

# **THE WINSTON CHURCHILL MEMORIAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA**

**Report by Nicholas Bochner**

**2009 Churchill Fellow**

## **The Dame Roma Mitchell Churchill Fellowship to study the use of improvisation in the teaching of classical musicians**

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Signed Nicholas Bochner

Dated 10.06.10

# Index

<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Programme of study</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Creative approaches to music education used in the UK</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>David Dolan’s classical improvisation method of teaching</b>	<b>6</b>
<i>Philosophy and general principles</i>	
<i>Methods and techniques</i>	
<i>What students gain from Dolan’s teaching methods</i>	
<b>London Symphony Orchestra Education Program</b>	<b>11</b>
<i>Underpinning philosophy</i>	
<i>Range of activities</i>	
<i>A definition of the animateur</i>	
<i>Training of animateurs</i>	
<i>The role of the animateur in music education programs</i>	
<i>Richard McNicol and his development of the music animateur</i>	
<i>The animateur’s role in the LSO in four specific contexts</i>	
<i>The role of musicians in the LSO education program</i>	
<b>Guildhall Continuing Professional Development (CPD) workshop-leading composition weekends</b>	<b>15</b>
<i>Work covered at the CPD workshops</i>	
<i>Structure of the CPD workshops</i>	
<i>Results of workshop attendance</i>	
<b>The “CONNECT” project</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>21</b>

# Executive summary

Nicholas Bochner  
27 Wellington Street, West Footscray, VIC, 3012  
Assistant Principal Cello, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra  
Member of Resident Faculty, Australian National Academy of Music  
m: 0403 791 330

The Dame Roma Mitchell Churchill Fellowship to study the use of improvisation in the teaching of classical musicians.

The aim of my fellowship was to study improvisation in classical music teaching and explore the ways it could support and enhance innovative approaches to music education for professional musicians. The study consisted of three separate but related elements: observing Dr. David Dolan, Head of the Centre for Creative Performance & Classical Improvisation at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (GSMD), teaching improvisation and chamber music at the GSMD and at the Yehudi Menuhin School (YMS); observing the work of musicians and amateurs in the London Symphony Orchestra's education program, LSO Discovery; and undertaking two weekend-long workshops in workshop-leading run by the Guildhall School.

The highlights of my fellowship were:

- observing David Dolan's teaching in detail and gaining an insight into how he directs students on their journey of learning;
- meeting the people responsible for developing and delivering the LSO's iconic education program;
- coming to understand the role of the amateur in music education work;
- hearing wonderful performances by young people from diverse backgrounds;
- improvising with David Dolan.

My study led me to the conclusion that the vibrancy and ongoing relevance in society of the classical music sector is dependent on the ability of musicians to communicate through, and about, music. Orchestras and music colleges in Australia have much to learn from the creative approaches to teaching aspiring professionals and to engaging with the community at large that I saw in operation at the GSMD and the LSO Discovery Program. I have made ten recommendations that would lead to a strengthening of practice in these areas in Australia. Through my positions in the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and at the Australian National Academy of Music, I will actively seek implementation of these recommendations at these two institutions. Both organisations already have strengths in these areas, and are focussed on innovation and continuous development, and will be able to establish practices that can serve as a model for other Australian contexts.

# Introduction

The aim of my fellowship was to study improvisation in classical music teaching and explore the ways it could support and enhance innovative approaches to music education for professional musicians. The study consisted of three separate but related elements: observing Dr. David Dolan, Head of the Centre for Creative Performance & Classical Improvisation at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (GSMD), teaching improvisation and chamber music at the GSMD and at the Yehudi Menuhin School; observing the work of musicians and amateurs in the London Symphony Orchestra's education program; and undertaking two weekend-long workshops in workshop-leading run by the Guildhall School.

This project had its genesis in the period I spent in full-time study at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in the early 1990s where I undertook David Dolan's course *Interpretation through improvisation* for two years as a post-graduate student. Dolan is the only practitioner of this type of teaching that I am aware of. My work with him changed the course of my studies dramatically and ever since I have been interested in finding a way of incorporating some of his techniques into my own teaching.

During my time working in Melbourne Symphony Orchestra I have become aware of creative approaches to music education, and of a strong need for orchestras to pursue innovative techniques for community engagement. The London Symphony Orchestra is one of the world's leading orchestras and its education program, known as LSO Discovery, is at the forefront of creative community outreach and education work. In Australia, current training for performing musicians does not generally provide any basis for this type of innovation and I felt certain that there would be a great deal to learn from examining the practices of, and connections between, the GSMD and the LSO. I also felt that I would be well placed, through my position as a cellist with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, and as a member of the resident faculty of the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM) to make good use of any lessons learnt.

I am indebted to the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust of Australia for the invaluable support to undertake this study. I would also like to acknowledge the great work in support of the trust done by the late Dame Roma Mitchell whose memory this fellowship honours.

I would also like to thank David Dolan who gave me so much assistance in developing my program of study and who gave so generously of his time during my fellowship. I am also very grateful to Philip Flood, Head of LSO Discovery, and the Discovery team for their openness, generosity and assistance.

Finally, I would like to thank my family for being so supportive and understanding, and for sharing the journey with me.

# Programme of study

The bulk of my time from February 11 to March 29, 2010, was spent observing David Dolan teaching at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (GSMD). In addition I undertook the following activities:

## February 2010

- 9-10 Observed David Dolan teaching at Yehudi Menuhin School (YMS)  
Met with Nicholas Chisolm, Headmaster of Yehudi Menuhin School
- 12 Met with Stefan Popov, Cello Professor, GSMD  
Met with Philip Flood, Head of London Symphony Orchestra (LSO) Discovery
- 18 Attended Chamber Music recital at Wigmore Hall, Renaud and Gautier Capucon
- 20 Observed full day of rehearsal of Fusion Orchestra, an LSO Discovery  
community music ensemble. Met with Paul Griffiths, Animateur  
Attended concert of David Dolan (piano) and Berent Korfker (violin), Clare Hall,  
Cambridge
- 21 Attended community engagement programs at the National Gallery and the  
Southbank centre  
Attended performance of Fusion Orchestra at Barbican Centre
- 23 Met with Richard McNichol, Animateur
- 27-28 Attended GSMD Continuing Professional Development (CPD) weekend I,: Fraser  
Trainer, Sigrun Saeversdottir

## March 2010

- 6 Attended Family Saturday Morning, LSO St. Lukes  
Attended LSO creative music workshop, Barbican Centre "Do something Different"  
weekend
- 7 Attended LSO John Adams Discovery Day and LSO concert
- 8-9 Attended Carl Schachter lectures at GSMD
- 11 Observed David Dolan teaching at YMS
- 13-15 Met with Stan Dodds, violinist, Berlin Philharmonic, attended Berlin Philharmonic  
Orchestra concert in Berlin
- 17 Spoke with Sean Gregory, Director of Creative Learning for the GSMD and  
Barbican Centre
- 18 Attended lecture at GSMD given by John Rink, Professor of Musical Performance  
Studies, Cambridge University,
- 19 Lesson with Stefan Popov
- 21 Attended LSO family concert, Barbican centre
- 27-28 Attended GSMD CPD weekend II,: Paul Griffiths, Sigrun Saeversdottir
- 29 Individual playing session with David Dolan

# **Creative approaches to music education used in the UK**

## **David Dolan's classical improvisation method of teaching**

### **Philosophy and general principles**

Dolan's teaching is based on the idea of learning the various styles and forms of musical language from the inside, by means of what he refers to as "combining business and pleasure" i.e. fusing intuitive abilities, conscious, and unconscious knowledge. Since the decline of improvisation as a common practice amongst musicians, and the increase in emphasis on reliability and repeatability in performance, a great deal of a musician's practical training is based around mimicry and copying. Style and structure of music are generally taught as separate academic subjects and the task of integrating this knowledge into the practice of producing actual sound is often left up to the student. Frequently musical styles, particularly historical ones such as Classical and Baroque, are poorly understood by young musicians. The study and practice of improvisation provides a unique and valuable technique for examining, and properly understanding, the features of a musical style. Additionally, improvisational elements are integral to many styles of music, and those styles can only be rendered in a truly authentic manner when the performer is conversant with improvising in that style.

Dolan's approach to teaching is entirely practical and is based on the principle of guiding the student on a journey of discovery. The majority of the teaching is done with groups of four students and consists of a mixture of work with individuals and with various permutations of the whole group as Dolan deems necessary. The pace and structure of a session is guided largely by the needs of the specific students. Dolan never simply gives students information, but rather, through a series of questions, exercises, and inquiries, leads the students to discover the insights needed to progress in the study of improvisation.

Dolan's approach to teaching seeks to put students in touch with the considerable body of knowledge and understanding they naturally possess. This aspect of his work is based on a theory of learned and innate schemata that shape the production and perception of music (Dolan 2005). The study of improvisation works to open a direct channel of

communication between the instinctive, intuitive process of music-making and the thoughtful, planned aspects. That a musician should enjoy making music is fundamental to Dolan's approach. This enjoyment is not merely a by-product of good playing, but is an integral part, and Dolan frequently questions students about their level of enjoyment as part of assessing the progress of their work. Dolan also encourages students to shut down the judgmental, critical voice that stems from the ego, and to engage in the real-time experience of music-making on a purely musical level, assessing and directing their playing based entirely on the parameters of the music that is in progress in that moment.

## **Methods and techniques**

The following description of David Dolan's teaching is based entirely on my own observations during the course of my seven week fellowship and does not constitute a full exposition of his method of teaching. He clearly emphasised to me, both during the planning of my fellowship and while I was observing him, that the full course of his *Interpretation through improvisation* takes place over a two year period, and includes elements that I was unable to observe, such as work with drama students. This document represents a "snap shot" of the work that Dolan does and is not to be read as a "how-to" of teaching improvisation. The success of the methods and techniques set out below is dependent on the highly developed improvisational skills of the teacher using them.

## **Work with individuals**

### *Let's take a walk*

Dolan's sessions quite often start with the phrase, "Let's take a walk". Generally in this exercise Dolan agrees on a key with the student, but leaves other elements free. He begins to play, and invites the student to join after a short period, usually four bars or so. The aim of this exercise is to allow the student to explore the sensation of improvising, and to begin to bypass the criticising, judgmental voice that frequently interrupts any creative process. Dolan carefully tailors his improvisation to accommodate the level of the musician, often with some gentle challenges, but the aim here is to provide students with a positive experience of improvising, and to make them aware of an innate capacity to improvise.

### *Ping-pong*

Musical ping-pong is a starting point for a variety of exercises. As the name implies, Dolan initiates an exchange of phrases or half-phrases in a given style and key. According to the

student's level, the exercise can incorporate a small number of fixed length phrases, or go on to include longer phrases and modulations. The modulations can be either pre-determined or not, and can be simple (to dominant or relative major and back), or more complex. This exercise is a relatively simple way of introducing aspects of a given style of music. For example, it is a clear way of demonstrating symmetry, particularly in classical style, but works in other styles too. While Dolan usually initiates this exercise himself, he quite frequently hands over his role in the exercise to a student in the group.

### *Singing and Playing*

Singing and Playing is an excellent basic skill-developing exercise. In its simplest version, the student plays a diatonic scale, ascending then descending, whilst singing a contrapuntal line over the top. The goal is to feel the movement within the scale as a dynamic progression from one harmonic event to another, and for the improvised line to have clearly defined direction reflecting these progressions. As the student becomes comfortable and competent in singing over scales, progression can be made to playing a free bass line and singing a simple line over this, again aiming for a sense of coherent phrase structure and direction. When the student has mastered this, modulations are incorporated into the exercise. A further development is for the student to play two simple lines and sing a third that is between them, thus developing the capacity to hear inner parts.

### *Improvising a Baroque prelude*

The Baroque prelude provides a model for improvisation of a relatively simple, complete piece allowing students to practise combining elements from other exercises. In its simplest form the baroque prelude consists of five parts: establishment of key; modulation to close key (dominant or relative major/minor); chromatic modulation to a more distant key; strong re-establishment of main key using dominant pedal; closing cadential section. Each of these elements can be achieved with just a few bars of music and the whole prelude can be based on one very simple motivic element.

## **Work with groups**

### *Improvising a Classical minuet*

The Classical minuet is an excellent starting point for structuring improvisations in groups. The phrase structure is simple, clear, and symmetrical. The simplest form has four eight-bar phrases, with a modulation to the dominant in the third phrase, and a return to the

tonic in the fourth. This simple formula can be extended by adding further phrases with more complex modulations as desired. In this exercise two people improvise together. Frequently Dolan plays the first phrase and various pre-determined combinations of the student group play the following phrases.

### *Improvising Ternary and Rondo forms*

Larger scale forms are approached through working on ternary (ABA) and rondo (ABACA) forms with the whole group playing together. In this exercise a leader is nominated for each section of the music. The leader for the return of the A section is frequently not the same as the leader for the original section. The leader is invited to communicate to the other musicians important structural features of the music, such as when other players should start to play, and when the section as a whole has finished. This exercise can be conducted in any style, including tonally-free styles. The important elements are that the sections should be complete and extended, and include motivic development of ideas, and that the different sections should be clearly differentiated in character. Often the sections are in different predetermined keys, but the sections need not necessarily modulate.

### *Devising and using harmonic reductions*

A very important part of Dolan's work is based on devising "reductions" of an existing musical text. In devising a reduction, the underlying structure of a piece of music is revealed which will then form the basis for making interpretative decisions. A reduction is achieved by playing the minimum number of notes required to show the harmonic structure of a work. More than one reduction of a particular text is possible, each leading to a different interpretative path. A valuable exercise in both devising reductions and in being guided by them is to have two musicians simultaneously play the text and the reduction of the same piece. The student playing the reduction is the leader and is asked to make his or her interpretative intentions clear through performance of the reduction. This exercise can be undertaken with a wide variety of repertoire depending on the instruments involved. Where possible it is desirable to do this exercise with music by JS Bach for solo instruments. This exercise forms the basis of an extremely valuable approach to working on chamber music. The following exercises are also used in chamber music coaching.

### *Speaking the music*

This exercise is a way of exploring the directional nature of a phrase of music and its emotional narrative. Students are asked to speak the rhythm of the music using volume

and pitch to indicate direction of the phrase towards important points of emphasis. The exercise also reveals the relationship of musical articulation and utterance to the rhetorical arts. It is easier to reveal the similarity of a musical phrase to a spoken sentence when you transfer the musical phrase to the voice. Many students find this exercise difficult and confronting. Dolan reports that this exercise brings many students to very strong emotional experiences and its use by inexperienced practitioners is not recommended.

### *Musicians sitting back to back*

An essential skill for the successful improviser is the ability to take in as much information as possible from other performers. In fact, this is an essential skill for any performer who plays with any other musician. To have two students sit touching back to back on a piano stool while playing chamber music is an exercise that encourages students to be open to communications other than the obvious visual and auditory ones. In doing this, they become aware of cues such as breathing and the other player's physical sense of the movement of the music. It also encourages the students to communicate musical intention directly through attributes of the sound, such as intensity and vibrato, which in turn produces far more communicative playing.

### **What students gain from Dolan's teaching methods**

The study of improvisation in this way results in students:

- having a greater harmonic awareness;
- having a much deeper understanding of style and structure;
- learning to develop a real interpretation of a work from first principles;
- developing the capacity to communicate through music much more effectively;
- learning to deal with accidents and mistakes in performance much more robustly;
- having an enhanced sense of pleasure and emotional experience.

Some of these gains were observable in the course of just a few sessions over a period of a few weeks, while others were reported by students in informal discussions. I also experienced these results from my own earlier work as a student with David Dolan.

Improvisation is a unique tool in teaching classical music which allows students to work directly on skills and techniques that can otherwise only be addressed indirectly. It also encourages a musician to develop a relationship with music and with performance which will allow them to be flexible, creative, and innovative in the way they teach, perform, and communicate throughout their careers.

# **London Symphony Orchestra Education Program**

My observation of the LSO's education program was not intended to be a comprehensive overview of their very impressive and extensive program, but rather a look at what skills some of the activities require from musicians and how the training provided in the UK supports their success.

## **Underpinning philosophy**

The LSO's education program is built on some key principles:

- The quality of all LSO activities is to be of a standard commensurate with the reputation of the orchestra.
- All activities should, in some way, relate to, and support, the presentation of orchestral music.
- Activities are carefully tailored to specific populations. Extensive feedback is sought from all consumers and presenters of activities, through questionnaires
- the aim is to provide opportunities for continuing contact, with the products on offer providing the possibility for progression. Where progression is not possible, continued contact is.
- Where possible and appropriate the activities include a significant proportion of practical, creative interaction with audiences.

## **Range of activities**

The program includes: performances, ranging from chamber ensembles to full orchestra; creative workshops in a wide range of venues with diverse populations; masterclasses; pre-concert talks; and a number of ensembles open to a wide range of members of the community. The Discovery program is so extensive, well thought out and strongly connected to other institutions, both private and public, and to the community in general that it would itself be a valuable subject for a period of study. It is beyond the scope of this document to describe the whole program in detail. Further information can be found at the LSO's website: <http://lso.co.uk/getinvolved>.

## **A definition of the animateur**

The LSO education program makes extensive use of a group of music professionals known in the UK as animateurs. The animateurs I worked with were Paul Griffiths, Rachel Leach, Vanessa King, Sigrun Saeversdottir and Fraser Trainer. An animateur is "a practising artist, in any art form, who uses her/his skills, talents and personality to enable

others to compose, design, devise, create perform or engage with works of art of any kind". (Animarts 2003: 9). This is a title unknown in Australia in relation to musicians although the VCA offers courses in animateuring for drama and dance. I believe a significant part of the explanation for this is that improvisation is still an important part of the craft and training in these disciplines, whereas in classical music training, the roles of performer and creator are separated and specialised. While there are some people in Australia who have been trained through the UK system who are doing this type of work, a significant difference in the UK is that the number of people with this training is so much greater. This means the diversity of their backgrounds, specific skills and interests is much broader, making it easier to engage the most appropriate leader or presenter for a particular project.

### **Training of animateurs**

Many of the animateurs I met had undertaken the Masters in Leadership at the GSMD. This is a course that has no equivalent in Australia. The Guildhall's prospectus says that the course:

*...primarily provides a foundation for fundamental skills in creative collaboration, flexible performance and also communication/leadership skills. This includes a focus on improvisation; voice; body and percussion skills; exploration of non-European and folk-based approaches to arts practice; introduction to cross-arts collaboration; group composition; creative and repertoire-linked projects; performance and workshop-leading for different contexts. (2007)*

For others, such as Paul Griffiths, who comes from a jazz background, and Fraser Trainer, who is a composer, their training and work experience make them naturally suited to the collaborative, creative facilitation that animateuring involves.

### **The role of the animateur in music education programs**

The role of the animateur is very complex, and is realised in a different way in every situation s/he works in. The animateur works to facilitate an interaction between an artist and an audience which goes beyond the traditional (often passive) mode of consumption associated with that art form. An in-depth examination of animateuring in the UK is provided by the paper The Art of the Animateur: an investigation into the skills and insights required of artists to work effectively in schools and communities published by Animarts in 2003.

## **Richard McNicol and his development of the music animateur**

The original development of the concept of a musical animateur can be attributed to a great extent to Richard McNicol. While working as a professional flute player and member of the London Philharmonic during the 1970s, McNicol saw a need for music education to link with the world of professional music. He began pioneering work with orchestras and young people, forming the Apollo Trust in 1977, the aim of which was to bring professional orchestras into the field of education. While this was seen as radical in those days, thanks to such initiatives educational work is now accepted as central to the role of classical ensembles in the UK. McNicol developed and led the LSO Discovery education programme and conducted/introduced many of their education concerts. He held the position of Music Animateur to the London Symphony Orchestra from 1993-2006. In 2002 McNicol was invited to Berlin by Sir Simon Rattle to establish a similar type of program with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. He has published a large body of educational material for primary and secondary schools.

## **The animateur's role in the LSO in four specific contexts**

The two modes of practice in which I saw animateurs working were: as presenters of music, as in the LSO Discovery Day and the LSO family concert, and as co-creators of music, as in the creative workshops and the Fusion Orchestra.

Although the audiences for the Discovery Day and the family concert are very different, the basic principles on which the animateur works are the same: s/he seeks to communicate some real aspect of the music to the audience in a way that will engage and stimulate them, and deepen their understanding of the music. In order to achieve this the animateur must have a deep and detailed understanding of the music and also a very good understanding of how the particular non-specialist audience will best be able to relate to and explore that music. The animateur shapes a presentation with some sort of theme or direction of exploration, using musical examples, anecdotes, visual material and complete performances as necessary. Exactly how this is done depends on the audience, the repertoire and the venue.

In the creative workshops the aim of the sessions is to explore music by creating music. Generally the animateur will give shape to the sessions by having a theme or a starting point to work from. These starting points will often be conceptual, such as the idea of describing an aeroplane flight, but often the animateur will also have some musical starting

points in mind too, such as a particular rhythm or a set of notes or mode on which to build a piece.

In the creative workshop for the *Barbican Do Something Different Weekend* that I attended, the participants ranged from young children with basic instrumental skills to young adults with no apparent musical training. Rachel Leach, an LSO amateur, assisted by three LSO musicians, developed a simple, effective piece of music very quickly. She began by asking people to think of a phrase associated with flight that could be spoken over a regular pulse. She then chose three of the phrases and divided the larger group into three smaller groups. Each small group had an LSO musician working with it, and was set the task of developing a small section of music based on the rhythm of the phrase, using the instruments available. Leach then heard each of the sections, made some adjustments and made an arrangement of the piece, by determining the order in which the sections would be heard, and when some sections would be concurrent or overlap. The end result was a performance of something that was recognised by all participants as an effective piece of music.

The Fusion Orchestra, led by Paul Griffiths, is made up of 10-18 year-olds who meet regularly and is open to musicians of all levels and instruments. All the music they perform is created by the participants. In the work I saw them prepare and present, the theme related to the work the LSO was presenting at the time, which was music by Philip Glass inspired by the photography of Frans Lanting. In the case of the Fusion Orchestra the work method is based on the same principles of collaborative creation as above but, because the ensemble has been working together for some time, with some members attending for many years, the process is far more sophisticated. In the workshop I saw, they were largely rehearsing, fine-tuning and arranging sections of music they had developed in the preceding weeks. They reviewed sections of music, making adjustments where necessary and rehearsed them in the same way any ensemble would to ensure the music they had created would sound its best. The final arrangement of the sections was largely Paul Griffiths' decision but there was considerable input from some of the young people. The piece was approximately 15 minutes long and included many different sections, including some where members of the ensemble improvised solos. Paul Griffiths was assisted by four LSO musicians. The final work was performed in the Barbican Centre Foyer before the LSO concert and was very well received by the audience.

## **The role of musicians in the LSO education program**

In different contexts the LSO musicians are required to perform different roles. In situations where the animateur is presenting music, the musicians perform in a way that is much closer to their normal mode of concert presentation, although flexibility and a good grasp of how the animateur is working enhances the effectiveness of their performance. In creative work, however, the musicians take on a very different role and must be able to contribute to the creative process and assist the participants in contributing. They may also be called on to help solve specific instrumental problems and to lead small groups in developing sections of music where the animateur has chosen to divide the group for particular tasks. In this situation, some capacity for improvisation is essential and it is for this reason that not all orchestral musicians are comfortable taking part in this kind of work.

## **Guildhall Continuing Professional Development (CPD) workshop-leading composition weekends**

The Guildhall School of Music offers a number of continuing professional development courses of which Creative Music Workshop-Leading is one. The course is open to all musicians who wish to gain skills in workshop leading and collaborating with a variety of musical styles and cultures. Musicians (teachers, professionals and students) from all backgrounds are welcome to apply.

The CPD course offers modules that cover workshop leading, group composition, creative collaboration, improvisation, and vocal and percussion skills. At the end of the course participants also have the opportunity to try out these skills in a creative music project with the Guildhall Connect Ensemble, Urban Sounds.

I was able to attend the two composition modules, which were each run over a weekend, one at the end of February and one at the end of March.

### **Work covered at the CPD workshops**

The weekends were an excellent chance to get a more in-depth look at the philosophy and techniques behind creative-based education and community work. During the course of the two weekends the sessions were led by three different animateurs. Fraser Trainer, Sigrun Saeversdottir, and Paul Griffiths demonstrated a range of approaches and techniques. Creative workshop techniques were used for teaching, with each half-day of the course mirroring the progress of a creative session. Using creative workshop techniques to teach creative workshop techniques strongly reinforced the content and

allowed for rapid assimilation of new information. Time for discussion and questions was allowed for at the end of each day.

## **Structure of the CPD workshops**

The basic structure of creative sessions is generally the same, with elements of the structure being varied in style and importance depending on the context. The main elements are:

**Warm up:** usually done in a circle, with a range of exercises to bring the energy of the group to an ideal level and to provide an opportunity to focus on co-operating, listening and responding.

**Introduction of musical ideas:** these are usually introduced seamlessly after the warm-up, often building on some element of it, and provide the basis for the creation of music.

**Instrumental skills:** instruments are introduced (these can be participant's own instruments or small percussion instruments provided). Ways of transferring the musical ideas to the instruments are explored.

**Improvising and creating collectively:** development of the existing material and new ideas are sought through participants playing together. This allows participants to find their own level, giving freedom to explore but not exposing anyone to particular scrutiny.

**Organising material:** the leader identifies which of the developed elements will be used in a final arrangement and makes adjustments as necessary, such as changing the length of a section, adding a shape to it, such as crescendo, or layering of parts.

**Rehearsing:** the piece as arranged is rehearsed to ensure everyone knows how it goes and feels comfortable playing right through.

**Performance:** the piece is performed. This can either be to an audience if one is available or, if not, the leader nominates a play-through as a performance and ensures that it feels like one. This is achieved mostly by ensuring silence before and after the play-through. Recording the performance also provides a valuable sense of end-point.

**Discussion and evaluation:** the group takes a few minutes at the end of the session to discuss and evaluate the process and the product, and give honest feedback about the experience.

## Results of workshop attendance

The composition weekends made it clear that the creative workshop approach is suitable for use in exploring a wide range of styles of music. They also made it very clear that in order to explore a style of music in this way, the workshop leader must have a very good understanding of how that style works, so that s/he can extract elements from it and introduce them through the standard workshop structure. A training in improvisation such as that provided by David Dolan's course at the GSMD develops exactly this type of understanding and would provide an excellent basis for musicians wishing to participate in, or lead, creative workshops.

## The "CONNECT" project

The Guildhall School website describes the CONNECT project:

*As its name implies, CONNECT is about making connections, putting people, organisations and cultures in touch with each other and enabling them to do better together what they would do less well alone. Through over twenty years of local, national and international collaborations with schools, colleges, communities and arts organisations, CONNECT has developed an artistic and educational identity that resonates with people from a wide range of backgrounds, ages and experience. Its inclusive approach embraces everything from classical to popular music, western and non-western genres, set repertoires, as well as new works created through collaborative workshops, often involving other arts disciplines.*

*The programme places an equal emphasis on process and performance for project leaders, professional musicians, students and community participants. As a result of this, CONNECT has established new forms of artistic leadership, creative processes and community development central to the training of young and professional musicians. It aims to break down the boundaries between musical genres, arts disciplines, 'specialists' and 'non-specialists', and open up an exploration of new musical languages and alternative mechanisms for instrumental teaching and learning. (2007)*

The Connect project philosophy underpins a great deal of the work done at the GSMD and has much in common with the philosophy that underpins the education program at the LSO. In practice, this means that programs can be presented by organisations collaboratively, sharing resources and staff. The co-operative, sharing, all-inclusive and outward looking approach that these organisations take in developing and delivering their programs greatly amplifies the value that the programs in isolation would have. The benefits of this collaborative approach are manifold:

- organisations operating in a similar geographical area and art form can avoid duplicating programs which would compete and split the audience;
- administrative resources can be shared;
- a very dynamic flow of ideas and sharing of experience results in training opportunities for a wide range of people;
- the effectively larger, more co-ordinated body gains greater public awareness and therefore provides greater opportunities for participation.

The collaborations extend to international ones and both Sean Gregory, Director of Creative Learning for the Guildhall School and Barbican Centre, and David Dolan indicated that there is a possibility that such a link could be formed between the Guildhall School, the Barbican Centre and a music college or perhaps even an orchestra in Australia. I believe this would provide valuable opportunities for the exchange of ideas and for assistance in developing programs of this type in Australia.

## Conclusions

As the course of my fellowship progressed I began to feel that much of the work I was seeing was profoundly connected. That connection can best be expressed by observing that striving for genuine communication and dialogue is the fundamental aim of all of it. The communication and dialogue is itself frequently in the form of music.

David Dolan's teaching and his work with improvisation encourages a musician to be in direct communication with a style of music. Dolan's work with groups develops communication skills between musicians in a way that can go far beyond traditional styles of teaching. This strengthening of communication between musician and music, and between members of a performing group, leads to a strengthening of communication between musician and audience. It also greatly enhances a musician's capacity to communicate about music to a wide range of people in a wide range of contexts.

The LSO Discovery program is so successful because for each activity on offer the program is very clear about exactly what it is communicating and to whom. All the amateurs and musicians employed in delivering the programs are skilled and passionate communicators about, and through, music.

The CPD workshop-leading course develops skills to engage in musical dialogue with the widest possible range of participants.

The GSMD and LSO are in effective communication with each other, with the GSMD aiming to provide the sorts of professional musicians that the industry needs, and with the LSO very effectively demonstrating the wide range of work that a classical orchestral musician can engage in.

While I only observed a small part of the musical landscape of London, which has three major music colleges, four large orchestras and countless small ensembles and individuals, I observed a very effectively operating system, in which the component parts were fulfilling their role whilst communicating with the other parts and the wider community. The system is self-sustaining, both because the internal relationships generate energy, and because the system generates significant output to its host society, which in turn attracts significant input. The result is a vibrant musical community that interacts with society at large.

An ability to interact with a larger part of the community will be vital to the continued viability of the orchestral and classical music sectors. The approaches to teaching aspiring professionals and to engaging with the community at large that I saw in operation at the GSMD and the LSO Discovery Program are not only successfully meeting the current needs of these sectors, but will also provide an excellent basis for flexibility and innovation in the future.

## **Recommendations**

Many of these recommendations are framed with reference to the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (MSO) and the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM) because it will be through my connection with these two organisations that I will seek to apply the lessons learned from this fellowship.

1. ANAM and similar institutions should seek to include some classical improvisation training in their course offerings.
2. ANAM and similar institutions should include some community engagement projects as part of course requirements.
3. ANAM and similar institutions should seek to establish a formal link with the Guildhall School and the Barbican Centre, allowing for teacher and student exchange and to provide for support in implementing 1 and 2.
4. Symphony Orchestras should introduce, or extend, interactive and creative community and education projects.

5. Symphony orchestras should realise the importance of the role of the amateur in creative education work and encourage an awareness and development of this profession in Australia.
6. Symphony orchestras should make creative education work a higher priority and provide opportunities for permanent members to undertake this type of work.
7. Symphony Orchestras should collaborate with tertiary training institutions in developing community outreach programs. This will ensure the training provided matches the needs of the industry.
8. ANAM and MSO should encourage Australian musicians to undertake training at the GSMD in the MMus-in-Leadership course.
9. MSO, in collaboration with tertiary training institutions, should explore the possibility of establishing local training equivalent to the GSMD's MMus-in-Leadership.
10. MSO should aim to become a centre of excellence in this region for education, community involvement and cross-institutional collaboration.

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