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Composers' reflections on the relevance of artistic doctoral education in Finland: From self-development towards knowledge exchange and knowledge creation

Introduction

Today, Artistic Research (AR) can be seen as part of professional practice and education – a practice in its reflective mode conducted to increase or deepen "knowing-in-practice", as Schön (1983) would put it. As such, AR has always existed in some form, often manifested as a combination of musicology, music historiography, or music analysis on the one hand, and practices such as performance and composition on the other (Kanno 2019). With music conservatories becoming more academised globally (e.g., Johansson & Georgii-Hemming, 2020), AR has become more widespread in higher music education institutions across Europe. Consequently, more and more education institutions in Finland are also coming to recognise AR as a disciplinary field, and offer courses and degrees in AR; yet, the recognition of its associated activities as research is lagging, or divides opinions at the least.

AR can be seen to involve the ongoing reflection that is expected to be part and parcel of expert practice. In music, becoming a reflective practitioner remains a challenge when working or studying in higher education institutions (e.g., Guillaumier 2016; Kruse-Weber & Sari 2019), as reflection still seems to be strongly linked to an individualistic, path-dependent act of following accepted tradition. This understanding of reflection is limited to master-apprentice relationships, and dilutes the aspect of learning within and as part of expert work (e.g., López-Íñiguez & Bennett 2020). Together with Argyris, Schön examined reflective learning in a variety of professions and coined the term "double-loop" learning as part of reflective practice in order to highlight how achieving high-level expertise is not simply based on "single-loop" learning around highly predictable activities, but requires "double-loop" learning that can *change the values that govern behaviour* (Argyris & Schön 1974, 19; italics added). In observing both individual and organisational learning in various professional fields, Argyris makes a surprising remark on how learning becomes more challenging the more advanced the professionals are:

> Highly skilled professionals are frequently very good at single-loop learning. After all, they have spent much of their lives acquiring academic credentials, mastering one or a number of intellectual disciplines, and applying those disciplines to solve real-world problems. But ironically, this very fact helps explain why professionals are often so bad at double-loop learning. Put simply, because many professionals are almost always successful at what they do, they rarely experience failure. And because they have rarely failed, they have never learned how to learn from failure. So whenever their single-loop learning strategies go wrong, they become defensive, screen out criticism, and put the "blame" on anyone and everyone but themselves. In short, their ability to learn shuts down precisely at the moment they need it the most. (Argyris 1991, 99.)

The examples Argyris cites are from business professional practices such as management consultancy, but his remark may apply to many highly skilled professionals, including music practitioners. Recent literature in professional education in music urges the music field "to develop a reflexive connection to wider social systems and societal environments, with all their attendant complexities" (Gaunt & Westerlund, 2021, xix). As Gaunt and Westerlund argue, "it is necessary to develop such an expanding understanding of professionalism in music that can inform professionals and higher education institutions about how professional practices can be articulated within societies reflecting more than one rationality" (ibid.).

Despite this call, higher music education does not sufficiently support aspiring musicians in experimenting and learning new things beyond "business as usual" because of the pressure under which they work, resulting in a tendency to stay within one's comfort zone (e.g., Westerlund & Gaunt, 2021). Indeed, professional training in music tends to focus on the final performance, in which single-loop learning and avoiding mistakes is the name of the game. This further reduces the tendency towards risk-taking and the willingness to create an experimental and learning mindset during musicians' professional education and professional career (e.g., López-Íñiguez & Bennett 2020).

Yet, this does not mean that music practitioners would not have an innate desire to develop and improve their art. They are motivated to pursue a career in their chosen artistic discipline and feel responsible for the quality of their practice: the motivation stems from a basic human impulse, the "desire to do the job well for its own sake" as Sennett puts it (2008, 9). Despite the inverse relationship between learning and expertise in the fields that require highly skilled professionals, as suggested by Argyris and Schön (1974), many music practitioners maintain a desire for constant improvement throughout their career, and they are interested in self-development as the core of their professional development. Such motivations and desires have led, for instance, to the decade-long Reflective Conservatoire project by the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, addressing diverse questions relating to the training and education of professional musicians, "combining macro perspectives looking out-

wards to changing forms of professional practice, their purpose, relevance, and implications for higher music education [–] with micro perspectives on pedagogies and their contribution to learning appropriate for the twenty-first century" (Gaunt & Westerlund, 2021, xix). In the same vein, artistic doctoral studies can thus be seen as an attempt to improve the doctoral candidates' ability to "do the job well for its own sake". However, it is not clear if it encourages double-loop learning – a change of values of any kind. Indeed, the recent internal evaluation of and report on research at Uniarts Helsinki in 2021–22 states that: "Where artistic research is recognised so far, its identification seems to lack clarity and accuracy. This leads to an untenable misapprehension of, generally, all professional development and, more specifically, doctoral study per se as artistic research." (Palonkorpi & Alatalo, 2022, 41.)

Hence, in this qualitative study we aim to explore the epistemological approach of contemporary composers in Finland towards Artistic Research (AR) and artistic doctoral education. The study is based on interviews of ten established composers, and aims to stir up discussions concerning AR and its doctoral level education by posing the question: How do contemporary composers in Finland conceive artistic doctoral studies and its relationship to composers' professional practice?

Background to the study

Professional self-development

For musicians, vocational education is fundamental to their development as artists. Musical excellence, as the ultimate goal of the training, is governed by the skills, competences, and aesthetics of the established industry, and its mode of learning and teaching is determined by those considered as "experts". While the learning material varies from beginner-friendly pamphlets and videos on "how to play a three-chord progression on the guitar" to technical and psychological approaches to achieve musical excellence (e.g., Williamon 2004), the teaching method is most typically represented by the master-apprentice model (e.g., Gaunt et al. 2021b). Yet, nearly all professional music practitioners are not only masters, but also teachers of themselves. The focussed articulation of a learner identity in a professional musician, as explored in López-Íñiguez and McPherson (2020, 2021), for example, exemplifies the nature of skill development observed from the dual perspective of expert performer and learner. Yet, such a process of professional development is usually left to the practitioners themselves, hence the term "self-development". Furthermore, this process often takes place at the post-education stage of life and takes on the character of life-long learning.

At the same time, vocational education in music aims at achieving the skill level needed to develop independent inquiry in today's changing environment. Trained

music professionals are expected to be equipped with skills that enable them to solve problems independently. For instance, the doctoral program in AR at the Queensland Conservatorium (Griffith University, Australia) has an entry requirement of a minimum five years of professional experience that is relevant to the research topic (Schippers et al. 2017). While it is not explicitly articulated as a requirement, a similar level of experience is also considered appropriate and necessary at the authors' home institution, the Sibelius Academy. The implication is clear. The hallmark of being a professional musician – having achieved a high level of skill expertise and the experience of independence, both tried and tested in the industry – is understood as a highly desirable qualification in AR.

However, taking into consideration that professional development in music often takes the form of self-development, further questions arise, such as: What is the difference between research and expert work? Can mere reflection as part of expert work be considered research? And, is all art ultimately research? Indeed, the abovementioned internal evaluation and report on research at Uniarts Helsinki raises a related and expanded question: while not all projects in professional development can be seen as research, but rather often fall into the category of deepening one's "knowing-in-practice" (Schön 1983), can professional development conducted by expert musicians as self-development ever be research, and under what conditions does it become recognised as such?

There are some general guidelines for what counts as research. One of the largest-scale research assessment exercises in the world, the Research Excellence Framework (REF) in the United Kingdom, defines research as follows:

> It [research] **includes** work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, culture, society, and to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction. It **excludes** routine testing and routine analysis of materials, components and processes such as for the maintenance of national standards, as distinct from the development of new analytical techniques. It also **excludes** the development of teaching materials that do not embody original research. (REF 2021 Guidance on submissions, 90; bold in the original.)

Consequently, the REF assesses all research in terms of originality, significance, and rigour; the criteria for research are only fulfilled to the extent that it satisfies the defined conditions. The definition implicitly differentiates between a demonstration of high levels of expertise as such and the new insights and innovations that are developed when using such expertise.

Skill expertise and incremental innovation

Similar to the REF definition, AR is also typically related to various understandings of innovation. The Oslo Manual, the foremost international and regularly updated source of guidelines on collecting and interpreting data on innovation activities in Europe, defines four types of innovation: product innovation, process innovation, marketing innovation, and organisational innovation (OECD 2021). The headline for their latest version of the Manual states that innovation goes far beyond the type of Research and Development (R&D hereinafter) known only in the confines of research labs, and extends to users, suppliers, and consumers in government, business, and non-profit organisations, across borders, across sectors, and across institutions (ibid.). The scope of innovation activity is very wide, and the means to implement innovation are likewise many and various.

It has been shown that vocational education plays a unique role in and makes a significant contribution to R&D (Toner 2010). Two types of innovation have been identified that could be respectively linked to the "double-loop" and "single-loop" learning described above (i.e., Argyris & Schön 1974): radical innovation, and incremental innovation. Radical innovations are often represented in blue-sky research concepts, being ambitious whilst also subject to uncertainty over both the course of invention and eventual impact. Incremental innovations, on the other hand, "involve endless minor modifications and improvements in existing products, each of which is of small significance but which, cumulatively, are of major significance" (Rosenberg 1994, 14–15, cited in Toner 2010). While the two types of innovation are obviously related (and there is considerable hybridity in between), a key implication of the prominence given to incrementalism today is that it displaces a linear model of innovation where change is assumed to flow from basic scientific research to applied research (Godin 2006). "Learning by doing" is recognised as the principal driver of incremental innovation in this approach, suggesting that the repetition of tasks leads to a gradual improvement in the efficiency of processes, and ultimately in performance. The importance of such processes has been recognised as central to practice-based learning (or production workers in industry) as a source of work-based learning (Vear 2022). Although there are some explicit focuses on skills and skills formation in innovation studies, "the importance of skills and skill formation is [only] implicit throughout the literature" (Tether et al. 2005, 73, cited in Toner 2010).

The presence of skill expertise and development is also implicit in AR in music whenever R&D is discussed. Nevertheless, it is unclear how advanced practical skills contribute to research beyond functioning as a specialist tool for research process and product (Kanno 2019). It seems that we are not yet at a point of clarity on the kind of research discourse through which musicians' skill expertise can contribute to innovation, and thereby AR.

AR in music: Persistent challenges

While AR can be pursued in every art form and genre, its emphasis on creativity and open exploration has been more enthusiastically taken up by visual artists, theatre and movement makers, and performance and sound artists. As exemplified by the number of publications on AR platforms (such as *Journal of Artistic Research*) and presentations in AR conferences (such as those by the Society for Artistic Research), AR in music has been embraced more extensively by global, folk, and popular music makers and songwriters, as well as digital media musicians. The definitions of AR presented a decade ago, for example by Coessens et al. (2010) and Borgdorff (2012), have not resonated as effectively as they might have among classical music practitioners. Three characteristic phenomena of AR in music function as setbacks in this respect: (1) the lack of elucidation on how skill expertise becomes engaged as research, as noted earlier; (2) the extensive philosophical or ideological orientation in much of AR, which appeals less to many music practitioners who identify skill expertise as the foremost critical component in their profession; and (3) when these two are combined and create arbitrariness in the research discourse. We will now explore these last two phenomena.

Chiantore (2017) observes how the ideological orientation in AR has become more pronounced in the 2010s, through writings by music scholars such as de Assis (2018) and Doğantan-Dack (2015). The current President of the Society for Artistic Research, Peters (2017) proposes an expansion of the term AR to include hitherto uncaptured aspects; his expanded horizons embrace activities "outside" artistic production, that is to say outside the realm of the artwork and outside the art market, to fully seize their knowledge potential for AR: "The domain of artistic research includes all artistically driven inquiries into means with which we enhance our *understanding* of the lifeworld, transforming ourselves on the way toward a better life" (ibid., 26; italics in the original). This more holistic and more abstract approach has also led to perceived arbitrariness or esotericism in some AR processes and outcomes. An article in the Times Higher Education written by Matthew (2021) illustrates this dilemma. He starts with a description of AR music performance as: "A man with a guitar takes to the stage and proceeds to deliver a 20-minute seemingly atonal performance – punctuated by reverberating pedal effects... inspired by Native American dance rituals. It certainly isn't mainstream music. But should it count as academic research?" The journalist then reports on the interviews with the executive personnel of the European League of Institutes in the Arts (ELIA) and the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC). He illustrates the difficulty by quoting them:

> The artistic process has to be described in such a way that the whole project is "useful for someone else", something that is "true of all research". This is far from

> easy[–] At least half of artistic projects were "not well done" [–] But the problem is that some sceptical art academics perceive all such performance-linked research as "bullshit". (Matthew 2021.)

The arbitrariness in AR discourse has also led the composer Croft (2015) to suggest that composition is not research. He argues that, even with aims, questions, methodology, and expected outcomes in place, composition is no more than a "research equivalent", because research discourse does not concern itself with aesthetics. The idea of composition as research, Croft argues, is "a category error":

> By reducing compositional quality and originality to forms of innovation amenable to the language of research, we completely lose sight of the former: the most radically original music for string quartet will be difficult if not impossible to describe in these terms, whereas the icecap-based internet improv[-isation] project [mentioned earlier], while having the kind of "originality" that can be documented and verified, may well yield music that is utterly conventional, or just not very good. Our concepts of musical value are grossly distorted by applying the wrong criteria. (Croft 2015; 10.)

Similar arguments have been made to evince that originality and novelty in composition does not equate and replace creative skill and imagination (see e.g., Stephens 2013), illuminating the complex relationships between creativity and originality.

Research approach

Empirical material and procedures

The purposive sample (Creswell 2009) in this study consists of ten bigenerational composers, both male and female, currently strongly linked to the Finnish music scene as professionals: half started their careers in the 1970's and 80's (five composers), and half entered the business more recently (five composers). The interviewed composers identify themselves as composers to the extent that they are all members of the Finnish Composers' Society. The interviewee selection focussed on art music (known as such) in Finland, and we are aware that this choice may have influenced our findings.

The semi-structured individual interviews (ranging from 60 to 90 minutes) were conducted by the three authors via Zoom, using the English language. Whilst most questions, and the interview as a whole, focused on the participants' career landmarks, learning pathways, and composer education in general (see Westerlund & López-Íñiguez 2022), the last question dealt with professional education in relation to AR, and in particular the artistic doctoral studies offered at the Sibelius Academy.

It should be noted that the interviewees were prepared to talk about their personal careers and professional education, and did not necessarily consider artistic doctoral education and AR as part of this picture. This also affected the relatively small size of the material in this study. Given that the degree and extent of familiarity with AR varied greatly from one participant to another, the following interview questions served as a starter to prompt the participants to describe how they see AR and artistic doctoral education:

- What do you think of AR education in relation to composers' professional practice?
- What do you think about the artistic doctoral studies for composers at the Sibelius Academy? Do you see it as relevant for composers and their practice?
- Which functions may or can AR serve in the future?

In this study, the material generated through these questions is analysed relative to the personal stories of the interviewees. As a whole, the analysis serves as a prompt for our wider reflection on the epistemological aspects of artistic doctoral education.

Analysis method

We analysed the material by using qualitative thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006, 222), in which the themes were actively developed around the research questions. In the iterative and formative process of the analysis, the material was first organised under the themes and patterns that the interviewees raised when discussing artistic doctoral education and AR (Ravitch & Mittenfelner Carl 2016, 237). We then read the material concerning the focus of this study against the whole data assemblage on how composers talk about their professional practice and education in general, by searching for the boundaries of the phenomenon and specific discursive frames through contextualising. This stage involved triangulation against previous research on the topic using multiple perspectives "to make sense of, and challenge emerging learnings" (ibid., 228) from the material. In general, the reflexive analysis of the material is based on "dialogic engagement practice" (ibid., 201–202), in which both the interviewees and the researcher group consisted of both "insiders" and "outsiders" of the phenomenon at hand. Yet, the goal of the analysis is to provide an insight into "what the study participants actually say, how they say it, and from within which contexts they share particular thoughts or experiences" (ibid., 224). The insight is not taken as representing the current reality of artistic doctoral education or as defining the experience of AR, but rather as material for asking further

questions and inspiring discussion on artistic doctoral education in relation to professional practice.

Ethical statement

The study was reviewed by the Research Ethics Committee at the University of the Arts Helsinki, Finland. This research attends to the voluntary nature of participation, including the interviewees' right to discontinue their participation. The participants provided their written informed consent and were not compensated for their time. All participants were informed about the possible retention of data by Zoom, following Goberna Caride's (2021) recommendations to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of 27 April 2016 (GDPR).

Findings

Benefits and challenges of artistic doctoral studies for composers

The participants who had experience in artistic doctoral studies (either as teacher or student) were unanimous on the benefits of doctoral education as a provider of *time* for development as composers. One participant described the peril facing artistic education today, regarding the "time pressure" – the time constraints within which learning is expected to reach completion:

> I think at the Sibelius Academy one problem is – at least we are told by our deans – that there is no money, and the students should only do the courses absolutely necessary for graduating. And, of course, this is time pressure – if there is something wrong in the institution, and I think it goes for the whole University of the Arts, I think the strategy of the Finnish Government and the Ministry of Education has not worked out. Since we are staying in the same line with all the other universities, and should not to be seen as not the only, but kind of one, of the arts universities in Finland [–] if we could allow a little bit more time for our students to be still students, and not to have this pressure that they have to finish in five and half or two and half years [for the bachelor and master degrees] that would not be bad. I think that is still like the main thing. And if they could have a little bit more options added to compulsory things [–] of course, they have free choices for classes, but maybe they could study a bit more.

Another participant described being a composer as "a profession of thinking", which was further elaborated by another emphasising the significance of time-investment for this professional practice:

> What hasn't changed is, at least strictly speaking as a composer of art music [–] [is the] level of expertise that you gain through studies or then some kind of research, you have to seek some things, get the information [–] You have to invest some sort of time into this if you are going to make it as an art music composer.

The formal structure of doctoral education secures the time investment for composition, which was contrasted against the perceived lack of time provided in the current industry:

> It will be more and more difficult to find the time to invest in order to become a composer that can create music that will be listened to, that people will find valuable enough to listen to. Since they are aware that their time is so limited, and I want to do so many things in my life, this piece is 24 minutes long, so I don't have time.

At the same time, there remains a question of whether this need should be met in the form of doctoral level artistic education. The younger participants mentioned the constant search and applications for funding to gain the time to compose, by way of gaining working grants from foundations or study grants from educational institutions. Doctoral level education for composers can be seen as a means to gain time, and as such scepticism has also been levelled at the value of doctoral level education for composers.

Another benefit that emerged from the interviews about artistic education, including but not limited to the doctoral level, was the *supportive environment that higher music education institutions provide*. This is articulated against the shared understanding that the act of composing is a lonely, individualistic enterprise. Most of the participants revealed their appreciation of the social side of the institutional settings, of belonging to a community of like-minded people, as a relief from the intensively self-interrogative endeavour of composing.

The community also provides a space to share ideas and think together without professional pressure for individualistic competence or competition. The institutional framework secures space and time for experimentation in a safe environment which, as one of the participants points out, is crucial at the doctoral stage of development for artists:

> I am very happy that we have that [opportunity for development], because I think it offers excellent possibilities for the best students during their artistic growth. During this period there is the possibility to do and explore things that maybe they would not have the possibility to do during a normal everyday professional life.

When it comes to the benefits of artistic doctoral studies in terms of *curricular content and offerings*, the participants did not completely agree in their views. One composer considered the benefits of AR education to be limited, stating that "if scientists find AR irrelevant, that is not dangerous; but if artists find AR irrelevant,

then it is". This was also echoed by some other participants, who argue that the quality of learning and teaching in AR varies considerably. Other setbacks mentioned included: (1) a lack of ambition in some doctoral projects, (2) poor quality in teaching, and (3) the anxiety and doubt over how AR combines art and research. Yet, some of the participating composers noted that many higher music institutions now see a doctoral level degree as a desirable – if not essential – requirement for teaching posts. The pursuance of artistic education was considered, then, as the most pragmatic pathway through which to gain the degree.

Composition and AR

There appears to be a consensus among the participating composers that composition involves *inquiry* to some extent, as one of them described:

> If you think about what an artistic work is, I think it's actually a form of research too, writing a piece, for me anyway [–] but of course you don't have to prove anything, you just have to write a piece, which is hopefully good, but still the work in itself is, you know, choosing between, defining materials, and so on. And then trying to put together something that is as good as possible based on this work.

There was also an acknowledgement that composition has become dramatically *more accessible* on a societal scale over the last decades, in the sense that recent technology allows "anyone to compose music", and that this change has affected composition as a discipline. Given this fast-changing environment, they all agreed on the value of knowledge acquisition and exchange. One participant, who is currently pursuing a doctoral degree at Sibelius Academy, described her motivation in this way:

> I wanted to study more. And I thought that Uniarts [Helsinki] gave so many interesting courses, classes I wanted to join. That was one reason. And secondly, I wanted to have colleagues with whom I can talk about music, and we have this wonderful composition seminar [–]. And we talk about our music, our colleagues, and that is fantastic. We don't have that elsewhere.

However, at the same time there was doubt about whether composition is or should be AR. Some of the composers saw AR as artists' research, that is to say research conducted by artists with themselves at the centre of the discourse, rather than research in and through artistic practice. One participant described it as "performer's research". The views were divided on the *self-centredness*, as another participant put it:

> [–] if they have good subjects, it helps. What I get a little bit disturbed about, in the artistic research seen from a composer's perspective at Sibelius Academy,

> is that it should link so much to our [composers'] own artistic work and so on. Because, to put it bluntly, you might not be the most exciting person yourself for yourself all the time. You might learn very much more valuable things for your own identity for the future if you look elsewhere than yourself.

The *self-centred orientation* was seen as both positive and negative. While some participants observed that AR can help composers find "different ways of doing" composition that respond to each individual and circumstance, as well as "different tools for communicating" their art, others found AR seemingly too "open" (without a clear methodological framework) or pondered about the self-absorbed artistic introspection that sometimes passes as AR:

> And this is really like the complexity of what we are seeing too, with the younger generation that is really obsessed about me and myself and my own me and so on. I think when we are talking about artistic research and composers and so on, in one way Jennifer Walshe represents that age group who really have started to work with this sort of thing about – I mean she is not doing anything about herself on stage, but she is performing herself, she is doing these fictive personas that she is very much making ironical things about, and so on. But it seems to me that yes, artistic research too [–] this will become very exciting in the next ten, fifteen years in this sense, because then we will start to get these students who are basically obsessed about this self-presence, this medial presence, and so on. But is that really a discussion about writing the music, or is that a discussion about how to create this sort of thing, like a composer avatar who is twittering around in the clouds.

This participant also observed a link between the self-centred orientation trend in both composition and AR on the one hand, and *activism* on the other:

> I think the big questions are really [–] [related to] the role [artists play] in the sense that this is the end of the age of manifestos. The person who is writing a manifesto is always young and angry, and he tries to get a lot of attention. It used to be he, now it's not only he anymore but it's she too, so that's the good news. But all these manifestos, we know they are always a little bit tacky, and twenty years later on they try to say that "well I have become a little wiser, but you know at least I made a good splash". But I think this is really a sort of distressing thing that disturbs me very much, in the sense that this heightened presence of identity that becomes an avatar next to, in fact, what sort of music you are really writing. There are a lot of composers who are extremely [sensitive about it], and all composers say "we get back to this activist discussion" [because] they want to be very aware and societally aware. And they write all these pieces that give the illusion of that. And in reality, it's just music of course. But you have this enormous role of having to perform different additional identities, where there is really no real critique or discussion about whether that actually succeeds.

These findings also point towards a diversity among the views of those composers who choose to participate in AR. On the one hand, some composers undertake artistic doctoral studies for reasons of self-development and to have more time to develop their craft and artistic ideas, as bachelor and master level education does not provide enough time for them to engage in such reflective practices. This approach connects to a type of self-absorbed artistic introspection (closer to the direction of "single-loop" learning). On the other hand, the participants recognise the existence of other composers who connect with activist and societal issues through AR that reaches beyond personal inquiry (oriented towards "double-loop" learning). Furthermore, whether AR in composing can or cannot be considered research seems to be relevant for these participants, though no clear explanations are offered on what criteria could be used to assess this.

Discussion

Our study shows that professional art music composers make significant efforts to maintain their professional practice, which tends to be a lonely endeavour. When it comes to learning, they have a stronger desire for self-development than for any other goals (such as wanting to find employment or seeking financial reward). They seek financial support from educational institutions and art foundations primarily for the purpose of gaining time to compose music or to develop themselves and their ideas. The lack of time is an urgent issue for the younger participants. Further learning and self-development through doctoral studies has become increasingly important since the duration of basic studies in higher education has been shortened.

Their view of doctoral level education was mediated by the strong presence of "I", and artistic doctoral studies were seen to create a logical continuum for the students' previous vocational studies and career aspirations. Hence, the participants talked about doctoral studies not as a place for a boundary-breaking learning experience, but only for deepening what they were already doing. In this sense, artistic doctoral studies provides a platform for "single-loop" learning (Argyris 1991, 99), in which a high level of artistic expertise is applied to solve real-world problems defined by the discipline itself, rather than questioning some of the disciplinary foundations as occurs in "double-loop" learning. The notions of collaboration or group work in this educational path were seen to expand their professional practice in positive ways. Some of the composers were keen to develop ways to engage with societal issues as part of their work as composers, and some went so far as to calibrate compositions as a way to perform activism, indicating experimentation and a degree of "double-loop" learning as part of the research. The desire to be closer to society plays a part in the development of a composer's voice. Activism also relates deeply to identity politics (see also Westerlund, 2020). Although artistic doctoral education and AR are both

seen as suitable frameworks from which to explore and experiment with such novel ways to engage themselves with the world, no specific examples were given for such boundary-crossing AR that would question the status quo of prevalent practices. In this sense, the concurrent, parallel juggling between professional practice and artistic doctoral education was seen as an ideal condition, suggesting a model of education *in* the profession and discipline rather than that of education *for* the profession (Gaunt et al. 2021a).

There appears to be a consensus among the interviewees that composition is a kind of inquiry or research equivalent. The composers emphasised the importance of thinking, skill, and creativity in their profession, and they conducted research as a way to develop their practice as composers. While composition may be seen as requiring inquiry, the composers did not agree on the question of whether composition is AR. While the definition of AR as research in and through practice is accepted, AR was more often understood as research activities that are devised, processed, and performed by an artist, in this sense pointing more towards the professional status of the researcher than to the nature of the inquiry. As many of the participants considered that being a composer is about work production rather than performance production (Aguilar 2017), there appears to be some resistance to the body-centred or first-person nature of AR.

Moreover, artistic doctoral education was neither considered ground-breaking nor particularly challenging (not requiring "double-loop" learning), but rather as a continuation of the master's studies meant to stimulate students' personal growth as artists (a pragmatic opportunity to study more). The question remains, then, about the ways in which artistic doctoral projects qualify as research, whatever the kind of research it may be, considering that the achievements in master's level studies do not qualify as such. A subset of questions in this regard includes:

- Which factors in AR make it possible to undertake a self-development project at the doctoral level with a limited understanding of whom it is for, beyond the artistic researchers themselves and their interest-sharing peers?
- In which ways can the professional self-development of composers produce incremental innovations as part of artistic doctoral education and AR?
- What is the difference between inquiry as part of any expert work (e.g., medical doctors) and inquiry as part of activities counted as research?

Later conceptualisations of Schön and Argyris's view of the knowing and learning practitioner reveal the difference between being a reflective practitioner on the one hand, and on the other hand a reflexive transformative practitioner (Gale & Molla 2016) who is "committed to enquiry that contributes to change, not just new understanding" (ibid., 252). Such reflexivity goes beyond reflecting the existing practice – involving "double-loop" learning – by shaking up the taken-for-granted

mental models pertaining to professional education. Against this, it can be asked what the level of reflexivity might there be in artistic doctoral education for composers (and other music practitioners for that matter) in an environment that maintains the demarcation between artistic research and scientific research, of which practitioner research (as stemming from Schön and others) has long been accepted as a part.

Further considerations on knowledge creation in AR and artistic doctoral education

While not abandoning the goal of self-development, we rather suggest that self-development is an important agent that activates the line between education and research, which in turn represents varied forms and kinds of knowledge exchange and knowledge co-creation. Such self-development is not reserved only for AR, and is indeed the motivating fuel for all research. Self-development is undoubtedly a motivational engine that impels participation in knowledge exchange and knowledge creation in all research.

Importantly, however, this does not mean that research ought to be looked at from the perspective of the traditional understanding of learning as mere acquisition, or even participation (Paavola & Hakkarainen 2005). Figure 1 illustrates the three metaphors of learning proposed by Paavola and Hakkarainen, adapted for the current discussion. The acquisition metaphor of learning "relies on the idea that knowledge is a property of an individual mind; an individual is the basic unit of knowing and learning" (Paavola & Hakkarainen 2005, 537), typically observed in the field of the master-apprentice model in music education (e.g., Gaunt et al. 2021b; Westerlund, 2006). Paavola and Hakkarainen give an example of such learning in "the traditional cognitive approach that has highlighted the role of mental models or schemata in learning [–], often without recognizing the importance of environment or context at all" (ibid., 537).

An alternative model arises from the participation metaphor of learning, in which "learning is an interactive process of participating in various cultural practices and shared learning activities that structure and shape cognitive activity in many ways" (ibid., 538). Like the composers who saw the value of studying in a community and being recognised as a member of it, learning in this metaphor is seen as a process of "acquiring the skills to communicate and act according to its socially negotiated norms. The focus of the participation view is on activities, i.e. on 'knowing' and not so much on outcomes or products (i.e., on 'knowledge' in the traditional sense)" (ibid., 538).

However, Paavola and Hakkarainen argue that innovative research environments identify themselves through the perspective of knowledge *creation*. Learning is a

part of this, but innovation is too often evaluated not on the basis of learning, but rather on what the outcome of such learning is. The orientation towards the end-product as knowledge, as well as the self as the knowledge holder, characterises the first two approaches and marks a critical difference from the third, "trialogical" approach.

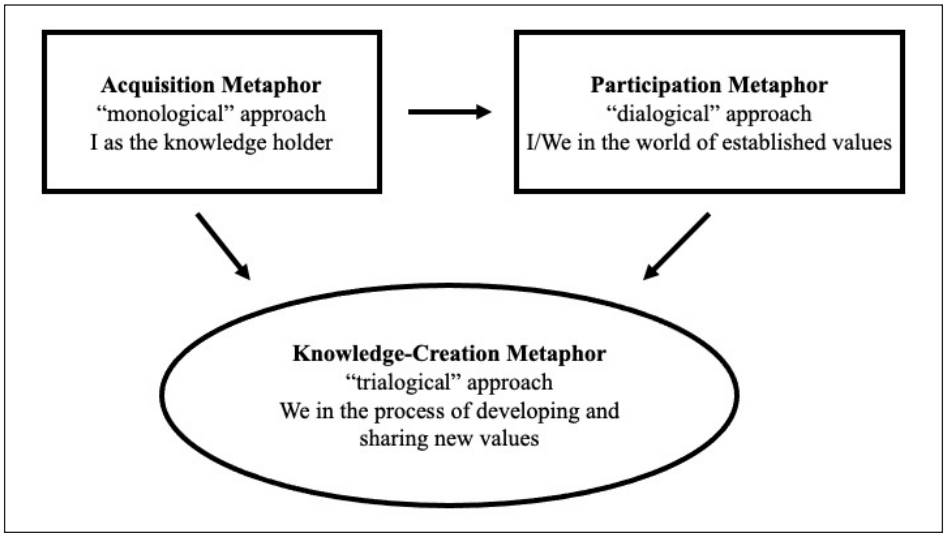

Figure 1: Three metaphors of learning, adapted from Paavola & Hakkarainen (2005, 539)

It is noteworthy that this is also the place where originality and individualism become confused, since not every personalised search is original solely by virtue of being individually specific and of value. Learning orientation does not necessarily mean a loss of individuality or end-product. Research in any discipline is not simply individual communication, but social communication meant to advance the discipline. We see evidence of this understanding in the learning outcomes of doctoral education, which include "the capacity to engage in constructive interaction in the arts community, in the academic community and in society" alongside "the capacity for generating new information" (Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts). The combination between societal interaction and originality implies innovation. Music contributes to the society at large – this is also at the very core of the learner identity model, which recognises the intra- and inter-psychological dimensions of being and becoming a professional learner in music (López-Íñiguez & McPherson 2020; 2021).

However, there is no clarity, in so far as the learning outcomes are concerned, on how a doctoral work might articulate a shift from a dialogical to a trialogical approach. Knowledge production is easily taken for knowledge creation in AR on the basis of the work being individualised (rather than original in the sense of in-

novation). This is not to deny the presence of knowledge creation taking place in artistic doctoral education or AR: rather, the field does not make a clear distinction between knowledge production and knowledge creation, nor articulate innovation as part of learning and collective effort. The reason might be that the path from the self to community (so that self-development becomes a community-development) is still unclear; and because it is still rare to see routes going beyond the established boundaries of the field (going beyond "dialogical" approach) in the face of emerging new societal needs (Westerlund & Gaunt 2021) – the difference between single- and double-loop learning.

While such boundary-breaking activities as part of research may require more complex, interdisciplinary theorisation, artistic doctoral education might be developed against Paavola and Hakkarainen's trialogical view of learning, in which self-development goes beyond knowledge acquisition by individual learners (a "monological" approach), beyond knowledge participation in social interaction (a "dialogical" approach), and reaches community-scale development that changes normative values (a "trialogical" approach) for innovation. As such, self-development within a "trialogical" approach becomes "a process of knowledge creation which concentrates on mediated processes where common objects of activity are developed collaboratively" (ibid., 535), in the sense that the knowledge-creating community is recognized by and yet also appraises the knowledge. The resonances between this view and those of the composers who saw the arts university as a social environment characterised by relevant communication may be worth considering further when discussing AR and artistic doctoral education, and when considering how trialogical learning as part of AR is manifested in the university context.

Furthermore, whereas it is commonly recognised in the humanities that research can enhance learning not just for the researcher and their community, but also for the research participants (e.g., action research), it is worthwhile asking how AR can continue to expand beyond the focus on the individual artist in order to encourage more varied learning and knowledge co-production. In the interviewed composers' own practices, this kind of shift can be identified in some of their deliberate attempts to distance themselves from the traditional role of a composer and situate themselves more towards working with various communities – not simply with professional musicians (Westerlund & López-Íñiguez, 2022). How this shift might be manifested, reflected, or verified in artistic doctoral education in music at large will require further exploration and discussion, to which it is hoped this work can contribute. This topic needs to be taken up on further fora in order to be collaboratively and proactively discussed by various partners in higher music institutions, and outside arts universities. Further towards this goal, two starting questions would undoubtedly be: How might the self-development of artist-researchers positively impact our troubled societies? And, what role(s) would doctoral education play in this process?

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