

EXPANDED MUSIC

Creating moving image works via musical intuition and process

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Abstract

Moving image works made outside of mainstream narrative filmmaking practices engage in a rich variety of processes in realising their final form. Yet there remains a mystique around the artistic process behind this kind of work.

This study is an investigation into the creation of a variety of moving image works that arise from processes of musical intuition as opposed to those traditionally associated with film or video production. The research has progressed with the intention of producing actual moving image works via studio experimentation and a variety of creative engagement while also examining and writing about the theories behind them. In doing so my agenda here is to identify and work with specific musical processes and mobilize them for various aspects of moving image creation.

Coming from a background in music and morphing over time into a moving image practitioner I have intuitively used musical ideas to assist in all aspects of my work. Work by key scholars such as Bowman, reframe this intuitive process as emerging from a type of bodily knowledge. In producing the creative works for this Masters research project I have sought to interweave just such a corporeal awareness with an expansive understanding of rhythm as being the primary drivers of moving image creation. This combination has enabled me to draw attention to/highlight/uncover a variety of musical processes that have played a role in creating the wide range of moving image styles that are included as examples in the research project.

Ultimately the research project contributes to and expands the dialogue around the boundaries of cinema and music with implications for alternative ways of theorising film and cross-art practice while illuminating new (for the author) artistic directions to pursue.

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Navigating this Research

Expanded Music consists of a written thesis and an accompanying DVD.

With one exception, the DVD contains all original works. In navigating this research it is recommended that the reader begin with the text and then watch each of the works as they appear in the body of the thesis. A prompt in parenthesis will remind the reader of this.

Contents and durations of attached DVD

A Priest in the Family (2014) 33 min 07 sec

Role: Writer, co-producer, co-director, co-editor

Bridge (2013) 3 min 25 sec

Role: all creative roles

Father & Son (2002, excerpt. Audio Only) 1 min 19 sec

Role: composer, performer

Turbulence for Performance (2015) 7 min 35 sec

Role: all creative roles

Syndromes and a Century (2006, excerpt) 2 min 57 sec

Thai film directed by Apichatpong Weerasethakul

Homecoming (2014) 5 min 44 sec

Role: Writer, co-producer, co-director, co-editor

Turbulence (2015) 43 min 43 sec

Role: all creative roles except music/sound

Music for Sprockets (2015, work in progress) 2 min 46 sec

Role: all creative roles

List of Figures

Figure 1 Molly looks at herself in the mirror.....	31
Figure 2 Molly exits bathroom, view of church, sound of bells.....	31
Figure 3 A view of school kids playing.....	33
Figure 4 Frank enters (view from behind).....	34
Figure 5 Syndromes and a Century example 1.....	36
Figure 6 Syndromes and a Century example 2.....	36
Figure 7 Priest in the Family, B-Roll, Landscape 1.....	51
Figure 8 Priest in the Family, B-Roll, Landscape 2.....	51
Figure 9 Music for Sprockets, A.....	54
Figure 10 Music for Sprockets, B.....	55
Figure 11 Music for Sprockets, C.....	55
Figure 12 Music for Sprockets, D.....	56
Figure 13 Music for Sprockets, Rhythmic Structure.....	57

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgments	iii
Navigating this Research	iv
Contents and durations of attached DVD	iv
List of Figures	v
Introduction	1
Context of the Study	1
Problem Statement	4
Aim and Scope of the investigation	5
Overview of the Thesis	6
Chapter 1: Toward a Definition of Musical Intuition	8
Chapter 2: Expanding Music – When Music Practice Becomes Moving Image	13
<i>2.1 Expanded Cinema, Expanded Music</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>2.2 Expanded Music versus Visual Music</i>	<i>18</i>
Chapter 3: Musical Practice and Material Practice	21
<i>3.1 Medium Specificity: Purity & Indexical Truth</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>3.2 Politics of Resistance</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>3.3 Nostalgia or ‘Retromania’</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>3.4 The Music in Material Practice</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>3.5 Material Practice and Performance</i>	<i>27</i>
Chapter 4: A Priest in the Family - The Music in Writing	29
<i>4.1 Composition and narrative practice</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>4.2 Inversion and theme and variation</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>4.3 Intermodal Interpretations</i>	<i>35</i>
Chapter 5: Lights, Camera, Action:	38
Musical Performance and Film Production	38
<i>5.1 The Camera as Instrument</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>5.2 Actors and Crew as a Band/Ensemble</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>5.3 The Performance Moment – Setting Time Alight</i>	<i>41</i>
<i>5.4 Long takes and embodied rhythms</i>	<i>46</i>
Chapter 6: Post Production – Editing the film	48
<i>6.1 Rhythm and Composition – A Priest in the Family</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>6.2 Rhythm and Composition – Music for Sprockets</i>	<i>54</i>
<i>6.3 Rhythm and Composition – Turbulence</i>	<i>59</i>
Chapter 7 – Conclusion	60
<i>7.1 Research Summary: Motivation, Aims and Methods</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>7.2 Significance of the Study</i>	<i>61</i>
Reference List	63
Appendix 1: New Factual Storytelling Symposium – Program, April 10, University of Canberra	67
Appendix 2: Screenshot of email to actors	69

Introduction

Just over 10 years ago, while touring Brazil as composer and percussionist for Circus Oz, I accidentally made a film. I say ‘accidentally’ because my initial intention was solely to create the soundtrack. But, as it turned out, by the time the film was complete I had contributed to the image, completed the sound, written the script (voice over) and assisted with the editing.

The project was a collaboration with film artist Louise Curham. At one point during the collaboration Louise handed me a Super 8 camera and suggested I shoot some images while on tour. I agreed. I was puzzled initially by the camera and quite tentative in the beginning. The conceptual breakthrough came when I realised I could conceive of the camera as ‘instrument’ with boundaries to explore...just like percussion. Suddenly I was at home. The camera became familiar and I felt free to explore. The project progressed.¹

In the proceeding years I began to shoot more and play less. Each time I worked with moving image though I would intuitively draw on my musical experience to solve creative problems and generate material and ideas. However, it wasn’t until nearly the half way mark of this MCA, juggling as I was, my various passions and interest – music, analogue film, slow cinema, doco/drama, installation - that I became fully aware of the music through-line. With the benefit of hindsight it all seems so obvious and I wonder why it took me so long. In any case, *Expanded Music* began to take shape.

This thesis documents the research project, *Expanded Music: Creating moving image works via musical intuition and process*. It is an investigation into the creation of moving image works by what I refer to as musical intuition and process. The project seeks to illuminate these processes and posit some of the effects this has on filmic representation. By doing so I hope to interrogate accepted norms surrounding cinema, installation and the moving image while expanding on the definition and aims of a moving image work.

Context of the Study

Part of my task in *Expanded Music* is to locate the works produced in the broader context of music/film history and theory. My trajectory as an art maker has been from music, specifically a percussionist/composer, to a filmmaker working between both experimental and narrative

¹ This film ‘Tenho Saudades’ had a number of public screenings and was reviewed in Realtime 66.

modes. Consequently questions around cross-art practice or intermedia are central to the discussion.

In achieving this, the method has been to create, reflect, document and theorise, in no particular order and often overlapping. In that sense the creative practice I engage with is itself a form of research and the enterprise as a whole is best described as *practice-led research*. The idea that arts practice can itself be a form of research has been a growing notion in academic circles over the last two to three decades and it's worth taking a moment to clarify how I see this research fitting in to this field.

I'm using the term 'practice-led research' however I wish to emphasise that I see this research as overlapping at times with what's known as 'practice-based research'. Linda Candy, in her guide to practice based research defines the difference as follows:

1. If a creative artifact is the *basis* of the contribution to knowledge, the research is practice-based.
 2. If the research *leads* primarily to new understandings about practice, it is practice-led.
- (Candy, 2006)

Further to this, encompassed in this term I would also lay claim to the notion of its converse – what's known as *research-led practice*; where the scholarly research itself leads to further creative work. The enterprise as a whole has led to a number of instances of this the first of which occurred in a work titled *Bridge*,² (see track 2 on accompanying DVD), a short work made in September 2013 in response to the ideas coalescing around this research. As with all my moving image work the threads can be traced to musical thought and intuition but with this piece, it is the first time I've attempted to embed these concepts into the fabric of the work itself. The image component features hand processed black & white 8mm and 16mm footage. The sound track is 'found' sound of London's Tower Bridge opening and closing from inside one of the bascule chambers. Throughout the course of the work the sound transforms into the location sound of the rural images on screen. The hand processed images enable a dialogue with a tacit musical understanding, while the sound functions as a literal and metaphoric bridge between music and moving image. This argument is taken up in further detail in chapter 3. The sound is also undeniably 'musical', sounding like a cross

² Screened at Belconnen Art Centre October 2013 as part of 'Photochemical Games' a screening dedicated to artists who work with photochemical processes.

between an orchestra tuning and electronic ambience. Shots from a moving vehicle point to a journey (across a *bridge*) From here the work moves to a static, rural montage and finishes with a kind of pared back cinematic artifice in full play, that is, a separate location sound recording matched with an image recorded without sync sound.

The notion of employing and transcribing an embodied musical knowledge to filmic representation is clearly not an exact science and there are of course dangers in attempting to pin this down. Italian writer Germano Celant, discussing Arte Povera, puts it this way, 'all definitions are contradictory. They create a frame where there shouldn't be one. Labels are therefore dreadful, they become odious the moment they are made' (2002). Nonetheless, the function of this thesis is to do just that, attempt to pin down and frame if not exactly label, the work of *Expanded Music*. In doing so I feel it's important at the outset to draw a distinction between this research and another well documented field known as *Visual Music* which usually refers to works that investigate the direct transformation of sound into image.

German academics Holger and Cornelia Lund, while acknowledging that there is no consensus as to a clear definition of the field, describe Visual Music as 'pursuing the basic objective of evenly balanced or equilibrated interplay between visual and acoustic components' (2009). The works and ideas behind this research are not aimed to this end. Rather this research investigates *processes* and *actions*, usually associated with making music, employed to create moving image works. If the resulting works have evenly balanced audio and visual components then this is by chance rather than design. However it is worthwhile holding some of the theoretical concerns of Visual Music in mind as we navigate this research because, like Visual Music, this research acknowledges that sound is inherent to the experience of the work. The synergies and differences between the field of Visual Music and this research will be looked at more closely in chapter 2.

Worth mentioning here also is the context of this research with respect to the history of my own practice. From my late teens I was pursuing music seriously as a percussionist. By my mid 20's and having finished my B.Mus. at the Victorian College of the Arts I was involved in a wide variety of musical endeavours including original bands playing everything from punk to jazz to Eastern European styles. During this time I was also an active member of Melbourne's flourishing improvised/experimental music scene while also playing and composing original music for theatre and dance contexts. My artistic, intellectual and creative formation is steeped in the pursuit of music and more specifically in musical experimentation.

This key fact is central to this research and my thesis argues that the shift to moving image remains in fact on a musical continuum rather than what at first glance may appear to be a severing of form followed by an uptake of another. In essence this research attempts to tease out this idea by looking in more depth at how this came about and what this might mean.

My musical development and approach combined classic elements of musical education as well as a musical practice developed in response to a specific milieu, that is, a more idiosyncratic and individual approach to music honed in a particular time and place and with a particular peer group. In short, my music education was equal parts formal and tacit.

It was through the pursuit of music that my creative and artistic sensibility was given voice. Specifically a music that was based on an individual relationship to an acoustic instrument, where the music created was often based on an exploration of the physical limitations of instrument. Over many years and with a number of collaborators, a musical language developed that was not only based on familiar musical lexicon, but one that had begun to incorporate gesture and theatre into its musical grammar as well as employing everyday objects to achieve a musical end.

In this sense there was always a notion of the music expanding, of stretching not only aural boundaries but formal boundaries as well. It was a music that had begun to incorporate the spatial and the theatrical in its language; an 'expanded music'. I use this term to deliberately reference the field known as *Expanded Cinema* (Youngblood 1970), which refers to a body of work made from the late 1950s to the mid 1970s that aimed to 'expand' the traditional function and presentation of moving images beyond the usual black box presentation. Further discussion of Expanded Cinema and the implications for this research are addressed in chapter 2.

Problem Statement

In working through the ideas behind Expanded Music the thesis addresses the following key questions: is it possible to identify as a musician yet produce moving image outputs? Is musical understanding a valid knowledge to bring to bear on the creation of moving image? If so what might this look like and in what way does this effect the resulting works?

These are the central questions this research attempts to tease out.

Aim and Scope of the investigation

Important to understanding this research is the fact that it has a dual focus shifting between the preoccupations of producing actual moving image works while also examining and writing about the theories behind them. This dual focus reflects the joint aims of the MCA program that requires the production of a work of art within the context of academic research.

The artworks for *Expanded Music* are comprised of a variety of approaches and styles however this research seeks to demonstrate that the primary impetus that underpins the work originates and belongs to what traditionally may be regarded as musical thought. By doing so it ultimately contributes to and expands the dialogue around the boundaries of cinema and music with implications for ways of thinking about cross-art form practice and intermedia in general.

I do wish to emphasise here the contrasting styles that these artworks traverse; from traditional dramatic narrative to long take cinema to hand made material films in a more experimental mode. At first glance this may seem unusual however I would suggest that the creative processes I'm highlighting in this research naturally encompass a wide variety of expression. Moreover there is something at play here, which by my account points to a larger contemporary mind-set that does not hold so tightly to arguments of previous generations, where the endless binaries between various branches of art and music - abstraction versus representation, improvisation versus composition, pop versus punk, free jazz versus traditional jazz ad infinitum - were argued with life and death fervency. These rigidities seem somehow inappropriate in the current landscape and their pious justifications feel dated.

The major work produced as part of this research project (in terms of time and resources) is the drama, *A Priest in the Family*. However, I'd like to emphasise that other works and processes contribute equally to the overall enterprise and these are referred to as they arise in the body of the thesis. All works discussed are on the accompanying DVD while a list of works can be found on page iv of the thesis.

Before launching in to this discussion fully and making a case for creating moving image works via musical intuition and process I want to address a pertinent question: why do I want to create moving image works in this way? The answer to this is perhaps best answered with

another question: why dispense with hard won knowledge when that knowledge is equally applicable to the form in question?

Overview of the Thesis

In producing a moving image work it's common to divide the various tasks required into pre-production, production and post-production. There are obvious reasons for this primarily stemming from the wildly different skills each stage demands. I've chosen to structure the thesis in a similar way. After the first 2 chapters, which are devoted to defining the field and establishing the scope of the research, the remaining chapters loosely align with the various stages of production; chapter 3 and 4 with pre-production, chapter 5 with production and chapter 6 with post-production. This serves to highlight and isolate the variety of musical processes, which I argue come into play during the different stages of creating a moving image work.

With a view to establishing a clear understanding of musical intuition, chapter 1, *Toward a Definition of Musical Intuition*, engages with existing theories of both knowledge acquisition (epistemology) and musical understanding. Some key shifts in 20th century music are also touched upon to provide a larger context for the understanding arrived at in this chapter. An investigation of the theories of music philosopher, Dr. Wayne Bowman is introduced, in particular his notion of 'intermodal transfer' (2004), which is a key concept for this research. Bowman is a specialist in the field of music cognition and education and has contributed widely to this field. Overall, this chapter provides the background needed to move toward the more specific applications of musical thought outlined in the remainder of the thesis.

Chapter 2, *Expanding Music: When Music Practice Becomes Moving Image*, continues to clarify the terms of this research by unraveling the term *Expanded Music* from the title. A crucial feature of this chapter is to clarify the overall scope of this research while situating the artistic outputs on a historical lineage. To achieve this I unpack the term *Expanded Music* through a discussion of the movement, referenced by my title, known as Expanded Cinema. By identifying some key features of Expanded Cinema while placing this in the context of art practice, both historic and personal, I'm able to clarify the scope of this research and argue in turn, that my concept of Expanded Music fits comfortably within a lineage. Finally, in a further effort to clarify these concepts, I take some time to trace the differences between this research and the field known as Visual Music.

In chapter 3, *Musical Practice and Material Practice*, I examine that aspect of my practice, which is involved in the hand processing of 8mm and 16mm film. By looking at current theories of analogue practice, in particular some of the specific dialectics surrounding photochemical engagement such as a devotion to purity, a commitment to indexical truth, a politics of resistance and a sense of nostalgia, I'm then able to differentiate my engagement with the analogue and define which aspects of musical intuition I'm involved with when I'm 'materially' engaged.

In chapter 4, *A Priest in the Family - The Music in Writing*, I examine what would traditionally be regarded as writing for the screen by pointing to specific examples in my major work, *A Priest in the Family*, where the writing process is shaped by the application of specific musical composition schemata. In addition to this I examine an excerpt from Apichatpong Weerasethakul's film, *Syndromes and a Century* (2006), as a clear example of the concepts I'm elucidating.

Chapter 5: *Lights, Camera, Action: Musical Performance and Film Production*, looks at various roles in the film production process, specifically shooting, collaboration and acting and investigates a number of analogies between these and a range of musical ideas. In doing so it draws on contemporary theories of film 'writing', improvisation, music practice and neuroscience.

In the final chapter of the thesis, *Post Production – Editing the film*, ideas around editing for the screen are examined in light of a number of musical correlates which I argue come into play, specifically rhythm and composition. While drawing on the work of Karen Pearlman's book, *Cutting Rhythms*, I point to instances in my own work where the editing process has been navigated by applying these musical ideas.

Finally, in proposing a denouement of the research and as an enterprise that has consisted of a synthesis of theory and practice, I conclude the thesis by surveying the territory covered and make some remarks about the current and potential implications on my own practice. Specifically I argue that the very recent return to performance in my own work has come about as a direct result of immersing myself in this research and marks a new beginning for me with respect to my own practice. Further to this I highlight potential alternative ways of theorising about cinema that this research points to.

Chapter 1: Toward a Definition of Musical Intuition

If light is the basic material of the photographer, then duration is the *materia prima* of the time-based arts(Viola & Violette 1995)

The task I have set myself in this research is to investigate the application of musical intuition and process to the creation of moving image. This chapter engages directly with the idea of musical intuition in an effort to clarify the types of thinking that are mobilized when creating moving image works in this way. By isolating essential musical knowledge and its location in a musician we arrive at an understanding of what musical intuition consists of. The remaining part of the chapter examines how it becomes possible to transfer this type of knowledge to other experiential domains.

I certainly don't intend in this paper to make any grand synthesis or definitions of music however I do want to make the case that this interpretation and expansion of the idea of music that my thesis posits is demonstrable and has precedent.

Coming of age as a percussionist in the late 20th century, it was a given that texture had an equal footing with harmony and melody. Those debates or questions had been raised and grappled with from the early 20th century and in many ways reached fruition in 1931 with *Ionisation* (Varèse 1970), the first piece of Western classical music to be scored for an ensemble comprised solely of percussion instruments. Composed by Edgar Varèse, what surprised many was the ability of the piece to achieve a grace and eloquence through its subtle manipulation of musical texture without resorting to any use of melody or harmony.

What *Ionisation* gave us was a democracy of sound. It told us that, in the right hands, presented in the right context, the moan of a siren could play a musical function equal to that of a harpsichord, cello or piano. Rhythm and sequence then, became more significant elements in defining music than notions of melody and harmony. The possibilities of music continued to expand in the 20th century with John Cage and aleatoric music, extending into the ideas and performance works of Fluxus in the 1960s and 1970s. As a percussionist with years of experience in musical improvisation and experimentation, I felt at home in this more expansive approach to music. I had long been incorporating everyday objects into my

musical arsenal and many performances increasingly incorporated theatre, gesture and dance, if not directly, then certainly in its frame of reference.

My point in raising this is to remind the reader that a static definition of music is hardly a realistic possibility. While describing the complexity of musical practices may seem an impossible task, there are some guiding lights that ring true to my experience and provide support to my thesis. A key text here is Barthes' essay, *Musica Practica* (1977). For Barthes, a clear distinction needs to be made between the music one listens to and the music one plays:

These two musics are two totally different arts, each with its own history, its own sociology, its own aesthetics, its own erotic....The music one plays comes from an activity that is very little auditory, being above all manual (and thus in a way much more sensual). It is the music which you or I can play, alone or among friends, with no other audience than its participants (that is, with all risk of theatre, all temptation of hysteria removed) (Barthes & Heath, 1977)

The inference here of a music existing outside of performance where it's more physical than aural is something I have a strong affinity for. Percussion in particular requires an emphasis on physical dexterity. As such the body becomes integral to an understanding of music. There is always finality in the corporeal, which is an important concept for me. The human body and the body of an instrument provide physical limitations, which can be explored and pushed against. In my pursuit of creative output, be it music or moving image, the fact of the thing-in-itself is always present in one-way or another.

This idea of musical understanding being located in the body and material fact is the very understanding that I draw upon when creating moving image and is one of the key ideas this research seeks to tease out. If musical understanding then is located in the body, if it is "very little auditory" and "above all manual" what can be said about the knowledge that listening provides? And what about other musical/intellectual concepts such as harmony, texture, rhythm?

Recent scholars have taken issue with Barthes inference that listening modes are not embodied. Bowman (2007) stresses the centrality of embodiment to both performing *and* listening and goes to great lengths to affirm the body in all aspects of music. The arguments

suggests that this embodied account of cognition that musical understanding affords can act as a kind of ideal template for all other kinds of knowledge. Instead of the mind/body split,

Mind is rendered possible by bodily sensations and actions, from whose patterns it emerges and upon which it relies for whatever intellectual prowess it can claim.

(Bowman, 2004)

The act of listening with the body has a large and growing body of literature around it which not only addresses the role of the body in listening but also listening without audiation that someone like deaf percussionist Evelyn Glennie attests to. Indeed, Glennie has written eloquently about this phenomenon herself, stating that,

Hearing is basically a specialized form of touch. Sound is simply vibrating air which the ear picks up and converts to electrical signals, which are then interpreted by the brain. The sense of hearing is not the only sense that can do this, touch can do this too. ... For some reason we tend to make a distinction between hearing a sound and feeling a vibration, in reality they are the same thing. ... Deafness does not mean that you can't hear, only that there is something wrong with the ears. Even someone who is totally deaf can still hear/feel sounds. (Glennie 2015)

These ideas posit that musical understanding is foremost a knowledge grounded and inseparable from the body. This notion is certainly borne out in my own understanding and experience of music. Any further elements attached to musical understanding; harmony and melody for example, are necessarily filtered through this corporeal fact.

Bowman goes further, and in an essay where he persuasively re-casts Merleau-Ponty's ideas of ambiguity and leakage (1962) he suggests alternative terms that carry less baggage. Of particular interest to this research is Bowman's notion of leakage as being:

cross-modal (or intermodal) transfer – on which schemata from one experiential domain (recurrent dynamic patterns of motor and perceptual experience, for instance) function as structural and organisational templates for another. (Bowman, 2004)

Furthermore (and importantly for this research) this suggests that the embodied knowledge required of musical understanding can be applied to other fields which are not obviously related.

Perhaps another way to discuss the influence of the corporeal is contained in the idea of tacit knowledge. When speaking of musical intuition or musical knowledge I'm interested to emphasise both the formal or codified forms of *explicit* musical knowledge, i.e. that which can be studied and shared: harmonic relationships, note values, scales etc. with the *tacit* knowledge that is built over time with experience. Tacit knowledge is necessarily individual and not easy to share or communicate. When I previously mentioned a musical knowledge developed in a specific milieu I'm highlighting those aspects of musical knowledge that are specific to my peer group and me. Included in this is the understanding that comes from practice. The hours of practice that goes into learning an instrument accumulates into another kind of tacit knowledge. Harry Collins in his book *Tacit and Explicit Knowledge* (2010) expands on Michael Polanyi's conception of *The Tacit Dimension* (1983) by suggesting a three-way classification of tacit knowledge - relational, somatic and collective. The knowledge that comes with the practice of an instrument then could be referred to as a type of somatic tacit knowledge and it is this mingling of explicit and tacit knowledge that constitutes musical intuition.

Continuing to investigate musical understanding, there is much debate and conjecture surrounding which elements of music - rhythm, melody or harmony - are most fundamental to musical understanding. Earlier I pointed to Varèse's work *Ionisation* as being a forerunner to the acceptance of texture as being possibly of greater significance than melody and harmony in musical understanding. I'd qualify that by saying that *the* most fundamental component of these three elements is in fact rhythm and 'that the essence of musical experience lies in attending to rhythm as communicative of a sense of time' (Akbar, 2013).

I'd like to emphasise here that my years of work as a percussionist underlines the ubiquity of rhythm to my understanding not only of music, but of any time based work. What do I mean by rhythm? When talking of rhythm I am referring to something beyond the more common use of the term (as applied to music) where it's usually used to describe repetition or periodicity. In fact defining rhythm is not easy and, not surprisingly, no small topic. There is not the room here to entertain the various nuances of the rhythmic concept but to clarify I'm drawing on the work of Christopher Hasty, specifically his book *Meter as Rhythm* (1997) and

Shawn Raja Akbar's 2013 PHD thesis, *'Musical understanding: Studies in philosophy and phenomenological psychology'*. (2013) In Hasty's concept anything that 'holds potentiality for rhythmic experiences' (1997) can count as rhythmic. This could include a painting or a block of wood or even a furniture arrangement. Akbar concurs with Hasty that rhythm neither is, nor necessarily implies regularity or repetition but he does emphasise the role of duration stating that any 'event, process and movement(s)' (2013) could be thought of as containing rhythm.

The purpose of the above discussion has been to flesh out what constitutes musical intuition. Putting into language and describing the myriad of rapid-fire decisions that underpin intuition is certainly not a straightforward task. The discussion above takes steps toward unpacking this somewhat mysterious process and arrives at two central aspects I wish to underline for this research. Firstly the idea that musical intuition is a knowledge located in and inseparable from the body. This aspect of musical intuition is a key concept to grasp as we navigate this research as it forms the basis of many of the ideas and processes I subsequently tease out. In other words it is this tacit and explicit knowledge inscribed in the body that is continually drawn upon when creating moving image works. The second aspect of musical intuition and one that is equally important for this study is the idea of rhythm. This rhythmic ability I argue is the most fundamental of all musical processes and serves to clarify a large part of what 'being musical' is all about. It is this expansive rhythmic concept that is again drawn upon when creating moving image and will be highlighted as we delve deeper into this research.

Chapter 2: Expanding Music – When Music Practice Becomes Moving Image

As mentioned earlier, the *Expanded Music* in my title is used to deliberately reference the field known as Expanded Cinema. My point in referencing this field in the context of this study is to highlight what I see are certain similar underlying impulses at play between this research and the field of Expanded Cinema. My agenda in the following chapter is to examine this idea in more detail by contextualising this within my own creative history while situating the work of *Expanded Music* on a historical lineage. A more detailed look at the field of Visual Music and its relationship to this research rounds out this chapter.

2.1 Expanded Cinema, Expanded Music

As a movement, Expanded Cinema can be seen to be part of the radical artistic transformation that took place throughout the 20th century and to a large extent culminated in the 1960's where:

each art form was fundamentally rethought, and the idea that these art forms could be clearly distinguished from one another gave way to intensive experimentation with cross-fertilization and mixing. (Walley 2011)

In the case of cinema, artists began to re-imagine the form by expanding it beyond the bounds of the filmstrip, which up to that point had been one of cinema's defining elements. Further experimentation with the conditions of its presentation as well as an interrogation of the technological apparatus of projection saw the field merge with sculpture, theatre and performance art.³ In many cases the filmmaker and/or spectator became the protagonist in the films by intervening directly with the cinematic apparatus. The works then were more about the live 'here and now' experience and hence much more ephemeral and one off than traditional cinematic presentation.

In this sense it's worth considering an iconic work of Expanded Cinema, Anthony McCall's *Long Film for Ambient Light* (1975). With no screen, projector or film, the work is stripped

³ There is a strong case to be made that the proliferation of video in gallery and new media presentation that began in the 1990's and continues to this day owes a debt to *Expanded Cinema* and the radical experimentation of the time. This, despite the uncomfortable relationship it had with the contemporary art scene throughout the 60's and 70's. As A.L. Rees notes: 'Film and video projection of the 1970's sat uneasily between the categories of art and cinema, and was fully identified with neither, leading to its aberrant state and to an eclipse which is only now being remedied in the very galleries and museums where it failed to find a home at the time'. (Rees 2009)

back to what McCall regarded as the fundamental properties of the cinematic experience – ‘an architectural container, a light source, a given duration’ (*Baker 2006*). The work takes place over a 24-hour period in a specially prepared room where the windows down one side are covered in translucent paper. In the center of the space a single light bulb is hung at head height. This remains illuminated for the duration of the piece. The audience is free to come and go as they please.⁴

For the uninitiated it's clear that *Long Film* has no resemblance whatsoever to what we would normally regard as a film and on the surface it has more in common with performance art and sculpture. McCall however insisted on its film status by claiming light and time as the fundamental material of cinema. A radical provocation perhaps but taking the enterprise of Expanded Cinema as a whole it is this ontological interrogation which largely defines the field.

All of the iconic works of Expanded Cinema make explicit their cinematic ontology from creation through to presentation and in many ways the conversations and debates surrounding the field arise through a collision between the work meeting the public and the expanding ontologies prescribed by their creators. In other words, at least part of the satisfaction of much of the work lies in considering the tension between its outer form and its claim to cinema. This is certainly the case with *Long Film for Ambient Light*.

Expanded Music then makes a similar claim, that is, for a musical ontology in creation. As for presentation I don't feel the need to announce the musical ontology in every case and prefer to let the work and the context make that decision. Given the types of work I produce it should come as no surprise that I hold this more pluralistic view. There is a strong anti-illusion/anti-narrative thread that runs through Expanded Cinema that I don't feel strongly aligned to. As I argue later, musical intuition can also affect traditional narrative and I also see potential for the ideas put forth in *Expanded Music* to extend into multi-linear narratives that new media and gallery contexts provide. This opposition to 'dominant cinema' that lies at the heart of Expanded Cinema, with its activation of the previously invisible space of

⁴ Thanks to the industrious explorations of two local artists, Lucas Ihlein and Louise Curham, I've been able to witness a number of iconic Expanded Cinema works, including *Long Film for Ambient Light*, which they re-enacted at the Performance Space in Sydney on March 16 and 17, 2007. Curham and Ihlein are engaged in an on going project of re-enactments from Expanded Cinema, where they painstakingly research and document each work, including primary source interviews where they track down the original artist for pedagogy and comment. Their work is fast becoming an invaluable contribution to a contemporary understanding of Expanded Cinema. See: <http://www.teachingandlearningcinema.org/expanded-cinema-re-enactments>.

reception in an effort to 'de-pacify' the viewer had a didactic impulse that feels anachronistic in the current climate. As Stephen Ball states:

Foregrounding the material and technology of 16mm film in the black box of a cinema or a performance space might produce a spatial awareness of context, but it does not follow that this will necessarily produce a more active viewer any less likely to identify with illusionistic narrative. (Ball 2011)

A lot has changed in the intervening years since this first wave of Expanded Cinema blossomed in the 60's and 70's. Cut to 2015, with the proliferation of images and cinematic forms now thoroughly dispersed throughout public and private space, the idea that there exists a wholly dominant cinema-viewing relationship which acts individually on passive audience members seems hard to sustain and ignores 'the vast matrix of relationships to pictorial representations, social codes and cognitive expectations' (*Rees, 2011*) more common to contemporary experience. Nonetheless my agenda here is not to critique Expanded Cinema but to highlight which aspects of the enterprise have inspired the work of *Expanded Music* and which have been left behind.

Beyond referencing the field of Expanded Cinema, the title *Expanded Music* has personal significance with respect to the trajectory of my overall approach to music, which has made a home in exploring and pushing boundaries and indeed definitions of music. There was a sense both in the overall approach and in specific compositions that the music was expanding to incorporate a kind of narrativity.

The inclusion of everyday objects to achieve a musical end effectively expanded the idea of music to include the non-musical while at the same time incorporating a theatricality into the overall presentation. Objects that had become part of my musical vocabulary included circular saws, a variety of scrap metal, wine glasses, plates and bowls, kids mechanical toys, radios, balls of all kinds, spiky cacti, chop sticks, water and balloons to name a few. The inclusion of everyday objects into the musical domain is an instance of the music expanding into the narrative realm. They have the effect of reducing the abstractness of music by bringing evidence of our own lives into the musical world. Further work combining live improvisation with theatre and dance speak to the overall musical enterprise as constantly stretching and partaking in a kind of representation.

One of my last compositions before taking up moving image practices was a piece for live auctioneer and percussion. Titled *Father and Son*⁵ (my father was the auctioneer. See *Father & Son - excerpt* on accompanying DVD) the piece married the aural world of the stockyard with art music. From a musical point of view, the piece explored not only the rhythmic cadences of a cattle auction in full flight but also explored musical mimesis with a use of everyday objects combined with live electronics used to conjure the aural world of the stock yard. This piece, in the spirit of Fluxus, demonstrates a well-developed impulse to expand and cross-pollinate a musical knowledge with other, more tangible, everyday worlds.

A further biographical detour is useful here. It must be noted that the transition from music to moving image occurred in the context of an intuitive creative process rather than as an act of rational thought or decision. I had a large body of work behind me, which involved composing music for theatre, dance and the odd film soundtrack. In 2000 I began a collaboration with film artist Louise Curham. This project, which I alluded to in the introduction, was ostensibly to be a fairly straightforward collaboration: we were to make a film where Louise would provide the image and I would create the soundtrack. As the collaboration progressed Louise suggested I take a Super 8 camera with me on tour (I was touring to Brazil as percussionist with Circus Oz) to generate some of the visual material, which Louise would then treat in her inimitable way. As mentioned the camera felt strange and somewhat impenetrable until I began to think of it as another type of musical instrument. It was this that facilitated further exploration and the strangeness of the task evaporated. By the time we'd finished I'd contributed to the image, completed the sound, written the script (voice over) and assisted with the editing. In other words, I'd made a film but importantly (in terms of this research) I'd made it while remaining a musician.

Apart from embracing more open-ended forms and styles this impulse nonetheless sprung from a tradition of expanding music and arts practices that occurred throughout the 20th century, beginning with Austrian composer Arnold Schoenberg, who by the end of the first decade, effectively stretched the rules of harmony to breaking point. Along with Webern and Berg their vision challenged the traditional hegemony of harmony, melody and rhythm and in doing so paved the way for further innovations. Despite this revolutionary turn, the work of this trio (collectively they were the main members of what became known as the Second

⁵ Performed at Gasworks Theatre, Melbourne as part of Astra Chamber Music groups 2001 concert series. Recorded by ABC classic FM and broadcast in 2002.

Viennese School) still remained wedded to the music establishment in that they continued to uphold 'the sacred principals of musical virtuosity via mastery of traditional musical instrumentation' (Goddard, Halligan & Spelman 2013, p. 259).

Around the same time however was an Italian poet, Filippo Marinetti who in 1909 published the Futurist Manifesto (1909) and effectively launched the movement known as Futurism. He and a group of Italian writers and artists subsequently lay the foundation for the historical avant-garde and essentially became the first in a long line of cultural and artistic rebels of the 20th century.

One of the group's members, a painter and composer named Luigi Russolo, is considered the first composer to embrace the use of pure noise in his concerts and performances. Russolo developed a noise-generating device called the *Intonarumori* and wrote a manifesto called *The Art of Noises* (1916) where he issued his challenge to the musical orthodoxy:

We futurists have all deeply loved and enjoyed the harmonies of the great masters. Beethoven and Wagner have stirred our nerves and hearts for many years. Now we have had enough of them, and we delight much more in combining in our thoughts the noises of trams, of automobile engines, of carriages and brawling crowds, than in hearing again the "Eroica" or the "Pastorale." (Russolo 1916)

Russolo was writing in 1916 (the above quote from the first English translation in 1916) and despite both his inventions and much of his work not being taken seriously at the time the intent and ideas behind them have continued to develop, manifesting again and again throughout the 20th century and continuing today.

Svetlana Maras, writing in her 2011 thesis *Embodied Composition*, describes the introduction of noise and its impact on western art music as follows:

From all the extra-musical occurrences which were mentioned so far, none has expanded the musical discourse more significantly and more thoroughly than the non-musical sound - noise. (2011)

It is hard to argue with this assessment. From its appearance at the beginning of the twentieth century the use of noise has developed and permeated much of our musical landscape and continues to do so, crossing genres and cultures in the process. By my

account, these twin gestures, the dismantling of harmony and the inclusion of noise early in the 20th century lay the groundwork and were the prime catalysts for much of the subsequent musical experimentation that followed.

In the visual arts Marcel Duchamp with his *ready-mades* along with the restless output of the Dada-ists and Surrealists paved the way for an acceptance of conceptual art and by the time John Cage appeared in the middle of the century, famously presenting music by its absence,⁶ music had well and truly expanded to include modes and practices that would once have seemed inconceivable. Add to this the subsequent anarchic experiments with style, genre and form of the Fluxus movement, who dedicated themselves to stylistic cross-pollination, and we can see that by the 60's and 70's the boundaries between music, visual art, literature, theatre, performance, film and video had too evaporated.

Of course I'm not suggesting that traditional modes didn't (and don't) continue to co-exist rather that the reverberations of all this experimentation served to expand our understanding of what music and all arts practice could be. And here I remind the reader why I've taken this brief historical digression, which is to point out that the ideas behind this research then, could be seen as fitting into a long lineage of artistic experimentation that at the very least can be traced back to the early 20th century.

2.2 Expanded Music versus Visual Music

As mentioned in the introduction I felt it necessary to differentiate this research from the field known as Visual Music. In some ways it wouldn't be surprising if a superficial reading of this research, with its broad concerns of music and film, placed it the domain of Visual Music. It would seem useful therefore to investigate Visual Music a little more closely with the hope that, by doing so, the nature of this research will come into sharper relief.

The common held view of Visual Music comes to life in the idea of the VJ (visual or video jockey) with its origins firmly in the 1980's while being associated with the technological developments of the time. Emerging from live venues - clubs and discos, raves and festivals. The VJ uses similar techniques to that of a DJ – sampling, looping, re-mixing etc. and applies

⁶ I'm referring of course to Cage's piece - 4'33". Composed in 1952, it is commonly discussed as being four minutes and thirty-three seconds of silence although the intention is in fact to highlight the impossibility of silence by focusing the attention of the audience on the sound of their environment during the performance.

this to the images they have chosen (or made) for a given event. The VJ's duty then is to connect in some way both the visuals and music.

In fact the scope of Visual Music encompasses practices well beyond this more popular conception and naturally has its own distinct histories and lineage. There's not the space here to articulate this history in any detail but as Friedemann Dahn asserts in his essay, *Visual Music: Forms and Possibilities*:

The desire for artistic connection between image and sound, the audible and visible, spatial and temporal art, has existed for centuries in various forms of research and art-making, accompanied by a desire for a direct transformation of sound into image.
(Lund & Lund 2009)

This desire for an artistic connection between image and sound also, I would suggest, has echoes of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* (Trahndorff 1827) or total artwork which is most often associated with Wagner. In any case this impulse toward synthesis, specifically speaking of aural and visual synthesis, reveals the potential of many forms enveloped under this rubric, articulating a much larger territory than the narrow concept of the VJ.

Dahn, in the same essay, sketches some of this variety highlighting that 'a special form of visual music has existed for centuries – notation' (2009) while also reminding us of Wassily Kandinsky and Paul Klee's assertion of their paintings being a kind of *visualised music*.

A further aspect of visual music explores the rich area of synaesthesia. In synaesthetic perception one modality is automatically and involuntarily translated into another. The most familiar form of synaesthesia involves seeing coloured forms in response to music but other types exist including the perception of letters, numbers or days of the week as inherently coloured or associating shapes with smells or tastes.⁷

Thus we can see that the field of Visual Music is itself quite vast but in grasping the term the common thread that binds the field, I would suggest, is an intent to synthesize. The success or otherwise of this synthesis can be debated, yet the intent defines it.

⁷ For a thorough examination of this phenomenon as it relates to audio-visual work see Whitelaw, M. (2008), 'Synaesthesia and Cross-Modality in Contemporary Audiovisuals,' *Senses and Society*, 3:3, pp. 259-276

Here then we arrive at the main point of difference between this research and Visual Music. The results of *Expanded Music* and its associated works are not motivated by an intent to synthesize. As I suggested previously, if the resulting works achieve some kind of synthesis then this is by chance rather than design. Visual Music *describes work* that is essentially its own art form where as this research is first and foremost an investigation of *creative process* irrespective of the resulting outputs. In fact this research exhibits no stylistic or formal intent towards any type of work. The common thread that binds this research and its resulting outputs is the mobilization of a musical thinking applied to the act of creation itself, independent of artistic style or form.

Having identified musical intuition as consisting primarily of a bodily knowledge with an expansive rhythmic understanding as well as situating the work of *Expanded Music* on a historical lineage I now turn to specific instances in my own practice where musical process are deliberately engaged in creating moving image works.

Chapter 3: Musical Practice and Material Practice

Having made a case for a moving image practice that sits on a musical continuum, both personally and historically, I now turn my attention to further aspects of my own practice and seek to illustrate the specific areas of musical thought that they draw from. In this case I examine my exploration and use of analogue film.

From the beginning of my forays into moving image I've had an association with analogue film. The first camera I used in my creative work was a Super 8 camera and I've continued to delve deeper into the analogue. Working in this mode clearly lines up with more avant-garde approaches to cinema although I should add that this is not at the expense of using video and working with narrative. In fact both video and narrative are employed in the major work completed as part of this MCA - *A Priest in the Family* (discussed in chapter 4, 5 and 6).

It might be assumed that an interest and practice that employs analogue film does so out of a love of an 'old world look' or a kind of nostalgia for past practices. There remain a number of artists and filmmakers committed to analogue work and their reasons for doing so vary. While I do feel an affinity with much of the contemporary theory around materialist practice that someone like Tacita Dean represents, I wish to highlight that the primary impetus behind my employment of the analogue again has its roots in musical thinking. Before looking more closely at what this might mean, it is worth taking a moment to briefly survey some of the theory around analogue practice to again differentiate this research.

3.1 Medium Specificity: Purity & Indexical Truth

Concepts of medium specificity have a long and well-documented history in the theory of art. Medium specific theories generally state that different media have unique characteristics and these characteristics in turn should form the basis of how a medium is used. As the content of the work becomes largely about or of the medium, works categorised under this rubric tend toward abstraction. This focus on the materials of a medium then often gets associated with a perceived purity or at least an intention of purity. With respect to film the plasticity of the medium is foregrounded. This modernist trend, most often associated with painting, in particular the abstract expressionists and championed by critic Clement Greenberg, was also adopted later by the medium of photography and film. According to Greenberg,

It is by virtue of its medium that each art is unique and strictly itself. To restore the identity of an art the opacity of its medium must be emphasized. (Harrison & Wood 1992)

It's interesting to note in the context of this research that in elaborating these theories Greenberg points to the realisation (by the avant-garde) that it was the abstract nature of music that provided primary inspiration. Music, by its very nature, was free from literature's 'corrupting influence' (1992) as it was inherently absorbed in its own materials and, as such, involved only with the expression of sensation:

the advantage of music lay chiefly in the fact that it was an 'abstract' art, an art of 'pure form.' (Harrison & Wood 1992)

And later,

The effects of music are the effects, essentially, of pure form; those of painting and poetry are too often accidental to the formal natures of these arts. Only by accepting the example of music and defining each of the other arts solely in the terms of the sense or faculty which perceived its effect and by excluding from each art whatever is intelligible in the terms of any other sense or faculty would the non-musical arts attain the 'purity' and self-sufficiency which they desired (Harrison & Wood 1992)

While the fervency of these comments feel dated now, employed as they were to shore up allegiances and exclude others, namely the conceptualists, ideas around medium specificity have continued to evolve over the decades and have arguably been given a new lease of life as analogue film has transformed from being the dominant (indeed only) form of moving image to one of being in danger of extinction thanks to the overwhelming pervasiveness of digital media. Current discussions around medium specificity then are less about excluding other forms and genres and more about reminding a world, enamored as it is with the clean, crisp immediacy of all things digital, of the many peculiar charms of the analogue.

Alongside notions of medium specificity, analogue film also contains within it the idea of indexical truth, which is a concept that gets an airing by contemporary practitioners such as Tacita Dean. The photochemical image has an indexical relationship to reality due to the fact that any given image is a direct result of the actual light at the time the shutter was released, directly altering the material structure of the film, hence providing the image. As Mary Ann

Doane states, indexicality is repeatedly invoked 'as the guarantee of a privileged relation to the real, to referentiality, and to materiality.' (2007) In light of digital media's ability to seamlessly combine, alter and generate, it's easy to see the attraction of this claim to truth.

3.2 Politics of Resistance

Along with an adherence to the material fact of analogue there has always been a keen sense of the subversive running through the history of experimental cinema and analogue culture. In fact experimental film is often defined in terms of resistance; that its prime motivation springs from the desire to be free from the constraints of narrative and that it's fundamentally anti-mainstream and anti-illusion. While the definition remains contested, particularly at its fringes, Michael O'Pray, in his introduction to avant-garde film, observes that avant-garde film has been:

renowned for its opposition to mainstream cinema, whose artistic value it has denied and has assigned to the kitsch – the sentimental, melodramatic and banal. (O'Pray 2003)

In fact resistance lies at the core of the term itself. Avant-garde (literally 'advance guard' in French) began its life as a military term where:

to be avant-garde, one must be a minority. This criterion anchors our understandings of the avant-garde firmly to the avant-garde's historical origins in the military, where it designated a small group of soldiers that went in advance of the main body. (Sell 2010)

Bradley Eros comes to mind who, as an artist committed to working with analogue film and performance, often explores the point at which the material and apparatus breaks down, exposing the beauties that emerge when film cracks and burns and projectors grind to a halt. I would be tempted to describe it as an aesthetic of death, in any case Eros himself notes that:

(analogue culture...) is a critique of consumer capitalism and the seductive marketing of the 'always new'. (Weinbren 2012, pp. 2-3)

Apart from such explicit statements it is easy to understand why this kind of practice is interpreted as an act of political resistance. Certainly, in the second decade of the 21st century, there can be no question that for those artists and filmmakers who tamper with the photochemical, they are unequivocally in the minority. Regardless of the stance of the filmmakers themselves, works that employ the analogue will likely to continue to be read in terms of their resistance to their mainstream counterparts.

3.3 Nostalgia or ‘Retromania’

These days, when confronted with the delicate flickering of film with its random dust and scratches, many people will make a comment about its ‘nostalgic’ or ‘retro’ feel. However, as much as the use of film has diminished, it is unlikely anyone would describe the blockbuster *Interstellar* (2014) which was shot on 65mm film and now showing as I write, as having a retro feel. In any case the notion often gets ascribed to those that employ photochemical technology, vinyl records being the music equivalent.

Again it’s easy to see how analogue culture can come to be discussed in these terms. Simon Reynolds, in *Retromania* defines the term ‘retro’ as:

Refer(ing) to a self-conscious fetish for period stylization (in music, clothes, design) expressed creatively through pastiche and citation. (Reynolds 2011, p. xii)

It seems to me there’s a subtle negative connotation to this definition (not so subtle in Reynolds’ book). I would argue, with respect to contemporary arts practice, that a use of analogue can’t simply be summed up as a ‘self-conscious fetish’. There are many reasons an artist may employ analogue materials that transcend the fetish. I’ll have to resist the temptation to get into a full-blown defense against the claim of retro in this context as it’s beyond the scope of this thesis. In any case, as I point out below, there are other clearly defined reasons for my own use of the analogue. In the context of this thesis however, my purpose for now is simply to draw attention to the phenomenon and to this end Reynolds book does an excellent job.

3.4 The Music in Material Practice

I've highlighted the dialectics surrounding analogue practice not to deny or validate them but to illustrate how my take on the analogue differs. In fact I find much of the discussion compelling and frankly I'm quite happy to ride on the coat tails of certain aspects of this theory, particularly with respect to ideas around resistance as well as film photography's status in its relationship to the 'truth event.' However, with respect to my initial interest in analogue and in my current practice, these discussions are shadowed by what the corporeal encounter between subject and material provides - a dialogue with a musical way of knowing.

When I enter the studio/dark room to work with photochemical film materials it is not unlike sitting down to practice an instrument. As I argue in this paper, a large part of my understanding of creating art is intimately tied to material engagement. An acoustic musician has a physical closeness to the music achieved by directly manipulating an instrument. This is analogous to physically manipulating film. It is the closest I can physically get to the image. I can literally *make* the image the way I can literally *make* music: by physical intervention. This is the main benefit analogue film processes provide me with. That it may transform later into digital immateriality is not of concern to me and as I point out while discussing the role of editing in chapter 6, other types of musical thinking are mobilized once the image is in digital form.

Had my background and training been in computer music for example, I would likely not feel as strongly the affinity with this material aspect of film and would be content to work solely with video. Doing so however significantly reduces material engagement by such a degree that my interest simply waivers. There is a satisfying through line in working this way that keeps me in touch and enables communication between the bodily knowledge of acoustic instrumental practice and the equally corporeal aspect of analogue film practice.

Further to this I often have the sense that the optics, mechanics and chemistries of the photochemical process act not unlike musical collaborators - sometimes taking the lead, sometimes following but always contributing to the final result in ways that are beyond my complete control. The sheer variety of physical and technical demands inherent in the photochemical process means that just like a musical instrument - practice makes perfect. The idea of practice is an integral feature of my musical understanding and there is a very real dialogue occurring between the demands and practice required of photochemical

process with those of a musical instrument. Professional musicians in particular have a very tangible relationship with practice, more so I would argue than many other arts with the obvious exception of dance. Whenever our bodies use objects to make or do anything the physical limitations of body and object are foregrounded and we have no choice but to enter some kind of dialogue with these limitations. We soon discover that repetition and practice enable increased efficiency and, it turns out, there seems no end to this. In other words there exists no defined end point to mastering a physical task. Skill and efficiency can always be honed and refined resulting in a kind of expanding tactile elegance. Furthermore the act of acquiring a technical skill has the effect of training the mind as well. Observing mistakes in technique requires physical and mental adjustment. Through this process it's discovered that mistakes are the very things one needs to solve the problem at hand. Richard Sennett in *The Craftsmen* puts it this way,

To arrive at that goal, the work process has to do something distasteful to the tidy mind, which is to dwell temporarily in mess – wrong moves, false starts, dead ends. Indeed, in technology, as in art, the probing craftsman does more than encounter mess; he or she creates it as a means of understanding working procedures. (Sennett 2008, p. 161)

A recent experience in the studio/dark room illustrates this process quite well. I had acquired a large spiral loading tank so I could spool 100 foot lengths of film in one go (the more common, smaller tanks only allow 50 feet) Given I have a 16mm camera that takes 100 foot loads the advantage of this larger spiral is that I can shoot and process without having to cut the film into 50 foot sections. To successfully load the spiral it of course needs to be done in total darkness however I'd run into a major problem, I couldn't even load it while concentrating and observing in full light. To get to the stage where I could load it in full darkness was clearly going to require a level of technical mastery that suddenly seemed a long way off. I could see from the nature of the mistakes I was running into that minute variations of my hand position changed the way the film took to the spiral. A gap had opened up between the mastery necessary for pitch-black loading and the reality of my current ability.

From my training as a musician and the hours of practice I had experienced, this kind of problem - this 'gap', felt very familiar. I knew in that moment that to cross this gap would require a type of practice very similar, if not identical, to that of instrumental practice. I needed to train to the point where my body could perform the task automatically. This meant

I needed to perform, observe, adjust, and repeat ad infinitum until my body ‘received’ the intelligence. Foucault talks of this as a kind of ‘instrumental coding of the body’ (Foucault 1979). My own awareness of this instrumental coding no doubt came from my intimate understanding of the nature and role of instrumental practice. Interestingly, in this particular example, I soon discovered that mastery of this task also required an auditory component. Given I eventually needed to perform the task in darkness I discovered that I could *hear* my mistakes when the film went off track. I could then adjust as needed and literally, get back on track! The repetition of the task refined and honed my various senses, which came together to achieve the desired result. This kind of grappling with materials is a feature of working with photochemical processes and the understanding that musical practice provides offers much in this way to these demands.

In summary, a physical relationship with an instrument and the subsequent necessity to refine and hone (practice) this relationship are those aspects of musical intuition and process which provide my engagement with analogue materials the status of an ‘expanded music’. Tacit knowledge is being built by regular ‘practice’ with the ‘instruments’ of film.

3.5 Material Practice and Performance

A very recent development in my own practice is emerging as a direct result of thinking through this research. This has developed right at the tail end of this research and I mention it here as it dovetails with my material practice. I should say that at this stage it is relatively unformed and requires further investigation and experimentation, which I look forward to.

Simply put, after moving away from all types of performance during the last decade as I investigated moving image, an inclination is now returning to re-visit live performance in combination with my material experimentation. The realisation that I’m still a musician has somehow freed me to re-think performance and film and to now bring the two fields together. Two recent opportunities have resulted in the first public outcomes of this investigation. The first came in the form of a creative development at *Articulate Gallery* in Leichardt in Sydney. In yet another collaboration with Louise Curham I engaged with live manipulation of my own field recordings while Louise manipulated live projected film. Secondly I was recently accepted to perform at a one-day symposium on *New Factual Storytelling* held at the University of Canberra (see Appendix 1). Held at the University of Canberra I presented *Turbulence for Performance* (see *Turbulence for Performance - Excerpt* on DVD), which

juxtaposed hand processed images, specifically long takes of city crowds navigating a busy street corner, as well as visual material from the recently completed work *Turbulence* (hence the same name as the aforementioned work) with audio mixed live consisting of everything from my own field recordings and ambient creations to snatches of sampled music and audio.

This approach, coming as it does at the tail end of this research, represents a new direction for me and has emerged as a direct result of this investigation.

Chapter 4: A Priest in the Family - The Music in Writing

Having taken into account the various modes of musical thought that come into play in a more experimental approach to moving image I now turn to that aspect of my work that explores more traditional moving image outcomes – narrative film. This chapter examines the process of writing in the pre-production stage. I examine the musical influences in creating a screenplay, specifically the adaptation of the short story, *A Priest in the Family*. Putting aside for now discussions about the status and function of a screenplay (that is touched upon in chapter 5) my agenda here is to highlight and demonstrate how specific musical concepts were (and can be) entertained even at this ‘literary’ stage.

I conclude the chapter with a brief analysis of an excerpt from contemporary cinema in which I suggest similar processes are at play. Here, I borrow Bowman’s use of the term ‘intermodal’ (introduced in chapter 1) and call this an instance of an *intermodal interpretation*. Apart from illustrating this example the implication here is that intermodal interpretation offers potential for radically different ways of theorising about cinema.

4.1 Composition and narrative practice

A Priest in the Family is the title of a short film, based on a short story of the same name, by the Irish writer Colm Tóibín. (see track 1 on the accompanying DVD) Apart from conceiving the project my actual role on this production was writer, co-director, co-producer and co-editor. I’ve been working on this project for the duration of my studies and, as mentioned, it constitutes the major art work produced in realising the practical component of this MCA. My agenda in this section is to highlight some of the musical processes applied during the writing stage that allowed me to generate visual, formal and narrative ideas.

The process of combining musical elements over time, typically regarded as composition was an aspect that I consciously employed during the writing stage of *A Priest in the Family*, the process of which was an adaptation from prose to screenplay. This adaptation process began in a way that, on paper, would appear to be straight from the manual of film pre-production, i.e., a process of intensive writing and rewriting where the short story was turned into a script with scenes added or subtracted to more closely align the work with the visual demands of film presentation. While this did indeed progress along these lines I nonetheless continued to draw on musical thought in the generation of material with a view to not only

arriving at a kind of compositional clarity in the final form but also in an attempt to draw out and accent the main themes of the narrative. In this way we can see that a direct application of musical thought can be (and was) applied to the process of writing as well.

4.2 Inversion and theme and variation

As suggested, a natural consequence of shifting any work from a literary domain to the realm of moving image requires a rethinking of the material to more suit the demands of the film form. In the case of *A Priest in the Family* one of the things I was grappling with was the ending of the story. I was seeking a more visual and cinematic ending than what the original short story provided, which ended with Frank (the son) driving off having visited his mother, Molly (the protagonist) while she listened to him drive away.

In the 8th draft of the screenplay the following scenes were added as an alternative to this ending:

24. EXT. PORTLAND. DAY

A wide shot of Portland, early morning.

25. EXT. CAFE. DAY

Molly is seen through the cafe window. She is reading a newspaper. She looks out the window for a moment then briefly back to her newspaper before glancing around the inside of the cafe. She gets up and heads to the bathroom upstairs at the back of the cafe.

CUT TO:

26. INT. BATHROOM. DAY

Close up on Molly, staring down the barrel of the camera. We are the mirror. Molly takes a moment to study her reflection in the mirror. She looks down at the basin. The sounds of taps being turned on, running water.

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP:

Molly's hands, washing. Unexpectedly we hear church bells. It's the bells of the Sunday morning service ringing out.

Back to the close up on Molly. We see her hear the bells. She turns off the tap and turns to look out the window, which is directly behind her. We see her back taking in the view, which remains concealed from us. She turns back to the mirror, barely taking herself in before exiting the bathroom. Through the bathroom window we can now see what Molly just observed. It's the source of the bells; the town cathedral, tolling the morning service, calling the faithful to salvation. We stay with this static as the bells continue tolling. After a moment the end credits appear and run to completion.



Figure 1. Molly looks at herself in the mirror. Scene 26



Figure 2. Molly exits bathroom, view of church, sound of bells. Scene 26 continued.

On paper I was happy with this ending and felt that it provided a more ‘film appropriate’ way to end the film. Once I had this scene my musical instinct was to ensure that this scene could be incorporated in a compositional way to the overall form. By taking this scene and interpreting it as a musical gesture or theme (this conceptual side-step again demonstrating Bowman’s ‘intermodal transfer’) specific musical concepts could now be applied to generate further material. In this case I chose to create a new scene by subjecting this material to a kind of theme and variation and inversion.

In music theme and variation is a specific kind of form, most common in the romantic classical period, in which a composer will write a theme and then repeat it in varied form. There are many tools a composer can use to provide or influence the variation such as melody, key, time signature, rhythm, chords, texture, instrumentation etc. In the case of the above example from *A Priest in the Family* the primary tools I’ve exploited in providing the variation were via the location, the spatial and the aural elements of the scene.

The following table outlines the theme and variation pertaining to the example being discussed:

	Scene 1 - <u>Theme</u>	Scene 2- <u>Variation</u>
Location	Bathroom in foreground, Church in background (Fig. 1 & 2)	Office in foreground, school yard in background (Fig. 3)
Spatial elements	(i) CU Face, blocking background. (Fig. 1) (ii) Exits frame, revealing background (view through window frame. Fig. 2)	(i) view of background (view through window frame, Fig.3) (ii) enters frame, CU back of head (Fig. 4) (iii) Exits frame, revealing background a second time (view through window frame)
Aural elements	Bathroom sounds followed by sounds of church bells	Office sounds followed by sounds of school bell

The inversions that took place relate to the spatial elements, in this case the choreography of the scene, which was reversed, i.e., the scene *starts with a view* out the window, (Fig. 3) the character enters and looks out, now blocking our view. (remember the previous scene begins with the character already in frame and blocking the audiences view out the window from the outset). The position of the character is thus inverted; looking out the window instead of down the barrel of the camera. (Fig. 4) We (the audience) see the back of his head initially (instead of the face). A *variation* occurs on the level of location and sound. The church grounds of the first gesture have become the schoolyard in this new scene. The bell of the church in our first gesture becomes the school bell of the next image. One more variation occurs when he exits frame leaving us with the view of the schoolyard and sound of the school bell calling the kids to class. By doing so, this extends the original scene by one choreographic gesture, if you like, creating a variation in rhythm.

One final compositional application completes the new scene. The original scene described is the final image in the film. The compositional impulse dictates that our new scene (variation) becomes the first image of the film. This creates a formal coherence; a bookending of the work, a 'frame' within which the world of the film can unfold.

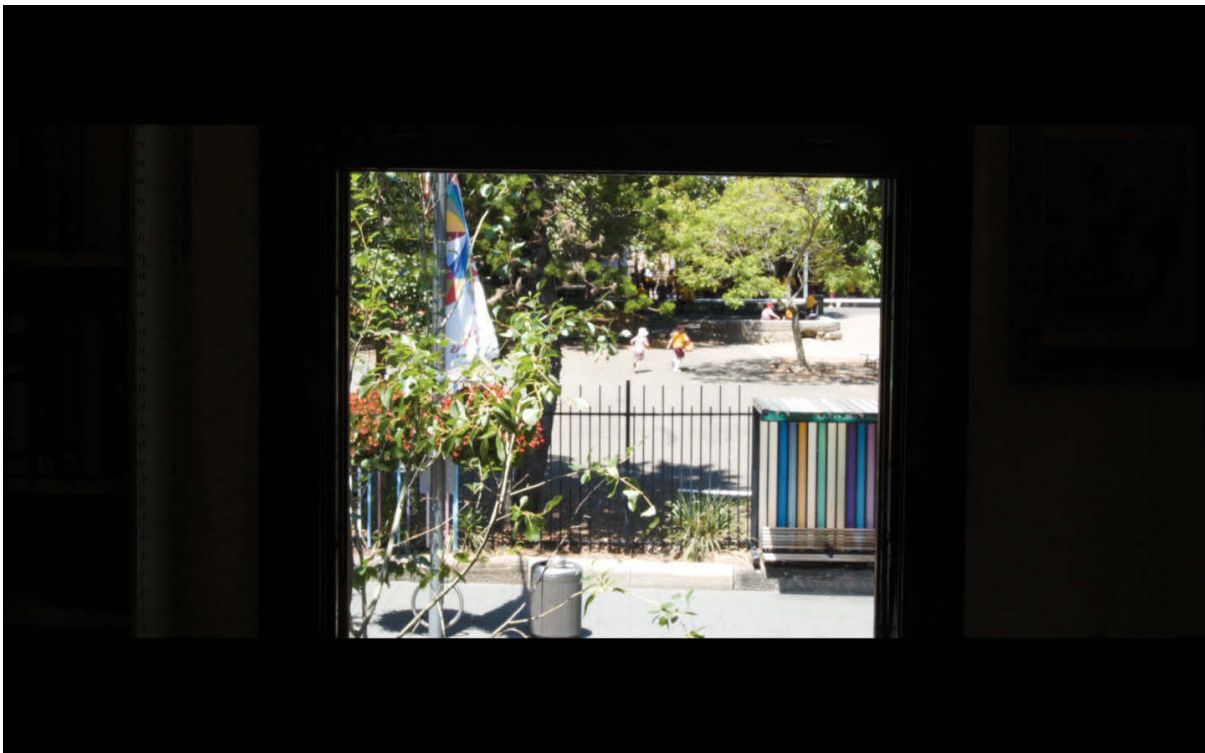


Figure 3. A view of school kids playing.

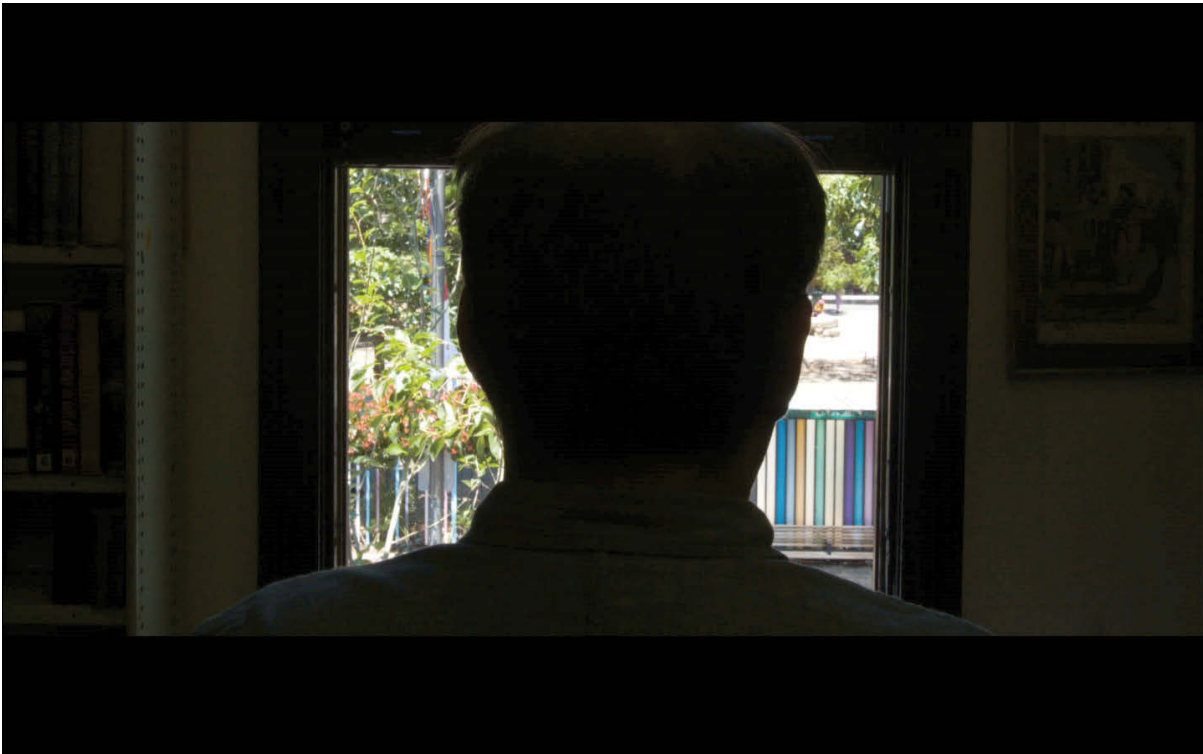


Figure 4. Frank enters (view from behind) observes kids leaving playground, school bell rings out

The ‘composing’ of this second scene, which provides the film with complimentary material, I attribute wholly to a type of musical thought.

Of course by applying these musical concepts, further narrative implications become evident. Without going into lengthy analysis, these could be summarized as follows:

1. the *variation* in sound (the different bells) is significant to each character and the narrative
2. The *inversion* of the close up (front-on versus rear view) and the literal and metaphoric implications of this.
3. The *variation* of view: the schoolyard versus the church and what they represent in the context of the narrative.

I should point out here that unfortunately this sequence ended up on the cutting room floor due to a technical problem with the footage, not discovered until we got to the editing stage. Nonetheless, for the purpose of our discussion, it clearly demonstrates how new material is generated in the writing stage via a specific application of musical thought. In this sense the

application of musical thought could also be considered a generative strategy. For an investigation of a number of sequences that are in the film see chapter 6 – Editing the film.

4.3 Intermodal Interpretations

I'd now like to highlight an example from contemporary cinema of what I see as a cinematic sequence that in my mind displays strong evidence of the 'intermodal transfer' that this thesis champions.

Syndromes and a Century (2006) is a feature film by acclaimed Thai experimental filmmaker, Apichatpong Weerasethakul that presents a series of languid scenes loosely based around the first meeting of his doctor parents before the filmmaker was born. (see track on accompanying DVD)

The sequence in question comes about two thirds of the way through the film and lasts about two and a half minutes. By my account the filmmaker is demonstrably applying choreographic schemata to filmic materials and as such the sequence sits equally at home in the field of contemporary dance. The following description outlines this choreographic interpretation but I should say that architectural and musical interpretations are also plausible.

The scene is bookended at either end by four tracking shots of statue/monuments (two at each end) followed by a series of groups of bodies moving along an outdoor walkway in either direction. At first it's the point of view of the protagonist observing a large group being led in formation on a kind of exercise walk. In a series of tracking and dolly shots, this opposite movement of bodies passing each other is highlighted. There follows a mundane sequence of a group of six nurses entering the walkway just as the large group we've previously seen has passed by. All dressed in white, the nurse at the back of the group stops to tie her shoelace. Two nurses in front turn to wait but the nurse tying her lace gestures for them to continue. (Fig. 5) This ostensibly banal gesture is rendered entirely enigmatic by inversion and repetition. From the opposite direction come another group of six, this time dressed in blue and now we see the exact same choreography played out: the man at the end stops to tie his shoe lace and he too gestures the group to not bother waiting for him. (Fig. 6) The groups then pass each other before the scene finishes with the 2 statue tracking shots previously mentioned



Figure 5. *Syndromes and a Century*, example 1

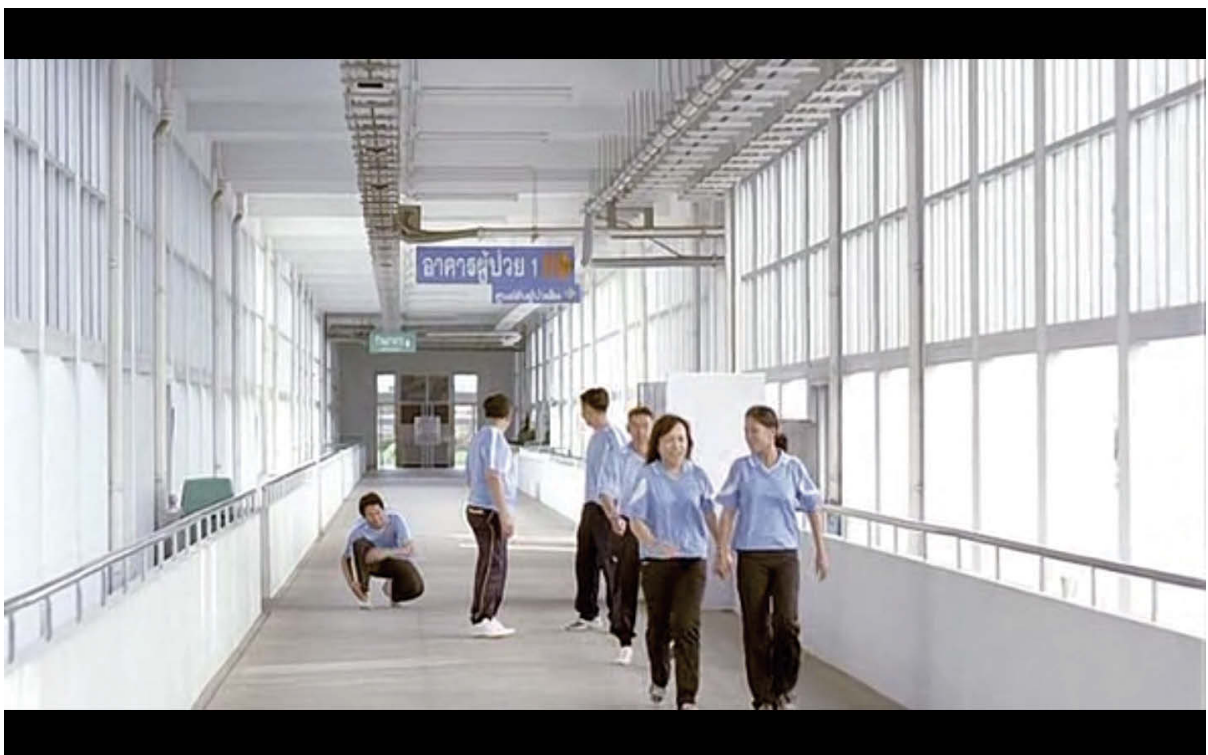


Figure 6. *Syndromes and a Century*, example 2

The act of applying inversion/repetition to a group of bodies moving through space is directly from the tool kit of a contemporary choreographer. The whole scene displays a choreographic impulse with detailed attention to movement within and of the frame.

Whatever can be said about this sequence (and the scene certainly allows a number of open-ended interpretations) it undoubtedly owes more to textbook choreography than to textbook narrative filmmaking in that it completely eschews the notion that each scene or detail must move a plot forward – a notion that continues to be emphasised in many film schools.

This kind of sensibility in a narrative film context comes as a shock (a very pleasant one) and provides both forms – narrative cinema and contemporary dance – with alternative ways of looking at form, genre and inter-media.

Beyond this scene the film as a whole offers some unique structural features that allow for further types of intermodal interpretation. While it is not in the scope of this thesis to fully explore that avenue there is no doubt potential for further research along these lines. In any case the example here points to a larger potential in this idea of intermodal interpretation. One in which other forms and genres (beyond the music to moving image nexus that this thesis explores) can also be examined for their intermodal drifts, therefore expanding our understanding of how different genres can cross-pollinate and the intermedia field in general.

The previous chapters have examined the area of pre-production in moving image creation. I now turn to the production stage of moving image and examine how further aspects of musical intuition come to bear during this stage of the process.

Chapter 5: Lights, Camera, Action: Musical Performance and Film Production

There are a number of specialised tasks that come into play during the production of any moving image work. The following chapter engages with this area of moving image production and investigates how a variety of musical concepts come to bear throughout this stage. A number of analogies are drawn between musical intuition and process and specific image production tasks with a view to once again demonstrate that musical knowledge can provide more than a sufficient framework upon which to approach the creation of moving image.

5.1 The Camera as Instrument

As previously mentioned my first introduction to the world of film occurred when I was given a camera in the process of collaborating with a film artist colleague. While the initial intention of this project was for me to devise a soundtrack for the finished work, my colleague and I thought that it would be an interesting variation for me to experiment with a Super 8 camera as potential extra visual material.

At the time I was on tour as percussionist/composer in Brazil with Circus Oz and here I began my first tentative steps with this new (for me) technology. Initially I felt quite confused and intimidated by the camera. How does it work? What could I, as a musician, possibly bring to it? Is there any point to this? I'm not a filmmaker. I'm a musician. I persevered and began filming what caught my eye in this foreign environment. In doing so, bit by bit, the 'machine' began to sit more comfortably in my hands. As I became familiar with the controls my understanding of the implications of these controls grew: aperture, shutter speed, film iso, focus and so on, that is, the stuff of photography. I gradually became more interested in the area and the required technical depth felt familiar in the sense that it was not unlike the technical depth required of mastering an instrument or grasping the intricacies of harmony.

It was this line of thinking that led me to the real conceptual breakthrough with respect to the camera: that here was a device that could be approached exactly like a musical instrument. That is, as an object with certain intrinsic parameters in which the 'music' lay in exploring and pushing against the natural limitations that these parameters provided. My approach to musical instrument had always been along these lines; an approach akin to first cataloguing

these intrinsic parameters and then investigating a kind of push and pull against them. For example if one intrinsic parameter of most percussion instruments is that they're primarily involved in the production of staccato sounds, how then might one go about producing sounds of a legato nature? It is in the attempt of answering such a question that the music is created. Its success or otherwise is in fact irrelevant as the primary purpose of this type of investigation is to uncover the 'dispositif' (Martin 2011) of the enterprise.⁸

The notion of wielding a camera as a musical instrument has some parallels in recent screenwriting discourse, where the concept of writing seems to have opened up 'beyond the container of the page' (Maras 2009). Filmmakers and scholars are discovering that the popular concept of the screenplay as is currently practiced in mainstream cinema; that is a written 3-act structure with its rigid separation of concept and execution is, historically speaking, something of an aberration. A closer look at historic practices highlights a myriad of approaches in which the primacy of the separate written document is shattered and the roles of concept and execution are much more closely aligned. These notions are being reclaimed as the sophistication of digital technologies become more refined.

French critic and filmmaker Alexander Astruc, active in the middle of the 20th century, introduced the idea of writing with the camera, coining the term 'camera-stylo' (camera-pen) (Astruc 1948). Kathryn Millard explains the influence Astruc had on filmmakers of the time:

Jean Rouch, who's body of work can be seen as a response to this idea, aimed to create the world in front of his camera, describing his camera and microphone 'as indispensable as a notepad and pencil' (Millard 2014, p. 45)

This comes from Millard's recent book *Screenwriting in the Digital Era*, which is dedicated to uncovering alternative ways filmmakers, from all over the world, have approached screenwriting. The result is a much more holistic view where the boundaries between pre-production, production and post-production are more often than not blurred. In her text, the roles of collage, improvisation, re-mixing, impressions, fragments and performing all become sites for and of scripting.

⁸ Martin picks apart the concept of *dispositif* in this excellent article. First suggesting that it is a recasting of the 70's film theory term 'apparatus' he goes on to explain it as both a conceit (like the literary conceits of Georges Perec) and a machine. Often generated from exclusions or rules—'refusals to play by this or that convention deemed corrupt or ossified by the filmmaker.... 'But we must immediately insist that a dispositif is not a mechanistic or rigid formal system: it is more like an aesthetic guide-track that is as open to variation, surprise or artful contradiction as the filmmaker (who sets it in motion) decrees.'

Clearly, the idea of 'camera as instrument' sits comfortably within this more expansive approach and scholars like Millard and Maras reinforce this through a wealth of contemporary and historic examples.

5.2 Actors and Crew as a Band/Ensemble

The concept of a 'film band' is something that I have been pursuing since my side step from music to moving image. In writing, directing and producing *A Priest in the Family* I set about forming a 'film band' to reach this goal. Most of my previous moving image work had been on a much smaller scale and I knew to complete this more ambitious project that I would need to recruit a larger pool of talent. I'd already formed a 'duo' with cinematographer Sean Morris who had been a collaborator on a number of smaller projects. For this larger project I set about gathering a larger 'band' of collaborators, each with their own specific skills that would be needed to see the project to completion.

One might say that identifying this particular task as 'forming a film band' is simply another way of going about the standard pre-production task of hiring cast and crew for a given shoot. To a certain extent this may be the case and I acknowledge the difference is largely conceptual however in my mind this doesn't at all detract from its importance. In fact I would argue that approaching this particular task with this mind set provides distinct advantages. Firstly, if I'm forming a band to play music together there's the inherent assumption that the group will continue beyond one piece of music or one performance to tackle numerous musical and performing opportunities in the future. Taking this approach to the task of hiring cast and crew is a much more satisfying way of conceptualising the task and again it allows me to actively draw on hard won experience in the process of developing moving image works.

Also a band that continues to work together will develop increasingly close relationships which in turn foster risk taking and improvisation; in my mind a far more preferable way of working. Millard discusses:

...the example of four improvising musicians who had not previously played together. The musicians began working with highly structured songs, which provided minimal opportunities for improvising. They only began improvising when they were more comfortable working together. (Millard 2014)

Millard is citing this in support of her larger thesis of an expanded definition of screenwriting. This of course demonstrates a precedent for the exact enterprise I'm engaged with of reaching into the domain of music to highlight filmic processes.

In fact the history of cinema is filled with examples of continued and ongoing relationships between directors, actors and crew that easily could be considered as a fulfillment of the band model. In any case I can certainly attest to the benefit of having access to actors and crew who understand your goals and processes that close relationships afford. It enables a more efficient pathway into the work with less effort expended in explaining an intended outcome or goal.

5.3 The Performance Moment – Setting Time Alight

The skills involved in rehearsing a group of musicians to the point where they are ready and able to perform a given piece of music, whether composed or improvised, have a number of parallels to readying a group of actors and crew for the moment when the camera rolls. The intense collaborative nature of this process and all the relational demands are familiar to both forms.

Reflecting further on the idea of the performance moment there is a very real similarity between the 'count in' of the band (or the establishment of tempo by the conductor) to what is sometimes referred to as 'calling the finals' – that process of locking down the set in the lead up to the call of 'Action'. For the uninitiated, this is usually called aloud by the Assistant Director in the lead up to the camera rolling. While there is some variation, a typical sequence goes something like this: "Quiet on set. Roll sound (wait for confirmation). Roll camera (wait for confirmation). Mark it. (the clapper loader calls the take number and claps for sync) Action".

What is happening here when the percussionist counts in and the 1st AD calls action? From the perspective of music I've often thought of this moment as a kind of ignition; time gets set alight. I would suggest that this treatment of time, marking it out and setting it alight, is in fact one of the defining elements of music.

Of course we talk of music, the performing arts and moving image as being time-based arts. There are a variety of nuances at play in the way these different art forms approach and deal with the issue of time and it's beyond the scope of this study to entertain these at length. However, as I see it, the nuances of the way time is approached primarily relate to the concept of rhythm and this metaphor of setting time alight seems particularly apt for the two events I'm discussing. In thinking about rhythm I remind the reader of the more expansive concept of rhythm discussed in chapter 1 which defines it beyond the usual notions of pulse or periodicity while emphasising the role of duration.

There can be no doubt that the method of slicing up time into rhythmic units or the application of pulse in the way that is largely specific to music provides the form with its singular essence and it's this specific notion that provides the spark (if you will) for my 'setting alight' metaphor. Nonetheless the metaphor also sits comfortably in the more expansive rhythmic definition where the role of duration is foregrounded (much music after all survives without distinct pulse) and it is here where the analogy extends easily into the domain of moving image production and the performance moment.

Naturally there are very literal similarities between the recording of a piece of music and the recording of video or film based on the fact of hitting the record button and capturing a moment in time, a similarity, which doesn't extend to theatrical performance work. From my experience the essence of this recording moment feels remarkably similar between music and moving image. Hitting (and at some point stopping) record 'ignites' time in a way that serves to give the performance moment a very sharp frame in which the collaborative time-based events unfold. The important point to highlight here is that this is quite different to the experience of other time-based works in particular live theatre. It's not to say that many theatre works don't have clearly defined beginnings and endings (the lights go down, the show begins etc.) however I'd argue that these beginnings and endings don't have the same hard edge of a recording session. Going into record is unequivocal in terms of the frame it provides. There is no ambiguity or porousness with this frame, whereas it's the very 'liveness' of theatre that gives a softer edge to its beginnings and endings. Yes, the lights have gone down, the show has begun, but the fact of the audience - shuffling programs and coughing, not to mention the space in which the theatrical event takes place with the boundary between performer and audience always ripe with potential to dissolve – makes theatrical time feel a little closer to real life than a time set alight.

Once the performance moment is in progress, a slice of time gets carved out, if you like, which I would suggest is entirely analogous to a band improvising on a piece of music. In any case, this is certainly how I make sense of this moment. As I will outline below, having extensive experience as a performer, improviser and composer provides useful expertise when required to direct actors. A large component of my earlier musical output was as an improvising musician in both solo and ensemble contexts. Sometimes improvisations would occur on a theme and other times they would be 'free'. In all cases however it would be necessary to bring to the table a very specific quality of attention to allow for spontaneous and relevant decision making while drawing on the practice and experience built over time. One of the ways this quality of attention gets foregrounded is by the 'setting alight' that the count in or the calling the finals provides.

On the set of *A Priest in the Family* we encouraged a variety of improvisational approaches, (see Appendix 2: screenshot of email to actors) all of which I drew on my experience as an improvising musician to devise. One such example, while not making the final cut of the film, has developed into a discreet work of its own. Thinking of the more free style ensemble improvisations I had experienced as a musician, I asked the actors to improvise a scene. I provided them with starting point and nothing more. Of course they had their characters and the overall context of the narrative world to work with. Otherwise no dialogue or direction was given beyond this. The result is *Homecoming* (see track on accompanying DVD), a 5-minute, single-take film of 3 siblings attempting to confront the unfathomable. With no script material to work with the only way the actors could make it work was to be fully present in the moment and to work with what came up, just as in music improvisation.

Regardless of how detailed a screenplay is and regardless of how detailed a musical score is both an actor and musician will fill in the gaps during the performance moment. This function of improvisation and interpretation, common to both forms, is essential due to the limitations of both musical notation and screenplay. Of course the variety of detail and style in both screenplays and musical scores is vast but even in the most detailed notation and the most detailed of screenplays, the necessity of interpretation on behalf of both actor and musician remains.

The discussion around adherence to a text/score and the role of performance/interpretation has long been a contested one, however by the second half of the 20th century, Hans-Georg Gadamer, one of the heavyweights of hermeneutics theory, rightly suggested that any effort

to canonize the 'text' would be a failure of interpretation. Interestingly, in the context of this research, his comments regarding this, link music and drama:

Thus we do not allow the interpretation of a piece of music or a drama the freedom to take the fixed "text" as a basis for arbitrary, ad-lib effects, and yet we would regard the canonization of a particular interpretation – e.g., in a recorded performance conducted by the composer, or the detailed notes on performance which come from the canonized first performance – as a failure to appreciate the real task of interpretation. A "correctness" striven for in this way would not do justice to the true binding nature of the work, which imposes itself on every interpreter immediately, in its own way, and does not allow him to make things easy for himself by simply imitating a model.

(Gadamer, Weinsheimer & Marshall 2004)

It may be suggested that while interpretation is necessary to both music and drama, questions remain with respect to the nature of interpretation due to the radically different makeup of the original 'texts'. In other words, yes, a screenplay and music score both need actors and musicians to interpret them, but where are the commonalities between the types of interpreting taking place? Here, I return again to the time-based commonality between the two mediums and suggest that the quality of attention and the complex decision making required for both activities is very similar. Consider the following passage from Kjell Gunnar Nordeson's 2013 thesis on improvisation in music, describing the kind of attention a musician needs to bring to performance:

He or she needs to be aware of the musical material, the instrument, maintaining an adequate picture of past trajectory and potential progression ahead in order to make decisions in the present. (Nordeson 2013)

Substitute 'musical material' for 'screenplay' and 'the instrument' for 'their body' and this sounds remarkably similar to the quality of attention an actor needs to bring to a performance.

Much of the recent scholarship around performance (both music and dramatic) draws on cognitive science, which challenges traditional mind/body split dualism. In fact recent scholarship in both music performance and acting have drawn on exactly the same cognitive studies in reaching for root processes at play in this kind of activity. The 'somatic marker' hypothesis developed by leading neuroscientist, Antonio Damasio (2000), investigates how

complex decisions are made, by incorporating emotional processes as well as cognitive ones. Elizabeth Carlin-Metz in discussing how an actor responds to a text says:

Develop(ing) this ability entails leading actors through experiences that focus the consciousness onto the sensations of the body and thereby its proprioceptors – sensory nerve receptors situated in the muscles, tendons and joints – and encouraging the students to recognize and validate the sensory information derived from these impulses. Dr. Antonio Damasio refers to such instances of physical knowing as ‘somatic markers’ (Carlin-Metz 2013)

And recent music scholarship, also borrowing from the cognitive sciences, draws on the exact same theory:

In his book *Descartes’ Error*, the neuroscientist Antonio Damasio, lays out a persuasive theory of the interplay between emotions and reason, and how the result is manifested in bodily sensations. He calls these manifestations somatic markers, and their function is to maximize our accuracy in perception and decision-making. (Nordeson 2013)

And in discussing how an improvising musician approaches the task of ‘in the moment’ decision making, Nordeson continues a little latter:

While making music, different parts of our bodies, including our brain, are in constant communication. Our bodies give and receive orders, and our senses, muscles, reflections, and anticipations are intertwined. When performing, a musician’s body is on high alert; muscles and nerves employ a sensitivity honed during thousands of hours of practicing, creating nuances in dynamics and phrasing, timing and accents. Damasio clarifies in what ways a healthy brain-body configuration is crucial to our creativity. (Nordeson 2013)

Examples in recent music performance and acting scholarship where the same studies are cited are in fact numerous. The qualities of attention required for both disciplines occur in a very similar realm. Here, the similarities and synergies at play between this aspect of music and moving image (as illustrated by the above studies) demonstrate that, as a body of knowledge, music can provide a perfect point of reference to draw from when working with actors and crew on set.

5.4 Long takes and embodied rhythms

A Priest in the Family contains several long takes, the longest of which is 6 minutes and in articulating its form the film largely revolves around longer takes. *Homecoming*, which as mentioned came out of the shoot for *A Priest in the Family*, is also essentially a single take film. In developing the shot list for *A Priest in the Family* my stated aim was to try and get each scene in a single shot. I expressly tried to avoid the 'shot – reverse – shot' approach of much narrative story telling while also eschewing the close-up as much as possible.

What lies behind this preference? Andre Bazin in *What is Cinema* (Bazin 2004) suggests that the use of a long take introduces a sense of 'ambiguity into the structure of the image' (Bazin 2004) which 'compels the spectator to make his own choice' (Bazin 2004). This is clearly the case and it is an aspect of the long take that I welcome but I do wish to emphasise that my particular relationship to the long take again takes its cue from music.

Firstly, this inclination comes from a musical performers' sensibility. In music, there is no equivalent of the close-up, or put another way, space can only be simulated. Variations in texture and volume can represent distance, direction and movement but it always remains an abstract representation. Furthermore, in musical performance these textural and dynamic variations are in the control of the musician and unfold in real-time. In shooting *A Priest in the Family* (as in a lot of my moving image) I've attempted to transfer this phenomenon to moving image production. I gave the actors freedom to move within a designated space and suggested that moving in and out of frame was perfectly fine. I was more interested in providing the actors with an open-ended approach where we (the crew) would avoid interrupting a scene with variations in camera set-ups and lighting and where the actors, just like musicians, can control the pacing and dynamics of a scene. This allows the actors to approach a scene in much the same way as a musician can approach the performance of a piece of music, that is, as a whole, discreet unit to be performed from beginning to end. This serves to maintain a continuum of temporal/rhythmic expression and forces the actors to embody the rhythm of the scene, the text, the space and the other performers in a way that feels true to music performance.

Furthermore the idea of playing a scene independently of what the camera is doing pushes the role of the camera closer to that of a microphone in music recording. Also from this perspective, there is much more a sense when shooting a long take of being part of an

improvising ensemble. When the camera rolls on a long take, the camerawork is, like the music, a subjective reaction to unfolding events, an improvisation with no retakes.

From the point of view of the audience there is a musical logic at work here as well. The listener of a piece of music can always choose how and where to focus their attention. I am interested to provide a viewer with an experience that is congruous to that, where they can choose to focus their attention without the interruption of multiple cuts and camera angles. Moving from a wide shot to a close up, as practiced in classic continuity editing, is an instance of an author deciding what a spectator should focus on and in that sense denies them other alternatives.

Certainly there are a numerous ways to discuss these many small decisions when shooting a film. In a nutshell what we are talking about here is a practice that allows and encourages musical concepts to influence the mise-en-scène.

Chapter 6: Post Production – Editing the film

In a documentary on the art of editing Sally Menke, best known for her editing on many of Quentin Tarantino's films, talks of the film starting 'to sing' (2004) when all the elements in an edit begin to come together. It seems relevant to note that I've come across many editors who were ex percussionists which again points to the fact that having musical skills and in particular a rhythmic specialisation comes as a distinct advantage in the editing room. This has certainly been my experience with the process of editing. The difference between a sequence starting 'to sing' and a lump of clumsy, unusable images can be (and often is) as little as one frame. In the effort to describe the task of editing, it's common for people to reach for musical analogies. Eisenstein, in his classic work on film theory, often makes explicit the debt owed to music. In articulating his famous theory of montage he reaches for a variety of musical analogies when clarifying the finer points of metric, rhythmic, tonal and overtone montage (Eisenstein & Leyda 1957). Later essays continue his interest in the relationship between image and music, and in unpacking the questions posed by audio-visual combinations suggests a

'solution to this compositional problem lies in finding a key to the measured matching of a strip of music and a strip of picture; such measured matching as would enable us to unite both strips "vertically" or simultaneously: matching each continuous musical phrase with each phase of the continuing parallel picture strips – our shots'
(Eisenstein, 1957)

How to manage the meeting of image and sound and the resulting affects crops up again and again in Eisenstein's writing. Borrowing or referencing musical language in these discussions can be useful however in examining the application of musical intuition to the editing of moving image, a key concept with respect my own practice is the kinaesthetic understanding of rhythm which Eisenstein's theories don't cover. This concept is examined in some detail in the first section of chapter 6.

As noted in the introduction to this research it is the commonalities of time between film and music, and all that results from this, that provide the most immediate or obvious analogy between the two forms. Both music and moving image are time-based arts and as such must account for time as an inalienable fact in its final form. How time is accounted for will in large part provide a music or moving image work with its singularity.

The aspect of moving image where time gets most thoroughly accounted for is in the editing process and my agenda in this chapter is again to highlight how quite specific musical skills are not only consciously employed but arguably come as a big advantage when editing moving image. In particular a deep understanding of rhythm and its various applications constantly come into play. Further to this a broader understanding of musical composition comes as an invaluable adjunct in piecing an edit together. I will look at instances in the editing of *A Priest in the Family* where these aspects came into play. Further to this I will analyse the creation of my most recent work, *Music for Sprockets*, a work in progress which exploits a musical treatment of rhythm with respect to its form.

Today, early in the 21st century, there are a myriad of potential strategies and processes that can be used to compose music. From traditional notes on paper, to sounding out chords and melodies on a piano, to spontaneous improvised composition in rehearsal or performance, to computer based electronic composition, or indeed any combination of these approaches. Certainly it would be fair to say that as in just about every other field in modern life the computer has become a central feature of music making whether it be as a simple notator to much more complex interactions of hardware and software used to generate sounds and structures. And so it is with film editing. The trajectory being from a linear style of editing using strips of film on a Steenbeck or Moviola to today's non-linear digital editing systems where, as well as piecing a movie together from source camera footage, it's also possible to generate images and environments using computer generated imagery (CGI) and 3D technology.

6.1 Rhythm and Composition – A Priest in the Family

As outlined in chapter 4 when discussing *A Priest in the Family*, compositional ideas were used as a generative strategy for the writing process in pre-production. Now in post-production rhythmic skills are applied compositionally and employed in the process of shaping a final edit.

On an instinctual level, I would suggest that having specific musical skills are a huge advantage and they are constantly coming in to play in the area of film editing. Why might that be?

A cursory glance at the literature of film editing, both theoretical and technical, reveals again and again references to the importance of rhythm in editing. Rarely though do these texts attempt any thorough analysis of what rhythm might actually mean with respect to the cutting of moving image. An exception is Karen Pearlman's book, *Cutting Rhythms* (Pearlman 2009). Pearlman, who is an educator, academic and editor, draws extensively on other disciplines, in particular dance and neurology (Pearlman is a former dancer) in an effort to define the rhythmic concept as it applies to film editing. In that sense there are a number of parallels here between Pearlman's analysis and the task I've set myself with this research in that we are both reaching into other previously practiced disciplines in an effort to clarify processes and practices in another discipline. Her book came out of a desire to try to fill a gap in the theory of editing which often acknowledges rhythm as a defining technique but rarely provides satisfactory or in depth analysis of exactly what this means.

If scholars have found the task of defining rhythm as it applies to music difficult then it's no surprise that applying the concept to film complicates matters further.

As discussed in chapter 1 the concept of rhythm is indeed broad and in no way is it limited to the experience of music and sound. It is equally common to refer to rhythm in an image, in architecture, biorhythms, rhythms of movement and so on. Akbar puts it succinctly when he says:

I do maintain that rhythm, which, unlike melody (as most of us understand it), is not only audible but visible and available to touch and kinesthesia. (Akbar 2013)

For the purpose of my discussion, the key aspects I'm emphasising here are these less often mentioned, visible and kinesthetic sides to rhythm (not at the expense, of course, of aural rhythm). What Akbar is doing here is explaining that an understanding of musical rhythm (indeed an understanding of music) is bound up with this more expansive sense of what rhythm actually is. This very musical skill - working with visual, kinesthetic and aural rhythm – is exactly the same skill one uses to shape an edit, on both a macro and micro level.

Pearlman also refers to the kinesthetic throughout her tract on editing. As well as citing research on mirror neurons she coins the term 'kinesthetic empathy' to describe what editors do:

Kinesthetic empathy is feeling with movement, a sensitivity we have developed by perceiving and being movement and a sensitivity that, I propose, is particularly relevant to editors of moving pictures. (Pearlman 2009)

On *A Priest in the Family*, as well as finding a solution to the first and last shots which we had lost due to technical problems, (as discussed in chapter 4) this idea of finding a rhythm became the central task of the edit. That is, rhythms large and small and rhythms on a macro and micro level. One of the ways this was achieved and maintained in the film was through a repetitive type of *modulation*. We had shot a number of exterior landscapes. This was classic 'B-Roll' material, that is, non-scripted shots of the location in which the film took place. Figures 7 and 8 show two examples.

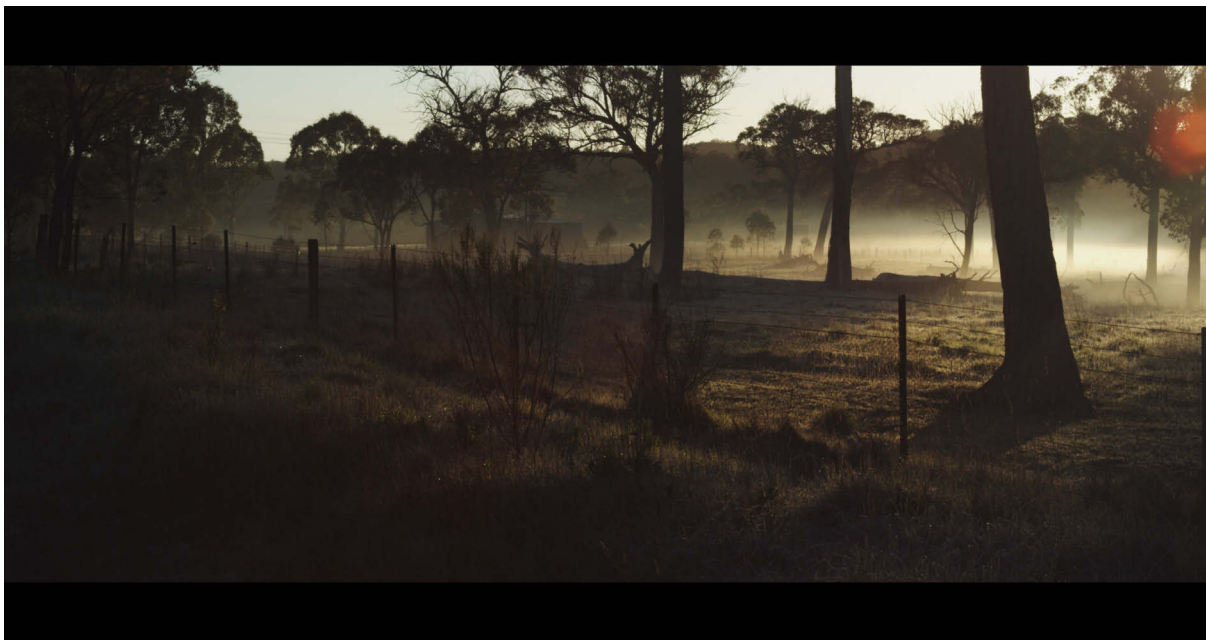


Figure 7. Priest in the Family, B-Roll, Landscape 1



Figure 8. Priest in the Family, B-Roll, Landscape 2

Due to the fairly consistent way in which these were shot I was able to use these as a kind of transitional modulation between the many dialogue scenes. These in turn became rhythmic/structural devices and helped give the film shape. The use of the word ‘modulation’ here is deliberately suggestive of its musical implications. In music, the word modulation can mean a number of things but it usually describes a harmonic tool where there is a shift in key. The purpose is to effect a change in the emotional register of the piece of music. In the case of *A Priest in the Family*, this was exactly the purpose these shots served – to effect a change in the emotional register. Specifically, they *modulated* the film back and forward between the human drama and the indifferent landscape upon which these events took place. Their repetition throughout the film acted as a series of rhythmic pillars upon which the rest of the film was structured. Each time they appeared they occupied a similar amount of screen time thus reinforcing their rhythmic consistency. Furthermore they provided the solution to the first and last shots I was looking which in turn set the tone for the rhythmic experiences I’m describing.

Interestingly, this use of the word modulation with respect to filmic events is not without precedent. Edward Branigan, in an analysis of the great Yasujiro Ozu’s use of space in *Equinox Flower* points out that:

In his later work Ozu does not use fades and dissolves. The Ozu transition, instead, consists of outdoor space...that as a unit, open and close the film as well as operate

between the scenes. In *Equinox Flower* only two of the thirty scenes are not enclosed by transitional spaces. The transition device of Ozu is called a 'coda' by Paul Shrader, but the more precise musical analogy is the 'modulation'. (Branigan 1976)

Given my love of Ozu's cinema the synergy of this is not surprising although if my use of landscapes in *A Priest in the Family* bear resemblance then it was certainly not done consciously. The main interest here I would suggest is the appearance of an explicit musical analogy in a film analysis - one of the few examples I've uncovered – revealing both a precedent for the ideas espoused by this research and, by virtue of the scarcity of such references, an opportunity to explore in greater detail these 'intermodal interpretations'.

I've described above one of the key structural elements of *A Priest in the Family*, created in the edit via applying specific musical/rhythmic concepts. My main point here is that in achieving this I'm yet again drawing on a musical intuition honed over many years having experienced a wide variety of musical environments.

As previously mentioned, my interest and goal in any given moving image work is to approach a state of music. One of the tasks I set myself in editing *A Priest in the Family* was to avoid the use of non-diegetic music. While I'm not totally against its use (each edit must be open to all possibilities) I have for many years railed against it. I raise this as I suspect this inclination sheds a tangential light on what I mean when saying 'to approach a state of music' and also on the research more broadly.

Given my previous immersion in the music world some might (and have) assume that my joint interest in music and moving image would prompt a certain approach to practice along the lines of the music video or visual music, however it is at a more embodied level and at the level of approaches to creative practice and process where I seek to apply musical concepts.

As outlined in chapter 1 and re-enforced throughout this thesis, the most fundamental aspect to music is in fact rhythm so it stands to reason then that rhythm, in all its guises, is the key thing to bring out in the edit. When I say that the goal is for the work to 'approach a state of music', I mean the totality of the work combined, i.e. the sound, the image, the mise-en-scene, the rhythm. My feeling is that simply adding a completed piece of music over this would dilute this goal. Also, in the case of *A Priest in the Family*, I felt that the story was so

emotionally loaded and the subject matter so murky that using non-diegetic music risked suggesting a clarity of emotion that was simply not in the original story and would play against the more open ended interpretation I was striving for.

6.2 Rhythm and Composition – Music for Sprockets

Music for Sprockets (see final track on accompanying DVD) is an attempt to consciously extend the ideas presented in this research by ‘composing’ a ‘piece of music’ using purely visual material. By isolating small fragments of hand processed images and submitting it to visual and rhythmic repetition I’m seeking to create a work that in some ways could be seen as the purist expression of this research. With no sound at all it nonetheless aspires to the musical in both the process of its creation and in its realisation.

A closer look at the structural organisation of the work reveals the musical thinking at its heart. Four small fragments of hand-processed 16mm film were chosen to work with. The selection of this material explicitly avoided any images of representation, instead choosing small fragments of film which effectively were processing mistakes in that the chemicals hadn’t acted upon them in the ‘correct’ way.

In creating this work I’ve submitted these fragments to a process of repetition and theme and variation. The goal here was to arrive at a structure that can be felt or identified as having a formal coherence in a way similar to a simple musical form.

The following illustrations show stills of the 4 images I chose to work with:

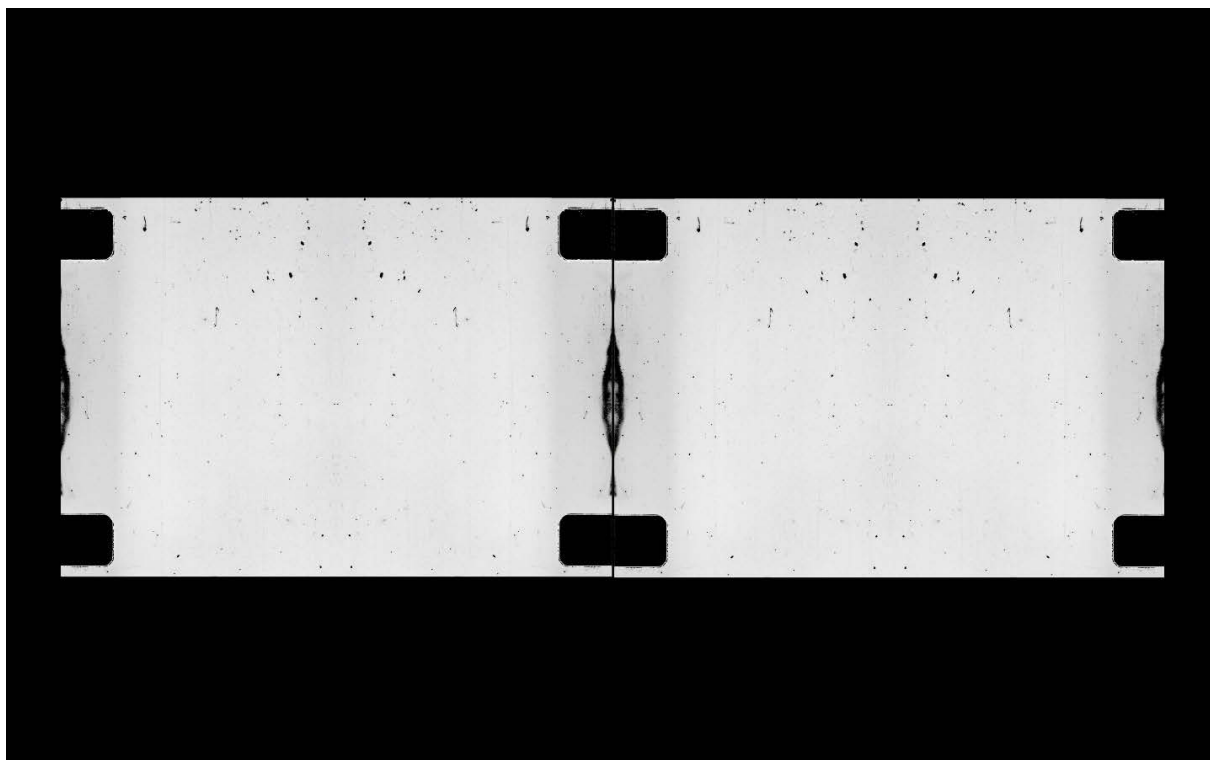


Figure 9: Fragment A

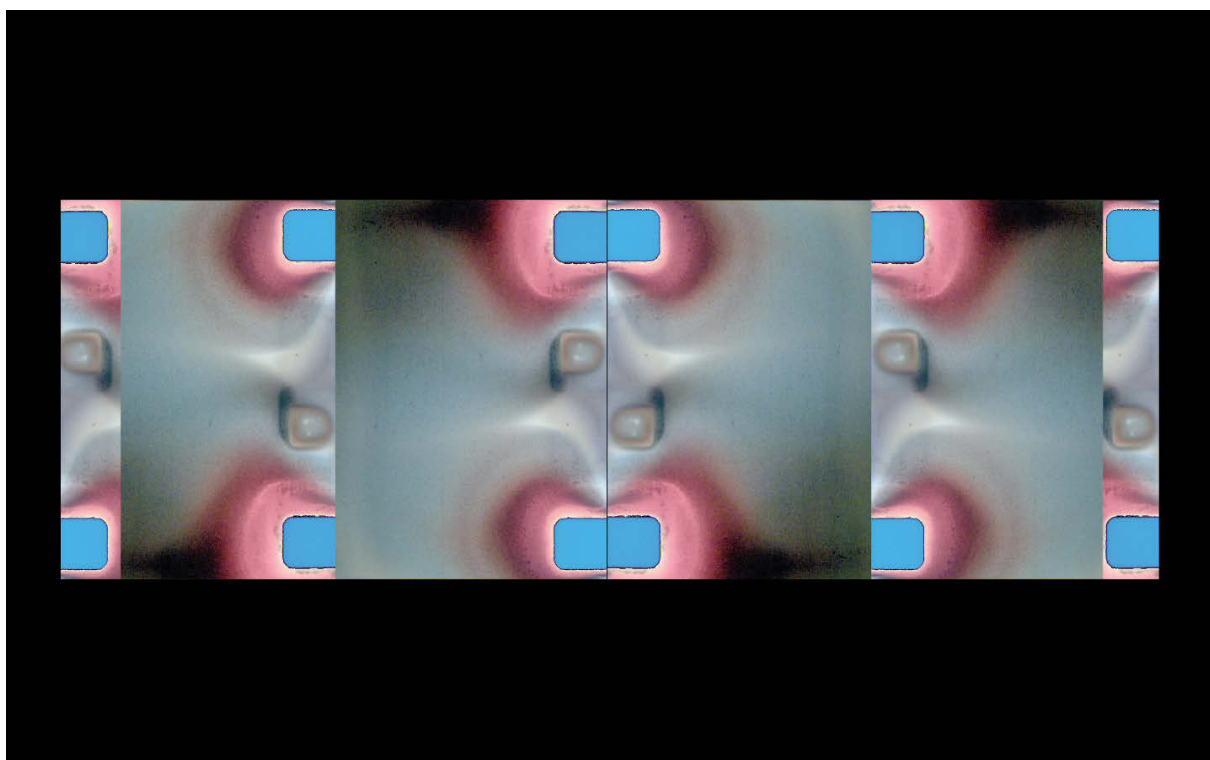


Figure 10: Fragment B

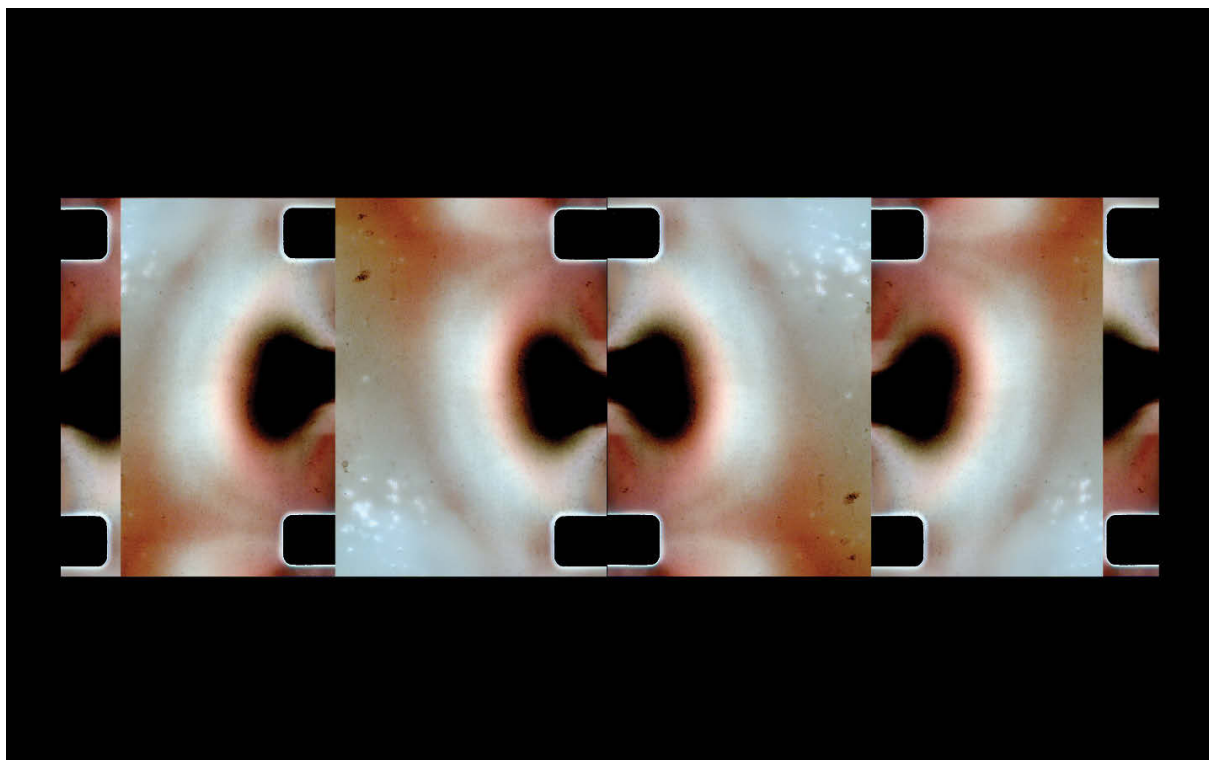


Figure 11: Fragment C

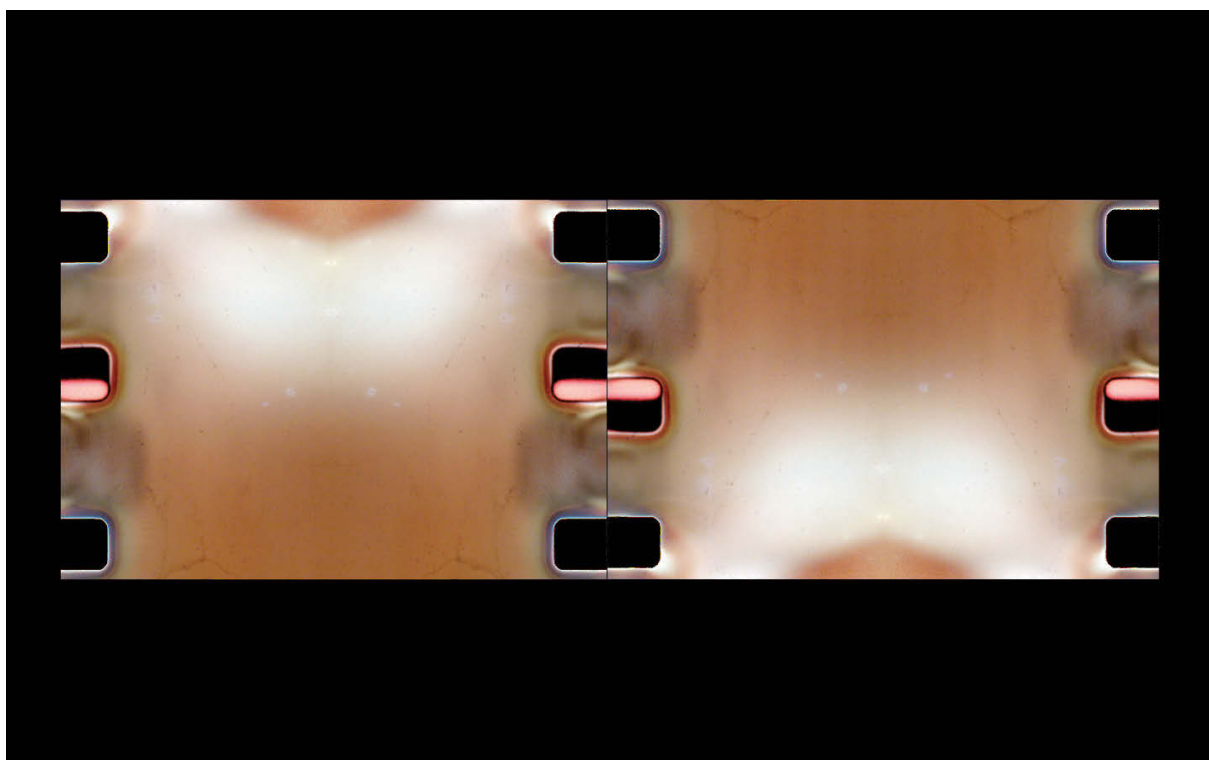
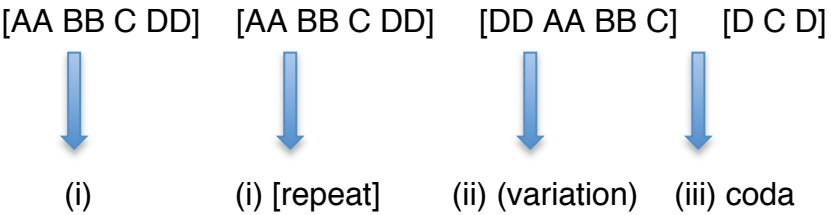


Figure 12: Fragment D

For the purpose of this research the main point to highlight with this work is a kind of musical treatment of visual fragments. The process of labelling these fragments as A, B, C etc., in an effort to compose a work comes directly from an understanding and history of working in music while also allowing us to observe the underlying rhythmic structure that emerged. (See Figure 13)

I do wish to underline here that this is very much a work in progress, created as it was in the final stages of this research. The process of choosing the rhythmic form is an intuitive one. This current form has evolved in the editing process through trial and error but always via submitting these 4 fragments to a process of repetition, contrast and variation and then viewing the results. I anticipate this current formal structure to further evolve as the work progresses.

Figure 13: Music for Sprockets – Rhythmic structure



6.3 Rhythm and Composition – Turbulence

Turbulence (see track on accompanying DVD) is a dual-screen work made in collaboration with Berlin based, UK composer Juliana Hodgekinson.⁹ Created in the last months of this research, *Turbulence* began its life as a chamber opera and was first performed as part the *Living Room Opera* series curated by Melbourne's *Chamber Made Opera*.

No footage existed of the original live performance so new material was shot with the two singers from the original production. This footage was then combined with my own library of hand-processed images to complete the project. A long, dense and 'difficult' work that, in the context of this research, represents an almost distilled example of the kinds of rhythmic editing being discussed here.

Furthermore, the production of this work (shooting the performers) tapped into all the ideas previously discussed in chapter 4 regarding working with actors. Interestingly, one of the performers from this production I have had a long working history from my days as a musician. This meant that there was a shared understanding and trust of the kind that only emerges when one has a shared history of performing.

Turbulence is a departure from all the other work discussed in this thesis due to the fact that there was a locked off sound track which I edited to. This demanded a particular approach where a sensitivity to the abstract nature of the sound be brought to the fore. The key creatives behind the original production were insistent that they didn't want a recreation of the performance and subsequently gave me licence to approach the film version in whichever way I felt appropriate.

The above three examples show a variety of ways that musical intuition comes into play in the editing process. Specifically a sense of rhythm becomes integral to the shaping of the work on both a micro and macro level. This expanded sense of rhythm, honed as a musician over many years, is the primary skill brought to bear on the editing process.

⁹ *Turbulence* had its Australian Premier at Melbourne's Federation Square on October 14, 2015

Chapter 7 – Conclusion

In conclusion this section summarises the research by taking in the research outcomes while looking at the motivation, aims and methods of *Expanded Music*. Finally I take stock of where this research leaves me personally and point to future implications and directions that this research entails.

7.1 Research Summary: Motivation, Aims and Methods

The real work of *Expanded Music* began following a single realization that dawned on me early on in this research – I was still a musician. Despite mentally turning cameras into musical instruments from the beginning of my film forays, this classic light bulb moment had the effect of bringing into focus almost 10 years of moving image work in all manner of styles and approaches. I knew instantly that this rang true and this simple conceptual shift made sense of past work while opening a door on new avenues of exploration. This research then has had the dual motivation of thinking through this idea with some degree of thoroughness while consciously applying these ideas to the creation of new work.

Throughout this thesis I have shown how it is possible to apply a variety of musical concepts to moving image work. The approach and concepts cover a wide spectrum of musical activity including composition, improvisation, music recording and instrumental practice. Ideas which, when applied to moving image, provide the work and its creation with a guiding rationale. In doing so it isolated knowledge of rhythm as being a key musical ingredient, specifically, a rhythmic sense tied to and inseparable from the body while also adopting Akbar's (2013) and Hasty's (1997) more expansive understanding of rhythm which points out that rhythmic experience is also available in objects and images with the role of duration retaining an emphasis. I showed how this emphasis on bodily knowledge (sometimes referred to as 'the bodily turn' in cognitive science and a number of other fields) is integral to understanding the type of musical intuition I was highlighting. A key theorist for this research was Dr. Wayne Bowman, who extended Barthes' notion that playing music is more physical than aural, by highlighting that listening was equally a physical and embodied activity. Bowman also informed a key notion of this research, his theory of *Intermodal Transfer* where one body of knowledge is directly applied to another field. If we take

a moment to re-visit Bowman's definition of *Intermodal Transfer* we can see how this research demonstrates a clear instance of this concept:

A more useful characterization and one more directly applicable to cognitive theory is cross-modal (or intermodal) transfer – on which schemata from one experiential domain (recurrent dynamic patterns of motor and perceptual experience, for instance) function as structural and organizational templates for another. (Bowman, 2004)

Referring to this definition, this research then could be summed up as schemata from the experiential domain of music (recurrent dynamic patterns of motor and perceptual experience) functioning as structural and organisational templates for the creation of moving image. In other words this research has shown how musical intuition, distilled as it was to an expansive rhythmic concept and expressed through the body, could be transferred in a variety of ways literally and conceptually, upon works both experimental and narrative in nature.

7.2 Significance of the Study

At the end of this practice-led research project a number of implications and directions present themselves from both a personal perspective and in a broader perspective with regards to other arts practitioners and theorists.

Most encouraging to me creatively is that the process of working through this research has led to completely new directions for my own practice. I touched upon this at the end of chapter 3 with a necessarily brief description of a further 'research-led' outcome, which has led me full circle back to performance as well as working with more explicit musical ideas with my hand processed material. Of course there is a rich tradition of performance and film and the prospect of combining a hand made film practice with the type of music sensibility I discuss in this paper leaves me enthused and gives me the pleasing sense that this particular phase of the research is ending with a beginning. This work, *Turbulence for Performance*, represents what I expect to be a rich avenue of research and experimentation now opening up for me, that is moving image accompanied with live performance/improvisation.

Beyond my own practice I believe there are broader implications that this research points to. Throughout this research I've emphasized Bowman's idea of intermodal transfer. In many ways this research is a practical example of this notion and as such opens the field for other cross-textual analysis. I gave one short example of this in chapter 4 by suggesting the term 'Intermodal Interpretation'. This type of interpretation I believe shows great potential for not only discussing and theorizing about all kinds of works but also for the potential of instigating creative works by applying intermodal parameters. I expect to continue working with these ideas and equally see great potential in consciously applying other modes or experiential domains directly to my arts practice.

In this paper and in the accompanying works I make a case that these projects can all be expressed as a kind of expanded music where the sometimes inherent and other times deliberate application of musical knowledge provides the main framework for its creation. This kind of musical thought can be applied to moving image work of all kinds both experimental and narrative.

The main thrust of my moving image practice and certainly the part that engages me most lies closer and aspires to musical thought more than any other process. In this paper and in the works created I've introduced this idea and shown that this notion is in fact demonstrable while positioning the practice in a broader historical context.

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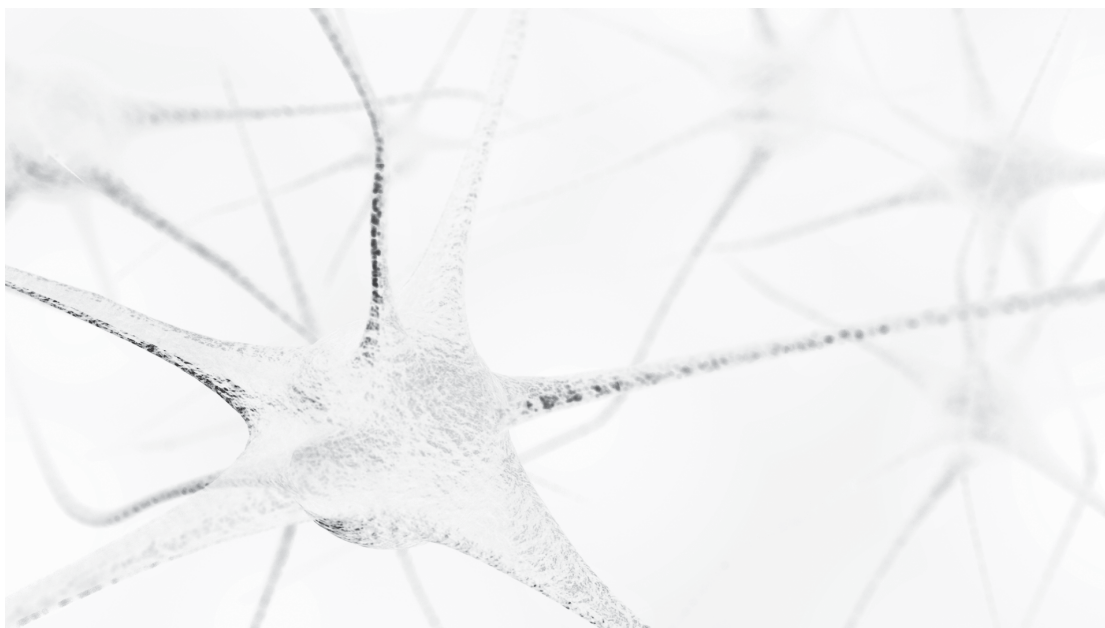
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Appendix 1: New Factual Storytelling Symposium – Program, April 10, University of Canberra



New Factual Storytelling

One-day Symposium

Ann Harding Conference Centre

Bruce campus

10 April 2015

Bios and Abstracts

UCDOCLAB

CENTRE FOR
CREATIVE &
CULTURAL
RESEARCH

 UNIVERSITY OF
CANBERRA

Peter Humble, UTS

Moving back and forth between image and sound, what links Humble's work is a focus on materiality – in his work, the photographic emulsion and the audiorecording standing in for a specific time and place. Originally trained as a musician, a kind of musical thinking underpins his work.

Proposal Audiovisual performance for hand processed 16mm and live music and sound

A 6 minute performance for laptop and 1 data projectors

Hand processed images, specifically long takes of city crowds navigating a busy street corner are juxtaposed with a myriad of sound elements mixed live. The banal patterns and accidents of everyday life are playfully disfigured and poeticized by the evolving sound scape which draws on environmental recordings and remixed snatches of found sound and music.

Working with materiality, long takes and musical intuition the performance is a collision between image and sound, concreteness and abstraction, documentary and fiction.

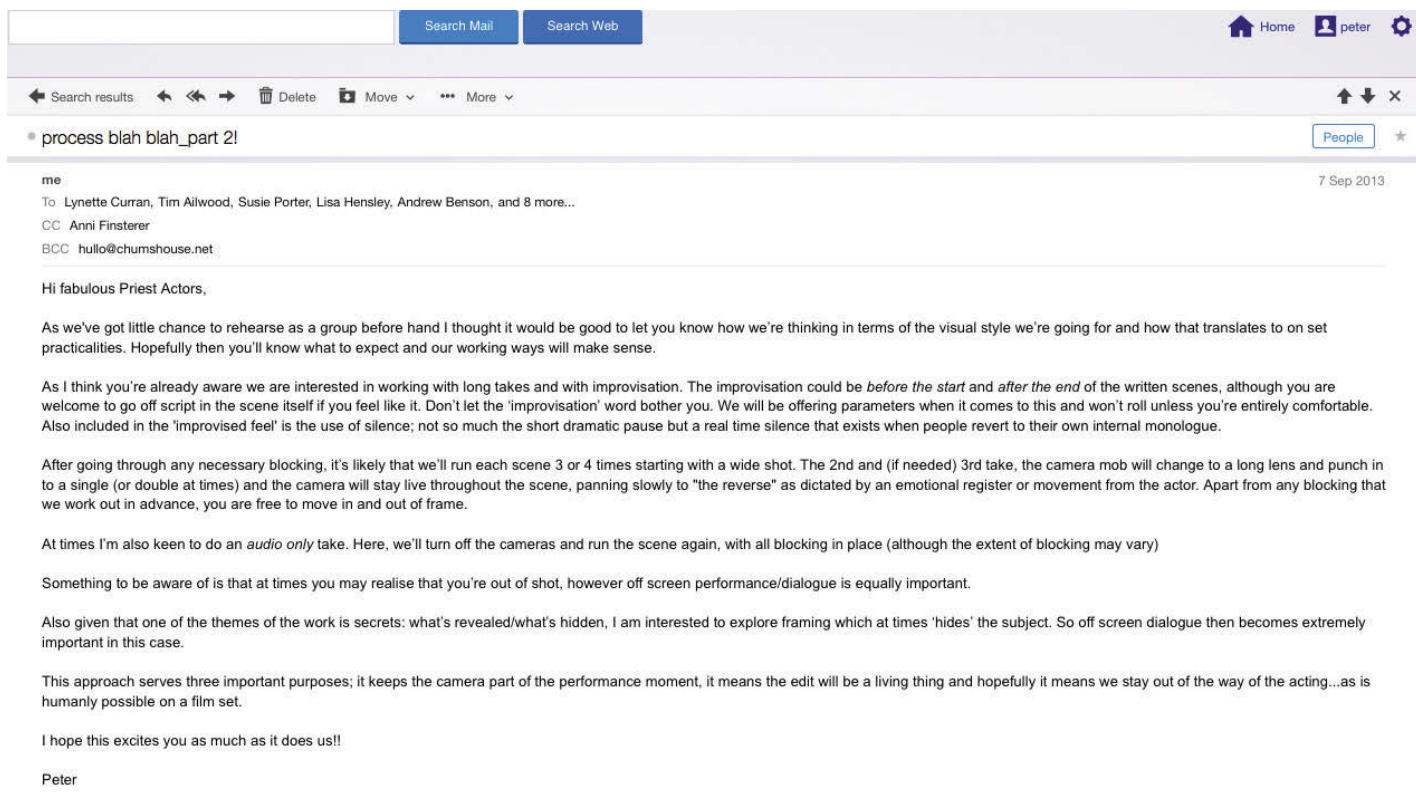
Simon Cunich, UC

Simon Cunich is an Australian documentary filmmaker and television producer. He works as a freelance director, cinematographer and editor of documentaries, short films, television commercials, music videos and online videos; including educational, advocacy and promotional multimedia content for non-government organisations. Simon specialises in telling stories about human rights, development, social justice and environmental sustainability. He works in Canberra and Sydney, travelling interstate and internationally for projects, and collaborates with cinematographers, editors, animators and composers.

Proposal *Maratus* - a documystery

My current projects are leading me to question various ideas in documentary filmmaking practice. While a subject's influence on the shape of a documentary is often viewed with wariness I'm interested in engaging the subject as a creative collaborator, using reflexive devices to demystify the relationship between filmmaker and subject. In doing so I'm trying to explore not so much the role of filmmaker as a participant in the story but the role of subject as a participant in the storytelling. This involves a discussion of where filmmaker and subject conspire to blur the line between fiction and non-fiction through dramatisations and other hybrid devices. Work-in-progress excerpts will be screened from my 'documystery' project, *Maratus*.

Appendix 2: Screenshot of email to actors (Text copied below for clarity)



Hi fabulous Priest Actors,

As we've got little chance to rehearse as a group before hand I thought it would be good to let you know how we're thinking in terms of the visual style we're going for and how that translates to on set practicalities. Hopefully then you'll know what to expect and our working ways will make sense.

As I think you're already aware we are interested in working with long takes and with improvisation. The improvisation could be *before the start* and *after the end* of the written scenes, although you are welcome to go off script in the scene itself if you feel like it. Don't let the 'improvisation' word bother you. We will be offering parameters when it comes to this and won't roll unless you're entirely comfortable.

Also included in the 'improvised feel' is the use of silence; not so much the short

dramatic pause but a real time silence that exists when people revert to their own internal monologue.

After going through any necessary blocking, it's likely that we'll run each scene 3 or 4 times starting with a wide shot. The 2nd and (if needed) 3rd take, the camera mob will change to a long lens and punch in to a single (or double at times) and the camera will stay live throughout the scene, panning slowly to "the reverse" as dictated by an emotional register or movement from the actor. Apart from any blocking that we work out in advance, you are free to move in and out of frame.

At times I'm also keen to do an *audio only* take. Here, we'll turn off the cameras and run the scene again, with all blocking in place (although the extent of blocking may vary)

Something to be aware of is that at times you may realise that you're out of shot, however off screen performance/dialogue is equally important.

Also given that one of the themes of the work is secrets: what's revealed/what's hidden, I am interested to explore framing which at times 'hides' the subject. So off screen dialogue then becomes extremely important in this case.

This approach serves three important purposes; it keeps the camera part of the performance moment, it means the edit will be a living thing and hopefully it means we stay out of the way of the acting...as is humanly possible on a film set.

I hope this excites you as much as it does us!!

Peter