’. In the poem it refers to Miles playing his horn (trumpet) and that’s why I incorporated this groove. This is another example of a groove one can employ within instrumental groups without the use of the jazz rhythm section.
Figure 10– ‘The Journey’ Movement Two bar 52-57

Below (Figure 11) is another three-four ‘swing feel’, this time from the third movement of the Journey. The composer’s own groove was utilised, showing the variety of approaches in three-four swing that were employed.

Figure 11– ‘The Journey’ Movement Three bar 18-22
Examples of straight grooves

A straight groove is where the quavers are felt more equally (exactly half a beat each) and this is in contrast to a swing quaver where the eighth notes have a more triplet feel to them. Figure 12 is an example of a sixteenth or semi-quaver based groove from *Movement Three* of ‘Matt Versus the Zombies’. This has been inspired by similar sixteenth based grooves in tunes such as ‘The Chicken’ by Pee Wee Ellis (Ellis, 1969) and the Funk music genre of the 1960s and 70s, described well by Vincent:

James Brown’s band established the ‘funk beat’ and modern street funk in the late 1960s. The funk beat was a heavily syncopated, aggressive rhythm that put a strong pulse on the first note of the musical measure (“on the one”), whereas traditional rhythm and blues emphasised the backbeat (the second and fourth beats of the measure). (Vincent, 2014)

![Figure 12](image1.png)

Figure 12- Matt Versus the Zombies Movement Three bars 86 and 87

Figure 13 below is the bass line played by Jaco Pastorius on the composition ‘The Chicken’ (Ellis, 1969) performed on the album *Invitation* by Jaco Pastorius (TOLLESON, 1983). Although different in rhythm, both figures contain an emphasis on beat one, both are sixteenth based grooves with syncopation: all hallmarks of Funk music.

![Figure 13](image2.png)

Figure 13- Bass line as played by Jaco Pastorius from the Chicken (Vazquez, 2012)
As well as taking inspiration for straight grooves from funk music, I also drew inspiration from Afro Cuban jazz music\(^{14}\).

Below is an example from *Movement One* of ‘Matt versus the Zombies’ (Figure 14) that incorporates a ‘two-three’ clave played by the alto and tenor Saxophone by depressing their keys in a percussive fashion. On the right hand side (figure 15) is an example of the two three Clave cited from David Peñalosa’s book ‘The Clave Matrix; Afro-Cuban Rhythm: Its Principles and African Origins’ (Peñalosa, 2010) and the bass line from the composition ‘Afro Blue’ (Santamaria, 1959).

The bass line played by the baritone Saxophone (Figure 14) in this piece has the same rhythm to the one on the right hand taken from Afro Blue (Figure 15).

---

\(^{14}\) “Afro-Cuban jazz is a musical style that developed in the 1940's and 50's based on jazz harmonies, African and Cuban rhythms and different techniques of improvisation”. (Juliao, 2003)
Odd time grooves

Figure 16 (below) is an excerpt from movement two of ‘Matt Versus the Zombies’ where a 5/4 groove was employed. Figure 17 alongside it presents the groove from Paul Desmond’s composition ‘Take Five’ (Brubeck, Desmond, Morello, & Wright, 2009). As can be seen, the first three beats are arranged in two dotted crotchets and the second half of the bar into two crotchets making this a ‘three-two’ arrangement of time in 5/4. A similarity between the piano left hand and the baritone line can also be seen.

Figure 18 (below) shows a triplet based 5/4 groove played in Movement One of ‘Standing Ground’ (Bar 70). This groove was chosen to show the extension of the ‘Afro Cuban’ style that was used in figure 14 and 15 but utilised in a different time signature and with an entirely different ensemble. I contend that this demonstrates the ability of the composer to manipulate and translate grooves into different ensembles with different instrumentation.
All of these examples (Figures 7 to 18) demonstrate the breadth of time signatures and styles within the jazz idiom that can be used to form inspiration for grooves and the ability for these to translate into each ensemble, without the use of the jazz rhythm section.

The preceding examples are all ‘bass-line driven’, that is they all have one low instrument playing a mostly continuous bass line, which maintains forward motion generally utilising the tubas and baritone saxes. The final type of groove explored is where the groove is generated cooperatively, not just using a bass line and harmony, but many parts generating the groove together.
Cooperatively generated grooves – not bass line driven.
The following example (figure 19), taken from Movement One of ‘Standing Ground’ (bars 9 and 10), is an example of a cooperatively generated groove not reliant on a bass line for its rhythmic flow.

![Musical notation](image)

Figure 19 – Movement One ‘Standing Ground’ bars 9 and 10.

The bass line on its own is not enough to set the groove as it contains too many rests at the beginning of the bar. All five parts cooperate to make this groove successful. If the cornets and baritone played alone it would feel like a very ambiguous groove. If the bass played alone, a similar feeling of ambiguity would be felt by the soloist, but all the parts together make a successful feeling groove or rhythmic feel. It is the complete combination of all parts in their rhythmic and harmonic role that create the sense of forward motion and harmony.

A second example (figure 20) is taken from the Second Movement of ‘Matt versus the Zombies’ (Bars 37 and 38). The Baritone Saxophone part here has a minim or half note in the middle of the bar and on its own would lack the necessary drive to ensure the soloist felt comfortable. All the parts together create enough forward motion ensuring that each instrument plays on each beat and that the soloist can feel the quarter note (crotchet beat) pulse.
Figure 20 – Movement Two Matt Versus the Zombies Bars 37 and 38.

Call and response

In *Movement Two* of ‘The Journey’, letter C (1:41 on the video) is a written call and response section. What was particularly pleasing in particular though is the soloist response to the second phrase. The 1st trumpet player Adrian Kelly scooped into his concert E in bar 45 and when Jeremy Greig responds in bar 46, he plays in a very similar way in both melodic material and with a scoop on his first note in a very similar articulation to Kelly’s.

At 2:24 on the video (bar 61 *Movement Two* of ‘The Journey’) the ensemble plays a line and Greig’s response to this musical passage is a very similar matching line to
theirs, rhythms and melodic contour. Leading up to this interaction Jeremy had used quavers (eighth notes) bars 52-54 as a rhythmic subdivision, then he moves to triplets in bars 55 and 56. When he transitions into semiquavers (16th notes) in bars 57 to 60 this is in direct response to the semiquaver phrase played by the ensemble in bar 56. From bars 52-60 he had played each phrase on beat one of the bar, but following the ‘call’ of the ensemble in bar 62, he misses beat one of his response showing a sense of interaction with the accompanying ensembles written material and how it is affecting his improvising.

In the video, one can see that Jeremy is certainly listening to the ensemble. He glances in their direction listening and interacting intently even during periods of rest. One could suppose that he is using this time to consider his next phrase and hopefully using the accompanying material as some of the fuel for his creativity.

In ‘Matt Versus the Zombies’ Movement Three bars 94-101, there are a series of 1 bar call and responses. In each case Styles picks up the rhythmic shape and the general melodic contour of each call and uses it in his response. This is another good example of the call and responses written into the piece where the outcome achieved by the group and the soloist were consistent with the composer’s intentions.

In ‘Standing Ground’ Movement One, bars 78-83 contain a written call and response. At 3:34 on the video, the cornets play a phrase heard by soloist Joshua Davis, he then uses the melodic material of this phrase but slightly changes the rhythm. Then in each proceeding phrase Davis’ responses beautifully finish off the calls by the band in each case showcasing an excellent example of how the accompanying notation created interactive moments.

These interactions indicate that the three soloists were listening closely to the accompanying musicians. This is important because listening is the precursor to interaction. If in ‘The Journey’ Greig was only soloing, using the chord changes and not listening, no interaction would take place. Secondly this means that Greig was stimulated by what he heard and he decided in that moment to respond to the accompaniment and the way Kelly or the ensemble played it. This is true of all three ensembles and all three soloists.
Interjection – where the accompaniment offers unexpected rhythmic, melodic or harmonic ideas.

In ‘The Journey’ Movement One bars 53-56, an interjection is written. Prior to this interjection, the ensemble accompaniment is fairly repetitive and serves to enhance the swing feel. Greig’s solo from Letter C (4:10 on the video) is primarily triplet-based and has many long tones and short phrases. From the point of interjection at bar 53 onwards, the ensemble accompaniment becomes thicker texturally with more players entering as well as playing more notes per bar. The interjection here aims to evoke a feeling of aggression or excitement after what has been a fairly minimal and regular accompaniment. Greig responds in kind to this new stimulus by playing more notes and in a generally higher register especially over the forte-piano’s in bar 55 and 56 which is where the energy from the interjection was aiming for.

‘Standing Ground’ Movement One bar 37 the interjection written in the flugel and tenor horns (which is also written as a cue for the soloist) is picked up and emulated by soloist Davis. He also picks up on the semiquaver (16th note) interjection by the cornets and uses this as new material for his solo.

These examples demonstrate that the interjecting material, either rhythmic or melodic, does feed the soloist new ideas and they are interacting with these elements as they solo. These are the clearest examples identified from the project. Other less distinct examples were identified, but with interjection only being utilised in 0.07% of the works overall, less emphasis has been placed on this area in my analysis as there are less explicit examples to choose from.
Conclusion

This practice-led research project set out to produce musical works that brought together ensembles from the Western Classical tradition (that only read notation) and soloists who improvise - in order to explore the idea of interaction; and what this can mean when applied to different idiomatic ensembles. One of the exciting elements of this project was using improvising soloists that were also classical musicians (Joshua Davis, principal trombone of the West Australian Symphony Orchestra and Dr. Matthew Styles, Head of Classical Saxophone at the West Australian Academy of performing Arts). The project brought these artists into creative areas that they rarely get to express themselves in, and adds to their creative portfolio, to the benefit of the research and the wider musical community.

Three works were composed for three ensembles, each with an improvising soloist. The ensembles included a British style Brass Band, Brass Quintet and a double Saxophone quartet. The project built on the work of Andy Scott and Eddie Sauter who did not include the rhythm section with their ensembles. Prior to people like Sauter and Scott, works in this genre added the jazz rhythm section to these compositions (mostly with strings) when they wrote for an improvising soloist. From ‘Parker with Strings’ to Hank Jones with the Meridian String Quartet, the pattern was for a much more subordinate accompaniment for the classical ensemble which also became quite redundant during the solo sections where the jazz rhythm section would take over.

The works for the ensembles in this project were written in such a way as to provide enough ‘interactive possibilities’ to assist the improviser in their creativity. These interactive possibilities consisted of three elements found in the jazz rhythm section that I believed could be notated. These elements were: call and response, interjection, and setting and sustaining a groove. This was part of the ‘Plan’ phase of the ‘Plan, Act, Observe, Reflect’ model utilised to guide the processes and stages of the research.

The practise led elements of this research project helped me make critical reflections based on them. This exegesis has helped inform my practise and has helped to drive my philosophy and practise as a creative artist for the future through the works
created and the lessons learnt from rehearsing them and the collaboration with the ensembles and soloists.

The research questions posed for this project were:

1. What techniques can the composer employ when writing accompaniments for differing non-jazz ensembles and an improvising soloist and how can these accompaniments include jazz elements, yet also be idiomatic?

2. How will these jazz elements work in practice in a balanced way that best engages, enhances and supports the soloist’s improvised solo’s?

The first question was addressed through a literature review and then explored through the creative portfolio and associated processes of critical reflection, including analysis of the works in both their written and recorded output.

For example, the analysis of the compositions identified that many different types of grooves were able to be created across the three ensembles. Different time signatures, numbers of possible voices, with or without percussion, using a bass line or not using a bass line - each piece was able to set and sustain the groove successfully. Grooves were also drawn from different time periods and styles of jazz. Of most interest to the composer were those grooves referred to as ‘cooperative grooves’, where each voice has part of the overall forward motion of the groove and together they form a sustainable and effective continuous feel/groove.

There were also many points, as noted in the analysis, where the soloists interacted with call and responses or used a motif from an interjection to send them in a new direction creatively. The analysis of examples showing where soloists heard the jazz elements and interacted with them shows that the elements did work in a balanced way and did engage the soloist in their creativity. These points demonstrate the effectiveness of the techniques to expand creative practice, affirming the research design and methodology.

Rehearsal time and musician’s availability were one of the anticipated limitations, and in practise, this was a factor. Rehearsal time with the Brass Quintet came down to only one and a half rehearsals, followed immediately by the recording. The Saxophone octet had 2 rehearsals and then played their piece live in a concert. The
Brass Band had roughly 5 rehearsals with many months between the first three and the final two prior to the recording.

During these rehearsals there were no note edits to the compositions at all. It was encouraging to recognise that the initial conceptual ideas could be followed through toward concise musical outputs, and that I was able to handle and effectively execute the new compositional challenges. The easy assimilation, coupled with the small amount of rehearsal time, strongly supports the assertion that these compositions were indeed idiomat ic in nature. Coupled with the three jazz elements notated and analysed along with the performance of each piece, I conclude that the musical aspects of question one have been thoroughly explored.

Question two was answered with the analysis of the interactions by soloists with the ‘call and response’ and ‘interjection’ events. This was considered by examining their overall playing across the three works. The exploration by balancing written themes, ensuring freedom to improvise with chord changes and cadenzas illustrates how this was approached diversely and creatively.

The vast majority of the time the compositions required the soloist to improvise. There was very little in the way of written melodic thematic material written, and so continual creative output was required from the soloists. The accompaniment written with these intentional points of interactivity must have been stimulating enough to be able to sustain the soloist attention. In discussion, immediately after recordings, each soloist remarked that their improvising was not hampered in anyway by the accompanying music. This is significant as it seems to indicate that the musical settings are representative of idiomatic improvising settings for each soloist.

During this project a great deal has been learnt about rhythmic writing for musicians that can inform my own practice. Through the use of both professional and community musicians, great insight has been gained into the difficulties that can arise from certain rhythmic notation. In the ‘Rehearsal Process’ chapter, the ongoing issue of the quaver rest at the beginning of the bar was raised (see Figures 4 and 5). Much of this was alleviated through spoken or sung interpretation of the figure and none of these took a huge amount of time. It is, however, a lesson on rhythmic writing across groups and something to consider for future projects.
The material in this compositional portfolio represents almost 60 minutes of music, 881 bars of fully notated music for three ensembles, and utilises 41 musicians from professional to community bands and four soloists. This was the first time these ensembles had performed with an improvising soloist. There is definite potential for innovative projects to foster community and professional links and encourage musical and social benefits for all involved.

Bringing these two worlds together, soloists who can improvise and ensembles that only read notation, was one of the main aims of this project. All of the ensembles and soloists were pleased with the process and in having the opportunity to make music in this way. All said they would be interested in further musical projects such as these.

The enjoyment and easily accessible nature of the music for both soloist and ensemble is in keeping with the initial aims of the research. Music was created that was able to set and sustain the groove, employ call and response and interjection in an idiomatic.

Future possibilities for this research idea are to work with other reading ensembles such as concert bands, Orchestras and choirs. This idea can be applied in both a community and professional setting, as demonstrated in this creative research project. There is also no limit to the number of soloists one might have. Future iterations could combine a written classical soloist with an improvising soloist, as one of many possible combinations.

It is fair to say this research has indicated that there is scope for expanding these ideas; especially for progressive ensembles and artists who wish to work together or form new communal musical experiences - where some are improvisers and some are trained in only reading notation. The only limitation is the creativity of the composer, their ability to understand and write idiomatically and the interest and drive from the ensembles and soloist in the project.

Collaborating with the soloists involved in this project was a personal joy and a professional goal for the author. Each soloist gave so much of themselves to this project not just in time, but also in enthusiasm and creativity.
Jeremy Greig was the main jazz soloist. He is head of jazz trombone at the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts and is in demand as a live performance and session recording musician. Through collaboration with Greig, a great deal was learnt about how much the soloist’s sense of the style affects the ensemble. He brought a great sense of swing, which is most evident in the Second Movement of ‘The Journey’ from letter A. His conception of swing really helped to anchor the ensemble’s rhythmic backings, especially in bars 15-19.

Dr. Matt Styles was very collaborative and it was his idea to use soprano Saxophone in the second movement, which makes that movement the author’s favourite in the three movements from ‘Matt versus the Zombies’. Dr. Styles also entered into the humorous nature of the work playing his saxophone like a weapon gesturing towards each zombie defeating them with his improvising. This can be seen in the accompanying video and the audience reaction is testament to his good nature in carrying this to completion with such believability.

Joshua Davis is a highly accomplished trombonist and seasoned classical musician. He is also a highly respected arranger, having arranged works for The Berlin Philharmonic Brass Ensemble, The President’s Own Marine Band, the Sydney and Melbourne Symphony Brass Ensembles, and has recently had arrangements recorded by The Berlin Philharmonic Horn Quartet on their album ‘Four Corners’. When one listens to his solos, they can hear a very well-considered measured and motivic, almost compositional nature to his improvising. It was Mr Davis that the author feels interacted the most with the interactive elements across the three movements hence the comment about his compositional approach to improvising.

All three soloists had different improvising approaches but all made the respective pieces their own. This in no way deviated from the main aims of the project, but serves to show that there was freedom within the compositions for each artist to play and create within their own strengths and creative style. Their investment meant that the pieces sounded authentic in their delivery. All three artists said that they would like to work with the author on future compositional projects and were interested in exploring the ideas of interaction as expressed in this thesis. This outcome was also a goal of the project and demonstrates that conceptual approach has merit.

After completing this research, I feel confident in employing these compositional techniques with other ensembles and situations, forging new paths between two
musical worlds. These worlds are tending to interact more, or want to interact more, but extra music specifically facilitating this partnership is needed to create further synergies and partnerships. It is hoped that others who wish to explore interaction as a gesture within composed music will apply and build on the techniques from this research in many unique and varied contexts.
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