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A Philosophy of Performance, Politics and Composition

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This is to certify that the work I am submitting is my own and has not been submitted for another degree, either at University College Cork or elsewhere. All external references and sources are clearly acknowledged and identified within the contents. I have read and understood the regulations of University College Cork concerning plagiarism.

Dorone Paris

Introduction

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict viewed through the eyes of an Israeli citizen born in 1988

My earliest memory is of the Gulf War in 1990. I remember sitting in a bomb shelter, while my Dad prayed for our safety and my Mom tried to feed me through the large, sagging gas mask that was strapped over my head.

We survived that war, and luckily, numerous others which followed including the Lebanon War and the first Intifada.

As I grew older and passed through various education systems, it became clear to me that there were enemies nearby called 'Arabs'. We knew all about the enemy from school-yard talk, teachers' comments and official bomb drills. Crucially, however, neither I, nor anyone my age had ever met an Arab.

In 1995, Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was murdered due to his belief in coexistence. I was only 8 at the time, and still I can remember the day of his death as if it was yesterday. This act of violence, physically and philosophically has shaped Israel as it is today. It was the moment in which all hope of coexistence has disappeared and a raging storm of never ending violence took over.

In 2000, the Second Intifada broke out. I remember clearly the sound of three buses exploding in Haifa. It is strange that a child of 14 would be so familiar with the sound of a suicide bomber destroying hundreds of lives. The worst thing about that sound was the tension in the moment of silence afterwards, as the sickening realisation of what had just happened washed over you.

It is very difficult *not* to think about the other side as the enemy, when you grow up experiencing such events.

I first met Shahd Zoubi when I arrived at my work desk, as part of the national service programme for which I volunteered to try to assuage some of the disappointment of my friends and relatives. When I asked what her name was, I was surprised that it was in Arabic — not because I had never met an Arabic person before, but because I had never heard of an Arab

volunteering in the Israeli National Service. I was astonished and it was the first time I got to know, work and become friends with someone from the other side of the conflict. My whole world changed.

Of course Shahd is a unique person. She had to hide her involvement in the National Service from her own friends and family, since participating in any Israeli government organisation is regarded as treason. Moreover, Shahd believes that she is an Israeli (in complete contradiction to the Palestinian identity she inherited at birth). In her own words: *"the State of Israel is where I was born and so I wanted to give something back to my country by volunteering"*.[1]

Shahd's story highlighted a fundamental aspect of the war: We are forced by nothing more than the religion of our ancestors to "belong" to a single side in the conflict. You are either an Israeli or a Palestinian. Although the State of Israel is a single entity, there are overwhelming political and social barriers which serve to divide citizens in every aspect of their daily lives, forcing them to remain separate, isolated and hostile.

My view of the world has changed dramatically after meeting Shahd. Since my realisation that the 'other side' wasn't as bad as I always thought, I began doubting everything I knew before. I realised that my knowledge had been created through a much filtered angle, which was set to serve a specific political agenda of the appointed governments of the time.

The revolutionary French scientist Antoine Lavoisier said in 1777 that '*The human mind gets* creased *into a way of seeing things'*.[2] Biologists suggest that the evolutionary reason for this trait is called "assortative mating": Finding a partner who has similar values to your own, makes for a closer family. And stronger opinions, form stronger family bonds. The outcome of this is that our existing opinions become deeper-set, as we block our minds from absorbing any new information which counters our existing ideologies. We are attracted to people who share our ideas and we gather into increasingly polarised groups.

In the modern world, this trait has been catalysed by our ubiquitous and near-permanent access to communication. Technology immediately exposes us to worldwide issues, and the facebook generation, through either peer pressure, our need for self-identification or exhibitionism indiscriminately obliges every individual to have a voice. Online tools vastly extend our ability to form powerful social and ideological groups. Information is increasingly filtered and crucially

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[1] Shahd Zoubi and Dorone Paris, Conversation with Shahd Zoubi, 2008.
[2] Antoine Laurent Lavoisier, *Elements of Chemistry*, Dover Classics on Science and Mathematics (New York: Dover, 1965).

personalised, to your own specific tastes, forming a cycle of reinforcement, which ultimately polarises, divides and entrenches public opinion. By enabling users to interact only with people and groups who share similar ideas to them, (often in the absence of first-hand or in-depth knowledge of what these ideologies truly mean), social media can create a dangerous, informational echo-chamber, in which discrimination, hatred and even violence can flourish. Our understanding of the 'other', is severely distorted by our prejudices and free-thought is oppressed by the ideas we have attached to ourseslves.

Being raised in a deeply religious society has shaped both my worldview, and that of Shahd. Judaism and Islam both repress women and enforce strict rules to keep women subservient to men. For this reason among others, we each grew up in circumstances in which we felt disillusioned or detached from our social systems. We soon found that the similarities in our upbringings outweighed the differences we had been taught. When we first met, we felt inhibited about promoting coexistence. However, our years of friendship fostered confidence in our ideas and the courage to declare them publicly. Our struggle to be accepted as equals in our society inspired me to dedicate my life to promote equal rights for women and coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians.

My sound world, compositional style and output prior to the PhD
My Musical background growing up was diverse. I grew up playing the saxophone. Listening, practicing, performing and studying Jazz music. I was training myself to become a jazz saxophone performer and my entire efforts were focused on achieving that. I had played in a few jazz ensembles in my local area and organised a few jazz sessions in order to encourage a development of a musical jazz community. I found that jazz was a musical form in which expression of feelings had no constraints but only set rules for harmonical movement, progression and scale.

As I progressed in my studies, I felt that I wanted to work with the boundaries instead of being confined to them. I discovered the music of John Coltrane, Charles Mingus and Thelonious Monk and slowly began to creatively think about music theory and contemplate on freedom in constructed musical movements.

I began my Bachelor's degree in the University of Haifa in Israel, a degree in both Music and Philosophy. I was privileged to have taken modules in Arabic and Contemporary Israeli Music which had a strong influence on my music today. Both those courses shaped my understanding

of the musical aesthetics in Israel through practicing and examining the music of civilians of the same land (whether Israelis or Palestinians in their identity). More, studying both topics in depth for three years, I have gained tools to express feelings through models of musical identity such as musical modes (whether Arabic or Jewish traditional ones), and musical techniques of traditional Arabic and Jewish instruments.

The first influence my studies has had, was on my performance practice. I explored identity through playing jazz standards which I applied Arabic modes to. Slowly I began adapting those to my compositional practice too. My first attempt was in arranging Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* into a unique ensemble consisting of instruments both from traditional Arabic and Jazz instrumentations such as the kanoon, bouzouki, tenor saxophone, violin and soprano singers.

Figure 1: Pictures at an Exhiition-arrangement

By the end my degree, I my focused on the role of self-identity through music has progressed much more and resulted in a forty-minute dance composition. The instrumentation consisted of mainly traditional Arabic instrumentation, which I have collaborated at times together with sound samples from a famous Arabic song by Um Kultum, 'Will I Meet You Tomorrow'. It was a

fascinating opportunity and the first time in which I felt strongly about my middle eastern-Israeli identity.

My studies in Philosophy shaped my thoughts on ethics and society. They have influenced my compositional decisions, performance and eventually shaped my focus on ethics and society with my work.

In the *Aging of New Music*, Adorno discusses oppression. He argues that the unconscious restraints imposed by society mean that we have also become too repressed to advance music. He continues claiming that repressed music is a sign of severe contradiction of freedom and collapse of individuality. Adorno holds a very pessimistic view of the future, stating:

> *"The sounds remain the same but the anxiety that gave shape to its great founding works has been repressed. To recognise the aging of new music does not mean to misjudge this aging as something accidental…The symptoms of this repression in social terms contradict freedom and collapse individuality that helpless and disintegrated individuals confirm, approve and do once again to themselves".* [5]

Composer Gerhard Stäbler has a similar philosophy. Stäbler firmly believes that the 'extreme' is needed in order to facilitate learning and perception, or to progress at all as an artist. However, he claims that extreme aesthetics have become fashionable, and are purely a game for contemporary artists, who are now revered for amusing or entertaining their audiences with trivialities. Stäbler criticizes the motivations of modern composers when he says *"the goal is no longer to notice what is, but rather to distract from what is, in order to dampen the experience of what is, and to inhibit reflection thereon"*.[6]

Adorno and Stäbler have a big influence on my musical preferences and philosophy. Their work sharpened my understanding of the purpose of contemporary music and political art. It seemed to me that as a society, we are increasingly passive about injustice and blind to war. Worse still, we persistently fail to learn from the mistakes and tragedies of the past, continually letting

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[5] Theodor W. Adorno and Richard D. Leppert, *Essays on Music /: Theodor W. Adorno ; Selected, with Introduction, Commentary, and Notes by Richard Leppert ; New Translations by Susan H. Gillespie*, trans. by Susan H. Gillespie (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 2002).
[6] *Bild.klang.los: Ein Trialog von Kyungwoo Chun, Kunsu Shim Und Gerhard Stäbler*, ed. by Kyungwoo Chun and others (Saarbrücken: Pfau, 2009).

history repeat itself. Given my traumatic history, I found this passivity — in spite of the modern ubiquity of information — particularly intolerable. These reflections, coupled with my experience growing up, clarified my thoughts, ignited my passions and inspired my aims in composition.

In my master's course, I was exposed to new, 21st-century music, which was celebrated as the apogee of musical progress by the course lecturers. However, I slowly realised how similar the aesthetics of contemporary composers were. The norm became everything that used to be new; extended techniques, which in a sense weren't extended anymore since they were used by everyone as the default way of playing/composing. Formulaic music, which wouldn't necessarily be heard/observed by anyone but the composer, as well as the suppression of emotion in the process of composing. Finally I realised that the main concerns of those we studied and those we were encouraged to become, were mainly of nothing but a philosophical approach, almost a game of aesthetics that they said was of music of our time. It was superficial, empty and I felt as if it lost its passion and uniqueness for existing.

I began to feel disillusioned.

Recalling the ideas of Adorno and Stäbler, I began searching for sounds that could make me feel something stronger. I found myself listening more to heavy rock, metal, free and avant-garde jazz, African drumming, music of the Japanese Noh and New Complexity movements. I became drawn towards sonic extremes in all areas; dynamics, pitch, extended techniques and anything that could break the monotony of the average contemporary music performance. Contrast and drama fascinated me and I began to explore how I could juxtapose complexity with simplicity, volume with silence, and relentlessness with relief. These extreme aesthetics fulfilled a need for me and became the sound for which I am best known.

Compositional Methodology

Political Music is a musical view and/movement that aims to present and discuss social political situations using music.[7] A famous case of the impact in which political composer's might have is of composer Hanns Eisler who between 1942 to 1947 was persecuted for his political music, after composing music which included political words within its titles and lyrics. Eisler strongly

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[7] *Musical Worlds: New Directions in the Philosophy of Music*, ed. by Philip Alperson (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998).

opposed that "music should be offered to audiences to arouse "effects"". Instead he claimed that "music should transform the consciousness of an active community of people. The bourgeois musical concert was to be transformed into a political meeting". [8]Inspired by Eisler and many more who have dedicated their work to social-political situations in hope that they will influence a change in their society, such as Luigi Nono in *Il Canto Sospeso*, Benjamin Britten in *War Requiem* and Gerhard Stäbler in *Drüber*, I have decided to devote my compositional work to socio-political activism.

The methodology for composing political music developed through a process of distillation as the project progressed. This involved carefully assessing the successes and weaknesses of each piece, prior to composing new works. This distillation process is detailed in each of the chapters which follow.

I regard the sound in my work to be simultaneously an outlet for personal expression, as well as a practical tool to inspire change. Although the latter is paramount to the methodology of the project, the sound cannot be regarded in isolation as a "political composition". It can only become truly functional in a political sense through interaction with other art forms, within the context of a specific place and time.

Place and time are crucial when attempting to communicate messages of this nature. Pieces are often composed for, or in response to, a particular political event. Hence, these works only become whole on the day of the performance, when sound, visuals, location, time and audience intersect.

I believe that music and art in general, holds within it a unique power to reflect and discuss socio-political issues through an alternative angle. More, socio-political issue concern the general public and therefore those should be given a public space to encourage engagement. Therefore, I feel political art should be performed publically, in public spaces. Most of the pieces are performed at unconventional locations, such as a street, promenade or public park. These ideas notwithstanding, I also believe that it is important to encourage a change from within the traditional formal performance stage, and reshape it as a symbol of activeness against social passivity and the break the widespread acceptance of music as a form of solely entertainment.

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[8] Lydia Goehr, 'Political Music and the Politics of Music', *Wiley on Behalf of The American Society for Aesthetics*, The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, 52.1 (1994), 99–112.

Collaborations with visual artists are crucial to the impact of the performances. My work varies in form, encompassing video footage, dance, theatre, drama, drawing and glass art. These forms serve as important complementary avenues to attract attention, create impact and communicate.

The relationship between the audience member and performer, in European Classical Music, is traditionally one of distant appraisal. The performer is considered an 'other' relative to the listener. In an attempt to narrow this gap and 're-humanise' the performers, I use a variety of techniques such as instructing them to move around among the crowd as they perform. This helps the audience identify with them as 'real' people in a story and through that generate empathy.

The following compositions draw upon theories from a diverse range of fields, including politics, ethics, feminism and human rights. Rather than using research as merely an inspirational well, I also try to identify specific ideas from the research which can be practically applied to my pieces. For instance, the concept of the heterotopia[9] — a space within a space — has informed all of my street performances. In explaining the role of the heterotopia, Foucault contends that those spaces "are both isolated and accessible. They enable us both to confront our illusions and to create *new* illusions of the utopia we cannot have".[10]

With this in mind, I aim to embrace Foucault's philosophy in my compositions and transform the venue into a thought-provoking space. For example, most public spaces have social and political associations for certain social groups. By carefully choosing a space that plays off those associations, the venue becomes a stage not only for performance, but also for challenging conventions.

The compositions use various auditory symbols as stimulants. These symbols generally take the form of well-known musical styles, motifs or recorded samples to help communicate political ideas through the pieces. In many cases, these symbols are more powerful when they act upon the listener covertly. For example, a piece which uses a familiar musical motif can feel familiar without the listener being aware of the connection. Tools like these are used throughout my work to prime the listener.

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[9] Heterotopia is a concept formed by philosopher Michelle Foucault which has been published first in his lecture *Of Other Spaces (1967)*.
[10] Michel Foucault, Daniel Defert and Michel Foucault, *Lectures on the Will to Know: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1970-1971 and Oedipal Knowledge* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

Rather than focusing on communicating a specific message with my piece, I use the various methods mentioned above in order grab attention, evoke emotion and disturb. While these methods do not force a specific point of view, they compel the audience to challenge and re-evaluate their ingrained perspectives regarding political issues, controversies and injustice.

Portfolio Contents

This portfolio is comprised of two socio-political projects which are my chief concern.

The first project concerns the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. I named this project *PATH*. *PATH* aims to foster and expand peaceful thought between Jewish and Palestinian civilians in Israel-Palestine. Through performance art, *PATH* spreads a message of acceptance, unity and brotherhood between our peoples. Above all, PATH demands and end to intolerance, hatred and violence among all the inhabitants of the State of Israel.

The second project concerns women's rights globally. I have realised that although we have come a long way in our struggle for rights for women, great challenges remain. There is a need to unite women and men against a form of oppression that discriminates against 50% of the world's population. I called this project, *For Utopia*.

Chapter 1

Laying the groundwork

In this chapter, I discuss the first three pieces I composed as part of my PhD project.   These pieces were my point of departure in composing political pieces. In the process of writing them, my intention was to lay the groundwork for my aesthetics, timbre and socio-political ambitions.

Skin Peeled

PATH piece #1

Skin Peeled was the first piece composed as part of the PATH project. The piece was performed in front of the American Embassy on Tel Aviv's promenade on November 29, 2011, Palestinian Solidarity Day, the day on which the borders of the State of Palestine were proposed in 1947.

Skin Peeled's composition process began with the intention of composing an affective political piece. This involved a consideration of compositional aesthetics such as instrumentation, timbre and modes together with compositional techniques such as movements, form and philosophy that will assist in communicating the piece's message. Those aesthetics and techniques are discussed below:

Skin Peeled is composed for a Syrian bouzouki, kanoon, trumpet, and tenor saxophone and also involves an actor. The instrumentation for the piece was chosen deliberately to represent a strong mixture of Arabic and Western classical music timbres, with the intention of creating a philosophical-musical unity. This concept was inspired by the history of music presented in Al Andaluz[12], which demonstrates examples of how musical coexistence has been achieved. By combining timbres, my intention is to create tension while simultaneously allowing the similarities of the instruments in the ensemble to become apparent. The frequent microtonal glissandi and natural harmonics produced by the saxophone and trumpet seem to blend together with those of the bouzouki and kanoon. In addition, the range of saxophone is relative close to that of kanoon (kanoon G2-D6, saxophone Ab2-Eb5), and the same applies to the trumpet and bouzouki (trumpet F♯3-C6, bouzouki G4-G6). The total range spans from G2 to G6, which locates the instruments relatively close to each other. Thus, all of the similarities mentioned above reflect the relative timbre of the instruments.

To complement the exploration of timbres in *Skin Peeled*, the piece contains elements of Jewish and Arabic liturgical and folk music. The various timbres along with the combined modes also signifies the cultural similarities between the two groups. The scales chosen for *Skin Peeled* are

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[12] Amnon Shiloah, *Music in the World of Islam: A Socio-Cultural Study* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2000).

the Phrygian Dominant scale (the fifth mode of the Harmonic Minor scale) and Maqam (mode) Nahawand, each of which is significant to one of the cultures. The Phrygian Dominant scale (Ahava rabba music mode) is known in the Jewish liturgy, as well as in Klezmer music, to serve as a mode of praying. The Ahava Rabba mode is used to express gratitude for the love of God and for the gift of the Torah (the Hebrew bible).[13] In Klezmer music, this mode is known to invoke or make an appeal to God.

Figure 2: Phrygian Dominant Scale

In addition, Maqam Nahawand, which was chosen as the Arabic mode of the piece, represents resolution, seriousness and discourse in the Arabic liturgy.[14]

These two modes, both of which are used in a similar context in each culture, were selected due to their closeness and similarity. The scales are almost identical, differing only by the movement of the flat from the second to the third note of the scale. This one, simple change carries huge significance to the music of each group, however. The fact that the scales differ so minutely epitomises the closeness and continuity between the cultures, languages and history of the two ethnic groups of Israel-Palestine.

Figure 3: Maqam Nahawand (trichord Kurd on G)

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[13] Marsha Bryan Edelman, *Discovering Jewish Music* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2007).
[14] Habib Hassan Tūmā, Laurie Schwartz and Reinhard G. Pauly, *The Music of the Arabs*, New expanded ed., paperback ed (Portland, Or. ;Cambridge: Amadeus Press, 2003).

Figure 4: Maqam Nahawand (trichord Hijaz on G)

In the piece, both scales are combined on occasion. The modes change erratically from one phrase to the other, creating an ethnic ambiguity in the sound.

Figure 5: Skin Peeled bars 35-36

In order to emphasise the similarity between the soundscapes for both Israeli and Palestinian listeners, both modes are combined within a contemporary classical aesthetics. I intended for those to create a disturbing and restless mood to the piece which is in stark contrast to the conventional form of these musical genres. The shock of the unfamiliar coupled with a hint of familiarity is used with hope to trigger and encourage the listener toward independent thought, rather than unconsciously accepting the predominant political ideas and cultural stereotypes of both cultures.

My presumptuousness regarding the ability of music to influence society was inspired by ancient Greece's philosophy on the power of musical modes. In *Politics* Aristotle claims:

"Melodies contain the greatest likeness of the true natures of anger, gentleness, courage, temperance, and their opposites, and of all the other components of character as well. The facts make this clear. For when we listen to such representations our souls are changed" –**Aristotle.**[16]

Similarly Plato argues *"Of the harmonies I know nothing, but would have you leave me one which can render the note or accent which a brave man utters in warlike action and in stern resolve; and when his cause is failing, and he is going to wounds or death or is overtaken by disaster in some other form, at every such crisis he meets the blows of fortune with firm step and a determination to endure; and an opposite kind for times of peace and freedom of action, when there is no pressure of necessity, and he is seeking to persuade God by prayer, or man by instruction and admonition, or when on the other hand he is expressing his willingness to yield to the persuasion or entreaty or admonition of others. And when in this manner he has attained his end, I would have the music show him not carried away by his success, but acting moderately and wisely in all circumstances, and acquiescing in the event. These two harmonies I ask you to leave; the strain of necessity and the strain of freedom, the strain of the unfortunate and the strain of the fortunate, the strain of courage, and the strain of temperance; these, I say, leave.*
And these, he replied, are the Dorian and the Phrygian harmonies of which I was just now speaking."[17] **Plato.**[18]

Both philosophers believed that changing the modalities of the predominant musical culture could change the ideologies of individuals since music has an autonomous emotional power over people. However some philosophers argue that the emotion raised in people when listening to music, is not necessarily autonomous to music itself but according to Charles Nussbaum is created "by motivating virtual (off-line) actions *afforded* in musical space". [19]In other words, listening to music encourages the listener to imagine a musical scene which creates specific

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[16] Aristotle and C. D. C. Reeve, *Politics* (Indianapolis, Ind: Hackett Pub, 1998).
[17] The translator refers to harmonies as modes, as a result of difficulties in translating from ancient Greek to English. For additional information, please refer to the book.
[18] Plato and others, *Dialogues of Plato* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2010).
[19] Charles O. Nussbaum, *The Musical Representation: Meaning, Ontology, and Emotion*, A Bradford Book (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2007).

brain/body actions. According to Nussbaum all European western classical music, since 1650, is programme music. Therefore "the mental models it motivates are layouts and scenarios in which the listener acts off-line". Only once those bodily actions accrue and the human imagination of musical space takes place, will emotions surface.

Skin Peeled combines Western contemporary classical music aesthetics within it, consciously in order for it to assist in raising emotions through the given mental modes it motivates. Those according to Nussbaum, are occurring in European music since 1650, as well as serve as a foreign negotiator.

Due to my own experience of the seemingly boundless resilience of hatred in Israel-Palestine, the role of a foreign negotiator is a necessity. An outside negotiator can encourage both sides to reflect on both the similarities and uniqueness of the identity of each group, in order to encourage mutual understanding and respect. In the case of *Skin Peeled*, the negotiator is contemporary music.

Skin Peeled is divided into three movements, each of which tells the story of Israel-Palestine, symbolising the strong feelings both sides of the conflict have to issues of land ownership. Movement One alludes to the geographical location of the land by opening the piece giving a prominent role to the kanoon, a traditional instrument from the Middle East. The interruption by the brass and wind instruments 'interrupt' straight as the piece opens. By disrupting the flow of the piece, the brass and wind section intend to showcase and evoke the differences and conflict between the two cultures.

Movement Two represents the fragility and vulnerability of the current situation in Israel-Palestine. In addition, the movement conveys a sense that we no longer have the patience to wait indefinitely for a peaceful future. The movement is dramatic and intense and is characterised by clashing timbres, extreme ranges, varying dynamics and a rhythmic structure. The listener is supposed to feel assaulted, and consequently vulnerable.

Movement Three begins by continuing the tension of the central movement. It later resolves with a single melody line, however, which fuses characteristics of melodies from both Jewish and Arabic cultures to create both a musical climax and conceptual resolution. Thus, Movement Three calls for a better future, an aspiration of utopia.

The text of *Skin Peeled* combines words in Hebrew and in Arabic in order of response, such that a sentence in Arabic will always be followed by a sentence in Hebrew and vice versa. Although the translations are not direct, this means that each issue is discussed in the language of both opposing sides of the conflict. Arguably, Hebrew and Arabic have many similarities in terms of vocabulary, dialect and grammar. Edward Lipinski, who has conducted extensive research into Semitic languages, contends that West Semitic languages such as Hebrew and Arabic have cross-fertilised each other in terms of vocabulary, dialect and grammar.[20] Conversely, however, other linguists such as Joshua Blau assert that the languages are very dissimilar, specifically in this regard.[21]Although this illustrates a lack of academic consensus, it is generally accepted that the progression and development of each language stems from the same root.

Although the languages are related, they both have negative associations for the other social group. By combining those together in the piece, I intended to present a linguistic tension which both languages together create. Therefore, in order to resolve the piece in a mutually amicable way, it seems fitting to close *Skin Peeled* with a melody sung without words, which unifies the two musical modes. In order to unify both modes, each scale contributes and concedes one significant note. The Phrygian Dominant contributes its second (Db) and gives up its seventh (Bb) while the Maqam Nahwand contributes its seventh (B) and concedes its third (Eb). During this process, the characteristics of the modes are also being combined, thus fusing the supplicant air of the Phrygian dominant with the resolution and seriousness of the Maqam Nahwand. This symbolises the measured compromises involved in building a truly peaceful coexistence.

Figure 6: resolution scale

The melodical closing line illustrated above creates a musical resolution, aiming to contain a thinly veiled feeling of anguish that unfolds in the performance. This wordless melody, sung

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[20] Edward Lipiński, *Semitic Languages: Outline of a Comparative Grammar*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, 80, 2nd ed (Leuven ; Sterling, VA: Peeters, 2001).
[21] Joshua Blau, *The Renaissance of Modern Hebrew and Modern Standard Arabic: Parallels and Differences in the Revival of Two Semitic Languages*, University of California Publications, v. 18 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981).

solely and through experienced tragedies of the performer, represents a cry for a different future.

Figure 7: Skin Peeled bars 79-81

In addition to the musical allusions to the message of unity, historical allusions to war can also be found in the piece. In Movement Three, Bar 11, the ensemble finally becomes slower and quieter. Conversely, however, the kanoon player is instructed to drum an interfering march rhythm on the wooden sides of the instrument. The slow and quiet notes are a representation of fragile peaceful times which are always accompanied by an ominous threat of war. The use of march rhythms to denote war is found throughout history[24], such as in Verdi's operas, Britten's war Requiem, and even in simpler wartime pieces like Jack Judge's 'It's A Long Way To Tipperary'.

The actor's role in the piece is completely improvised. In the performance notes for the piece, the actor is given a poem written in both Hebrew and Arabic. He/she is then instructed to recite the poem at any pace throughout the duration of the piece. It is critical for the actor to have in depth knowledge of the conflict in order to dramatise the poem correctly.[25] Therefore, the performance notes stipulate that an Israeli or Palestinian should perform this role.

The piece was initially a collaboration with Palestinian poet Raji Bathish. Mr Bathish and I worked on the text together, and shared similar ideas about how to convey the chosen theme. However, he later decided not to take part in the project. This decision was informed by his allegiance to an Arabic political party which encourages its members to avoid collaboration with any Israeli-Jewish artist. Nevertheless, the poet decided to grant permission to use his text for the project, and gave me the freedom to work with it.

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[24] Eric Schwandt, 'March', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* <www.oxfordmusiconline.com> [accessed 20 October 2011].
[25] It is essential that the actor for this role would enquire an in depth knowledge of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by learning of the struggle, the position and traumas that each side carries.

Originally, the piece also involved a soprano singer, but both of the sopranos who I approached feared that their involvement in what could be perceived as a politically liberal piece might result in them losing their jobs. The realisation that social pressure may have priority over people's real beliefs was deeply disappointing, particularly at such an early stage in the project. Although the two singers ultimately declined to participate, I decided that the piece could be equally, if not better, performed by an actor. The ensemble consisted exclusively of students, which on one hand had no job to lose but were also convinced of the necessity of coexistence, a coexistence we experienced studying together at the University of Haifa's between 2007-2010.

Various aspects of the performance were designed to strengthen the influence of *Skin Peeled* on the public. A unique geographical location, date and performance space were chosen. The performance occurred directly in front of the American embassy in order to highlight US support – both tacit and explicit – for the aggressive and militaristic policies of the Israeli government which segregate our ethnic groups. The date was chosen in memory of a day in which a peaceful resolution, between Jews and Arabs, was almost achieved. The show was performed at 12pm in a public area of Tel Aviv's promenade. The embassy was also selected due to the large amount of people who usually pass by this location on the promenade. In order to amplify the impact of the performance even more, a noticeable stage was erected. The position of the stage was indicated with two big flags, and the performers dressed in Western classical music official concert dress, sat between them. One actor faced the performers, creating a closed circle.

During the performance, onlookers gathered around the venue to listen and consider the purpose of the event. About five minutes after the piece began, a few plain-clothed security guards from the American embassy appeared in the audience and questioned me about the content of the performance. I was subsequently warned not to hold similar performances in future.

Wall

PATH piece #2

Wall is named after a physical wall which separates Jews from Palestinians in Israel/Palestine. . *Wall* is a reflection of the hastiness in which outraged Palestinians and Israelis became on the seemingly-innocuous subject of a collapsing bridge which, was important to the Muslim community in Jerusalem. The intention of this piece was to spotlight how fast hatred spreads between polarised groups of people and to encourage an audience condemnation of any kind of blind hatred.

Wall was composed for bass flute, clarinet, trumpet, violin, cello and two pianos (only one of which is played). As I intended to work with a Western classical music ensemble on this piece, I chose instrumentation that could symbolise a mixture of Jewish and Arabic folklore ensembles. The Jewish instrumentation, which was inspired by the traditional Klezmer Jewish music ensembles, I have chosen includes a clarinet, trumpet and piano, whereas the traditional Arabic instrumentation comprises a violin and bass flute (which alludes to the sound of a ney or Arabic flute). The instrumentation is not set to any scale or mode which is particular to either ethnic group. Similarly, the instruments are not grouped according to ethnic origin on the stage. Conversely, they are deliberately mixed together in order to critique the notion promulgated by both sides of the conflict that ethnic diversity leads to chaos.

 The piece opens with a unique stage layout.

Figure 8: Wall stage layout
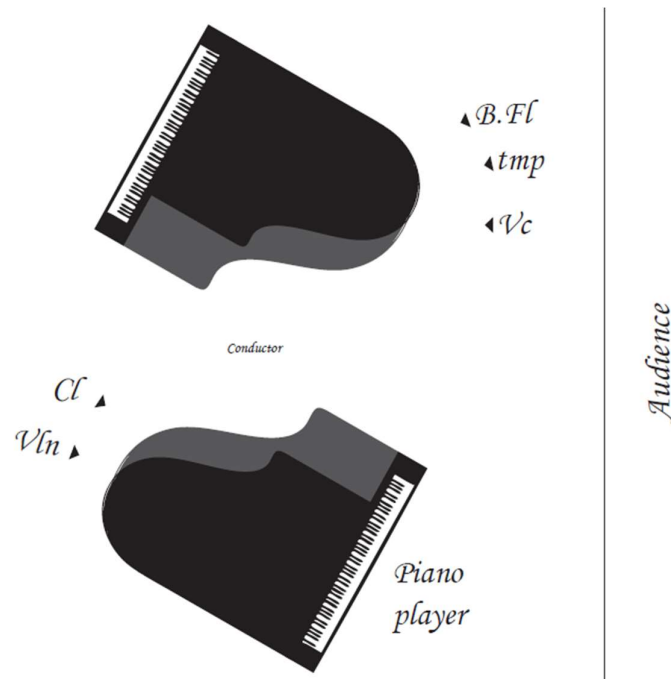
The stage is divided into 2 parts, each of which includes a grand piano surrounded by two to three performers. This set-up intends to create tension, due to its unusual layout and by the division of the ensemble into two groups positioned in opposing directions, who never face the audience during the concert. This division serves as a representation of both of the ethnic groups in Israel-Palestine.

While visually, the tension is created by the division of the stage into two parts, musically, it is in evidence through the oppositional rhythms among the instruments within each group.

As the piece progresses, each group becomes more united (from bar 13) having its own rhythmic passage, played together by its group members. As the musical unity of each group strengthens, the contradiction and tension between the two groups becomes more apparent.

The rhythmic passage begins to slowly break up, however, and various players are directed to stop playing and begin shouting into the vacant piano. This causes the piano's strings to vibrate,

placing emphasis on the words they shout. These words interrupt the chaotic rhythms and therefore represent the hope that the wall can be broken.

Il Canto Sospeso by Luigi Nono inspired the writing of *Wall*. Nono's piece influenced the technical, aesthetical and philosophical sensibilities of *Wall*. Although Nono provides inspiration, however, his ideas have been transformed.

For Nono, the aim of *Il Canto Sospeso* was to use music alone to reveal certain taboos to the Italian people which they were not confronting. [26] In doing so, Nono hoped to bring about political change in both Italy and Europe.

One of the most important methods in Nono's piece that aimed to shock the audience and controversy, was his decision to use nine letters written by World War Two victims who were sent to death camps.[27] These letters were written during the last days of their lives. While the letters serve as living testimonies of the last days of life, they also provide evidence of events which were culturally supressed and regarded as taboo in Italy at that time. The way in which the testimonies are assembled in the piece raises even more tension. The words of the testimonies in the letters are broken up into individual syllables, compelling the audience to listen closely. This is an extreme example of an aesthetic use of language which is enhanced even more by the subject matter of the letters. The horrific, ominous feeling which is evoked when these words are broken down into single, isolated sounds is another method aimed to shock. *Il Canto Sospeso* not only reveals the truth, it also uses aesthetics cleverly to create a sense of the mental anguish endured by the victims. In Theodor Adorno's book *Prisms,* he discusses the role of poetry after World War Two, referencing Nono's use of isolated syllables rather than full words:

> *"The critique of culture is confronted with the last stage in the dialectic of culture and barbarism: to write a poem after Auschwitz is barbaric, and that corrodes also the knowledge which expresses why it has become impossible to write poetry today." Adorno* [28]

[26] Carola Nielinger, 'The Song Unsung', *Oxford University Press*, Journal of the Royal Musical Association, 2006, 83.

[27] Ibid., pp. 85

[28] Theodor W. Adorno, *Prisms*, Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought, 1st MIT Press ed (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1981).

Many composers, such as Benjamin Britten, Cornelius Cardew and Gerhard Stäbler have used texts in their political pieces in order to describe a situation and/or send a clear message to their audiences. Inspired by their work and by *Il Canto Sospeso*'s use of text, *Wall* also consists of a text about war and a utopian dream for a better world.

Spices
Written by Dorone Paris

This war
Separated us
A single stone

Familiar smell of spices, wind, gunshot
Suffocates my memories
Leaving them to bleed

A scared dream
Is still breathing
For you
For me
Together.

While I was certainly inspired by Nono's philosophical concept, he also informed my use of text in *Wall*. While the text I chose is not analogous to a last living testimony, it is also a testimony of sorts. It is my personal testimony about the feeling of growing up in a land where bloodshed is interwoven into both the historical tapestry and daily fabric of life. In *Wall*, the poem is broken up into syllables in order to engender emotional intimacy between the listener and each word. The breaking up the words into syllables does not detract from their meaning — as contended by Stockhausen in relation to *Il Canto Sospeso* — because the words are deliberately delivered in such a way that they remain recognisable.[29] Although the unique sounds of the syllables within

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[29] Karlheinz Stockhausen, 'Music and Speech', *Universal Edition*, die Reihe, 6 (1964), 48–49.

the words are enhanced, they follow the same pitch and are designed to be heard together so that the meaning of the underlying words remains unobscured.

Figure 9: Wall - bar 27
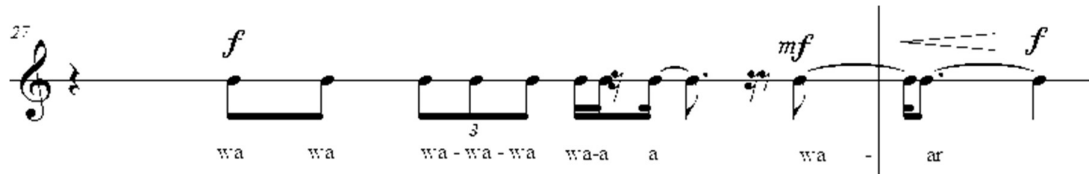
Il Canto Sospeso involves a rigid compositional formula, a so-called 'magic square', which governs almost all aesthetical elements of the piece. The magic square determines the dynamics, duration, pitch and number of movements in the piece.[31] The square's formula consists of a row of numbers which actively influences every movement, every thought and every gesture throughout the piece.

All of this bolsters Nono's initial intention in writing the piece: to reveal the taboos that Italians were not confronting, such as the war crimes committed by Nazi Germany and its allies, which included Mussolini's Italy during World War Two.

As well as being inspired by the political philosophy and usage of syllables in Nono's piece, *Wall* is also inspired by Adorno's analysis of post-war music. For him, this new music continued to contain formulas which went hand in hand with war.

> *"The sounds remain the same. But the anxiety that gave shape to its great*
> *founding works has been repressed. Perhaps that anxiety has become so*
> *overwhelming in reality that its undisguised image would scarcely be*
> *bearable: to recognise the aging of New Music does not mean to misjudge*
> *this aging as something accidental. But art that unconsciously obeys such*
> *repression and makes itself a game, because it has become too weak for*

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[31] Kathryn Bailey, '"Work in Progress": Analysing Nono's "Il Canto Sospeso"', *Music Analysis*, 11.2/3 (1992), 279 <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/854029>.

*seriousness, renounces its claim to truth, which is its only reason for existence." **Adorno.**[32]*

Unlike Nono, *Wall* symbolises musical repression through rhythmic formula only. The initial row in *Wall* is presented only once (in bar 13) and progresses and evolves throughout the piece. For this reason, *Wall* does not include a consistent rhythmic row. Moreover, the row used in *Wall* only determines the rhythmic patterns of the piece, but does not influence the dynamics, duration, pitch and number of movements. My magic square consists of 12 different rhythmic patterns within the beat of a single quaver. For each beat in the bar, a pattern is chosen consecutively from the square, starting from the first column on the left and moving in sequence towards the twelfth column on the right. The formula changes numbers in the various vertical lines for each quaver, which was taken from Nono's magic square and is calculated as follows[33]; the square consists of 1 of 12 permutations, each of which is a sequence that is counted through loops. Counting the loops of every 5th number results in the first sequence of 5, 10, 3, 8, 1, 6, 11, 4, 9, 2, 7, 12. The rest of the squares formula continues using a different calculation which is the result of the sequence before. Every second number is calculated, starting with the second number and returning to the beginning after reaching the last digit, which results in 10, 8, 6, 4, 2, 12, 5, 3, 1, 11, 9, 7.

However, each of the groups in *Wall* consists of a contradictory magic square calculation which enhances the tension between the two groups.

Figure 10: Magic squares calculation

Group A	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Ix	X	XI	XII
	5	10	3	8	1	6	11	4	9	2	7	12
	10	8	6	4	2	12	5	3	1	11	9	7
	8	4	12	3	11	7	10	6	2	5	1	9
	4	3	7	6	5	9	8	12	11	10	2	1
	3	6	9	12	10	1	4	7	5	8	11	2

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[32] Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, Bloomsbury Revelations, paperback ed (London: Bloomsbury, 2013).
[33] Nielinger, pp. 100-101.

	6	12	1	7	8	2	3	9	10	4	5	11
	12	7	2	9	4	11	6	1	8	3	10	5
	7	9	11	1	3	5	12	2	4	6	8	10
	9	1	5	2	6	10	7	11	3	12	4	8
	1	2	10	11	12	8	9	5	6	7	3	4
	2	11	8	5	7	4	1	10	12	9	6	3
	11	5	4	10	9	3	2	8	7	1	12	6

Group B	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Ix	X	XI	XII
	5	10	3	8	1	6	11	4	9	2	7	12
	10	8	6	4	2	12	5	3	1	11	9	7
	8	4	12	3	11	7	10	6	2	5	1	9
	4	3	7	6	5	9	8	12	11	10	2	1
	3	6	9	12	10	1	4	7	5	8	11	2
	6	12	1	7	8	2	3	9	10	4	5	11
	12	7	2	9	4	11	6	1	8	3	10	5
	7	9	11	1	3	5	12	2	4	6	8	10
	9	1	5	2	6	10	7	11	3	12	4	8
	1	2	10	11	12	8	9	5	6	7	3	4
	2	11	8	5	7	4	1	10	12	9	6	3
	11	5	4	10	9	3	2	8	7	1	12	6

The choice of a row of rhythms and not any other 'magic square' features, represents my musical response to the question of whether today's music is repressed or not. It is noteworthy that due to its use of musical formulas, Adorno regards *Il Canto Sospeso* — along with many other pieces by 20th century composers — to exemplify repressed music.[34] However, neither *Wall* nor *Il Canto Sospeso* renounce their claim to truth by using calculated music. Although Nono used the musical techniques normally associated with repression (music formulas) to shock the listener, this provides even greater dramatic juxtaposition with the testimonies of the victims, thus evoking the feeling of horror once again.

I believe that hatred is a nourished emotion when living in an oppressed society. Therefore in the piece I wanted to emphasis the feeling of repression and still leave room for hope, however, I had to reconsider the strict formula I had been following. Thus, I limited the use of the formula to the rhythmic motifs only so that it served as a hint of repression without leading the piece into an overall atmosphere of fatalism.

Adorno's analysis of Nono's piece suggests that due to the abhorrent crimes of the holocaust, we are undeserving of beauty and truth in music. In contrast, *Wall* attempts to shed light on what we had, on what music used to be: a pure expression of feeling, and contrast this with the rigid formulaic sound of Nono's technique. In this way, we may always remember what we have lost, and be vigilant to avoid future atrocities. This is so easy to forget, and in some ways it has been forgotten already in Israel/Palestine.

Wall was never performed.

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[34] Adorno and Leppert, p. 183.

Hollow Memory

PATH piece #3

Hollow Memory was written about illegal Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territories. The name *Hollow Memory* signifies the faded collective memory of a country not at war with itself. The piece was written in support of the Israeli high court's decision to evacuate the Migron settlement. My intention in the piece was to applaud and celebrate the brave, surprising and exceeding the expectations decision of the Israeli Supreme Court, through an examination of instrumental impossibilities. The piece aims to express the uniqueness of this decision by combining various extremes in a non-traditional way.

In the process of composing *Hollow Memory,* I explored the political aesthetics of Michael Finnissy's *English Country Tunes.* [36]Finnissy's piece speaks against the "attitudes in England to sexuality, a culture which attempts to deny or outlaw, any aspects of human sexual behaviour, until they return to hunt it with a vengeance".[37] I chose to analyse *English Country Tunes* for two reasons. Firstly, *English Country Tunes'* political content seemed to relate to my research in that it dealt with the pain suffered due to government oppression. Secondly, I chose this piece because it was composed for a solo instrument and I wanted to explore the potential role of a performer in a political piece.

 Being inspired by his political activism through music, my focus, was in observing the timbre, construction of his piece while finding ways in which I could successfully implement two wind instruments in my own composition to create a political message.

English Country Tunes is known to be an extreme, virtuoso composition for piano, and a standard challenge for piano players.[38] In a similar vein, *Hollow Memory* challenges the saxophonist's technical acumen and ability to sustain tension by incorporating sporadic and extremely fast and dense note sequences. Although each saxophone has a limited independent

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[36] Michael Finnissy's English Country Tunes was written in the UK in 1977 and revised between 1982-1985.
[37] *Uncommon Ground: The Music of Michael Finnissy*, ed. by Henrietta Brougham, Christopher Fox, and Ian Pace (Aldershot, England ; Brookfield, Vt: Ashgate, 1997).
[38] Ian Pace and Jonathan Cross, 'Finnissy, Michael (Peter)', *Oxford Music Online* <www.oxfordmusiconline.com> [accessed 13 January 2012].

range, the difference between the saxophones in key allows for a wide and fascinating musical timbre which more closely matches the wide range of the piano in *English Country Tunes*.

Michael Finnissy is known for compositions inspired by visual media such as film and photography. In his music, the complexity of notes and rhythms goes hand in hand with his passion for the visual and its necessity in music. Finnissy has stated that *English Country Tunes* is inspired by American experimental films:

> *"I was particularly taken with film makers like Stan Brakhage, Gregory Markopolous, Jack Smith, the film makers of American Underground during the 1960s/70s… Film like Jack Smith's Flaming Creatures, an ecstatic, totally overblown, kitschy drag ball, number of illicit pleasures going for them, but the editing style has a slightly frenetic quality that I find everywhere in things like in English Country Tunes. It's an accurate measure of a particular psychological state of mind, a kind of hyper sensitivity, hyper neurosis which I want in the music, like exposed nerve-ending. That was the crucial door which opened through film: editing, forming."[39]*

Hollow Memory was composed after an initial examination of the film *Flaming Creatures*, specifically in regards to its effect on the aesthetics of *English Country Tunes*. I began by watching the film and exactly documenting what I saw. A rape occurs but it is hard to discern how severe the cruelty in the film is. The exact nature of the event remains somewhat opaque and the rape scenes are shot in a disturbingly hectic manner. Film reviewer Jonas Mekas criticised it for raising feelings of disturbances and disgust within its audience.[40]

In order to understand the unsettling disruption at the heart of this movie, I listed all the features which I thought helped to evoke this feeling:

1. Editing (of scenes)
2. Form (the pacing of scenes in the film)
3. Colour (black and white)
4. The simplification of sexuality and anatomy
5. Ambiguity between criminality and sexual fantasy

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[39] Brougham, Fox and Pace, pp. 5-6
[40] Juan Antonio Suárez, *Bike Boys, Drag Queens & Superstars: Avant-Garde, Mass Culture, and Gay Identities in the 1960s Underground Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996).

6. Use of various sexual taboos (androgynous sexuality, transvestites, drag shows)

It seems that the film technique mentioned in the quotation by Finnissy, which focuses on the importance of specific editing techniques as well as form, elicited an ominous, discomforting feeling in the viewer while watching the film.

The next step was to transpose these filmmaking techniques for use in musical composition, which led me to integrate the following aspects into the piece:

1. Editing
2. Forming
3. Use of extreme range
4. Simplification of sound (the difference between sound and music)
5. Juxtaposition of a mass of notes with long notes
6. Musical and political taboos (rhythmic complication, a degree of musical difficulty which risks exceeding the bounds of playability, political awareness)

I analysed *English Country Tunes* based on the same musical aspects discussed above. This confirmed that Finnissy integrates filmic characteristics into his music. This is reflected during the first movement of the piece, *Green Meadows,* which involves nine extreme changes of passage.

Figure 11: English Country Tunes - analysis

The "psychological state of mind", "hyper sensitivity" and "hyper neurosis" that Finnissy refers to in Flaming Creatures is reflected in various aspects of *English Country Tunes*.[41] The extreme changes in the rhythm, pacing, mass of notes and mood instructions are justified because they are necessary in order to transpose the extreme characteristics of the film, such as its form and editing, into music.

The use of extreme timbres as well as the simplification of music to sound and sound to music, is already apparent on the first page. The juxtaposition of a mass of notes with extremely long notes is also evident on the first page of the piece. Finnissy intended to explore a musical taboo in his piece concerning the English government's view on cultural ideals. Finnissy composes *English Country Tunes* with the intention to "savagely" "demolish the presumptive innocence of old-time songs". [42]

In composing *Hollow Memory*, I adopted the aesthetics of *Flaming Creatures* and *English Country Tunes*. The first step was to work on the movements, rhythm, pacing, mass of notes and mood changes. My intention was to create tension using extreme changes in the mass of notes, pacing and rhythm.

The piece consists of four movements. Each movement stands alone as a form of expression of the political situation in Israel-Palestine. The first movement, entitled *Restless,* consists of many accented short notes, which are played hastily by both saxophones. Each note is played abruptly after the other saxophone note is created. By that, the movement intends to elicit a feeling of restlessness.

The second movement, entitled *Delicate and Fragile,* consists of harmonies that are somewhat fragile. This represents the nuances of the situation in Israel-Palestine; although we, both Israelis and Palestinians, wish for serenity, we are, unfortunately, divided in our methods of achieving it. The third movement, entitled *Violence and Recklessness* represents the region's weakest moments, in which efforts to achieve peace and tranquillity seem doomed to fail.

The final movement, *Beyond the Obvious*, reflects on the unpredictable decision taken by the high court to vacate the Migron settlement. The movement itself is also beyond the obvious, in that it emerges in the middle of a chaotic section from which musical traces continue to linger. This symbolises the difficult decision the court had to face and my admiration for it.

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[41] Brougham, Fox and Pace, pp. 5-6.

[42] Wilfrid Mellers, 'One-Man Band, Music and Vision', 1999
<http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:ljCU7gsidrwJ:www.mvdaily.com/articles/1999/03/finnissy.htm> [accessed 30 January 2012].

The second step, after writing the first abstract for *Hollow Memory*, which concerned mainly the general movements, rhythm and pacing of the piece, I began to closely examine and edit the aesthetics, harmony, melody and pitch I was using in the piece. *English Country Tunes* is known for its extreme range of notes on the piano and the extraordinary timber which results. Although the range of a saxophone is quite small in comparison, I decided to try to transcend those limitations in my piece. I echoed the extreme range of Finnissy's piece by introducing extreme fluctuations in the pitch of the saxophone notes. The extreme changes in range are approximated by varying the amount of air blown into the saxophone, thus producing different pitches. The changes in the volume of air also create different timbres between the notes throughout the piece.

In order to enhance the use of extreme timbres in *Hollow Memory,* I introduced another type of harmonic aspect to the piece. As illustrated at Bar 4 below, the C note changes to a B on the alto saxophone while leaning on the tenor saxophone's F note. This change in the alto note generates tension moving from a perfect fifth into a tritone. The perfect fifth interval remains for five tones exactly, and at bar 5 the aim is to dampen the tension into a relaxing harmony. However, the attempt to reach a relaxing harmony breaks down again as the F note of the tenor results to an E note creating a perfect fifth at bar 5 and a restless feeling (see below).

Figure 12: Hollow Memory bars 3-5

Step three explores the relationship between a simple melodical line and a mass harmony. The juxtaposition between the extreme mass of notes and the long singular note is a reference to the simplification of sound to music. As singular notes are more accessible when creating a melodical line, a mass of notes can be used to create an unusual harmony. Therefore, when the sound is subsequently simplified into singular notes, the experience becomes more accessible, as the listener is suddenly able to discern a combination of layers of melodies.

However, the extreme changes of pace caused by moving between singular notes and masses of notes create tension throughout the piece.

The last step was to highlight the issue of extreme instrumental possibilities, similarly done in *English Country Tunes*. The piece aims to explore the outer reaches of a saxophonist's ability to play extremely complicated rhythms. The intention here is to challenge all forms of taboo and convention regarding the 'correct' rhythm structure for saxophone playing. In addition, the central subject matter of *Hollow Memory* is eluded to by the overall tension in the piece, which evokes the hatred of those living in the settlements. Furthermore, the aim is to deconstruct the official narrative which seeks to portray settlers as leading quiet and peaceful lives and reflect the tense reality of life in these places.

Performance observation and conclusion

I was very pleased with the musical aspects of the piece after rehearsing and performing it. The movements of the piece did indeed reflect my emotions for this political event and moreover, I felt that I have accomplished placing my political statement into a musical construction, making this piece a political entity for me.

Having said that, after the performance of *Hollow Memory* at the Clockworth concert hall in Leeds, I realised that a very important aspect of the performance was missing. After speaking to audience members about the piece, I concluded that the subject of the piece was not widely understood by those who had not read the programme notes in advance. Since I wanted the piece to communicate the intended message on its own, I rewrote the performance notes on the score, adding instructions about aspects of the performance such as stillness of movement, posture and expression through body movement. This experience has taught me about the

importance of combining dramatic features when attempting to communicate a message clearly.

Unfortunately *Hollow* Memory was only performed once, so my suspicions regarding clarity of a message were never challenged again with this piece.

Conclusion

For chapter one/laying the groundwork

These first three pieces have had a strong impact on my approach and vision for political composition. Personally, I have felt, with each piece being performed, complete sensorial satisfaction. I felt that the pieces were well performed and were able to convey the strong feelings I had for the subjects. Having said that, I wasn't sure whether the performers and audiences have felt the same way. This chapter made me assess my reasoning for composing political composition while understanding the compositional problems and limitations when discussion socio-political issues. I have also realised that the audiences understanding of my political pieces is a very important factor for me as I believe that political works should discuss and raise ideas with everyone who is affected by them. Therefore, I have decided to focus on analysing the success and disappointments of the pieces in relation to the clarity of the message they may have.

 After some testing and revision, I could locate all three pieces successfully at an appropriate time and place in response to an ongoing event/political circumstance. This is important when attempting to evoke emotion and raise a particular subject matter with an audience. Moreover, all three pieces successfully disrupted the daily routines of the listener, either through performance in an unusual location such as the promenade, or by reimagining and transcending the traditional confines of a conventional concert hall.

However, although the performance of the pieces took place at the 'right' time in an unusual performance venue, they were still missing a crucial component. In all three cases, the presentation of the piece created a division between the audience and the performers, thus separating them from the piece.

It seems that even in the case of *Skin Peeled*, which consisted of words dramatised by an actor, rather than being disturbed, the audience was entertained by the occasion. This can be observed in the video of the event, which shows members of the audience taking photos and wandering around asking about the instruments during the performance. Similarly, *Hollow Memory* was applauded by some for being a virtuoso display of saxophone playing, rather than for its political content. However, the division between the performers and audience was not the only shortcoming of the pieces. The lack of clarity of the subject matter also posed a problem; crucial features such as dramatic components were missing, which hindered the audience's ability to

understand the subject matter (such components also existed to an extent in *Skin Peeled*, but they were limited and largely undetected by the audience).

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict was not the only injustice seared into my consciousness, but also the global problem of gender discrimination. Chapter Three expands on this realisation and elaborates a more advanced approach to promoting coexistence and women's rights.

Chapter 2

Negation of philosophies

On numerous occasions while discussing my PhD research, I was confronted with questions and doubts regarding the socio-political power that political composition might have. Thus, I decided to present and examine three approaches to political music through the works of Hans Werner Henze, Richard Barrett and Cornelius Cardew. In this chapter, I will discuss their approaches alongside my own, through a process of negation. In Georg Hegal's philosophy and logic, a process of negation is a method of defining something by contrasting relevant elements with each other in order to achieve an accurate result.[44] Inspired by that, I adopted his process to this chapter, in order to reach a more refined methodology for composing political pieces. Hence, by examining three very different approaches I attempt to refine my methodology for composing political pieces.

One of the most famous examples of a negation to the approach I adopt to political music is described in Hans Werner Henze's book "Die englische Katze: Ein Arbeitstagebuch 1978-1982". In the book, Henze describes an argument he had with Lachenmann about "musica negativa", a term coined by Henze to denote a musical movement which seeks to portray the "ugly itself" as "artistic".[46] Henze criticises this movement, arguing that *"It is permitted to portray utopias, to sketch out and prepare models of utopias; it is permitted; one has the allowance of loving God if you will, or of whomever, even of Adorno too...The artist has permission ... to retire from the awful things of the world..."* [47]

In other words, Henze argues that music does not always have to be about the real world, about real situations and moreover, it does not have to be serious. Henze criticises art that mirrors the "negative parts" of society on the basis that his art is a place of comfort and simple understanding *"It really does matter very much to me that I am followed as far as possible in my music...I would in fact like to be understood, I would even like to be loved…That's why it comes to such compromises"*.

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[44] Lloyd Spencer and Andrzej Krauze, *Introducing Hegel* (Thriplow; [New York, N.Y]: Icon ; Totem Books, 2006).

[46] Helmut Lachenmann and Jeffrey Stadelman, 'Open Letter to Hans Werner Henze', *Perspectives of New Music*, 35.2 (1997), 189 <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/833650>.

[47] ibid., pp. 196.

I agree with Henze on the need to express human feelings through art, but I disagree that a sketch of Utopia can achieve this. In order to address the complexity of the world's socio-political situation, we have to face the horrible injustice within it. Otherwise, we merely support our oppressors in allowing the injustice to continue.

Adorno, in *The Aging of New Music*, claims that oppression marks the end of freedom and individuality. [48] Conversely, in *Iran: The Spirit of a World Without Spirit,* Foucault argues the opposite, contending that oppression is the reason for freedom, since it encourages the desire for it and the attempt to attain it. [50] However, both philosophies attain apparent common ground in Massimo Cacciari's "Weber and the politician as tragic hero" which also discusses the concept of freedom. Cacciari claims that if we conceive the substantial (freedom) as "simple bright light", it will be taken from us.[51]

Cacciari's conclusion to the chapter emphasises the importance of exercising liberty, positing that "no idol can freeze the energy of the conviction and the supreme appeal of the single person toward the recognition of one's own liberty *as his* liberty, liberty that would never be if it were donated, if it depended on the will of another." [52] In essence, as long as liberty is exercised and oppression does not become embedded in society, liberty will rule. Thus, the approaches of both Adorno and Foucault might be compatible with each other.

On examining these theories, I would argue that generally speaking, oppression of a society has a higher chance of persisting if freedom is not exercised, and that striving for freedom and exercising liberty are preconditions for revolution. I hope that by employing aesthetics that intentionally reflect a contradiction of utopias and/or beauty I will intrigue and enhance the musical experience of the listener. By that I hope to raise awareness about the importance of freedom in the process, by highlighting the continued fragility of life for many women and the complexity of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Hence, I hope that by refusing to reflect a utopian world, I can disrupt the preconceptions of the audience regarding political art and encourage a new perspective on the importance of freedom.

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[48] Adorno and Leppert, p. 183.

[50] Michel Foucault and Lawrence D. Kritzman, *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings ; 1977-1984* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1990).

[51] Massimo Cacciari and Alessandro Carrera, *The Unpolitical: On the Radical Critique of Political Reason*, 1st ed (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009).

[52] Cacciari, *The Unpolitical*, p. 237. The analogy of liberty as 'light' can be found on the same page under the quoted sentenced. Although it is an analogy that Hegel originally used, I find it helpful in representing Cacciari's idea.

Richard Barrett's series of work entitled *NO – resistance* & *vision* explores how musical activity can respond to a political event.[53] Barrett states that this series of work is a natural reaction to the prevalence of neo-conservative imperialist political ideology in the West. He contends that the same historical process which gave rise to this ideology also produced the anti-globalisation movement.[54] Although *NO* employs European contemporary classical music aesthetics which may alienate the majority, Barrett claims *"I'm trying to make the kind of music I would want to hear were I in the audience, and I don't regard myself as somehow on a higher plane of existence than the people listening"*.[56] He proceeds to explain that although modern art evolved under the control system of capitalism, which has its own inherent systems to neutralise and exploit freedom, this does not mean that we should submit to it. All classes of society should be expected to be rational and reflective about their own culture, in the same way that the general populace is trusted to make rational political decisions in a democracy.

Barrett's argument that an anti-globalisation movement is a natural reaction to neo-conservative imperialism echoes Michel Foucault's theory of power.[57] Foucault argues that power relations involve a certain symmetry of action between those exercising power and those subjected to it. In this case, this leads to a symmetry between the rise of neo-conservative imperialism and the anti-globalisation movement.

Furthermore, Barrett's decision to use the modern art aesthetics for his music, an aesthetic he argues has evolved as a response to capitalist control, seems similar to Adorno's ideas about modern art's function in the world: In *Aesthetic Theory,* Adorno claims that *"the art work is related to the world by the principle that contrasts it with the world"*.[58]

Although Barrett was heavily concerned with *NO'*s aesthetics and construction, it was criticised by various music critiques being too long to sustain the attention of the listener, too philosophical in

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[53] Richard Barrett, 'No: (Resistance and Vision Part 1) for Orchestra, (1999-2004)' (Waltham Abbey, Essex : United Music, 2004).

[54] Richard Barrett and Veronika Lenz, *NO - programme note & interview*, 2005 <<http://richardbarrettmusic.com/NOinterview.html>> [accessed 2 June 2015].

[56] Arnold Whittholl, 'Resistance and Reflection: Richard Barrett in the 21st Century', *Music Times Publications Ltd.*, 146.Autumn 2005, 57–70.

[57] Philip Barker, *Michel Foucault: Subversions of the Subject* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993).

[58] Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory,* p. 7

theme, and too opaque to communicate political issues with a broad audience and affect the majority.[59] [60]

Similarly to Barrett, I also believe in retaining the language of "modern" art/music. However, I disagree that all classes of society tend towards cultural reflection. I believe that a tendency towards cultural reflection is a personal trait which is highly dependent on a person's background, personal experience and influences.

I believe that as political issues are complicated, complex means of expression are required in order to address them adequately. However, the clarity of a message to the audience is crucial since I believe that political issues belong to the general public. Therefore, I attempt to compose pieces containing accessibility points which are specifically designed to engage the general public. I do so by incorporating known musical symbols and gestures into my compositions as well as integrating other art forms. My hope is that the experience of the each piece will trigger thought over socio-political subjects that they have experienced.

Finally, I would like to discuss Cornelius Cardew's music under "the People's Liberation Music", a political rock group –for which Cardew sang and composed pieces for. These pieces are presented as being part of a revolutionary struggle, as "music that serves the public". The music is overtly political and the mood in which the lyrics are expressed is in stark contrast with their meaning. The music further bolsters this contradiction by placing emphasis on a positive and happy mode of expression. After a successful period as an avant-garde composer and as an assistant to Karlheinz Stockhausen, Cardew moved away from avant-garde music and pilloried modernism and art music because he regarded it to be elitist and "potentially imperialist". His criticism focuses on Stockhausen for being "a part of the cultural superstructure of the largest-scale system of human oppression and exploitation".[61]

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[59] Andrew Clements, 'Barrett Premiere', *The Guardian* (Barbican, London, 15 February 2005) <http://www.theguardian.com/music/2005/feb/15/classicalmusicandopera1> [accessed 22 September 2013].
[60] Geoffrey Norris, 'Driven to Distraction', *The Telegraph* (Barbican, London, 15 February 2005) <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/3637143/Driven-to-distraction.html> [accessed 22 September 2013].
[61] Cornelius Cardew, *Stockhausen Serves Imperialism, and Other Articles: With Commentary and Notes* (London: Latimer New Dimensions, 1974).

Cardew explained that the dramatic departure from his roots was due to *"the exclusiveness of the avant-garde, its fragmentation, its indifference to the real situation of the world today"*.[63]Gerhard Stäbler also criticises the exclusiveness of the avant-garde. However, he believes that avant-garde music is the right idiom for political music, since its 'extreme' aesthetics catalyse individual learning, perception and independent thought in the listener.[65]

Cardew's arguments contradict Adorno's interpretation of the role of modern art. Adorno claims in *Aesthetic Theory* that all of the previous interest in "the New Music" has dissipated. In addition, he claims that modern art should not be "corrected" by becoming the "art of the past".

However, Stäbler's observes that contemporary music exclusiveness — a fact that Adorno says is an inherent necessity for new music — also signifies elitism. [66]

Barrett claims that the impact of the new music produced by Cardew was very small despite his unrelenting efforts to try to influence people. However, Barrett contends that a question remains *"to which there seems to be no answer, except the principle that musical problems are obviously not as important as political problems…If working-class people are not in a position of awareness to accept any musical service of socialism except for the inevitable pastorage offered by composers like the later Cardew...then this is the fault of the process of exploitation and stultification dealt out by ruling classes to serve their interest".[68]* Thus, Barrett advocates the use of the avant-garde style adopted in his own music, when he concludes that "It is unfortunate that most people are not in a position to come into contact, let alone sympathize, with radical musical ideas".[70]

Cardew's own combative energies drew consistent attention from critics who, despite improved ticket sales to his concerts, dismissed his new political work as overly simplistic, which significantly undermined his position in modern music history. [71]

I believe that Cardew's success with political music, which centred on social change and anti-war activism, owed much to the zeitgeist of the time, of quite a few big social movements blooming in

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[63] Timothy D. Taylor, 'Moving in Decency: The Music and Radical Politics of Cornelius Cardew', *Oxford University Press*, Music & Letters, 79.4 (1998), 555–576.

[65] Gerhard Stäbler and Dorone Paris, Stäbler - Political Music, 2012.

[66] Michel Foucault, Pierre Boulez and John Rahn, 'Contemporary Music and the Public', *Perspectives of New Music*, 24.1 (1985), 6 <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/832749>.

[68] Richard Barrett, 'Cornelius Cardew' *New Music 87,* ed. by Michael Finnissy and Roger Wright (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987)

[70] Ibid., pp.20-33

[71] Cardew's failure of the 'Scratch Orchestra' concert in 1971 due to his inability to link his music to the trends of progressing pop music.

the 1970. [72] Thus, I do not feel it would be an appropriate way to address the current political situation in Israel, in which anti-war movements and social activism are oppressed rather than celebrated.

In addition, I believe that contemporary music is the most suitable medium for political music precisely because it *is* exclusive, socially insular and seen by many as elitist. Through presenting an unfamiliar spectacle to audiences, I hope that my music will spark intrigue and create a forum for ideas which would otherwise be impossible in modern day Israel-Palestine due to the overt nature of pop music and the level of social resistance to liberal politics.

Finally, I believe that contemporary music can significantly affect society. Although my opinions on political music differ to those of Henze, Barrett and Cardew, I am convinced that as artists we have a unique power to illuminate different angles of various political situations and that this is the first step towards social change. By performing an emotional state, connecting with audiences and giving them the opportunity to associate themselves in that space of art while mirroring socio-political situations through a practice that doesn't commonly discusses politics, art holds within it a great power for social change.

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[72] The 1970s was blooming with a few big social movements as women's liberation, environmentalism, peace movement, gay rights, indigenous rights, antinuclear movement, African-Americans joining mainstream America, American-Indian movement and the Disability Rights Movement.

FreeFall

EXERCISE

FreeFall was written as a result of the previous sub-chapter 'Negation of Philosophies'. With writing this piece, I wished to oppose the compositional methodologies used by Henze, Barrett and Cardew for political composition. Therefore, the piece does not discuss any socio-political matter, and it combines aesthetical features that were raised in the compositional approaches that were discussed before. The intention is for this piece to highlight the importance and need for complexity, seriousness, accessibility and clarity in a political composition, by creating a piece that is the exact opposite of that.

FreeFall is an electro-acoustic piece built around seven sound samples taken from daily life, what I term "occurrences". The decision to choose sound samples stemmed from a University of Florida study which found that such sounds are particularly effective in eliciting an emotional response in humans.[73] The study revealed that the more unpleasant the sounds are, the most affect those have on the human body. More it reveals "Electrodermal reactions were larger for emotionally arousing than for neutral materials".[74] These I thought were important findings to consider when composing an *affective* political piece. In composing this piece I used sounds that showed to elicit strong emotional reactions in the study's participants, as I was interested in examining the effect those samples may have when composed into a non - subject piece, in order to challenge Henze's and Cardew's approach to music. The samples are of a baby crying, a drilling sound, a loud engine, laughter, glass breaking, people walking and the sound of musical scales being played by a tenor saxophone.

To compose the piece, I worked with the pre-recorded samples as if they were seven instruments, each of which had its own unique timbre and rhythmic pattern. In order to musically combine them together, I simplified the samples into a rhythmic pattern alone using an undetermined note, and subsequently arranged them into a "rhythmical" piece. Afterwards, I

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[73] Margaret M. Bradley and Peter J. Lang, 'Affective Reactions to Acoustic Stimuli' (Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[74] Ibid., p.204

began processing the timbre of the samples while adding notes around sounds which I wanted to emphasise in the subsequent mixing process.

Figure 13: FreeFall - initial score

After assembling the processed samples into a score, I started to apply my own aesthetics to the piece such as extreme dynamics, sharp cuts between samples and silence, as well as extreme changes in pitch, distortion, reverb and echo.
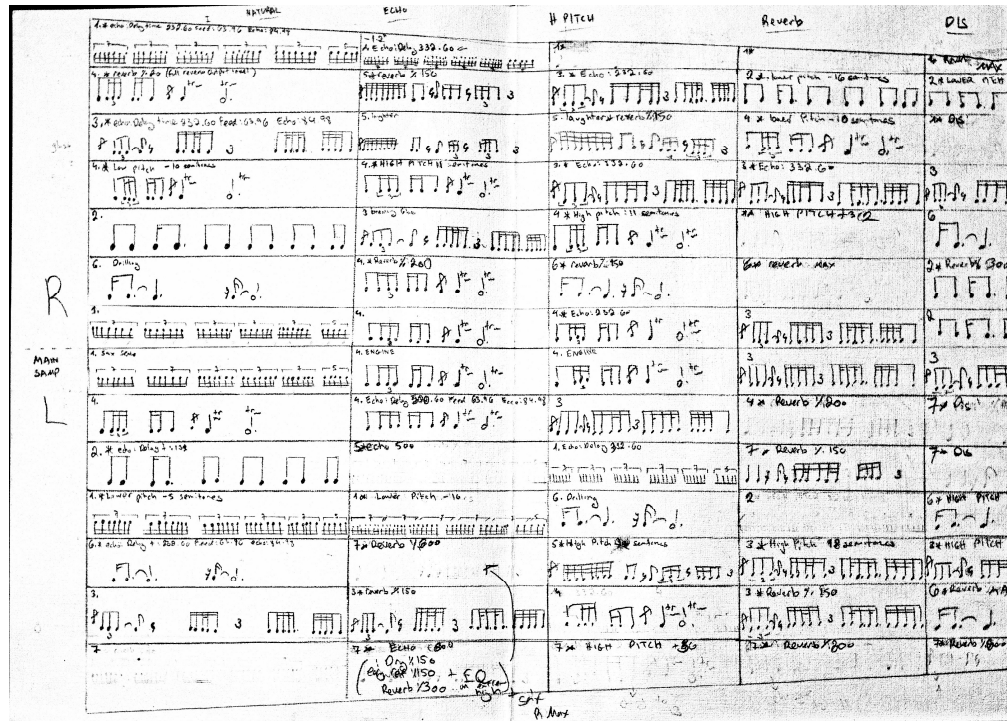
As part of challenging a piece's clarity of message, I have incorporated a musical formula into it. I wanted to examine, whether a calculation as such could be heard without the knowledge of its existence, and whether the meaning of it could be understood by listening only. This examination was set to challenge Barrett's philosophical approached to *No (Resistance & Vision)* that was discussed in the chapter *Negation of Philosophies*.

The piece uses a mathematical calculation to compute the speed of a falling object from a height of 12500 feet. The average speed of an object as it falls from this height is approximately 185kmh. However, it is important to recognise that the speed at which the object falls is not

constant, because it accelerates through the air due to gravity. Thus, the samples played in the piece are accelerated in proportion to the speed at which a human would free fall through air. The piece opens with the entire duration of the samples being played at their original speed, which amounts to six seconds in each case. After the initial presentation, their speed is accelerated by a factor 10 (4''2''[75]'), then 8 times the speed of the latter (0.525''') and finally the speed is doubled once more (0.2625''').

For an average person, it would take 58''176''' to reach the ground from a height of 12500 feet. However, I felt that 58'' could not capture a feeling of falling well enough. As a result, I decided to expand the time frame of the fall to 2'22''.
In order to create a strong sense of a falling object, I have changed the speed, timbre and pitch of each sample as the piece progresses. Moreover, in order to increase the intensity of the piece, I introduced unexpected moments of silence.

[75] '' - seconds. ''' - decisecond

Chapter 3

Tweaking the process

In this chapter, I will present two pieces that address the lessons learned in Chapter One. Chapter One, discusses my starting point pieces, the personal satisfactions and the performative disappointments. In that chapter, I examined my personal pleasure in conveying my emotions in each piece. Having said that, the experience of performing those pieces and the interaction with audiences has highlighted my need for communicating a clear message with my political compositions.

Therefore, features such as dramatic performance and the creation of a space for interaction between performer and audience, were taken under consideration for future pieces, with an attempt for those to present a clear political message. The conclusions of chapter one were implemented to the pieces below, in an attempt to overcome the communication challenges discussed in that chapter.

For the Lives of Our Children

PATH piece #4

Ireland's history of wars, whether civil or for its independence, terrorist attacks and killings of innocents, has shaped the country as it is today. For me personally, I see a direct comparison between Anglo-Irish history and the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict. After learning about Irish history and visiting historical sites, I was struck by the similarities of the histories of both conflicts. I was saddened, especially because it evoked childhood memories that were quite similar to the Irish events. For me, the relative peace in modern Ireland is a symbol of hope for other countries around the world struggling with similar conflicts.

This composition is a film, consisting of photos and sound. It is dedicated to Ireland and the Irish people, in memory of the day peace was achieved. It aims to remind the Irish people of the devastating consequences of war so that they will continue to support other peace processes globally.

The piece was written for a pre-recorded bodhrán, snare drum, and electronics. Choosing the bodhrán for the piece relates to the historical significance of the instrument. A number of authors contend that the bodhrán was associated with the Wren ritual, which suggests that the instrument *"may have its roots in pre-historic, or at least pre-Christian, times"*.[76] More, since the bodhrán was first an agricultural tool rather than an instrument, used by farmers to separate grain seed from the chaff or shells, its unique value lays deeply in Irish lives. Ireland's agricultural history that dates back to 6000 years ago [77]as well as a leading country in Europe for export of farming products, places the bodhrán not only in many Irish homes but also as a dominant part of Irish culture.[78] The bodhrán is not only as a symbol of traditional Irish farming but also of freedom as it was used as an instrument by families who couldn't afford to buy a 'real' instrument. In modern day the bodhrán plays an important role in traditional Irish music

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[76] Rina Schiller, *The Lambeg and the Bodhrán: Drums of Ireland* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University Belfast, 2001).

[77] The Heritage Council, 'Ireland's Farming Heritage' <http://www.longfordlibrary.ie/uploadedFiles/longfordlibrary/Heritage/Downloads/Irelands_Farming_Heritage.pdf> [accessed 1 December 2015].

[78] Irish related food produce employment is estimated at 14%-15% at 2008

sessions. The drum, alongside its unique playing technique serves as a representative of Ireland around the world. With that in mind, it seemed crucial to me that the bodhrán, which accompanied Irish life throughout history, should have a significant role in the piece.

Alongside the bodhrán, I added a snare drum that is strongly associated with military bands and war. By composing for these instruments together, I intended to focus mainly on the Irish troubles while also metaphorically alluding to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The electronics in the piece are used to manipulate some of the characteristics of the drums to represent various warlike soundscapes, such as sounds that are hateful or irritating to the ear alongside sounds that are comfortable and warm (such as the low bass heartbeat sound), and sounds of gunshots, explosions and pain.

The sounds were manipulated mainly through extreme alteration of the equalisation. This involved extreme stretching of the overtones, bass and frequencies of the sounds. In order to achieve an even richer and more detailed drum sound, I used two separate microphones; a condenser microphone (usually used for voice) was used to record the more scratchy sound of the drum, whereas a professional drum microphone (of sennheiser) was used to clearly record the tone of the leather.

For me, it was very important that although the drum sounds were heavily manipulated and almost artificial, a "human touch" will remain in the piece nevertheless. For this reason, I substituted the drum sticks at times for tapping fingertips, bassy thuds with the palm of a hand, scratching finger nails, and squeaking sounds created by the contact of a strong hand spreading across the drums skin (also an analogue for skin against skin, humanity against humanity).

The film opens in complete silence (the first sound is 28 seconds into the piece) and features photos of symbolic Irish landscapes such as the Giant's Causeway, Glendalough, and the Cliffs of Moher. Two minutes into the film, the images become less clear, whether the photos shown are of an Irish landscape or of Israel-Palestine. The same visual device is used for the images of the conflicts and struggles, once again giving rise to a degree of ambiguity about the provenance of the photos.[80]

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[80] See appendix for questioner.

Graphic images of war, gun shots and fire are starkly juxtaposed with images of serene natural beauty, thus placing vivid emphasis on the destruction of humanity, nature, respect and kindness.

The harsh sounds are contrasted with sudden and irritating moments of silence. I was inspired to use silence in a political context by an article written in 1991 by Gerhard Stäbler entitled *About Silence*:

> "actually SILENCE is dangerous to the extent that compelled silence (cringing, humiliation, degradation to a lower status) and quiet for reflection and analysis carry within themselves a new beginning. Inherent in the process of silence, which can mean the loss of competence, a no-exit situation, death, is the impulse for outrage, resistance, the signal for rebellion, revolt".81

Consciously inspired by Stäbler, the moments of silence are intentionally designed to make the listener feel uncomfortable, restless and ultimately trigger contemplation about their current actions, and their actions in future.

Figure 14: For the Lives of Our Children – 2'38''-3'08''
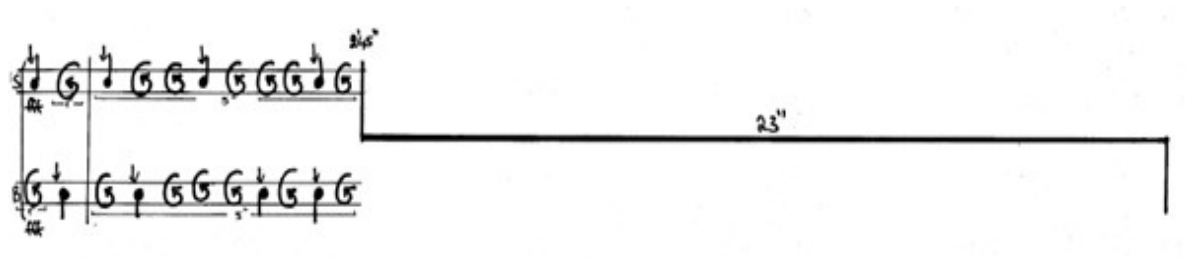
I felt it was important to add a visual human body to the film in order to evoke empathy. Therefore, I added a dancer to the piece. She appears three times, as a shadow (some might say a ghost) as a contrast to the photos in the film. Suddenly the figure becomes a moving, breathing body. In this way, the dancer contextualises the film and brings the audience back from history to contemporary life. Her appearance is dramatic and designed to make the audience feel the

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81 *Angefügt, nahtlos, ans Heute: zur Arbeit des Komponisten Gerhard Stäbler: Standpunkte, Analysen, Perspektiven*, ed. by Johannes Bultmann, Hanns-Werner Heister, and Gerhard Stäbler (Hofheim: Wolke, 1994).

urgency of her calling for pursuing coexistence worldwide. This is hinted by the dancer's restless performance, perhaps desperate, which finds its support in the relentlessness of the triggered sound samples that disturb the sound of the drums in the piece.

The dancer is accompanied by a heartbeat (played by the bodhrán), which increases in tempo and pacing with each appearance. The rhythmic pattern in segment two is based on the actual rhythmic sequence of a human cardiac arrest, which again evokes human frailty.[82]

Figure 15: For the Lives of Our Children – 3'50''-4'30''
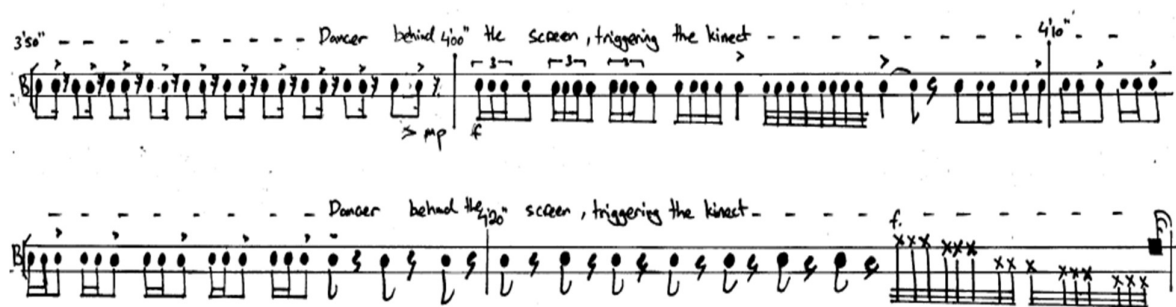
The dancer triggered sounds are taken from "normal" daily life, which emphasises that the issue has become a commonplace reality rather than an isolated incident. These sounds include a fly, construction work, a broken/busy phone line and the extreme sound of a woman's scream.

The sounds are triggered using a Microsoft Kinect, a motion sensor initially developed for the Microsoft Xbox 360 video game console which has since been used by artists and scientists for a variety of other purposes. The sensor connects to the Max/MSP (Max Signal Processing) visual computer programming language using a special driver called "synapse". The driver receives the 3D space coordinates of the body movements and transmits them to Max as x, y and z variables. I then programmed Max such that the variables trigger sound samples when the dancer performs certain poses.

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[82] HEARTSTART SKILLS Frasco, *Cardiac Arrest* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XV11kplLoxw> [accessed 8 May 2014].

The piece was performed twice as part of two related university events, once as an extract (without the dancer), and once in its complete form. I felt that the differences between the two performances were quite significant. The audience at the first performance seemed somewhat more guarded and reticent; they observed the piece for a few minutes, but tended to leave the exhibit once the more "unfamiliar" landscapes appeared. At the second performance, however, the role of the dancer clearly made a marked difference. I felt that the piece was more successful in evoking feelings of pain, hurt, shock and empathy and above all, the message was communicated more successfully. More, the differences in performance venue led to different groups of audiences observing and interacting with the piece. The first performance took place in a gallery. A venue which traditionally attracts observers of art rather than an interactive audience. The second performance was as part of a short lecture I gave that discussed my pieces and therefore the audience members that attended the talk were more inclined to interact with the piece.

For Utopia no. 1

FOR UTOPIA piece #1

In 1983, Ireland introduced a constitutional ban on abortion as a result of a referendum which proclaimed:

> *"The State acknowledges the right to life of the unborn and, with duo regard*
> *to the equal right to life of the mother, guarantees in its laws to respect, and,*
> *as far as practicable, by its laws to defend and vindicate that right."*[83]

This expansion on the 8th Amendment of the Irish Constitution to forbid abortion in all circumstances.[84] Although the decision was democratic, the 8th Amendment has given rise to one of the most enduring political and legal controversies in Ireland and is considered to be in breach of human rights by the United Nations (UN).[85]

Thus, *For Utopia no. 1* concerns women's rights, specifically in relation to the ongoing abortion debate in Ireland. The piece aims to evoke empathy in Irish people for women seeking an abortion, while preaching for the protection of the lives of Irish women over traditional religious legacy.

The piece is composed for a soprano singer and a tenor saxophone. The decision to compose for them relates to their opposing "gender" characteristics.[86] By musically unifying both "gender" stereotypes, the piece emphasises that gender equality is a cause for men and women alike. In order for gender equality to flourish, our actions and intentions also need to demonstrate this equality. Therefore by choosing gender associated instrumentation, I actively engage with the subject of equality in the piece.

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[83] Office of the Attorney General, 'Eighth Amendment of the Constitution Act, 1983' <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1983/ca/8/enacted/en/print> [accessed 2 February 2013].
[84] Unless an abortion is a result of a medical intervention performed to save the life of the mother (Protection of Life Bill 2013).
[85] *UN Human Rights Committee & Ireland's Abortion Laws*, July 2014 <http://www.ifpa.ie/node/603> [accessed 21 October 2013].
[86] S. Hallam, L. Rogers and A. Creech, 'Gender Differences in Musical Instrument Choice', *International Journal of Music Education*, 26.1 (2008), 7–19 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0255761407085646>.

For Utopia number 1, opens with a melodical line that intends to symbolise a religious chant; the opening melody is monophonic and unaccompanied similarly to characteristics of Gregorian chant. Further, playing a melodical line, as part of a piece which imposes a challenge on religious rule, contextualises the melodical line as having a religious weight. Since the piece deals with a religious matter, I have decided to connect it visually to a religious practice. It was important for me that both performer and reader could gain a sufficient perspective into the piece. This, in order to encourage a specific angle of interpretation of the piece when reading or performing it. Therefore the opening and closing phrase of *For Utopia no. 1,* are both written in a Gregorian chant notation to assist in setting the piece's mood.

More, the saxophone part involves a significant pattern of ascending triplets. This pattern was inspired by the shape of a spiral and intends to create a feeling of instability. In order to enhance the circular feeling of a spiral, the phrases are played as if they were written in 3/4 waltz pacing pattern, with a strong articulation on the first note of each triplet.

Figure 16: For Utopia no. 1 - bars 47-48

A change of tempo occurs at the end of Bar 36 of the piece. From a tempo of approximately 60 bpm, it rises to approximately 100 bpm, almost twice the opening speed of the piece. This change bolsters the dramatic content of this section, representing the overwhelming emotion that inaccessibility to abortion elicits in many women. In response to the erratic saxophone part consisting of ascending triplets and descending glissandos, the singer stops singing and begins to recite in a prompt manner. The tempo reverts to the original pace in Bar 62, in order to signify a collective solemn, yet resilient determination to repeal the 8th Amendment.

Although the score opens with Gregorian notation for the saxophone part, it changes quickly thereafter to a European classical notation style. Throughout the piece, short graphical symbols are presented which are related to the standard notation. In the middle of Bar 65 for the saxophone and Bar 66 for the soprano, however, the score changes almost entirely to graphical notation. I decided to make this change during the last section of the piece to evoke an emotion that I felt could not be adequately conveyed using standard notation. Moreover, I wanted the performer to have a chance to express their personal engagement with the subject matter. Thus, by designating a time frame for this near the end of the piece, I aimed to encourage the singer to voice a strong opinion on the subject.

In order to encourage the potential which audiences of the piece might have in acting to repeal the 8th Amendment , the singer's part begins as she walks among the people, either on the street or in a concert hall. As she walks toward the saxophonist, she sings dramatically and recites quotes from various academic texts in support of legalising abortion. By doing so, she is also making the message of the piece clear. For example, the following text by Judith Jarvis Thomson is used:

> *"...a great deal turns for women on whether abortion is or is not available.*
>
> *If abortion rights are denied, then a constraint is imposed on women's freedom to act in a way that is of great importance to them, both for its own sake and for the sake of their achievement of equality; and if the constraint is imposed on the ground that the foetus has a right to life from the moment of conception, then it is imposed on a ground that neither reason nor the rest of morality requires women to accept, or even to give any weight at all."*[89]

In addition, I have added a few dramatic features to enhance the clarity of the message. The singer represents all women who lack basic human rights. She raises an unusual voice to discuss abortion rights. Her singing is operatic, desperate and personal, the exact opposite of the norm

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[89] Judith J. Thomson, 'A Defence of Abortion', *Wiley*, 1, no. 1.Philosophy and Public Affairs (1971), 47–66.

in which discussing abortion rights is usually demonstrated in public talks or group chants that presents strength and power. [90]

To reinforce this association visually, the singer performs wearing a funereal black veil and dress, which represents her grief about the injustice of being denied her human rights. Secondly, I wanted emphasise the insanity of a system which enables a group of overwhelmingly male politicians, judges and religious leaders to dictate to women what they can do with their own bodies. To allude to this insanity, the singer exhibits erratic mood swings, veering from distress and laughter to elegance.

I hope that the text itself as well as the physical proximity of the crowd to a singer begging for her human rights will help people feel a connection to her as a human being. In turn, I hope this inspires them to help change the situation.

Figure 17: For Utopia no. 1 – street performance

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[90] *March for Choice* (Dublin, Ireland, 2014 - 2015).

Figure 18: For Utopia no. 1 – street performance

Based on my previous experience, I began composing the piece after finding performers willing to take part. I set my heart on a female singer because although the issue concerns everyone, only women's bodies are affected. I contacted four different singers, but when I explained the subject matter I had in mind all of them declined to participate. Interestingly, all of the singers declined on the basis that they felt uncomfortable with abortion; although they did not disagree with my message, they were nervous about how it might be received by their friends and relatives. Luckily, the fifth singer I approach was confident enough to agree to participate.

For Utopia number 1 was originally composed for a soprano singer, tenor saxophone and electric guitar. However, future performances of the piece involved a soprano and saxophone performers only, due to the unavailability of the guitar player and the failure of finding a performer to replace him.The piece's performances were unpaid. I have applied for funding from the arts council for them however those were rejected. I found that it was hard, and yet essential, to create continuous performances without funding for obvious reasons. Luckily, I was able to arrange the piece and deliver it successfully having a soprano and saxophone only.

For Utopia number 1, was performed five times at various locations in Dublin such as Grafton Street, University College Dublin, The Abbey Theatre and Dublin Institute of Design.

The reaction I received to each performance of *For Utopia no. 1* — whether performed on the street, classroom or in a concert hall — was quite similar. The majority of the audience felt quite uncomfortable about the piece, regardless of whether they supported the view espoused in it or not. In numerous cases, audience members left the show because they opposed abortion rights. Conversely, many other audience members approached me to express their support for the performance. It is important to point out that all of the performances took place in Ireland, where the subject matter is particularly controversial. Thus, I foresaw the negative backlash and to some extent even encouraged it. However, despite the controversy of the theme, I still received a lot of support from a wide array of organisations and political groups which helped me find venues to stage the piece. It is not merely a subject which concerns Ireland in isolation, it is also a question of injustice. In my view, those who supported the piece were able to see past the controversy and question that injustice independently.

Conclusion

Chapter three/Tweaking the Process

Both *For the Lives of Our Children* and *For Utopia number 1* had quite encouraging results. I felt that overall, both pieces were well received by the audiences. Firstly, the fact that both pieces were a response to an ongoing political situation helped to underline their immediacy and importance. Secondly, the connection created between the performer and the audience, in tandem with additional visual and dramatic components, improved the audience's interaction of the pieces significantly. This was reflected first by the invitations for many performances and several commissions that *For Utopia number 1* has received. Secondly it was reflected by the comments of audience members on the socio-political subjects raised in each one of the pieces.

Nonetheless, I felt that the pieces targeted specific groups of audiences instead of targeting the general public. This was in complete dissonant with my belief that political issues belong to the general public. Although *For Utopia number 1* was performed once on a street, all subsequent performances took place in closed venues. Secondly, both pieces suffered of lack of repetition. In my opinion, repetition plays an important role in improving audience's connection with a piece of music. "musical repetitions, in other words…can effect a sense of boundary-collapsing communication that can awaken a range of experiences from mildly pleasurable to totally redemptive".[92] Therefore, if an audience feels more connected to a piece of music, than it could encourage them to listen and perhaps contemplate over the pieces message.
 More, I felt that if I were to have add musical symbolic gestures, (phrases/sounds that are associated with a specific time and place) I could have assisted in representing a clearer topic for each piece. However, by not combining all compositional decisions in the pieces together with the absence of a sufficiently lengthy warm up to ease the audience into broaching such a highly controversial theme, may have provoked active resistance to the subject matter, contrary to the central aims of the pieces.

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[92] Elizabeth Hellmuth Margulis, *On Repeat: How Music Plays the Mind* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014).

Chapter 4

Final Pieces

In the previous chapters, I raised various issues that are crucial when attempting to create an "active" political composition. These issues included how to clarify the subject matter, collaborate with other art forms, maximise access to the general public, humanise the piece, connect the audience to the performer, disturb daily routines, evoke emotion, and repeat central themes. In this chapter, I will present and discuss my latest pieces, entitled *In the Lion's Den*, *Felicia's Requiem* and *Mirror*. The commentary of *Mirror* is significantly longer than the previous commentaries, as it is the largest scale piece and the last one for this research.

In the Lion's Den

FOR UTOPIA piece #2

The piece follows the struggle of a victim of assault, represented by the dancer in the piece, from stages of oppression and disbelieved by her loved ones and the authorities. Eventually, she is finally able to begin to psychologically rehabilitate. The piece criticises society's inaction regarding victims of sexual assault and reminds us of our social responsibility to them.

The aim was to raise awareness in regard to sexual assault in contemporary western culture societies. This is achieved by presenting and speaking aloud about the social responsibility we have for victims and survivors of sexual assault. By presenting the issue on the street, I hoped to encourage immediate action to help end sexual violence and support victims from all classes of society.

I chose the instrumentation for the piece so that it would be loud enough for an outdoor performance. Thus, the piece involves soprano and alto singers, bass recorder, clarinet, tenor saxophone, gong and snare drum which are all played to their maximum range in terms of volume. Among these instruments, the bass recorder is the quietest, whereas the snare drum is the loudest. The extreme between the bass recorder and snare, intends to symbolise the unequal power relations between a victim and an attacker; both instruments do not differ only in volume but also in their construction and production of sound. The recorder is a wind instrument meaning that a breath of air has to be blown into it to produce sound, while the snare drum only requires a struck by a stick/hand to be heard. Since the sound of the recorder is produced through breathing into it, it represents the soul of the victim while the snare, which produces sound by an act of force on its skin, represents the attacker.
 More the recorder is a pitched instrument while the snare isn't. Meaning that the recorder possess within it the ability to produce a note and therefore has the ability to create a melody while the snare drum is capable of only, traditionally speaking, producing a rhythmic passage. This relationship reflects the contrast of the instruments built and mechanism as well as a metaphor between the opposite spirits of an assault victim and her/his oppressor. While the bass recorder represents the spirit and soul of the victim, the militant sounding snare drum represents the oppressing *force* of the attacker.

Furthermore I set my heart on having a female dancer in the piece to represent and express the assault victim. Prior to composing the piece, I searched for a dancer to whom I would feel connected artistically to as well as a dancer that has had a personal experience/that has been assaulted, as I believe that a connection between a subject and a performer is crucial for a delivery of a performance.

After months of search, I met a brilliant dancer who fit my criteria. We both felt convicted by the topic of the piece as well as by the need to act upon this subject in order to raise awareness on the topic. We both have experimented with sound and movement, while sharing personal stories and feelings on concepts of assault. The dancer introduced me to Laban's theory of movement and I was quickly enchanted by it.

Rudolph von Laban theory of movement claims that each movement of the body contains its own unique message:

"movement evidently reveals many different things. It is the result of the striving after an object deemed valuable, or of a state of mind. Its shapes and rhythms show the moving person's attitude in a particular situation. It can characterise momentary mood and reaction as well as constant features of personality".[94]

For example in the second part of *In the Lion's Den*, I wanted to convey the fragility of the dancer. Laban claims *that "A feeling of lightness, of losing strength, corresponds with the reaching upwards to the point where the arm or the body prepares to relax and to fall backwards towards the ground".[95]* Based on this insight, the choreography for this part involves the dancer making many attempts to lift herself up from the ground, but with each attempt, she falls back down and loses strength.

Laban's choreography incorporates a system of notation called Kinetography Laban.[96] I felt that in order to profoundly understand his theory of dance, not only should I discuss and experiment with those ideas together with the dancer but that I should also use his notation for the score in order to have/contain a visual representation of the dance movements in writing.

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[94] Rudolf von Laban and Lisa Ullmann, *The Mastery of Movement*, 2d ed., and enl (London: MacDonald & Evans, 1960).
[95] Rudolf von Laban and Lisa Ullmann, *Choreutics* (Alton, Hampshire, UK: Dance Books, 2011).
[96] Kintetography Laban, a system of notation invented by Rudolph Laban, first published in 1928.

Figure 19: In the Lion's Den – dance part 2'50''-3'50''

Unfortunately, 3 months into collaborating on the piece, the dancer had disappeared and I was left with a piece and a mission I didn't want to give up. I began searching for a new dancer and after a few weeks found someone. We began working together, taking it from the point in which the previous dancer left, while trying to expand on her ideas with new added perspective. Unfortunately after 2 months work the second dancer had disappeared too. I was left with less than a month until the scheduled performance and I was desperate. Finally I was very lucky to have found Inma Pavon, who was the dancer for all of *In the Lion's Den* performances, who applied, expanded and added her own touch to the piece.

In the Lion's Den is divided into six interrelated parts.

The piece opens with a long, fragile, unstable drone notes played by the bass recorder. As the piece slowly progresses, the ensemble gathers around the dancer, repetitively playing and singing a melodical phrase that resembles a ritualistic chant. The relentlessness of the melody in the background is a metaphor for how sexual assault has become almost ritually and unconsciously accepted in our society.

> *"…ritualized behaviour shares certain features: it tends to be compulsory and high-cost (consuming of time and resources). It tends to be rigid, valuing precise adherence to the details of past performances, it entails goal-demoted behaviour-action sequences that are drawn from the typical repertoire, but re-enacted outside the context of their ordinary use. Ritual involves a highly*

unusual degree of internal repetition and redundancy, and a restricted range of topical themes".[97]

More this melody is repeated throughout the entire composition, giving the audience a familiar point of connection to the piece.

By the end of the first part, the dancer finds herself surrounded by the entire ensemble. Finally, in complete silence, she lies on the floor for 20 seconds, which signifies her defeat.

In Part Two, she rises up and tries to convince the ensemble to believe her, only to be met with disbelief by her loved ones. In this part, the dancer tries to lift herself up from the floor but each time she tries, she falls back down, symbolising her fragility and the traumatic consequences of her so-called "second rape", a concept that will be discussed later in this chapter.The part contains aggressive music followed by a drum duet of snare and gong, which again symbolise the collapse of her spirit.

However, after many long minutes of drum aggression, she is able to break out of this vicious cycle and stand strong. This marks the beginning of Part Three. This part contains strong, firm movements, inspired by classical ballet which denote her strength (and her victory) in the face of oppressive sounds/people. Musically, she is supported by a quiet gong and bass recorder melody which together reflect her mental and physical strength. At the end of this section, she stands in the middle of the stage and announces that she is a free human like everyone else, shouting "I Think Therefore I Am!" [100]

Part 4 represents the reaction of society to assault victims, which often involves a certain amount of victim blaming and oppression. In this section, members of the ensemble use extreme aesthetics in order to assault and silence the dancer. She still stands strong, however, and they begin to "believe" her.

In Part 5, all the members of the ensemble slowly begin to play accented sporadic notes, inspired by the graphic on their score resembling rain. The rain is a symbol of a new start and hope. At this point, the ensemble members slowly gather together and hold hands, symbolising unity, understanding, and solidarity with all victims of sexual violence. Together, they all shout "I think therefore I am!"

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[97] Margulis, p. 56.
[100] René Descartes and others, *Discourse on the Method ; And, Meditations on First Philosophy*, Rethinking the Western Tradition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

Finally, in Part 6, all of the performers walk to the crowd while reading philosophical texts about assault, abuse and social responsibility.

The issue of social responsibility has been dealt with and written about for centuries. A 1991 book entitled *The Second Rape* attempted "to expose the blind, subtle betrayal of the rape victim by the perpetrators of the "second rape" — the police, medical and mental health workers and the criminal justice system".[101] This was achieved by gathering testimonials from sexual assault victims and their abusers. The betrayal of abuse victims by the institutions of state is criticised throughout the book, which exposes the growth of this trend in modern society:

> *"Women will go to make sure that rape or sexual violation is "not me". It underscores the depth of repression that is necessary to carry on with the sometimes frightening experience of being female in our society. Despite our years of experience and the book knowledge we had in the area of sexual assault, we were ignorant about some aspects of it. ...*
>
> *There is a new, more disturbing twist to rape if one becomes aware that women who report a rape are again raped by a system composed of well-intentioned people who are nevertheless blinded by the myths of centuries. It's impossible not to know that a second rape is occurring."[102]*

The authors showcase that "second rape" is a worldwide phenomenon, and implies that as a society we have a responsibility to bring it to an end.

Similarly, the subject of social responsibility was also examined in ancient Greece. Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics is one of the most well-known texts to discuss the issue:

> *"a man may be ignorant, then, of who he is , what he is doing, what or whom he is acting on, and sometimes also what he is doing it with, and to what end... and how he is doing it... Now of all of these no one could be ignorant unless he were mad, and evidently also he could not be ignorant of the agent; for how could he not know himself?"[103]*

[101] Lee Madigan and Nancy C. Gamble, *The Second Rape: Society's Continual Betrayal of the Victim* (New York : Toronto : New York: Lexington Books ; Maxwell Macmillan Canada ; Maxwell Macmillan International, 1991).

[102] Madigan and Gamble, p. 3.

[103] Aristotle and Terence Irwin, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 2nd ed (Indianapolis, Ind: Hackett Pub. Co, 1999).

Aristotle criticises the passivity of society regarding victims of assault, and claims that we have a collective moral obligation to help them.

Both books discuss social responsibility using different examples to criticise the morality of society. These specific examples were chosen to help the reader relate to the victims as individual human beings. Likewise, in my piece, I strive to communicate a clear message with the audience, irrespective of class, race and gender. Thus, I felt it appropriate to adopt an approach to writing the piece that adhered to the same egalitarian spirit.

To communicate the subject of *In the Lion's Den* clearly, various dramatic features were employed. Significant features in the performance include makeup, masks and black and white outfits, all of which suggest a specific interpretation of the piece. The dancer and the bass recorder player are the only performers wearing black. The dancer represents the physical body of a sexual assault victim, while the bass recorder represents the victim's spirit in sound.

The rest of the performers are dressed in white, a colour which symbolises religion, cults, purity, peace and holiness in western culture.[108] However, all of the performers dressed in white are also wearing masks, as if to express the corruption of their identities — the holy exterior masking the immorality lurking beneath.

When composing the piece, it was crucial to create a connection between the performers and the audience. I achieved this by beginning the piece within the crowd. The performers are spread among the crowd and slowly walk to the focal point of the performance. In addition, as the piece reaches its conclusion, the performers once again spread out among the audience while reading texts about social responsibility. This elicits empathy with the performers.

This point notwithstanding, however, the audience is also made to feel complicit in the assault when they gather to witness the performance. Yet, with time, the audience ventures from the role of the assaulter to that of the victim, in that they too are subjected to the assault they are witnessing. Thus, creating a feeling of aggression in the audience plays a key role in communicating the message of social and moral responsibility. By assuming the role of both attacker and victim, I hope the audience will reassess their preconceptions regarding sexual assault.

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[108] Such as in the white cloths of the catholic priests, white flags of peace, white wedding dress etc.

Performance and Logistics

Performing a piece like this is not easy, especially in an open air venue. While writing the piece, I had to consider environmental acoustics and the noise of the street, which absorb a big portion of the instruments' sound. Another consideration for the outdoor performances was the reverberation of sound waves on buildings, walls and other objects on the street, which could help sustain the sounds of the instruments.

The first performance of the piece took place outside Cork City's General Post Office. The door of the GPO and the large wall alongside it echoed the sound of the instruments throughout the street, which captured the attention of passers-by.

Keeping the performers in time proved to be a complex logistical issue, particularly as they moved within the performance space. In order to overcome these difficulties, all of the performers wore an earpiece which played a recording of a rehearsal of the piece. This was intended to serve as a universal metronome for the performance. Although this theoretically should have worked, however, in some cases the recording confused rather than helped the performers and the timing of the piece suffered as a result. For this reason, stopwatches were used in subsequent shows.

Performers Review

The performer's understating and reaction to the piece was of great importance to me. Firstly, as I believe that performers can use their creativity to help to make the piece more expressive, certain parts were specifically designated to tap into their interpretations of the work.

Minute 3'55'' of the clarinet piece is left open for creative expression.

Figure 20: clarinet part 3'50''-4'50''
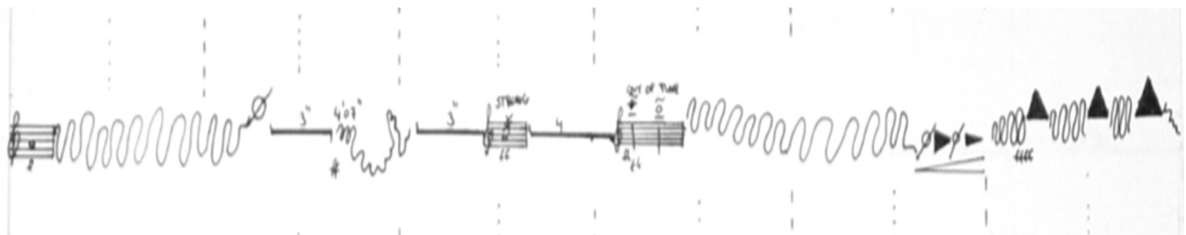
Secondly, I believe that the performer's reaction to the piece and their enthusiasm for the associated cause are apparent to the audience too.

After the first show, I send out a survey to the performers asking them how well they felt the issues in the piece were communicated. I was happy to hear that they all felt very engaged in and informed about the piece. However, this understanding was not necessarily derived from the score and its indications. Instead, most respondents felt that they developed their understanding of the piece chiefly through rehearsal work and story-sharing sessions we had done together.

As a result, I added a preface page to the score giving a general background about sexual assault and a personal story of a rape victim.

Experiences of the performances of In the Lion's Den
The piece was performed in Ireland, Germany and England during 2014. In Ireland and Germany, the performance took place on the street and was performed in England as part of a concert series at Goldsmith's University London. The concept of the piece was developed in collaboration with a dancer. However, similarly to previous cases, both this dancer and a subsequent performer I approached felt uncomfortable with the subject of the piece and ultimately decided not to participate.

In contrast to this setback, however, I felt fortunate and honoured to be approached by a talented bass recorder player from Germany, who made an unsolicited request to take part in the piece. This seemed to catalyse a snowball effect, whereby more performers joined the cause and I very quickly amassed an ensemble of six musicians. We began rehearsals without a dancer, but a week before the first performance took place a new dancer joined us. I felt honoured to work with such an amazing group of women who cared so much about the subject.

Moreover, for the performance in Berlin, three new musicians participated in the piece, an oboe, a sopranino recorder, and an alto recorder. The new arrangement consisted of parts and motifs from the original score.

The general reaction to the piece was positive and the audience expressed an understanding and interest in it. The reactions mainly focused on the impressive performance and the unusual public venues it took place in such as streets, parks and a performance at a university. More, the

conversation with audiences had reflected the importance of an open discussion on the subject of the piece. These conclusions were supported by the size of the crowd that remained throughout the piece, as well as the number of people who engaged me in conversations about it afterwards.

Felicia's Requiem

FOR UTOPIA piece #3

Felicia's Requiem was composed for soprano voice, loop pedal and projector. The piece intends to highlight the issue of "sexual" cyberbullying while addressing the phenomenon of teenage suicide. The piece focuses on the story of Felicia Garcia, who committed suicide as a result of being a victim of cyberbullying in 2012.

Technology and social media directly expose us to worldwide issues, events and conflicts and have vastly extended our ability to form powerful social and ideological groups. Electronic information is also increasingly filtered and personalised, however, which entrenches and polarises public opinion.

"...media may be a source of a social identity or self-legitimation, providing a sense of belonging to a community, (sub) culture or political order".[109]

In a sense, this is a positive development in that it gives us the ability to express a collective consciousness as a community and show concern about global events. However, some observers fear that these developments also pose a threat to our "*moral ecology… because prevailing ideologies and practices demonstrate that inadequate self-knowledge eats at the heart of the free society".[111]* By enabling users to associate only with people who share similar ideas (often in the absence of first-hand or in-depth knowledge of what these ideologies truly mean), social media can create a dangerous global informational echo chamber, in which discrimination, hatred and even violence can flourish.

For instance, during the recent war between Israel and Gaza various competing narratives surfaced among opposing cultural groups. [113] In Europe, there was an online trend towards strongly opposing Israel's military operation, which led to anti-Zionist demonstrations and rallies. In some cases, Israelis living in Europe were subjected to persecution and harassment.[115]

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[109] *Culture and Power: A Media, Culture & Society Reader*, ed. by Paddy Scannell, Philip Schlesinger, and Colin Sparks, The Media, Culture & Society Series (London ; Newbury Park, Calif: Sage Publications, 1992).
[111] *Making Globalization Good: The Moral Challenges of Global Capitalism*, ed. by John H. Dunning (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).
[113] Operation Protective Edge, 2014
[115] My experience being of Berlin, Germany, Ireland and England.

I had first-hand experience of this on several occasions during this period. Meanwhile, in Israel, there was a similarly dominant trend towards strongly blaming Palestinian "terrorists" for the conflict Again, in some cases Palestinians were targeted in violent attacks. It seemed to me that the aggressive, polarising rhetoric on both sides of the conflict on social media created a social climate in which violence was more likely to flourish.[117] Interestingly, there was also a minority group in Israel which opposed the military operation and called for a peaceful resolution to the conflict, and similar dissident groups in Europe supporting Israel. However, those types of groups were relatively small and had limited reach on social media.

Another popular trend that social media has helped flourish is called "cyberbullying". This phenomenon alone leads to approximately 4500 suicides per year of children under the age of 18.[118] With the rising of cyber bullying as a popular trend, stereotypical judgements of women and double standards has taken an extreme turn towards a more frightening forum. This results in many cases of women shaming, a phenomenon that is becoming even more prevalent due to the pervasiveness of social media in our lives. The abuse of social media to sexually harass has been called "sexual cyberbullying".

The piece consists of four different elements. Firstly, a soprano singer represents the female voice, not only in its musical sense but also as a female personification of the torture and anguish experienced by victims of sexual cyberbullying.

Secondly, a loop pedal is used to evoke the everlasting, relentless agony, and hopelessness, chaotic crisis that the victims endure. This has been characterised by White and Swartzwelder as follows: *"cyberbullying can be even more damaging than face to face bullying...there's no hope that the bully can be reined by parents, teachers or legal intervention...on the internet bullies can hide or impersonate others"*.[121]

Although cyberbullying is chiefly associated with social media due to the number of related suicides, it is also a by-product of the new digital age, in which information can pass around the globe within seconds. Indeed, cyberbullying predates social media and was already apparent earlier in the development and breakthrough of the internet. One of the best known cases and

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[117] G. Ostby, 'Polarization, Horizontal Inequalities and Violent Civil Conflict', *Journal of Peace Research*, 45.2 (2008), 143–62 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0022343307087169>.
[118] *Cyberbullying Rampant on the Internet* (USA: CyberBullyHotline, March 2015) <http://www.cyberbullyhotline.com/07-10-12-scourge.html>.
[121] Aaron M. White and Scott Swartzwelder, *What Are They Thinking?!: The Straight Facts about the Risk-Taking, Social-Networking, Still-Developing Teen Brain*, First edition (New York ; London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2013).

perhaps even the first was that of Monika Lewinsky, who reports that she is still being bullied and harassed for having extramarital sex with a man in 1998.[122] The relentless and never-ending dread caused by cyberbullying is hard for any person, but especially for teenagers: *"without the perspective and control that comes with fully developed frontal lobes, bullied teens may feel that they don't have any options rather than self-destructive behaviour."*[123]

Although it initially seems that the loop pedal is only used by the singer in Part 1, the chaotic loop recording returns at the end of the third part, in order to highlight once again the relentless onslaught of abuse.

Thirdly, a live feed of bullying tweets of a sexual nature from around the world are projected. This projection is an active representation of the relentless torrent of abuse on social media; while it appears to be seemingly ephemeral, it results in everlasting pain for the victim.

Finally, the piece is designed to be performed in a concert hall or any other closed venue. By doing so, I wanted the audience to physically experience a situation in which they cannot escape, leave and find comfort, so that they could sympathise with what the victims have gone through.

Felicia's Requiem consists of three musical parts:

Part 1 opens the piece and the aim of the singer is to make the audience feel engaged with the subject and emotionally connected to the singer herself. In order to achieve this, she sings a personal letter about the loss of an unknown relation who it gradually becomes apparent was a victim of cyberbullying.

In order to indirectly represent cyberbullying in this part, I added a loop pedal to the piece. My intention was to gradually allude to the topic so that the audience would not feel too repulsed or emotionally overwhelmed to continue listening. Thus, the loop pedal only records (and loops) single words from each sentence being sung. The pedal is pressed by the singer at a designated time. In order for the words to gradually form a sentence, however, the pedal is also pressed during "unrecorded" parts to achieve the correct timing. For instance, at the third line of the part, the underline indicates when the pedal should be pressed (once) to trigger recording.
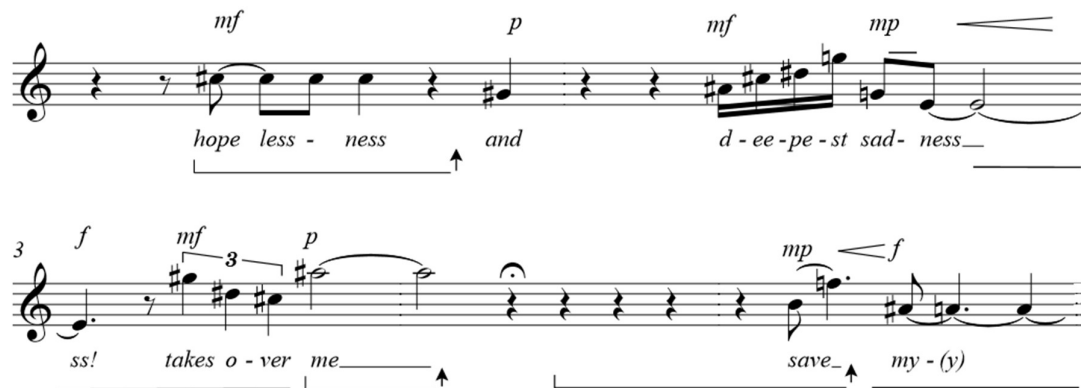
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[122] Monika Lewinsky, *The Price of Shame*, TED Talks, 2015
<http://www.ted.com/talks/monica_lewinsky_the_price_of_shame?language=en>.
[123]White and Swartzwelder, pp. 152-159.

When the vertical line appears just before the word "me" on Line 4, however, the singer should record the word using the microphone connected to the pedal.

Figure 21: Felicia's Requiem- part one, line 3 and 4

As the piece progresses, more words are gathered together and the topic is gradually revealed through the looped recording of the relentless thoughts the victim (and not the relative). The sentence which is ultimately revealed is: "shame, hopelessness, fragile, desperate, save me angel".

Furthermore, the melody consists of a lot of short (semi quavers, quaver and grace notes) semi-tones leading up to a long, craving tone. This serves as a metaphor for the emotional and psychological destruction of the victim, signified by the note breaking and fluctuating in and out of "tune".

Part 2 begins with a melodic and rhythmic pattern which repeats throughout the second part of the piece. As the part progresses, however, the pattern is disturbed by (pre-determined) snaps created by the singer, which represent the sudden, ceaseless and persistent harassment endured by victims of cyberbullying.

This part mainly consists of vowels vocalised by the singer. However, after each snap the vowel changes so that the pattern slowly alters in timbre, signifying the victim's attempt to appease her tormenter in hope that the snaps will stop.

Part 2.5 is a dramatic event. It opens with the notification sound of a new Tweet followed by a projection of a handwritten note which reads: "I can't. I'm done. I give up". This was a real Tweet written by Ms. Garcia on the day before she committed suicide in 2012. Part 2.5 is not musical, but is intended to vividly convey the humanity behind the story. The note is written on notebook paper, an allusion to school which signifies the victim's fragile adolescence and the tragically extinguished potential of a young girl who does not wish to learn anything more about the world.

Figure 22: Felicia's Requiem- part 2.5

I can't
I'm done
I give up.
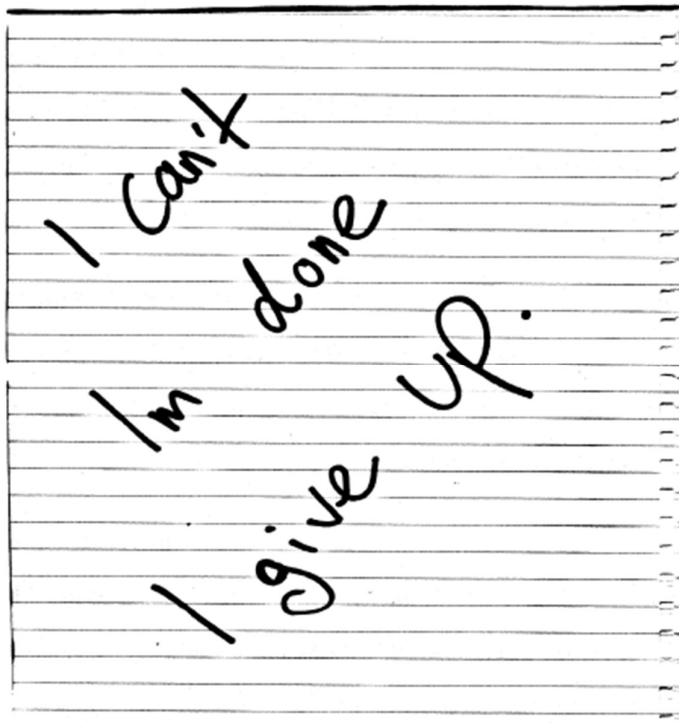
Part 3 tells the story of Ms. Garcia's suicide from her own perspective. After the tragic event has happened, the text continues as a news report. In this part, the singer intentionally stretches the limits of her voice to reflect fragility, weakness and diminishing strength. Some words are omitted as her weakness overwhelms her ability to sing (which seems to fatalistically call into question whether words even matter anymore).

In creating the piece, I collaborated with software programmer Thomas Vieux-Pernon, who built a programme to showcase bullying tweets of a sexual nature in real time during the performance. The tweets were projected behind the singer, highlighting the speed, spread and invasiveness of social media.

Performance Logistics

As the piece required electricity and an internet connection in order to project the tweets, it was not possible to have it performed outdoors with the budget that I had for this project. Having said that, it was important to me that the show will be available to the general public to experience. Thus, I was fortunate to gain an indoor venue in Dublin's Institute of Design in which both shows took place. Both were advertised (online as well as on street posters) and were free of charged (in order to attract the general public). The piece was successful in attracting the online community however it wasn't successful in means of attracting passer-by's. Therefore I thought that for future performances, I should focus on targeting the population that concerns this subject the most and arrange performances in *their* common places. We plan to stage further performances of this piece at universities, colleges and schools, in order to target the young adults who are most vulnerable and affected by this phenomenon.

Performers Review

While composing this piece, I worked closely with singer Heidi Deisch to establish how the subject could be best expressed. In order to humanise the piece and communicate it appropriately to the audience, I felt that a close relationship between the audience and singer was essential. In a questionnaire sent to Ms. Deisch after the performance, she indicated that she felt connected with the piece and had developed her understanding and interpretation of it while working on it. The success of the performances in communicating the message and humanising the piece has demonstrated the importance of working closely with the performer.

Experiences of the performances of Felicia's Requiem

The piece was performed twice for an event organised by the Centre for Creative Practices and as part of the Culture Night events in Dublin.

The results of this composition were astonishing and even more frightening to watch than I had predicted. The live, bullying tweets from around the world in tandem with the live performance which dramatised the tragic consequences really overwhelmed me during both performances.

 I strongly experienced the difference between a composition and a performed piece and was struck by the impact a performed piece has, even to a composer who has predicted and indicated the entire performance.

The crowd's reaction to the piece was very positive, consisting of curiosity and shock as well as encouragement for the importance of acting on the subject matter. This was reflected by the engaging conversations regarding the piece after the show as well as by the crowd's attentiveness throughout the concert. I consider these reactions to be a result of both, the engagement with the performance/composition as well as the urgency of the subject matter, a subject that is considered as modern day crisis among young adults throughout the world.

Mirror

PATH piece #5

Mirror is a collaboration with Shahd Zoubi, a glass artist and close friend. [124] The composition involves 7 mirrors, pre-recorded samples, soprano and tenor saxophones, a baritone singer, a gong and a piano. The piece is performed live by Zoubi, while the sounds are played through a speaker.

The performance of *Mirror* is a statement against oppression and blind hatred. The piece seeks to encourage independent thought and freedom of being. It reflects on the similarities and differences between Israelis and Palestinians, and calls for them to be appreciated and embraced.

In a war-torn country, it is very natural to choose a side in the conflict. Being born in such a place forces you into a reality over which you have extremely limited control. This stunts freedom of thought, as it is very difficult to be open-minded in a social prison. Patterns of thought are taught to us from an early age and reinforced on a daily basis by friends, family and government authorities. Those who express alternative views risk being ridiculed, socially shunned, or even disowned by their loved ones. As a psychological defence mechanism, people consequently learn to develop fear, prejudice and a dangerously simplistic hatred of a distant external enemy. By repressing all nuance of thought and feeling, our entire identity becomes defined by the conflict, as we forcefully contradict everything that we are in fear of being labelled as a sympathiser of the opposing side.

"The other side" had a similar upbringing to us — the same landscape, food, smell, colour and passionate religion. Above all, we are all burdened with a broken, fractured, devastating and oppressed reality.

Shahd and I shared ideas of the emotions we'd like to convey in the piece and slowly I began searching for performers to take part in it. I have sent personal invitation to performers which I have worked with before while also setting an online call for performers to participate in a piece that concerns the subject of coexistence. However the search for performers has struck me as I

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[124] See introduction for background on Shahd Zoubi.

received many declines and no response at all from the online call.[125] The declines have sadly contained element of disillusionment with the very concept of coexistence. It was the first time I had realised that coexistence itself has been regarded as a subject of controversy. This led to pre-recording the entire musical part of the piece rather than having it performed live.

It was very important for me that the piece would strongly advocate coexistence and be rooted in real events. Thus, in order to address our shared identity, as discussed in the introduction, of us both growing up in Israel from opposite sides of the conflict, I needed to convey the pain endured and the bloodshed. When collaborating with Shahd on this piece, we decided that the best way to express this pain would be through presenting a broken reflection of a known place. We hoped to symbolise the anxiety, grief and open wounds which envelop both the place and the audience. Once the speakers are switched on, the piece begins, and Zoubi shatters the mirrors.

Visually, the piece takes place in an open space and its borders are dictated by the dimensions of the mirrors. The mirrors are placed in a semi-circle facing the audience. As the audience walks in front of them, they see different parts of their body reflected into the surrounding environment.

Figure 23: Mirror – stage setup

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[125] Recruiting performers through an online call has worked with past pieces of mine such as Skin *Peeled, For Utopia number 1* and *In the Lion's Den.*

The Movements In the Piece

The movements of *Mirror* represent the key components of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

Sina' (hatred)

Although it is a subject of taboo, the presence of hatred in Israel/Palestine is undeniable. This movement is played throughout the piece creating a distant, yet relentless, reminder of hatred in the background. I decided that such a movement was crucial because if we are to truly change our society and bring blind hatred to an end, we must first face up to the phenomenon. *"Hate multiplies hate, violence multiplies violence, and toughness multiplies toughness in a descending spiral of destruction ... The chain reaction of evil - hate begetting hate, wars producing more wars - must be broken, or we shall be plunged into the dark abyss of annihilation."*[126]

The dark feeling of hatred is created in the movement by scratching six string instruments, creating a tense physical and emotional feeling of stress, fragility and pending eruption.

In the process of scratching each string, there is always a possibility that the fingernail loses grip and breaks the ascending (or descending) tones. When this occurs, the movement of the nail is forever damaged and the scratch needs to begin all over again. This represents the fragility and instability caused by blind hatred.

The eruption is created by scratching all strings on the six instruments simultaneously, with increased pressure from the fingernail. It occurs twice in the piece, between 13'50''-14'00'' and 22'50''-23'10''. This creates a very loud, coarse and anxious feeling akin to an explosion or eruption.

Sina' is played throughout the entire length of the piece, gradually becoming louder, more intense and consequently more irritating.

Zehut (identity) is the second movement of the piece. The aim of this part is to "lure" the audience into actively listening by using familiar recordings of known religious groups throughout.

It consists of recordings of various religious representatives and pre-recorded saxophones. The recorded samples contain melodies from Islam and Judaism that are set together in scale, tone,

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[126] Martin Luther King, *Strength to Love*, Reprint (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010).

and intent. In order to join the samples together, I firstly grouped together those featuring similar "musical aesthetics" into musical phrases, including melodies and prayers of similar maqam and mode, public prayers, prayers for peace, melodies involving significant extension of vowels, and melodies with emotional peaks. In the process of doing this, the religious origin of each sample became ambiguous.

The largest religions in Israel – Palestine are Judaism and Islam. Judaism is mainly associated with the Israeli identity while Islam is mainly associated with the Palestinian one. Having said that, there are many Israeli citizen, such as Shahd, that are Muslim and Israeli too.[127] However, within Israel and Palestine there are a few other, smaller, religious groups. The largest one of them being Christianity. I found it crucial to have a representation of Christianity in the piece since it represents the third major monotheistic religion in the country and therefore it is a religion that many of the Israeli and Palestinian civilians hold. In order to represent everyone in this call for coexistence, I found it crucial to have all three main religions represented within the piece.

Christianity is represented in the piece by the echoing tones of the church bells. Those tones can be heard daily in the big ethnically mixed cities of Israel including Nazareth, Akko, Jaffa, Haifa (downtown), Lod, Ramle and Jerusalem (in the old city). The sounds frequently coalesce with the calls of the Muezzin for prayer and Jewish announcements. This mixture of such different sounds together, involving different instrumentation, tuning and content is a simple daily occurrence, and for me, it has always represented hope for better days to come.

However, the church bells in the piece contrast with the other samples in that they do not fit in terms of mode, intent or tuning. Conversely, they are placed in the piece to remind us to embrace our differences, acknowledge our similarities, and enjoy the beauty of harmonious coexistence.

As the piece continues, the long samples are cut into short phrases and motifs that are shuffled throughout the movement. Those motifs have been selected from the long pre-recorded samples and are echoed intermittently. The saxophones echo the religious samples after they have already been played in their original context, though not necessarily in sequence.

As the long main samples become cut into shorter phrases and single motifs, *Sina' is* slowly exposed. The aim here is to present contrasting emotions, ranging from the celebration of cultural similarities and differences, to aggressiveness and distress.

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[127] See introduction for reference of Shahd's Israeli-Muslim identity.

At around 3'20'', Zoubi begins to cover the mirrors with black paint. What begins as an abstract painting, blocks the audience's view as the piece progresses. By doing so, we hoped to entice the audience into examining the reflection of themselves in what was left of the mirror. This action symbolises a hope that freedom of thought is still possible. This has been done by blocking the audience's view and self-reflection in the mirrors, with the aim of highlighting the natural human craving, seeking for the clear parts of the mirrors. In order for that to be encouraged, Shahd left small parts in the mirrors without any paint to inspire reflection, freedom of existence and coexistence for everyone. Those small uncovered parts are a symbol of hope within a violent present.
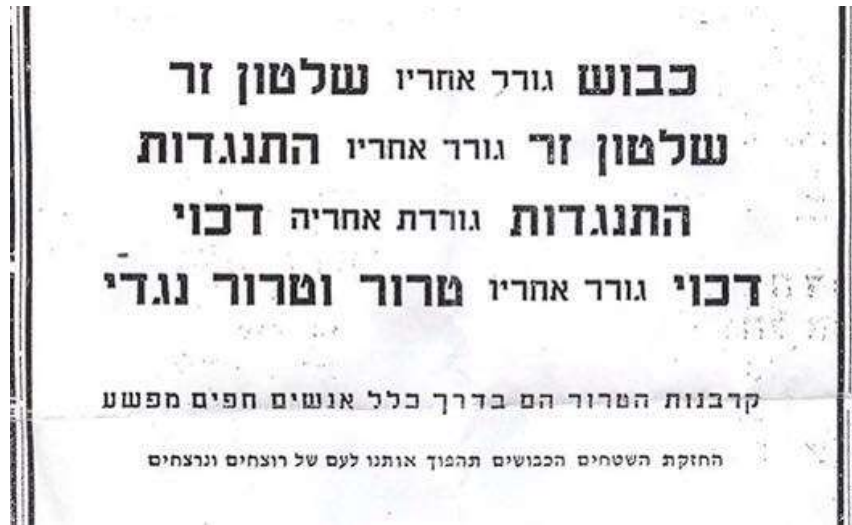
Figure 24: *Mirror*'s artistic result
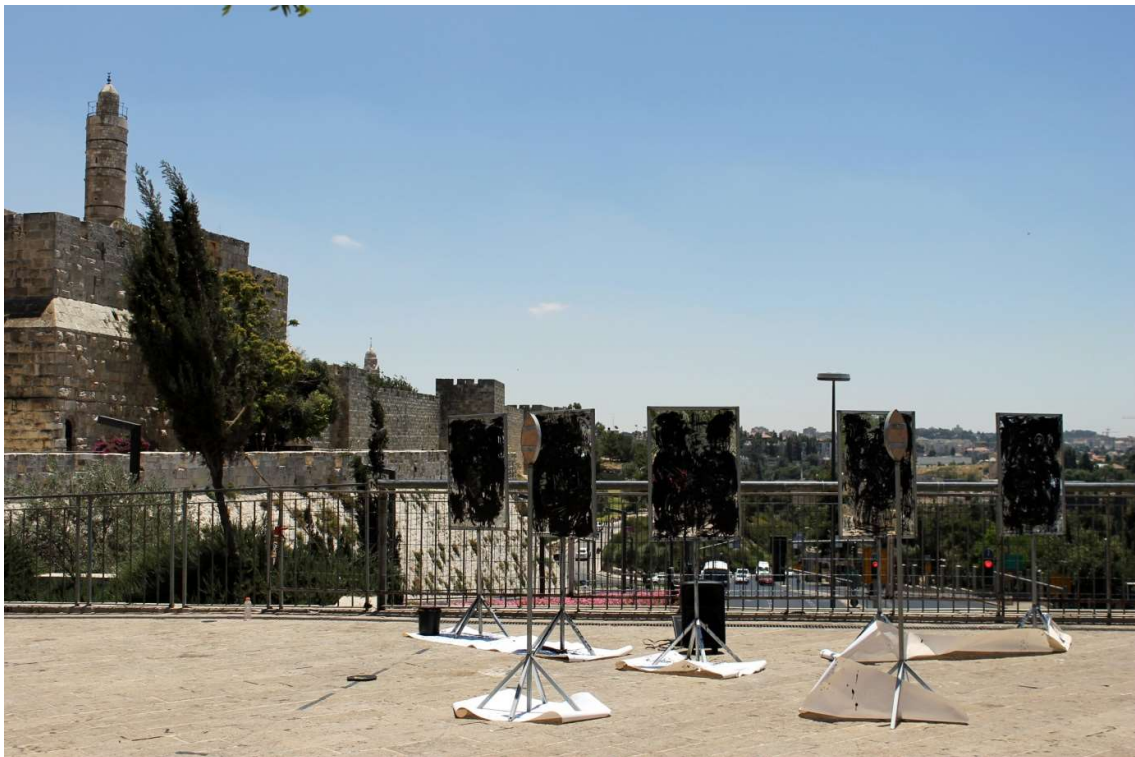
KIBUSH (occupation) is the third movement of this piece and is composed for a solo baritone. *KIBUSH* speaks about oppression from various angles. Firstly, it addresses the oppression of countries and people, and secondly, it evokes the feeling of being oppressed, whether by the armed forces or biased media coverage.

The lyrics for this part are taken from a sign written in 1967 after the Six-Day War between Israel and Egypt, Jordan and Syria:

Figure 25: 1967 sign against Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

כבוש גורר אחריו שלטון זר

שלטון זר גורר אחריו התנגדות

התנגדות גוררת אחריה דכוי

דכוי גורר אחריו טרור וטרור נגדי

קרבנות הטרור הם בדרך כלל אנשים חפים מפשע

החזקת השטחים הכבושים תהפוך אותנו לעם של רוצחים ונרצחים

The sign calls for an end to the Israeli policy of building settlements in Palestinian territories due to its link with retaliatory terrorist attacks. It translates as follows:

"Occupation drags with it/leads to (more like coerce in this context) foreign rule.

Foreign rule leads to resistance.

Resistance leads to oppression.

Oppression leads to terror and counter terror."

In order to clearly evoke the emotions of the oppressed in this part, the performer is asked to imagine being a human rights activist working for coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians. He should imagine being in pain after seeing his family and friends get hurt, while feeling ashamed of the retaliatory killings carried out by "his/her" people.

In addition, the performer, is asked to learn the Hebrew IPA for the piece, focusing mainly on the pronunciation of the letters ħ and ʕ which are pronounced very coarsely and stretched over an extended period of time. This represents the unpleasant, harmful and violent sound of choking and is a metaphor for what could happen if we do not control *Siná*.

Once the movement ends, it reaches back to samples from *Zehut*. Although the samples are replayed, they have become shorter and more lifeless than before, as if teetering on the brink of losing their brightness and positivity from the previous movement.

Figure 26: Mirror - 17'01''-18'10''

At around 20'50'', Zoubi finishes painting the mirrors, and leaves the performative space with the mirrors covered in black paint with some small remaining spaces representing thought and hope.

The result of this movement leads to *Hell*.

Hell, although it is the final movement of the composition, it is not my intention to convey a nihilistic view of the conflict, but it should serve as a warning of the consequences of blind hatred.

Hell has its own unique timbre, which intentionally differs from the other parts. It is composed for saxophones, gong, grand piano and electronics and is inspired by traumatic events from the second Intifada. [128]

The saxophones and gong represent the two sides of the conflict, as they stem from two different families of instruments. Yet, when played together they create a beautiful timbre of metal, which symbolises a utopian hope of resolution.

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[128] Second Intifada is also known as Al-Aqsa Intifada, took place between 2000-2005.

This hope notwithstanding, I thought that it was also important to feature sounds of pain and desperation, emotions that epitomised the second Intifada. These emotions are evoked by the whiny sound of the gong, which was created by scraping a rubber on its metal.

The grand piano was recorded mainly from within its body. This is a metaphor for the human heart and its ability to love. The pedal is pressed down for a significant length of time during this part to let the saxophones echo within the piano, as if these vastly different instruments were conversing with one another. To capture those moments of depth, I placed specialised microphones at targeted locations on the body of the piano.[129] This resulted in a very deep sound of bass, reverb and echo of the strings.

Moreover, the saxophones play motifs from the previous *Zehut* movement which have been processed in various ways ranging from simple retrogressions, to complete reinterpretation in a new compositional context. [130] This was not only a compositional decision, but also a metaphorical one. I hoped that by placing those motifs in a new context and sound world, I could create a new perspective on coexistence. As the part proceeds, the motifs become more abstract as a symbol of their acceptance and integration into the new perspective.

However, these elusive moments of freedom are interrupted by a sudden sine wave which is in complete opposition to the new sound world. As the piece progresses, these disruptions become more frequent as an analogy for the way in which blind hatred destroys life and freedom of thought.

Symmetry and power relations

In a chapter entitled "Power/Knowledge", Philip Barker analyses the role of power in the philosophy of Michel Foucault. He examines power relationships, suggesting that they are ubiquitous, complex, and defined by varying degrees of resistance between all those involved. Foucault claims that the role of power must involve a certain symmetry of action upon the action of others and suggests that power relations exist only if they are symmetrical. [131] According to this analysis, any act of force leads to asymmetry, which ultimately results in the oppression of one side. [132]

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[130] 2 x AKG4-14
[131] Barker, pp. 76-84.
[132] Barker, p. 81.

The use of non-violence can be examined with regard to Martin Luther King's struggle for equal rights. As one of the foremost proponents of non-violent resistance, Dr. King argued that *"nonviolence is the answer to the crucial political and moral questions of our time: the need for man to overcome oppression and violence without resorting to oppression and violence. Man must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love".* [133]

Mirror creates a symmetrical division of power as follows:

1. **Free choice:** "*Power necessarily involves the possibility of freely made choices*". [134] While the audience of *Mirror* does not deliberately choose to observe the street performance, the show does not proscribe any direct action or point of view and therefore, is not a forceful act. This idea was inspired by Gandhi's Salt March across various villages in India in 1930, from Ahmedabad to the coastal village of Dandi, in an effort to produce his own untaxed salt. Gandhi did not force his ideas on the residents of the villages, but still inspired many to think and act.

2. **Strategy:** "*Power relations serve...because they can be utilised in strategies*". [136] As previously discussed, the artist begins the performance within the crowd, which humanises her and balances power relations with the audience. In addition, placing the performance at Jaffa Gate infers a change in the psychological power of the surroundings on the audience, whereby they are transformed from an innocuous everyday space into a site of deep-seeded historical significance.

3. **Knowledge:** "*Power is only practiced with knowledge, knowledge is only practiced with power*". [137] By seeing themselves reflected together, and through a merging of musical styles, *Mirror* seeks to encourage audience members to reflect on how similar they are to one another.

4. **Dialogue:** *Symmetrical power relation is needed in order to open a dialogue*. [138] In the case of *Mirror*, visual symmetry creates visual interaction. The reflections of the audience members intertwine, creating a symmetry between reflected and physical reality. In addition, the show gathers people of multiple racial and religious backgrounds

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[133] Nobel Prize acceptance speech, Stockholm, Sweden, 1964
[134] Barker, p. 81.
[136] Barker, p. 78.
[137] Barker, p. 79.
[138] Barker, pp. 76-84.

to stand side-by-side for several minutes. During this time, their power relations are symmetrical.

Experiences of the performance

The Stanford prison experiment was a psychological experiment conducted in 1971 by Stanford University in the USA. The experiment aimed to investigate the brutality which was rising among real guards in the navy's prison system at the time, and whether it was due to inherent personality traits or the social consequence of working in the prison. 24 members of the public were randomly assigned to play the role of either a prison guard or inmate. The experiment was intended to run for two weeks, but was stopped after just six days due to the brutality of the prison guards toward the prisoners.[139]

The result shows that people quite dramatically conform to the social roles they are assigned, especially if it gives them power over others. As will be discussed, these traits were evident after the second performance of *Mirror.*

Mirror was performed at two very different locations in Israel in June 2015. It was performed first on an outdoor square next to Jaffa Gate in Jerusalem. On the second day, it was performed in Beit HaGefen gallery, a Jewish-Arab cultural centre in Haifa. The locations differ geographically, structurally and socially and provoked markedly different audience reactions.

Many passers-by glanced at the shattered glass while ignoring the sound so that they could continue with their day without being disturbed. That was interesting in that it seemed to reflect how glass shattering, aggressiveness and destruction have become an everyday event in Jerusalem. In addition to these intermittent audience members, however, the piece attracted five people who stayed for the full thirty minute performance. This led to a healthy and encouraging discussion around the need for further work of this type in the city.

The second performance took place in a closed gallery. The attendees were invited in advance via social media and knew what to expect as a result. One might think that this would have led to more interest, engagement and a positive outcome, but the opposite was the case. Several audience members had attended solely to voice their disdain for what they perceived as the 'leftist' politics of the performance. To compound matters, the after-show discussion organised

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[139] Craig Haney, Curtis Banks and Philip Zimbardo, 'A Study of Prisoners and Guards in a Simulated Prison', *Standford University*, Naval Research Review, 30 (1973), 4–17.

by the gallery was hijacked by people who expressed hateful opinions and cynicism about the prospects for peaceful coexistence. In a society in which politics is so strongly and oppressively ethnonationalist, moderate opinions encouraging peaceful coexistence represent a grave threat to the core ideologies of *both* sides of the conflict, often attracting more opprobrium than the opinions of the opposing side. The thought of being equal to the enemy is more horrifying than being attacked by them. Thus, those promoting peaceful coexistence are often branded as traitors.

Conclusion

This research resulted in some outcomes that I had not expected. To my surprise, some of the topics I dealt with were viewed by audience members, collaborators, performers and peers solely through the lens of controversy, rather than that of injustice. Pieces on subjects of women's rights such as *For Utopia no. 1*, *In the Lion's Den* and *Felicia's Requiem* were perceived with much encouragement by performers and audiences. Since they were perceived positively, they were performed many times, both due to performer's engagement with the pieces as well as due to the general 'popularity' of subjects of women's rights.

 On the contrary pieces that discussed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, *Skin Peeled*, *Hollow Memory*, *For the Lives of Our Children* and *Mirror*, had had many obstacles in recruiting performers, securing venues and attracting audiences. Positive reactions by crowd members and/or performers were limited and revealed a complete different, rigid approach in experiencing and perceiving them.

 Overall, I have learned that people are more prepared to stand together when a situation is universally and incontrovertibly regarded as unjust. Conversely, when the subject matter is deemed to be controversial, only the most passionate and committed collaborators and performers are willing to participate. Often, the psychological pressures of merely considering to partake in such projects are simply too great.

My work has reflected society's resistance in the face of change. It seems that each of my performances created a certain amount of distress to both the performers and the audience. That distress is a direct result of speaking out against the prevailing orthodoxy of each participant's social environment. Threading a line of moderation, acceptance and tolerance is surprisingly difficult in the face of highly a polarised media bombardment and unrelenting social pressure to conform. Thus, my experience has strengthened my conviction that there is a growing need to shake up and reassess our opinions on these issues with openness, compassion and understanding.

In the process, I witnessed the flourishing of the group of performers who worked on the *For Utopia* project and was astounded by their dedication, faith and empathy. We travelled and

performed *In the Lion's Den* in Ireland, England and Germany, covering our expenses independently with no external funding. We were united in our conviction about the importance of the message and the success of the project has inspired many in our group to continue pursuing political activism through their own projects. This was an unexpected outcome and one which I now feel is central to the success of my work. Gathering and inspiring other artists seems as important to me now as convincing the general public of the importance of our message.

This research has helped me understand the complexity of social and political affairs and has informed my growth as a political composer. I have developed a more nuanced understanding of the importance of clarity of message, simplicity, targeting, artistic collaboration, performance art and the role of the performer in political art.

My greatest benefit from composing and researching this project has been gleaned through experiencing first-hand the social risks, disappointments and rewards of political composition. While I cannot boast of any large-scale social influence — indeed, it is absurd to expect that in such a short time frame — I believe that by persisting with this process, I will ultimately contribute positively to the future evolution of my social environment. By continuing my political activism through art, I hope to inspire a stronger movement against oppression and injustice and that we can collectively harness our creativity to generate more awareness, consideration and empathy in our society.

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Appendix

The following reviews were selected from a questioner that was sent to several Irish individuals, with the intention of understanding the emotional effect these photos might have them. The discoveries have led to the selection of photos used in *For the Lives of Our Children*.

The questioner asks the following:

Please describe the emotion (if at all) that the photos below evoke in you, and/or if you felt provoked by them.

Appendix fig. 1:

Anonymous 1- Fear, need to escape.

Anonymous 2- Not really sure to be honest- wasn't sure what exactly is happening in the picture

Anonymous 3- Anticipation.

Anonymous 4- Hard to know what is happening – looks like the person in the headscarf is about to throw a grenade or a rock at the person in the striped tshirt/at the truck. Either way I have a

sense of impeding dread for the people who might be injured, including the person in the headscarf if someone suddenly turns on him (it looks like a male). I suppose it could be a spirited demonstrates of resistance and counterattack against a stronger adversary but I just feel awful that vulnerable people find or put themselves in situations where there is a grave risk their lives and health.

Appendix fig. 2:

Anonymous 1- These first two photos do provoke feelings of defensiveness in me more than the others because I can see people in the act of destroying something. I can't see their reasons or even their expressions just their act of violence. This gives me very little room to understand them or sympathise with them

Anonymous 2- What a waste. I hate waste.

Anonymous 4 - Amusement.

Anonymous 5- These actually look very like the pictures from Egypt 2012 which were called 'riots' (not revolution until later). Again I fear for the vulnerable figures facing the vehicles of a state authority. They don't look in real danger in this image (I presume if they were, they'd be running away) but I do think the position they have placed themselves in speaks to an

endangered position they might have in society. These look like the figures of young men. We know that young disenfranchised men are often found at the frontline of conflict and there are social reasons for their placement there – symptoms of their general precarity in life. They are expected to be angry – expected to fight. Of course struggle is important but where is the collective support in this photo? Where is the solidarity? Either they have broken away into an unsafe space for themselves and thereby endangered others in the struggle by not being tactical or they have been abandoned by those others. Neither scenario is positive and I don't feel uplifted by it. I worry about the violence these young men are conditioned to enact in their social groups, how that affects the people around them, particularly women and how it impacts on their own wellbeing. I worry that maybe they are relatively safe right now in this picture but they could be recognized later and beaten by police away from cameras.

Appendix fig. 3:

Anonymous 1- A picture like this, with the violence directly in front of my face, the biggest emotion I feel is fear. It is difficult to even look at the photo for a prolonged period of time because it feels like a direct threat.

Anonymous 2- Terror. Thank god I did not live through that.

Anonymous 3- Scared, felt uncomfortable at the gun pointing directly at me.

Anonymous 4- Sad

Anonymous 5- I grew up with pictures exactly like this on the news so I am desensitized to it to a certain extent. This is because I did not live in Northern Ireland, I lived far away from that conflict and so I never had to think about myself having a gun pointed at me like this and suffering a threat In any case I was raised Catholic. The balaclavas and old army jackets like these gunmen (there were always called 'men') are wearing were associated with IRA members who were also Catholic so I would not expect to find myself in their line of fire. Therefore in real life, coming from a rather nationalist area in the south of Ireland, I perhaps felt comforted by the relief that these guns were not the ones pointed at me. However in my nightmares as a child, it was always the IRA I was afraid would sneak into our house and shoot my father. That's because I didn't understand as a child how much the media was biased to make the IRA look far worse than the British Army or ULA – we did not understand as children about the social, economic and psychological abuse imposed on Catholic communities in the North. We only absorbed the sound bites out of context; 'gunmen', guns, bombs etc were always associated with the IRA. If I look again at the picture though, it is terrifying to stare into the barrel of that gun. Doubly so now that I am an adult and I know the person holding it was probably far younger, less mature, more impetuous and more angry than I am now, If I imagine myself behind the person holding that gun I feel really conflicted – part of me supports that struggle although another part utterly condemns the killings. I do feel there was courage as much as there was foolhardiness, toxicity and corruption. But that feeling makes me feel very naïve.

Anonymous 1- This photo makes me feel desperate than someone would step in to help this woman, and anger that the man in the background is doing nothing

Anonymous 2- Violence, defenceless woman attacked from behind. Anger.

Anonymous 3- Annoyed- That someone can treat another person like that and thinks its ok.

Anonymous 4 - Anger.

Anonymous 5- I feel very angry looking at this picture. The person being manhandled here appears to be a young male who is unarmed. There is a imbalance if not abuse of power here that is being sanctioned by a state authority represented by a British army officer in bullet-proof vest. The officer is not reacting to the treatment of the unarmed person so I guess that young man is a Catholic and that this is another example of exploitation by the army/agents of colonial power.

To my mind, the authority of the state this officer represents was not 100% legitimate and the way in which the Troubles were handled by the British government delegitimized that authority further. This picture represents exactly my impression of the Troubles; barbarism, inequality, terror and anger.

Anonymous 1- This photo makes me feel quite hopeless, in that the image behind the man seems so much bigger and more powerful than the man himself. This seems to say that the struggle of war and violence is a struggle that has almost overwhelmed the hope of people in their fight against it.

Anonymous 2- None. I vaguely know he was a leader of? Not sure of details.

Anonymous 3- don't really understand the pic, feel sorry for the solider though-he's obviously sad.

Anonymous 4- Nothing really

Anonymous 5- I can't tell if the person squatting is Israeli or Palestinian but because of he is beside this mural I presume it is in Palestine and that he must be Palestinian. He might be holding his head in his hands because he is tired, upset or dizzy (that looks like a bottle of water in his hand between his legs). Either way it makes me sigh because the Israeli-Palestinian conflict really seems never ending and worse still, it really feels to me that a disproportionate amount of sympathy is given to Israel due to global anti-Muslim sentiment.

Anonymous 1- Something like this makes me feel angry. I feel anger at the divide between the apparent peace of the houses in the background and the violence of the barbed wire, it makes me angry that people in the world are so divided because for some people violence and oppression are part of their everyday lives and other people are so unaware of these things. Also, it makes me angry that the beauty of the world, such as the blue sky you see in the picture , is overshadowed by people's suffering caused by War.

Anonymous 2- Sadness to live like that.

Anonymous 3- I feel lucky that I don't live in a place surrounded by a fence.

Anonymous 4- Nostalgia

Anonymous 5- This looks like a film still to me – not real. The houses look appealing in the sunshine so the presence of the barbed wire fence is especially chilling. My mind asks why do these houses hate? They face the fence so they are not afraid – they look down on what is behind the fence – they must hate it to keep it from them.

Because the houses are in sunshine and the fence is dark, it seems to me that the houses are on the outside – free and enjoying the sun, whereas darkness is behind the fence – entrapment and despair.

Appendix fig. 7:

Anonymous 1- The woman in this photo appears quite strong compared to the exploded building next to her. This photo for some reason gives me the sense that people are stronger than their circumstances should allow them to be, that people in desperate circumstances can defy all odds and remain strong.

Anonymous 2- Poor old lady, how her life as she knows it has changed.

Anonymous 3- I find this picture sad- it seems the wreckage doesn't really affect the people in the picture- maybe it is because they are so used to it?

Anonymous 4- Interesting/Interest

Anonymous 5- This picture speaks of resilience to me. We imagine older women in our society as particularly vulnerable. Yet here is one striding fearlessly past a demolished building. I suppose the people with shopping bags behind her checking out furniture that is presumably for sale seems to say that life goes on. Or that this happened a long time ago. Or maybe (less positive) that capitalism prevails. But it also makes me wonder about the ghosts of conflict that

she walks past – who inhabited that space as that building was destroyed? Are only older generations left? She doesn't seem troubled though so I guess I don't feel sad or remorseful.

Appendix fig. 8:

Anonymous 1- This photo makes me feel angry and sad that these people think raising their guns is somehow an act of bravery and strength when all it can lead to is loss.

Anonymous 2- Fear. I hate guns.

Anonymous 3- Don't really feel anything.

Anonymous 4- Dismissive.

Anonymous 5- Gun salutes to me are just displays of macho bullshit. The person may have died in conflict but I wish their family could be left alone to mourn without being dragged into the pride and drama of warfare. Maybe it's a solace to the family the person they have lost has her/his life marked in this way but I still think its macho and will never feel good. I really hate guns though so my reading of this image is tainted by this opinion.

Anonymous 1- This picture makes me feel a strong desire that life needs to be lived using a much gentler approach than we have, because it is so fragile.

Anonymous 2- Happiness to see beautiful and cute children but they are not smiling and devastation behind makes me sad.

Anonymous 3- Sad for the kids and feel lucky that i didn't ever experience that.

Anonymous 4- Sad.

Anonymous 5- Children are often photographed in conflict zones I guess to emphasis the destruction of innocence and threat to peace. I mostly feel that the purpose of pictures like these are to manipulate when used to illustrate political stories – mainly because of the things we presume children think and feel about conflict and how it might symbolize our inner child and yearning for peace, love and security. It doesn't stop people indoctrinating kids like these into their political beliefs though.

Anonymous 1- I'm not sure what I feel about this photo, other than seeing the irony in the mural.

Anonymous 2- Confusion.

Anonymous 3- Nothing- don't really understand IT

Anonymous 4- Hilarious! / Dismissive

Anonymous 5- I really hate these murals. Macho bullshit that glamorizes the stance and costumery of warfare whilst managing to threaten real life people and indoctrinate communities so that they can survive amongst the hate and power play.

Anonymous 1- This makes me feel admiration for people who continue on with their lives in spite of everything and sadness that they have to try so hard just to do ordinary things like walk down the street.

Anonymous 2- Empathy. Poor woman living like that.

Anonymous 3- Similarly to the picture above-feel shocked that the people in the picture aren't reacting more.

Anonymous 4- Admiration

Anonymous 5- This picture seems to demonstrate that fires are commonplace in this area as the woman is not startled or running. That alone is pretty shocking for someone like me who has never had to deal with this in my vicinity as a child.

Appendix fig. 12:

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Anonymous 1- This photo makes me feel embarrassed that people in big groups can stop thinking for themselves.

Anonymous 2- Not sure, are they celebrating or demonstrating?

Anonymous 3- kind of scares me I would hate to be there – these people are obviously passionate about something.

Anonymous 4- Hilarious!!! Great photo!!

Anonymous 5- Multiple (mainly) young males engaged in a demonstration of defiance. Even if I support their cause, I wonder about the lack of female presence here and what that reflects about the culture of this society.

Anonymous 1- I feel drawn to know more about this person's life. The house looks like a body that has been shattered. I feel regret than this is what we have made of the world.

Anonymous 2- I hate to see waste of anything, this suggests the building has been bombed, I feel sad. Poor kid.

Anonymous 3- Nothing really.

Anonymous 4- Nostalgia.

Anonymous 5- Loneliness and futility. So much destruction in aid of what?

Could there not have been a better way than this?

Anonymous 1- Looking at this picture I feel I can remember what it was like to be the age that girl is yet she is looking at something that will affect how she sees the world. I feel worry and terror that her look of confusion at what the man is doing will change in time to become one of hatred or both.

Anonymous 2- Surprised that the child is obviously used to this scenario. Even in war, kids are kids.

Anonymous 3- really like this picture. Showing good versus evil I think.

Anonymous 4- Grim.

Anonymous 5- I am curious about how much defiance is involved in this girls decision to go so close to this army officer. I am really intrigued by how the devil-may-care impression given off by her roller skates is belied by her cautious and kind of despondent stance. The life-threatening war game engaged in by these men is interrupting her game which is about enjoying life and being free. It's a very striking image. I think it actually says a lot about this man's vulnerability that he can be stared down by this young girl in this way. She has been allowed to come so close

to him. That makes me wonder if his humanity actually wants this contact. His head is inclined towards her even though his eyes are away as if he is listening for her. I imagine he feels pretty shit about himself holding a gun in her presence under the pretense of 'protecting' but really in defense of a bad system.

Appendix fig. 15:

Anonymous 1- This makes me feel pity and confusion and anger. I also feel with all of these pictures that I am very sheltered from so much of what happens in the world, I feel I am living in a different world, or more that all of these different worlds exist not just one.

Anonymous 2- Horror!! Is that a child? Man's inhumanity to man.

Anonymous 3- Feel angry and annoyed that someone could do that to a child
Anonymous 4- *Anger*

Anonymous 5- This is the worst picture in the lot, especially to follow the last one. I can nearly understand what would make an adult want to sacrifice herself or himself for her cause. I do not understand what would make an adult convince or allow the sacrifice of a child. I am horrified and disgusted if this interpretation is correct. Maybe though, this picture is just about posing like a martyr to gain some honour. I am still pretty horrified about bringing a child up to believe that sacrificing his or her life is preferable than any other aspiration or method of conflict resolution. I don't feel comfortable judging this woman's intentions like this, after all I don't know her pain or the ordeals she is faced with. I am jumping to a conclusion that she herself has been indoctrinated to believe that rearing a martyr is a positive thing and that her sorrow for the loss of this young person from her family/community will be in anyway recompensed by the way in which this struggle is conducted. I am also presuming that this has a lot to do with religious indoctrination which typically has less regard for the rights, entitlements and opportunities of women and children than it does for men who are, by and large, the main participants in warfare.