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This is to certify that the dissertation entitled:

DIALOGUE AS PERFORMANCE. PERFORMANCE AS DIALOUGE.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to all who follow their heart and put to action through music, visual art, dance, poetry and theatre that which is heard, felt, and envisioned. I beseech you follow with courage your wisdom this way.
Abstract
This dissertation is an arts-based qualitative study in Leadership and Change that describes the qualities of dialogue revealed through the felt experience of Native and non-Native American music composers engaged in a dialogue through music composition. The fifteen co-collaborators who participated in the study range in age from three-years-old to elders. The study is theoretically embedded within Performance Studies, Dr. Carolyn Kenny's music therapy model Field of Play, and aesthetic philosophy. Methodologically, this work is expressed through performance ethnography and autoethnography and privileges textual and non-textual modes of account including photographs, video excerpts, poetry, and music manuscript. The text is written utilizing two elements of music: melody and harmonic rhythm. The ethical guidelines and protocols developed for this study were derived from consideration of Kenny’s work and the ideas of other hermeneutic scholars. The interpretation of the dialogues describes qualities of the process of dialogue, considers intervening epistemological qualities, and focuses on the qualities of the sacred musical space. This dissertation includes attached video files. The electronic version of this dissertation is at OhioLink ETD Center, www.ohiolink.edu/etd
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Program Notes.

Welcome to the performance! My approach to this opus/dissertation was to write, reflect, produce, and create, based on the acts of composition and performance of music. Program notes and even a pre-performance lecture are often presented prior to a performance. The notes that follow will be mirroring this long-held tradition to prepare the audience for what lies ahead.

The performance includes written text, performed music, music compositions, photographs, and other audio and visual media. It is my intention that the work be "read" as whole with the weaving of text and non-text expressions. The work is presented in two parts. The first part titled "Dialogue as Performance" begins with an autobiographic account of critical life experiences that led me to create this study. The account is comprised of my first encounters with music, my entry into the profession of education, my steps into roles of leadership, and finally my reach beyond dominantly organized teaching to serve underrepresented communities through music. The intention of this account is to position me as a scholar, and to position my study within the vast fields of scholarship. It will become clear that music has been the river of my experience; life-giving, transforming and sustaining. My study is arts-based in its focus and disposition.

My point of departure for the study is dialogue. My interest in dialogue stemmed from an "undialogue-like" experience I had as a first-year student with Antioch University’s Ph.D. in Leadership and Change program. As I developed the concepts of my dissertation I began to find, as if emerging from a hazy fog, the
makings of the marriage of dialogue and music in my exploration of the postmodern condition. My exploration of the postmodern condition was also one of positioning, contextualizing my practice as an educator, as an artist, and my experience as a human being. The autobiographical account, in concert with the postmodern reflection opened a path seeking a theoretical foundation for the study.

The theoretical foundation, consisting of intersecting concepts and theories, allowed a way to glance at the qualitative nature of music and dialogue. The two foundational theories for the study are Dr. Carolyn Kenny’s *Music and Life in the Field of Play* and the work of scholars in the area of performance studies. Some of the practices, principles, and theories from the discipline of music therapy strongly relate to the importance of music in everyday life. The practices of music therapists and clients involved in the performance of healing connect music therapy and performance studies. Dr. Kenny’s model and the theories of performance studies address qualities of transformation, change and growth that may be generalized beyond the specific contexts of music therapy and performance of healing.

My inquiry centered on describing of the process of the performance of dialogue through music, specifically highlighting the felt experience of composers engaged in the process of composing within the research context. In composition, the lived human experience of the everyday is transformed to another form of experience through the creation or authorship of music. Lived experience serves as a source of inspiration and is reflected through the creation of music. In this
way, the creation of music is an expression of interpretation, in which individuals translate and transform their particular experience from one form to another form.

The work of scholars engaged in scholarship is to come to knowing and make knowledge claims. The methodological approach that best allowed for the description of the process that my co-collaborators/students and I engaged in over the course of the study was ethnographic in nature. I explored key considerations and implications of entering an ethnographic study. Entering the ethnographic field required deep thought about the ethical implications of the study.

The second part of this work titled “Performance as Dialogue” features the study. The study is performative in nature. The performance began with an invitation to my students who are members of the Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble. The Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble is the name of the community-based music group I formed through my teaching with under-served and under-represented peoples. The ensemble has been active for nearly four years. Over the course of these years, the Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble has traveled through variations of performing experiences. The study presented in this work is an outgrowth of a composing project that my students and I have been involved in with for nearly two years.

At the time of the study there were fifteen active members in the ensemble. Members’ ages ranged from 7-years-old to elders. Members are Native and non-Native people. Thirteen of the members play violin or viola, one member plays only Native drum, and one member plays modern flute. Four of the thirteen violin and viola students have also performed Native drum with the ensemble. Eleven
of the ensemble members have had some experience with composition prior to this study; nine of these members began composing as part of their experience with the Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble. The invitation to participate in the study was extended to all active members. Members were invited by phone, followed by written invitation distributed by email to attend a gathering to begin the process.

Because of family circumstances, two of the Shooting Stars members were not able to fully participate in the study. One additional member chose to participate in the naming of the composition, but not in the composition process itself. During the study, a new group formed as an off-shoot of the Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble. Three additional participants who belonged to the newly formed group were invited into the study. In the end, there were fifteen participants who composed during this study; twelve active members and three new-comers.

The study began with music making, a potluck dinner, and a dialogue to establish the parameters of our shared experience. After we played music and shared our meal, I introduced the purpose of the study and outlined the process of the study. It is the tradition of the ensemble to collectively name our collaborative experiences. The project was named “Music From Our Souls.” Although the focus of the study was focused on process, because the group is a performance group it was necessary that a venue be identified for a culminating performance for the compositions created through this process. Group members decided the
venue was to be a broadcast on public television. At the conclusion of our gathering I scheduled first interviews.

I met individually with each co-collaborator for an initial interview. Interviews were held either at the participant’s home or at my home. Each interview began with a presentation of the Participant or Minor Participant Consent form. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and the kinds of activities we would engage in together over the course of the study. Each participant signed, giving their permission to participate and to share their created materials. Minors were informed with their parent guardian present. The parent guardian was also asked to sign the minor's consent form.

Following the informed consent process, the biographic interview began. These interviews were informal and documented as co-created text. Each biography included a photograph of the participant. Each collaborator participated in the editing and review of their story.

Upon completion of our interviews, I met individually and in one instance with a group, to collaboratively create music compositions. Composition sessions were held either at the participant’s home or at my home. Each composition session was video-recorded. Many participants reflected about their experience of composing during the composition session.

The ensemble continued to meet over the course of the study to play music and share individually created works. I checked in weekly to offer instruction to the two active members who were not available to participate and the one active
member who chose not to participate. One of these members received two violin lessons, then other circumstances made him not available for lessons.

All written and recorded materials were made available for the co-collaborator’s review. I kept field notes to further enhance the ethnographic account. These notes included a brief chronology of the research events, my observations about the participant’s experience, and reflection upon my own experience in this process.

Critical to the foundation of the study were the ethics of research activities. I have had extensive conversations with parents, children, and in some cases communities about these ethical responsibilities. I was willing, when necessary to seek formal permissions not only from parents and the children themselves, but also from Tribal Councils. The children of the Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble who participated in the study came from diverse cultural backgrounds, which surely enriched their compositions, conversations, interviews, and performances and thus the creation of new knowledge. I acted with the highest principles of ethical research conduct as stated in the Belmont Report, namely, respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. I also sought to act with the highest regard for the specific principles of best research practices in Native communities as described by Linda Tuhiwai Smith in her important benchmark publication, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*.

The findings of the study are presented as ethnographic account and performance. The account is intended to sharpen performance experience for the reader/listener/audience. Accompanying the account is the storied biography of
each composer, the written manuscript that resulted from the composing session, and a video excerpt highlighting the composing process. This presentation is performance of the process and serves as the findings of the study.

I have captured moments of this transformative interpretation through narrative text, text of composition, and audio and video representation. These moments celebrate and mark the simultaneous expression of the ordinary and the extraordinary found in the experience of the process of composing music. My students and I have composed together, adding a strong collaborative element to the study. The focus of the study is the process. All texts attempt to describe this process through different lenses – verbal (written and spoken), musical, and visual representations.

Following the account of the process of composing, I present a postlude narrative reflecting upon the implications of the study. Following the postlude narrative, the performance of the dissertation concludes with a sounding of the pieces composed during the study.

The narrative and music that follow these “program notes” mark the beginning of this performance. The narrative form or the structure of the first part of the composition is the weaving of melody and harmonic rhythm. The melody sings of my lived and felt experience. The harmonic rhythm sounds the scholarship and the experience of others. Because music is the guiding metaphor and map for this work, the “process” of music is integral to the structure of the performance. Melody is the lyric, song-like element of music created by a horizontal connection of notes, one to the next. Harmonic rhythm provides the
vertical depth of music whose structure of rhythm simultaneously serves as foundation while creating movement. This kind of interplay of melody and harmonic rhythm is exemplified in the second movement of Beethoven’s 7th Symphony.

The movement opens with an introductory chord. The chord dissolves to a quiet, simple introduction of the harmonic rhythm in the form of melody. Once introduced, the harmonic rhythm takes its place in the lower voices, sometimes bowed, sometimes as pizzicato, sometimes as the stroke of the tympani or the sounding of a brass instrument. What follows is a continued and sustained dialogue of melodies and harmonic rhythm.

I invite you to sit back and join me in the opening performance of this work.
Music terminology is used throughout the dissertation. I am providing a glossary of terms to assist in the smooth reading of the work.

Glossary of Music Terms

Clef Sign – A symbol written at the beginning of the staff that indicates the pitch of notes.

Chord – The sounding of three or more tones at the same time.

Harmony – The vertical structure of musical composition.

Harmonic rhythm – The rhythmic pattern created by changes in the harmony.

Interval – The distance in pitch between two notes.

Key Signature – The sharps or flats at the beginning of each line of music that indicate the tonal center (key) of a piece of music.

Melody – A series of notes connected horizontally.

Pizzicato – Plucking the string of a string instrument with the finger.

Timbre – The quality of tone produced on an instrument of voice.

Time Signature – Two numbers, one above the other, written to indicate meter. The top number indicates the number beats per measure. The bottom number indicates what note value is the beat.
Overture.

We live in a time of rapid change. The pressures of change push hard at the fundamental level of our most basic institutions and understandings. We are in a time in which satellites that circumnavigate the earth share sky with the eagle. A time in which even as a gentle breeze blows through the trees leaves, the winds of global social, political, and economic struggle translates into practices by humans that challenge the survival of fragile systems of our Mother Earth. As she calls out do we hear? Are we listening?

In 1980, I had no way of knowing that a passing discussion I had with my father about the philosophic, practical, and ethical reasoning of the neutron bomb would come to be a tip-of-the-iceberg conversation of my time. Weapons that could destroy living beings without harming material things developed as tools of peace. Even then I knew and acknowledged the absurdity this whole frame of thought and expression. It is absurd that weapons and force should command peace. It is absurd that we should take pride in having at our “push of a button” disposal weapons designed to value and discriminate material things over living beings. It is absurd that any “rightness” could be extracted from this kind of thought.

Seated in stillness in the armchair of my Great Aunt Margaret, I wonder about all this change. I wonder what those who will come seven generations from now will be contemplating. As I wonder, I ask myself, what contribution might I make?
The contribution I wish to make is to enhance awareness about the vital and essential gift we have to help us navigate these waters of change: the gift of dialogue. The focus of my consideration of dialogue will not be through the use of words in conversation, but through music. Why dialogue? Why music?

Harmonic Rhythm: Dialogue.

My awareness about and attention to dialogue was heightened during my first year with the Antioch Ph.D. program in Leadership and Change as a participant in a dialogue group. I noticed that our group seemed to be talking at each other, but not with each other. I voiced my concern to the group. One member of the group responded to my posting and offered a lifeline in the form of a book. She asked, “Have you read On Dialogue by David Bohm?” I had not read the work. I thanked her for her recommendation, ordered the book and began my reading.

Early into the book there was a section about dialogue and thought. Bohm suggested that dialogue is “really aimed at going into the thought process and changing the way the thought process occurs collectively” (9). Paying attention to the process of thought itself, Bohm highlighted a couple of challenges.

The first challenge he identified is the difficulty of fragmentation. Bohm offered an image of reality as “the whole world is shades merging into one” (9). It is thought that “divides everything up” and that this division is “a result of how we think” (9).

Bohm continued his critique of the challenge of thought and identified a deeper issue. He suggested that “thought is very active, but the process of
thought thinks that it is doing nothing” (10). This statement created a barrier in my process of thought and came out as a “WHAT?” I reread this statement over and over, but could not comprehend what was being said.

Instead of reading on and pretending that I had comprehended, I stopped. I put the book aside and allowed the thought to be with me for a couple of weeks. Bohm’s statement became a meditation for me. I needed to calm the dissonance created in my mind by what I understood the meaning of “active” and “doing nothing” to mean. The dissonance was created because I could not reconcile my understanding of how these words were meant to act together to make meaning. I actively reflected on the process of thought. In stillness, I was able to see and feel both the whole and the part of this statement. The challenge for me was to settle and accept the juxtaposition and simultaneous manifestation of “active” and “doing nothing.”

This experience of coming to make meaning, of coming to comprehension left an indelible mark upon me, opening a space for curiosity and inquiry to emerge. The experience led me to want to have more experience with and know more about the nature of dialogue itself.

Bohm examined the definition of the word “dialogue” by looking at its root meaning. He explained that dialogue comes from the Greek word *dialogos*: *logos* meaning “the word” and *dia* meaning “through.” Bohm suggested that dialogue is “a stream of meaning flowing among and through us and between us” (6). The implication is that the nature of dialogue is ongoing, dynamic, and fluid.
As a flowing stream of meaning, dialogue may be understood as expression, as event, as experience, as process, as a mode of learning, or as a way of Being. Dialogue may involve a single individual or several individuals. This flowing stream of meaning that is dialogue is not limited to meaning through word, but may also be expressed in other ways through music, visual art, and dance.

This study is dedicated to exploring dialogue through music. My students and I have engaged in a process of dialogue through music. The study emerges from the intersection of my lived experience as an artist, teacher and learner. The Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble is a manifestation of my experience. I have nurtured the growth of my students, individually and collectively, driven by the stubborn passion that music makes a difference in the development and lives of human beings in a good way. What has emerged through the theme-and-variation growth of the Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble is the powerful voicing of others. As a teacher, I stand in humbleness and marvel at what has come forth from my students.

The purpose of the study is not to confirm or disprove the “correctness” of the assumption that music is of value to the human experience. Instead, it is meant to provide an example of how music is of value to the human condition. Music will serve as the medium of communication. My students and I have engaged in translating felt expressions of everyday life into compositions of sound. These compositions serve as conversation starters and foundations of dialogue.
There are several purposes for the study. First, it provides my students an opportunity to continue to reach and grow as performers and composers. The study will provide a window-like opportunity to consider and explore manifestations of everyday life dialogued through music, where music serves as an agent of change and transformation. As a result of the project, more music will come to in the world written by individuals who might not otherwise be heard. The study will contribute information to the research field about the impact of the arts on the human condition. Finally, this work will allow me the opportunity to strengthen my voice and find place within the community of scholars.

The knowledge claims stemming from the inquiry are based upon a specific case of a particular experience involving members of the Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble and myself. Because of the specificity inherent in presenting a particular case, the knowledge revealed will be bound by and limited to positional and situational parameters of the case. Although there are countless ways from which to view this particular phenomenon the scope of the study is narrowed to consider composition, the performance of specific created compositions, and dialogue.

My interest in this inquiry emerges from my lived experience. I draw upon my life experience as a text-like source to reveal the seed of me. In discussing the enfolding-unfolding wholeness as the movement of the universe, Bohm suggests that although the seed contributes “little or nothing to the actual material substance of the plant or to the energy needed to make it grow,” (Wholeness and the Implicate Order 193) when soil, water, air, and sunlight are “informed” (194) by
the seed, a living plant is produced. Bohm’s basic contention is that “love is an informing energy” (Weber qtd. in Kenny 115).

The following narrative highlights significant encounters of my love through music, teaching, and leadership that have come to shape who I am as a researcher and scholar. It is just as revealing to note how I shape these experiences. This give-and-take between being shaped by and giving shape to experience is a dialogue, a dialogue in which one’s Self is transformed through one’s experience.

I invite you to a moment of reflection with music composed by James, a member of the Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble. Shania and myself performed his piece at the Nisqually River.
Melodies of mySelf.

First melody. Music.

Music has always been part of my life. The first music I came to know was the music of Fox Island, an island located in the Puget Sound west of Tacoma, Washington. As a four-year-old child I remember being surrounded by the music of the island. I remember the sounds of the wind making way through the grass, the blackberry bush, and the trees. Mostly, I remember the sound of the water that came to the shore located across the street from our house. I remember the sound of the gurgling water tickling the pebbles, rocks, and shells of the beach I would walk. I remember picking up a shell, holding it to my ear and listening very carefully to hear the song. What was the song I heard?

The song I heard sang of all of time, of all places, of all experiences, of all creation. I was not afraid of this song. As I listened, I remember smiling from the
inside out. The sounds of nature, not the sound of man, are what I remember as the first music I came to know.

While we lived on Fox Island our family attended the church located at the end of the beach road. I was at church when I first heard the sweet sound of the violin. There was an older couple who played music for the service: she played the organ and he played the violin. I remember that she had to pump the pedal of the organ to make sound. He simply drew the bow across the string and played to my heart that sweet, sweet sound. The moment I heard the delicious sounds from his instrument I found my passion, my rapture. I was completely and forever in love. From that day on, all parts of my experience have been in someway touched by music.

You are invited to pause and join me at the shore’s edge to enjoy a musical welcome, “Greetings From Fox Island.” I composed this piece for Native flute or violin. My performance takes place at the church on Fox Island where I first heard the sounds of the violin.

Second melody. Teacher.

Although my parents loved music, they were not trained as musicians. It was not until I was ten-years-old and living in the urban setting of Tacoma, Washington that I had the opportunity to study the violin. I remember the day Mr.
Lee came to our classroom, violin case under his arm. He took out the instrument and played. I signed up and my life of dream began.

I do not know if I chose to become a teacher or if teaching chose me. As I traveled from childhood through adolescence there came a time when I made a choice about my career path. Although I had invitations to enter the world of business and an interest in the genetic sciences, it was my service to youth and music that won my attention for study. I became a music teacher to somehow give to others the opportunity that had been provided me.

I wish those around me had embraced my decision to become a music teacher, but that was not the case. It was not my ability, but rather the profession of teaching itself that hailed caution from those I expected to be the greatest advocates. Teachers were trying to dissuade me from becoming a teacher. The heart of their concern was the devaluation of the profession in combination with the politic over funding that adversely influenced the condition of teaching. I held these words of caution and continued to pursue my path to be a teacher.

It has been over twenty-five years since I first entered a classroom as a teacher. I entered teaching when mimeograph machines were still in use. As those who had tried to dissuade me from education had predicted, my journey in education has been a bumpy one. I have experienced two teacher strikes, two reduction-in-force actions, and numerous program reduction discussions initiated because of budgetary concerns. My fellow arts educators and I are the first to feel the pressures on the system of schooling when finances tighten.
Although we are over two centuries into the experience of common schooling in this nation, reading, writing, arithmetic, and science comprise the core of the curriculum, while arts education remains at the margin. Because of the marginal placement of the Arts in the curriculum, when there are budget concerns the Arts feel this impact first. The combined pressure of standards-based schooling with the federal legislation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, commonly known as “No Child Left Behind (NCLB),” have placed the traditional core of schooling on high boil. Although the Arts serve as one of the strongest models of how to achieve high standards in learning, the place for arts education within a high-pressured system is diminished, as are opportunities for students to learn what is offered from these disciplines. There simply is no place on thirty-seven category NCLB report for schools to report student learning in the Arts.

Year after year, I continued to wade through the politic of schooling seeking ways find place and space within the curriculum for students to learn to play violin, viola, cello, and string bass. Why? Because I know from my own experience the difference this kind of learning makes in the lives of human beings. Because of this, I stubbornly refuse to relinquish my hope of this possibility for all children.

Throughout my career, the learners I am most at home with are middle school-aged students. I thrive being in the company of these high-energy, rebellious, trying-to-figure-it-all-out learners. We work on trying to figure it all out much as one works on a puzzle: individual pieces finding fit to form parts, then these parts fitting with other parts to form the whole.
Within my heart, I continue to claim that education itself is a social justice issue. As an educator concerned about education as an issue of social justice, I pay attention to both the quantity and the quality of instruction that is available to all students. Does inequality exist within our system of schooling? Yes.

I first became sensitized to the issue of inequality during my time with the Tacoma Public Schools in Washington State. There existed within this district, as there does undoubtedly in districts throughout our land, an inequity of educational opportunity based upon geography. One inequality that existed was around geographic location of schools for which tenured staff chose and were assigned to teach. Those who had seniority often chose to teach in the more affluent schools the north end section of the city. After the north end, the next choice for tenured teachers were schools located in the south end of town. The last choice for tenured teachers were schools located on the east end part of the city which consisted of heavily economically-disadvantaged families. Disturbingly, the pattern of the assignment of tenured teachers followed a socio-economic pattern. To the extent that there is a relationship between the seasoned experience of an educator and improved quality of learning, this inequality existed in a pronounced way.

At the heart of the issue of inequality is privilege. In my journey of recent, this issue of privilege raised through our scholarly discussions continues to leave me unsettled. My experience is directly influenced by privilege. I am a female who reads and writes. I am a female who has completed high school, undergraduate, graduate school and I am now in a Ph.D. program. I have had
opportunities for education not available to everyone. In this respect, I live a life of privilege.

To find way within the system for students to learn through the Arts, I have learned to be an advocate. As an advocate, I became a student of the system itself. The key questions of my inquiry for two decades have been: Who makes decisions? How are these decisions reached? What information do decision-makers need to make space for arts education within the curriculum? What form does this information need to take to be helpful to decision-makers? I have honed my thinking as a strategist by asking and seeking answers to these kinds of questions. As I sought information, I did so trying to get a more complete glimpse of the bigger picture. My work as a practitioner-advocate eventually led me being identified as a leader.

*Third melody. Practitioner-leader.*

The first time “leader” was attached to me was by the teacher’s union. I was invited to participate in a New Leader Training session sponsored by the Washington Education Association (WEA). Because my father was a union leader with the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, it was not difficult for me to enter the world of unionism. I had grown up in union home. However, it did take some effort for me to translate blue-collar unionism to white-collar unionism. For me, the key to the translation of unionism came from understanding that sweat is realized as much through the labor of intellectual and social work as it is through manual labor. The conditions of work, and the need to advocate for favorable conditions to achieve positive outcome in the work are just
as important in intellectual and social contexts as they are in physical contexts. Ultimately, the transition into my work with the teacher’s union allowed me to synthesize and express two additional passions: concern about the profession of teaching and adult learning.

I found within the WEA, an organization that fully embraced the principles of adult education, a place in which the life experience of adult learners serves as the foundation to create ever-expanding opportunities of learning for adults. For several years I learned from and with some of the most masterful adult educators of our time. To Raymond Wlodkowski, professor with Antioch University Seattle, thank you for sharing your masterful teaching by teaching about adult education even as you modeled these principles as an educator. It is your teaching that allowed me to enter this world of adult education. To Gary King and Diane Schmidtke of the WEA, thank you also for your work as masterful adult educators, and for guiding myself and other adult learners on a path of empowerment through learning. This path allows a way for a beaten-down and oppressed group, educators, to reclaim the passion and power of our way, teaching and learning.

Through the WEA, I had the opportunity to reflect upon the condition of schooling, including the role of unionism. I received training to become an advocate, a mediator, and a bargainer. I had the opportunity to serve my colleagues and profession in this way. My work with the union led to additional opportunity as a leader. I was subsequently invited to become a school administrator.
For six years I worked in a school administrator role. I served as a middle school assistant principal for four years and as a district office administrator for two years. My work as a school administrator was not without accomplishment. I provided the support and consistency for the staff at the middle school to heal from the ravages of polarizing leadership that had rendered an otherwise effective group of educators incapable of attending to the mission at hand, teaching and learning. Through process and Being, I helped this group of educators find and reclaim their voices. In doing so, we reclaimed our instructional focus and found ways to provide additional opportunities for some of the most at-risk learners in our region. The healing environment created allowed the adults to continue their professional growth. The environment provided grounding for entering educators to firmly plant themselves on a growing path and allowed support for those already on their path within the profession to deepen their knowledge and skills. The environment also let those who were retiring from the profession the opportunity to do so with dignity and recognition. Although the work was good, I was not satisfied with these new roles.

My dissatisfaction came not from the relational aspect of the work, but rather from the function of the work itself. As I was doing this work, I also entered the Pd. D. program at Antioch University and was introduced to the work of Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus. While reading their work I had an epiphany. Bennis and Nanus make the distinction between leadership and management, between leader and manager:

There is a profound difference between management and leadership, and both are important. “To manage” means “to
bring about, to accomplish, to have charge of or responsibility for, to conduct.” “Leading” is “influencing, guiding in direction, course, action, opinion.” The distinction is crucial. Mangers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right thing. The difference may be summarized as activities of vision and judgment – effectiveness – versus activities of mastering routines – efficiency. (20)

The naming of this distinction allowed a way for me to name my dissatisfaction within my professional experience. For the majority of my time I was expected to manage the schooling process. I came to see that the function of management is to maintain the status quo. Because of my overall discontent about the inequalities of schooling I saw playing out each and every day, I had no interest in maintaining the status quo. I also came to see that the role in which I served was very prescriptive and did not allow for the kind of creativity where real change happens. I had felt my way to outer margins where real change happens, but only got near enough to taste it for a moment, and found that the constriction of the role itself was killing me, literally.

In this way, change began with me. As I reflected upon the observation of Benus and Nanus, I found that I did not entirely agree with their conclusion about the distinction of leaders and managers. Leaders are those who do the right thing and do things right. Both qualities are essential.

I informed the Assistant Superintendent responsible for Human Resources of my intention to move on. He valued my work and allowed me the opportunity to create a role within the district to provide support for the Arts and Health and Fitness programs. Again, the work with my colleagues was rewarding and profound. One of the more rewarding experiences was directly connecting our
Arts educators and program with Washington State’s education reform. Within two years, our district became known and recognized for its commitment to arts education. Four teachers from our district became the core training team for arts assessment in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts for all arts educators throughout our state.

Although the work was rewarding, again I found the role as a district administrator to be limiting. I came to understand that further “up” the administrative ladder I climbed, the more disconnected I became to what it is that I am really all about: music, teaching and learning, adult education, and assessment.

*Fourth melody. Change begins with me.*

One and a half years ago I allowed mySelf to crumble. This crumbling was the result of experiencing several significant losses at the same time. My marriage ended, I sold my home, and took leave from my job all at the same time. I was stripped of, or stripped mySelf of many of the anchors used to name and create identity. During this time I also withdrew from my involvement with professional organizations and my scholarly community. All of this stripping and withdrawing left me naked and vulnerable. In this state of defenselessness, I came to find both the best and worst of experience. I have come to name the worst of this experience as domestic violence. I now must claim that I am a survivor of domestic violence. I learned that the whole of relation is neither all good, nor all bad. Experience itself is a blending of bitter and sweet.
During this time I read *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* authored by Robert Pirsig and began my contemplation of quality and experience. Reading this work at a time when, through a process of shedding and withdrawal, I was most vulnerable and sensitive, allowed me to step into the place of voidness of experience. This is a place to me. It is a place within spirit existence not given to definition by geography or history. From this place of spirit existence all other manifestations of experience come to be expressed. I do not name this place as dark or darkness. This place is where all of experience is manifest: light and dark, sound and silence, dream and awake. It is a place where I feel the flow of the current of the River around and through mySelf simultaneously. It is the place where I listen to story from the Leaves of Trees. It is the place where I accept that life of the Salmon is keenly and directly connected to my life and that I am of Salmon and Salmon is of me. It is the place where Creation itself and all of her expressions like beauty, love, poetry, music, dance, and art flow. It is the source of inspiration. This is where I traveled with my naked and vulnerable Self. I traveled to this place told to me as a child when I walked along the shore of Fox Island listening to the rocks and shells. It is not that I took leave of my senses, but rather that I came to sense in another way. It was during this time that I restored my senses. To do this I fished, farmed, and began teaching again.

I spent time with a friend at Black Lake fishing. Fishing time was time to listen, talk, be, and dream. The lake was my sanctuary, my retreat. The rocking motion of the dock and the lapping sounds of the waters soothed my aching soul. I came to enjoy reading the ever changing waters as one reads a really good
book. I absorbed her smells through my pores. I became part of her life and her life became part of me: the Eagles, the Ducks, the Trout, the Bluegill, the Perch, the Catfish, the Trees, the Sun, the Moon and Stars. Sunrise and Sunset, Fog, Fog lifting, Mist and Rain, gentle Breeze and white-capping Winds. This was wonderful time with a wonderful friend.

During this time I also moved to McCleary, Washington and lived on five acres of land. I moved here to be with the spirit of my grandfather. As I understand the story, my mother’s father experienced emotional and physical abuse from his father. When he was thirteen he left the family home in Arkansas to come to be with his older sister here in Washington State. He harvested the forest as his work. As he worked, he matured into a young man. All of the bounty and beauty of this forested land nurtured his body and soul as he matured. Even as he was a part of it, it too, became part of him. Eventually, he left Washington State and moved to California where he met my grandmother and so on. What I remember of my grandfather was his deep love of the Earth expressed through amazing gardens. Wherever Grandpa lived there would be a glorious garden overflowing with vivid colors and wonderful smells.

I moved to McCleary to be with my grandfather as I traveled through my own transformation. I chose McCleary, or rather McCleary chose me that I might be of the land that had once nurtured my grandfather in his transformation. I came to call my home in McCleary “My place under the Stars.” Every night I would find my rest under the canopy of the night sky and I would sleep deeply.
Each day I worked with the Earth and established several gardens. In the prime of my garden’s time, the fragrance of fresh flowers greeted my nose as I entered my home. Through the open window of my bedroom, this sweet scent was the first thing I would smell each morning when I awoke and the last thing I would smell as I drifted to slumber each night. Color surrounded me in various shapes and sizes. As wonderful as the flowers were, it was the vegetable garden that was most splendid. The nutrition of the Salmon returned to the Earth yielded vegetable crops that grew in abundance and to unimaginable size oozing delicious flavor.

It was also during this time that I came to teach again. My friend heard my story. He heard that I missed teaching. My friend lived in an RV park by the lake. One day he told me about a young girl who lived in this RV park who wanted to learn to play the violin. I met her to hear her story. Yes, she did want to learn to play the violin. I spoke with her mother who agreed to allow her daughter to play. I purchased an instrument for her to use. This is how violin music began within this village. This young girl became the first member of the Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble. The Shooting Stars emerged from my experience of healing. It is a blend of passion, learning, teaching, and friendship.

Through the development of my teaching with the Shooting Stars, I came to the shores of Wa-He-Lut Indian School located at Frank’s Landing by the Nisqually River. Although one may come to the profession of teaching as a calling, one actually teaches only by invitation. I was invited to teach the children at Wa-He-Lut Indian School as a substitute the spring of 2006. I was invited and
taught middle school students math and science during the 2006-07 academic year. Although I am a teacher, it is my learning that I wish to speak of.

I came to learn about what is important to this community. I came to understand that learning is not merely an issue of content, but also of process, that both content or “what” and the method or “how” is part of learning. I began my learning by watching and listening. Story is at the heart of my listening. I learn as I listen to story and for story.

Learning within the context of teaching at Wa-He-Lut Indian School, there is the story of the school itself and the history of this land and these people. There is the story of each student, each family, and each tribe. There is the story of other adults I work with. There is the story of elders who share that we may learn. Even now I smell the winds of the River and hear her flowing waters. There is the story of the River and all of Creation that is sustained and nurtured here. Learning to listen this way is the journey of a spiral. As I learn, I continue to learn how to learn.

*Fifth melody. Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble.*

The Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble was born through a conversation I had with a friend in the summer of 2004. Shooting Stars is the name that emerged as my friend and I tried to articulate our friendship. This name represents the resulting birth of galaxies that are created when two stars collide. My friend listened to my story and heard that I missed teaching. The reflection of his listening came back to me as an invitation, “There is a girl in the park who wants to learn to play violin.” The “park” referred to an RV park located near a
local lake. The Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble began with one student who wanted to learn to play the violin.

The Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble is itself a song. Its melody is comprised of learning, connecting, and reaching the lives and experiences of individuals, families, and communities that may not otherwise be served this way. It is a melody that I follow even as I am part of its creation. The Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble travels like the River through the lives of many performers and listeners. Its articulation has reached dozens of adult and school-aged student performers. Its expression has reached both Native and non-Native communities in our region. Its expression crosses the boundaries of socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. Its expression has embraced the ancestry of all peoples and insists that regardless of age, we are all learners and beginners. Its expression allows us to connect with passion that music provokes. The music brought forth by performers has reached residents of nursing homes and Alzheimer homes, tribal gatherings, service organizations, school children and elders. The recorded music of these performers travels to places and spaces that I am not even aware of. The music sings back to the Stars from which it was born.

Once a week we come together to share in the learning of our music. Once a month we share our music in performance with others. Our instruments are violin, viola, Native drum, Native flute, rainstick, and voice. The music we play and perform consists of folk tunes, beginner arrangements of classical composers, fiddle tunes, Christmas music, and our own compositions. We began
composing music because the music that we were meant to play had not yet been written. Our music-making as performers and composers continues.

Greetings from Ashley

Hello there my name is Ashley. When I was a young a girl, I had a lot of dreams. One of the very many was to play the violin. The first time I ever met Laura Lynn was at I-Hop. We enjoyed shibby pancakes and that was the first day I ever learned how to do treble clefs. Since the last 4 years kids to adults of all ages have learned how to play music. Not only did we learn music, but we learned friendship :]

Interlude of the Postmodern Condition

Asking myself in deep prayer:

What is it that has happened
to leave the foundation
of all knowing
so shaken?

There emerges within my heart’s mind
an image --

A mushrooming cloud of white death
whose wind-spread spores
resound the theme of annihilation
of entire and multiple species
of Creation.

I was born
to this deeply unsettled memory
to a time long after
the expression of this image was unleashed
from the womb of Einstein's dilemma.

From the womb of Einstein’s dilemma
Why is understanding the postmodern condition so important to me? The image of the exploded atomic bomb haunts my dream, my memory, my Being. Einstein’s dilemma is the realization that the technical capacity of humans far exceeds our moral and ethical capacity to reason. An unimaginable chasm of being has been created because our ability “to do” extends so beyond our capacities to view and judge the right or wrong of our doing.

The context of postmodernism.

It is not my intention in this work to expound upon the text of postmodern theory. However, through our experience my co-collaborators and I, and the study itself are firmly positioned and subject to conditions of the postmodern. As a scholar I have encountered other scholars during this journey who have influenced and heightened my appreciation of the postmodern context. These scholars and scholar-practitioners helped me to name my experience, and to more clearly, in a mud-water sort of way, describe some of the framing structures that allow for my contextualization. This influence is an essential issue of positioning. I enter this brief discussion compelled to honor the ethical obligation accepted by scholars to name, when possible, the places where others have influenced experience.

Valerie Malhotra Bentz and Jeremy Shapiro suggest that postmodernity may be understood from the convergence of three things: postmodern historical situation, postmodern culture, and postmodern theory. Trends such as the emergence of a global market economy, the accelerated integration of information technology, the awareness and realignment of the limits of human activity pushed
against environmental limits, the redefinition of the political and social movement marked by the end of the Cold War, and enfranchisement and participation of previously suppressed or marginalized groups collectively distinguish this period from previous periods of history.

The second converging point is postmodern culture. The arts provide a window to the changing nature of the characteristics of culture. Previous distinctions as those made between modern, classical, or traditional culture and “high” and “mass” culture are dissolved. Bentz and Shapiro describe that beyond form, “postmoderism in the arts severs the artist from the modernist philosophy of history” (23). The expression of postmodern visual, performing, and literary artists denies “both the objective reality to represent and a self to express” (24).

Postmodern theory is the final point of intersection described by Bentz and Shapiro. Postmodern theory is, “a particular body of thought and theory, especially in philosophy, the humanities, and the social sciences, that constitutes a break with the main tradition of modern philosophy, and social theory since the seventeenth century” (24). Postmodern theory suggests that those constructs such as identity of self, the direction or meaning of history, the absolute nature of knowledge that are positioned within modern assumptions are fodder for deconstruction. In this deconstruction a more fluid, contextually based sense of reality emerges. How do we redefine and reorient our thought and practices in this shifted reality? The Arts provide experiences with process that allow for exploration that lead to invented practice.
In their work *Postmodern Education*, Stanley Aronowitz and Henry Giroux comment on three distinct aspects of postmodernism which have epistemological implications. First, as we move into the period of postmodernism we are freed of the limitations imposed by modernist images of progress and history. Aronowitz and Giroux describe:

> This is a world in which capital no longer is restricted by the imperatives of nationalism; it is a culture in which the production of electronic information radically alters traditional notions of time, community, and history, while simultaneously blurring the distinction between reality and image. In the postmodern age, it becomes more difficult to define cultural differences by means of hegemonic colonialist notions of worth and possibility, and more difficult to define meaning and knowledge through the master narratives of “great men.” The modernist emphasis on totality and mastery has given way to a more acute understanding of suppressed and local histories, along with a deeper appreciation for struggles that are contextual and specific in scope. In addition, in the age of instant information, global networking, and biogenetics, the old distinction between high and popular culture collapses, as the historically and socially constructed nature of meaning becomes evident, dissolving universalizing claims to history, truth, or class. All culture is worthy of investigation, and no aspect of cultural production can escape its own history within socially constructed hierarchies of meaning. (115)

As images of progress and history are transformed, so to is the reference point of how we understand individual and collective experience. “Postmodernism presents itself as a critique of all forms of representations and meanings” while rejecting “universal reason as a foundation for human affairs, and poses as alternatives forms of knowing that are partial, historical, and social” (116). This
implies that not only is the methodology of how knowledge is acquired changed, but also that the very essence of what constitutes knowledge is itself changed.

Aronowitz and Giroux also consider the dynamic experience of the subject noting that “postmodernism offers a series of referents for rethinking how we are constituted as subjects within a rapidly changing set of political, social, and cultural conditions” (117). Aronowitz and Giroux suggest that scholars of the postmodern tradition are working in a dynamic environment where the subjects engaged in knowledge making, the acquisition of knowledge, and knowledge itself are all in flux.

Margaret Wheatley brings to this discussion ideas that are reflected through the physical sciences to the social sciences. She shares a story about how she entered the realm of new science explaining:

Like most important journeys, mine began in a mundane place – a Boeing 757, flying soundlessly above America. High in the air as a weekly commuter between Boston and Salt Lake City, with long stretches of reading time broken only by occasional offers of soda and peanuts, I opened my first book on the new science – Fritjof Capra’s The Turning Point, which describes the new world view emerging from quantum physics. This provided my first glimpse of a new way of perceiving the world, one that comprehended its processes of change, its deeply patterned nature, and its dense webs of connection.

I don’t think it’s accidental that I was introduced to a new way of seeing at 37,000 feet. The altitude only reinforced the message that what was needed was a larger perspective, one that took in more of the whole of things. From that first book, I took off, reading as many new science books as I could find in biology, evolution, chaos theory, and quantum physics. Discoveries and theories of new science called me away from the details of my own field of management and raised me up to a vision of the inherent orderliness
of the universe, of creative processes and dynamic, continuous change that still maintained order. This was a world where order and change, autonomy and control were not the great opposites that we had thought them to be. It was a world where change and constant creation were ways of sustaining order and capacity. (Leadership and the New Science 3-4)

Unlike Wheatley, I was at my desk in front of my laptop when I entered the world of the physicists and systems thinkers. The problem I was working through was the “undialogue-like” pattern of the on-line dialogue of the group I was assigned to learn with in my doctorate program. This was my introduction to the work of David Bohm.

As a physicist, Bohm is concerned about issues of space, time, matter, and energy. Ultimately, changes in our understanding of any one of these four elements leads to a shift in reality itself. Through his science he wrestled with fragmentation and wholeness, language and thought, reality and knowledge as a process, and the nature of consciousness (Wholeness and the Implicate Order). Bohm did not confine his curiosity to the physical world. He extended the understanding of matter making the connection between the physical and mental (Unfolding Meaning). It took me several months to complete that journey, to open myself to be in Dr. Bohm’s world, where physicist, philosopher, and artist converge.

In his work, Leadership Without Easy Answers, Ronald Heifetz lays foundation to bridge the philosophic and theoretical expressions to those in practice. He discusses three different kinds of work or situations facing organizations. Type I situations are technical in nature where both the problem
and solution are clear. Type II situations are characterized as being both technical and adaptive. For these situations the problem is clear, however, the solution requires learning. Type III situations are adaptive and require that both the definition of the problem and the solution be learned. I believe that the issue of our ecological sustenance and existence as a species is a Type III situation requiring that both the problem and the solution be learned.

Robert Fritz highlights the relationship between structures of organizations and the creative process. He comments:

> We have been trained to think of situations that are inadequate for our aspirations as problems. When we think of them as problems, we try to solve them. When you are solving a problem, you are taking action to have something go away: the problem. When you are creating, you are taking action to have something come into being: the creation. Notice that the intentions of these actions are opposite. (11)

Fritz reminds that navigating the terrain of the postmodern condition requires that we develop our capacity to learn and create in multiple and varied modes.

I entered into this discussion through reflection upon a manifestation of human expression of unimaginable consequence, my country’s detonation of a weapon of mass destruction upon innocent civilians. This action is not a singular occurrence, but a pattern of behavior. As further evidence, I invoke memory of the systematic mistreatment of this land’s First People or the experience of Africans brought to the shores of this land as slaves. The wounding effect to my consciousness compels me to seek redress through healing and forgiveness.
This pattern of wounding behavior continues and simply must stop for there to be healing.

The path through the terrain of the postmodern that we navigate is not clearly defined. This path appears more like an impressionist’s painting than a clear and defined photograph. My amateur appreciation of the Impressionists affords me the opportunity to explore this terrain of fuzzy form. As an observer of the work of the Impressionists, I appreciate that the form represented is suggested, not demanded. The responsibility of observation becomes one of paying attention as if walking on an unknown dimly light path. This same sense of acute vagueness applies to description of the postmodern condition. This path is yet to be defined. Form is suggested through the words and thoughts of scholars. The construction of a path of knowing is a particular blend of that which is suggested by author combined with the meaning that is created through interpretation of the reader. Embedded is a vast wealth of emergent theoretical and methodological concerns.

Objective truth is denied. Knowing is partial, historical and social. There is an acute awareness of the deconstruction of past assumptions that form reality. Paradox is viewed as essential. The process of change is considered as critical as the products of change. A new relationship is created between that which is of matter and that which is non-material. The delinking of time from space allows for reality to be understood not as expression of the linear, but whole and round like the drum. Waves of sound resonate like the rippling of a drop of water meeting the calm surface of the lake.
Being through words places language at the center of the creation of reality. Being through words opens limitless possibilities of created and invented dimensions of reality. The opening of limitless dimensions of reality desperately cries for new language that allows for the flow of paradox and uncertainty, seeking language that allows for the redefining and rebalance.

Recently, I began my read of *The Ever Present Origin*, written by the Swiss cultural philosopher, Jean Gebser. I was intrigued to find that Gebser, like myself is writing in part, as response to the detonation of the atomic bomb. I was equally thrilled to find that the Arts have a prominent place in his reflective process as a scholar. The particular manifestation of product shared in text is distinctive and unique. I placed a question before myself as I engaged in this experience of reading: What is the metaphor of his reason? Asking this question, assuming that the foundation of reason is of metaphor as to fact, acknowledges the fuzziness of the path and the terrain we now walk. Although our path is not well-defined, I believe the essential nature of what is at stake as we walk this path is.

If this planet is to survive, indeed thrive, and we are to be present as a species, we must find and develop our ability to live in balance. I believe that our disciplines whether they are in the arts and humanities or the sciences must be collectively focused toward that end. I believe that we must fully engage individually and collectively in this work. It is time for the music to begin!
Melody Music.

To put to words moments of lived experience.
Of mine and Others.

Music is what brought us together.
what we bring forward.
Our story is embedded within her story.

Music stirs us to our deepest experience
and comes forth
from that place
that is beyond words.
Music is where we live.

Before language is music. Music lives within the experience of sound.
Silence is part of that experience. Sound carves from the vast and limitless realm
of all experience a domain specific to music. This domain is ultimately a gift given
by Creator to creation. I do not offer empirical proof that Creator exists, or that
creation exists, or even that Music is a gift given by Creator to creation. As a poet
I know that the songbird’s song is a gift. The shimmer of wind through a tree’s
leaves is a gift. The crackling sound of the fire is a gift. The murmur of water over
pebbles of a stream’s bed is a gift. As Kenny suggests, music is the gift of the
ineffable (Music and Life xv).

Music resides within creation in ways that we as humans may not always
hear. The stars sing. The moon sings. The creatures of the water sing. Stones
sing. There is music through and within universes beyond our own. Music exists
whether it is heard or not. Music extends beyond that which is known as the
“heard.”
Music may also be received in other ways. Music may be received as felt experience. Music exists not only as song, but also as movement and action. The capacity to bring forth created sound is an action of music. Music is the action of human beings imitating creation. Improvisation and composition are the actions of human beings conversing directly with Creator. When we live within music, like breath itself or the rolling waves of the ocean, we receive and we give.

It is not my interest to deconstruct music by peeling away its many and wondrous layers to find some single and essential core. Such an activity would be ongoing and never ending and in the end serve no purpose. Music itself defies this kind of treatment of analysis. Kenny captures the heart of my concern sharing her thoughts about language, description and the music therapy experience:

> It is important to emphasize the non-verbal nature of the music therapy experience. Trying to describe it or explain it in the “terms” of verbal language, in a sense must sacrifice some of its essence. And this language and description process seeks ‘essence.’ (85)

I wish to sing of some of the more shining and brilliant qualities of music’s wholeness that are essential to this study, those that come to serve as a theoretical foundation. In the following narrative, I will explore harmonic rhythms that support, enhance, and are directly connected to the melodies of this study: music as experience, music as a particular expression of vibration, and music as a life sustaining force.
Harmonic Rhythm: Theoretical Connections.

Music as experience of senses.

Our relationship with music is as felt experience. Music is an ongoing, never-ending constant common to all and simultaneously greater than and particular to each being. Our encounter with music is the self brought into and brought forth through experience of receiving through our senses.

In his work *Art as Experience*, John Dewey concerned with connecting our experience with and expression through the arts to our everyday lives, describes ‘sense’ the following way:

“Sense” covers a wide range of contents: the sensory, the sensational, the sensitive, the sensible, and the sentimental, along with the sensuous. It includes almost everything from bare physical and emotional shock to sense itself – that is, the meaning of things present in immediate experience. Each term refers to some real phase and aspect of life of an organic creature as life occurs through sense organs. (22)

Dewey instructs that “sense” is multifaceted in expression. He connects these varied expressions to experience as “phase or aspect of an organic creature” that occurs specifically through the sense organs. Further, he positions sense within the dimensions of time and space as “present in immediate experience.” All past and all future experience is embedded within present experience. This embedded-ness of past and future within the present allows for expression of parts and whole simultaneously. This expression of simultaneous parts and whole is completeness.

When one thinks of receiving music, the sense organ that comes to mind is the ear. George Leonard offers a careful description of the ingenious and
complicated system of the human ear. He begins, “the ear evolved from the gill, and its strange mechanisms were built upon an organ designed for something entirely different” (36). He describes the intricacies of anatomy that come to receive and respond to vibration as motion that “moves the eardrum back and forth only 40 billionth of an inch, which is about ten times the diameter of the smallest atom” (36) and the 24,000 or so tiny hairs connected to receptor cells. He marvels that these vibrations come to be known in pattern by the brain as sound commenting:

Our sense of hearing is indeed a wonder, surpassing sight in many ways. When an artist blends three pigments, for example, our eyes can see the resulting blend only as a single new color. When clarinet, flute, and oboe join together, our ears can hear the resulting blend as a single new sound, and can also pick out the three ingredients within it. (37)

What is suggested in Leonard’s description is that we can know distinct expressions of sound such as clarinet, flute, and oboe simultaneously. In the same sounding, we may also know the new sound that is the blend of clarinet, flute, and oboe. We may also know simultaneously the three ingredients of clarinet, flute, and oboe as we know the new sound created with the blend. Our sense of hearing will allow us to know parts and the whole of a sound experience simultaneously.

Leonard continues to develop the concept of individual parts and wholes in his consideration of holography. He offers a wonderful description of the process of holography where the impression of an object is transmitted to and projected from film in a 3-D form, allowing the observer to “move your head from side to
side while looking at it” allowing you to “see around things, bringing to view parts of the scene that might otherwise be hidden” (68).

Leonard shares in delight that when a hologram is cut in half, “the entire picture is contained in both halves. When these halves are cut in half, the same thing is true, and so on down to the smallest fragment” (68). He adds that as the pieces get smaller the image gets fuzzier. Although the resolution of the image is lessened, the whole picture is still there. Leonard explains that it is the relationship of an object’s parts to its whole and the whole to its parts that allows for the continued expression of the whole through its parts.

Continuing his consideration of the senses describing qualities of smell and taste, Leonard suggests that the “senses are related. They differ simply in that they use different means for transforming fast-pulsing rhythmic waves into rates of vibration that can be handled by the brain” (40). The example Leonard offers of the interrelation of senses is the case of the vestibular sense, which allows us to stand upright, to start and stop and whirl and tumble without becoming disoriented. He suggests, “The vestibular system is richly interwoven with the brain circuitry of the other senses, especially that of sight, hearing, and the various feeling senses” (40).

If you have ever had the opportunity to stand near a drum when it is being played, you would feel the sound of vibration through your skin. You would see the vibration of the skin as the mallet strikes. These few strokes would allow you to know with certainty that the experience of sound is not merely a heard
experience. It is also an experience of touch and of sight, of taste and of smell. The experience of sound engages and involves multiple senses.

Gleaned from these observations is insight that music is an experience of the senses. What is all this sensing of the heard? For what purpose? Dewey suggests that, “The senses are the organs through which the live creature participates directly in the on-goings of the world about him” (22). In this way, it is the sense organs that become the threshold where the live creature engages with the world. “Experience is the result of, the sign, and the reward of that interaction of organism and environment which, when it is carried to full, is a transformation of interaction into participation and communication” (22).

My contemplation turned to this place where a living creature meets the world about her and is transformed into action of participation and communication. This is an important place. This place has been named by the cultural anthropologist Victor Turner as liminal. Turner comments:

A limen, as the great French ethnologist and folklorist Arnold van Gennep has pointed out, is a “threshold,” and he uses the term to denote the central of three phases in what he called “rite of passage.” He looked at a wide variety of ritual forms, taken from most regions and many periods of history, and found in them a tripartite processual form. Rituals separated specified members of a group from everyday life, placed them in a limbo that was not any place they were in before and not yet any place they would be in, the returned them, changed in some way, to mundane life. (The Anthropology of Performance 25)

My attention to the liminal phase of ritual is heightened by Turner’s next words:
The second phase, *marginality* or *liminality*, is what interests us here, though, in a very cogent sense, the whole *ritual process* constitutes a threshold between the secular living and sacred living. The dominant genres of performance in societies at all levels of scale and complexity tend to be *liminal phenomena.* (25)

It is our senses that bring the being of humans to this place of the liminal with their environment. It is within this place of the liminal, at this threshold that humans receive music.

*Music as a particular expression of vibration.*

Of all sonic phenomena timbre carries the most complete information about a sound source and its location - but we have no language to describe it; with "no domain-specific adjectives, timbre must be described in metaphor or by analogy to other senses." (Fales qtd. in Olwage 205)

Like the intake of breath or the incoming wave of the ocean, in the previous section we explored music as a received experience of the senses. Now we turn to explore the breath out, the outgoing of the wave aspect of music, the art of making music. Although the music to be shared in this study will be made from the vibration of instruments, I begin with consideration of the human voice. The melodic nature of the violin closely imitates the voice.

When I reflect upon voice, I think about the qualities that converge to be known as voice. Kenny comments that approaching inquiry by viewing qualities is a "simple act of elaborating in a more poetic way" (126). "Timbre" is a wonderful musical term that describes the quality of sound. The following narrative is a celebration of aspects of timbre of voice.
The quality of each voice is unique. Leonard states that, “To be human, it seems clear is to have a personal identity. This identity is unique and irreversible” (50). He shares the work of musician-scientist Manfred Clynes whose work reveals through Beethoven and Mozart, the ever-present and personal essentic form. This form reveals, “Like a fingerprint, a voiceprint, a signature, or a chromosome, the inner pulse is an expression of identity” (56).

Kenny embraces the quality of uniqueness as essential in the development of theory. She states, “Uniqueness, in a sense, keeps us growing and alive. We rely on the uniqueness of others to keep the creative spirit active” (135). She adds that music therapists spend much time attending to clients as they “discover their identities, their attributes, aspects of their characters, not only as individuals, but also as social and cultural beings” (135). The music therapist creates space through process for the expression of inner pulse.

Grant Olwage traces the social history of vocal timbre in his study of the black South African choralism. Olwage’s work provokes my thinking in several ways and at many different levels. As an artist, I was reminded that as Olwage was writing his essay he had in mind a specific sound, a sound that was not included with the essay. I yearned to hear directly, the sound that resonated within his mind’s ear. Without this, I was left to recollect from my own experience what this sound might be.

I recalled my time in 1975 traveling throughout the British Islands with a white South African symphony group and a black South African vocal group during apartheid. I did not know the word “apartheid” before this trip. I made
acquaintance with members of both groups. I repeatedly enjoyed the performances of both groups and our conversations in the disco in the evenings. I came to know apartheid through their eyes as they tried to explain to me in terms I might understand why musicians who come from the same land could not ride in the same car on the train to London. I came to know that this gathering of musicians was not without controversy. I saw the leaflets calling others to boycott our performance. I came to know that the youth symphony orchestra I performed with was nearly denied the opportunity to travel and participate in this particular festival because of the “safety” concerns stemming from the controversy incited by apartheid. I cannot imagine my life without this experience. Olwage’s essay called me to remember this. Mostly, I remember the quality of those beautiful voices individually and collectively. I remember the timbre.

In his essay, Olwage cites the work of Roland Barthes who poses a concept of “the grain of the voice” to define the encounter between voice and language, “more precisely when voice is in the ‘dual position, a dual production – of language and of music’” (Barthes qtd. in Olwage 212). This discussion of “grain” is one of experience of the liminal and of pattern.

When I read about this idea of “grain,” I immediately thought of the wood that makes my instrument. I think of her distinctive pattern of waving lines of experience as tree before she came to be in the form of a violin. I think of the seasons that she came to know as a tree. I think of those creatures that were with her, who took sanctuary and who nurtured her. During the time I began to learn to smoke salmon, my breath was taken when I first saw the grain of the
smoked salmon was of the same pattern as the grain of the wood of my violin. Then I saw this same pattern upon the sand of the dunes at the ocean and upon the rippling of the waters of the lake created by a gentle wind. I saw this same pattern in the sky in a particular form of white clouds. What was revealed to me through these unique and distinct expressions of grain was the interconnectedness of all Creation. Kenny suggests that patterning is an aesthetic process. She describes:

We usually think of patterns as the business of artists. Artists see connecting patterns that we do not see. Composers hear connecting patterns that we do not hear….Connecting patterns break the barriers of linear thought and objective reality. They are concerned with a sensational reality having many benefits of which we are presently deprived. We can sense connections between ourselves, our environment, and our culture that bring us together through the sharing of patterns. (28)

When I consider the patterns that I recognize through grain, there are a couple of questions that emerge. What is this pattern imitating and recreating over and over and over again? What is this aesthetic?

Music as life-sustaining.

Parts and whole.
The whole coming to be seen through the parts.
Is the resolution clear enough for us to see to understand?
How do we know that what we feel and are seeing is just that: parts and whole, whole and parts?

My first remembered aesthetic moment was the moment I first heard the sounds of the violin that day in church when I was five-years-old. In that moment I was touched, the grain of my soul was raised. The sounds of those sweet strings
carried to my heart through gentle winds a welcome, I was home. I have traveled this way living the life of the aesthetic, sometimes intentionally, other times without self-imposed knowing.

The following words of Elaine Scarry reflect in many ways this journey:

The beautiful, almost without any effort of our own, acquaints us with the mental event of conviction, and so pleasurable a mental state is this that ever afterwards one is willing to labor, struggle, wrestle with the world to locate enduring sources of conviction – to locate what is true. Both in the account that assumes the existence of the immortal realm and in the account that assumes the nonexistence of the immortal realm, beauty is a starting place for education. (31)

Scarry entertains an exploration of beauty carefully describing to definition. She reveals through description that "beauty brings copies of itself into being" (3). Scarry invites contemplation of errors we have made about beauty. Our errors tend to fall into the categories of either overcrediting or undercrediting something with the attribution of beauty. At Scarry's invitation, I contemplated the error of beauty that I am working through. My error is not one of attribution, but of being. I am learning to rebalance with the understanding that beauty is to behold, but not to hold on to. Within the space of the liminal, I am learning to trust the fluidity of being.

A verse from Homer's The Odyssey, is Scarry's launching point to tease out four qualities of beauty. Beauty is sacred. Beauty is unprecedented. Beauty is lifesaving. Beauty incites deliberation. Rather than Homer's The Odyssey, it is Kenny's Field of Play that opens for me a passageway to explore these qualities of beauty described by Scarry.
Strongly influenced by her Indigenous heritage and worldview, Kenny developed a theoretical model to describe the music therapy process. This model emerged as she responded to the urgent, resonating, and essential question: “Is it possible to formulate a language to describe the music therapy experience and create one of many possible general models which accurately reflect music process, yet can be understood and used by professionals in other fields?” (82). What emerged through her creative deliberation of folding and unfolding her experience within the batter of ideas, models, theories, and philosophies of others was a multi-dimensional theoretical model composed of seven elements or fields.

She describes these elements of fields as the aesthetic, the musical space, the field of play, ritual, a particular state of consciousness, power, and creative process. The first three elements (the aesthetic, the musical space, the field of play), described as primary fields can be “considered stages in time, although not necessarily chronological time” (105). The latter four fields (ritual, a particular state of consciousness, power, creative process) are considered secondary fields. These fields are “contained in the field of play and represent a four-fold interactive set. They are not necessarily time-ordered and are determined more through personal tendencies, cultural orientation, and comfort of style” (105).

The field that is at the center, the heart of her model is the musical space. Kenny offers the following description this field:

The musical space is a contained space. It is an intimate and private field created in the relationship between the therapist and client. It is a sacred space, a safe place, which becomes identified as “home base,” a territory that is well known and secure. (100)
She adds that:

This is sacred space because of the nature of its origins and represents a delicate and powerful moment in time. It is the first time something new comes into being and indicates a receptivity to creation (change) and thus to resources contained field of the music space defined through the relationship between therapist and client. (100)

Reflected in this description of sacred space are qualities that may be true of all that is sacred. The sacred is contained. The sacred emerges in relation. The sacred is felt as safe, known and secure. The sacred embodies that which is by embracing in wholeness that which was and that which will be. The sacred holds paradox, such as delicate and powerful, in balance. Beauty is sacred.

Kenny suggests that what emerges from this sacred space is something new. That which is new is also unprecedented. That which is unprecedented may be of that which is or has been, but is unique and original. A central consideration of that which is unprecedented is the dilemma of uniqueness. Kenny explains:

In medieval logic and rhetoric, a dilemma was an argument in which a person had to choose between two alternatives, both of which were unfavorable. The alternatives in an argument were likened to the two horns of an animal, so a person on the horns of a dilemma would be tossed by the animal, whichever horn was grasped. (124)

The experience of the horns of a dilemma is the experience of paradox. Kenny comments that paradox “suggest a dialectic, a separation: self and other; alike and different; alienation and society” (124). The experience of paradox
places us in a state of being "tossed up." Kenny describes the experience of being “tossed up” as “a state of disequilibrium. It is non-dualistic. All of the boundaries shift. It is the territory of the unknown” (127).

Beauty is unprecedented. The unprecedented is unique. The expression of uniqueness as being “tossed up” brings us to the liminal of the known and the unknown. Freed of the limitations of precedent, the unprecedented emerges. Kenny explains, “When one is tossed up one is not limited by definitions. New definitions can be created in the music” (130).

In some way, that which is unprecedented must also be essential. That which is essential to a living organism is that which is life-giving, life-sustaining, or life-saving. In her work, *Homo Aestheticus*, Ellen Dissanayake suggests that art satisfies a biological human need. She comments:

> It is time to recognize that art is as normal, natural, and necessary as other things that people do, and to try to approach it ethologically, as a behavior…It might be easier to establish the viability of the idea of art as a human behavior by considering it further as a human need (or as the satisfying of a human need). As individuals, many of us know in our bones that we need art, whatever that may mean. (It is often an unformulated, subterranean feeling or conviction.) We cannot imagine life without music, or poetry, or man-made beauty in one or more of its many forms. We thirst or hunger for these, and feel deprived when they are absent. (33)

So essential are the arts to human existence that even under the most unimaginable of all experiences, the arts are evidenced. In his account of his three-year experience as a prisoner at Auschwitz and other Nazi prisons, Victor Frankl states, “As the inner life of the prisoner tended to become more intense, he
also experienced the beauty of art and nature as never before” (p. 62). He
describes the improvised cabaret that fatigued prisoners would attend, foregoing
their daily nourishment of bread. Frankl shares:

I awoke from the deep sleep of exhaustion on my
second night in Auschwitz – roused by music. The
senior warden of the hut had some kind of celebration
in his room, which was near the entrance of the hut.
Tipsy voices bawled some hackneyed tunes. Suddenly there was a silence and into the night a violin
sang a desperately sad tango, an unusual tune not
spoiled by frequent playing. The violin wept and a part
of me wept with it, for on that same day someone had
a twenty-fourth birthday. That someone lay in another
part of the Auschwitz camp, possibly only a few hundred or a thousand yards away, and yet completely
out of reach. That someone was my wife. (67)

Dissanayake argues that based on the criteria of energy investment,
pleasure, and universality, that involvement with art satisfies a “fundamental
human need,” a “deep human imperative” (34). She explains:

Art can be considered as a behavior (a “need,”
fulfillment of which feels good) like play, like food
sharing, like howling, that is something humans do
because it helps them to survive, and to survive better
than they would without it. (34)

Accounting for the basic and essential human need for art, Dissanayake
uses the term “make special,” to name the tendency for humans to differentiate
the ordinary from the extra-ordinary. Dissanayake emphasizes that “it is not art
(with all its burden of accreted connotations from the past two centuries) but
making special that has been evolutionarily or socially and culturally important
(56).
Dissanayake offers that humans make-special as dormena and enhancement. Her exploration of dormena, referring to “what is done (those “things done” and made special) in ritual ceremonies” (69), connects the behavior of art to ritual. In her discussion about art as a means of enhancement, Dissanayake shows how each of the arts can be understood as “cultural control (shaping and elaborating) of natural material that in its raw state if unfinished and unseemly” (107). She proposes that this shaping and elaborating is not one of control over, but as a means of subsistence involving “the things that individuals and societies most cared about” (107).

The fourth quality of beauty that Scarry suggests is that beauty incites deliberation. This suggests that our engagement with beauty is active, vibrant, and deeply provoked. Further, that which is provoked becomes fodder for our thought, invention, and action. I am provoked into resonating vibration by the concepts and ideas offered by Kenny, Leonard, Scarry, Frankl, Dissanayake and other scholars as I am hearing the sounds of Grandmother ocean tumbling her curling waves to shore. I am stirred hearing the eagle’s call in the morning as I am beholding the fullness of this night’s moon. This vibration occupies my consciousness and becomes inextricably connected to my thought, invention, and action. I offer that this quality of inciting deliberation serves as the magic of beauty.

Interlude: The Indigenous Voice

As this writing poured forth, there emerged in my mind’s ear the sound of the specific voices of individuals and the voice of the collective ensemble of many
individuals. The sounding of these voices, this collective voice sang to me from those whom I work with. Many of the people I work with are Native Americans. I am not native to this land. My people are from Eastern Europe and the Mid-East. Although I am not native to this land, I am sensitive to the resonating timbre that spills through our interaction and relationships. This timbre is distinctive in its quality, distinguished by a specific and collective present, past, and future of lived experience. Kenny describes:

As First Nations peoples we experience and define beauty in relation to the way we live. Our relationship to Mother Earth and to each other, the way we live together in a place, our appreciation of holistic aspects of life all coalesce to give a sense of coherence to our worlds. It is our ability to sense this coherence that can give us the confidence to express ourselves fully, define ourselves authentically, and assist us in the creation of our own stories. Through this sense of coherence, we know who we are and we can see the visions of who we might become in the future. (160)

I treasure this sounding. I value its uniqueness. I admire its enduring strength. I hold at the center of my heart concern about its delicate fragility. I celebrate this sounding as a vibration of beauty, of aesthetic. It is my wish through this scholarship and the work that continues beyond this opus to enhance and to amplify this particular timbre.
Melody of Dialogue.

What is this pattern, this magic of aesthetic?

A dialogue can be among any number of people, not just two. Even one person can have a sense of dialogue within himself, if the spirit of the dialogue is present. The picture or image that this derivation suggests is of a stream of meaning flowing among and through us and between us. This will make possible a flow of meaning in the whole group, out of which may emerge some new understanding. It’s something new, which may not have been in the starting point at all. It’s something creative. And this shared meaning is the “glue” or “cement” that hold people and societies together" (Bohm, *On Dialogue*)

Cissna and Anderson provide a framework to examine conceptions and characteristics of dialogue stating:

**Dialogue implies more than a simple back-and-forthness of messages in interaction; it points to particular process and quality of communication in which the participants “meet,” which allows for changing and being changed.** (10)

This description highlights that dialogue is processual and known by its quality. Central to the process is a meeting of participants. The quality of this meeting engages participants at the deep level of being changed and changing another.

Cissna and Anderson outline four conceptions of dialogue. First, dialogue is conceived as a form of human meeting or relationship. Secondly, embedded within the process of dialogue are the intricacies of human conversation. These intricacies are created by and support specific cultural norms. Thus, dialogue is
a cultural form of human knowing. Finally, dialogue creates a text to be understood and interpreted.

In addition to these conceptions of dialogue, Cissna and Anderson describe the following eight characteristics of dialogue.

1. Immediacy of presence. This presence is discussed as availability where participants are “uninterested in orchestrating specific outcomes or consequences” (13). The authors do make mention that in some instances, a “close familiarity with the discipline of a script or close rehearsal” (13) is necessary for participants to freely interact creatively. This certainly is the case for musicians involved in improvisation or composition within a specific idiom such as jazz.

2. Emergent unanticipated consequences. This characteristic underscores the improvisational quality of dialogue that allows for a flow that is free of imposed individual goals or agendas.

3. Recognition of “strange otherness.” The authors describe, “Each person knows that I am not you and that you are not me. Partners in dialogue imaginatively infer realities and perspectives that are not their own and communicate such interpretations tentatively” (14). I appreciate the tentative quality of interpretation that is suggested in this description. This quality of tentativeness requires and allows participants to continually reach toward knowing.
4. Collaborative orientation. This characteristic centralizes the concern “for self (and one’s own position) as well as for the other (and for the position advanced by the other)” (14) within the process of dialogue.

5. Vulnerability. The authors clearly state, “Dialogue involves risk. Participants not only expose their ideas to the scrutiny of another, they open themselves to the other’s ideas and hence to the possibility of being changed” (14). This characteristic implies a rigorous application of character and integrity of participants to maintain openness and a knowing of one’s self as one is changing.

6. Mutual implication. This characteristic acknowledges that each participant anticipates a listener or respondent by incorporating him or her into one’s utterances. The authors describe, “dialogue is a process in which speaker and listener interdepend, each constructing self, other, and their talk simultaneously” (14). Mutual implication differs from rehearsed response in that it occurs within the context of immediacy of presence.

7. Temporal flow. The authors comment, “Dialogue emerges from a past, fills the immediate present (and thus is experienced as “wide,” “deep,” “immersing,” or “enveloping” by participants), and anticipates and prefigures an open future” (15).

8. Genuineness and authenticity. This characteristic reinforces that each participant bestows to the other an assumption that “the other is speaking from experienced – not hypothetical, self-consciously strategic, fantasized, or deceptive – positions” (15).

Cissna and Anderson identify two characteristics of dominant American culture that work against dialogue: individualism and conversation narcissism and
pragmatism and the emphasis on technique. Contrasting these identified characteristics that work against dialogue to the previous characteristics of dialogue, the challenges become evident. For example, consider the contrast of individualism to collaborative orientation or conversation narcissism to mutual implication. The challenge to dialogue is one of self with other, conceptually and in practice. Contrast pragmatism to immediacy of presence and emphasis on technique to emergent unanticipated consequences. Again, the challenge to dialogue is clear.

In her work *Turning to One Another*, Margaret Wheatley suggests dispositions that support us as we meet challenges that may be posed as we meet and engage in dialogue. One disposition is courage. She defines courage this way:

*Courage* comes from the Old French word for heart (*cuer*). We develop courage for those things that speak to our heart. Our courage grows for things that affect us deeply, things that open our hearts. Once our heart is engaged, it is easy to be brave. (25)

Wheatley reminds us that we can “take courage” knowing that dialogue is a process we know how to do and that by engaging in this process we are “reawakening an ancient practice, a way of being together that all humans remember” (24). As we engage in this ancient practice, we may also take courage knowing that many people are longing to be in conversation again.

Another disposition that Wheatley suggests is that we be willing to be disturbed and to have our beliefs and ideas challenged by what others think. She explains:
No one person or perspective can give us the answers we need to the problems of today. Paradoxically, we can only find those answers by admitting we don’t know. We have to be willing to let go of our certainty and expect ourselves to be confused for a time. (35)

Wheatley encourages us to embrace that which surprises and disturbs us. She offers a set of principles (29) that allow for deeper conversation. The principles suggest that:

- We acknowledge one another as equals
- We try to stay curious about each other
- We recognize that we need each other’s help to become better listeners
- We slow down so we have time to think and reflect
- We remember that conversation is the natural way humans think
- We expect it to be messy at times

I appreciate that Wheatley suggests that these are principles and not rules. Principles allow one to enter as a novice the sacred space created, a space similar to Kenny’s musical space, where the changing of self through and with others may occur. This space allows for liminal expression and encounters.

Cissna and Anderson describe this “between” place as confirmation stating:

If we think of interpersonal communication ontologically, we are led to looking at the relationship between self and other that is created in and through communication…The *between* refers to the relationship – a third entity that requires both self and other, but is more than the sum of them. (23)

Abraham Kaplan describes this “between, ” this third entity, as communion.

He comments:
There is a certain kind of communication which we all know, very precious to us, very different from the kinds of communication which are most common and which are most commonly analyzed...Let me call it “communion” instead of communication. (38)

Kaplan describes that in communion, the relationship between persons is unmediated and direct. In communion, the communication is more than an exchange of conversation through words. For example, when eyes meet he explains:

The eyes are the window of the soul, as are the hands, the lips – everything with which we can communicate. When the eyes meet, it is not that something which lies between the two people connects them, but as though two human beings, for those brief moments have become one. (39)

Kaplan provides the following description of the experience of communicating in communion:

When people are in communion, when they are in this narrow sense really communicating with one another, the content of what is being communicated does not exist prior to and independently of that particular context. There is no message, except in a post-hoc reconstruction, which is fixed and complete beforehand. If I am really talking with you, I have nothing to say: what I say arises as you and I genuinely relate to one another. I do not know beforehand who I will be, because I am open to you just as you are open to me. This, I think, is what makes growth possible among human beings, and why it seems to me impossible really to teach unless you are learning; why you really cannot talk unless you are listening. You are listening not only to the other, you are listening to yourself. Indeed in a fundamental sense – I would even say in a quite literal sense – self and other are now so intertwined that we need new
conceptual frameworks, new categories to describe what is happening. (41)

The reality that Kaplan is suggesting in this vivid description of communion is one of paradox. Dialogue is not merely an experience of the said or the spoken, but instead is an experience of listening. What language do we have that speaks of dialogue through the experience of listening? What language do we have that communicates the “tossed-up” experience of our identity when we are in communion? What language acknowledges the courage required to be with our fear of self, other, and other-self that allows the opening for the expression of communion to occur?

Kaplan suggests that “the aim of all talk is to pave the way for silence. In all talk we move from silence to silence” (45). What is the language of silence?

Harmonic Rhythm of Listening.

Gently approach this threshold of silence
In quiet acceptance
Crossing to the unimagined.

Here, fear is an imagined thought.
That which is real invites and welcomes
to this place where poet and muse meet.

The threshold of silence marks a specific point in the pattern of artistic creating. It is the trough of the ripple created by a drop of rain touching the lake. It is the place between waves of particles that create light and sound. It is the blank page (or computer screen) that greets the writer. The silence I refer to is not the silence of oppression, but rather the silence of liberation. It is the state of
being one finds through deep meditation or when one is arrested by a moment of 
beauty.

Kaplan instructs that there are two kinds of silence:

There is the silence of hostility, of ignorance, of 
bewilderment, the silence which means that I have 
nothing to say to you nor you to me. There is the very 
different silence of understanding, of love, of 
knowledge, where the situation is not that we have 
nothing to say to each other, but that nothing more 
needs to be said. (45)

He continues:

What we really need, I think – I invite my scientific 
colleagues to look at this problem – is a syntax of 
silence. We might do well to focus on the ways in 
which human beings communicate when they are not 
using language, or its conventional equivalents in 
gesture and the like. (45)

This call for a “syntax of silence” focused on ways human beings 
communicate without using language places us at the doorstep of the arts, 
specifically music, visual art, and dance. The arts allow humans to express 
through sound, light, and motion. Music, visual arts, and dance are non-textual 
ways in which human beings communicate. Although there is much insight and 
wisdom that may be gleaned from an examination of each art form and the 
interrelatedness of these forms, this study focuses on the experience of 
communication (communion) through sound.

Music can be defined as humanly organized sound (Blacking, 10). There 
are two basic orientations humans have around music: listening to music and 
making music. These two orientations, although distinct, are also interrelated.
One listens to music that is made. One also listens as one makes music. The interrelatedness of music making and listening highlights two kinds of listening.

Dorit Amir explains:

There are two kinds of listening: external and internal. External listening occurs when the listener opens the door to his heart and allows the tones and rhythms to vibrate into his inner, private world...External listening can be seen as a movement of music directed from the outside to the inside. (53)

She continues:

Internal listening is tuning into one's own inner sounds and rhythms. It is the listening to inner messages that come from within the self, messages that contain harmonious as well as disharmonious chords, consonances and dissonances. It is "to be with" oneself, to fully experience oneself on various levels...Internal listening can be seen as a movement that takes place only inwardly, without letting the outside world interfere. (53-54)

The relationship of external and internal listening is illustrated through the ritual of tuning an instrument. Tuning begins with the player's listening to an external sounding of a pitch. On the violin, that pitch is 440 "A." The player then adjusts to match the violin's "A" string to the external "A." The instrument is then tuned to itself by matching harmonious fifths of its strings. When one plays in an ensemble, there is a collective matching between external and internal soundings and harmonious fittings. Without this tuning, the essence of the music itself is changed.

When listening to music, external listening is completed when sounds are brought to the inner experience of a person. In this sense, external listening
depends upon the internal listening process for the listening experience to be wholly complete. The experience and processes of internal listening posed by Amir are framed as complementing opposites of harmonies and disharmonies. It is this juxtaposition of externally listened opposites that creates the movement of inner listening. It is not the sound itself, but rather the form suggested by the process of external sound that describes the internal listening process.

The experience of listening is also instructive when considering activities of music-making. Music-making, or bringing forth sound from an instrument, is created through and for the experience of listening. Activities of music-making may include singing or playing an instrument, or extended to include composing music and recording music. Let’s consider for a moment, the body as an instrument.

We can make melody singing and whistling. We can make rhythm clapping, snapping, tapping, patting, stomping and many other ways. As instruments, our bodies can make melody and rhythm simultaneously. This music of our body may be created to imitate some experience of external listening. The source of inspiration of our music may just as well pour forth from the movement of our internal listening. Ultimately, this whistling, singing, patting and tapping is brought forth to be heard by one’s self or by others.

The heart of this yearning of the heard is an experience of the listened. Listening and the making of music are the dialogue of music, a dialogue that occurs without words.
I conclude this section of narrative with a song of verse written by Nancy McMaster titled *Listening: A Sacred Act*.

*Listening: A Sacred Act.*

Something sacred there is about listening when the whole of our Being is tuned to resonate with all that enters our field of experience.

Such listening requires an openness, an interest in contact, in discovery; a faith, however momentary, that there is a place for “everything under the sun.”

It is NOT half-listening, as if we already know what is likely to happen in the next moment. It IS a sense of not ever knowing, completely what is here, now, either within or around us

a willingness to be profoundly surprised.

It is NOT listening from the perspectives of either survival or hope, tuned only to intimations of threat or promise, all else deemed irrelevant; nor is it listening to judge whether something is worth hearing.

It IS a sense that all sounds and silence, all movement and stillness, are eloquent expressions of the very nature of every aspect of Reality, each equally significant in itself, as is, as a part of the Whole, regardless of any distress or pleasure we may feel in its presence-

an alert curiosity and ready acknowledgement towards all that we perceive.

It is NOT listening from a feeling of already being overwhelmed, too tangled in a sticky web of responsibilities, too tugged off-balance by our responsiveness, to want to respond to anything more; nor is it listening in a state of numbness, so guarded against the residue of old pains that we dare not allow ourselves to resonate freely ever again.

It IS a sense of our inviolate core;
a sense of the consummate importance of honoring the integrity of each part of every interaction, ourselves included; and a sense of our capacity to survive and be expanded by tremendous surges of sensation, however excruciating or ecstatic-

and a still center which is open to touch.

And finally, 
It is NOT listening in resignation, having long ago given up a dream of being part of a mutually responsive world in which we give and receive attention, understanding, welcome, and accommodation. It IS an act of commitment to expressing that dream, to doing one’s best to bring it into being, to embody in the moment all that the dream requires of each one of us.

And therein lies its sacredness. (72-74)

Harmonic Rhythm: Performance Studies.

I invite you to experience Performance of Liminality.

Two years ago I did not know that something called “Performance Studies” existed. I could not have imagined that my study and scholarship would come to be held by and within the pattern of theoretical weaving (not sure if its basket or web, this weaving) called Performance Studies. Nonetheless, here we are!

I have been guided to these waters by skilled and careful teachers. Dr. Carolyn Kenny, Dr. Laurein Alexandre, Dr. Elizabeth Holloway, and Dr. Dara Culhane through the dissertation dialogue, and by Victor Turner, Richard
Schechner, Dwight Conquergood, Jill Dolan, and D. Soyini Madison through text.

I will say more about the significance of the role guides and mentors play in navigating the waters of Performance Studies later in this section.

Those seeking a definition of performance studies will learn quickly that these waters move through description. Richard Schechner, scholar, theatre director, editor and playwright and a pioneer of Performance Studies describes:

Performance studies resists fixed definition. Performance studies does not value “purity.” It is at its best when operating amidst a dense web of connections. Academic disciplines are most active and ever-changing interfaces….Performance studies is open, multivocal, and self-contradictory. (22)

Schechner further instructs that:

performance must be construed as a “broad-spectrum” or “continuum” of human actions, ranging from ritual, play, sports, popular entertainments, the performing arts (theatre, dance, music), and everyday life performances to the enactment of social, professional, gender, race, and class roles, and on to healing (from shamanism to surgery), the media, and the internet. (2)

The dialogue between Victor Turner and Richard Schechner is a cornerstone to the foundation of performance theory. Performance theory is a constructed frame that allows a way for us to view and understand our actions and behaviors even as we engage in actions and behaviors. Performance studies allows for the simultaneous expression of theory and practice. Schechner suggests that performance in art and in everyday life is “restored behavior” and “twice-behaved behaviors” that people train for and rehearse. Implicit in our
actions and behaviors are these trainings and rehearsals, which when performed may be viewed and understood as actions of learned social and cultural norms.

Schechner suggests that, “Performance may be defined as ritualized behavior conditioned/permeated by play” (89). He names seven functions of performance. These functions are to entertain, to make something beautiful, to mark or change identity, to make or foster community, to heal, to teach persuade, or convince, to deal with the sacred and/or the demonic (46).

Schechner instructs that the performance process is a time-space sequence consisting of three phases (225): proto-performance (that which precedes or gives rise to performance), performance, and aftermath. Each of these phases may be divided into further parts. Training, workshop, and rehearsal comprise parts of proto-performance. Performance consists of warm-up, public performance, events and/or contexts that sustain the public performance, and the cool down. The final phase, aftermath, consists of critical response, archives, and memories.

Schechner provides a wonderful descriptive account of the waters of performance studies: however, it is theorist, ethnographer, and filmmaker Dwight Conquergood who points out the significance of these shifting currents. Through narrative, he allowed me to see that this body of study called performance studies is an epistemological intervention.

There are several passages written by Conquergood that clutched my attention. The first passages speak of subjugated knowledge.
Subjugated knowledges have been erased because they are illegible; they exist by and large, as active bodies of meaning, outside of books, eluding the forces of inscription that would make them legible, and thereby legitimate.” (Interventions and Radical Research 146)

The performance studies project makes its most radical interventions, I believe, by embracing both written scholarship and creative work, papers and performances...Performance studies brings this rare hybridity into the academy, a commingling of analytic and artistic ways of knowing that unsettles the institutional organization of knowledge and disciplines. The constitutive liminality of performance studies lies in its capacity to bridge segregated and differently valued knowledges, drawing together legitimated as well as subjugated modes of inquiry. (Interventions 151-52)

The subjugated knowledges addressed through these passages resonates within me as knowledge lost, knowledge suppressed, knowledge ignored. The basic survival imperatives that face humans demand the liberation of knowledge by making space in all our venues for voicing as we develop and deepen our skills as listeners.

Within the context of scholarship, I must ask and answer this question, “What kind of performance will I and my co-collaborators be engaging in?
Schechner names eight kinds of performance situated in everyday life, in the arts, in sports and other popular entertainments, in business, in technology, in sex, in ritual (sacred and secular), and in play. Our performance is one of multiplicity. It is situated within the everyday life, within the arts, within technology, ritual, and play. My co-collaborators and I, complete with our situational limitations of
privilege and representation are privileging traditionally subjugated knowledge as performance.

Performance studies scholar Jill Dolan explores what she refers to as utopian performatives. She describes that “the word utopia means, literally, “no place” (7). She explains:

Utopian performatives describe small but profound moments in which performance calls attention of the audience in a way that lifts everyone slightly above the present, into a hopeful of what the world might be like if every moment of our lives were as emotionally voluminous, generous, aesthetically striking, and intersubjectively intense. As a performantive, performance itself becomes a “doing” in linguistic philosopher J. L. Austin’s sense of the term, something that in its enunciation acts – that is, performs an action as tangible and effective as saying “I do” in a wedding ceremony. Utopian performatives, in their doings, make palpable an affective vision of how the world might be better. (5-6)

Dolan’s description of utopian performatives voices the heart and the spirit of how I and my co-collaborators have come to be with music, music-making, and each other over the course of these past years. This study will come show the creation of “what should be” leading us to the threshold of what Madison describes as the practice of critical theory. This performance of scholarship is intended as an epistemological intervention.

Turner discusses the concept of social drama and identifies four phases of social drama. Those phases are breach, crisis, redressive action, and resolution. Madison describes that in breach, “there is an overt nonconformity and breaking away by an individual or group of individuals, from a shared system of social relations…in breach, the agreed-upon norm is violated” (Anthropology of
This study is designed to create breach by revealing extraordinary experience within the context of everyday life through the creation of music from traditionally unheard artists. Breach occurs as we hold with repeated examples glimpses of experience of process of the birth of music emerging from the center of threshold. That is where we find ourselves attending to the process of creating newly organized sound. This no place of utopian performance is where the intersection of the three inter-connected principles of performance paradigm Conquergood (Between Experience 37) names as process, embodiment, and dialogue meet. It is this performance’s quality of immediacy that will allow for the breach to occur.

We return once again to the no place of liminality where this performance will occur. Liminality is the place of the in-between. This place is where music itself is made manifest by expressions of material (people, instruments, etc) but is itself non-material. It exists in immediate moments and then is gone without trace. (I thank Phyllis Solter for her shared insight about the nature of music that allowed me to reflect through this moment). Performance also reflects this transparency. Schechner observes that, “Performance is much more ephemeral than painting, sculpting, pottery, and architecture. Performing leaves no direct traces” (222). The liminal is where expressions reside between the body and that which is embodied. Feminist performance theorist, Elin Diamond comments:

When performativity materializes as performance in that risky and dangerous negotiation between a doing (a reiteration of norms) and a thing done (discursive conventions that frame our interpretations), between someone’s body and the conventions of embodiment,
we have access to cultural meanings and critique. (qtd. in Dolan 6)

The liminal is the place of expressions of spiritual and is the place where consciousness resides. The liminal is also where the source of the inspiration of music resides. In this way, this scholarship is an intervention of consciousness. Experiences that provide access to our cultural meanings allow us to experience and contemplate reality. Conquergood describes reality as an “intimate awareness and that which commands belief plus commitment” (A Sense of the Other 151). Gebser describes this awareness of consciousness as “wakeful presence” (42). He articulates five structures of consciousness including the archaic, magical, mythical, mental and integral. I appreciate that Gebser instructs that each of these structures is present in experience, which anyone who has spent time listening with an elder will confirm. I wrote the follow verse as I navigated understanding with Gebser’s glimpse of consciousness:

Being as archaic.
    I walk as Fire, Water, Wind, Earth, and Sky, without awareness of my difference.
Being as magical.
    Waking up in dream to awareness of the dream with no mouth.
Being as mythical.
    Looking within to find the depths of my soul, recognized by polar woven wholeness.
Being as mental.
    Awoken to dualism of I and Thou.
Being as integral.
    Transparent sphere in motion.
    Whole completeness in action.

It is a great challenge to describe the integral structure. The words we have to perform this act are bestowed with meaning and privilege of dualism of
the mental structure. We do not have, to my knowledge, language that describes consciousness that is “not identical with intelligence or rational acuity” (99). Nor do we have phrases that express “completion of integration” (99) as intensification, not expansion. We have utterances and partial phrases, but not language.

The path we walk to this language is paved by process of the spiritual.

Gebser provides the following description of this process:

A true process always occurs in quanta, that is, in leaps; or, expressed in a quasi-biological and not physical terms, in mutations. It occurs spontaneously, indeterminately, and, consequently, discontinuously. Moreover, we become aware of such presumably invisible processes only when they have reached sufficient strength to manifest themselves on the basis of their cumulative momentum. The apparent continuity is no more than a sequence subsequently superimposed onto overlapping events to lend them to reassuring appearance of a logically determinate progression….the mutational process we are speaking of is spiritual, and not biological or historical. (37)

This scholarship, with its focus on process, is a performance of consciousness, where dialogue through music may make more explicit integral consciousness.

In summary, this scholarship is theoretically connected to the principles articulated in performance studies. This study is a performance of epistemological intervention that privileges non-positivist method with the intention of decentering the dominance of text. This study is a performance of the utopian. This study is a performance of consciousness expressed in-between body and embodiment.
Choosing with intention to participate in the creation of knowledge in this “no place” with this kind of blurring is dizzying and disorienting. It is possible to get lost and hit rocks or floating logs. Hence, the need for skilled and careful guides, mentors, and teachers. Choosing to participate as a scholar in this type of scholarship is to allow one’s self to be “tossed up” (Kenny) and to willingly or reluctantly have previously held assumptions and positions challenged at the very core of one’s expressed experience. Then to yield, as yeast and flour of bread, to the repeated kneading as dough of one’s self. It is perfectly understandable to me why some may approach this particular threshold and go no further. However, once carried and tossed there comes the emergence of transparency of unbelievable beauty. And so to my guides, mentors, and teachers, I pause a moment to say, “Thank You!”

I offer this quote by Conquergood as transition to the next section of this narrative, performance ethnography:

It is our commitment to the embodiment of distinct particulars that will keep interpretation and performance studies grounded in praxis...It is this commitment to embodiment, to speaking with others, entering their presence, instead of speaking about them, abstracted from context, that will keep our feet on the earth, in touch with the soil. May we never be afraid to be in touch with the lives of others.” (Between Experience 46)
“Joining other humanists who celebrate 
the necessary and indissoluble link between art and life, 
ethnographers present performance as vulnerable and open to dialogue 
in the world”
(Conquergood, Performing Cultures 1)

Melody of Ethnography.

I view scholarship as a cloudless night sky. Each time I gaze to the sky I 
see endless possibilities and know that there are even more possibilities beyond 
that which I can see with my eyes through corrective lenses. It is Geertz who 
helps bring my star-gazing self to earth. He coined the term “finding our feet” as 
a way of describing some of what it is ethnographers do. This narrative is a way 
for me to “find my feet” and to establish a foundation to bring forth the story I 
carry.

A practicing ethnographer is one who is performing at many levels, 
and aware that she is performing 
(Conquergood, Performing as a Moral Act 61)

Dialogue of Self and Other.

I begin acutely aware of my “otherness.” This sense of “otherness” that I 
feel is an example of the anthropological concern of emic (insider) and etic 
(outsider). As a novice who is committed to “learning as a way of being” (Vaill), 
an invitation has been extended to me to enter into this community of scholars 
who practice this way of knowing. I am at the threshold of entry. I am not by any 
means an insider, nor am I truly an outsider. I bring both the freshness and 
aïveté of newcomer.
There are essential questions that emerge as I review the literature at my side. What is ethnography? What is it that ethnographers do? How do ethnographers do what they do? What significant trends or issues have been illuminated by scholars of ethnography that might influence my practice as an ethnographer? I begin with how it is I came to be interested in this path of inquiry.

I have a story to tell. This story stems from my experience as a woman, as an artist, as an educator, and as a learner. This story takes place at a specific point in time and space within the limitless possibility of all time and all spaces. This story involves specific characters engaged in specific behaviors of living within a specific point in time and space. These characters, including this writer, have their own stories to tell. These characters gather and form a cluster shape of some sort. From this clustered gathering of beings comes a collective story.

To tell this story, I must first establish a place for the telling. This placing requires that I engage in the process of mapping, of locating this experience within dimension and relation of other experiences. The act of storytelling is a human activity. The act of naming, sorting, and cataloguing is also a human activity, one of science. The framework of science offers two venues from which we may choose: physical sciences or social sciences. The nature of the activity of storytelling suggests that this work be catalogued somewhere within the vast field of social sciences. The specific area within the field of social science most familiar to the gathering and telling of story is that of anthropology. My interest in telling story, an arts-based story, places this activity within the range of cultural anthropology, specifically within the specialty of ethnology.
Taylor describes that ethnology “includes the study of techniques, economic organization, kinship, associations, government, law, religion, art, folklore, and other aspects of human culture” (4). Ethnography is the term applied to the descriptive fieldwork aspect of ethnology.

Geertz discusses ethnography as thick description where the ethnographer is faced with “a multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit, and which he must contrive somehow first to grasp and then to render” (9). The image that comes to mind is several skeins of yarn of various texture and colors all bundled, intertwined, and knotted together. With this image in mind, the process action of the researcher is to approach this tangled wad of experiences and carefully explore the intricacies of each strand, the nature of the series of tangles as well as the wad itself. The purpose of inquiry or “rendering” is first to understand strands, tangles, and wad, rather than fixing the tangled wad itself.

Geertz explains that, “the ethnographer ‘inscribes’ social discourse: he writes it down. In so doing, he turns it from a passing event, which exists only in its own moment of occurrence, into an account, which exists in its inscriptions and can be reconsulted.” (19) Ethnography is a process action of writing and of accounting.

Bentz and Shapiro describe ethnography as being “concerned with capturing, interpreting, and explaining the way in which people in a group, organization, community, or society live, experience, and make sense out of their
lives, their world, and their society or group” (117). This definition implies that ethnography engages the researcher in three distinct process actions to make knowledge: description, interpretation, and explanation. The researcher engages in these process actions in a purposeful way to understand the lived experience of others in a variety of contexts. With its focus on the experience of life in relation to group, I note that the flavor of this description of ethnography has a decidedly sociological feel to it.

While reading Prus’s account of knowing through ethnography from a symbolic interactionist approach, I became acutely aware that the accounting offered had a very different sense than anthropology as it related to the treatment of “other.” I reflected on accounts I had read from *Conformity and Conflict* edited by Spradley and McCurdy. These readings had a cultural anthropological flavor where human behavior is known through the treatment of contrast to other groups. Whereas, Prus’s account pointed to understanding human behavior from within the group. I began to realize that although ethnography may have been introduced to social science through anthropology, she is the child of method to several fields and disciplines. This caused me to pause and ask another question – What’s going on here?

As I continued to reflect, the pattern I perceived to be emerging was nothing less than the closing of the emic-etic gap. What I will describe are examples of peripetia (Bruner, 5), those turns in the story of ethnography that were evidenced through my reading. The twist is about the changing role of the researcher and the changing understanding of the role of narrative itself.
In her work *Critical Ethnography*, Madison provides a brief historical overview of critical ethnography. In her discussion of anthropology and British functionalism, she notes that anthropological methods used to gather data significantly shifted in the early 20th century through the work of Bronislaw Malinowski and Frank Boas. The data collected by missionaries, traders, sailors, explorers, and colonial administrators did not provide the kind of information and detail needed to support the enlarging understanding of human experience. Malinowski and Boas provided the foundation for participant observation fieldwork.

The gathering of information by direct observation changed the method from that of encyclopedic ethnography to narrative ethnography (Agar, 8). This change to information gathering impacted method and narrative products associated with the ethnographic process.

Malinowski again provided inspiration for the next turn in story of ethnography. It was not his writing, but rather a photograph of him attending to his writing in the field that this turn is evidenced. The account of this turn is described by Clifford:

In Bronislaw Malinowski’s *Agronouts of the Western Pacific*, where a photograph of the ethnographer’s tent among Kiriwinan dwellings is prominently displayed, there is no revelation of the tent’s interior. But in another photo, carefully posed, Malinowski recorded himself writing at a table. (The tent flaps are pulled back; he sits in profile, and some Trobrianders stand outside, observing the curious rite.) This remarkable picture was only published two years ago – a sign of our times, not his. We begin, not with participant-observation or with cultural texts (suitable for
interpretation), but with writing, the making of texts. (2-3)

In my mind’s eye it is this photograph of Malinowski writing in the field that serves as the poster of one of the greatest challenges facing this emerging practicing ethnographer – narrative and representation within the postmodern context.

Referring to the “crisis of representation,” Goodall comments, “representation is literally about re-presenting a reality, which assumes a correspondence between language used to create representation and the reality that gets represented” (12). With this heightened sensitivity to the reality-shaping nature of language itself, all aspects of the ethnographic process are called into question. It is through this questioning that emergent understandings and practices narrow the emic-etic gap.

What I came to appreciate most about these readings, is that the closing of the emic-etic gap is being achieved through expansion, rather than narrowing. Because of the awareness of the limitations of past narrative, new forms are emerging. More voices enter from multiple fields engaged in variety of forms of accounting through story. Ethnography is not just for anthropologists!

Fields and disciplines such as social and administrative studies, child and family development, sociology, systemic studies, social psychology, speech communication, education, nursing, cultural studies, social and behavioral science, English, education administration, higher education policy studies, management, and political science all have concern and involvement with ethnographic activity (Agar, 2).
The lines between disciplines blur as an Impressionist piece of art. New forms of ethnography emerge such as performance ethnography (Turner, *Anthropology*; Denzin), autoethnography (Ellis and Bochner, Bochner and Ellis), sociopoetics and reflexive ethnography (Ellis and Bochner), and critical ethnography (Madison). The gap between theories of living and the experience of living narrows. The stories themselves speak to a broader experience of living. Like art itself, this movement of bridging gaps between insider and outsider, self and other and all the messy blurring that occurs brings us to understanding anew.

*The Ethnographic Process.*

An ethnographic account is a narrative woven of interrelated forms of description, analysis, and interpretation (Bentz and Shapiro, 118). This accounting makes way for that which is unknown to become known. This coming to knowing is rendered through process.

In her work *Narrative Analysis*, Catherine Riessman shares a model depicting the levels of representation in the research process. She illustrates in diagram and through text a process that begins with a primary experience, a phenomenological event. The researcher then attends to this experience and tells about that particular experience. This told narrative is then transcribed. The transcribed experience is then written as an analyzed experience. The analyzed experience takes one more turn to become a read experience.

I gleaned two insights from Riessman’s illustrated description of the ethnographic process: the thoroughly narrative nature of the ethnographic
As I read Riessman’s account of this process, I deeply connected with her discussion of the transcription process. I suspect I attended to this discussion knowing that I have gathered precious stories and moments with essential liaisons for my study and that these stories and moments are not going to lend themselves to traditional methods of transcription. Riessman suggests that, “Decisions about how to transcribe, like decisions about telling and listening, are theory driven (Ochs, 1979) and rhetorical; by displaying text in particular ways, we provide grounds for our arguments, just like a photographer guides the viewer’s eye with lenses and by cropping images” (13).

This statement brought to my mind how thoroughly narrative the ethnographic process truly is. This thought was then flooded with the implications of the constructed nature of narrative itself. The wave of insight was then followed by a deeper recognition that this construction of narrative is at best a “partial” truth (Clifford, 7). The continuation of this line of thought acknowledges that through this process of intensely constructed narration of partial truth, knowledge claims are made and supported, knowledge claims that in some way may help to improve the human condition.

Ethnography is indeed a messy proposition and elegant in its messiness. I trust that through this journey of messy elegance, the researcher continues to maintain some level of sanity. It makes me wonder, is there some prayer for ethnographers?
With the door open to considering the reading experience as a part of the ethnographic process, it is the work of Martyn Hammersley which provides insight about the reading experience itself. In his work, Reading Ethnographic Research, Hammersley identifies the main aspects of the ethnographic account as “the research focus; the case(s) studied; the methods of data collection and analysis used; the major claims and the evidence provided” (28).

Hammersley explains that each identified aspect serves a specific function to bring to understanding an ethnographic account. For example, he differentiates between the research focus and the case. The research focus positions the study within a general context or setting of knowledge. The case is more specific, more particular and resides within the context or setting a more general research focus. The rationale for inquiry about a specific case is made within the context of the more general research focus. The evidence provided that supports this rationale ultimately serves in the analysis and may be used to assess the validity and relevance of a specific study. It is the interrelation of these aspects and their functions makes way for the creation of knowledge.

Hammersley also discusses analysis in connection with identifying major claims and the evidence that supports these claims (36). He suggests that there are four types of arguments that are found in most ethnographic accounts including definition, description, explanation, and value claims. Briefly, a definition claim tells how a particular term is being used in an account. A description claim is a verbal or numerical representation of some aspect of setting. An explanation is concerned with why one or more those features described occur and seeks to
show that they are the product of particular factors. Finally, a value claim goes beyond describing and explaining “what is” and becomes an evaluation of “what ought to be.”

Martha Feldman makes explicit the theoretical foundation of these four types of argument. In her work, *Strategies for Interpreting Qualitative Data*, Feldman explains that the techniques of analysis are based on the theories of ethnomethodology, semiotics, dramaturgy, and deconstruction. Feldman discusses these theories from the perspective of how a researcher attends to the analysis of account. She describes that an ethnomethodologist “looks for processes by which people make sense of their interactions and the institutions through which they live” (4). A semiotician “looks for surface manifestations and the underlying structure that gives meaning to these manifestations” (4), while an individual engaged in a dramaturgical analysis is “looking for a performance” (5). Finally, a deconstructionist “looks for multiple meanings implicit in a text, conversation, or event” (5).

The final aspect of the reading experience is conclusion. The merit of conclusion is viewed through the standards of validity and relevance. Hammersley describes that the standard of validity is concerned with “truth” and “the extent to which an account accurately represents the phenomena to which it refers” (62). The standard of validity poses these questions about knowledge claims: How plausible is it? How likely is this true? How credible is it? The standard of relevance suggests that findings be considered in light of their significance for some purpose, a purpose inferred through the study itself.
The consideration of reading as a significant element of the ethnographic experience lends itself to a critical link for this study. A primary event rendered through the process of narrative to include the read experience is similar to the listened experience rendered through music from sound. In music we have the primary experience of sound. Sound is attended to in a specific way to become music. Some music is written down as an experience of the composed. This transcription is known as a score. The articulation of interpretation and analysis of the score comes to be performed. This performed music that is received by audience becomes a listened experience. In this way, the listened experience is similar to read experience. Those considerations made of the read experience are present in the listened experience as well.

*Performance Ethnography.*

Like a raindrop hitting the surface of the water creating multiple ripples, there are several stories within a given story. The story I carry is embedded within the still larger story of music. The making of music begins not with sound from the instrument or voice, but with preparation. We first must prepare our instruments or voice for sound. Like music, storying also requires preparation. There must be a space for the story to unfold. This space-making is the positioning of the story.

Positioning a story requires attention to several dimensions. For example, this story is embedded within the larger story of music. Placing this story within the larger story of music becomes one dimension of positioning. From this larger story of music comes the story of human experience with music. We continue to
follow the pattern of ripple until we reach our individual experiences. Then from our individual experience the rippling extends as an echo outward, first to the collective experience expanding until music itself is touched.

What is it that connects the larger story of music to individual lived experience and then individual lived experience to the larger story of music? I believe it is the telling or accounting of experience through story that is the connecting link. There are several ways to account or tell story. The particular type of account considered in this narrative is performance ethnography.

Through his work with cultures and ritual, Turner identified performance as the essential component of our inquiry, viewing performance, not as product, but as process. Turner makes the connection this way:

If man is a sapient animal, a toolmaking animal, a self-making animal, a symbol-using animal, he is, no less, a performing animal, *Homo performans*, not in the sense, perhaps that a circus animal may be a performing animal, but in the sense that man is a self-performing animal – his performances are – in a way, reflexive, in performing he reveals himself to himself. (*Anthropology* 81)

Turner further suggests:

The basic stuff of social life is performance, “the presentation of self in everyday life” (as Goffman entitled one of his books). Self is presented through the performance of roles, through performance that breaks roles, and through declaring to a given public that one has undergone a transformation of state and status, been saved or damned, elevated or released. (*Anthropology* 81)
There are a limitless number of possibilities of how we present ourselves in everyday life. The presentation of stories I wish to share centers around music-making.

Tia DeNora, in her critique of L.W. Adorno’s work connects music as a significant component in the construction of social life and acknowledges the limits of his work. She comments:

Dedicated to exploring the hypothesis that musical organization is a simulacrum for social organization, Adorno’s work conceives of music as formative of social consciousness. In this regard, Adorno’s work represents the most significant development of the twentieth century of the idea that music is a ‘force’ in social life, a building material of consciousness and social structure. But because it provides no machinery for viewing these matters as they actually take place, Adorno’s work also has the power to frustrate; his work offers no conceptual scaffolding from which to view music in the act of training the unconsciousness, no consideration of how music gets into action. The weakness of Adorno’s approach thus lies in its failure to provide some means by which its tantalizing claims can be evaluated. (2)

It is the weakness of Adorno’s approach, the lack of seeing the self and selves in act of being with music that opens the door for her study. DeNora reveals that it was the use of her computer at home waiting to access her email and her observation about the impact music had on her finger tapping habits that led her to consider music in the contexts of airline flights, in a therapeutic setting, and at a karaoke event. What each of these cases highlights is the listening of music and its impact on lived experience and social life.

Conquergood highlights the musical aspects of performance ethnography, describing:
The rethinking of ethnography as primarily about speaking and listening, instead of observing, has challenged the visual bias of positivism with talk about voices, utterances, intonations, multivocality. Sight and observation go with space, and the spatial practices of division, separation, compartmentalization, and surveillance...Sight and surveillance depend on detachment and distance. Getting perspective on something entails withdrawal from intimacy. Everyday parlance equates objectivity with aloofness. Being “too close” is akin to losing perspective and lacking judgment.

Metaphors of sound, on the other hand, privilege temporal process, proximity, and incorporation. Listening is an interiorizing experience, a gathering together, a drawing in, whereas observation sizes up exteriors. The communicative praxis of speaking and listening, conversation, demands copresence even as it decenters the categories of knower and known. (Rethinking Ethnography 183)

Simon Frith invites researchers to broaden our path of inquiry stating:

Most academic research on everyday music focuses, as I have focused here, on music listening. But what is equally remarkable is the sheer amount of music making in which people are engaged, and my point here is not just that people do, in large numbers, join choirs, form rock and pop groups, play around with record decks, and set up home studios, but also that these musical activities are central to their understanding of who they are. Music making provides, as Ruth Finnegan argues, critical pathways through life (Finnegan 1989). And music making is less about managing one’s own emotional life than about enjoying being together in groups, real and imagined. Future research in music and the everyday needs to integrate the study of music making with the study of musical use. (100-101)
It is here that my story and the stories of others I am working with rest. We are musicians. We are music-makers and the makers of music. We have gathered together at this time, in this place and bring forth this expression of lived experience.

Interlude: Composition as Felt Experience.

Guiding me through my scholarship is a picture that I took of a moment between two of my students. Imagine a young girl of six in the presence of her grandmother. Her grandmother gently attends to her granddaughter, shaping her hand to hold a violin bow. Both the grandmother and the granddaughter are my students. This moment represents to me the greatest gift that comes to a teacher, witnessing a student becoming a teacher who shares her love and passion with another. The grandmother pictured teaching her granddaughter to hold a violin bow is now a composer. Her hand, pictured shaping the hand of her granddaughter a couple of years ago, is the same hand that now pours spots onto manuscript paper, creating pattern for other performers to reveal. She and the other students I began working with nearly four years ago are all composing. We compose because the music for us to play has not been written.

During my individualized study of ethnography, I hosted a pilot study with four families that I have been working with over the past couple of years. The purpose of the study was to learn about their experience of music-making and performing with the Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble. During each interview, I was surprised to find that my students engaged in either improvisation or in composition. One student completed a partially written composition for viola.
Two students asked me to play compositions they had written for violin. This playback is a part of the editing process of composition and allowed these student-composers the opportunity to reflect through sound on what they had written to make next-step decisions. Another student held a conversation with her mother through improvisation on Native drums. Instead of words, both the mother and her daughter spoke to each other with beat and rhythm.

I connect these experiences of composition and improvisation to a passage written by Victor Turner about the ingredients that comprise a cultural performance. In this context he states, “Part of the potency of a ‘great performance’ comes precisely from this: the author reflects; the actors flow. There is a fruitful tension between the opposites” (Frame, Flow, and Reflection 49). What was evidenced during these interviews was ‘great performance’ where my students were both author and actor. Holding this fruit in my heart, I bravely entered into the world of databases to hold yet other tensions: the tensions of art and science.

The form of this narrative is designed to hold both art and science. As an artist, I have learned the three “Ps” of the artist: process, product, and presentation. What I wish to do in this writing is present science in an artful way.

As I browsed databases in search of empirical knowledge about music composition, I noticed that there were several perspectives about music composition that were revealed. These various perspectives include the technical “how to” compose, scholarship about the assessment of compositions, teacher interventions in process of composing, the different uses of composition including
choreography (choreography and figure skating was one of my favorites), film, and the use of music composition for therapy of individuals and groups of individuals. There were articles that explored neurological factors that influence how we perceive music and articles that demonstrated how to use the metaphors from music composition to name institutional change process. A great deal of scholarship is dedicated to knowing about the influence of technology to the experience of composing music.

I am interested in the felt experience of my students as they compose. I began to extract articles for closer examination. The articles that I selected fell into three general categories: the experience of the composer composing, information relevant to the context of this experience, and creative ways scholars are using music composition. Through this activity of sorting, I comfortably narrowed my focus to the experience of the composers composing. Of the seventeen articles I reviewed, nine of the articles were based on quantitative research and eight were based on qualitative research. Additionally, each of the five dissertations reviewed were based on qualitative research.

The articles that are based on quantitative research have a decidedly unique feel to the inquiry where some quality or characteristic of the composer or the composing process is framed in such as way to allow for quantification of the experience of composing. The methodology of all of these articles fall into the category of naturalistic quantitative research, either as a descriptive, correlative, or ex-post facto study. Some of these studies focused on characteristics of the composer, for example birth order (Wagner et al.), learning style (Moore),
audiation (Kratus, Children’s Music Audiation), handedness (Aggleton et al.), and self-concept (Colwell et al.). Although these perspectives do not necessarily address the specific experience an individual or group of individuals have composing music, they do provide insight to factors that may influence that experience.

Two quantitative articles highlight facts that may significantly influence the composer’s experience of composing. Gromko investigates the notation systems that student composers may employ in relation to their understanding of musical process. The “writing it down” experience of music composition requires deep expressive and interpretive representational skills. I recount from my own experience the time I spent with my former husband, who is a composer, as he poured over manuscript paper catalogues. He did this in a way that others might study to purchase a car or a home. Could it be that his ritual of selecting manuscript paper was in some way related to the “writing it down” experience of music composition?

Related to the notation system used to represent sound is the influence of pitches and tones that are known and available to composers (Kratus, Effect of Available Tonality). I am reminded of the saying, “If a tree falls in the forest, and no one hears it, does is still make a sound?” The argument of this study assumes that music itself is singularly an auditory experience. And although music is an auditory experience, it is not necessarily only an auditory experience.

Byrne et. al explored through quantitative method music composition as an experience of critical skill development. Although these researchers were
concerned with connecting the theory of critical skill transference to teacher practice, I included this article as it addresses another aspect of the experience of the composer: problem finding and problem posing.

MacDonald et. al consider through a quantitative study, the quality of individual composer’s experience engaged in a project with a group compositional process. I found it interesting that in addition to the self-reporting, the compositions themselves were also rated for quality by participants and invited music specialists. Of all the quantitative articles reviewed, this article comes closest to touching the heart of my interest of inquiry.

Overall, I found that the qualitative studies gathered during my search more closely approach how I am interested in knowing about the experience others have as composers. The perspectives examined through these studies included self-described decisions and value judgments for composing music (Freed-Garrod), exploring the difference between improvisation and composition (Burnard), the processes of composers (Kennedy), the connection between musical and life experiences of composers (Stauffer), the relationship of individual backgrounds and strategies used to compose (Burnard and Younker), teaching and learning beliefs and practices between a teacher and student during composition (Barrett, Creative Collaboration), the relationship of previous experiences with others and song writing (Barrett, Inventing Songs), processes of composing (Levi; Perconti; Tsisserev), and thought processes and composition (Younker; Freed Carlin).
Researchers highlighted generated, interpreted, and analyzed data utilizing an ethnomethodological approach. With one exception, the data of the qualitative studies reviewed were gathered through participant observation and interviews. The study presented by Burnard and Younker is the exception. Their cross-cultural, cross-case study is based on cases developed through a metaanalysis of data gathered through verbal reports, verbal responses and interviews generated from previous research, a re-presentation of representation if you will. In addition to participant observation and interviews data was also gathered through video/audio recording (Levi; Perconti; Younker; Freed Carlin; Burnard; Barrett, Inventing Songs) and using compositions created by participants (Levi; Perconti; Younker; Freed Carlin; Kennedy; Stauffer; McAdams).

The articles considered represent a balance of quantitative and qualitative studies. This balance supports the guiding principle of sound research that method of inquiry emerges through the nature of the question or the centralizing tendency of the inquiry. The question itself is shaped by the researcher to reflect knowing about a phenomenon from a specific perspective. Ultimately, the researcher frames the perspective of inquiry. The epistemological balance of articles presented in this review supports this notion of relationship between researcher, question, and method.

Understanding the felt experience of my students as they engage in their individual experience of music composition places my study within the field of qualitative research. My point of entry into inquiry is with a centralizing tendency rather than a question. Through this study I wish to provide description of those
moments of “grand performance” suggested by Turner, where my students experience the intersection as author and performer of music emerging from and inspired by everyday life. Performance ethnography will serve as the strongest method to approach this study.

Harmonic Rhythm of Ethics.

Stepping into the space of ethnographer places one’s self between self and other. The ethnographic space is the place of the in-between. In his introduction to the second edition of the *Professional Stranger*, Agar suggests, “Ethnography is neither subjective nor objective. It is interpretive, mediating two worlds through a third” (19). Madison captures this as movement explaining, “Dialogue moves from ethnographic present to ethnographic presence by opening the passageways for readers and audiences to experience and grasp the partial presence of a temporal conversation constituted by the Other’s voice, body, history, and yearnings” (10). Finally, Clifford declares, “Ethnography is actively situated between powerful systems of meaning” (2). Through their distinct, particular, and varied descriptions these authors collectively identify this place of the ethnographer’s in-between.

This place of the in-between is of substance. It has the sense dimensions of substance like those of a field of brilliant orange-blossomed poppies. You can feel the ground under your feet. You can see the color of these beautiful flowers as they wave with a gentle breeze. You can smell the smells and taste the tastes and hear the sounds. It has the life force substance of an energy field. The substance of this field is the material manifest through the ethical. In short, the
place of the in-between emerges as a result of the interaction between self and
other and is created in substance through the expression of ethical tensions and
considerations through these interactions. Madison explains:

Ethics is concerned with the principles of right and
wrong. Questions of morality and what it means to be
honorable, to embrace goodness, to perform virtuous
acts, to generate goodwill, and to choose justice above
injustice constitute the study of ethics. (80)

It is ethics that shapes and forms the bound liminal space, the sacred
space where ethnography and the ethnographer live. This space is created
through the deliberation of issues of right and wrong in relation to one’s Self and
one’s Self in the presence of others. This deliberation of thought leads to
deliberate actions and practices.

In her work *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Linda Tuhiwai Smith calls
scholars to consider the process and products of research as an experience of
colonization. Smith clearly positions herself with the opening words stating:

From the vantage point of the colonized, a position
from which I write, and choose to privilege, the term
‘research’ is inextricably linked to European
imperialism and colonialism. (1)

Smith describes four ways that imperialism is used when describing the
form of European imperialism that started over 500 years ago (21) including:

1) as economic expansion

2) as the subjugation of ‘others’

3) as an idea or spirit with many forms of realization

4) as discursive field of knowledge

Smith’s work resonates with me, causing me to listen deeply to be a
better teacher when working with my students, both Native and non-Native and to
listen deeply as a scholar engaging in an experience of scholarship. The
experience of colonization permeates the very core of our thought. Smith
attributes the fragmentation of thought, not as a “phenomenon of postmodernism,”
but as a “consequence of imperialism” (28).

A series of critical questions emerges for consideration by scholars that
become the core of the ethical discourse of scholarship. Smith states:

In contemporary indigenous contexts there are some major research issues which continue to be debated quite vigorously. These can be summarized best by the critical questions that communities and indigenous activists often ask, in a variety of ways: Whose research is it? Who owns it? Whose interests does it serve? Who will benefit form it? Who has designed its questions and framed its scope? Who will carry it out? Who will write it up? How will its results be disseminated? (10)

I am choosing to privilege story as a means of knowing. I am choosing to
privilege music as text whose performance reveals truth embedded within our
everyday lived experience. I am choosing to privilege spaces of liminality as
sacred. I am choosing to privilege dialogue as an experience of the said and the
listened. Finally, I wish to privilege in my practice the following ethical research
protocols suggested by Smith (120):

1. Aroha ki te tangata (a respect for people).
2. Kanohi kitea (the seen face, that is present yourself to people face to
   face).
3. Titiro, whakarongo...korero (look, listen...speak).
4. Manaaki ki te tangata (share and host people, be generous).
5. Kia tupato (be cautious).
6. Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata (do not trample over the mana of people).
7. Kaua e mahaki (don’t flaunt your knowledge).

Thank you for participating in the Part 1 of this work – “Dialogue as Performance.” The textual performance of this work began with an autoethnographic narrative declaring my position as a researcher. The performance will continue in Part 2 - “Performance as Dialogue” with the help of more traditional forms of ethnography including interviews, field notes, music compositions, recordings of performances, and photographed moments as some of my students and I as we engage in the grand performance of everyday life.

Entr’acte to Dialogue as Performance.

In this section I share my witness of the birth of song. From the seed of creation comes sound, including that which is song. It comes to us as a gift of Creator. Song is for us to celebrate and realize the manifestation of love. Song is the embodiment of Creator’s love. I present for your consideration this body of work that is a particular expression of this love, this beauty. What I present is a specific interpretation of several distinct and unique moments of birth. This birthing is the result of numerous individual and collective soundings and listenings. These soundings and listenings are moments of dialogue.
The dialogue occurred through four phases of performance. The first phase was an invitation to participants to join in the co-creation of the context for the performance of the birth of song. The second phase was the performance of the composition of music. There were two parts to the composing process. First, each participant “storied” a part of his or her biography. Following the process of storying, participants and I engaged in collaborative moments of composition. Meaning-making marked the third phase as performance of interpretation. The final phase was an articulation of the implications inherent in the study. Embedded throughout each phase of the work are utterances expressed through narrative, documents, written composition, photographs, video and audio recorded excerpts.

Prior to the study beginning, I submitted an Institution Review Board (IRB) request to Antioch University’s Leadership and Change Program outlining the scope of the study, defining that I would ensure that participants in the project would be treated in an ethical, fair, and harmless manner. I received approval to participate in the study.

Invitation was made to fifteen active ensemble members of the Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble to participate in the project. The ages of members ranged between seven years of age to elders; eleven participants were minors under the age of eighteen, four participants were adults. The racial and ethnic backgrounds of invited participants were also diverse. Five invited participants were Native American representing the Nisqually, Blackfeet, Puyallup, or Navajo tribes or nations; two were of African ancestry; three were of Pacific Island
ancestry; five were Caucasian. Ten invited participants were female and five were male.

All fifteen invited members accepted the invitation. However, because of other circumstances, twelve of the fifteen were available to complete the entire process. During the time of the project another group formed as an off-spring of the Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble. Three additional participants who were members of this newly formed group requested and received invitation to participate in the project. Ultimately, there were fifteen co-collaborators, whose ages ranged from three years of age to elders. Of the fifteen co-collaborators, nine participants were minors under the age of eighteen; six were adults. Three participants were Native American, two were of African ancestry, three were of Pacific Island ancestry, seven were Caucasian. Four participants were male; eleven were female.

Following the recommendation of members of my dissertation committee, I developed and used the following guiding principles during the performance of scholarship.

Guiding Principles of Performance as Dialogue.

This study is firmly embedded within the bounds of human sciences. The intention of the inquiry is not to answer some question of experience or practice, but rather to describe experience through practice. The process of description is intended to lead to the co-creation of knowledge that emerges from the shared experience of my co-collaborators and myself. The presentation of my proposal led to a rich discussion with members of my dissertation committee around the
area of methodology. This narrative is intended to respond to and make explicit two methodological concerns: guiding principles that speak to how we will engage with music and with each other as a community of learners, and a description of the notating system that documents my experiences and observations of the process.

As I reflect upon making guiding principles explicit, there are two scholars who most closely respond to the methodological and epistemological concerns inherent to the study: Hans-Georg Gadamer and Carolyn Kenny.

In his work *Truth and Method*, Gadamer is not concerned with “a system of rules to describe” or with establishing the “methodological procedure of human sciences” or with “putting findings to a practical end” (xvii). His concern is philosophic. He is interested in what happens to us “over and above our wanting and doing” (xvi). Gadamer comments, “My starting point is that the historic human sciences, as they emerged from German romanticism and became imbued with the spirit of modern science, maintained a humanistic heritage which distinguishes them from all other kinds of modern research and brings them close to other, quite different, extra-scientific experiences, and especially those proper to art.” (xvii) In response to his critics, Gadamer comments about the difference of concept-formation between natural and human sciences that “The difference that confronts us is not in the method, but in the objectives of knowledge” (xvii).

In his work *Dimensions of the Hermeneutic Circle*, Ronald Bontekoe explains that Gadamer’s reason for writing *Truth and Method* was to “establish how it is that understanding can be arrived at in the human sciences as they are
actually practiced” (92). Bontekoe instructs that Gadamer had two reasons for pursuing his line of thought. First, he wished to show that truths arrived at in human sciences are legitimate though the methods used are different than natural sciences. Secondly, he wished to dispel the inaccurate presumption of the necessity of adopting the point of view of the author of a text or historical event to attain objectivity, a presumption furthered from the work of hermeneutic scholars Friedrich Schleiermacher and Wilhelm Dilthey.

Gadamer’s work was a response to the undermining effect that Immanuel Kant’s work imposed upon the hermeneutic disciplines. Gadamer sought to free art from the gnarled entanglement that resulted from Kant’s argument to establish the grounds for religious faith based on the beauty of nature. Bontekoe explains that this untwisting is found in the commonness and uniqueness of nature and art highlighted by Gadamer, stating “If the significance of natural beauty is that it seems surprising that we should feel ourselves addressed through nature, there is on the contrary nothing at all surprising that we should feel ourselves addressed in art, since we ourselves create art for the very purpose of addressing each other” (95). Nature and art find their intersection within this quality of audience, being addressed by and addressing others.

Bontekoe continues his critique of Gadamer’s work focusing on the purpose of audience and what is revealed of art itself. We are reminded that art is “created not only for the sake of providing aesthetic pleasure, but also for the sake of sharing our insights and discoveries” (95). Through this sharing we come to
better understand our world, and ourselves allowing for what Gadamer refers to 
as “continuity of meaning” linking man to his world through art (96).

Once created, art continues through time to address its audience. 
Regardless of when it is created, as long as it exists art is “always appreciated 
and understood *in the present*” (96). Gadamer names this quality as 
“contemporaneity” (96). Through time, the work of art continues to exist in 
sameness as the audiences who come to appreciate, make meaning, and 
understand change. This change allows the opening for multiple and limitless 
possibilities of meaning. Gadamer further suggests that not only may a single 
piece of art perform differently in different situations, but that different 
performances of the same piece of artwork may be generated as in the case of 
the performing arts. Each performance of Beethoven’s 7th Symphony is based on 
the same score, yet each performance is unique to itself.

Given this field of limitless possibilities, as my co-collaborators and I 
entered into the liminal sacred space where our dialogue will occur how might we 
be guided through a process that results in understanding through interpretation? 
Gadamer offers four humanistic concepts that serve as bedrock forming the 
foundation of a set of guiding principles that were used during the study.

*Bildung* is the first concept discussed by Gadamer. *Bildung* refers to the 
“properly human way of developing one’s natural talents and capacities” (11). 
This development or cultivation has no goals outside of itself. It is a process of 
sacrificing particularity for the sake of the universal. In rising to this universal, 
Gadamer references Hegel stating that “in acquiring a capacity, a skill, man gains
the sense of himself” (13). Gadamer adds that, “To seek one’s own in the alien, to become at home in it, is the basic movement of spirit, whose being is only return to itself from what is other” (15). This returning to self through others allows for the development of tact. Tact refers to how we understand a “particular sensitivity and sensitiveness to situations, and how to behave in them, for which we cannot find any knowledge from general principles” (16).

*Sensus communis* is the second humanist concept explored by Gadamer. He considers the work of J.B. Vico and the appeal to common sense. Gadamer comments that sensus communis “does not mean only that general faculty of all men, but the sense that founds community. According to Vico, what gives human will its direction is not the abstract generality of reason, but the concrete generality that represents the community of a group, a people, a nation, or the whole human race” (21). Two kinds of knowledge are distinguished: the theoretical and the practical. The relationship of these two knowledges comes to be viewed within an ethical frame of what one should or should not do including the ability to distinguish between the proper and improper. “For Vico, however, the sensus communis is the sense of the right and the general good that is to be found in all men, moreover, a sense that is acquired through living in the community, and is determined by its structures and aims” (22). For those disciplines whose object is the moral and historical existence of man, “a reasoned proof, is not sufficient, because what is important is the circumstance” (23). It was the concept of moral sense developed through consideration of sympathy by Shaftesbury and his
successors, evidenced through wit and humor among friends, that became a “foil to Kantian ethics” (25).

Closely connected to sensus communis is judgment, the third humanistic concept explored by Gadamer. Good sense is in many ways characterized by judgment. Gadamer describes judgment as “the capacity to subsume the individual case under a general category” (21). Because judgment cannot be taught in general, but only practiced from case to case, it is considered more a “faculty like senses” (30).

The fourth humanist concept considered by Gadamer is taste. Originally, taste was more a moral than an aesthetic idea. Taste is concerned with the “differentiation that we make in the judgment of things” (33). Because the exercise of taste requires that we stand back from our preferences and ourselves, “its essential nature is not private, but a social phenomenon of the first order” (34). When considered as a sense, “Taste really seeks, not what is tasteful, but what does not offend it” (35). Like judgment, taste evaluates the object in relation to the whole for its ‘fittedness.’

I draw upon Carolyn Kenny’s concept of the musical space from her model “Field of Play” to connect the next theoretical strand that creates the foundation for the guiding principles of this study. Kenny compels us to consider the space in which the process of dialogue is to occur. In her model, Kenny defines the musical space as contained. Its containment is shaped by the “intimate and private field created in the relationship between the therapist and the client” (100). Kenny describes this space as sacred, safe, and “identified as ‘home base,’ a
territory well known and secure” (100). She instructs that the space is gained when “participants are motivated to make the first ‘sound,’ a creative gesture, a risk, a self-motivated action from an intention to engage” (100). Kenny carefully outlines that which is defined as the musical space describing four principles present in the musical space.

First, the musical space is created through relationship of intention and engagement between the therapist and the client. Secondly, the relationship extends to include all expressions that emerge in musical form as feelings, thoughts, and sensations. Third, the musical space is known as sacred because “it is the first time something new comes into being and indicates a receptivity to creation (change)” (100). Finally, it is the merging of the aesthetics of the client and the therapist that generate trust that may expand to a new field, the field of play.

It is an odd thing to make explicit otherwise deeply felt and understood intuitive processes. To this end what I see emerging from the theoretical foundation forged by Gadamer and Kenny are four general areas of practice to be addressed through the articulation of guiding principles: Relationship, Space to Create, Community, and Generation of Product.

I begin with the essential center of my aesthetic self – relationship. If one were to peel away at the varied and many layers of identities of mySelf there emerges as my center a goofey-looking little peep-like bird, who with wide-eyed hilarity repeatedly utters a single sound – “Relationships.” Embedded deep within this little creature resides a single pearl, coated many times with the secretion of lived
expressions and experiences. The utterance of this little peep-bird is the thunderous articulation of this pearl.

It is the particular of “relationships” that continually and graciously yields and makes way for other expressions. Relations defined the space we created for composing music during the project with our self and others. The space was distinguished by what was brought to and shared by each self with other. The products that emerged from the space reflected the collective whole of the relationship and were simultaneously beyond, self-referential and expanding. It was through our relationships that we built a place of safety that allowed for the risk-taking, disclosure, and revealing of our selves to engage in creative expression and bring forth products of that process. The products that emerged from the created space were of or inspired by music reflecting our relationship with music, through music, even as music flowed around us. The space we created allowed for a flowing fluidity. The space was boldly marked by its presence and by its impermanence. The moment that something new was revealed, the space yielded to the expression or speaking of the product itself. In that moment, the dialogue of “from” community and “to” community began. Because we are of community, each self brought community into creating creative space and into creating creative product that emerged from within that space. The product of creation became the medium of a community engaging in dialogue and reflection of and for itself. Dialogue is not complete in the form of the said. For dialogue to be complete it must also be embraced, felt, and understood as the listened.
The space of the listened, in quality and expression is not unlike that of the said. It too is created through relationship. The product that emerged also exceeded and extended beyond the bounds of its initial origin, manifest as motion of unfolding. The space yields to its quality of impermanence as community listens “from” and “to” itself.

The following guiding principles were the path I followed as I engaged with others.

- I sought to be a worthy guardian of my relations with others. I did this by acknowledging, honoring and respecting the trust that was between us.
- I sought to be a worthy guardian of the creative space that was created with others. I did this by being fully present in our time together and by allowing the expression of impermanence to flow.
- I sought to be a worthy guardian of the products that were generated through the process. I did this by giving full and heartfelt attention to whole of each expression. My physical treatment of these gifts was with care, respect and courtesy of the sacred.
- I sought to be a worthy guardian of a process that continually allowed music to be the center of that which flowed between others and myself. I did this by being a vigilant listener.
- I sought to develop as a scholar, my discipline in practice around the following concepts:
  1) Sacrificing particularity for the universal.
  2) Tact defined as sensitivity to situation.
3) Common sense defined as sense of community.

4) Taste defined as understanding the expression or experience in relation to the whole for its fit.

One critical methodological consideration in this study centered around the generation of fieldnotes. Traditionally, the notes of the researcher engaged in ethnographic study are created solely by the individual researcher based on their observations. In this manner, the dialogue involved in creating the notes is between the researcher and herself. There are two characteristics inherent in this particular study that suggest another form of “gathering data” be in order.

First, this study focuses attention not on the product of the creative process, but on the process itself: a process of bringing forth music. It is music’s indelible nature that suggests a form, other than textual narrative be considered as a viable means of gathering data of this process. Creative forms such as the generation of music through improvisation or composition, poetry, or visual representations more closely reflect the spirit of this studies intention.

Secondly, because of the central role that relationship plays in this study there needs to be a transparency in both the note-taking process as well as in the notes themselves that fosters trust and deepens the relationship. The image that comes to mind as a model of this trust-building is of a piece of art I once saw painted by the Canadian artist, Emily Carr. Her artistic expression traveled her to Native communities in Northern British Columbia at the turn of the twentieth century. The painting I recall had a nail hole pierced through the canvas,
evidence of a particular artistic practice. Carr would publicly post her painting for everyone in the community to see as she did her work. The community could see, in a transparent and public way exactly what she was doing.

In the spirit of Emily Carr, I shared my responses with my co-collaborators through emails and phone conversations. I invited the responses of my co-collaborators. Gathering data through conversation honored the deeply relational nature of this study. Most importantly, the practice firmly positioned me within the study as a co-collaborator: one of many.

An Invitation to Play.

The performance of the birth of song began with invitation. For confidentiality purposes, the address and contact phone numbers have been altered.
You are invited to

a

Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble
Project Planning Dinner

Friday, January 25, 2008
5:00 – 6:30 pm

Hosted by Meg, Eric and Nathan

XXXX ----- St. SE
Olympia, WA  98513
360-555-5555

Call Laura if you need directions or carpool…
360-555-5555

Bring your instruments and music, your appetite and
your great ideas!
We gathered at Meg, Eric, and Nathan’s house to share music and food and to create our project. This was the first time the Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble had gathered at this location. Present were twelve ensemble members and eight family members (four members of one family arrived after the sign-in). We all sat in circle: performers, family and friends. Performers situated themselves, their instruments, and their music. Instruments were tuned. Bows were tightened and rosined. Drums were warmed. All preparation for music to play was completed.
Before the collective expression of music began, we welcomed each other by introducing ourselves by name and the instrument(s) we play. As introductions were made, everyone signed the Shooting Stars sign-in book. After introductions and welcomes we acknowledged, with appreciation, our hosts Meg, Eric, and Nathan.

With these rituals performed the music began!
After we played a few pieces, performers put their instruments away and we shared dinner. Following our shared meal, I introduced the project. The experience of the study was embedded within and as an outgrowth of our larger experience of music-making. Rather than research, I named our collaborative work as a “project that will allow us to compose music and that will help me complete my doctoral studies.” I felt that naming our work as a 'project' rather
than ‘research’ would give a more accurate context for understanding the nature of what we would be doing together. Previously, most, but not all of the co-collaborators have shared in other projects and performances together. I explained that we were going to have a dialogue through music and that we would be composing. Participants were assured that the focus of the experience would be on the process of composing music. I explained the three phases of the project: creating our biographies, composing, and performing our compositions. One participant expressed that she was anxious about her ability to compose because she was a beginner. I assured her that no previous experience was necessary and that I would teach and support her in her creation. Other members who had previously had this experience echoed their assurances as well.

I briefly explained that because we would be creating new knowledge, there would be a consent form for each participant that would be reviewed when we met to create their biography. I emphasized that involvement in this study would be voluntary and that it was “ok” to not participate and that I would still provide lessons. The second area I emphasized was that all products created in this process belonged to the creator of the product. At this point, there were no questions or comments from participants.

Our discussion moved on to exploring possible contexts for our final performance. What emerged from this conversation was a menu of possible contexts. I was moved by the depth of conversation and how deeply participants valued their opportunity to be a part of music-making. The theme was one of sharing: share to as many as we can! In this light, participants came to
consensus that we would create a DVD video to share with the local public television station for airing in our community.

The last order of business was to name our project. Individuals shared over and again the unity they felt through the experience of music-making with the Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble. An elder reflected that what she appreciated about the experience was that people were never too young or too old to be a part of music. Whether you were just starting or had more experience playing, there was a place for everyone. Rather than our differences, it was the commonality of the experience of music-making that resounded from the sharing at this gathering. The comments that followed reflected that music comes from our hearts.

One of our youth quietly shared that she had written a poem that spoke about what we were discussing. The title of our project came from Tashina’s poem, “You’re never to young, you’re never too old to play music from the soul.” Music From the Soul emerged as our project title. During the biography phase of the project the title settled to be “Music From Our Souls.” With full hearts and full tummies, our evening together came to a close. We designated the last Friday of every month to be our regular Shooting Stars rehearsal and meeting time during the time of the project.

After the meeting I sent the following correspondence to all participants:
February 2, 2008

Greetings Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble!

Please join in the conversation. I will be sending a weekly letter to you to keep you posted on our project’s progress. I invite you to respond to this letter and future letters. Your responses (letters, poems, pictures, photos, music compositions, etc....) will be shared with others each week and collected for our memory book.

This is what I wrote to my committee chairwoman about our gathering and our future work together....

January 26, 2008

Good morning Carolyn!

The Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble had a wonderful gathering last night. The consensus of the group seems to be that the experience of the Shooting Stars be broadened and deepened. The theme of our project stems from the sharing of one of our elders and brought to name through a poem of one of our ensemble members, "You're never too young, you're never too old, to play the music from your soul." "Music from the Soul" is the title of our project. What members wish to highlight is that this common experience of our souls allows for our variations to be celebrated. Variations that the group wishes to highlight are that we are beginners, intermediate, and advanced musicians and that we are young and old. The suggested performance venue is a video for airing through our local community television channels. The Shooting Stars wish to sing to and reach the larger community. They want to invite others into this experience. Contact info, web pages, brochures, bringing more music experiences to the community through the Hands on Children's museum. Reach out, reach out, reach out..."Teachers, we will need more teachers," is what I shared. I asked that members begin to think of themselves as teachers and to share of themselves this way. No one left the room.....This vision far exceeds the bounds of this study, but then that is how it is with works of the soul.

Shooting Stars -- Please write back!!!
Laura Lynn
llynn2005@comcast.net
2103 Harrison Ave NW
Suite 2 #331
Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble Gathering
January 25, 2008

Participants:
Nathan, Meg, Eric
Tashina, Shania, Jonathan, Tristian, Wanona, Herman
Marcia, Trinity, Charles
Tiffany, James, Marjie, Angel, Norma
Skye, Connor, Divina
Miss Laura
“Music From Our Souls.”

The performance of “Music From Our Souls” began with a poem written by Tashina. The performance of the poem was a performance of liminality. The poem is situated and situates us between the sound of word and the sound of music. I invite you to enjoy Shania’s performance of her sister Tashina’s poem “Passion of Music.”
Passion of Music

There's times
where they can not say in words
what they feel inside
the music from the soul
the notes just
go, and go
from emotions of
joy, happiness, excitement
to
sadness, loneliness, and confusion inside
There's many ways of music
But, like they always say
your never to young
and never to old
to keep the music going
in your soul
Music From Our Souls Chronology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 25, 2008</td>
<td>Meg’s House</td>
<td>Project introduced Outcome discussed and decided Project named Participants: Sign in</td>
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<td>Meg’s House</td>
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<td>February 8</td>
<td>Divina’s house</td>
<td>Divina, Skye, Connor Consents signed created biographies</td>
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<td>February 12</td>
<td>Marcia’s house</td>
<td>Marcia, Lisa, Charles Consents signed created biographies “Misfits” create process</td>
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<td>Meg’s House</td>
<td>Lessons for Meg and Nathan</td>
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<td>February 16</td>
<td>Shipwreck Beads</td>
<td>Marcia, Trinity shop for necklace materials Consents signed for Trinity Trinity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Black Bear Restaurant</td>
<td>created biography</td>
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<td>My house</td>
<td>Charles revises biography Composing session at Marcia’s cancelled – Charles not</td>
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<td>circle (Tom)</td>
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<td>March 2</td>
<td>April’s mom’s house</td>
<td>April’s baby shower</td>
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<td>March 9</td>
<td>Downtown Starbucks</td>
<td>Meet with Elaine, not time for biography, sign consent</td>
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<td>March 10</td>
<td>Yelm Starbucks</td>
<td>Elaine’s biography</td>
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<td>March 11</td>
<td>Marjie’s House</td>
<td>Tiffany and James lesson</td>
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<td>March 12</td>
<td>Divina’s House</td>
<td>Skye and Connor compose</td>
</tr>
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<td>March 17</td>
<td>My House</td>
<td>Wheelers cancel</td>
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<td>March 18</td>
<td>Marcia’s House</td>
<td>Misfits compose and rehearse for March 22 performance</td>
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<td>March 19</td>
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<td>March 21</td>
<td>My house</td>
<td>James and Tiffany cancel – Wellbriety Pow-wow</td>
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<td>March 22</td>
<td>Hampton Alzheimer Center</td>
<td>Misfits perform Whatever Her Name performed</td>
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<td>March 27</td>
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<td>March 28</td>
<td>Evergreen Forest Elementary</td>
<td>Tiffany composes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 28</td>
<td>Meg’s House</td>
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<th>Marcia’s House</th>
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<td>Phone Dialogue Marcia and Charles</td>
<td>Song is sacred</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 25</td>
<td>Meg’s House</td>
<td>Shooting Stars Rehearse Song as sacred Tie Drum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Ethics of Scholarship in Performance.

Teaching begins with invitation. The practice of scholarship involving others begins with informed consent. At the beginning of the biography interview, I reviewed the Participant Consent form with each participant. During the review I placed emphasis on specific aspects of the document.

It was essential that individuals participate voluntarily. Voluntary participation in the study is particularly sensitive because of two factors. First, the relationship I have with most of the study's participants was as teacher. The relationship between teacher and student is a relationship of trust. This trust is sacred. Additionally, some participants are members of groups affiliated by age, ethnicity, race, and/or socio-economic status whose experience with research is particularly sensitive. Because of these sensitivities, informed and voluntary participation is not merely important, but essential.

The second aspect I emphasized centered on the “ownership” of one’s story and music. Ultimately, I do not believe that anyone can “own” story or music any more than anyone can “own” the stars in the sky, the wind, or the rain. However, as stewards of story and music, I wanted to be clear that products of biography and composition belong to those who created them.

Although there were no photographs or recording devices to document the performance of the consent process, as a steward of the process I hold the documentation of signed Participant Consent forms for each participant. The Minor Participant Consent form was presented for participants under the age of
18-years-old with a parent/guardian present. The following are the Participant Consent and Minor Participant Consent forms used for the study.
Participant Consent

Title of Study: Dialogue as Performance. Performance as Dialogue.

You have been invited to participate in a project facilitated by Laura Lynn, a doctoral candidate in the Leadership and Organizational Change program at Antioch University, Yellow Springs, Ohio.

This project provides an opportunity for you and other Shooting Stars Performance Ensemble members to be a part of a conversation through music. You will have a chance to create and perform music or some expression related to your experience with music. You’ll also have an opportunity to share your ideas about composing music or expressions related to your experience with music. As a participant you will have the opportunity to help decide how we will present our compositions and name our project.

The project will begin with you helping me to create a biography about yourself as a musician and composer. This will take about a 1 hour. We will meet again to compose music. This session will be video recorded and available for you to see. Any product that you create during this session belongs to you. There will be a performance of all the compositions created through this project. Our performance will reflect and respect your cultural traditions. Following our performance, we will meet again for you to share about the experience of this project. This meeting will be video recorded and available for you to see. I will be sharing responses that I create with you during the project.

With your permission, I will use only your first name in my final report. You may chose to create a different name for this project. You will have an opportunity to see or hear all audio, video and photographs that you are a part of that are generated during this project. Any composition product that you create during this session belongs to you. All project materials will be kept in a secure place. The results of this project will be incorporated and shared in my doctoral dissertation.

I hope your experience as a musician and composer will be deepened through your participation in this project. The risks to you are considered minimal. Should you withdraw, your information and composition will not be included my final report.

If you have any questions about any aspect of this project or your involvement please contact:

Laura Lynn
llynn@phd.antioch.edu
360-402-3166
Two copies of this informed consent form have been provided. Please sign both, indicating that you have read, understood and agreed to participate in this research. Return one to me and keep the other for yourself.

Name of Project Facilitator (please print)

____________________________________________________

Signature of Project Facilitator

____________________________________________________

Date

Name of Participant (please print)

____________________________________________________

Signature of Participant

____________________________________________________

Date

Confidentiality: Permission to use your first name.

Check one: _____ Yes  ______ No

____________________________________________________

Signature

____________________________________________________

Date

Permission to use recordings of your music, photographic or video materials, original composition, or other designated products.

Check one: _____ Yes  ______ No

____________________________________________________

Signature

____________________________________________________

Date
Minor Participant Consent

Title of Study: Dialogue as Performance. Performance as Dialogue.

You have been invited to participate in a project facilitated by Laura Lynn, a doctoral candidate in the Leadership and Organizational Change program at Antioch University, Yellow Springs, Ohio.

This project provides an opportunity for you and other Shooting Stars Performance Ensemble members to be a part of a conversation through music. You will have a chance to create and perform music or some expression related to your experience with music. You’ll also have an opportunity to share your ideas about composing music or expressions related to your experience with music. As a participant you will have the opportunity to help decide how we will present our compositions and name our project. This form is given to you to make sure you understand the project and your participation in the project. Your participation is completely voluntary. It is important to me that you understand what you will be doing in this research project, that you have discussed this project with your parent guardians, and that you ask questions if anything seems confusing or unclear to you.

The project will begin with you helping me to create a biography about yourself as a musician and composer. This will take about a 1 hour. We will meet again to compose music. This session will be video recorded and available for you to see. Any product that you create during this session belongs to you. There will be a performance of all the compositions created through this project. Our performance will reflect and respect your cultural traditions. Following our performance, we will meet again for you to share about the experience of this project. This meeting will be video recorded and available for you to see. I will be sharing responses that I create with you during the project.

With your permission, I will use only your first name in my final report. You may chose to create a different name for this project. You will have an opportunity to see or hear all audio, video and photographs that you are a part of that are generated during this project. Any composition product that you create during this session belongs to you. All project materials will be kept in a secure place. The results of this project will be incorporated and shared in my doctoral dissertation.

I hope your experience as a musician and composer will be deepened through your participation in this project. The risks to you are considered minimal. Should you withdraw, your information and composition will not be included in my final report.
Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have. Sign this form in the presence of your parent guardian. If you have any questions about any aspect of this project or your involvement please contact:

Laura Lynn
llynn@phd.antioch.edu
360-402-3166

Page 1 of 2
I have read this form and discussed the project with my parent guardian and I understand everything about my participation in this research project. Two copies of this form have been provided. Please sign both in the presence of your parent guardian. Return one to me and keep the other for yourself.

___________________________________________________
Name of Participant (please print)

____________________________________________________
Signature of Participant

____________________________
Date

___________________________________________________
Name of Parent Guardian (please print)

____________________________________________________
Signature of Parent Guardian

____________________________
Date

Confidentiality: Permission to use your first name in the report.

Check one: _____ Yes _____ No

____________________________________________________
Signature

________________________________
Date

Permission to use recordings of your music, photographic or video materials, original composition, or other designated products in the report.

Check one: _____ Yes _____ No

____________________________________________________
Signature

________________________________
Date
Composers Storied.

Following the planning meeting, I gathered the biographies of the composers. In the tradition of music performance, program notes often include biographies of featured soloists, the conductor and/or musical director, and the composer. These biographies provide a way for the listener to place the featured artist within a body of musical work, to contextualize the performer. I felt that developing a biography with each participant involved with this study served two purposes. First, the personal story allowed the participant an opportunity to share a window to his or her world and lived experience. These stories provided an important link to understand the in-between experience of our ordinary lives made extra-ordinary. Second, sharing story created the collaborative space and allowed for the successful experience with the process of creating music. To this end, storying was both performance and rehearsal.

Although my initial language for this phase was “biography,” it became clear that we were in fact “storying” experience. Biography implies a more formulaic, scripted and distanced account of personal experience. The stories that participants shared were more intimate. As a listener and scribe, I became immediately aware that I was interpreting. I was aware that I was not scripting, but rather fully engaged in the process of creating art through this dialogue. The flow became one of listen, write and read back for reflection. I asked repeatedly, “Did I get it?” or “Is this what you mean?” When something was not clear, I asked. The feeling of intimacy and immediacy that I experienced in this process awoke the sacred of my spirit. I was in the presence of beauty.
Most of the stories were shared at the home of the participant. When I teach lessons, I go to the home of my students. My students have all been to my home. We share music together in our homes and other places. It was very natural for us to story and compose within our homes. This is the level of comfort and trust we have with each other. There were exceptions. Shania, Tashina, and Trinity co-collaborated in the composition of their stories at a restaurant as we shared a meal. Elaine’s story was composed at a coffee shop.

I did not enter this experience with a strictly defined script. The process was much more casual, fluid and conversation-like. Tell me about yourself. When the kids looked back at me with the “What do you want to know?” glance, I would respond, “How old are you?” The successful response to this question opened the door for more story to pour. Although I scribed most of the stories there are exceptions. Tiffany loves to type on my computer. She asked if she could type and typed she did. I included a picture with her at the keyboard to honor how important this is to her. The last sentences of her story are her words and spaces. Tashina wrote her own story as we shared our meal at a restaurant. Marci composed her granddaughter McKenzie’s story. Charles was not satisfied with the first story. He felt it was too transcribed and not storied enough. We decided to narrow the focus of his story and met a second time to compose.

Every story is embedded within a larger story. In this way, every story is both complete and incomplete. Geertz shares a story to illustrate the incompleteness of any kind of cultural analysis. In the story he shared there are two people in dialogue: a person from India and an Englishman.
There is an Indian story – at least I heard it as an Indian story – about an Englishman who, having been told that the world rested on a platform which rested on the back of an elephant which rested in turn on the back of a turtle, asked (perhaps he was an ethnographer; it is the way they behave), what did the turtle rest on? Another turtle. And that turtle? “Ah, Sahib, after that it is turtles all the way down.” (28-29)

To make these stories more complete, I offer this brief scored account my relation and/or the relation of participants to each other involved with this project. This accounting reads like a family tree. As way of introduction, a photo is included for each participant.

Marcia invited me to teach her two grandsons when I first started teaching at Salmon Shores RV park four years ago. A couple of lessons later she asked if I might teach her as well. I did. Marcia started with violin and then learned viola. Although she knows how to play both instruments, she prefers playing viola. Marcia has encouraged members of her family to play violin or viola. At the time of this writing, eleven members of her family either play or have had opportunity to play violin and viola. I’ve had the privilege of working with nine members of her family as teacher. Marcia is now the teacher for her family. She also invites and teaches other community members of the Salmon Shores RV park. With her leadership, a new performing group has formed. They have named themselves “The Misfits.” The name of their group
reflects the sentiment that they feel that although they may not fit anywhere else, they fit together. I was invited to introduce and perform with “The Misfits” at their debut performance on March 22, 2008.

Trinity and McKenzie are Marica’s granddaughters. Trinity plays the violin and has a beautiful voice. McKenzie has grown up with music as a central part of her family’s experience. She plays rainstick and viola.

Charles played viola in a community symphony with Marcia. He and Marcia love to play and compose music together.

Tina was encouraged by Marcia to begin playing violin. Marcia is her teacher.

David was encouraged by Marcia to being playing viola. Marcia is his teacher.
Divina worked with me as an office professional when I served as the Arts administrator for a school district. When I left the district on a leave of absence, Divina shared with me that her daughter wanted to learn to play violin. When I began to instruct Skye and Connor, I invited Divina to learn to play as well. She accepted the invitation. Skye plays the violin. Connor played violin for a few months, then heard the drum and found his passion.

A friend introduced me to his sister who is the relative guardian of James and Tiffany. I came to their home with instruments and the music began. James plays violin and Native drum. Tiffany plays violin, Native drum, and sings. This past year, Tiffany has been active in learning and performing the traditional songs and dances of her tribe as a member of the Nisqually Tribe Canoe Family.
I met Tashina and Shania when I taught at Wa-He-Lut Indian School. I brought violins to school and we played during our lunch time.

Last summer, a dear friend was in transition in her work with international schools and stayed with Meg. I invited my friend, her husband, Meg and her family to a 4th of July fireworks symphony concert in which I was performing. My friend told me that the 4th of July was Meg’s birthday. I tried to convince the conductor to let the symphony play “Happy Birthday.” Instead, my brother and I left the stage between the sound check rehearsal and the performance to join the audience and play “Happy Birthday” for Meg. Meg invited me to teach her son, Nathan. I invited Meg to play and she did. Meg has organized music playing with some of the technicians at the pharmacy that she works.

Nathan is Meg’s son. Nathan plays several instruments including piano, guitar, Native drum and violin.
I received a phone call one day from a friend who served as union president at the time I was secretary. Although he is retired, he continues to substitute teach. He was calling as substitute teacher from a high school to ask if I might agree to mentor a student as she developed and completed her Senior Project required for graduation. With this brief introduction, he handed the phone over to Elaine.

Elaine sings and plays flute and guitar.

Composition Performed.

After the composer’s stories were completed, we began the process of composing music. Each composition session was video recorded. I contemplated how to present these individual experiences of music composition, of coming to what Blacking refers to as “humanly organized sound”, that when considered collectively represent the expression of “Music From Our Souls.” I contemplated the editing of this moment or that. I realized that there was no one moment that is any more or less important than the next. Each moment is important and uniquely essential.

I wrestled with how to allow the reader to join the performance and dialogue that led to this birthing of song in its whole completeness. Initially, I thought to present the whole of these sessions unedited, but have instead chosen to narrate that which is edited and present what I consider to be essential moments of these experiences with the process of composition. You will find
there is nothing polished or posed in the DVD video recordings presented. You will see us together in our everyday spaces as we gathered to share our music and the making (composing) of music. You will see the beauty of our perfections, as well as our blemishes.

First, I will present the composer’s story. After each story a narrative and excerpt of the performance of composition will be presented. The combination of narrative and video recording of composition is both a presentation of data and initial interpretation. The video recordings are data. The narrative account is interpretation of this data. Each performance of composition will be completed with the written presentation of the composition created.

Although you will be experiencing several varied moments with the process of composition, these individual expressions are intended to comprise a single performance. It is my honor to present to you this performance of the making of “Music From Our Souls.”

The first performances featured Skye and Connor composing at their home. The group, “The Misfits” shared the next performance of composition. Meg and Nathan composed their works at their home. Tashina and Shania joined me at my home to create their compositions. Tiffany composed at her school in the Native Student Program classroom. Our final performance featured Elaine sharing her composed narrative about the felt experience of the process of music composition from her high school library. Following the performance of composition, I will guide you through a discussion of critical insights that may be gleaned through the performance. First, the music of making music!
Performance of Composition.

James was not available to participate in creating a new composition during this project. However, he has composed several pieces prior to the study and is one of the first Shooting Stars composers. His composition, Splash of Salmon, composed for violin and Native drum was featured in Part 1 of this work.

James

I’m fourteen-years-old. My birthday is in December. I like to play football, skate, and play video games. I like to go on vacations like to Kelso, Seaside Oregon, and Hawaii. Hawaii was the best because I got to see new things like the Blow Hole. I got a ukulele. It was hot there. I liked that best. My favorite food is Mexican food. I like the bean burritos, rice, guacamole, Shirley Temples, and the flan. We went out to eat recently. I like hanging out with my friends, going to parties, drinking root beer, watching movies, and sleeping. I play the violin and drum. I have composed five or six pieces. My music has been played at the Nisqually Watershed Festival, for seniors at the retirement home, for the
Nisqually Elders, at the Nisqually Tribe, and Hawaii. I am part of the Nisqually Tribe Canoe Family. I perform drum and I paddle. I love cooking stuff like smoked salmon, macaroni and cheese, little smokies, spaghetti and meatballs, and eggs. I like to fish with my Uncle. I catch fish a lot. I tell great fishing stories. I like the smell of sage. My favorite football teams are the Patriots, the Seahawks, and the Raiders. I can play almost all sports. When my hair grows long I look like Betty Boop. (February 5, 2008)

Skye and Connor Compose.

Skye and Connor were the first Shooting Stars to compose for the “Music From Our Souls” project. Seated on the couch in their living room, we began our time together playing music that was known to us. Connor was seated between Skye and myself. Divina, Skye and Connor’s mom, stood behind the camera, helping us to “stay in frame.” We started by playing the fiddle tune Cripple Creek, a piece that the Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble usually ends rehearsals and performances. Connor established the beat of the drum. I joined him with the kick-off. The sound of the steady pulse of the drum set by Connor blended with vibrating strings of Skye and myself as we played our tradition twice through the tune, then on to the tag with the ringing of the final note. This was our pre-composition ritual. Warming up with what we were familiar with to prepare for that which was yet to be scored.

After playing, we engaged in a pre-composing conversation. As the play-back revealed, I faced the challenge of listening, finding not my feet, but my ears to understand. I probed to find out whether Skye and Connor would
be composing together or individually and which combination of instruments they had in mind. I came to understand that Skye had written two pieces for violin prior to our session. I learned that Skye had tried to help Connor compose by “giving me some beats.” At first I was not clear if this meant that Skye’s melody would be joined with Connor’s beat or if Connor was going to write his own piece. After probing and checking, the plan became that Skye and Connor would compose separately. During our pre-composing conversation, I also realized that I did not bring a second drum to use for a “drum only” composition. I improvised by tapping the back of my violin to demonstrate a possible second source of drum. Although another possibility of sound was created, a violin back is not the same as a stretched-hide drum.

Connor and I switched places so that I could be seated next to Skye. As a teacher, I made the mistake of not giving Connor the opportunity to leave the recording area to work on his own music. As I turned my focus to Skye, it appeared as though I was ignoring Connor. Eventually, Connor took the initiative to excuse himself to work in the other room. I present to you our first composer, composition session, and composition.
I love dogs. I love animals. Someday I want to live somewhere warm and with lots of animals. I like the big cat family like lions and tigers. I like the dog family, also. Some of my favorite dog breeds are the Boxer and the Golden Retriever. I like mutts too. When I grow up I want to live in South Africa, Australia, or Hawaii. I want to live in these places because it is warm and there is wildlife. I want to take care of the animals when they are young. There is a show on Animal Planet called Meerkat Manor. It is about a family of meerkats that have two neighbors that are enemies because they fight for territory. The sad thing is that the dominant female died saving her pups from a deadly cobra. Her name was Flower. I like this series so much I got it as a gift for Christmas.

Today I got a DVD called Snow Buddies. It is about five Golden Retriever puppies. One of the puppies sneaks into the vanilla container of ice cream and stayed in there too long. The ice cream container gets shipped to Alaska with the all the puppies in it.
Comet is a Golden Retriever. He has a very weird personality. He burps and farts like no other dog I've seen before. The vet said that Comet looks very handsome and would be a good dog model. My best friend has a neighbor who has a Golden Retriever named Rosy. She's very pretty. My friend and I talk about her being a perfect match for Comet.

JD is now our cat. He was my cousin’s cat, but they moved to Texas. Now they are letting us take care of him. They have not visited for three years. Now JD is our cat. He is not an indoor cat. JD and Comet did not get off to a good start. Occasionally, I let JD in if it is snowing or raining hard. JD is strong and independent. He gets into fights with our neighbor's cats and usually wins, even though he sometimes has wounds. One time there was this white ooze coming out of his head. I was freaking out. He's ok now. JD has a girlfriend. She is a white cat. He lets her eat his food.

Now I am trying to compose a piece that is called “A Dog’s Life.” I am writing music about when it is born, then about when it is a puppy and rambunctious like puppies are, then how it is more mature, then how it finds a mate, then how it slows down, then how it dies.

I play the violin. I began playing when I was seven-years-old. I remember the first time I thought about playing the violin. I was on the computer and there was a learning game with different instruments. I liked hearing and seeing the violin. I asked my mom if someday I could play the violin. I’m beginning to learn vibrato on the violin.
I like my grandma’s pancakes. She cuts them into little square pieces, the way I like it. (February 8, 2008)

Skye Composes.

Skye is quiet and shy. As we began our composing session together, she attended to polishing her violin with a soft white cloth as I spoke with about her music. Skye showed me the scored paper with two compositions she had written titled A Dog’s Life and How Mojo Means Magic. I asked her if she would like me to play her pieces. Our conversation began with the sounding of one of her pieces How Mojo Means Magic. Before I played, I asked Skye about specific notes she had written. “Do you want C or C-sharp?” I asked about the tempo. “Do you want it fast, or medium, or slow?” I played the first couple of measures and checked in again with Skye. I was checking for understanding to glean a general sense of “Is this what you had in mind?” Pitch and tempo are but two elements of music that come to create in music a specific communication in a specific way. This checking allowed me to be a deeper listener. The playback revealed that I sometimes was not listening carefully enough. There was one point in this process, where I played a C-sharp then a C-natural and asked Skye which she preferred. She indicated “the second” way which was the C-natural, but I kept playing the C-sharp. As this process unfolded, Skye continued to polish her violin, occasionally looking up to the music on the music stand. At the end of this sounding of How Mojo Means Magic, I expressed my delight of her work, Skye gave an approving nod “yes,” and Divina added her praise as well. We moved on.
The next conversation began with a question, “Ok. Where shall we begin?” There were more choices to be made. Do we finish composing *A Dog’s Life* or start a new composition? Skye chose to continue to develop *A Dog’s Life*. Before I played what she had composed I checked with her for tempo. I checked to see if Skye wanted to play the piece or if she wanted me to play. Skye asked me to play. I played, but my tempo was too fast so I played again with a slower tempo. Skye gave me her nod of approval. Divina added her words of praise. I asked Skye about her composition. “Is this part of a story?” She responded, “No.” I asked Skye what she thought might happen next in the music. We began to explore options through form. I presented a couple of choices of form for Skye to consider. We could go on and write a new section or we could return and repeat the beginning. Skye chose to go on and add a new section. During this part of the conversation, she had stopped polishing her violin and was fully focused on the page of music.

Connor entered the composing space to share a rhythm he had been developing and practicing, evident in the audio background of Skye’s composing session. Although it is Skye who is being video recorded, Connor was also actively engaged in his composition off camera exploring different rhythmic patterns. Composition is not a contained experience or process. It is dynamic and fluid. Connor shared his rhythm. Skye and I both reflected his rhythm back in gesture with our hands and wrists.

Skye and I continued to explore with sounds searching for different ways to continue her composition. Skye wanted the sounds to “go up.” Next came the
decision of what our roles were to be during the composing. Who will write and who will play? Skye chose to notate which is the “getting it down” part of composition. At this point, my role became one of presenting and explaining different soundings for consideration.

Skye transcribed the melody that resounded for her. Her transcription required that I continually review in sound what we already had done before to go on. Skye watched the placement of my fingers as she listened to write it down. I turned the violin so she could more easily see what string I was playing and what finger I was using. She wrote note by note, occasionally checking aloud the specific note name of what was being played. Undeterred by the barking of the family dog, her full focus was on the score. I played four variations to end the phrase she was working on. She nodded with approval the final variation. She transcribed again, note by note.

With the new section complete, I played the entire work. I asked Skye if she wanted there to be a third part. Although she stated that she did not want a third part, I played a couple of possibilities for her consideration. After hearing she stated, “I’m done.”
I invite you to view the performance of Skye’s composition.

Following her composing session, Skye and I played her new piece together. When asked, Skye stated that she did not have any particular dog in mind when she wrote this piece, just that she liked dogs. She said that composing felt good. Skye accepted more manuscript paper to compose other pieces at another time. I thanked her for her work and for sharing her music.
How Mojo Means Magic

Lacey, WA  3-12-08
I am ten-years old. I was born August 19th in Olympia, Washington. I play Native American drum. I’ve been playing the drum since November 2006. My drum was made by David ThunderBear. My favorite music is Promises. Promises. I like this piece because the beats go really well with the violin.

The first time I played the drum I learned the beats really fast. I just snapped onto them. I like the drum really well. I also like to listen to country music, folk music, and my dad’s rock-and-roll.

I like reading a lot. I read comics like Peanuts, and novels like Star Wars. I like playing video games. My favorite games are Mario and Sonic at the Olympic Games, Call of Duty IV, and Halo III. These games are active. Mario and Sonic at the Olympic Games is active with a motion sensor. When you go up, it goes up. When you go down, it goes down.

I have a dog named Comet. He is a Golden Retriever. He will be two-years-old in May. He is like a guard dog like a Rottweiler. He is not passive. He is like an alpha-dog.
I like to ride my bike and workout lifting weights. I like the trampoline the most, jumping up and down. I remember a time when I did a back-flip, hit a pole, and got the wind knocked out of me.

At school I try to figure out beats with a pencil and ruler. Sometimes my friends will also pitch in and try to help figure out beats. (February 8, 2008)

*Connor Composes.*

Connor entered the composition space with rhythm. During the time Skye was composing, you could hear Connor in the background finding the rhythm for his composition. However, the rhythm he presented during Skye’s composing session is different than the one he chose to use during his composing session. Connor began his composing by sharing the rhythm he had developed. He played that rhythm several times for me. As he played, I transcribed. What I transcribed was not what Connor was playing. Initially, I transcribed the first three notes of his rhythm as a triplet figure. They were not triplets. As I transcribed, Connor continued to play his rhythm. I continued to listen, using my pencil as a drum stick to begin to feel the rhythm. I explained that getting the rhythm Connor played was challenging for me. I also explained that I was writing it out so that others can have a chance to play his music. I tapped the beat with my foot, then on my finger using the pencil while speaking the rhythm aloud. Still, I could not get beyond thinking of his rhythm as a triplet, rather than the three eighth notes that they were. Although the transcription of the rhythm was not accurate and I knew it was not accurate, I went on to ask Connor what
instrumentation he wanted for his composition. I presented options of a second
drum or violin. He chose to write this piece for drum and violin.

I asked him about the kind of melody he was thinking about. He wasn’t
sure. I gave him some options like long notes or faster notes. To help in his
selection of a starting note, I played four notes that varied in range of pitch. He
wanted a note that would go with the rhythm. I explained that any of the notes
could go with his rhythm and asked if he wanted a low, medium or high-pitched
note to start. He chose a low-pitched note. Connor and I improvised a slow
melody that started on a low-pitched note. After the slow melody we improvised
a fast melody. Connor felt that a slower melody would “fit in.” To help facilitate
the process of going from our improvisation to transcription I audio recorded our
improvisation. Behind the camera, Divina asked Skye if she wanted to use a
native Hawaiian percussion instrument to join in. Skye joined in at first, then
chose to not to continue. We played our audio-recorded improvisation back for
listening.

The choice I posed for Connor about the melody was whether he wanted
to offer notes that people could play randomly or set notes in a pattern. He
chose to put the notes in a pattern. I went back to try once again to transcribe
the rhythm correctly. I played the pattern on the violin. Connor played it out
again. I was closer, but still not quite right. I listened and felt the rhythm one
more time and finally got it! I checked one last time with Connor. I played two
melodic patterns, first with violin only, then with violin and drum. Connor was not
sure which pattern he liked best. He asked that we play the second pattern
again. Connor chose the second melodic pattern to fit with his rhythm. As I transcribed the melody to staff paper, I showed and explained to Connor what I was doing as he watched the notes being written down. Connor and I played back what had been written. The family dog intermittently joined our music making. Connor chose the last notes of his melody and decided to have the drum play alone for the last sounds of his composition. Connor and I then played through his completed work. At the end of our play-through I asked Connor what he thought of his composition. He responded, “Awesome.” Divina echoed with her praise.

I asked Connor if he wanted to name his piece. He was not sure about the title, but stated that when he played his music he “listened to the music” but didn’t really think of any thing. Connor placed his signature to his composition. He decided to leave his piece Untitled. Skye came and joined and the three of us played Connor’s first composition.
The Misfits.

Marcia, McKenzie, Trinity, Tina, David, Charles chose to compose as a group. Prior to the session I attended, the group had developed and practiced their process by composing a piece titled *Whatever Her Name*. It was important to members of the group to practice before they were comfortable sharing their process with me. The session I recorded represented the second composition experience of the group.

There was a significant rite-of-passage that I experienced with this session. When I first began working with Marcia and her family nearly four years ago, I was their teacher. Over the course of the past few years, as she developed in her love of music she also developed in her capacity to share that love. Marcia and Charles have become the primary teachers of the group. My role in the composition process was to be the silent observer. When I interjected comment during the session, responding as a teacher, a role implicitly not assigned to me by the group, I felt the tension of my role-breaking. It was clear that I was welcomed to be a part of the session as a silent observer, not a teacher-collaborator. I was filled with a mixture of emotions. I was ecstatic that there was such personal and internalized owning of the experience of music, music-making, and making of music by members of the group, some of whom I had once been teacher. I was also saddened that I had been reassigned the role of audience observer, becoming the “them” of the “us-them” relationship.
Marcia

When I was three or four-years-old my grandmother would sing to me in Dutch. My mom played the organ and piano. I remember listening to her for hours. She didn’t have lessons. She was self-taught. She had had rheumatic fever and would listen to music on the radio. Then she would sit down and play it at the piano. We would ask her to play for us. She would never play a piece the same way twice. She got an organ when I was a teenager. Lessons came with that. I was a young teenager when I started piano lessons. My mom helped me and that is when my mom learned note reading. I played clarinet in high school and was in marching band. I like it. I wanted to play in orchestra, but I didn’t want to scratch.

Then I married and had a family. I really don’t like to listen to music. I like playing. I met you four years ago when Alex, my grandson, started to play viola. I started violin. Then I got my family involved. I have ten members, including myself, playing violin or viola. I purchased all of their instruments. I started viola about two years ago. No matter what, I keep playing the violin. It keeps coming back.

I became involved with the Shooting Stars. I love Shooting Stars. I like the music, the atmosphere, the kids, everything. I feel like the group is home.
The first time I went to the community orchestra, I had been playing viola for two weeks and I didn’t know the notes. I decided I needed to learn to read the music for the viola. One year later I went back. I met Charles. He and I were the viola section for the orchestra. He said play what we can and don’t worry about it and have fun. For two years, I didn’t learn the alto clef notes. The second week I was playing with the community orchestra, I got it! The light bulb went off and “poof,” I was reading notes. I continue to play with the community orchestra and even played a rehearsal with the Rainier Symphony.

I was telling Charles about the Shooting Stars. I invited him to come play with us. I also told him that we should form a group of our own. Charles said that he composed and arranged music. I told him that I had written a couple of pieces and asked him to arrange them for me. He said that he would give me composing lessons. I write what sounds good to me. Tuesday night group was formed. Wednesday night is community orchestra. Thursday night is composing. Friday is Shooting Stars or duets. I’m studying technical lessons with Charles’ wife.

Tina’s other half told me that she wanted to play violin. Tina called me to inquire about lessons. I told her to come play anytime. She said she didn’t have a violin. At first we traced a cardboard violin using a real violin. Then we let her use my daughter’s violin. Tina said she didn’t want to play performances or concerts. We are getting ready to play for a local Alzheimer's center. I never understood why Laura’s life seemed so disorganized. Now my life will never be organized and or the same again. Now I understand. (February 11, 2008)
Trinity

I am twelve years old. My favorite food is macaroni and cheese. My favorite colors are pink, purple, and blue. I like to hang out with my friends. We talk about a lot of stuff. I started playing violin when my cousins and brother began playing music. I wanted to play, too. I started to play violin when I was nine. My grandma and Ms. Laura were both there the first time I played violin.

The most challenging thing for me to do when I play is to play really, really fast. *Cripple Creek* is a really fast song. When I am learning a fast song, I start out slow and then I get faster. I also like to sing. I like to play music with my grandma. My favorite piece to play is *Scotland’s Burning*. That was the first piece I played. I play with Shooting Stars and on Tuesday night I play with the Shooting Stars String Quartet. The quartet is going to play concerts once a month at a local Alzheimer's center. I like to play music on my own. Sometimes when I play with other people, it messes me up. I have never composed a song before. I want to compose a song. I think what I will do is try to put different sounds together and see if it works. (February 16, 2008)
My name is McKenzie Marie. I am 3 years old and I love music. The ensemble group I play with is called The Misfits. I like to play the maracas, and my grandmother (Marcia) bought me a tiny viola which I am trying to learn to play but I am too young right now because I cannot sit still long enough.

I first got into music when I was born because my grandmother used to come to the hospital (which I was in for a long time because I was born way early) and rock me and sing to me everyday. Then my grandmother got my whole family into playing string instruments. I love to do concerts and also to go over to my grandmothers and help compose music. I like putting my notes on the paper and then finding out that they make a nice sounding song that I can appreciate and hum, dance and play maracas too.

I love to go to my grandmothers house and listen to her play the viola, and I love being a part of the ensemble group and playing at the Alzheimer's home every month because the people really like us to come and they love visiting with us. Our music brings joy to everyone including us. (April 2, 2008)
I’ve been listening to music since I was a baby. I began playing guitar in middle school. We used to have to watch musical movies like *Grease*. Watching the movies had nothing to do with learning the guitar. They would ask us to compose without knowing what the note sounded like. This was with paper before technology. I did learn the basic scale and note reading. This helped when I began to learn violin. I got bored with the class and stopped playing.

I got married and have three kids. Moved into a new neighborhood and met Marcia. I became friends with her. She was talking about the violin things she did with the Shooting Stars. She said she wanted to start teaching violin lessons. I called her up and asked her how much she was going to charge for lessons. The price was right and here I am.

I’ve been playing violin for two months. Because of my experience with the guitar, picking up notes with the violin was easy. I had a hard time with my chicken wings and putting my fingers on the right place. I wanted to learn to play violin so my daughter and I could play together. I learned *Hot Cross Buns*. My goal was to learn *Devil Went Down to Georgia*. I needed other goals in-between. Now we are working on pieces in the Suzuki book and the first cycle of pieces in the Shooting Stars music book. The piece I am working on now is *Swallow Tail*.
and *German Dance*. I’ve invited my daughter to bring her violin when she comes to visit this summer. She says that I know more than she does right now.

I really wanted to play for fun. Not to perform or become rich or a rock star. I would like to play music that has words to it and music that I know. I’m looking forward to composing. I’ve never done this before, but I’m willing to try it. After we are done with this project, I think it would be fun to perform a concert of pieces that we have composed. (February 11, 2008)

![Charles](image)

**Charles**

Why do I compose? To answer this question I begin with my connection with the accordion. I was ten-years-old and my brother was studying accordion at the time. With a typical kid response, I wanted to play accordion, too. We were a poor family and there was a shortage of music. Once I played the music that my brother had used, in order to have new music I started to compose. I don’t have the music I composed from that time, but I have the memories of the
experience of composing. Through this exploration of music I learned what music is. Composing for and with the accordion taught me the relationship of melody to accompaniment.

When I was twelve, there was a teacher who started an accordion band. I was playing something I had written for him. The teacher told me to write it down in a way that I would understand. I did. I created a notation system to do this. Because he had me do this, I learned that I could teach myself how to figure things out.

From that point on, I kept a notebook and wrote things down. When I started to do that, I learned the relationship between the keyboard and the staff. Because I did not have training in music notation, it took me some time to learn the rhythm notation system. I have 50 or 60 notebooks of compositions. Writing it down in the notebooks gave me a concrete connection of what I could do. Even now, it is more important for me to see what the music looks like on the page, than to hear it performed. To me, seeing a composition is like seeing a piece of art. The outcome I want to see is the visualization of the music. This experience of composition is still the same today. (February 28, 2008)
Music has been a part of my life for a long time. I was in choir for six or seven years. We did a little bit of composing to learn how to read notes. I attempted to start learning how to play the violin when I was in fourth grade. The teacher kept breaking strings when he tuned the instrument and blamed it on me. So, I stopped playing. I started because my older brother played and my mom wanted me to try it out.

Marcia heard that I had played and she kept bugging me to play again. I stayed over one night and she got me to try. It is something new and something to keep me busy. I stay interested because there is always something new to learn. I always need something new. I get bored with things fast. I started with the violin, but switched to viola. I like it better. I like the deeper tones.

(April 1, 2008)
The Misfits Compose.

Members of the group gathered at Marcia’s house to compose. Marcia assigned the order for participants to compose during the process. McKenzie composed first, Trinity second, Tina third, Marcia forth. David fifth, and Charles sixth. The criteria for the selection of order seemed to be based on the experience individuals had with composing. Tina asked if each person was to write two notes. Marcia responded, “I don’t know. I don’t think so.” Marcia explained that McKenzie would write two notes on a piece of paper with a large staff hand-drawn on it and that she would not use any particular rhythm. Charles explained that it hadn’t work the first time to have group members write notes with rhythms. The rhythms didn’t work out correctly.

Marcia and Charles were seated at the table drinking coffee as other group members stood around. Throughout the composing session, Marcia’s parrot occasionally joined the music, chirping out words or the ring sound of a telephone. McKenzie sat in her grandma’s lap as she composed. With grandma’s help, she wrote her notes onto the paper. Charles looked on and praised McKenzie. Referring to the interval McKenzie wrote, Marcia proclaimed “So look, 1,2, 3, 4, 5. You did a fifth on composing. Yeah, that was good!” Marcia gave McKenzie a kiss and sent her on her way.

Marcia showed Charles the paper so he could transcribe the notes to his manuscript paper. Trinity then added her two notes. Charles transcribed her notes to his manuscript paper. Tina added her notes. Marcia clarified that both
of Tina’s notes were spaces. Charles transcribed her notes to his manuscript paper.

Before Marcia wrote her notes, she asked Charles what clef he was writing in. Marcia, Charles, and David play viola. The music for viola is written with a different clef than violin music. In standard notation, the clef sign is a symbol at the beginning of each line of music that assigns a particular pitch to a particular line or space on the staff. For example, when written in alto clef, the clef that violists read, the third line of the staff is assigned the note “A” played one finger on the G string in first position. When written in treble clef, the clef that violinists read, that same third line is assigned the note “G” played three fingers on D string in first position. Without the clef sign, these notes written would appear the same. It is the clef sign that communicates to the performer the specific note to play. It is the clef sign that creates the context for pitch.

Charles suggested to Marcia that it wouldn’t matter which clef was used, the interval, that is the distance between the notes will be the same. Although the distance of the interval would be the same, the quality of interval is influenced by the specific name of each note. For example, McKenzie’s notes were written on the second and the fourth spaces. In treble clef these notes would be read as “A” and “E” and would sound as a perfect fifth, which has an open sound. If written in alto clef, these notes placed on the same spaces would be read as “B” and “F” which is a diminished fifth and has a different quality of sound, one where there is more clashing between the notes. The strings of violins, violas and cellos are tuned in perfect fifths as to diminished fifths.
Before writing her notes, Marcia picked up her viola and played the notes that have already been written. She played the notes in alto clef. The second note she played as an F-sharp, rather than the written F-natural. Marcia put her viola down and picked up a pencil to write. As she thought about the notes she wanted to add, Charles commented, “This is very Interesting.” Tina responded, “For someone who knows what they are doing it might be.”

Marcia wrote her first note and added rhythmic value, intending that the note be sustained for three or four beats. During this time, Trinity, Tina, and Charles had a brief discussion about the name of the group, “The Misfits” and concluded that “Misfits still fits.” After Marcia completed her second note she showed the paper to Charles who wrote the notes on his paper.

David added his notes for the composition. As he wrote, the conversation turned to a discussion about the number of measures that have been written and needed to be written. With encouraging words from Tina, “Alright Charles. Bring us home,” Charles wrote his notes on his paper. He added the treble clef to his paper, creating the context for the pitch of this composition. After he added his notes, Marcia asked, “What do we have?” Then she said to Charles, “Do it for us.”

Charles reflected aloud on the patterns of the notes written by group members. He observed that most notes were on spaces. He discussed implications of the notes selected from the perspective of an arranger. This discussion became a performance not of composition, but rather a performance of technical discourse about composition. During the discussion group members
asked questions to understand language Charles used like “octave,” “sing,” and “interval.” Charles turned the discussion toward decisions for the group to make. “Do you want a “singable” melody?” The group reached consensus that they wanted a “singable” melody for their composition. Charles then played pizzicato to demonstrate two examples for the group to hear on the viola.

However, what he played on the violin was not what the group had written. The first two notes written were “A” and “E” which are played as the highest two open strings on the violin. Instead, Charles played the high two strings of the viola, “D” and “A.” I suspect he made this transposition thinking of the viola players who do not have an E string. Charles played what is called a transposed melody. The first sounding he played the melody (transposed) as written. He then played the melody (transposed) altering the octave placement for some of the notes.

Charles commented that there was some indication of rhythm in the notes dictated. He then played an improvised transposed melody based upon the notes dictated by the group. Following this sounding, the group had a discussion about time signature. Compelled by the discussion, as the person behind the camera, I joined in this discussion suggesting that Charles play the melody in 3/4 time, then in 4/4 time with the emphasis on beat one. I also suggested he try the melody with no time signature. Charles made meter emphasis marks on the music that he read from. The focus during this part of the process was to find the feeling of the music.
The discussion then moved to form. Was the piece long enough? Did more notes need to be added? Marcia, Charles, and Tina were most active during this part of the process. Tina suggested that there be a “slow build up, a drastic middle, and a tapered end.” She explained that the piece could have the same form as the music for *Jaws*.

Marcia turned the original note-taking paper over. Each member of the group dictated two more notes to be used in the composition. McKenzie wrote her notes first, followed by Trinity. Tina reviewed aloud the notes that had been written and added her notes. Charles made a comment that her notes added drama to the piece. Marcia asked Charles a question about the rhythm of the notes. Charles did not commit. In reference to the rhythm, Marcia stated that she would write the notes as she wanted them to be. As Marcia thought about her notes, Tina explained, “I’m just going by the way I can imagine it being heard in my head by the notes that are already there. Ok, those notes might sound good after those two, so…”

When Marcia completed her writing. She turned the paper over and asked Charles to play from the beginning. Charles played the new section using pizzicato. He then played the first and second sections together. Marcia added a note and then asked Charles to play the new section with her added note. Charles continued to improvise using pizzicato. As he did, he found a pattern he liked and asked to add the next two notes. David added the last notes.

Even as the piece was still being composed, members of the group began to reflect upon the performance of the composition. Referencing how she heard
the melody, Trinity commented that there were “a lot of copy cat notes in there.” Charles responded to her and explained, “That’s what makes music memorable. If every note and rhythm were the same, it wouldn’t be memorable. Music needs memory.” Tina commented, “This one is going to be a little more complicated than the first one was.”

Throughout these conversations and comments were the continuous trying-it-out sounds of pizzicato from Charles on the violin. Charles performed in pizzicato a play-back of the whole piece. He suggested that he heard the piece in 2/4 time. Tina commented that the last section needed to be tapered. A ritard was added to the last section.

The last aspect of the group’s composing session was to name the piece. Each member suggested a name. Suggested titles included “Ferocious,” “Doo Dah,” “McKenzie,” “Penguin Folic,” “Swaddle,” and “Trinity.” Alex, Marica’s grandson who stepped in and out throughout the composing session, added the title of “Swaddle.” Alex was responding to his grandmother’s title “Penguin Frolic,” commenting that penguins don’t frolic, they swaddle. When Trinity offered “Trinity” as the title, Charles commented about one of the first tested atomic bombs being named “Trinity.” Different ways of deciding the title of the piece were suggested by members of the group including voting or putting names in a hat and drawing. Ultimately, the piece came to be called *Dance of the Penguins*, named sometime after the composing session. Charles completed the composition at another time, adding a viola harmony to the piece.
The composing session for “The Misfits” is Performance # 8.
Meg

Music has always been in my family. I grew up in Cameroon. My dad was a church minister and died seven months before I was born. Because he was a church minister, the missionaries took me and the other kids to a town in Cameroon called Kumba where we were raised by the missionaries in a place called the church center. This is where we belonged to music groups and sang. This is where music began. My brothers were in a band, playing guitar and drums and pop music. My three sisters and I all sang in the choir. When my family comes to visit we sing.
I am from a family of eight. I have four brothers and three sisters. After my dad died, a foundation was opened in Germany to support my family. That is how my brothers and sisters got their education. Before I was eight, my brothers and sisters were sent to Europe for education. I was raised alone by the missionaries. While I was in school, the German couple who helped raise me would come to visit. When I went to high school, I led choir groups but I did not do instruments at that time.

In 1989, I came to the United States. I got married and went to pharmacy school at the University of Washington. After graduating in 1996, I started my family. I thought this was a good time to start an instrument. I began playing piano with a teacher. I took lessons for four years before my son, Nathan, was ready for lessons. When my husband and I decided to have Nathan begin the violin, I also purchased a violin to help my son to practice. After his lessons, he would teach me what he had learned. This helped him to practice. That is how I became interested.

I became more interested when I heard the Shooting Stars. I decided to take lessons as well and join the group. When I started lessons, I discovered that there were two technicians at my pharmacy who also played. I encouraged one to bring her instrument to the pharmacy to play. This has encouraged her to practice and play. I have encouraged them to go back to their music. For a job as stressful as ours, music is relaxing.

I am considered the violin teacher at work. Once I asked the manager to give me a five-minute break so that I could go back and teach one of my techs
some notes. We were learning Cripple Creek. He gladly gave me the break and I taught her. She was happy. We are a group and plan to play someplace this summer.

I’m excited about composing. I’ve never composed, but I think I am ready to try this. (February 6, 2008)

*Meg Composes.*

Meg wrote out a melody using letter names on a piece of paper. She played her melody for her son, Nathan and myself. Nathan patiently watched as Meg and I transcribed her melody from letter notes to notes on a staff. I explained the notation as I wrote adding a treble clef sign, time signature, and then key signature. Meg and I sang her melody as I wrote notes to the staff, naming both the pitch and the note value. A repeat sign was added indicating that the first two measures are to be played twice.

The next phrase went on to the E string. Meg first played this phrase on the violin. She learned that F-sharp is the name of the note played by the first finger on the E string. I checked with Meg about the next part of her melody singing while shadowing my fingers without the violin and bowing with a pencil. Meg played this phrase again on her violin. Then we both sang the two-measure phrase in rhythm and in pitch using the letter names for the pitch. Meg sang the two-measure phrase from the scored page. The final two measures were scored. I pointed out that Meg’s eight-measure work had the form of AABA.

Nathan was invited to play his mom’s piece. He was concerned that he did not know the notes. I reviewed the written notes of the first line with Nathan,
and then he played. I checked and helped correct his bow hold and posture. Meg joined us when we replayed the line. We played through each line by reviewing notes, checking bow hold and posture, playing the line, then replaying the line with Meg joining us. At the end of the first play-through Nathan announced, “That is really good mom!”

Nathan, Meg, and I played all the way through her piece. Nathan missed the repeat and got lost. Meg asked Nathan if he wanted to play it by himself. He asked us to join him. We played through again. Nathan still was not pleased with his performance because he had missed two notes. Nathan and I played the last line as Meg listened. I checked to see that we were all on the same line by asking the name of the first note on the last line. Sure that we were all on the same line, we all played that line. Nathan wanted to write his song. I explained to him that we were going to develop a harmony for his mom’s piece first.

The harmony was developed through a process of improvisation. Nathan and Meg played the melody and I played an improvised harmony. Three possible harmonies were improvised to the melody of the first two measures. Adding harmony created multiple notes sounding at once leaving Nathan unsure of where he should be playing. He proclaimed, “I have a headache.”

We took a pause from composing to check in with Nathan. He said his neck hurt from the violin. Meg asked him to put on his shoulder rest. At first he refused, then he went to find it. During this time, I continued to write out the harmony part. Nathan decided to use his shoulder rest. Meg helped him find his shoulder rest. Nathan began putting the shoulder rest on his violin. I helped him
put his shoulder rest on his violin. Meg asked Nathan if he preferred to sit on the futon rather than in the chair. Meg took a chair out so he could sit on the futon. I helped Nathan set his bow hold. Once settled, we returned to working on Meg’s piece.

I improvised a fourth harmony for the opening. Meg commented, “It’s nice to compose. By the time you are done you know the music. It is like practicing.”

Meg and I played the next line. I improvised playing a third lower than the melody for the harmony. Nathan joined in the second improvisation. First, I checked Nathan’s bow hold. Meg and I repeatedly replayed the second line trying different harmonies, sometimes playing the whole phrase, sometimes replaying specific notes in the melody. This process was overwhelming for Nathan. Meg had Nathan begin to write his music. Meg asked if I liked her music. I affirmed that I did and stated that I could hear others playing it as well.

As I wrote out the harmony, Meg revealed her process of composing.

“I was just in the bedroom thinking something. I’m always thinking it and I came up with something.”

I commented, “You did and it was great. So, just as you were getting ready to go to bed you figured it all out?”

Meg continued, “When I am in the shower I sing. Then I came to the violin and started playing things. Then I want to play it for Eric (Meg’s husband). I didn’t know what notes at that time. I was trying things with sound. Oh, my song.”

“It’s good. It’s good,” I replied.
With the last harmony notes transcribed, Meg handed me her violin to check and see if she had enough rosin. I tuned her strings. We laughed with each other that the problems of sound were not because of the instrument. Nathan rejoined us, seated on the futon between Meg and me. I had Nathan set his bow hold one more time. The computer recorded as the three of us played through Meg’s composition. After we played, we listened to the music that had been recorded. Meg and Nathan commented on the technical quality of sound. I probed, seeking affirmation to the quality of the composition itself. Was Meg satisfied with the composition? Yes, she was.

Upon review of Meg’s recorded composing session, I realized how intensely attentive she and I were to the process of composing. The focus of our attention toward the process of composing appeared to create exclusion for Nathan. When viewed through the teacher lens, Meg’s session was both successful and unsuccessful. Viewing Nathan’s struggle with the session caused me great discomfort. The process was overwhelming and frustrating for Nathan and sometimes left him feeling not sure of how he fit in. To that end, anytime Nathan may have felt excluded the session was unsuccessful.

Concerned about Nathan’s well-being, I consulted with Meg. She and I viewed the video together. Meg commented that Nathan was bored. We agreed that Nathan should have composed first. Nathan came home from school as we were completing the video. Nathan viewed the video of the composing session. Meg asked Nathan how he was feeling during “mommy’s time to compose,” Nathan affirmed that he was bored. Nathan watched the video closely, and
commented that his voice did not sound the same. He seemed pleased to see himself in performance with his mom and on his own.

After our collaborative review of the composing sessions, Nathan and I had a mini-lesson. I encouraged him to use his “advanced” bow hold. Nathan selected the pieces that we played for the lesson. What pieces did he chose? His composition, *The Nathan Son*, his mom’s composition, *The Risen Lord*, and the fiddle tune *Bile Em’ Cabbage Down*. He selected these pieces in that order. During the lesson Nathan learned double stops (playing two notes at one time) and we talked about rosin. After the lesson, Meg, Nathan and I shared pizza dinner together.

The performance of Meg’s composition has been edited and includes segments of the process. The presentation of excerpts is my recognition that the display of a child’s frustration resulting from unsuccessful teaching is not necessary.

Meg’s composing session is featured as Performance # 9.
The Risen Love
Composed By: meg

[Music notation]

Composed By: meg

Olympia, Washington
March 25th, 2008
I am seven-years-old. There is something special that happened to me before I was ten-months old. I went to a toy store and saw a lot of kids running around and some of them were riding tricycles all over the place. My mom and dad bought me a toy motorcycle. My dad was someplace and my mom was unpacking out of the room. The motorcycle started to roll away. I got up from the couch and started walking toward it while it was rolling. That was the first time I ever walked.

When I was two-years-old, my dad helped me take out my violin and bow and put it on the floor for me to play. I put the bow in my hand and I started pulling the bow across the violin. The bow was kind of heavy for me when I was two.

I started playing piano when I was four-and-a-half years old. I had a piano teacher. I learned how to read music and play piano in music book A, which is level 0. Then I went on to the B book, which is also level 0. When I was six-years-old, I started to do level 1. After that I went to the middle of level 2 and then I stopped lessons. I like playing the piano. When I was playing piano, my dad signed me up for guitar.
In guitar, the first song I learned was *Mary Had a Little Lamb*. The first chords I learned were C chord, G chord, D chord, DM7 and A chord. The second song I learned was *Mustang Sally*. Now I am learning part of *Crazy Train*.

As I was learning guitar, my dad signed me up for drum lessons. In drum lessons we play a game, beating the drum in words. People have to guess what we say with the drum. After drums I started violin again when I was seven.

The first song I learned was *Mississippi River*. The second song I learned was *Jolly Old St. Nicholas*. The first time I came to the Shooting Stars group, I listened to the songs that they played. I had to really decide if I wanted to go to Shooting Stars group. I decided to go because their music sounds really good and I like music.

In guitar, the first song I composed was really good. The second song I composed was kind of good. The third song I composed is called *Nathan Funny*. I call it that because the song is kind of funny to me. The fourth song only has whole notes. The fifth song has the G chord, the G7 chord and DM7 chord. The sixth song I made has twelve lines and fills up two pages.

I started to compose because I like making music. Before I started to write music, I would strum strings. Then I started to make songs.

(February 6, 2008)
Nathan Composes.

First, I listened as Nathan played his song. I played back what I heard for his reflection. Nathan confirmed that I had heard and played his melody correctly. My role was to write as Nathan dictated the notes of his melody through a conversation.

“What was the first note?” I asked.

Nathan responded, “D.”

“How many D’s were there?”

“4.”

Then, I wrote four open D’s on the staff paper.

I asked Nathan if he wanted to do the writing. He declined.

“What happened after the 4 D’s?” I asked.

We continued the dialogue pattern of Nathan telling and me writing for the entire composition of the melody. Upon completion of the melody, I asked Nathan if he wanted to add harmony. He said yes.

We improvised three patterns. Nathan liked the second pattern the best. I sang the note names as I wrote what I had played for harmony. During Nathan’s composing session, Meg entered the room and asked about the title of her piece. After a brief discussion with Meg, Nathan and I continued to explore combinations of sounds measure by measure.

When Nathan heard the sound he liked he would nod his head in affirmation. Meg joined us. Nathan taught his mom his piece by the pattern of the notes. 4 D’s - 4 G’s - and so on. I wrote in the letter names above the first of
each set of notes to help Meg with the reading. We checked bow holds before beginning our sounding of this new composition and played all the way through. Meg praised Nathan for his song saying, “That sounds good. Nathan’s song is really good.”

Nathan’s composition session is presented as Performance #10.
I am thirteen years old. I started playing violin when I attended a Native American school. That’s when I first meet Ms. Lynn as my math and science teacher. Then I soon found out she was more then just a regular teacher at school she was a musician of all types of music. It all started with a little music in class. The violin has shown me ways that I could express my self with out saying word. I started playing violin in school, with Ms. Lynn. One day Ms. Lynn asked if I wanted to attend Shooting Stars. Of course I said yes.

The first thing I noticed was the way the other kids and adults played their instrument very well. Unlike me I was messing up a lot. I became shy and embarrassed of the way I played. But I practice over and over until I became better. Then soon the Shooting Stars became like a family to me. A family of music from the soul. Like no other, not even words can explain the music that we all play. As if this was all just a dream. Now I have composed many different pieces and became stronger with those in the Shooting Stars.

(February. 14, 2008)
I am eleven years old. I first started playing violin when I was nine years old. One of my friends knew the teacher who played violin, viola, and cello at the school I attended. I spoke with the teacher about playing the violin. I then attended her class. I was surprised and unknown. I didn’t know most of the kids in the class. I was surprised that there were so many kids that wanted to play and how young some of them were. I kept on messing up. I kept practicing and I did pretty well. My dad kept playing my violin.

Months later I went to another school and met Ms. Lynn. I started attending Shooting Stars. I was embarrassed because I kept on messing up. I kept practicing and I became better. Sometimes I perform Native Drum with the group. I am good at the drum because I am in the school’s Coastal Dancer performing group. Coastal Dancing is a blessing for younger kids to learn the Native culture. Most of the kids drum, some sing, only a few dance. My sister and I are one of the dancers. We wear black and red colors. I think that this is a great experience for my sister Tashina and me. I wonder if we were made to do this or what. I wish everyone could see what we do for music.

(February 14, 2008)
Tashina and Shania Compose.

Tashina and Shania composed their music at my home. Shania and Tashina sat on the couch next to each other, with their violins in hand. I sat on a chair next to Tashina. The session began with the lyric sounds of the poem that Tashina had written, “Passion of Music.” Shania read her sister’s poem.

Our music composition began with a conversation. I listened and found that Tashina and Shania had composed a violin piece together. Tashina played their piece on her violin. I suggested that we write the music down. The girls agreed. I asked who wanted to do the writing. The girls requested that I do the writing. I took a piece of staff paper and a notebook to write on. I talked through what I was writing as I wrote. First, I wrote the treble clef. I explained to Tashina that I would have her play a few notes and would be stopping her along the way to write. She played the opening phrase. I sang the phrase back using notes names. Tashina confirmed that I had the correct notes. Then I sang the notes as I wrote them on the manuscript paper.

As I wrote, I asked the girls how they came up with this song. Tashina explained that they were “fiddling around” playing Cripple Creek. Shania suggested that they try to compose since their last music composition, The Butterfly had not turn out as hoped. Shania explained that their process was to put little pieces together each day. Tashina and Shania explained that they had tried several different endings, but that the piece was not complete.

The transcription process continued. I continued to sing each phrase and write note by note. As I completed a new section, I asked Tashina to play from
the beginning to check my work. Tashina looked over my shoulder as I wrote each note. She would correct me if I missed a note. For example, she saw that I had written only one A, when two A’s were sounded. I wrote and then sang back what I had written for to affirm the accuracy of my transcription.

The pattern of the process of transcription became play, sing, write, play back, sing back. When I felt I was close to completing the transcription, I played their piece on my violin. After I played through their piece, I first asked Tashina, then Shania, if what I had played was correct. Both girls confirmed that I had written their melody correctly. Next, I placed the transcribed notes within a frame of time, 4/4 time. I talked or sang out each beat as we put notes in frame of time. Once the melody was transcribed, I asked the girls what they wanted to do next: continue with the melody or add a harmony. They agreed to add a harmony.

Tashina continued to play violin and Shania served as the critical listener as I improvised harmony. The first measure I inverted or as Tashina described “flipped” the notes of the melody to create harmony. After Tashina and I played, Shania, our listener confirmed her preference. I played two different endings. Shania’s initial response was, “Your’s sounds better” referring to the quality of the sound I was making from the violin. I redirected Shania’s listening asking, “Which way do you like it? Where we end on the same notes or on different notes? Do you want to listen again?” Before we played I would state what I was going to do in the harmony on the last two notes at the ending of the phrase. Both girls agreed upon the second way, ending the last two notes of the phrase with notes that harmonized, what I called different notes. With the affirmative
confirmation of the ending, I wrote down the harmony explaining what we had done. Tashina watched as I wrote, Shania listened. Shania excused herself for a moment. Tashina and I continued to improvise and find our harmony.

When Shania returned, we played our duet. After we played, Tashina and I turned our heads in unison to Shania. Awaiting her feedback. Tashina asked, “Does it sound good?” Shania responded, “I like how she does that …” moving her hand to make vibrato. Tashina added, “It makes it sound better.” I affirmed the importance of their continued practice with vibrato. We returned to composing harmony. Improvise, play, play back, chose, explain the nature of the music choice, write it down.

Shania got up to take a look at the camera and adjust the camera. She returned for the final play through. Shania described the blend of our sound this way, “The blending was like two different things absorbed into one big thing that did a beautiful, beautiful music.” As she spoke her words, Shania merged her two cup-shaped hands together to create a single sphere.

I asked about the title of the piece. The title these composers had in mind was E and F Adventure to Be. The “E” is the first letter of Tashina’s middle name, the “F” is the first letter of Shania’s middle name. The adventure to be because “we are going on an adventure,” Tashina explained.

The composing session with Tashina and Shania creating E and F Adventure to Be is featured as Performance #11.
Composed by
Stefan + Yeabiria

March 27
Washington
Shania Composes.

Shaina’s composition began with a lesson about how to play pizzicato on the violin. Pizzicato means to pull or pluck the string to make sound. We wrote this piece as a game. I had Shania select four notes. I asked her to select a starting note. She selected A on the G string. I asked her where she wanted to go from that note. One rule of this game is that you can consecutively repeat any note as many times as you wish. I repeated back to Shania what she had played. I spoke each note as I wrote the note onto the manuscript paper. Shania played her notes back. I then played her notes back to her. For the next round of the game, Shania added another note to her bank of notes. I spoke what I heard Shania play. She confirmed my listening and I wrote. I played her song back.

The game continued. “Where do you want to go next?” I asked. Shania responded, “What was the last note?” It is in music, as it is in life that we must sometimes look to where we have been to see where we are going. Shania selected her ending notes and I wrote. She then announced, “That will be it.” I played it back for her reflection.

I asked Shania if she wanted her piece to be harmonized. Shania stated that she did. I improvised harmonies with Tashina playing melody. Shania continued to select. As I wrote her selection, I asked Shania why she liked one harmony to another. She responded with her criteria of sameness and difference in the blending and sounding of the notes.
Shania, Tashina, and I played the new piece. Tashina said it sounded like nature. Shania described “The sun and the ground first lead each other round and round.” As she spoke, her hands rolled around each other in a swirl of completeness. That is how Peace came to be born.

The performance of the creation of Peace is presented as Performance #12.
Pizzacato Peace

composed by

March 27

Washington
Tiffany

I am nine-years-old. I am a violinist. I started playing violin when I was six-years-old. I love music. I love to compose music. I’m going to compose “Love from the Heart.” I’m going to write my piece for violin and drum. I love school. I like math, social studies, and science. I like recess. I am part of the Nisqually Tribe. I love to sing and dance. I like to go shopping. I like painting my toenails and fingernails. I love to cook. My favorite things to cook are macaroni and cheese and grilled cheese sandwiches. I like to go to choir. I like to wear jewelry. I love to play and type on the computer. I like to compose music because we can share our pieces with other people like Hawaiians and Idaho people. I like to meet new people and be their friends. I like to compose music for other people. You should start to compose Music! The end!

(February 5, 2008)
Tiffany Composes.

Tiffany composed her music seated at the table in the Native Student Program classroom at her school. With her multi-colored ink pen in hand, purchased just moments before at the school’s book fair, and manuscript paper posed awaiting her notation, Tiffany clicked and was ready to begin. She announced, “I am going to compose a song Love for the Grandma.” She began by writing the title of her composition in cursive.

I asked Tiffany how she wanted to compose. Would she sound her composition on her violin, or would I sound her composition on my violin, or would we both play? Tiffany preferred that I play out the notes she wrote. I took my violin from its case, lightly brushed each string to check tuning just in time to hear Tiffany state that the first note was B-flat. She wrote the letter “B” and little “p” symbol for the flat. Not happy with her notation, she wrote “B flat” instead. I played B-flat. “A” was the next note. Tiffany continued to write more notes. I saw that she was not sure how to write B-flat. I showed her how to write the flat symbol, by lightly penciling the symbol on her paper.

Tiffany stated that the next note was “B.” I asked her if she wanted “B” or “B-flat.” She responded that she wanted “B-flat.” I played B-flat, A, B-flat as she listened. She wrote the next B-flat. Tiffany read, as a book, her notes to me, adding the next note “A.” I played what she had written. The next note added was B-flat, then another “A.” I returned and played her emerging composition from the beginning. As I played, Tiffany used the non-ink button end of her pen to point to each note. B-natural was the next note announced and added.
Again, I returned to the beginning of the composition to play-out what had been written to that point. C-sharp was written next without announcement.

Tiffany nudged the composition in front of me to play. I played the composition from the beginning. Tiffany stated that “D” would be the next note. I asked if she wanted finger D or open D. She reached across to the manuscript paper and wrote D with a little “o” at the upper right of the letter, meaning open D, played as an open string with no fingers touching the string. I played the first completed line of her composition from the beginning.

Tiffany then tapped the G string of my instrument with her pen. She placed my finger to B-flat on the A string. She moved the manuscript paper back into her and tapped her pen. She announced the next note would be three fingers on G string and tapped the G string with her pen. Dutifully, I moved my fingers into position. Tiffany asked me what that was called. I told her finger C.

She asked, “C on D?” referring to three fingers on D string.

I corrected with, “on G.”

“C on G?” she asked clarifying how to write this note down.

I explained that she could put G-3 down, G in reference to the string to be played, 3 referring to the number of fingers to place on the string.

Tiffany used a non-standard notation system for her composition. Some of the notes she wrote as letter names referring to pitch. Although there are four B-flats ranging in pitch from the lowest register of the instrument to the ear-wax melting high register of the instrument, I know that Tiffany knows and has played only one B-flat. The B-flat on the A string. The D⁰ means “0” (no) fingers on the
D string. This is called open D. The G³ means to place 3 fingers on the G string. This will sound middle C.

Tiffany and I then discussed the duration or rhythm of her written notes. In traditional notation a note on a staff will communicate two things to a performer: the sounding pitch of the note and the duration (rhythm) of the note. I played three rhythms for her consideration. Tiffany chose a single beat for each note.

At this point, Tiffany felt confident with her process and wrote an entire line. When she was finished she passed the manuscript back to me to be played. I finished playing the line and passed the manuscript back to Tiffany. She re-clicked her pen to blue ink and continued to write.

Tiffany’s next note was F. I asked she wanted F-natural or F-sharp. She asked me what F-natural was. I showed her the fingering for each note and played each note on the violin. I played the three previous notes and then added F-natural. Then I played the same three notes and ended with F-sharp. She asked me how to write F-natural. I penciled a natural sign for her to copy.

Sure of her notation, Tiffany moved the manuscript closer to her, wrote the rest of the line and went on to the next line. When she had finished her writing, Tiffany passed the manuscript back to me to play. I asked her about one note she had written, an E-sharp. I played the new section back. She changed her mind and scribbled through the E-sharp note. Tiffany moved the manuscript closer to her and wrote more notes. When she was finished she passed the manuscript paper back to me.
Before I played I asked her for clarification about what F she wanted me to play. We discussed, me pointing to the note using the end of the bow, Tiffany using the tip of her pen. I asked her if she wanted me to sound F-natural or F-sharp. She said no and chose F-natural. I showed Tiffany where I would begin playing and played as far as she had written. With her pen she reached over to the manuscript and wrote three more notes.

Seeing that she was getting ready to write on her own arm, I moved the manuscript closer to her and asked that she point to the notes on the page as I played from the beginning. After the play-through, Tiffany added one more note. Before I began to play she instructed and showed me by tapping on the string that she wanted G string. I showed her where I would start and played out to the where she had written.

Tiffany took the manuscript paper back and wrote her final notes, ending the composition with an exclamation point! I said the notes aloud before I played. I offered to play the piece from the beginning. She declined and was ready to write her next piece. I asked her is she wanted to transcribe her piece to standard notation. She declined. I checked again to see that I had played the rhythm as she intended. All was well.

Tiffany selected a new color of ink and titled the next piece The Hi Song. Before she moved on I had her return to the blue ink and add the treble clef to each line of Love For the Grandma Marjie. I penciled the treble clef sign on the first line for her to copy. She wrote the treble clef sign for each line thereafter.
Tiffany wrote *The Hi Song* using a process similar to her first composition. I had Tiffany sign her name, date, and write the place where she composed, giving her an opportunity to spell “Olympia.” She chose to use her newly acquired skill of cursive writing. Tiffany operated the computer as I recorded her pieces.

Tiffany’s composing session is featured as Performance #13.
Love for The grandpa

Mar. 28, 2008

Olympia, WA

Henry Truly

Lewis

Olympia, WA
the song

A B C D E F G H
I J K L M N
O P Q R S T
U V W X Y Z

Hope to see you

Mar. 28, 2002

Olympia, WA

Olympia, WA
Elaine Composes.

Elaine’s contribution to this study was not a musical composition. Although she is a beginning composer and was working on honing two compositions during the project, as her mentor I felt that her thoughts and expressions about the experience of the process of music composition fit beautifully within the context of the study. Elaine articulated a unique and essential insight about the process of making music and the felt experience of the composer engaged in this process. Her insight is a liminal bridge between the process and the felt experience of the individual engaged in the process of composing.

Elaine’s intended audience was the panel assessing the presentation of her Senior Project. Preparing for the presentation was difficult for Elaine. The challenge was one of capacity, not a deficit of capacity, but rather an abundance of capacity. The Senior Project presentation format is prescriptive intending to guide most students through the basic rigors of research. Because Elaine’s capacity for depth of thought and rigor of research so exceeded the prescriptive format of the project, the prescription tended to have a suffocating effect on her growth.

I am grateful to her teachers for recognizing and creatively working with Elaine to manage the limitations of the prescription of the project and allowing her to maintain some of her authentic voice. The agreement was that Elaine’s visual presentation would satisfy the panel’s criteria for assessment, freeing her to expand aurally upon what she really got from the experience during her seven-
minute presentation. In other words, what she was going to speak aurally was not what would be seen on the slides. Thankfully, the evening of her presentation was cancelled due to snow!

I extended an invitation to Elaine to present her Senior Project the way she envisioned it to the Shooting Stars Performing Ensemble at the February 28th gathering. The presentation allowed Elaine an opportunity to complete in fullness and with authenticity the intent of the project. Elaine’s presentation also allowed all of our younger Shooting Stars an opportunity to experience the presentation of research in a supportive, non-threatening environment. On the evening of her presentation, seated in circle with the Shooting Stars were Elaine’s family and teachers. Unfortunately, the recording of her presentation was lost due to technical difficulty (my error) in the replication process.

Elaine re-presented her comments in an interview with me at her school on March 24th. Elaine’s interview is improvised. Although it may appear to the reader to be a monologue, her composition of thought is embedded within a larger dialogue that she and I have engaged in over the course of several months. Her interview is an excerpt of the larger dialogue. The composed text is a transcription of her interview with me. The performance of Elaine’s interview is presented as Performance #14.
The performance of her visual presentation will be presented during the performance of compositions of “Music From Our Souls” that conclude the dissertation.

Elaine

Music has always been in my life. My mom sang with me in her belly. I sometimes wonder if this has influenced my art to be music. I was born in Concord, Massachusetts. I lived in Lincoln for two years. I regret not remembering the experience of traveling cross-country in my dad’s big blue Ram Charger to Washington. During that time my parents tell me that I learned to speak in complete sentences and we listened to Raffi tapes all the way over. “Baby Beluga” was a good song!

Being in the Northwest has strongly influenced who I am today. Nature. Water. The Puget Sound. It is hard for me to articulate how it has influenced me. When I am out on the water in a kayak, I feel peace and am ready to paddle for seven hours. Water encapsulates me. People encapsulate me, too. I draw comfort from people. The people are different in the Northwest than they are on the East Coast. I’ve heard that life is more laid back, but I live such a busy life it
is hard for me to say. This draws me back to water because when you are on
the water, you just are. You are a little bug floating on top. You are such a small
part of something bigger. I get a bigger realization of belonging and
insignificance on the water than anywhere else. It is so visual. You don’t get that
when you are surrounded by buildings or on a mountain surrounded by the
forest. It is the-overwhelming-ungraspable-unexplainable-in your heart. How do
you put into words how great the world is and how little you are? That feeling
influences my music.

There are many other things like water that are like that for me. The
spiritual. The ungraspable, unexplainable, overwhelming experiences are
spiritual. Water is one example of my many spiritual experiences. Music is a
way to make sense of and to re-live spiritual experiences. Music itself is a
spiritual experience as well.

Last summer while I was at camp, my dad sold the blue big Ram Charger.
I felt something had slipped out of my grasp that was not in my control. Making
music will always be something that will be there for me and can’t be taken away.

(March 10, 2008)
Elaine Composes.

March 24, 2008

What I wanted to do today is talk to you about Senior Project.

Everybody in the State has to complete a culminating or Senior Project to graduate. You chose your topic. You get a choice. I think that motivates a lot of students to be involved in the project and do it to the best of their ability. It is also a big weight on your shoulders because obviously, it means a lot and also it is a project that is very much self-directed. That opens the doors for many opportunities.

When I was sitting down to figure out what my Senior Project was going to be, I had no idea. You are suppose to, in theory, do it about something you want to be when you grow up, or something that you want to study for their education. I realized that I didn’t quite know what that was. I just knew what my interests and my loves were now. I decided that of all those interests and loves – sports, theatre, writing – my biggest one was music. I thought, “Ok. Where can I go from there?” The newest form of musical expression that I have had the opportunity to explore is musical composition. What I mean by explore is that ideas have been coming into my head and things have been evolving from there. I decided that was going to be it, that was what I was going to do my project on.

(Clap) From there I had to find a mentor. Luckily, you were available to be there for me and to open my mind up for lots of great discussion.
I started thinking about the music process just as much as I was thinking about music composition in general, the musical process as well as the creative process. I started thinking about the clear and fuzzy steps that create this creative process. In one sense, you can’t explain them to anyone who has not experienced them themselves. One thing led to another and I ended up with some fabulous research about how music affects the brain. We had to have that for our project. (This led me to) a greater understanding of creativity.

I realized that the creative process is a reflective process. Once you have created something you can reflect back on it. On a much deeper level, the first step you start out with is not quite knowing what this thing that you are going to be creating is going to look like. Though you may have some idea, or you may have several ideas, you never quite know. Because of that, creativity has a life of its own. Through this process of not knowing and letting your artwork evolve, it builds up slowly to a moment of pure feeling that I don’t think you can experience in any other anything. I think you can experience it whether you are sculpting, whether you are writing poetry, whether you are composing music, whether you’re writing. I think it is a uniform experience for all arts. This moment is a place where you are not yourself anymore, but yet you are yourself in every sense and more deeply than you could ever be in any other situation. Your past experiences, your future that you don’t even know about yet, and all the emotions that you are feeling at the present are wrapped up in this one moment. In that moment that is where art is born. That is where something that is just stuff or just
rough or just some notes on a page become art. That moment, because it’s so intense, because it’s so unique…that moment art lets you come back to that moment so you can reflect on that moment and learn more about yourself. That is how the creative process (bell rings, school is over) is something so beautiful. Your learn about yourself when you are doing it, but when you reflect back on it as well, you go “whoa” and you feel all the emotions that you were feeling at that time again. You can relive it. That is the beauty of art. That is all of the power art has to bring people together. Robert Frost, one of his big things is total communication, one of his unwritten theories. He believed that poetry, specifically, that was his art form, could transcend time and could transcend boundaries of communication. We as humans are limited by the words that come out of our mouth. That total communication is knowing without words exactly what another person was feeling at any point in time. That moment is the raw baby of that total communication.

How do you say all of this in a Senior Project? First, it was not strict factory research that I could explain to anybody. I just know in doing this project. I have become more passionate than I was about creation and the power of art and the need I think a lot of people have for that experience and that moment. It opens your eyes to yourself. It opens your eyes to the world. And it lets you create something beautiful because it is irreplaceable and irreplicable.
How do you? …Where do you go from there? Keep doing it. Because every time you grow and then every time the world gets a little bit more beautiful I really believe, too, because as you become a better person, you, as part of the world make the world better.

Thank you Elaine.
*Divina Composes.*

All of the video work you have viewed for this opus is Divina’s composition. With each viewing you have participated in her performance. Divina patiently, carefully, and creatively composed the DVD videos for the project. Like the composition of music, there was a pattern of flow to our work together. We worked in phases. The first phase involved recording each composition session and transferring those sessions from the mini-disc of the recorder to a DVD. I ran the camera for most of the sessions. Prior to this project, I had never used a video recorder. Like most things mechanical, I learned as I went along.

Elaine’s presentation was the first recorded session. Divina held the camera. At the end of the session I gave her the disc to make a DVD. I did not know that it was necessary to finalize the disc before making a copy. Divina returned the un-finalized mini-disc of Elaine’s presentation to me to be finalized. I thought that I was finalizing, but suspect that instead I cued and initialized the disc thereby erasing the recorded session. The session was gone.

The performances for this work occurred over the course of several weeks. Throughout the process, I would bring finalized discs to Divina and she transferred the session to DVD. In the first phase, we developed ten DVDs of data for this project.

Through a dialogue of editing, we created the first-draft DVD of performances. I viewed and re-viewed all of the outtakes of recorded sessions. As I viewed I took notes, transcribing specific portions of several of the sessions.
I developed a project worksheet that ordered the selections and identified specific passages and excerpts to include in the first edit of the project's DVDs. Divina suggested that I acquire the Adobe Premier to assist us in the editing process. I acquired the software and supplies she needed for the project. Divina used her laptop and contributed the most valuable asset of all, her time, talent, and willingness to learn what she needed to complete the project. At the end of this phase, the ten DVDs were condensed to five DVDs.

The first DVD contained performances that supported the first part of the dissertation, *Dialogue as Performance*. The sound and picture were not aligned on the Melody and Harmonic Rhythm performance. I had experimented with reciting the opening Overture seated in the chair of my Great Aunt Margaret. Three DVDs contained unedited versions of each of the composition sessions. I did not edit because I felt that each moment was just as important as the next in the process of composing. The final DVD featured the performance of “Music From Our Souls.” I edited the sound recording. Divina selected snapshots from the sessions to put with the music. Divina formatted the DVD and composed the visuals with the music.

Dr. Kenny received all five DVDs and text as my first-draft of the dissertation. I appreciated Dr. Kenny’s feedback suggesting that this unedited version is tremendously demanding for the reader. Based on her feedback, I decided to rework the sessions.

Divina and I reworked and edited the composing sessions together. I re-recorded the Melody and Harmonic Rhythm performance. Upon viewing the
revised version, the sound and visual still were not aligned. To remedy this, I made an excerpt, recording the music of the selection alone. Divina edited this selection to make it whole. I chose to omit the performance of the Overture. I added the performance of James’ composition *Splash of Salmon*. Divina formatted the newly edited and revised performances, creating two DVDs. The first DVD titled, *Dialogue as Performance. Performance as Dialogue.* presented fourteen performances that were read with the dissertation text. The second DVD, *Music From Our Souls* featured the performance of music composed during the study and will conclude the performance of the dissertation.

Divina

I was born in Honolulu, Hawaii. I moved to Lacey, Washington when I was nine-years-old. I remember being on the plane and wondering why we were going where we were going. At first I thought it was an adventure. I saw the house my parents said that we were to live in. It was a shock when I realized that we were not going to be going back to Hawaii. Eventually, we were able to go back to Hawaii every five years to visit family. My husband and I took our
honeymoon in Hawaii in 1991. It was not until 2006 that I returned to visit with my two children, Skye and Connor. Hawaii is the home of my heart.

I am a self-taught artist. I began teaching myself when I was twelve-years-old. I would doodle whatever came to my heart’s desire. Mountains, leaves, sky. I was one of those kids who would sit in the classroom staring outside, studying the details of the clouds, hoping the teacher would not call on me. I started to take art classes like calligraphy, drawing, and pottery in high school. When I was fifteen-years-old I taught myself how to paint oils. I did this by going to the Port of Olympia and watching other artists paint. Artists on the PBS also inspired me. I sold a few paintings at art shows and a show called “Artists on the Pier.” There were strangers who admired my work. This was encouraging. I painted mostly for family and friends as gifts. When I had my daughter, Skye, in 1996 I stopped. I didn’t want to risk exposing my babies to the toxins of the paints. Now I am beginning to paint again. I paint for gifts, the joy of it, and so I won’t lose my skills. I was concerned that my skills might get rusty, but like a fine wine I noticed that they are getting better and better with age.

I have a two-year associates degree in business. I finished my third year, but realized that business management was not my passion. I needed time to regroup. During this time I was hired by a government agency with the State of Washington. I’ve been working ever since. Now I am happily going back to college to go after my dream and to complete my Bachelor’s degree in visual arts. I want to follow my passion and be a graphic artist, art administrator, or teacher.
I have two wonderful children and a wonderful husband. My dad and my sister are musicians. They are artists. As much as I loved music, I tried to read music but didn’t have the knack for it and so pursued visual arts. I am amazed that I am learning to play the violin. I am learning through Skye and Connor’s eyes. In the short period of time that they started as beginners, they have gone much further than I expected. I am amazed and still trying to catch up. I can understand the technology part of playing and am figuring out the rest.

(February 8, 2008)

Interpretation.

I began this journey contemplating the nature of dialogue not of words but through music. The study provided an opportunity for my co-collaborators and I to engage in creating music as an act of performance of dialogue. The study was focused on the process of creating music rather than on the product. The process has been documented through photographs, video recording, text, and written manuscripts of music. The data presented allowed moments to glimpse, explore, unfold, and reveal qualities inherent to the process of our dialogue. Through interpretation we will look more closely to Bohm’s “stream of meaning” (On Dialogue 6) that flowed among, through, and between my co-collaborators and myself.

There is no limit to the possibilities of interpretations by any individual. The limitlessness of possibility created through this dialogue is also open to others. I warmly invite any and all to join. Schechner described three phases of performance as proto-performance, performance, and aftermath (225). Although
the performance of composing music is complete, interpretation is connected as a component of the dissertation process, marking a continuation of the performance of the dissertation. The following narrative of interpretation is a continuation of the performance of an ethnographic account of dialogues that have occurred that consider the birth of song,

Hammersley instructed that there are four arguments embedded within an ethnographic account: definition, description, explanation, and value claims (36). In the interpretive narrative, I sought to tease out and define themes woven within this study. These themes emerge as a result of my saturation with the descriptions through text, pictorial, and video representations of the study. My intention in defining what has been described and represented is to explain and clarify what has occurred through the process of the study. The value claims that emerge through the interpretation will be articulated as implications, formed as the concluding postlude to the opus.

The first question considered centers on whether a dialogue actually occurred. The framework used to address this question is Cissna and Anderson’s eight characteristics of dialogue (13-15). From the affirmed foundation that a dialogue has occurred, the focus of interpretation shifts to discussion about the qualities that were revealed during the process of dialogue through music revealed in the study. The interpretation concludes by examining what was revealed through the implementation of the guiding ethical principles developed for the study. One of the fruits yielded from the implementation of the guiding principles was a unique glimpse to the felt experience of the composer.
Has A Dialogue Occurred?

The eight characteristics of dialogue presented by Cissna and Anderson provide the framework to address the question of whether a dialogue has occurred. These characteristics are immediacy of presence, emergent unanticipated consequences, recognition of “strange otherness,” collaborative orientation, vulnerability, mutual implication, temporal flow, and genuineness and authenticity (13-15).

The characteristics of immediacy of presence and emergent unanticipated consequences explore the relational openness that is evidenced within the experience of the process. What evidence is there of openness between my co-collaborators and I? Between each individual and music? Between each individual and the experience of the process?

A striking feature of each of these expressions is that each participant began the process in their own unique way. For example, Skye entered the composing session with one completed melody and a second melody she chose to complete during the session. Neither Skye nor I knew for certain what would emerge as a result of our dialogue. Skye could have chosen to work a harmony for her completed piece, or written an entirely new piece instead of completing the melody for A Dog’s Life. Skye could have chosen to add Native drum to her piece or used the Hawaiian percussion instrument her mom offered. The entry into composition was unique for each individual and the outcome equally
unknown at the start of our time together. Each completed composition was unique.

The strongest evidence of the immediacy of presence and emergent unanticipated consequences relating to the openness of each individual and music and the process of composing music is found in what I considered my greatest teaching mistakes. I did not anticipate the intensity of the focus and openness involved in our experiences of composing music. The intensity was at a level that it appeared as though we were ignoring Connor as Skye began her composing session. Connor eventually excused himself. The second instance of intensity was during Meg’s composition session. It appeared that Nathan was being ignored. The sense of exclusion was so intense that in our process, we stopped composing to focus on Nathan. It is not clear to me whether it was music itself or our engagement in the process of creating music that resulted in others feeling excluded during these two composing sessions. Although these examples highlight poor teaching, they also bring forward the level of intensity that was present during each composing session: intensity that resulted from immediacy of presence and emergent unanticipated consequences.

The openness experienced by my co-collaborators and I created the space necessary for us to be vulnerable with each other and to the process. Vulnerability in dialogue makes way for the risk-taking that leads to change and growth. Looking at the starting point of each composing session gives a glimpse of the vulnerability present. For example, Meg entered the session sharing the melody she had written on notebook paper using the non-standard notation of
alphabet letters. Our session together was the first time she had ever attempted to compose. Playing her melody for me was conceivably one of the most challenging experiences of her life. She had poured an important part of herself into the music she had created. In sharing, she risked exposing a previously unrevealed part of herself. The challenge of risk was not about approval, but about the possibility of rejection.

Accompanying vulnerability is tentativeness. Throughout the session, Meg checked in with me asking, “Is it good?” We can only travel as deep in vulnerability as there is trust in the safety of one’s self and another. Vulnerability becomes the measure of our trust of the sacredness of the liminal place we create in our relations. We entered Kenny’s place of sacred musical space through the door of vulnerability.

Recognition of “strange otherness” refers the tentative exchange of coming to knowing between co-collaborators and between each individual and music. Evidence of the characteristic of “strange otherness” is found in moments spread throughout each composing session. I found myself continually checking in with my co-collaborator throughout each session. Is this the right tempo? Is this the note that you intended? I asked these questions so that I could come to feel the music as they intended.

As example, I consider my session with Connor. Connor entered the composing experience with an improvised rhythm. He played and replayed his rhythm as I struggled to put to standard notation what he played. My error was thinking that he was playing a triplet figure, when what he played was three
eighth notes in a duple meter. I was thinking threes and what Connor was playing was twos.

I made several unsuccessful attempts to find the correct notation for the rhythm Connor played during the first part of his session. Although I knew I was unsuccessful in my initial attempts to write Connor’s rhythm, as a teacher I knew we needed to move on to the next step and we did. After we improvised melody, what had been improvised needed to be notated. I began the notation trying once again to find Connor’s rhythm. I tapped it and sang it. At last, I felt it as twos. I got it!

Similar to my experience with Bohm’s On Dialogue text in which I resolved the paradox of “active” and “doing nothing,” coming to understand Connor's rhythm required that I relaxed my preconceptions to allow openness and see new possibilities. This same type of error occurred for the “Misfits” as Marcia and Charles explored to find the meter for their composition.

Cissna and Anderson describe the concern and regard for one's own position as well as for another as collaborative orientation (14). I turn attention to Tashina and Shania to exemplify this characteristic. These participants described their composing process as collaborative. Our session was dedicated to putting a harmony to the melody that they had collaboratively created. To create this way we each had roles we attended to during the composing session. Tashina served as the guardian of the melody. Shania served as the guardian of the heard. My role as teacher was to facilitate the notation and provide informed
improvisation to complement the pre-created melody. After our roles were tacitly assigned, the composing began.

Tashina played the melody as I translated it to standard notation. As we developed a harmony, Tashina continued to be the keeper of the melody. As the guardian of the heard, Shania attentively listened and watched as Tashina and I translated melody, then as we improvised harmony. My pencil would not touch the page until both Tashina and Shania gave their approval. During the session, Shania briefly left the room as Tashina and I continued to compose. I stated that I would only “lightly pencil” my notation until Shania had an opportunity to listen and provide input. Tashina and I had completed our work when Shania returned to the room. We played what we had done for Shania’s listening. After we played, there was a moment of breathless silence in which Tashina and I both turned to Shania, eagerly awaiting her input. With her approving input, the composition was complete.

Mutual implication is the characteristic of dialogue in which each participant anticipates a listener or respondent by incorporating him or her into one’s utterances. Although mutual implication is present in each composing session, a particular moment during the composing session with Tiffany exemplifies this characteristic.

Tiffany assumed the role of author of notes and notation during her process of composing. My role was to sound the notes that Tiffany wrote. Tiffany chose to use non-standard notation for her composition. The first composition she wrote was For the Love of Grandma Marjie. After our roles
were assigned, the pattern of the practice of the roles emerged during the writing
of the first notes of Tiffany’s composition. She would write a note, I would play
the note written. She wrote another note, I played the first note and the second
note written. She wrote the next note. Then I played the three notes written, and
so on.

A unique change to the pattern occurred in the dialogue of composing
between the eighth and ninth notes. Tiffany took her pen from paper and brought
it to my violin, touching the G string with her pen. She then moved my finger to
place it on B-flat on A string. Tiffany’s action of touching the violin string with her
pen and moving my finger on the violin anticipates sound. She was exploring
and anticipating the utterance of sound through these actions. Her action of
anticipating sound is an act of mutual implication between a composer and
music. In this moment, the dialogue was not between Tiffany and me, but
between Tiffany and music.

The characteristic of temporal flow I connect as a manifestation or result of
immediate presence. I was Elaine’s mentor during her high school Senior
Project. As her mentor, she and I had a series of conversations over a period of
a few months. It is not unusual for me to doodle, using my stick figure art, when
in conversation with others. These doodles are to me visual representations or
models of what the conversation is about. I often doodled during my
conversations with Elaine. It is also my practice that when I am in the role of
teacher, I give to the other person(s) engaged in dialogue whatever pictorial
representations manifest as a result of our conversation. (To those honored and
esteemed visual artists and visual arts educators, I beg you forgive me for bringing such bad art into the world. Know that I bring bad art into the world for a good reason.) During one of our conversations, I could see, hear, and feel that she was willingly struggling to articulate what it is that is essential to and about the artistic process.

I etched a single spot on a piece of paper to represent a specific moment of lived experience. Through the spot I drew lines that extended to the left, to the right, above, and below. As I added each line, I explained that in any given moment there exists all of time, complete with all that has been, all that can be, and all that is. This opening allowed Elaine to find her articulation of the creative process. She articulated that the process of making art as a process whereby the artist comes to knowing through the unknown by engaging in dialogue with the artwork. She explained the moment of the birth of art this way:

Through this process of not knowing and letting your artwork evolve, it builds up slowly to a moment of pure feeling that I don’t think you can experience in any other anything…This moment is a place where you are not yourself anymore, but yet you are yourself in every sense and more deeply than you could ever be in any other situation. Your past experiences, your future that you don’t even know about yet, and all the emotions that you are feeling at the present are wrapped up in this one moment. In that moment that is where art is born. That is where something that is just stuff or just rough or just some notes on a page become art. That moment, because it’s so intense, because it’s so unique…that moment art lets you come back to that moment so you can reflect on that moment and learn more about yourself. That is how the creative process is something so beautiful.

The wholeness of experience Elaine reveals is a description of the characteristic of temporal flow. Elaine’s interview is a meta-expression of
temporal flow. She was living within the moment as she described the moment she is living within. Moments like those articulated by Elaine as she experienced what it is she is articulating become points of departure for other essential conversations about consciousness and beauty.

Genuineness and authenticity is the final characteristic of dialogue offered by Cissna and Anderson. What evidence is there that the dialogues that occurred between myself and my co-collaborators or that occurred between each of us and music are genuine and authentic? Evidence is found in the setting and how we are with each other and music in those contexts.

These dialogues took place within our real lived spaces. We were in dialogue in our homes and at our schools, surrounded by the familiar: familiar sights, sounds, and smells. Skye and Connor composed seated at the couch in their living room with their dog Comet sometimes barking in the room. “The Misfits” composed around the dining room table at Marcia’s house with her parrot chirping and sounding throughout the session. Meg and Nathan composed in their family room, adjusting the furnace temperature to provide warmth from the snow-like temperature that Easter afternoon. Tashina and Shania composed at my home to the sounds of the occasional heater hum. Tiffany composed with the sounds of music and heater in the background. Elaine composed at her school in the library as students passed through and bells rang to dismiss school. All of these composers composed surrounded by the familiar. The transparency of the informal revealed how we were with each other and music.
The informal and openness expressed in the sessions was not without restriction. The presence of the camera did make a difference. Some of our younger participants directly acknowledged the presence of the camera during their composing session. Staying within the frame limited the freedom of movement and motion. The camera may have negatively influenced my fluidity with Nathan and Meg. What came to be viewed within the frame was partial. We did not see Connor in the next room as he worked through his rhythm. Having worked with many of these individuals as a teacher for several months and even years, overall I would say that participants were authentic within the context of the composing session.

We come together to play music, to enjoy ourselves, to enjoy each other, and to share our music and the joy of being together with others. We come together to play. Smile, laughter, and the tickle of one’s heart are at the center of play. There were smiles, giggles, and laughter in each session. Tashina, Shania, and I can be seen in an outright giggle attack during the session. There was no particular reason for our giggles. We just giggled.

The citation of examples for each characteristic of dialogue revealed through the project suggests that there is evidence that dialogue has occurred. There is evidence that dialogue has occurred internally within participants, between participants and myself, and between each participant and music. The interpretation now turns to understanding characteristics of the process that were present and some of the experience of individual composers that were revealed through these dialogues.
Qualities of the Process of Dialogue.

The first quality that immediately caught my attention was choice. I was struck that the birth of song is made through choice. To appreciate each experience in wholeness, it is important to name some of the choices that were made that led to the creation of each piece.

First, each collaborator chose to participate in the composing process. Each participant entered the session in a distinctly unique way. Some participants entered the session with partially or fully completed melody. Skye had composed one song, *How Mojo Means Magic*, and partially completed her second melody, *A Dog’s Life*. Skye had titled both of her pieces. Meg also entered the composing session with a completed melody, but had not titled her piece. Tashina and Shania entered the session with a partially completed melody. Connor, Nathan, Tiffany, Elaine and the Misfits entered their sessions without pre-composed material. Although each participant entered the session with varying stages of melody completion, each successfully completed one or more compositions during the session.

Each participant chose the instruments they composed for and with. The instrument chosen to be composed for anticipates what will be sounded at the completion of the composition. The instrument that was used during the composing session is the instrument chosen to compose with. In music, it is possible to compose for an entirely different instrument than the instrument that one composes with. In most instances, the instrument we composed with was closely linked to our experience of composing for.
Skye chose to write for and with the violin, while Connor chose to write for Native drum and violin, composing with the Native drum. Skye and Connor had opportunity to include a Hawaiian percussion instrument with their composition, but did not. Nathan chose to compose for and with the violin. He had access to Native drum, piano, and guitar. On the day of our session together, he chose violin. Meg had access to Native drum, piano, and voice. She chose to compose her piece for violin. Elaine chose to compose with words. As a co-collaborator, I too had choice. I chose to compose for and with the violin. Because of this choice, every harmony in the project is composed for violin. Because of this choice, the melody of Connor's piece sounds for violin.

The choices of voluntary participation, how the participant entered the composing session, and the instrument(s) participant chose to compose with and for are examples of explicit choices. There were also implicit choices made during the processes of composing featured in this study. What was revealed as implicit choices in the process of composing?

Each session and each participant revealed a pattern to the composition session. The pattern of our behavior is the music of the process of composing. The two implicit patterns most present were the form or shape of the composition process and the roles that were assumed by collaborators during the composing process. These two patterns work together as melody and harmonic rhythm to create music.

The harmonic rhythm of the pattern of our behavior is the form or shape of the composing process. This musical element varied depending on the session.
For example, the form of Nathan’s composing process of composing melody was as follows:

Nathan played his melody.

I played his melody back to him.

I asked Nathan to tell me the notes of his melody.

Nathan told me the notes.

I wrote those notes down.

The form of Nathan's process of composing harmony was as follows:

Nathan played melody as I improvised notes that would blend harmonically.

We improvised two or three variations of harmony.

I would play the harmony notes separately for Nathan.

Nathan would chose.

I would write down his choice.

We returned to the beginning of the composition to play as review melody and harmony together.

There is recognizable form of process to each composing session. The form of the composing process emerged within the context of the composing session recorded for this study, with the exception of the “Misfit’s” process. The form of their process had been established during their first composing session, one that I was not present to observe. However, the form of their process is observable:
Each participant writes notes to paper.

Charles arranges the composition with input from other group members.

The group brainstorms and selects a name for the composition.

The second element implicit to the process of each session was the roles that collaborators assumed. The roles involved in the process of composing included:

- Person(s) who authored the notes of melody and/or harmony
- Person(s) who performed the authored notes of melody and/or harmony
- Person(s) who listened to the performance of authored notes of melody and/or harmony
- Person(s) who notated the authored melody and/or harmony
- Person(s) who listened to the notated melody and/or harmony.

In some instances these roles were assigned tacitly, other times directly. In most sessions, these roles were assigned both tacitly and directly. For example, Tiffany directly assigned me the role of performer of melody. She tacitly assigned herself the role of author of notes, notation-taker of notes, and audience of authored and notated melody. With the exception of Elaine’s composition, collaborators assumed multiple roles during the session. During Elaine’s session, she was the author, I was the listener, and the camera became the notation-taker. Each of these roles was tacitly assigned.
Reflecting upon the melody of roles, I am reminded of Turner’s concept of actors, authors, audience, and grand performance (Frame, Flow, and Reflection 49). Envisioned in his notion of the theatrical was the distinct acting of roles that lead to a unique outcome. What I find unique to this study is the presence and acting-out of the roles cited by Turner and the blurring and multiplicity of roles assumed by each individual. All participants, with the possible exception of Elaine’s session, assumed multiple roles during the process of composing. For example, Connor, members of the “Misfits,” Tashina, Nathan, Shania, and Tiffany were authors of sound and listeners. Skye was listener and notation-taker of authored sound. The act of choosing a specific variation of improvised sound Skye, Meg and Shania crossed from listener to author of sound.

The demand for and blurring of our roles during the process of these dialogues leads to consideration of the qualities of the process of coming to knowing, the epistemological factors that were evidenced within the context of the study.

Qualities of Epistemological Intervention.

The study presented was an intervention of scholarship: whole, complete and bounded. Knowledge was revealed using text and non-text expression. I note the irony that text is being used to de-center text as the only way of knowing. The study is an intervention, a stepping-stone because of its blend of text and non-textual expression. I believe that it is possible that a foundational body of knowledge may be known and furthered without weighted reliance upon text. This is not that study.
My quest was to find a way to bring the reader, using text and non-text methods, into the space and moments of our experience, to feel with us, to further the dialogue and allow opportunity for a first interpretation of the experience. The bridge that furthered the dialogues of the study was constructed of a protocol of ethics. Rather than focusing on technical aspects of inquiry such as method or techniques of method, I am choosing to bring forward for consideration the ethics of my practice of scholarship. I engaged in the performance of the consideration of the ethics of my practice as a scholar to make my practice more transparent. I believe that it is the thoughtful consideration of the ethics of the practices of scholarship that informs and guides our actions, leading to the transformation of actual practices of scholars.

First, I sought to be a worthy guardian of my relations with others. The study is a testimonial of trust between people. It reflects agreements we forged through our time together. These agreements allowed us to accept even when we didn’t understand and to be accepted even when we may not have been understood. For example, there was no way for me to fully inform co-collaborators about the process of the experience because we had not had these moments together. Participants relied upon previous experiences to base their decision to be involved in the study. I trusted each participant and the process.

My greatest growth came when, during this study, my role changed in relation to the “Misfits.” I had to let go of my attachment to my previous role as teacher to embrace the teaching and learning that emerged. Humbly, I acknowledge that I didn’t make this transition without error. When I interjected
my comments, as the designated observer, it became clear from the tension of
the space between pronounced actions and words, that I had entered a place
that I was not welcomed. I left the session filled with emotion about that
experience. I was filled with joy that individuals of the group had so personally
and completely come to claim this experience as their own. At the same time I
was saddened knowing that what I had to give and offer was no longer
necessary. There are other gifts that I may share that may be needed and
necessary, but not this one.

Another guideline addressed my desire to be a worthy guardian of the
creative space that was created with others. When I wrote these words, I
imagined myself within the space of composing music. I was surprised to find
that the creative space-making began during our first planning meeting. The
planning meeting discussion and what was shared from the hearts of co-
collaborators about their experiences of music led to the naming of this project.
The discussion and naming created the sacred space we shared throughout this
process. “Music From Our Souls” transported and transcended from one home
or place to the next over time. Personal stories and expressions through music
poured forth from within this transcended space.

My sense is that the actions I attended to that maintained the
“normalness” of our relations and experiences led to the transcended space
being sustained over the course of the study. The brief phone calls and emails.
Inviting Marcia to help me video record at Fox Island. Meeting with Divina at her
home to edit the DVD and seeing Skye and Connor and petting Comet, the dog.
Inviting Tashina, Shania and their dad as guests to a performance I was playing for and singing and drumming with James and Tiffany at the Nisqually Tribe Canoe Family practice. Stopping in for a mini-lesson with Meg and Nathan. Our monthly gatherings gave all of us the opportunity to be with each other and do what we enjoy, playing and sharing with each other. We shared the music that had created during the project, reaffirming and celebrating the beauty that had emerged.

I sought to be a worthy guardian of the products that were generated through this process. My basket spills with fullness when I contemplate the products that emerged from this project. The whole concept of ownership and song plays out as a sticky issue. Individuals own their story. Individuals and the in one instance the group, owns its music. The question that emerged is how do we share with others in a good way, in a way that our music is respected and that we are respectful of others.

Marcia and Charles asked me to speak at one of our monthly gatherings about the stewardship of song. I facilitated a dialogue about how we all may be worthy guardians of story and song. My comments addressed the issues of respect involved with guardianship. Respect is shown when we play songs and tell story with permission, acknowledging the author or source of composition. We show respect when we bring our full presence to our performance. We show respect when we listen with full openness of our hearts. We show respect when we are with music, story, and each other this way. Guardianship seems to me a higher place than ownership.
The next quality of protocol put in place is another component of guardianship: guardianship of process in which music is privileged to be the center of that which flowed between each of us involved in the study. My intention in writing this part of the protocol stemmed from experiences I have witnessed as a performer when this was not the case.

Music making and making music brings one to the core of one’s self. This is where these liminal moments occur. What is revealed as expression comes from the core of one’s self. The act of revealing and expressing from one’s core demands courage. In this way, music making and making music is a delicately balanced dialogue between an individual and music. Sometimes the courage that is necessary to participate in the dialogue resonates with other chords of our person: chords of ego and arrogance. When the chords of ego and arrogance are awoken, the process of music is no longer about music, but about the individual. Music comes to be held hostage to the individual. When this happens, the result is not silence, but a gnarled wad of tangled sound of ugly.

I wrote this component of the protocol as my reminder about what it is that is important in the process. Early in the study, I referred, like the North Star, to the protocol of keeping music as the center. Charles was not pleased with the first product of his storied biography. He expressed in an email to me that it felt to him to be too rough a transcription. I responded to his email, clarifying that the focus of the study was going to be centered on process rather than product. He still was not satisfied. It became clear to me how deeply committed I was to holding process as the center of the study. I was also aware that Charles could
have chosen to not participate in the study and that potentially he might have influenced members of the “Misfits” to join in withdrawing from the study.

My response was to trust the process. I phoned Charles to listen further to his concerns. We agreed that instead of taking a broad view of his story, we would narrow the focus to specific points that led to his being a part of “Music From Our Souls.” Charles and I met again to re-story his biography. Our rewrite met with his approval.

In the study, the presentation of “The Misfits” composition session is partial. The nature of the partiality is inherent to the experience of the process itself. The group assigned Charles the role of translator/composer/arranger. What you observed were the critical preliminary conversations that informed Charles to do what he was assigned to do by the group. Their session was a series of input conversations. Also presented is the product of the final composition. What was not seen was Charles’s individual process of composing. What I have presented honors the composing process of “The Misfits.”

The last component of the guidelines focused on the disposition of the scholar. I sought to develop as a scholar through practice around the following concepts:

1) Sacrificing particularity for the universal.
2) Tact defined as sensitivity to situation.
3) Common sense defined as sense of community.
4) Taste defined as understanding the expression or experience in relation to the whole for its fit.
The example I hold for consideration is the composing session with Shania and Tashina when Peace was composed. Through play and improvisation a melody was developed. The process of developing the melody allowed Shania an opportunity to practice learning pizzicato.

Dialogue through music was the universal. The playing of notes using pizzicato was so quiet that you had to lean in to hear what was going on. Tashina, Shania, and I yielded our individual particulars to participate in the expression of music in that particular moment. We were engaged in play. We created the rules of our play and who would serve and act in various roles. Shania was the chooser and selector of notes. Tashina was the listener and reflector of sounds. I was the reflector of sounds and scribe. Each of us fully attended, with implicit sensitivity to our roles. As we did so barriers of age and other roles like teacher and student dissolved. We each were teachers and each were learners. When our roles dissolved, we came to community. Once in community, there was no longer a division of whole and parts. Both the whole and parts were present, necessary, and in motion. The outcome of the motion was an experience, an experience that allowed us to reveal and express some of our humanity for a moment.

These momentary expressions of humanity made transparent the felt experience of the composer. What was revealed was not a single dimension of experience such as emotion, but rather a weaving of multiple dimensions we call lived experience. One path followed by many composers that gave us insight
into the felt experience of the composer involved the naming of song created. The act of naming created compositions revealed for our observation the connection to and elevation of that which was uttered in the telling of story of the ordinary lived experience to that which was made extra-ordinary through music. Music was the medium, message, and messenger.

A re-read of Skye’s biography revealed her love of animals. Her love of animals became directly connected to her piece composed, *A Dog’s Life*. Connor’s felt experience was about an exploration of sound that was not about naming. His composition titled *Untitled*’ reflected an experience that is about sound and untranslatable to word. Meg named her piece *The Risen Lord*, reflecting the connection of music to her story of her lived faith experience. Nathan’s title, “*The Nathan Song*” reflected the continued development of his story. The members of the group “The Misfits” find the title of their piece through the dialogue of their group. Their experience of composing was an affirmation of the formation of their group. Tashina and Shania revealed the center of their experience, naming their composition using the initials of their middle name to the adventure of the lived experience of their lives. Tiffany dedicated through title, her composition to honor an essential person of her life, her grandmother, who is her parent guardian. Through narrative, Elaine sings of the passion storied in her biography connecting her intimate experience with the Arts and the artistic process. Divina captured the beauty of our expressions connecting visual representations of our experience with sound, thereby creating a motion of fluidity and flow.
I return in this final section of interpretation to describe, hold up, and make visible the sacred space we co-created through our relations and development of community to birth our songs.

**Qualities of the Sacred Musical Space.**

The center of Kenny’s *Field of Play* is the musical space. She names the qualities of sacred space as contained and safe as if at home (100). As my co-collaborators and I experienced moments of beauty with each other and with music, we co-created, sustained and lived within the space of the sacred. We brought our unique and essential qualities of individual experience to our work as co-creators. We created our sacred space in public and private places of our homes, our schools, and at local restaurants. We transported our co-created space to many places over time. In this way, our experience transcended both place and time.

Songs were born from within the sacred space we co-created. Songs that spoke in the language of music about our lives; songs that “made special” our everyday lived experiences; songs that were created through dialogue with our selves, with each other, with music, and with all of creation. Our experience with the birth of song gave each of us an opportunity to experience sacred living. The greatest challenge each of us now faces is remembering in wholeness about our experience of creating, sustaining, and living sacred.

**Postlude.**

What are the implications of the performance of dialogue through music? As performance, the work lends itself to address four distinct paths of
experience. First, the work addresses the important role that music plays in the learning of humans. Secondly, the work illuminates an important path for practitioners and scholars of leadership and change to travel as a bridge toward a fuller expression of humanity. Third, as an epistemological intervention the work opens space in the scholarly community to privilege otherwise subjugated knowledge. Finally, the work is an expression of one person’s transformation.

This work is an expression of Arts in action, specifically focused on music. Listening, as reflection, to the experiences and expressions shared by and with my co-collaborators I am greeted by a multitude of questions. Could the knowledge that emerged from the study been uncovered any other way? What is essential and unique to this expression? What is its beauty? In what other ways can we make transparent lived experiences of our ordinary to allow the experience of the extra-ordinary? What was revealed about our time in the sacred space? What was revealed through the work as an epistemological intervention? What was revealed about beauty? What is the harmonic rhythm and melodies of our expression?

The harmonic rhythm is the sounding of our ability to know and do, not as an act of duality, but as the flow of a single motion of wholeness and completeness. The sounding of our harmonic rhythm emerged through dialogues of community-based teaching and learning.

Meg learned F-sharp on the E string. She wrote music for a note she found through improvisation to play, but did not know how to name or notate. Through dialogue, she now knows and can do both. Tashina and Shania now
have a harmony for the melody of their adventure. Their harmony was
developed through a dialogue of musical play of improvisation and choice.
Connor created his rhythm through play. Through dialogue, I came to “feeling
know” Connor’s rhythm. Change and growth were manifest through the
dialogues within our self, between each other, and through music. Could this
growth and change have come from any other source than music?

Music is the source of the uniqueness of these expressions. Music
allowed each of us individually and collectively to create through choice. Music
provided a path for us to hold the experience of our ordinary lived experience as
we created and transformed that experience to extra-ordinary. Music brought us
to moments of beauty. Our encounters with music, like a gentle kiss, allowed
each of us the opportunity to reveal a bit of our humanity. As we revealed our
humanity, barriers of age, race, religion, education, gender, and socio-economic
status dissolved. It is not that these barriers ceased to exist; instead, these
barriers ceased to matter. Moments with beauty allowed us to reveal our
humanity and to be affirmed and transformed through these encounters.

As we attend to meeting the demands of postmodern life, music and other
arts continue to provide both a way and the means for us to reach, stretch and
grow through improvisation, play, expression, reflection, listening, and sounding.
Music is indelible and tightly woven with the pattern of creation, providing a
contributing quality to the human experience that is as essential as air, water,
and foods of the earth. The essentialness of music calls us to consider the
place of music and other arts within the context of the all of human experience, including all places of our public and private lives.

Music is at its best when it is allowed to flow in its own way. Music and other arts allow us to encounter what Elaine described as the “clear and fuzzy” process of creativity. Music calls us to dialogues of spirit consciousness. These dialogues of spirit consciousness are the essence of the extra-ordinary. Both our ability to do and the capacity to judge the rightness of our doing are exercised in the dialogues. Music is spoken and heard through our spirit. As we speak and listen through our spirit we live Gebser’s integral consciousness. We find ourselves simultaneously in dialogue with the center of creation, with our self and with others. It is through the process of dialogue that we come to restore and renew our balance, to reclaim our humanity.

My concern is that we do not make space available for these dialogues to occur. We are not making room in our schools or in our boardrooms. We are not making room in our community or family time, nor in our individual spaces. The challenge we face to make space available is not a resource issue. We make room for that which we value. The challenge of bringing forward dialogues that are arts-based and processually-centered is that we do not have language that expresses as value this deeply felt experience. Language does not exist that describes what becomes deeply felt and what becomes deeply felt defies description. How do we move beyond this quandary? Play on.

Play on as I did during Connor’s session when I could not find his rhythm and knew I had not found his rhythm. We played on. Eventually, I did find his
rhythm. I found it through dialogue with myself, with Connor, and with music. We played on. Play on until we become sure and trust the experience of process in which no language is necessary. When we reach the point of silence, language, like song, will be born: language that expresses the re-connection of our hearts, minds, hands, and feet.

In the opening narrative I lamented the marginalization and “push out” of the Arts in the curriculum of schooling systems. When we push the Arts out of the curriculum we lose not just a subject, but a way of learning that allows us to be and become fully human. Through music we are allowed the opportunity to practice listening. In this practice we listen, not with our ears, but through our own hearts. We listen to the heartfelt expressions of others. We learn to speak from our hearts and come to encourage and expect this kind of speaking from others. Through this listening and speaking, through this dialogue of music we come to find a deeply held connection with other humans and other expressions of creation. This dialogue is our bridge to restore our selves with our humanity and the humanity of others. What other expression allows us to practice the art of being human this way?

This work of restoration is an issue of social justice and the central concern of practitioners and scholars of leadership and change. Leaders face innumerable challenges, the greatest being the challenge of listening. The kind of listening I am referring to is a deep listening that allows for the transcendence of thought and the creating of new experiences. Listening with the attentive
awareness that when our presuppositions, assumptions, and prejudices are most active we are most likely to be unaware of their agency.

Listening with attentive tentativeness is demanding and requires discipline. To venture into these waters with Bohm and company, leaders are asked to leave the shores of absolute security. Immersed in these new waters, we come to find that deep listening is not an acquired skill or a point of destination, but rather a developed quality of disposition. A quality of disposition in which, as a way of being, we become comfortable with the currents of paradox, blurring, fuzziness, and messiness. There are few ways for us to practice this kind of becoming, in which we can practice, as I did finding Connor’s rhythm, deep listening that engages all of our senses and capacities.

In the witness of the birth of song, we come to find that “no place of in-between” is the source of inspiration and courage. Finding ourselves located at this no place of in-between where song is birthed, we connect to other human beings in a way that allows other barriers of age, ethnicity, race, gender, socio-economic status to dissolve. We become connected to nature, listening for and speaking through music of the beautiful songs of other voices of Creation. This is the power of music manifest. It is music that liberates us in this way. This power to liberate is music’s essential and sacred quality.

There is much more for us to know of this quality. There is much more to be heard. I applaud those who speak with courage and conviction to sound those voices muted and unheard. I join this chorus and re-sound that we must, as scholars engaged in acts of scholarship, focus as intensely upon our listening
as we do upon our voicing. The dialogue of listening for and listening to will create openings and make space available for previously unauthorized expressions to be voiced and heard. It is time for us to liberate ourselves through our practice as scholars from the tyranny of oppressive censorship.

I thank you for joining me on this amazing journey. It is Richard Schechner who made the distinction between experiences that transport as to those that transform. The experience of this journey through scholarship has both transported and transformed me. I am grateful for the opportunity to bring back to Fox Island the gift she gave me, music. I came to her transported by the melodies and harmonies of the hopes and dreams of those whom I travel with on this journey in the making.

I have been changed as a result of the experience of the journey of scholarship. I learned that change begins with me and not out there somewhere. I have enjoyed engaging in conversation of scholars who have challenged my preconceptions and fixed notions about the way things are. These learnings challenged me to acknowledge my limitations as a listener. I have much more practicing ahead to be a good listener. I appreciate the listening opportunities afforded me as a result of the study. Listening to the expressions of scholars and my students inspires and informs. I have learned that for me, writing is a form of listening. I did not make this journey alone. Scholarship does not emerge in isolation. I wish to extend my grateful appreciation to:

- All of creation that sustained, nurtured and inspired me on this journey.

- All my relations and past-aways who made way for me to be here to
express as I have.

-My family for seeing me through some of the most difficult living of my time, especially to my mom Betty and dad Luke.

-My friends who are ever-present and steady in my life who laughed and cried with me and who made me laugh and cry, openly.

-My students and co-collaborators: Ashley, Skye, Connor, Divina, Marcia, Charles, Tina, David, Trinity, McKenzie, Meg, Nathan, Tashina, Shania, Tiffany, James, and Elaine, I hope you find this song worthy of the amazingly generous gifts you have shared with me.

-David Thunderbear for connecting me with the people of your village and helping me learn to be a better listener and more sensitive being.

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-Members of the Wa-He-Lut Indian School, the Nisqually Tribe, the North
Thurston Public Schools, the Ketchikan and Metakalah communities for welcoming me and allowing me to travel with you during the course my studies.

-You the reader, for joining in this expression.

I begin living my life transformed sharing song. The performance concludes with the sounding of beauty created as “Music From Our Souls.” The performance of music composed marks the first steps into another liminal “no place of in-between.” “Music From Our Souls” was created through and extends beyond Dialogue As Performance. Performance As Dialogue. Presented for your enjoyment, the works of “Music From Our Souls” in performance.
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