RESEARCH PAPER

Spaces of solace and world-building: A praxis-based approach to Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) outreach for equity and widening participation in higher education

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This article argues that Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) outreach can produce *relational dynamics* with the capability of disrupting contextual power relations to create spaces of solace and collective *world-building*. Using a Pedagogical Methodology, an academic, a practitioner-researcher and two university students develop a collective praxis to co-theorise the underlying social dynamics of various CAPA outreach practices. Focus groups led by the two student authors and conducted with other university students directly involved in recent outreach functioned as our primary formal method of data collection. The underlying, generative dynamics identified relate to the collaborative nature of CAPA practice, the way mentors/teachers as CAPA 'practitioners' carry embodied knowledge of practice, and the non-text-based character of much CAPA practice. These themes merge under the overarching theme of world-building in recognition of the ways arts-related education practice can transcend simplistic notions of 'creativity' to a more fundamental reminder that *we can create*. We acknowledge that the rich spaces this form of outreach can produce are also vulnerable to deep injuries of misrecognition and shame, and advocate for a pedagogy of creative care.

Keywords: creative and performing arts; music education; education outreach; world-building; praxis; widening participation

Introduction

This paper draws on a participatory methodological framework and a diverse theoretical foundation to investigate and theorise the structures, power relations and possibilities of Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) outreach practice from an Australian university (with a focus on music). Our work contains an ensemble of voices as we, the authors, take inspiration from the focus of the research to present a creative and collaborative performance of practice-enhanced research. The quartet – an academic, a practitioner-researcher and two Masters of Teaching students – worked together over twelve months to understand the dynamics circulating within the multiple contexts of our CAPA outreach practices. We did so by adopting a Pedagogical Methodology (Burke, Crozier, & Misiaszek, 2017) to build generative reflexivities in relation to ongoing connections with marginalised local school communities. Focus groups led by the two student authors and conducted with undergraduate university students directly involved in

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CAPA outreach were our primary formal method of data collection. We built our theories from a foundation of formally acquired data and our own experiences.

We attempted to cultivate a collective praxis of critical reflection-action and action-reflection, working always towards co-produced learnings with participants of outreach practices. We approached this task of achieving an investigative resonance mindful that a *generative instability* can be fruitful (Lumb & Roberts, 2017) when teams are attempting cycles of critical praxis that are intentionally open to messy, social supersystems (Lemke, 1995; Freire, 1970).

We argue that CAPA outreach holds the possibility of producing *relational dynamics* that can disrupt existing contextual power relations to create spaces of collective *world-building*. The dynamics, identified via themes emerging from our data, relate to the collaborative nature of CAPA practice, the way mentors/teachers as CAPA 'practitioners' (e.g. band members, dancers) carry embodied knowledge of practice, and the non-text-based character of much CAPA practice. These themes we merge under an overarching theme of world-building.

The concept of world-building comes from the work of Tia DeNora (2000; 2016) and is used here to embrace the creation of both individual and collective worlds. The immersive potential of music in particular and its power in relation to the self, body and the social are key contributors to world-building. Music provides an immersive experience through its envelopment of the body in sound and is a trigger for bodily and emotional responses. In CAPA workshops reflected on here, music underpinned aspects of dance, drama and production that school students explored. A key aspect of music, as sound, is that it is at once the medium of expression and the content. In other words, we create content using music and other materials (such as movement) within a sonic space that we bodily inhabit for the duration of the music. This is why it can be a place of solace, a virtual asylum, when matched with participants' musical and creative dispositions (DeNora, 2016; Ansdell, 2014, p. 46). We are careful to acknowledge that the rich spaces of solace and creation that music and CAPA can produce are also open to injuries of misrecognition and shame. For this reason, we advocate a pedagogy of creative care.

Before we move to explicate these themes and their implications, we feel it is important to provide access to the multiple contexts from which this text has emerged.

Background and context

Widening access to higher education has become an increasingly adopted policy and funding position across the globe, "addressed in many international contexts through policies and practices aimed at overcoming the barriers faced by students identified as coming from socially disadvantaged backgrounds" (Burke, 2017, p. 1). The discourses attending policy and practice in the field of equity and widening participation commonly construct individuals and communities using deficit frames and simplistic notions of barriers, positioning people to perform particular forms of aspiration (Burke, 2017). Research and practice in this field have remained largely atheoretical (Burke, 2012) and commonly there is a worrying assumption that activity understood as 'educational' can only have positive consequences (James, 2017). A resilient discourse operating in close proximity to the work universities do with local marginalised communities is the 'poverty of aspirations' that conflates material poverty with that of a 'lack of aspiration'. The authors of this paper reject this discourse and do not find that it represents their own experience of working in strong local Newcastle communities where experiences of education have not traditionally included familial histories of progression from compulsory to higher education.

The Bradley Review of Higher Education in Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008) led to the establishment in 2010 of the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP). A dimension of HEPPP aimed to "increase the total number of people from low SES backgrounds who access and participate in higher education through effective outreach and related activities with appropriate stakeholders" (Commonwealth of Australia, 2010, p. 16). There is a growing body of research and evaluation relating to Australian equity and access practice, much of which accepts the deficit construction of individuals and communities. There are, however, some significant examples that reject this deficit frame and work to highlight the ways in which development of the equity and widening participation field in Australia could be a much more nuanced and respectful process. A comprehensive review of the literature that works to broaden the sociological imagination in this way is the Equity Initiatives Framework or EIF commissioned by the government and produced by Bennett et al. (2015).

When we turn to consider the research on and evaluation of CAPA equity and widening participation outreach by universities, we find that it is scarce indeed in the Australian context. Felton, Vichie and Moore (2016) present a preliminary evaluation of a program of creative arts-based outreach developed by a Brisbane university, "to raise awareness and aspiration for university study among students from low-income backgrounds" (2016, p. 447). They argue, "arts-based and creative industries disciplines, with their emphasis on self-reflection, meaning-making and self-expression, have the capacity to provoke significant attitudinal change in students" (Felton et al., 2016, p. 448). Similarly, to the programs of CAPA outreach we investigate in Newcastle, the Brisbane university's engagement model includes the delivery of programs by student facilitators who, "from low-SES backgrounds themselves … provide an accessible role model for the school students" (Felton et al, 2016, p. 448). Felton et al. (2016) evaluate this program as a widening participation (WP) initiative offered by a creative arts-based faculty, using themes of creativity and trust.

The questions driving our research emerged from outreach experiences. Specifically, we are interested in approaches to outreach that build capability and familiarity with the Creative and Performing Arts, where access to conceptual and material resources has historically been difficult. We undertook the project with what we understood to be a critical lens, albeit accepting the limitations of our collective criticality and reflexivity, in the hope of contributing to the field a nuanced understanding of the social justice dilemmas – and possibilities – of equity and widening participation initiatives. The CAPA outreach we reference in this paper occurred in Newcastle, the Hunter Valley and Central Coast regions of NSW between 2012 and 2016. Many of the reflections from student mentors are of a large-scale creative project in 2015, which involved school students from years 9 and 10.[1] They were encouraged to be involved in the first workshops and then made their own decision about further commitment. With a long and rich Indigenous history, these regions underwent European development in the early nineteenth century as an area that promised abundant coal deposits. Coalmining became the Hunter region's primary industry through the 1800s and into the 20th Century, yet many mines are now either closed or operating at a reduced level of employment, which has led to widespread intergenerational unemployment. School communities participating in CAPA outreach activity are mostly situated in towns that formed near mining activity, now classified as 'low SES' (socioeconomic status) in a de-meaning discursive positioning.

Our personal backgrounds are shared here briefly as additional 'context' to our co-theorization. We came together as academics and students involved in CAPA outreach and, in the case of the

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[1] In Australia, high school involves six years of study from Year 7 through to Year 12.

two students, having successfully transitioned from regional public schools [2] into higher education.

Jessica Page has been involved in CAPA since a very young age, specifically dance and flute. As is typical in Newcastle public schools, she learnt flute at school, getting beginner lessons for six months and then learning through school band programs. She only received classical training on an individual basis when she undertook a Bachelor of Music. She is currently completing a Master of Teaching. She studied dance throughout high school and continues with her practice now, teaching and performing within various dance contexts.

Jarrod Wilton is from a mining town in the Hunter Valley and attended local state schools throughout his primary and secondary education years. In spite of a strong passion for music, he left school aged sixteen to take up an apprenticeship as an underground mechanical fitter. As soon as he completed his four years, he applied to university, as the first member of his family to do so. Moving to Newcastle, he continued to perform in various bands whilst studying, completing a Bachelor of Music in 2015. He is now studying a Master of Teaching.

Helen English was born in England. As a musician before moving to academia, she worked in music education and outreach, notably 1992–1993 for Opera 80's Education Unit in the UK. Since 2012 she has led outreach to low SES schools in the Newcastle region. An important feature of this outreach has been the involvement of university student mentors. Through this work and research into 19th Century communities in the same region, she has focussed on the idea of music as a resource for world-building. This interest feeds into the investigation of our outreach.

Matt Lumb is originally from the mid-north coast of NSW, Australia. His commitment to projects at the intersection of education, community development and social justice emerged through experiences as a community development professional, as a classroom teacher and as an equity outreach practitioner at the University of Newcastle. Matt has worked with each of the other authors to support formal and informal CAPA connections with local school communities for students from a range of backgrounds since 2011.

Having introduced ourselves and provided a brief treatment of our policy, funding and socio-historical context, we move now to detail how we came to be committed to this project, and the approach we used to compose new knowledge.

Methodology

The authors worked together over twelve months to develop a collective praxis (Freire, 1970) with the purpose of co-theorizing the underlying social dynamics of equity and widening participation outreach practice explicitly linked with the Creative and Performing Arts, with a focus on music. We adopted a Pedagogical Methodology (Burke et al., 2017) to guide the research design and activity, including the methods of data collection, the iterations of analysis and interpretation, and the writing processes.

'Student-as-researcher' is not a new or unique model. In the Australian education and social justice context, there are many examples (re)positioning students as producers of knowledge. For example, in their examination of students' transitions into university using students as

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[2] In Australia, there are two main types of schools: public schools (also known as government or state schools) and private schools, which include Catholic schools and independent schools.

researchers, Maunder, Cunliffe, Galvin, Mjali, and Rogers (2013) found that student-researchers are "able to establish a unique relationship with participants – challenging traditional researcher-participant dynamics" (p. 148). Riddle (2017) takes a more progressive perspective to engage the notion of the student voice and agency in an urban secondary music college by alerting us to the increasing suppression of alternative knowledges and ways of being. He advocates for a refusal space in which music becomes both method and means of creating knowledge as an alternative to language-based research. Informed by Deleuzian perspectives and seeking to develop 'post qualitative' approaches, Riddle (2017) here is challenging the ways in which we imagine notions of 'voice' and 'agency' to operate in educational (and research) contexts, troubling and extending possible conceptions of participation in these contexts.

Our own methodology, Pedagogical Methodology (PM), goes beyond historical approaches understood as participatory, and aims to, "cultivate spaces of praxis and critical reflexivity for 'research that makes a difference'" (Burke et al., 2017, p. 49). PM draws on post-structuralism and feminism, and specifically the work of Paulo Freire and Nancy Fraser, to create empathetic orientations toward more socially just realities. We selected PM to explore meaningful connections that mitigate power relations in spaces that "through the research processes, engage participants in pedagogical relations" (Burke et al., 2017, p. 52). PM is about parity of participation in research processes, and recognises the contributions that 'close-up' research can make to the equity and widening participation field (Clegg, Stevenson, & Burke, 2016). Our approach was also guided by a methodological framework for evaluation undergoing collective construction at the Centre of Excellence for Equity in Higher Education (CEEHE), based at the University of Newcastle, Australia (Burke & Lumb, 2017). This CEEHE framework builds on PM to bring into focus the stratified nature of our multiple social fields, facilitating a collective theorization of the dynamic forces that cannot be simply cast as variables in programmatic contexts, yet directly *produce* the impacts observed.

The methods we selected to collect data for analysis in this study accord with the chosen methodological framework: recording research team dialogue sessions, recording and transcribing two student-led focus groups, and reflective journaling by the research team.

Multiple sessions of dialogue were recorded and transcribed for reflection and analysis. These sessions were held to build a shared understanding of the intent of the research activity, to develop research questions, and to decide concrete next actions. A Freirean approach to dialogue was attempted as a process between equals, requiring trust and respect, care and commitment. We each engaged with *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, with a view to questioning what we knew and accepting that the dialogic process might make it possible for existing thoughts to shift and new knowledge to be created (Freire, 1970). Our regular connections attempted to reflect the methodological commitments of PM; for example, recognizing power relations, keeping in mind the difficulties and the importance of holding together the dimensions of "representation, redistribution and recognition" (Fraser, 2003) and considering our embodied subjectivities (McNay, 2008; Burke, 2012). Some of the affective, cognitive, practical and embodied dimensions of our co-participation in this challenging process can be glimpsed below in an excerpt from one of our many sessions of dialogue, where we attempted to develop a shared understanding of sociological terms, methodological commitments, and interpersonal dynamics.

> Jess: Even like just then you said "reflexivity" and I was like no idea what the word is but then you went straight on to explain it if that makes sense, that's a really good way of communication as well.

> Helen: I think another thing that we didn't mention that's really important is trust … Jess and Jarrod were already, they're in the roles … with us, and that's building on the relationship. We're not bringing in two people we don't know, do you think?

> Matt: Right, yeah, in terms of us being co-investigators rather than them being research participants?

> Helen: Yeah, but I mean trust is really important to this process of feeling comfortable and feeling valued, how do we get trust, it's what I'm saying: partly we already had a sense of trust because we've already been working together.

The primary method of formal data collection was two focus groups comprising university students who had participated in CAPA outreach projects over the past four years. Both focus groups were co-facilitated by Jess and Jarrod, the student co-authors of this paper. The first focus group consisted of four female and three male university students and the second consisted of one male and four female university students. In an attempt to limit the impact of power relations, research invitations were sent by a professional staff member independent of the research team, and we decided as a team that the student researchers should lead the focus groups. The two student researchers co-facilitated productive discussion toward developing understandings within the group of the following thematic areas in relation to their outreach experiences: students' own musical pathways and journeys, memorable or significant moments as musicians, and significant connections or impacts with students during CAPA outreach activities, including what had helped produce this significance. The focus group approach drew on guidelines by Finch and Lewis (2003) that helped to scaffold the university student co-authors to co-facilitate stages of focus group activity in relation to setting the scene, establishing ground rules, and making introductions; opening up a topic for discussion; facilitating a productive and balanced discussion; and pacing the closing of discussion in a way that values the contributions. The focus group transcriptions were read and re-read many times by the research team, with sessions held to discuss emergent themes. The data was then thematically coded and multiple sessions were held to decide on collectively valued themes for further analysis and interpretation.

Each author produced reflections on practice across the twelve months. These reflections became useful milestones of insight to guide theorization of outreach dynamics. Each member of the research team had been involved in various iterations of the CAPA outreach practice, and so these reflections were important in terms of capturing experiences that might align or misalign with those described by those positioned as the 'research participants'.

Discussion

In considering the themes that emerged from the focus groups, there was agreement across the team that an overarching focus would be on the connections between school students, as well as between school students and university mentors, that CAPA, and in particular music, fostered in outreach environments. The focus group discussions often touched on the ways in which connections made in CAPA workshops were different to those of the classroom. This became a collective focus of investigation as we looked more closely at the data and into our own experiences. We have settled on three main contributory strands, understood as underlying, generative dynamics (Burke & Lumb, 2017), that work together in programmatic contexts to enable connections which can disrupt disabling contextual power relations: (1) CAPA as collaboratory (2) the impact of teacher-practitioners (3) CAPA as a non-text form of communication.

CAPA as collaboratory creation

> CAPA … revolves around sharing and compromise and communicating ideas that are often very personal. So I think it is mostly about building connections, like, you know, everyone plays in a band, a lot of people do performance work, dance. I mean, you've just got to – you've got to synchronize with other people …. So I think, as a base it is about learning empathy and how to deal with other people and the creative process and experimentation within a group. (Male university student, Focus Group 1)

Outside the context of equity and WP, the value of collaborative music making as a model for productive relations has been noted by a range of scholars including Christopher Small (1998), Richard Sennett (2012) and Gary Ansdell (2014). In part, this is because of the listening and respect that such a collaborative process necessitates. Richard Sennett (2004; 2012) calls on examples of music making as models for societal collaboration, arguing that performances provide such a model because participants must set aside individual agendas to collaborate in recreating a musical work. Garry Ansdell (2014) also discusses how collective music making, "enacts and symbolises the overarching pattern of ideal relationships that we want and need in our personal and social lives" (p. 30).

Sennett (2012) further draws on the notion of collaborative music making as an example of what he describes as 'hard cooperation'. In hard cooperation individuals' voices are heard in a balanced whole where each contribution is negotiated. He likens this dialogic practice to a performance in which different musical lines emerge and then are reabsorbed into the sonic whole. While the end result may seem natural and easy, it has required compromise. Hard cooperation therefore is where there is benefit to all parties, in contrast to a situation where the musician blends in, "submerging his or her ego in a larger whole" (Sennett, 2012, p. 14). In productive collaborations there is give and take, listening and leading. This open, dialogic relation resonates with Elizabeth Ellsworth's (2009) concept of 'generative conversations' drawn upon by Dubin and Prins (2011) as they assemble the foundations of a *pedagogy of imagination*. Certainly, the university students in the focus groups spoke of CAPA as a place of imagination, tapping into something akin to Ellsworth's concept which she promotes as a non-linear and experimental co-exploration into alternatives, possibilities and impossibilities. This purposeful participation – 'learning in the making', acts of experimental co-creation, and acceptance that those participating are not yet finished – can be seen in the following quotation from a student who participated in one of the focus groups:

> I think the relevance of it is a lot more than what people would imagine. Because, like, everything in this room, for example, was thought up in someone's head. So they had to be, like, this table – tables didn't exist until someone thought of the idea; I'm going to get some wood, put it on two logs so I can sit stuff on it, which is creativity, right. So I think that CAPA's kind of just good for that, just people remembering that they can invent things and create new things, whatever that be. (Male university student, Focus Group 1)

Moreover, we argue that the 'creativity' the university student discusses above is more complex than the notion of working together to produce new song lyrics or dance steps. He seems to be moving further, toward a more fundamental need. He seeks to describe the way Creative and Performing Arts remind humans that they *can create*. This collaborative act momentarily resists the neoliberal tide of individuated education, the increasing commodification and marketization

of education experience – even if only for an hour – as social dynamics crescendo in concert with the contextual conditions to remind us what it is be human and hopeful.

> I think the issue with CAPA is, like, it's more qualitative than quantitative. So it's hard to put a price value on it. But, I mean, like, you know, we communicate humanity basically … It's just, like, who doesn't listen to music? Who's ever read something? Who's ever looked at an image? Like, people who say, like, "Oh, you know, whatever, the arts," it's, like, "Where … have you been?" (Male university student, Focus Group 1)

This reflexive practice pauses oppression. It facilitates a place of solace. It is in the co-creation of collaborative music making that Small (1998) identifies a ritual aspect, arguing that "rituals are used both as an act of affirmation of community ('This is who we are'), [and] as an act of exploration (to try on identities to see who we think we are)" (p. 95). In the space of music making or other Creative and Performing Arts where oppression can pause, there might be opportunities to discover something about ourselves. In considering CAPA outreach, this is important because many of the high school participants had limited opportunities for such creative collaborations.

In the high schools we worked with, school students were mainly self-taught, many referring to YouTube as their source of skills and basic chords. Their exposure to a range of genres and styles was limited, as was their compositional experience. Small's (1998) notion of exploring 'who we think we are' (rather than who we are) is therefore important to consider in outreach contexts where students are seeking to express their ideas within genres of their choosing. For instance, a group of students we worked with in one school where there was a tradition of band playing, chose to co-write a jazz piece, without previous experience of the style. Another small group that our mentors helped to facilitate chose to write a pop song with no experience of how to shape and then notate their ideas. In these instances of outreach, there was often hard cooperation when participants shared ideas and relinquished or took control as best served the creative process.

(Image of outreach workshop reproduced with permission of participating students within public school consent processes.)

During creative workshops we observed connections being formed between school students and mentors and between school students, both within and across school groupings such as classes.

> I was told by one of the teachers that that particular kid or – the particular kid who was doing everything who is really involving herself with the thing usually is quite shy and was amazed, I mean, the teacher was amazed to see her being involved and engaging so much with the process. (Male university student, Focus Group 1)

The act of sharing and co-creating in workshops is an important contributor to forming connections.

> I'm obviously very biased in this sense but most CAPA is often group learning. It revolves around sharing and compromise and communicating ideas that are often very personal. So I think it is mostly about building connections, like, you know, everyone plays in a band, a lot of people do performance work, dance. (Male university student, Focus Group 1)

> But I think having – pushing someone to – to share something from their own that's what makes them a better person because then everyone shares and then you understand everyone better and then you connect because you've shared something. (Female university student, Focus Group 1)

Working in creative ways and spaces, outside their usual learning environment, appeared transformational for many participants. In particular, working together on a long-term project with encouragement and support from university mentors, yet freedom to pursue their own ideas and to take responsibility, enabled individual and collective moments of achievement and pride. Living in communities experiencing entrenched unemployment and/or limited access to resources will likely influence a young person's sense of the future (Gale & Parker, 2015).

Our findings suggest that a contributory factor to the effectiveness of outreach workshops was their open-endedness and emphasis on collaborative experimentation. Students in the focus groups commented explicitly on this, linking a sense that 'success' often came from an openness to the unknown; a leap into the process of creation.

> You get good outcomes from having a more experimental space than a defined space. (Female university student, Focus Group 2)

> One important impact is allowing a creative space to be experimental. From my own experience, I feel that it's very important to be able to make mistakes and feel that you're always able to explore. (Female university student, Focus Group 2)

These comments point to the potential for supported experimental spaces to be sites of meaning-making where young people can get lost, and found, in a creativity that is both individual and shared. This sharing among 'equals' in dialogic experimentation, through an acceptance of our collective 'unfinishedness' (a concept on which Freire built many of his concepts), provides rich space for identity (re)formation in the context of educational experiences, capabilities and ongoing trajectories of participation.

In the section below, we move on from the notion of CAPA as collaboratory creation to discuss a related phenomenon; the ways in which outreach spaces appear fertile sites for recognition of 'the other'.

CAPA educators as practitioners

> In an arts subject you're talking to them, you're experimenting with their paintbrush, helping them. It's more of a friendship connection but also a mentor kind of thing. (Female university student, Focus Group 1)

'Parity of participation' is a notion central to the work of Nancy Fraser from whose three-dimensional conceptualization of social justice we have drawn inspiration for our ongoing praxis. Fraser (2003) promotes three R's – *Recognition, Representation* and *Redistribution* – as necessary for participatory parity; that is, social arrangements that would enable all to participate on an equal footing in social life.

In this section we identify the ways in which the Creative and Performing Arts are often pedagogically unique across classroom and outreach contexts in that 'the teacher' enters into dialogue with 'the students' with a shared understanding of the practices and meta-practices of creation and performance. In particular, we look at the ways those positioned as CAPA 'teachers' (e.g. university student mentors, classroom teachers, academics) are often creative or performing 'practitioners' themselves carrying embodied knowledge of practice (e.g. as a dancer, band member or visual artist). We argue here that this inter-subjective common ground builds potentially powerful territory for recognition, yet also raises the stakes in that the violence of misrecognition can be amplified.

Given our focus in this section on 'practice' and 'practitioners', we move now to draw on relevant works theorizing practice, in an attempt to avoid a superficial treatment of this relatively common concept. In the article 'Thinking with and beyond Bourdieu in widening higher education participation', Webb et al. (2017) review the ways in which Bourdieu's body of work has been deployed in widening participation contexts. In relation to questions of *practice*, Webb et al. (2017) investigate the ways that the theorization of practice is often reduced when drawing on Bourdieu's empirical designation of practice as opposed to theory or in as a 'series of performances' (p. 147), seeing two ways in which this overlooks important dimensions of practice. The first of these is the internal goods of a practice. The second is that practice can be understood as a "coordinated entity … temporally unfolding and spatially dispersed nexus of doings and sayings developed over time by groups of practitioners … engaged in that practice in specific sites" (Schatzki, 1996, cited in Webb et al., p. 148). It is this latter notion of practice (as composed of being, doing, relating and knowing) that we see in operation with the 'educator as practitioner' theme of this section. As Webb et al. (2017) identify, these understandings can build a powerful solidarity between those invested in a project. We interpret this set of strong relations as a productive pedagogical site, one where disabling power relations established by, for example, schooling structures, can be diminished.

Kemmis et al. (2014), deploy the notion of *practice architectures* to understand the way *social memories* that make practices possible reside not in the participants' stored memories but in the shared language used by people at a site, in the physicality of a location and in the activity structures of work and life. Below is an example from our focus group data where university students spoke of their own life experiences where CAPA projects facilitated pedagogical relation between people with common understandings and investments in creative practices.

> My current honours supervisor, you know, he's my friend. We've had sort of multiple meet ups in my studio where we sort of, we just simply sit around and show each other art works. (Male university student, Focus Group 1)

In our dialogue as a research team, the impact of teachers who are practitioners on connections with students was a recurring one. As Jarrod explains:

> Straight away knowing that someone is involved in art you already know subconsciously that they – they've put themselves out there. So straight away you already feel – I don't know it's this weird thing, you already feel like you kind of - you know that they've put themselves out and they're kind of vulnerable. (Co-author Jarrod, in recorded research team discussions)

The university students talked openly in focus groups about the complex inter-subjectivities developed in CAPA contexts, talk that connects back to the notion of CAPA as a place of solace, formed relationally as a space in educational contexts for existence and creation. In the passage below, a female university student discusses a CAPA teacher she valued during her own schooling:

> I came from a different school from Year 7 to Year 8, and that's the year when things start getting really hectic with personal circles and your own body, stuff like that. I had a really hard time with it and got suspended from school twice, which is not a thing I say proudly, and she was always there supporting me even though I was making trouble. She'd say 'No, you're not that sort of person. This is where you can go' and helping me to make music an outlet for that. (Female university student, Focus Group 2)

University students discussing their experiences in outreach contexts with young people used language relating to the body in connection with the affective, emotional and practical, and in ways that link the embodied inter-subjectivity to the possibility of recognition. In the passage below, a university student details a moment during outreach connection where the bodies of high school students involved seem to represent their experience of responding to a performance of vulnerability and open-ness by the university student 'mentor'.

> I had a moment with two students who were writing a song for a performance together. We were sitting by the piano. I can't really play the piano, and I admitted that to them … We worked on a piece that they'd already been working on but we expanded on it. I think the connection was, I felt like one of the girls loosened up quite a lot. She was initially quite nervous and didn't want to show me much of what she'd already done, and also didn't know where to take it next. I think in my experimentation and being confident and making mistakes showed her that it didn't matter. It loosened her up a lot and I think she felt empowered to go on then and expand on that. (Female university student, Focus Group 2)

A consideration of the way bodies and embodiment operate in the context of CAPA outreach practice is important for this investigation. McNay (2008) in *Against Recognition* builds on Fraser's notion of recognition in an attempt to move beyond what she see as a materialist reinterpretation of misrecognition as objectively verifiable status subordination. McNay (2008), following Bourdieu, uses the concept of *embodied habitus* to bring into the frame the risk and experience of deep, bodied injury that misrecognition can become. In this way, and with the related notion of *embodied subjectivity* (Burke, 2012), we have ways of attempting to understand the embodied experience of recognition and misrecognition in the context of outreach. The sets of strong relations developed by embodied knowledge of commonly valued CAPA practices can enable and disable in powerful ways. In the case of CAPA outreach, maintaining a critical gaze

on our own investigation, we make the argument here that the stakes are high given the rich nature of the connection. We do position ourselves as advocates for community connection built by creation and performance, yet we promote the importance of care and attention from those positioned as 'the knowers' when facilitating these forms of connection.

Music and other CAPA are non-text based
In this section, we expand on the ways CAPA, as facilitated by music, can enable spaces of solace from the prevailing educational structures and power relations. We do so by exploring how university students spoke about the non-text-based nature of their connections in school communities, within theoretical arguments about how music influences the body and emotions.

Music and its sounds can create an alternative world to that of spoken language. Music's uniqueness lies in the way we respond to sound – at once cognitive and somatic because we don't just hear sound, we vibrate with it. Sound is both inside and outside us because our experience of sound involves the body's resonators (Shepherd & Wicke, 1997). Music's effects as it touches us are motivational, as it stimulates motor responses, and affective, as its timbres elicit affective responses (Bunt, 1994).

> I've got something I want to add to that … I think everyone in the world can interact with a really simple bit of music. I think every single person can do that. If it's just clapping crotchets, everyone can do that … that's why I think music is pretty good for an outreach program, because everyone can get involved. (Male university student, Focus Group 2)

The rhythms and beat of music arouse the body – something we can latch onto (DeNora, 2000). This effect on the body when taken with our attunement to timbre gives music the power to draw people in. This aspect is important in outreach spaces, where music can be a tool to break through entrenched hopelessness. Music not only offers an alternative non-text-based means of communication but is also enticing as it elicits a bodily response, enabling movement and dance.

The creative space in which things are made, interpreted and revised is a space with distinct values and emphases. In such spaces, self-expression is a key element. Emotions, which we are often constrained to hide, are here crucial to the creative process. This valuing of expression together with the de-emphasis of text-based communication potentially breaks down some of the power relations and hierarchies that quickly emerge when there is textual dialogue; dialogue that is identifying through aspects such as accent, vocabulary and use of syntax (Burke & McManus, 2011). This was commented on in the second focus group:

> I think there is a different connect made, though, when you're not using words to connect. When you're just using sounds. It's more emotive and it comes from another space maybe. (Female university student, Focus Group 2)

This emphasis on a different way of communicating is a contributing factor in creating a safe space for students. There is an emphasis on embodied response, and learning is participatory, improvisatory and collaborative. Creating together, students' communication is often non-verbal, as they try things out, listening, imitating, adding and varying (Green, 2008).

In CAPA outreach activities, school students worked in small groups to compose soundscapes, songs and lyrics, and responses to music through movement. When a group is engaged in one of these activities – trying out, revising, abandoning and starting again – there is potentially a deep

engagement between participants. The power of music to express our emotions and represent identity-forming connections was seen in the school students' pride in their work. Several focus group members commented on the transcendental moment of the creation of a song:

> But I worked fairly closely with one of the groups who was writing a pop song. So they were given the task – they sort of wanted to do something like pop music, but they had absolutely no clue what to do and they did not think they could do it … Then when they eventually did it on the performance night … it was amazing to see that, you know, they'd created this song when they really didn't think they could do it. (Female university student, Focus Group 1)

> I remember working with two girls who wrote this song for their performance … After the performance they actually came here at the Con and they recorded their song and it was really good, like, I thought that was great that they'd done that because it made them feel like, oh, you know, we're actually good. (Female university student, Focus Group 1)

Connecting through non-text-based communication provides new learning possibilities for students who have disengaged from highly text-based learning. Our examples relate to music because of music's particular effect on our bodies and emotions, however, the same liberation is possible in art, dance and movement workshops; dance being linked closely to music.

> At a school we had that really diverse range of kids, like the ones who had danced and done all their music and stuff and the kids who hadn't. But we managed to get the kids who hadn't to actively take part and even take lead roles. Even though they were terrified of doing it they eventually ended up enjoying it. (Co-author Jess, in recorded research team discussions)

Connecting beyond 'the text' opens up a new social space for connection. Both DeNora and Ansdell discuss music as a resource for building social worlds, for the care of self and world-building through music's elicitation of emotions. The sense of world-building came through in the creative workshops where the self was at once invested and renewed through the creative process and the connections to one's own creativity and to others.

> I was so – I was identity freaked out, like – I'm an extremely emotional person, but I just never had … an outlet that was acceptable apart from anger. Creativity sort of just, like, switched my life around. It took a fair while but it just – it gave me a sense of empathy and … it just made me feel comfortable. (Male university student, Focus Group 1)

This production of new spaces – at once comfortable and creative – is a common theme that emerged from our focus group data and is supported by extant scholarship (see, for example, DeNora, 2016; 2000; Ansdell, 2014; Berger, 2002). Escaping the text-based 'world' of modern educational contexts was certainly discussed as a powerful pedagogical possibility in the context of CAPA outreach.

Final thoughts

The Creative and Performing Arts provoke the imagination. When conducted with care, this provocation can be liberating where young people who may not be regarded as 'successful' in other learning contexts emerge as eager participants and leaders. In the time and space of

discovery there can be a 'chaos of creativity', moving towards the emergence of coherence. The power of creative workshops to produce safe spaces of engagement and leadership was commented on in the first focus group:

> I think a lot of the kids in every school we've been to didn't believe they could do it … So when – I had the honour of sitting with those two girls and just looking at their song, which they didn't think was good enough at all; and I just said, "This is great". Yeah. (Female university student, Focus Group 1)

There are of course no guarantees. The description above of a CAPA outreach project stands in contrast to some focus group participants' reflections on an experience in songwriting in a school with an anxious music teacher. Participants who had been mentors were indignant and surprised by an experience that showed that CAPA spaces are not always safe spaces, and can indeed be as inhibiting as any other learning space:

> One of my similar memories is with this oligarchical teacher. So it was really interesting to see a change in both student and teacher. I remember sitting around and everyone was just bummed out. No one was, like, one of those days where we went out and there was - there was just no energy. We're, like, "Well, what the hell's going on here?" And we just - we sort of, like, brought everyone into a circle and then just started this sort of, like - we didn't even drive the thing. It was, like, we just sat there and, like, "What's - what's up guys?" And they just started talking. It was, like, a half an hour conversation about how the teacher was ruling everything and they just didn't feel any ownership. (Male university student, Focus Group 1)

This serves to remind us that for creative spaces to be safe there must be trust. There must be respect. There must be a reciprocity of care. We advocate for building CAPA-based connection that is attuned to the multiple layers of social inequality operating in our fields of practice.

In this paper, we have argued that Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) outreach holds the possibility of developing rich interpersonal connection that can disrupt existing contextual power relations to create spaces of solace and collective world-building. The dynamics we identified in our investigation were the collaborative nature of CAPA practice; the way mentors/teachers, as CAPA 'practitioners' carry embodied knowledge of practice, and the non-text-based character of much CAPA outreach practice. We do not promote that building programs of CAPA outreach assures anything in particular. In fact, we have identified ways in which the rich interpersonal space produces vulnerabilities that can be identity-shaping experiences of recognition or misrecognition.

We agree with Eisner's argument (2002, cited in Dubin & Prins, 2011) that the arts contribute to processes of education by reinforcing the importance of imagination. In 'Praxis and the Possible', Randall Everett Allsup (2003) compares Maxine Greene's (1982) understanding of art with Paulo Freire's perspective on praxis to identify the way praxis and art both seek to transform the commonplace via a form of aesthetic detachment. Allsup quotes Greene's explanation of what art demands, "a kind of distancing, an uncoupling from your practical interests … to see what we sometimes describe as the qualities of things, to make out contours, shapes, angles, even to hear sound as sound" (Greene, 1982, cited in Allsup, 2003, p. 159). While Bourdieu (2000) might argue that 'distance from necessity' is never entirely possible to achieve, our efforts strained in this direction and, in our dialogic encounters and 'imagineering', we have theorised dynamics in action that lie beyond simplistic discourses of 'creativity', instead relating

to a more transcendental notion that the arts remind us that we can create. In the context of ongoing widening participation policymaking and practice in Australia, we would argue that this re/membering of the possibility (however difficult) of creating together diverse ways of practicing offers a helpful, sociologically imaginative perspective as the field matures.

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