CHAPTER 9 – DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

The main goal of this study is to investigate how musicians can build improvisational musical language through the study of speech. Literature review in the field of speech music, and interviews performed with leading academics in the field revealed three main areas which were found to be crucial in developing and improving musical language: transcription, harmonisation, and composition.

In Chapter 3, I explored five transcription methods: i) The segmented listening/writing method, ii) The repetition ear method, iii) The reading method, iv) The singing method, and v) The real time self-transcription method. I carried out eight spoken and two musical/instrumental transcriptions to determine which of the five methods was the most effective. Results revealed that no particular method was stronger than the other, however superior transcription results were obtained when multiple methods were used concurrently. One important aspect of this area is that each method can strengthen a weak aspect of a musician's ability. Therefore, it is beneficial to choose a transcription process that can build upon an area that one considers weak. For example, the repetition ear method is a great method to practice for the improvement of ear training.

On a personal level, I found that studying in this manner improved the accuracy of my transcriptions. The final chronological transcription[1] was notated the most accurately out of all the transcriptions. This was due to the brevity (24 Bars) of the excerpt and with the experience gained from completing the other previous transcriptions.

Furthermore, during the transcription process I developed a mathematical formula (Chapter 4) that identifies a single note (main note) in which an entire phrase

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[1] Chronologically 12/01/2019 *Jason Moran meets Hue Blanes*

gravitates towards. In this case, finding the main note allowed me to identify pivotal centres that do not directly link to any key centres or are directly affected by other individual notes. Discovering where the melody gravitates towards in a spoken phrase with a sound method that uses common mathematics means that no emotional bias is present when making harmonic choices that accompany these melodies. Intervals that were unique to a speaker were found in order to assess the speakers musicality. These two main points are the focus of the transcription analysis. My awareness of melodic and intervallic perception grew during this process.

An extended lexis of harmonising language (Chapter 5) was established through the study of speech patterns. Whilst harmonising speech melody and their irregular patterns proved challenging, this research discovered that principal tones and supporting tones form the basis to solving these harmonic problems.

'Never Sing, Speak', 2019 was written in a very short time and it is proof that an individual voice can be attained swiftly on the piano, with clear speech impetus. The composition (chapter 6) style was expanded over the 2 years of research and more communicative styles of expression were managed.

By developing the ear (Chapter 7), through speech study and the creation of The New Spoken "Jazz Licks", improvisations can be formed in any context. Fluency and virtuosity is gained along with a sense of a wholesome approach to dealing with improvisatory weaknesses.

The experiments (Chapter 8) that were conceived to develop the improvisational ear will benefit the harmonically curious musician. The musician is free to choose his/her pitch as the experiments are guidelines and notes are not written in a score. The experiments promote the ear by exploring harmonic and melodic intervals that may otherwise be overlooked. Using simple rules that govern each experiment the musician can enter their own sea of ideas and explore for themselves their own voice.

In conclusion, this research shows there are numerous virtuosic, communicative, compositional, and improvisational benefits to studying speech patterns. During the course of the research period[1], I have gained an insight into the musicality of speech and how to cultivate the necessary skills to develop effective methods to improve my musical practice as an improviser. Through the study of transcription[2], harmonisation and composition, I was able to build upon and further develop my improvisational language. My understanding of music as a conversational endeavour has been expanded and a more reactive, communicative improviser has arisen.

In essence, music is speech without words, a symphony of wordless sound[3]. Although unlocking the mystery of speech has been attempted in this paper this does not mean that the understanding of the concept has been fully[4] grasped. This will require further research.

Further Research

During the literature review, it became clear that a more in depth analysis and method of speech notation is needed, perhaps something similar to the computer game Guitar Hero[TM], to address the problem of rhythm in live performance other than the existing western notation system.

Furthermore, in future research, I would like to explore the uses of spoken language in music and speech in other improvisational contexts including Indian Folk and contemporary classical music. One particular interest is to write lyric pieces featuring piano players who may or may not have singing ability to perform using their voices while they play. It shall be a kind of Singer-songwriter meets the typing-poet. The

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[1] September 4 2017 to March 4 2019

[2] See Chapter 1 part 3 Methodology Fig 1-2

[3] The Music of Speech

[4] Hannaford, 'The understanding of an objects details does not necessarily translate to an understanding of the object itself' Carter, *Collected Essays and Lectures, 1937-1995, 214*

pieces will have resemblance to the piece 'Never Sing, Speak' (2019) found in the link at the beginning of the paper.

As future research in this field is conducted, the 'cacophony' of meaningless speech patterns produced every day will turn into one, clearer, musical picture.