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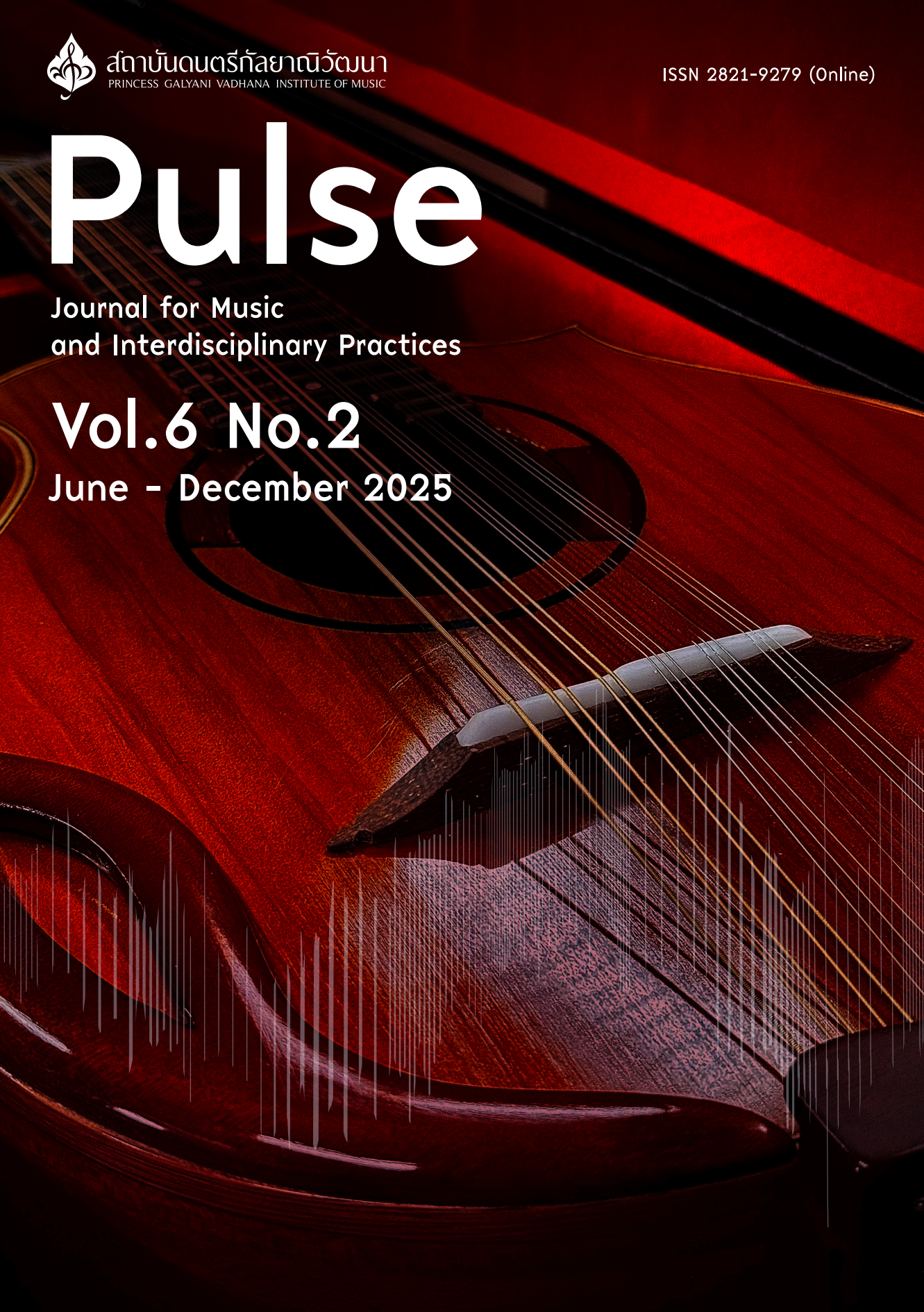



About

Pulse is a contemporary music journal. We provide a platform for researchers working on topics related to all aspects of Musical expressions to engage with one another and to share their work with a global audience.

Pulse is published by PGVIM, an institute dedicated to the development of music and the arts within Southeast Asia. Through the promotion of Musical diversity and innovation, the institute is paving the way for sustainable paths for the development of Southeast Asian creative practices in the world today.

Pulse endeavours to further support the development of Musical culture here in Thailand and throughout the Southeast Asian region. To this end, Pulse is a blind peer-reviewed, non-profit, open-access journal. We encourage submissions from emerging artists and scholars, graduate students, and early-career professionals.



Publication Frequency: two times per year

Issue 1: January - June

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Aims and Scope: We aim to enliven scholarly debate and discussion on topics related to contemporary Musical life, and to share with a global audience the distinct voices and perspectives of Southeast Asian musicians and scholars.

The journal invites submissions across a broad spectrum of music-related research topics, including: Performance Practice, Creative Practice, Innovation and Design, Interdisciplinary

Studies, Learning and Teaching, Music and Society, Cultures, and Aesthetics.

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Peer Review Process

All manuscripts submitted to Pulse are initially assessed by our editors to determine their suitability for the journal. Those deemed suitable progress to the peer-review stage.

Please note that manuscripts that do not conform to our submission guidelines will be returned to authors. They may be revised according to the guidelines and resubmitted for our consideration.

Double-blind reviews

Pulse uses a double-blind peer review process. This means that the identities of authors and reviewers are concealed from one another. Manuscripts accepted for review are anonymously evaluated by a minimum of three peer-reviewers. A member of our editorial team manages the process. He or she forwards comments from reviewers to authors, assess the validity of the reviews, the response of the author to feedback, and the quality of the revised paper, should any revisions be made. The final decision as to whether to accept or reject the manuscript rests solely with the editor. The editor reserves the right to request further revisions or to submit the revised paper for a second round of peer reviews if they deem it necessary.

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Forward

As we step into a new year, we hope that 2025 brought moments of inspiration, creativity, and meaningful progress for each of you. While the year behind us offered reasons for optimism, it also reminded us of the challenges shaping our world today: growing divisions, the closing of minds and borders, and the increasing influence of technologies that can distort understanding as easily as they can connect us.

In this dystopian context, our role as creators, thinkers, educators, and researchers is more important than ever. Our work has the power to clarify rather than confuse, to open dialogue rather than deepen divides, and to offer thoughtful responses to complex global realities.

Through constructive dialogue, we strive to listen carefully to one another and to the world around us. It is through this listening that understanding emerges, and with it, the possibility of meaningful and sustainable solutions.

Our creative and academic endeavours should stand as a reminder that we inhabit a world built on connection, critical thought, and the possibility of sustainable progress.

As such, this volume of *PULSE* is once again a testament to the creative and resilient minds of musical researchers in the Southeast Asian region, this time featuring contributions from the Philippines and Sri Lanka, as well as Thailand and Malaysia. This volume welcomes reflections across a wide variety of music-related practices, with a special focus on pedagogical innovation and contextual adaptations.

Rey Sunglao examines, through the lenses of Filipino resilience and bayanihan, how the Manila Symphony Orchestra survived and adapted through World War II and the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrating how core Filipino values, key individuals, and innovative responses have sustained the orchestra across generations.

Panicha Ponprasit, Napatsawan Ruamsap, Sirathee Maiwong and Juthatip Wiwattanapantuwong examine six early-adulthood musicians and finds that musical experiences shape self-identity through the development of musical self-clarity, support from others, perceived value in musical work, and music's role in coping with difficult times.

Andrew Jaye Ocampo's study is the first to investigate community rondalla pedagogy in the Philippines through digital ethnography, revealing how three community rondalla groups apply content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge in practice, while highlighting the crucial role of local government funding in sustaining groups and promoting Filipino culture.

Kylie Tan investigates the reception history and evolving interpretations of Miklós Rózsa's Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, examining how performers, stylistic approaches, performance challenges, and historical context have shaped its legacy and limited mainstream presence, while arguing for its artistic significance and potential for renewed scholarly and performative interest.

Jirut Khamlanghan distils nineteenth-century bel canto vocal pedagogy into an accessible contemporary framework through the analysis of selected soprano arias by Bellini and Donizetti, culminating in a public performance that demonstrates and revitalises these techniques for modern audiences.

P. B. S. L. Pushpakumara and Rashmi Senevirathne employ mixed methodologies to demonstrate that arts-based learning, particularly through music and drama, enhances first-year Sri Lankan university students' motivation, participation, and authentic English use by creating a low-anxiety, inclusive classroom environment that supports diverse learning styles and learner-centred ESL pedagogy.

We hope you enjoy reading through our pages and, as always, we look forward to hearing from you in the year ahead.

The Pulse Editorial Team


อาคารคีตราชนครินทร์
Gita Rajanagarindra



PGVIM

The Princess Galyani Vadhana Institute of Music, Thailand takes a contemporary approach to classical music education, scholarship and performance. The institute was initiated in 2007 as a royal project celebrating the occasion of the 84th birthday of Her Royal Highness Princess Galyani Vadhana Krom Luang Naradhiwas Rajanagarindra. The Princess graciously gave her name to the new endeavour, and thus the Princess Galyani Vadhana Institute of Music (PGVIM) was born.

PGVIM aims to be a leading international institute of music, with the following missions: 1) to support young Thai talents in their pursuit of Musical excellence, 2) to promote a better understanding of music among the general public and expand the role of music within society, and 3) to develop new knowledge in music and through interdisciplinary research. Our undergraduate and master curricula and Music for Society programs provide opportunities for students and the general public to learn the skills of music-making while developing their ability to use music as a tool for advancement of humankind, both within their local communities and on the world stage.

The publication of Pulse is a logical step towards the consolidation of a process which started in 2014. Through its annual international Symposiums, regular workshops, concerts and continuous activities, PGVIM has gradually established itself as one of the most active centers for research and creation in music within the Southeast Asian area. Our growing and vibrant network includes an extensive list of active researchers and scholars, practitioners, creators and educators all over Southeast Asia and around the world.

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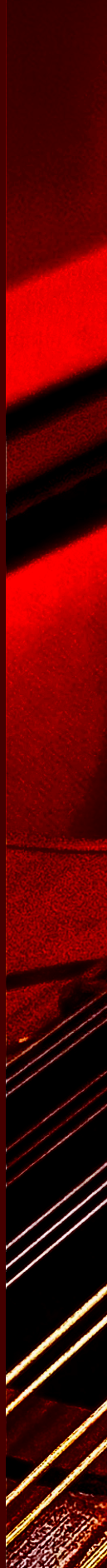



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BATTLES AND SURVIVALS: THE MANILA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA DURING WWII AND COVID-19: CONTEXTUALIZING FILIPINO RESILIENCE AND BAYANIHAN

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Abstract

Through the cultural lenses of Filipino resilience and bayanihan, this article explores the Manila Symphony Orchestra's (MSO) survival during two global crises, World War II and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Founded in 1926, the MSO has endured economic and social upheavals, rising each time with renewed purpose. This study employs a small-scale humanistic genre using an immersion approach. It draws from primary sources, including data from the World Health Organization (WHO), the MSO's official records, and a documentary by the National Music Competition for Young Artists (NAMCYA). Additionally, it utilises a wide range of relevant secondary literature, including journal articles and historical reports. The findings reveal how the MSO adapted to adversity during wartime devastation and pandemic restrictions by embodying Filipino resilience and bayanihan. This article highlights the contributions of key figures and the orchestra's innovative responses, reflecting how Filipino values have shaped the MSO's legacy and ensured its continuity across generations.

Keywords: Manila Symphony Orchestra (MSO), Filipino resilience, Bayanihan, World War II, Covid-19 Pandemic.

Introduction

Founded by Alexander Lippay in 1926, the Manila Symphony Orchestra (MSO) is one of Asia's oldest orchestras (Cultural Center of the Philippines, 2012) and the Philippines' longest-surviving artistic institution (Manila Symphony Orchestra, n.d.). Through the years, the MSO has hosted many renowned artists, including Yehudi Menuhin and Igor Oistrakh. Due to severe financial difficulties, the orchestra was disbanded in 1989. However, it was reorganized in 2001 by its longtime concertmaster, Professor Basilio Manalo (Manila Symphony Orchestra, n.d.). In 2020, decades after its revival, the MSO faced another catastrophic challenge when COVID-19 struck the Philippines. As concerts and events were its main source of livelihood, the imposed community quarantine severely impacted the orchestra (Gregorio, 2020).

While the Philippines has been exposed to Spanish and American influences, Filipino culture continues to reflect a collectivistic orientation (Church & Katigbak, 2000). This culture of collective behaviour is reflected in two prominent Filipino traits: resilience and bayanihan (Benosa & Ramos, 2021). This article explores how resilience and bayanihan are embodied in the survival of the MSO during two major crises—World War II and the COVID-19 pandemic.

In researching the historical impact of World War II and COVID-19 on the MSO, this article adopts a small-scale humanistic genre. The chosen approach is immersion or saturation, which, as defined by Phillips (2008), involves gathering and reading everything possible on the topic, preferably from primary sources. Since primary sources are central to historical studies (McCarthy, 2012), data from the World Health Organization (WHO), the official website of the MSO, and a documentary film by the National Music Competition for Young Artists (NAMCYA) are utilised. Secondary sources include journal articles and news reports. This article begins with a historical overview of the MSO, followed by an explanation of two key Filipino cultural traits—resilience and bayanihan—to provide a framework for understanding the orchestra's survival. Finally, the study examines historical findings related to

the MSO's experiences during World War II and the COVID-19 pandemic. These Filipino traits, resilience and bayanihan, serve as meaningful lenses for exploring the MSO's survival across two distinct and catastrophic periods in history.

The Manila Symphony Orchestra (MSO)

The Manila Symphony Orchestra is one of Asia's oldest orchestras (Cultural Center of the Philippines, 2012) and the Philippines' longest-surviving artistic institution (Manila Symphony Orchestra, n.d.). It was founded by Dr. Alexander Lippay in 1926, and its regular season concerts were supported by the Manila Symphony Society (MSS), with Filomena Legarda as its president in 1931 (Cultural Center of the Philippines, 2012). The spacious Metropolitan Theatre, with a seating capacity of 1,670, opened its doors on December 10, 1931, where the MSO, conducted by Dr. Alexander Lippay, performed works by Grieg, Meyerbeer, Strauss, Sibelius, and Beethoven (Carrion, 1958).

Lippay's leadership brought the orchestra to success. However, he passed away from a heart attack in 1939. Within a few weeks, he was succeeded by Dr. Herbert Zipper (Carrion, 1958). Dr. Zipper's first concert with the orchestra took place on August 15, 1939, as a Lippay Memorial Concert. From 1940 to 1960, the orchestra performed major symphonic works, ballets, and opera productions (Cultural Center of the Philippines, 2012). When Dr. Zipper left the Philippines for the United States in 1946, the orchestra continued its monthly concerts under the direction of Bernardino Custodio, Antonino Buenaventura, Antonio J. Molina, Liwanag P. Cruz, and others (Carrion, 1958). The Manila Symphony Society was then sponsored by Don Andrés Soriano.

In the late 1970s, the MSO was led by notable conductors such as Sergio Esmilla Jr., Josefino "Chino" Toledo (Buenconsejo, 2016), Oscar Yatco, Helen Quach, and Regalado Jose (Manila Symphony Orchestra, n.d.). Although efforts were made to sustain the orchestra, including initiatives by Redentor Romero (Buenconsejo, 2016) and Herbert Zipper, the period from the 1980s to the early 1990s came to be known as the orchestra's declining years (Tariman, 2021). Reviving the MSO seemed impossible with the emergence of the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra and other smaller ensembles. Ultimately, in 1989, the MSO was officially disbanded due to a lack of support (GMA News Online, 2011).

The MSO's long-time concertmaster, Professor Basilio Manalo, who appointed Arturo Molina as his successor (Manila Symphony Orchestra, n.d.), led efforts to revive the orchestra. This revival was made possible with the help of Sr. Mary Placid Abejo, OSB, of St. Scholastica's College in 2001, and was later strengthened with the involvement of Jeffrey Solares in 2008 (Buenconsejo, 2016). Since its re-establishment, the MSO has continued to perform in various concert halls in the Philippines under the baton of Arturo Molina and a roster of guest conductors (Tariman, 2021). A notable milestone was the 10th anniversary concert held at the Philamlife Auditorium on August 27, 2011, celebrating a decade since the orchestra's rebirth (Philstar GLOBAL, 2011).

Through the Manila Symphony Orchestra Foundation, Inc., the Manila Symphony Orchestra Music Academy (MSOMA) and the Manila Symphony Junior Orchestra (MSJO) were founded in 2014 to carry forward the legacy of the MSO's Musical excellence (Manila Symphony Orchestra, n.d.). These institutions offer regular lessons, masterclasses, and music camps aimed at developing the talents of young Filipino musicians.

On September 1, 2019, Arturo Molina was succeeded by Taiwanese-American conductor Marlon Chen (Hila, 2019). Under Chen's leadership, the MSO performed internationally, including in Shenyang, China, in 2019 and Tokyo, Japan, in 2022 (The Manila Times, 2022). At present, the MSO is composed of full-time musicians under the leadership of Marlon Chen as music director and principal conductor, and Jeffrey Solares as executive director and associate conductor (Manila Symphony Orchestra, n.d.).

Filipino Traits: Resilience and Bayanihan

The concept of traits is central to personality psychology and is defined as "relatively stable individual differences in thoughts, feelings, and behavior" (Church & Katigbak, 2002). One such trait is collectivism, which emphasizes strong family bonds, social belonging, group Identity, and respect for authority (Church & Katigbak, 2000). Collective behavior is commonly observed in Africa, Latin America, and Asia (Benosa & Ramos, 2021). Despite historical influences from both Spanish and American colonization, Filipino culture remains deeply rooted in collectivistic

values (Church & Katigbak, 2000). The Philippines has been rated toward the collectivistic end of the individualism–collectivism spectrum, receiving a score of 4 on a 10-point scale, where 1 represents the most collectivistic cultures and 10 the most individualistic (Church & Katigbak, 2000). This culture of collective behavior is particularly evident in two Filipino traits: resilience and bayanihan (Benosa & Ramos, 2021).

Filipinos have often been characterised as able to endure adversity. One prominent characteristic attributed to Filipinos is resilience (Garay, Garay, & Martinez, 2020). Resilience is a trait that allows individuals to thrive despite hardships (Reyes et al., 2019). It serves as a protective resource that reduces the potential for negative outcomes, particularly in the presence of factors that intensify difficulties. Persistence and flexibility are key characteristics of resilience (Garay, Garay, & Martinez, 2020). Filipinos have developed various coping mechanisms, and as they find ways to manage challenging situations, resilience is strengthened (Ang & Diaz, 2021). The long history of Spanish, American, and Japanese colonisation has been cited as a contributing factor in the development of Filipino resilience (Ealdama, 2012).

Bayanihan, as identified by social scientists, is an ancient Filipino custom that symbolises teamwork and communal unity (Ang, 1979). Rooted in the word bayan, meaning nation or community, bayanihan reflects a deep sense of solidarity that expresses compassion and empathy for others (Ealdama, 2012). Bayanihan can also be understood as mutual help and aid, a system deeply embedded in Filipino culture. This value is particularly evident during times of disaster, when Filipinos come together to assist those in need. As a manifestation of the Philippines' collectivistic culture, bayanihan serves as a practical response to both individual and collective challenges—one that would be difficult to achieve without cooperation and shared resources (Ang, 1979). In this sense, bayanihan parallels the American concept of brotherhood, emphasizing unity and collective action.

Two Battles and Two Survivals

This section explores historical findings on the MSO's experiences during two significant global crises: World War II and the COVID-19 pandemic. By examining these periods, the article highlights how the orchestra navigated and survived

these catastrophic events. Filipino traits of resilience and bayanihan are used as a framework to understand the crucial role these values played in the orchestra's endurance. Through this lens, the discussion demonstrates how these values not only sustained the orchestra's survival but also fostered a sense of community and solidarity amid adversity.

MSO and World War II

On December 5, 1941, the MSO performed a Mozart Anniversary Concert (Carrion, 1958). Just three days later, on December 8, 1941, Japan launched a surprise attack on the Philippines. News of the bombing was received after three in the morning, when most of the Philippines was still asleep (Jose & Yu-Jose, 1997). The attack began with aerial bombings, followed by the landing of ground troops in both north and south Manila (Dolan, 1991). Thousands of Filipinos evacuated the city, resulting in overcrowded train stations and forcing many to continue their evacuation on foot (Jose & Yu-Jose, 1997). As a result, the Manila Symphony Society stopped its activities, including performances of the Manila Symphony Orchestra, upon the outbreak of the war and the Japanese occupation (Carrion, 1958).

On January 10, 1942, Dr. Herbert Zipper, then the director of the Manila Symphony Orchestra, was detained by the Japanese authorities (Legarda, 2016). His arrest was reportedly due to his associations with high-ranking Americans and a speech he had delivered that was critical of the occupation (Fax, 2022). The Japanese Military Administration contacted Filomena Legarda, the then president of the Manila Symphony Society, on March 9, 1942, to reorganize the Manila Symphony Orchestra (Legarda, 2016). After spending four months in prison, Dr. Zipper was released under the condition that he would resume conducting concerts as a means of showing the world that peace and order had returned to the Philippines under Japanese occupation (Carrion, 1958). Dr. Zipper did not keep this promise (Fax, 2022). Together with Filomena Legarda, the Manila Symphony Orchestra and Dr. Zipper avoided playing for the new regime (Legarda, 2016).

The independence granted to the Philippines on October 14, 1943, lacked substance, as the Japanese military continued to control the country (Jose & Yu-Jose, 1997). By August 1944, American planes could be seen over

the Philippines, a sign that the Japanese were losing the war (Jose & Yu-Jose, 1997). However, in February 1945, the orchestra suffered a tragic loss when its concertmaster, Ernesto Vallejo, and his entire family were killed by a grenade thrown by a Japanese soldier in his hometown of Santo Tomas, Batangas (Legarda, 2016).

On May 9, 1945, the MSO held a monumental post-war concert in the ruins of Santa Cruz Church (Carrion, 1958). This performance celebrated the liberation of the capital, Manila (Fax, 2022). The programme featured Beethoven's Eroica Symphony, dedicated to the fallen heroes of World War II, and Dvořák's From the New World Symphony, dedicated to the United States of America (Carrion, 1958). Legarda (2015) asserted that the 1945 concert was rich in symbolism. The funeral march of Beethoven's symphony mourned those killed in the war, while "the bold dissonances mirrored the difficulties the Filipinos faced, and the sweeping climaxes and thundering chords asserted the country's determination to move forward to a greater future" (Legarda, 2015). Dvořák's symphony, on the other hand, was dedicated to the United States of America, which had fought against the country's "nightmare of Japanese oppression and brutality" (Legarda, 2015).

As the orchestra performed, machine-gun and artillery fire could still be heard in the distance, a reminder that the echoes of war had not yet fully faded. Prior to the start of the concert, Mrs. Legarda delivered her welcome address (Carrion, 1958). In her speech, she remarked, "This glorious music rising above the cacophony of war, these heroic strains rising so soon from the ruins which surround us in this desecrated church, are symbols of the aspiring and invincible spirit of men, which, it has again been proved, cannot be crushed to earth forever even by the most brutal tyranny." Additionally, an excerpt from the concert notes featured in the Santa Cruz Church programme stated:

> "... amid the Santa Cruz Church ruins, great music was heard as the Manila Symphony Orchestra, on a makeshift platform where the high altar was, played Beethoven's *Eroica* and Dvořák's *From the New World* to an audience of Filipinos and Americans, civilians and soldiers, officials and humble men. Even the music chosen was symbolic of the promise rising from the rubble of a shattered city... The rains came during the concert... the sky was the ceiling, but both concertists and GIs didn't budge an inch."

(Carrion, 1958)

The war ended when the Japanese formally surrendered on September 2, 1945 (Jose & Yu-Jose, 1997). The MSO survived the war with its music library intact, and most of its instruments were stored in a secure location throughout the conflict (Carrion, 1958). Many orchestra members who were former guerrillas and war prisoners returned to work when their regions were liberated. Some arrived at the first rehearsals in tattered clothing, sunburnt, and starving (Tariman, 2021). With the help of Professor Bernardino Custodio and Lieutenant Antonino Buenaventura as associate conductors (Carrion, 1958), Dr. Zipper reorganized the MSO immediately after liberation and joined an underground intelligence unit (Fax, 2022).

In 1946, Dr. Zipper left the Philippines for the United States, but the orchestra continued its monthly concerts under the leadership of Bernardino Custodio, alongside Antonino Buenaventura, Antonio J. Molina, Liwanag P. Cruz, and with the generous support of Don Andrés Soriano (Carrion, 1958). Dr. Zipper later became a pioneering advocate for arts and education, returning to Manila to conduct the orchestra every summer (Fax, 2022). However, by 1949, the orchestra was forced to suspend performances due to several factors, including the absence of suitable concert halls, the implementation of taxes on concert revenues, musicians' employment elsewhere, and a decline in members and patrons (Carrion, 1958). In 1951, however, Mrs. Basilio Valdés of the Asociación Musical de Filipinas sponsored the MSO in three concerts under Dr. Zipper, who offered his conducting services free of charge in an effort to support the orchestra's restoration. The post-war revival of the MSO was made possible through the generosity of organizations and individuals, including the Asociación Musical de Filipinas, the Artists' Guild of the Philippines, Don Juan Javier's National Opera Company, and the Music Promotion Foundation. Moreover, the orchestra's primary sources of revenue came from donations by private individuals and firms such as Don Andrés Soriano (Carrion, 1958).

MSO and Covid-19

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) was first reported in the Philippines on January 30, 2020 (Estrada et al., 2022). According to the World Health Organization, the country has reported 66,779 deaths due to the virus (World Health Organization, 2023). The implementation of community quarantines severely impacted the economy (Estrada et al., 2022). Because of strict lockdown policies, many small businesses were forced to suspend operations temporarily, while others closed permanently. The pandemic disrupted the livelihoods of approximately 10.9 million Filipino workers, with the manufacturing, food service, and entertainment industries among the hardest hit (Estrada et al., 2022). Activities that relied on live audiences were significantly disrupted (Sorilla, 2020), which had a profound impact on both visual and performing arts. Despite these challenges, the crisis also created opportunities for innovation, particularly through the adoption of online platforms. Visual art fairs and online concerts became widespread during the pandemic. However, the arts community was projected to face a prolonged recovery (Sorilla, 2020).

With concerts cancelled, many musicians turned to alternative means of sustaining themselves (Bodegon-Hikino, 2020). Some offered online music lessons, while others ventured into businesses outside the field of music. To better understand the impact of the pandemic on the livelihoods of artists, a survey of 101 Filipino musicians was conducted. Data were gathered from participants aged 18 and older, including both full-time and freelance musicians (Bodegon-Hikino, 2020). Among the respondents, most were male and between the ages of 25 and 40. The results revealed that 56% of the musicians experienced a decline in income, with 22% reporting a dramatic drop of 81% to 100% (Bodegon-Hikino, 2020). Despite these challenges, Filipino artists demonstrated remarkable resilience. Although the transition to online platforms posed difficulties due to technological demands and skill requirements (Sorilla, 2020), the pandemic revealed the perseverance and adaptability of Filipino artists (Asian Cultural Council, 2021).

The MSO was not spared from the struggles of the pandemic. In 2020, the orchestra's live performances were abruptly halted, but it adapted by transitioning to online platforms (Tariman, 2021). Beginning in April 2020, the MSO launched a

series of virtual performances (Gregorio, 2020). The first project, entitled *"Tagpi-tagping Tagping Damdamin Video Series: MSO in Quarantine"* (Manaloto, 2020), aimed to uplift spirits through music during a time of uncertainty. Initiated by the orchestra's executive director and associate conductor, Jeffrey Solares, the first online performance featured works by Morricone and the Beatles (Gregorio, 2020). The orchestra also performed *"Tifa's Theme"* from the soundtrack of *Final Fantasy VII.* Below are excerpts from an interview with Jeffrey Solares, sharing the difficulties and struggles of the MSO during COVID-19 (Gregorio, 2020).

> *... at first I didn't know how to make those videos where several people are on one screen, but I had some time during the quarantine to do some research. I arranged it for the orchestra and distributed the vocal parts to some of the musicians. I bought a video editing software and did trial-and-error, and after about four days I was able to make my first attempt. It's not yet perfect, but I'm still refining the process and, hopefully, the next video we will make will have better quality. It's a difficult setup because we do not hear each other, which is essential to ensemble playing. I only sent them an audio guide of a mockup mp3 file with a click that serves as a conductor, and they play it with their earphones on while they make the video. That somehow partially solves the issue of ensemble and playing together.*

The livelihood of musicians in the MSO primarily depends on performances at concerts and events, which were halted due to the pandemic. Few patrons agreed to support projects proposed by Solares during that period. Some relief came in the form of grants and assistance from government agencies (Gregorio, 2020). Following the success of the *"MSO in Quarantine"* online performances, the orchestra presented an online version of its concert staple and partnership with the Ayala Museum, *"Rush Hour Concert"* (Requintina, 2020). The concert featured songs such as *"Limang Dipang Tao"* (1981), composed and arranged by Ryan Cayabyab; *"Si Aida, O si Lorna, O si Fe"* (1989), composed by Louie Ocampo; *"Anak"* (1978), composed by Freddie Aguilar; *"Handog"* (1970), composed by Florante; *"Sana'y Wala nang Wakas"* (1986), composed by Willy Cruz; *"Kahit Maputi na ang Buhok Ko"* (1981), composed by Rey Valera; and *"Ang Huling El*

Bimbo" (1996), composed by Ely Buendia (Requintina, 2020). Solares carefully selected the repertoire for its familiarity and meaningful messages, appropriate for offering comfort during a time of isolation. The virtual concert marked the 30th anniversary of Avida's partnership with the Ayala Museum. The initiative formed part of the Ayala Museum's fundraising campaign to provide internet access to underprivileged Filipino students for online classes. Through the virtual concert, Avida, the Ayala Museum, and the MSO were able to provide one year of internet access to a student for every ticket sold (Requintina, 2020).

On December 18, 2021, the National Music Competition for Young Artists (NAMCYA), in partnership with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), released a documentary featuring five musicians from the Manila Symphony Orchestra who shared their experiences during COVID-19. The documentary, entitled *"Playing With Hope,"* was live-streamed on Facebook. The musicians spoke about how they coped with daily challenges when their livelihoods were disrupted, highlighting the emotional and professional toll of the crisis (NAMCYA, 2021).

In *"Playing With Hope,"* each featured musician shared a deeply personal account of resilience during the pandemic. One supported their family's daily needs by selling chicken wings and entering entrepreneurship during a time of crisis. Another demonstrated perseverance by producing performance recordings and participating in virtual music competitions. One musician, who had suffered an injury that nearly ended their ability to play, found renewed hope during the pandemic. Another viewed the crisis as an opportunity to write a children's book and produce an online benefit concert to support their finances while pursuing graduate studies abroad, which were also deferred due to the pandemic. Lastly, one musician shared how they nearly lost their passion for teaching but, after months of reflection, rediscovered their calling through online violin lessons. In the documentary, Solares expressed deep admiration for these musicians, highlighting their passion, determination, and grit during the pandemic (NAMCYA, 2021).

Conclusion

Resilience and *bayanihan* are traits deeply embedded in Filipino Identity. The resilience of the MSO during World War II can be seen in several ways. First, the

musicians showed determination by returning to rehearsals despite being sunburnt, starving, and dressed in tattered clothing. Second, Mrs. Legarda's speech, describing the musicians as people with invincible spirit. Lastly, the concert notes reflected a carefully chosen repertoire, music that symbolized hope and will to rise from the rubble of a devastated city and move forward to a better future. The spirit of bayanihan was equally evident in the post-war revival of the MSO. This collective effort was made possible through the generosity of organizations and individuals who came together to support the orchestra in the time of need.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the MSO once again demonstrated its resilience by continuing to perform through online platforms. The orchestra adapted to the changing circumstances, finding ways to innovate, survive, and be flexible in the face of uncertainty. This adaptability ensured that music continued to reach people despite the absence of live performances. The spirit of *bayanihan* was also evident in the MSO's efforts to collaborate with various organizations. These partnerships enabled the orchestra to participate in performances that served meaningful causes, such as fundraising campaigns for the benefit of underprivileged Filipino students. Through these initiatives, the MSO demonstrated communal unity and teamwork, the very core of the *bayanihan*, through music in a very difficult time.

By exploring the survival of the MSO through the lenses of World War II and Covid-19, it is worthy to note that the orchestra survived these two global catastrophes with resilience and the *bayanihan* spirit. Tariman wrote, *"The new generation of musicians and music lovers should remember that the Lippays, the Zippers, the Manalos, the Brimos represent the Musical life and times of the MSO"*(Tariman, 2021). While this recognition is well deserved, the efforts of Molina, Abejo, and Solares have been instrumental in sustaining and advancing the legacy of the MSO. It is equally important to acknowledge their contributions that have played vital roles in the orchestra's continued existence.

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ประสบการณ์ทางจิตใจในการสร้างและการรับรู้อัตลักษณ์ในตนเองของนักดนตรีวัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้น

PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES ON THE FORMATION AND PERCEPTION OF IDENTITY IN YOUNG ADULT MUSICIANS

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บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษาครั้งนี้มีจุดประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาการสร้างและการรับรู้อัตลักษณ์ในตนเองผ่านประสบการณ์ดนตรีของนักดนตรีวัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้น โดยใช้ระเบียบวิธีวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพแบบปรากฏการณวิทยา ผู้ให้ข้อมูลเป็นนักดนตรีวัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้นจำนวน 6 คน ที่ผ่านการคัดเลือกแบบเจาะจงตามเกณฑ์ เก็บข้อมูลโดยการสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกแบบตัวต่อตัว ผลการวิเคราะห์ประสบการณ์ของผู้ให้ข้อมูลพบประเด็นหลัก 4 ประเด็น คือ (1) ความชัดเจนในตัวตนทางดนตรี คือ การรับรู้ความชอบ ความสามารถ ความต้องการ และตัวตนทางดนตรีของตัวเอง (2) การสนับสนุนจาก

คนรอบข้างในเส้นทางดนตรี คือ ปัจจัยที่สนับสนุนให้ผู้ให้ข้อมูลได้ก้าวเข้าสู่การเรียนดนตรี การทำงานด้านดนตรี รวมถึงการให้กำลังใจ เป็นที่พึ่งพิงทางใจเมื่อพบกับความยากลำบากในเส้นทางดนตรี (3) การรับรู้คุณค่าในสิ่งที่ทำ คือ การเห็นคุณค่าในตนเองและการเห็นคุณค่าในดนตรีและสิ่งที่ผู้ให้ข้อมูลทำนั้นเป็นสิ่งที่เป็นประโยชน์กับผู้อื่น (4) ดนตรีช่วยให้ผ่านช่วงเวลาที่ยากลำบาก คือ ดนตรีมีส่วนช่วยให้พวกเขาได้ปรับอารมณ์ พักความคิดจากปัญหาที่ยังไม่ผ่านไป รวมถึงดนตรีทำให้เกิดความสบายใจ และจิตใจสงบ ทำให้ผ่านช่วงเวลาที่ยากลำบากไปได้ ผลการศึกษานี้ทำให้เกิดความเข้าใจเกี่ยวกับประสบการณ์ทางดนตรีต่อการสร้างและการรับรู้อัตลักษณ์ในตนเองของนักดนตรีวัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้น ซึ่งสามารถเป็นประโยชน์ต่อนักจิตวิทยาและบุคลากรที่เกี่ยวข้อง เพื่อสนับสนุนการพัฒนาศักยภาพและการรับรู้และเข้าใจในอัตลักษณ์ของตนเองในนักดนตรีวัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้นผ่านกิจกรรมต่าง ๆ ต่อไป

คำสำคัญ: ประสบการณ์ทางจิตใจ, อัตลักษณ์, นักดนตรี, วัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้น

Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the construction and perception of self-Identity through Musical experiences in early adulthood musicians. A qualitative phenomenological research methodology was employed. The informants were six early adulthood musicians who were selected via purposive sampling based on specific criteria. Data were collected through face-to-face in-depth interviews. The analysis of the informants' experiences yielded four main Themes: (1) Clarity in Musical Self: This involves perceiving one's own Musical preferences, abilities, needs, and Musical self-Identity. (2) Support from Others in the Musical Path: These are factors that supported the informants in entering Musical education and Musical careers, including encouragement, and serving as an emotional anchor when encountering difficulties in the Musical path. (3) Perceiving Value in the Work Performed: This is the act of seeing self-value, and seeing the value in music and the work the informants perform as being beneficial to others and (4) Music Facilitates Overcoming Difficult Times: Music plays a role in helping them regulate their emotions, take a mental break from unresolved problems, and also brings comfort and a peaceful state of mind, enabling them to navigate difficult periods. The findings of this study provide insight into the impact of Musical experiences on the construction and perception of self-Identity in early adulthood musicians, which can benefit psychologists and relevant personnel in supporting the development

of potential and the perception and understanding of self-Identity through future activities.

Keywords: psychological experiences, identity, musician, young adult

ที่มาและความสำคัญของปัญหา

ช่วงวัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้น หมายถึง ผู้ที่มีอายุตั้งแต่ 18-40 ปี เป็นช่วงวัยที่บุคคลมีจุดเปลี่ยนหรือโอกาสในการเปลี่ยนเส้นทางชีวิตตนเอง ค้นหาตนเองโดยเป็นอิสระจากบรรทัดฐานทางสังคมและความต้องการของผู้ปกครอง ถือเป็นระยะเวลาสำคัญของการค้นหาและพัฒนาอัตลักษณ์ (Identity) ทดลองและสำรวจตนเองเพื่อนำไปสู่การลงหลักปักฐานด้านหน้าที่การงานและความสัมพันธ์ ซึ่งเกี่ยวพันกับการเปลี่ยนผ่านและเหตุการณ์สำคัญในชีวิตหลายอย่างที่ต้องเผชิญกับการปรับตัวเข้าสู่บทบาทใหม่ที่ซับซ้อนมากขึ้นในสังคม ไม่ว่าจะเป็นการสร้างความสัมพันธ์ระยะยาว การรับบทบาทความเป็นพ่อแม่ และการเติบโตในหน้าที่การงาน (Arnett, 2015) ความทุ่มเทในการปรับตัวให้สอดคล้องกับบทบาทและความคาดหวังใหม่เหล่านี้ นำไปสู่กระบวนการประเมินอัตลักษณ์ของตนเอง (Identity evaluation) โดยบุคคลจำเป็นจะต้องปรับปรุงความเข้าใจในตนเองเมื่อเผชิญกับความเป็นจริงของการใช้ชีวิตและเป้าหมายที่ได้ตั้งไว้ก่อนหน้านี้ เช่น ด้านการงานและชีวิตครอบครัว (Pals, 1999)

ในบริบทของการสร้างและพัฒนาตัวตน ดนตรีถือเป็นสื่อที่ความสำคัญหนึ่ง เนื่องจากเป็นสื่อที่สามารถสะท้อนบุคลิกภาพ อารมณ์ และวัฒนธรรม อีกทั้งยังมีบทบาทที่สำคัญในการส่งเสริมการสร้างและพัฒนาอัตลักษณ์ทางดนตรี (Musical Identity) ซึ่งหมายถึงความรู้สึกถึงตัวตน (Sense of self) หรือความรู้สึกของการมีอยู่ ซึ่งรวมถึงการรับรู้คุณค่าในตนเอง ความเข้าใจในลักษณะนิสัยและความเชื่อของบุคคล (Rowley et al., 2016) การมีส่วนร่วมและสะสมประสบการณ์ทางดนตรี (Musical experiences) ไม่ว่าจะเป็นการฝึกซ้อม การแสดง หรือการสร้างสรรค์ผลงาน ล้วนส่งผลโดยตรงต่อการรับรู้และเข้าใจอัตลักษณ์ การปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางสังคม และการปรับตัวต่อความคาดหวังของสังคมในฐานะผู้ใหญ่ โดยมีปัจจัยภายนอก เช่น สังคม ค่านิยม และความคาดหวัง เป็นองค์ประกอบสนับสนุนการสร้างอัตลักษณ์ความเป็นนักดนตรี (Peck & Greasley, 2020)

งานวิจัยที่ผ่านมาจำนวนมากชี้ให้เห็นถึงบทบาทของประสบการณ์ทางดนตรีในการสร้างอัตลักษณ์ตัวตน โดยการศึกษาวิจัยที่ผ่านมา พบว่า กิจกรรมดนตรีแบบไม่เป็นทางการและกึ่งเป็นทางการมีส่วนสำคัญต่อการก่อรูปอัตลักษณ์ทางดนตรีของคนหนุ่มสาว (Lonie & Dickens, 2016) รวมถึงการศึกษาที่ชี้ให้เห็นว่าว่าผู้เรียนพัฒนาอัตลักษณ์จากกระบวนการทำความเข้าใจว่าตนเองคือใคร สามารถทำอะไรได้บ้าง และกำลังพัฒนาไปสู่การเป็นใคร (Westerlund et al., 2017) อัตลักษณ์หรือตัวตนนี้มีความยืดหยุ่นและก่อรูปขึ้นจากการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ร่วมกันในบริบทจริงทั้ง

ทางสังคมและวัฒนธรรม ขณะเดียวกันงานวิจัยหลายชิ้นยังชี้ถึงความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างอัตลักษณ์ของนักดนตรีและครูดนตรี ซึ่งมักหลอมรวมและส่งอิทธิพลต่อกัน (Freer & Bennett, 2012; Pellegrino, 2015) นอกจากนี้ยังพบว่า อัตลักษณ์ทางดนตรีขึ้นอยู่กับปัจจัยทางสังคม จิตวิทยา วัฒนธรรม และการศึกษา ทำให้มีความหลากหลายสูง โดยพบว่าดนตรีมีความหมายต่างกันระหว่างนักดนตรีมืออาชีพ ครูดนตรี และนักดนตรีสมัครเล่น ซึ่งแต่ละกลุ่มให้คุณค่าต่อองค์ประกอบทางอารมณ์ ความสัมพันธ์ทางสังคม และการสะท้อนคิดแตกต่างกันไป (Spychiger et al., 2009; Gruhn et al., 2017)

นอกจากนี้งานของการศึกษาที่ผ่านมาของ Lonie and Dickens (2016) ที่เกี่ยวกับการเรียนดนตรีและพัฒนาตัวตนเป็นนักดนตรี ยังชี้ให้เห็นว่ากระบวนการเรียนรู้ดนตรีสามารถเกิดขึ้นนอกสถาบันการศึกษาในบริบทที่หลากหลาย และพบว่าปัจจัยทางสังคม เช่น การสนับสนุนจากพ่อแม่ ครู หรือเพื่อน เป็นตัวแปรสำคัญที่ส่งผลต่อความสำเร็จทางดนตรีและการพัฒนาอัตลักษณ์ของนักดนตรี (Lamont, 2011b) ในอีกมิติหนึ่ง งานวิจัยด้านจิตวิทยาดนตรีที่ผ่านมา ยังแสดงให้เห็นถึงบทบาทของความชอบทางดนตรีซึ่งเชื่อมโยงกับการสร้างอัตลักษณ์ โดยเฉพาะในวัยรุ่นซึ่งมักใช้ดนตรีเพื่อแสดงออกและสร้างตัวตนร่วมกับกลุ่มเพื่อน ความพึงพอใจทางดนตรียังสัมพันธ์กับการรู้คุณค่าร่วมของกลุ่ม (Collective self-esteem) (Clark et al., 2023) และความเข้มข้นของการมีส่วนร่วมทางดนตรีในวัยรุ่นยังส่งผลต่อรูปแบบการปฏิสัมพันธ์กับดนตรีตลอดช่วงชีวิต (Müllensiefen et al., 2022)

อย่างไรก็ตาม แม้จะมีงานวิจัยจำนวนมากที่ศึกษาความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างดนตรีและอัตลักษณ์ของบุคคล แต่งานวิจัยส่วนใหญ่มักมุ่งเน้นไปที่ช่วงวัยเด็กและวัยรุ่น ทำให้เกิดช่องว่างในการทำความเข้าใจว่าประสบการณ์ทางดนตรีในช่วงวัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้นส่งผลต่อการสร้างและการรับรู้อัตลักษณ์ทางดนตรีอย่างไร ซึ่งวัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้นนี้เป็นช่วงวัยที่มีการสร้างและพัฒนาอัตลักษณ์อย่างต่อเนื่องและเผชิญกับความท้าทายในการปรับตัวที่เฉพาะเจาะจง บทความวิจัยนี้นี้จึงมุ่งศึกษาประสบการณ์ดังกล่าวผ่านการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพเพื่อเติมเต็มช่องว่างทางวิชาการ และสะท้อนภาพประสบการณ์ทางจิตใจในการรับรู้และกระบวนการสร้างอัตลักษณ์ทางดนตรีในช่วงวัยเปลี่ยนผ่านที่สำคัญอันจะนำไปสู่ความเข้าใจที่ลึกซึ้ง ซึ่งจะเป็นประโยชน์ต่อนักเรียน นักศึกษาทางด้านดนตรี ครูผู้สอน บุคลากรทางการศึกษา รวมถึงนักจิตวิทยาการปรึกษาที่จะทำความเข้าใจกับประสบการณ์และนำความรู้ดังกล่าวไปใช้ในการสนับสนุน ส่งเสริมการพัฒนาศักยภาพของกลุ่มนักดนตรีวัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้นได้อย่างเหมาะสมในอนาคต

วัตถุประสงค์

เพื่อศึกษาประสบการณ์ทางจิตใจในการสร้าง และการรับรู้อัตลักษณ์ในตนเองผ่านประสบการณ์ดนตรีของกลุ่มนักดนตรีวัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้นด้วยการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ

ระเบียบวิธีวิจัย

การวิจัยนี้เป็นการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ (Qualitative research) ที่ใช้รูปแบบการวิเคราะห์แบบปรากฏการณ์วิทยาแบบบรรยาย (Descriptive Phenomenology) เพื่อศึกษาประสบการณ์ที่เกิดขึ้นกับชีวิตของมนุษย์และทำความเข้าใจสาระสำคัญและความหมายของประสบการณ์นั้น ๆ ที่มีต่อบุคคล

ผู้ให้ข้อมูลหลัก เป็นนักดนตรีวัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้น จำนวน 6 คน โดยทั้ง 6 คนได้รับการคัดเลือกแบบเจาะจงตามเกณฑ์ที่กำหนดได้ ได้แก่ (1) อายุ 18-40 ปี (2) ประกอบอาชีพด้านดนตรี เช่น นักดนตรี ครูสอนดนตรี เพื่อหาเลี้ยงชีพมาเป็นระยะเวลาไม่ต่ำกว่า 1 ปี (3) สามารถสื่อสารและเข้าใจภาษาไทยได้ดี (4) ยินดีให้สัมภาษณ์ในการวิจัย โดยข้อมูลทั่วไปของผู้ให้ข้อมูลแต่ละรายมีดังนี้

เครื่องมือวิจัย (1) ผู้วิจัย เนื่องจากผู้วิจัยเป็นผู้ดำเนินการวิจัยด้วยตนเองทุกขั้นตอน

ตารางที่ 1 ข้อมูลทั่วไปของผู้ให้ข้อมูล

ผู้ให้ข้อมูล (นามสมมติ)	การศึกษา	อาชีพ	เครื่องดนตรีหลัก
รายที่ 1 “เมย์” **เพศ:** หญิง **อายุ:** 25 ปี	ปริญญาตรี (ละครเพลง)	ครูสอนเปียโน นักแสดงละครเวที	ขับร้อง
รายที่ 2 “วินด์” **เพศ:** ชาย **อายุ:** 32 ปี	ปริญญาตรี (การแสดงดนตรี) ปริญญาโท (ขับร้องเพลงแจ๊ส)	นักร้อง ครูสอนร้องเพลง เจ้าของโรงเรียนสอนดนตรี	ขับร้อง
รายที่ 3 “ดีดี้” **เพศ:** หญิง **อายุ:** 24 ปี	ปริญญาตรี (การแสดงดนตรี)	สอนเปียโนเด็กเล็ก นักดนตรีวงออร์เคสตรา	คลาริเน็ต
รายที่ 4 “มัธ” **เพศ:** หญิง **อายุ:** 35 ปี	ปริญญาตรี (วารสารศาสตร์) ปริญญาโท (จิตวิทยา)	ครูสอนไวโอลิน นักดนตรี	ไวโอลิน
รายที่ 5 “ไอวี่” **เพศ:** หญิง **อายุ:** 25 ปี	ปริญญาตรี (ดนตรีศึกษา)	ครูสอนดนตรีไทย	ระนาดเอก
รายที่ 6 “ไอริส” **เพศ:** หญิง **อายุ:** 30 ปี	ปริญญาตรี (การแสดงดนตรี)	นักร้อง นักแสดงละครเวที อาจารย์สอนขับร้อง	ขับร้อง

ตั้งแต่การเข้าถึงผู้ให้ข้อมูล เก็บข้อมูลผ่านการสัมภาษณ์และสังเกต รวมถึงการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูล (2) แนวทางคำถามสัมภาษณ์แบบกึ่งโครงสร้าง เป็นการสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกแบบกึ่งโครงสร้างที่มีลักษณะเป็นคำถามปลายเปิด ซึ่งถามเกี่ยวกับข้อมูลพื้นฐานและประสบการณ์ทางดนตรีของผู้ให้ข้อมูล ประสบการณ์ทางดนตรีกับการรับรู้อัตลักษณ์ในตนเอง และประสบการณ์ทางดนตรีกับการสร้างอัตลักษณ์ในตนเองและเส้นทางดนตรี เป็นต้น

การเก็บรวบรวมข้อมูล คณะผู้วิจัยเก็บข้อมูลผ่านการสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกแบบตัวต่อตัว (In-depth interview) โดยใช้ข้อคำถามสัมภาษณ์ปลายเปิดแบบกึ่งโครงสร้าง (Semi-structured interview) สัมภาษณ์ผู้ให้ข้อมูลแต่ละคน คนละ 1 ครั้ง และใช้เวลาประมาณ 60-90 นาที โดยผู้วิจัยได้ติดต่อนัดหมายกับผู้ที่ผ่านเกณฑ์คัดเข้าในการศึกษาวิจัย เพื่อชี้แจงข้อต่าง ๆ ที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการศึกษาวิจัยครั้งนี้ให้แก่ผู้ให้ข้อมูลทราบ รวมทั้งสิทธิของผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัย ประเด็นการเก็บรักษาความลับ พร้อมทั้งอธิบายข้อสงสัยต่าง ๆ จนผู้ให้ข้อมูลเกิดความเข้าใจเป็นอย่างดี และขอให้ผู้ให้ข้อมูลลงชื่อแสดงความยินยอรวิจัยในเอกสารการยินยอม จากนั้นทำการนัดวันเวลาและสถานที่เพื่อสัมภาษณ์ตามที่ผู้ให้ข้อมูลสะดวก ก่อนการสัมภาษณ์ผู้วิจัยขออนุญาตบันทึกเสียงก่อนเริ่มสัมภาษณ์ เมื่อได้รับการยินยอมแล้วจึงเริ่มสัมภาษณ์ผู้ให้ข้อมูล

การวิเคราะห์ข้อมูล ผู้วิจัยทำการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลตามแนวทางของการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพแนวปรากฏการณ์วิทยาแบบ Husserl ที่ระบุไว้ตามขั้นตอน (Giorgi, 2007) โดยการถอดความจากไฟล์เสียงที่ได้บันทึกไว้แบบคำต่อคำ อ่านบทสัมภาษณ์เป็นตัวอักษรซ้ำรวมถึงจดบันทึกการสังเกตในระหว่างการสัมภาษณ์ของผู้วิจัย เพื่อทำความเข้าใจกับข้อมูลในภาพรวม จากนั้นดึงข้อความหรือประโยคที่สำคัญในประเด็นที่มีความเกี่ยวข้องกับประสบการณ์ ความคิด ความรู้สึกต่าง ๆ มาลงรหัสข้อความ (Open coding) จากนั้น จึงนำรหัสข้อความที่มีความสัมพันธ์กันมาสร้างเป็นประเด็นหลัก (Theme) และจัดหมวดหมู่ข้อความ (Category) และวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลตามระเบียบวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ โดยจัดเป็นแก่นสาระหลัก (Theme) และแก่นสาระย่อย (Subtheme) เพื่อแสดงให้เห็นถึงภาพรวมของประสบการณ์ของกลุ่มผู้ให้ข้อมูล จากนั้นจึงสรุปข้อค้นพบที่ได้และนำเสนอในรูปแบบการเขียนเชิงพรรณนา โดยชื่อและข้อมูลส่วนตัวของผู้ให้ข้อมูลได้รับการปกปิดเป็นความลับและใช้นามสมมติ

ผลการวิจัย

ผลของประสบการณ์ทางจิตใจในการสร้างและการรับรู้อัตลักษณ์ในตนเองผ่านประสบการณ์ดนตรีของกลุ่มนักดนตรีวัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้น พบประเด็นหลัก 4 ประเด็น ได้แก่ ประเด็นหลักที่ 1 ความชัดเจนในตัวตนทางดนตรี ประเด็นหลักที่ 2 การสนับสนุนจากคนรอบข้างในเส้นทางดนตรี ประเด็นหลักที่ 3 การรับรู้คุณค่าในสิ่งที่ทำ และประเด็นหลักที่ 4 ดนตรีช่วยให้ผ่านช่วงเวลาที่ยากลำบาก โดยมีรายละเอียดดังต่อไปนี้

ประเด็นหลักที่ 1 ความชัดเจนในตัวตนทางดนตรี ในประเด็นนี้ ผู้ให้ข้อมูลได้บอกเล่าถึงความชัดเจนในตัวตนทางดนตรีของพวกเขาที่รับรู้ได้จากหลาย ๆ สิ่งในตัวเอง ที่เป็นปัจจัยสำคัญในการเลือกเข้าสู่เส้นทางดนตรี เรียนดนตรี จนกระทั่งทำงานด้านดนตรี โดยแบ่งออกเป็น 4 ประเด็นย่อย ได้แก่

1.1 การรับรู้ความสามารถทางดนตรีของตนเอง ผู้ให้ข้อมูลเล่าถึงประสบการณ์ที่ทำให้ตระหนักรู้ในความสามารถทางดนตรีของตนเอง มองเห็นว่าตัวเองมีความสามารถทางดนตรีที่โดดเด่น และรับรู้ถึงทักษะทางดนตรี ตัวอย่างเช่นผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 3 เล่าว่า *“ตอนนี้ก็ยังคิดอย่างนี้อยู่ว่ามันคือสิ่งเดียวที่เราทำแล้วมันแบบ ... เราทำแล้วมันดีที่สุดในชีวิตอะไรอย่างนี้ เออ เรารู้สึกว่าเราทำอะไรไม่ค่อย ... ทำอะไรก็ดูเหมือนแบบเขาเรียกอะไร จับฉ่ายอะ เออ มันดูไม่เด่นออกมา ก็เลยรู้สึกว่าดนตรีมันเด่นที่สุดละ”* หรือผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 5 เล่าว่า *“พี่รู้สึกว่า ... พี่เก่ง (หัวเราะ) พี่รู้สึกว่า อุ๊ย ฉันเก่งว่ะ เวลาดูคลิปอะไรอย่างนี้ ... พี่เลยไปมองดูตัวเองในคลิป โอ้ย ทำไมเก่งจัง”*

1.2 การรับรู้ความต้องการในเส้นทางดนตรี ในประเด็นนี้ ผู้ให้ข้อมูลเล่าถึงการรับรู้ความต้องการในเส้นทางดนตรี ว่าเป็นการรับรู้ความชอบในดนตรีที่มีความลึกซึ้งมากขึ้น ซึ่งกลายเป็นแนวดนตรีที่ต้องการจะเล่น หรือต้องการศึกษา จนกระทั่งต้องการประกอบอาชีพทางด้านดนตรี โดยผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 2 ได้รายงานว่า *“อะไรที่แบบว่าเรามุ่งมั่นที่จะศึกษาก็น่าจะเป็นคลาสลิกกับแจ๊สเนอะ ที่เราแบบศึกษาจริงจัง ไปหาครูเรียนส่วนตัวอย่างนี้”* หรือที่ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 6 ได้เล่าว่า *“ก่อนสอบเข้าค่ะ ก็คือพ่อแม่พามาเรียนกับครูคนหนึ่งเพื่อสำหรับการสอบเข้าโดยเฉพาะ ซึ่งครูเขาก็เหมือนแบบให้เราตีความเพลงอะไรก่อนร้อง ดังนั้นเวลาเราร้องอะ เราจะไม่ได้แค่ร้องเพลง แล้วเรารู้สึกว่าเราสนุกมากกับการที่แบบเราได้ ได้แสดงไปด้วย ร้องเพลงไปด้วย”*

นอกจากที่ผู้ให้ข้อมูลจะรับรู้ความชอบแนวเพลงหรือดนตรีแล้ว พวกเขายังรับรู้ถึงความต้องการที่จะทำงานด้านดนตรีของตนเองต่อไป เพราะว่าการทำงานด้านดนตรีเป็นสิ่งที่ทำแล้วมีความสุข มีความหลงใหล และมีความตั้งใจกับการทำงานนี้ ดังที่ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 1 เล่าว่า *“ร้องเพลง ไม่ว่าเราจะติดขัดอะไรแค่ไหน เราสู้อะ ... การที่เรามีใจรัก ซึ่งเรารู้สึกว่า เออ ดนตรีเป็นสิ่งเดียวที่เราแบบมีความหลงใหลไรเงี้ย”* และผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 3 เน้นถึงความตั้งใจในการทำงานที่ทำให้เกิดความสุขว่า *“ชอบเวลาสอน แบบเวลาสอนใครแล้วมันมีความก้าวหน้าพัฒนา มันมีความสุขอะ เออ เพราะว่าทุกครั้งที่เราพูดออกไปหรือว่าตั้งใจสอนออกไป คือมันแบบ เออ เราตั้งใจจริง ๆ แล้วเขาดีขึ้น แล้วก็ถือว่า ก็นั่นแหละ ประสบความสำเร็จ”* เช่นเดียวกับความตั้งใจในการทำงานของผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 5 ที่เล่าว่า *“พี่อยากไปสอนเด็กที่ไม่เป็นเลย ศูนย์ พี่อยากเริ่มใหม่ให้เขา อยากปูพื้นฐานให้เขาใหม่ ไม่อยากสอนเด็กเก่ง อยากสอนเด็กที่แบบ ไม่รู้อะ อืม ใช่ อยากให้ความรู้กับเด็กที่อยากจะรู้แต่ยังไม่รู้อะไรแบบเนี้ย อืม ใช่ ๆ อยากเป็นครูฟีลนั้นนะ”*

1.3 การสื่อสารตัวตนและความรู้สึกผ่านดนตรี ผู้ให้ข้อมูลทั้งหมดได้บอกเล่าถึงการที่ดนตรีเป็นสิ่งหนึ่งที่ทำให้พวกเขาได้สื่อสารตัวตนและความรู้สึกออกมาผ่านการร้องเพลง หรือการ

เล่นดนตรี ซึ่งทำให้พวกเขามีความชัดเจนมากขึ้นว่าดนตรีเป็นเหมือนส่วนหนึ่งของพวกเขา เป็นสิ่งที่สามารถสะท้อนตัวตนและความรู้สึกของพวกเขา ตัวอย่างเช่นผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 3 กล่าวว่า *"เราเป็นคนไม่ค่อยกล้าพูด ไม่ค่อย แบบเป็นคนไม่ค่อยแสดงออกแบบตรง ๆ โต้ง ๆ แต่พอเล่นดนตรีมันเหมือนแบบได้แสดงออกถึงมุมมองอะไรหลาย ๆ อย่างให้คนเขาได้ฟังในสิ่งที่เราไม่กล้าพูด แต่ว่าเรากล้าเล่นมันออกมา"* หรือการสื่อสารความรู้สึกได้อย่างตรงใจในขณะนั้น ๆ ดังที่ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 4 กล่าวว่า "อันนี้เหมือนกับว่า สมมติถ้าเราเศร้ามาก ๆ แล้วนั่งหน้าเปียโนเงี้ย แล้วเล่นเพลงสักเพลงหนึ่งออกมาที่มาแบบรู้สึกว่า เฮ้ย มันตรงกับความรู้สึกเราเลย ... จากเดิมที่มันอาจจะแบบเป็นความรู้สึกเศร้าที่ดู ดูเป็นทุกข์ ที่ดูทรมานอะ มันยังคงในห้วงของความเศร้านั้นอยู่ด้วยอารมณ์ของเพลงหรืออะไรที่เราเล่นน่ะ แต่มันเริ่มจะสวยละ"

1.4 อิทธิพลจากบุคคลต้นแบบ ในประเด็นนี้ผู้ให้ข้อมูลได้บอกเล่าถึงความชัดเจนในตัวตนทางดนตรีว่านอกจากจะเด่นชัดขึ้นผ่านการสะท้อนตัวตนออกมาระหว่างมีปฏิสัมพันธ์กับดนตรีแล้ว ยังเกิดขึ้นจากการมีบุคคลต้นแบบที่กระตุ้นให้เกิดแรงจูงใจที่จะพัฒนาต่อไปให้มากขึ้นในเส้นทางดนตรีนี้ ตัวอย่างเช่น ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 2 และผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 6 ที่กล่าวถึงบุคคลต้นแบบที่คือครูของเขาที่เป็นแบบอย่างที่ดีและทำให้พวกเขาอยากเป็นครูเหมือนกับครูที่เขาได้เจอ *"จริง ๆ ชอบสอนอยู่แล้ว แล้วแบบการที่เรามีครูที่ดีอะ ตลอดมาในชีวิตเรามีครูที่ดีเยอะมาก แล้วก็มีครูที่เป็นแรงบันดาลใจให้เราเยอะมาก เพราะฉะนั้น มันก็รู้สึกว่าเป็น การที่เรามีครูที่ดีอะ มันทำให้เราอยากเป็นครู เพราะเห็นว่าครูที่ดีทำอะไรได้บ้าง"* และ *"เราเรียนร้องเพลงกับวงที่เขาคอนดักต์มาตั้งแต่อยู่ปริญญาตรี หรือแม้กระทั่งตอนเรียนปริญญาโท เราเห็นว่าเขาตั้งใจแค่ไหน เกี่ยวกับการใช้ชีวิตหรืออะไร ก็เป็นไอดอลนะ เรารู้สึกว่าเขาอยากทำให้เราเป็นครูที่ดี เพราะว่าเขา ครูไม่ได้เป็นครูที่เอาแต่ตัวเองทำงานในหน้าที่ แต่เป็นครูที่นึกถึงเด็ก เราก็เลยรู้สึกว่า ดีจัง หมายถึงว่าวันหนึ่งก็อยากจะทำประโยชน์ได้อย่างนั้นบ้าง อยากเก่งด้วย และทำประโยชน์ด้วย"*

ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 3 และรายที่ 4 ที่ได้พูดถึงนักดนตรีที่เป็นบุคคลต้นแบบที่เป็นแรงบันดาลใจให้พวกเขารู้สึกอยากมีความสามารถ หรือสามารถทำได้เหมือนกับบุคคลที่ตนเองรู้สึกชื่นชม รวมไปถึงผู้ให้ข้อมูลมีความคิดที่อยากจะเรียนรู้แนวคิดหรือวิธีการเล่นจากบุคคลต้นแบบ *"ตอนแรกก็อยากไปเรียนกับคนหนึ่ง อยู่ที่ฝรั่งเศส เขาเล่นดูง่ายมาก ก็เลยอยากรู้เทคนิค เขาอาจจะมีแนวคิดหรือมีวิธีทำที่ทำให้เวลาเล่นมันดูแบบมันง่ายอะไรงี้ ตอนนี้ก็ยังชอบคนนั้นอยู่"* และ *"ตอนนั้นด้วยความที่เราอายุน้อยค่ะ เราก็เลยเหมือนยังฝันแรง ๆ ตอนนั้นยังไม่รู้ว่าจะไม่ได้เรียนในวิชาการหรืออะไรอย่างนี้ ก็เลยคิดเหมือนกันนะว่า โห ถ้าวันหนึ่งนะ เราตั้งใจเรียน เราตั้งใจซ้อมอะ เราจะได้เข้าไปเล่นวงอาชีพเหมือนเขา จะได้ขึ้นไปยืนโซโลหน้าวงเหมือนเขา อะไรอย่างนี้ เออ เขาก็จะเป็นแรงบันดาลใจในช่วงหนึ่ง ช่วงที่พี่ยังแบบ ยังเด็ก เป็นวัยรุ่น"*

ประเด็นหลักที่ 2 การสนับสนุนจากคนรอบข้างในเส้นทางดนตรี ในประเด็นหลักนี้ ผู้ให้ข้อมูลได้บอกเล่าถึงประสบการณ์ที่ได้รับการสนับสนุนจากคนรอบข้าง ซึ่งถือเป็นปัจจัยสำคัญนอก

เหนือจากความชอบในดนตรีของตนเองที่ผลักดันให้พวกเขาก้าวเข้าสู่เส้นทางดนตรี ทั้งในตอนที่เริ่มจนกระทั่งถึงในปัจจุบันที่ทำงานด้านดนตรี

2.1 การสนับสนุนเส้นทางการเรียนและทำงานด้านดนตรี ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายงานว่าพ่อแม่เป็นบุคคลสำคัญให้ได้เริ่มต้นเดินในเส้นทางดนตรีตั้งแต่แรก ไม่ว่าจะเป็นการสนับสนุนและผลักดันให้ได้ศึกษาดนตรีโดยตรง ดังเช่นที่ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 1 เล่าว่า *"แม่ให้ไปเรียน ... คือถ้าตอนเด็ก ก็เรียนไปตามที่แม่ส่ง"* และผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 4 กล่าวว่า *"ต้องยอมรับว่า (พ่อแม่) เป็นสปอนเซอร์ด้วย เพราะตอนเด็กเรายังไม่มีเงินเนอะ คนที่ส่งเรียนก็คือคุณพ่อ คือคุณพ่อพี่เนี่ยเป็นคนส่งให้ ให้เรียนพิเศษที่ไปเรียนที่ยามาฮ่าอะไรอย่างนี้ก็คือเป็นคุณพ่อส่ง"*

นอกจากที่คนรอบข้างหรือครอบครัวเป็นผู้สนับสนุนและผลักดันในการเริ่มต้นเรียนดนตรีแล้ว ระหว่างทางที่เรียนดนตรี ผู้ให้ข้อมูลได้บอกเล่าถึงครูอาจารย์ที่คอยสร้างโอกาสในเส้นทางดนตรี ที่ทำให้พวกเขายังคงเดินอยู่บนเส้นทางนี้ เป็นแรงผลักดัน สนับสนุน เปิดโอกาสให้ได้ทำสิ่งต่าง ๆ ที่เกี่ยวข้องกับดนตรี ดังที่ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 5 เล่าว่า *"ครูนี่สำคัญมากเลย เพราะว่าเหมือนถ้าไม่มีครูอะ พี่ก็ไม่ได้มีวันนี้นะ เพราะว่าครูเหมือนหาประสบการณ์ให้เราตลอด พาไปเล่นงานนู้น พาไปเล่นงานนี้ พี่เล่นแทบจะทุกงาน งานแต่ง งานศพ งานบวช งานครอบครู แบบครูพาไปอะไรอย่างนี้ เลยรู้สึกว่าถ้าไม่มีครูอะ พี่ไม่มีตรงนี้"* เช่นเดียวกับที่ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 6 ได้เล่าถึงอาจารย์ที่ให้โอกาสการทำงานด้านดนตรีว่า *"ด้วยความที่อาจารย์ทาบทามมาอยากให้เป็นอาจารย์ ณ ตอนนี้เนอะ เราก็บอกอาจารย์ไปว่า จริง ๆ ไม่ค่อยอยากเป็นอาจารย์มหาวิทยาลัยเลย เพราะว่าเหมือนมันต้องนั่งออฟฟิศ มีความรู้สึกว่าอยากเป็นนักแสดงมากกว่า แต่อาจารย์ก็บอกว่า เออ เอาเถอะ ก็มาลองเป็นอาจารย์พิเศษก่อน .. .ส่วนใหญ่เราจะได้รับความเมตตาจากคนที่เป็นผู้ใหญ่มากกว่าเพื่อน อืม ก็คืออาจารย์ ... ส่วนตัวเรารู้สึกว่าที่ผ่านมา เราได้รับโอกาสดี ๆ ได้รับการสนับสนุนจากอาจารย์ค่อนข้างเยอะ"*

2.2 การให้คำแนะนำและเป็นแหล่งพึ่งพิงทางใจในเส้นทางดนตรี ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายงานถึงประสบการณ์ที่คนรอบข้างให้คำแนะนำที่สำคัญในเส้นทางดนตรี เนื่องจากคนรอบข้างมองเห็นสิ่งที่อยู่ในตัวผู้ให้ข้อมูล จึงเป็นปัจจัยหนึ่งในการทำให้ผู้ให้ข้อมูลได้ค้นพบตัวเอง มีความชัดเจนกับตัวเองมากยิ่งขึ้น และพวกเขารู้สึกขอบคุณที่ได้รับสิ่งนี้มา ดังเช่นที่ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 4 เล่าว่า *"เรารู้สึกซาบซึ้งนะที่วันหนึ่งเขาบอกกับเราว่าให้ไปหาครูคนอื่น อะไรอย่างนี้ ... เหมือนกับว่าคงรู้สึกว่า เฮ้ย เราน่าจะไปได้ดีกว่านี้ เขาเลยมาคุยกับเราว่าแบบ ไปหาครูเรียนให้มันจริงจังเถอะ ... ก็รู้สึกขอบคุณ ขอบคุณเขา"* เช่นเดียวกับผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 1 ที่เล่าว่า *"คือจริง ๆ ตอนแรกที่เราจะเข้ามหาวิทยาลัย เราจะเข้าเปียโน เพราะเราเรียนเปียโนมาไง แต่ว่าเหมือนเวลาพักเที่ยงอะไรอย่างนี้ เราชอบไปร้องเพลงกับเพื่อนที่เรียนเอกร้องกัน คุณครูเขาเห็น เขาก็เลยบอกว่าลองไปสอบเข้าวอยซ์มั้ย เราก็เลยลองไปเรียนแล้วสอบเข้า แต่เราว่ามันเป็นตัวเลือกที่ดีนะ เพราะว่ามันดูเป็นเรากว่ามาก"*

นอกจากที่คนรอบข้างจะให้คำแนะนำผู้ให้ข้อมูลในเส้นทางดนตรีแล้ว ผู้ให้ข้อมูลยังบอกเล่าถึงประสบการณ์ที่ได้เจอความยากลำบาก หรือความไม่สบายใจ แต่มีคนรอบข้างไม่ว่าจะเป็นครอบครัว เพื่อน หรือครู ที่คอยเป็นแหล่งพึ่งพิงทางใจในเส้นทางนี้ ทำให้มีพลังและมีกำลังใจในการฝึกฝนดนตรี รวมถึงช่วยประคับประคองให้ผู้ให้ข้อมูลเดินหน้าต่อไปในเส้นทางดนตรีนี้ได้ ตัวอย่างเช่น ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 3 เล่าถึงครูผู้สอนว่า *"อาจารย์ไพรเวทที่เขาเป็นอาจารย์เครื่องมือเอกเรา เขาก็คือคนหนึ่งที่คอยให้กำลังใจเราตลอด เขารู้ว่าเราค่อนข้างอ่อนไหว เขาก็จะอ่อนโยนกับเราเป็นพิเศษ แล้วเขาจะพูดคำดี ๆ ตลอด ไม่เคยพูดกระแทกแดกดันเรา เขาก็จะคอยบอกว่า ยูทำได้ดีกว่านี้ ไม่เป็นไร เอาใหม่ อะไรอย่างนี้ ก็ชม ชมเยอะ"* โดยผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 4 บอกเล่าถึงเพื่อนและครูว่า *"เราจะได้กำลังใจจากเพื่อน อืม เพื่อนสมัยมัธยม ค่อนข้างที่จะแบบ เชียร์ให้เราเหมือนไล่ตามความฝันของเราอะไรอย่างนี้ แล้วก็ครูคนแรกที่สอนไวโอลินที่ยามาฮ่า เป็นคนที่ ... เออ ไม่รู้จริง ๆ เราเก่ง ไม่เก่งอะ แต่เขาก็พยายามที่จะชื่นชมเราตลอด มาให้กำลังใจ ให้ความมั่นใจ"* ในขณะที่ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 5 ได้เล่าถึงครอบครัวที่ให้กำลังใจในยามที่ท้อว่า *"ครอบครัวสำคัญมากสำหรับพี่ เพราะพี่เป็นคนติดครอบครัว รักครอบครัวมาก เขาก็สนับสนุนนะ ให้กำลังใจเราตลอด มีช่วงหนึ่งตอนปี 2 พี่ซ้อมหนักมาก พี่เรียนเยอะมาก ต้องซ้อม ต้องสอบ ต้องนู่นนี่นั่น พี่คิดที่จะแบบไม่เอาละ ซิ่ว จะซิ่ว ไม่เอาแล้ว ไม่อยากเรียน โทรไปบอกแม่ว่า จะซิ่วนะ ไม่ไหวแล้ว แม่ก็แบบเหมือนทุกคนแบบตกใจแล้วก็ให้กำลังใจ จนพี่แบบฮึบอะ มันฮึบขึ้นมาเลยจนไม่ซิ่ว จนเรียนจบทุกวันนี้ ก็เพราะครอบครัวด้วย"* และ *"เหมือนเราก้าวข้ามผ่นจุดนั้นมาได้เพราะว่าหลาย ๆ อย่าง แรงผลักดันพ่อแม่ ที่บ้าน ครอบครัว แล้วก็ครู แล้วก็เพื่อนเรานี่แหละที่แบบ เออ ลองทำดู"*

ประเด็นหลักที่ 3 การรับรู้คุณค่าในสิ่งที่ทำ ประเด็นนี้ ผู้ให้ข้อมูลทั้ง 6 ท่านได้กล่าวถึงการลงมือทำสิ่งที่เกี่ยวกับดนตรี ไม่ว่าจะเป็นการทำงานและการเล่นดนตรี ล้วนเป็นสิ่งที่มีคุณค่าต่อตนเอง ดนตรีถือเป็นสิ่งที่สร้างให้เป็นตัวเองในทุกวันนี้ สร้างอัตลักษณ์และได้เติบโตจากดนตรี

3.1 การเห็นคุณค่าในตนเองและการเห็นคุณค่าในดนตรี ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายงานถึงประสบการณ์ที่ได้เข้าใจ ยอมรับ และค้นพบคุณค่าในตนเองผ่านเส้นทางดนตรี ซึ่งเป็นความรู้สึกทางบวกที่ส่งเสริมอัตลักษณ์ในตนเองของผู้ให้ข้อมูล เช่น ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 4 เล่าว่า "เป็นความสามารถพิเศษอะไรอย่างนี้น่ะค่ะ มันทำให้เรารู้สึกแบบสะท้อนกลับมาว่า เอ้อ เรารู้สึกดีกับตัวเองนะ แม้บางที เป็นปกติเนอะที่คนเราจะมีมุมไม่มั่นใจในตัวเองหรือว่าการเห็นคุณค่าในตัวเอง ยังมีประเด็นเรื่องนี้ขึ้นมาบ้างอะไรอย่างนี้ แต่พอมองย้อนมาตรงนี้ปุ๊บ เราก็มีอะไรที่เราทำได้เหมือนกันนะ อย่างนี้ค่ะ"

เมื่อผู้ให้ข้อมูลเกิดความเข้าใจและยอมรับรวมถึงการมองเห็นคุณค่าในตนเองแล้ว ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรู้สึกว่าตนเองได้เติบโตขึ้น พัฒนามากขึ้น และอยากจะพัฒนาตนเองมากขึ้นไปอีก ดังตัวอย่างเช่น ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 3 รายงานว่า *"วันแรกที่เข้ามาในวง พี่รู้สึกว่าพี่ไม่รู้เรื่องอะไรเลย อ่านโน้ตหรือเล่นอะไรแทบจะตามเขาไม่ทัน ดูมือคอนดักเตอร์ไม่เป็น เพราะมันเป็นครั้งแรกของเรา แต่ว่าอยู่*

ไปเรื่อย ๆ ทุกสิ่งทุกอย่างมันก็ถูกพัฒนาจากอะไรที่เคยทำไม่เป็นก็ทำเป็น แล้วก็ตอนที่จะไปสอนดนตรีช่วงประมาณปี 3 ปี 4 ตอนแรกไม่ได้มั่นใจด้วยซ้ำว่าแบบเราจะทำได้อะไรอย่างนี้ แต่ว่าการที่เราอยู่ในวง มาฝึกทุกวัน มันก็รู้ตัวเหมือนกันนะว่า เออ จากปี 1 มาปี 4 เราก็เก่งขึ้น ทั้ง ๆ ที่ไม่ได้เรียนคณะดนตรีนะ อะไรอย่างนี้" เช่นเดียวกับผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 6 ที่ได้มองเห็นความก้าวหน้าของตนเองได้เล่าว่า *"จริง ๆ แล้วมัน (ดนตรี) มีความหมายนะ ... ในทุก ๆ วัน พี่ว่าดนตรีมันทำให้พี่เติบโตขึ้นในทุก ๆ วัน แล้วก็พาพี่ไปในสถานที่ต่าง ๆ ถ้าพี่ไม่ได้มาอยู่ในโลกของดนตรีพี่คงไม่ได้ทำและคงไม่ได้ไป"*

3.2 การเป็นประโยชน์ให้ผู้อื่น ผู้ให้ข้อมูลได้บอกเล่าว่าประสบการณ์ดนตรีและการทำงานด้านดนตรีเป็นสิ่งที่เปิดโอกาสให้พวกเขาได้ทำสิ่งดี ๆ ให้กับคนรอบข้าง การได้ทำประโยชน์ในกับคนอื่นนี้ก็ได้กลับมาเติมเต็มตัวตนทางดนตรี และเติมเต็มความสุขของพวกเขาด้วย ดังเช่นที่ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 3 เล่าว่า *"เรื่องสอน แบบว่าเรารู้สึกว่าเราได้สอนแบบให้ความรู้ทั้งหมดกับนักเรียน แล้วเหมือนบางทีเวลาเราเห็นนักเรียนเราพัฒนาขึ้น เราก็มีความสุข"* เช่นเดียวกับผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 4 และผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 5 ที่ได้เล่าถึงความสุขที่เกิดขึ้นจากการสอนนักเรียนของตัวเองว่า *"ลูกศิษย์ของเราอย่างนี้ มันมีความผูกพัน เราได้มีบทบาทเป็นผู้ดูแลใครสักคนหนึ่ง ซึ่งอาจจะไม่ใช่แค่ในชั่วโมงนั้น คือในชั่วโมงนั้นโอเค เราต้องดูแลเขาไม่ใช่แค่เรื่องดนตรี แต่มันคือการดูแลเด็กคนหนึ่ง เหมือนพ่อแม่เขาให้เราดูแลลูกเขาคนนี้ 1 ชั่วโมง แต่หลังจากหมดชั่วโมงไปแล้วอะ มันก็ยังมีความห่วงใย มันไม่ได้หมายความว่าเราทำงานเป็นหุ่นยนต์ 1 ชั่วโมงกับเขา แล้วนอกชั่วโมงเราไม่ได้เป็นอะไรกัน มันไม่ใช่ มันมีความผูกพันเกิดขึ้น"* และ *"พี่ชอบสอนคน ไม่เคยคิดว่าตัวเองอยากเป็นครูจนกระทั่งพี่เห็นแบบ ไม่ต้องเป็นเด็กก็ได้ เพื่อนอะไรอย่างนี้ เพราะพี่สอนปุ๊บ พี่รู้สึกว่าเพราะมันทำได้ เรารู้สึกว่า เฮ้ย เรารู้สึกดีอะที่มันทำได้"*

3.3 การเข้าใจโลกและตนเอง ผู้ให้ข้อมูลได้รายงานประสบการณ์กรสะท้อนความเข้าใจโลกและตนเองผ่านการเดินในเส้นทางดนตรี ไม่ว่าจะเป็นการได้รับมุมมองใหม่ ๆ ที่เกิดจากการฟังดนตรี การเล่นดนตรี หรือการทำงานด้านดนตรี โดยสิ่งเหล่านี้พาให้ผู้ให้ข้อมูลได้มองโลกในแง่มุมที่เปลี่ยนไป เข้าใจโลกผ่านการเทียบเคียงประสบการณ์ที่เกิดขึ้น ตัวอย่างเช่น ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 2 เล่าว่า *"สมมติว่าเราเขียนเนื้อเพลงเอง หรือเราศึกษาเพลงนี้ เราแค่ตีความก็ได้ อาจจะยังไม่ต้องแต่งเราแค่ตีความอย่างนี้มันคือการสร้างความเข้าอกเข้าใจแล้ว นึกออกไหม แบบคนร้องแบบนี้ เขารู้สึกแบบนี้ คนร้องแบบนี้ เขาประสบสิ่งนี้ สภาพจิตใจเขา หรือว่าตรรกะเขามันเป็นแบบนี้"* และผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 6 ที่เล่าว่า *"ส่วนตัวรู้สึกว่ายิ่งเข้าใจดนตรี ยิ่งเข้าใจชีวิตมนุษย์มากขึ้น เพราะว่าพอเหมือนเรียนป.โท มันต้องเรียนลึกว่าทำไมเพลง ๆ นี้ถึงถูกแต่งมา ผู้ประพันธ์เพลงคิดอะไร ยุคสมัยดนตรีมันเกิดอะไร มันต้องเข้าใจจริง ๆ ว่ามันเกิดอะไรขึ้น"*

นอกจากนี้ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 4 ยังได้รายงานถึงประสบการณ์ดนตรีที่สามารถนำมาปรับใช้กับด้านอื่น ๆ ในชีวิตว่า *"เราเจอตัวเองในหลาย ๆ มิติเหมือนกัน สิ่งแรกคือเหมือนกับว่า เราเชื่อใน*

การฝึกฝน ทำซ้ำ เพราะเป็นอะไรที่แบบว่าเห็นชัดมาก คือเส้นทางของคนที่เล่นดนตรี กีฬา มันไม่ซ้อมไม่ได้ ทีนี้พอเราซ้อมแล้วเห็นว่ามันดีขึ้น มันพัฒนาในสิ่งที่เราตั้งเป้าหมาย พี่ว่ามันเป็นลักษณะเดียวกันด้านอื่น ๆ ของชีวิตด้วย"

ประเด็นหลักที่ 4 ดนตรีช่วยให้ผ่านช่วงเวลาที่ยากลำบาก ในประเด็นนี้ผู้ให้ข้อมูลได้รายงานประสบการณ์ดนตรีที่มีส่วนในการช่วยเหลือ ทำให้ผู้ให้ข้อมูลผ่านช่วงเวลาที่ยากลำบากในชีวิต ทั้งความยากลำบากในเส้นทางดนตรี และความยากลำบากในแง่มุมอื่น ๆ ของชีวิต ดึงความสนใจในปัจจุบันของตนเองออกไปจากปัญหาที่เผชิญอยู่ ทำให้ได้พักความคิดจากปัญหาที่ยังไม่ผ่านไป เช่น ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 3 เล่าว่า *"พอเราไปอยู่ในโลกดนตรี เหมือนเราลืมทุกอย่าง พาไปหลุดอยู่ในสักช่วงหนึ่ง แล้วยังไงมันก็ต้องกลับมาอยู่ในปัญหาที่เจออยู่ดี แต่มันก็ไม่ได้แบบว่ารักษาได้ทั้งหมด แต่เหมือนแค่เราเอาโฟกัสอย่างอื่นออกไป แล้วโฟกัสแค่ตรงซ้อม เล่นดนตรี"* เช่นเดียวกับผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 5 ที่รายงานว่า *"รู้สึกว่าเล่นดนตรีแล้วใจเย็น คือพี่เคยรู้สึกแย่มาก ๆ ไม่ดีมาก ๆ แต่เลือกที่จะไปเล่นดนตรี พอพี่ไปซ้อมของพี่วันนั้นคนเดียว ซ้อมในห้อง เอ้ย มันดีขึ้น เหมือนเราลืมเรื่องราวที่มันแย่กับเราไปเลยชั่วขณะหนึ่ง ... มันทำให้พี่ใจเย็นขึ้น"* นอกจากนี้ผู้ให้ข้อมูลยังเล่าถึงการใช้เวลาดนตรีเป็นกิจกรรมที่ทำให้เกิดความสบายใจ ปรับอารมณ์ให้ดีขึ้น หรือสงบลงจากความไม่สบายใจ ณ ขณะนั้น ตัวอย่างเช่น ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 1 ได้รายงานว่า *"ก็เหมือนบางทีที่มีเรื่องกังวล เรามีเพลงหนึ่งที่ชอบฟังช่วงที่ผ่านมา ชื่อเพลงว่า My Life is in Your Hands เนื้อเพลงมันร้องว่า "You don't have to worry and don't you be afraid." อะไรอย่างนี้ มันเหมือนกับทำให้เราสงบลงในเวลาที่เราคิดมาก"* เช่นเดียวกับผู้ให้ข้อมูลรายที่ 6 ที่บอกว่า *"สมมติว่าวันนี้เจอเรื่องแย่มา แน่นอนทุกคนมีเรื่องแย่ แต่ว่าอย่างน้อย มัน (ดนตรี) เป็นสิ่งหนึ่งที่เราสามารถทำได้ ถึงแม้ว่าบางครั้งเราจะไม่ร้องมันออกมาก็ตาม หรือแม้กระทั่งมันเป็นช่วงเวลาหนึ่งที่เราส่งเสียงไม่ได้เลย แต่เรามีเสียงดนตรีที่เราชอบในหูเรา เราก็รู้สึกว่า โอเค เราก็ผ่อนคลายลงมา"*

อภิปรายผลการวิจัย

ผลการศึกษาครั้งนี้พบว่าประสบการณ์ทางจิตใจในการสร้างการรับรู้อัตลักษณ์ในตนเองผ่านประสบการณ์ดนตรีของกลุ่มนักดนตรีในวัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้น แบ่งออกได้เป็น 4 ประเด็นหลัก ดังนี้ (1) ความชัดเจนในตัวตนทางดนตรี (2) การสนับสนุนจากคนรอบข้างในเส้นทางดนตรี (3) การรับรู้คุณค่าในสิ่งที่ทำ และ (4) ดนตรีช่วยให้ผ่านเวลาที่ยากลำบาก โดยผู้เขียนจะขออภิปรายถึงประเด็นต่อไปนี้

ประเด็นความชัดเจนในตัวตนตนทางดนตรี ที่ผู้ให้ข้อมูลรับรู้ถึงความชอบ ความสามารถ และความต้องการของตนเองจากการมีประสบการณ์ที่เกี่ยวข้องกับดนตรีต่าง ๆ ไม่ว่าจะเป็นการเรียนดนตรี การแสดงดนตรี หรือการทำกิจกรรมดนตรีนั้น ตรงกับการศึกษาของที่ผ่านมาของ Peck and Greasley (2020) ที่ได้ระบุว่าประสบการณ์ทางดนตรีที่มีความหมายในช่วงวัยรุ่น สามารถส่งผลต่อการหล่อหลอมอัตลักษณ์ ความเป็นตัวตน การวางตำแหน่ง และการนิยามตนเองกับสังคมใน

ที่สุด นอกจากนี้การที่ผู้ให้ข้อมูลบอกเล่าถึงความชัดเจนในตัวตนทางดนตรีที่เด่นชัดขึ้นจากการรับรู้ความสามารถ รับรู้อารมณ์ ความต้องการของตนเองนั้น ยังสอดคล้องกับแนวคิด Musical Self-Concept ในการศึกษาของ Spychiger et al. (2009) ที่กล่าวถึงตัวตนทางดนตรีว่า ตัวตนทางดนตรีเป็นการรับรู้หรือเข้าใจตัวเองที่เกี่ยวข้องกับดนตรี ซึ่งจะนำไปสู่การประสบความสำเร็จด้านดนตรี โดยแบ่งออกเป็น 2 ประเด็นหลัก ได้แก่ ส่วนประกอบของตัวตนทางดนตรีที่ไม่เกี่ยวข้องกับสาระดนตรี ประกอบไปด้วย ด้านอารมณ์ความรู้สึก ด้านสังคม เช่น การรวมวงดนตรี ด้านร่างกาย เช่น การเคลื่อนไหว การเต้น ด้านสติปัญญา เช่น ความจำ ความคิด การวิเคราะห์ และด้านจิตวิญญาณ เช่น ความรู้สึกเชื่อมโยงกับโลก และอีกส่วนหนึ่งคือส่วนประกอบของตัวตนทางดนตรีที่เป็นสาระดนตรี คือ การรับรู้ทักษะทางดนตรีของตนเอง เช่น การเล่นเครื่องดนตรี การร้องเพลง ความสามารถในการฟัง การเรียบเรียงเสียงประสาน

ประเด็นการสนับสนุนจากคนรอบข้างในเส้นทางดนตรี ผู้ให้ข้อมูลทุกคนต่างกล่าวถึงการสนับสนุนจากครอบครัว พ่อแม่ และครูผู้สอน ถือเป็นปัจจัยสำคัญให้พวกเขาได้ลองเล่นดนตรี มีประสบการณ์ด้านดนตรี รวมถึงเป็นสิ่งผลักดันให้พวกเขาได้ทำอาชีพเกี่ยวกับดนตรีในทุกวันนี้ อีกทั้งยังเป็นส่วนสนับสนุนทำให้พวกเขาเกิดความมั่นในในทักษะฝีมือทางดนตรีของตนเอง เป็นกำลังใจในการดำเนินเส้นทางดนตรีทั้งในขณะศึกษาระดับมหาวิทยาลัยและขณะทำงาน ซึ่งตรงกับการศึกษาวิจัยเชิงปริมาณที่พบว่าการสนับสนุนจากครอบครัว โดยเฉพาะพ่อแม่หรือผู้ปกครองนั้นมีผลกระทบสำคัญต่อนักเรียนดนตรี ซึ่งการสนับสนุนจากครอบครัวมีความสัมพันธ์เชิงบวกอย่างมีนัยสำคัญกับการมีความเชื่อมั่นในความสามารถของตนเองด้านดนตรี (Musical self-efficacy) ของนักเรียนดนตรี รวมถึงการสนับสนุนนี้ช่วยเอื้อต่อการเสริมสร้างความเชื่อมั่นของนักเรียนดนตรีทั้งในด้านการเรียนรู้ดนตรี และการแสดงดนตรี ซึ่งเป็นปัจจัยสำคัญต่อความสำเร็จทางวิชาการและอาชีพในสายดนตรี นอกจากนี้ยังกล่าวถึงการสนับสนุนจากครูผู้สอนเป็นปัจจัยที่ทำให้นักเรียนดนตรีมีความเชื่อมั่นในความสามารถทางดนตรีดนตรีเช่นเดียวกัน และยังรวมไปถึงส่งเสริมความมั่นใจก่อนการแสดงซึ่งส่งผลต่อคุณภาพในการแสดงดนตรีอีกด้วย อีกทั้งในแง่ของอารมณ์และแรงจูงใจของนักเรียนดนตรี ครูและพ่อแม่รวมถึงเพื่อนก็มีส่วนในการสร้างแรงจูงใจที่สำคัญในการดำเนินเส้นทางการศึกษาดนตรีต่อไป (Orejudo et al., 2021) โดยประเด็นที่กล่าวถึงการสนับสนุนจากครอบครัวของผู้ให้ข้อมูลนี้ ยังตรงกับการศึกษาก่อนหน้าที่พบว่าการสนับสนุนจากครอบครัวถือเป็นปัจจัยที่สำคัญที่สุดอย่างหนึ่งในการพัฒนาตัวตน และการสนับสนุนจากครอบครัวมีความสำคัญอย่างยิ่งต่อทั้งการศึกษาและชีวิตในทุกด้าน โดยเฉพาะการศึกษาดนตรีที่มีผลกระทบอย่างมากต่อการพัฒนาบุคลิกภาพ อัตลักษณ์ ตัวตน ของแต่ละบุคคลในแง่ของการตระหนักรู้ในตนเอง รวมถึงการตระหนักรู้ถึงศักยภาพของตนเอง (Özden & Özdemir, 2022) อีกทั้งการรับรู้ว่าตนเองมีแหล่งสนับสนุนเป็นครอบครัวที่จะเป็นกำลังใจ เป็นผู้ผลักดัน และเป็นผู้สนับสนุนตนเองในเส้นทางนี้ สอดคล้องกับการศึกษาไทยที่พบว่าการรับรู้ต้นทุนทางดนตรีในมิติของการรับรู้ถึงการสนับสนุน

ของครอบครัว นับเป็นปัจจัยที่สำคัญอย่างมากต่อการดำเนินอยู่บนเส้นทางดนตรีของนักดนตรีมืออาชีพ ทั้งในทางตรงและทางอ้อม เช่น พ่อแม่ส่งเสริมลูกให้ได้เรียนดนตรีทั้งในระบบโรงเรียนและนอกระบบโรงเรียน เอื้อทุนทรัพย์ในการซื้อเครื่องดนตรี รวมถึงการที่ครอบครัวเป็นผู้เอื้อบรรยากาศดนตรีในบ้าน (Ponprasit & Tuicomepee, 2017)

ประเด็นการรับรู้คุณค่าในสิ่งที่ทำ ที่ผู้ให้ข้อมูลได้ระบุถึงการเห็นคุณค่าในตนเองและการเห็นคุณค่าในดนตรีและสิ่งที่ผู้ให้ข้อมูลทำนั้นเป็นสิ่งที่เป็นประโยชน์กับผู้อื่น รวมถึงรับรู้ว่าการทำกิจกรรมทางดนตรี ไม่ว่าจะเป็นการเรียนดนตรีหรือการมีอาชีพเกี่ยวกับดนตรี ครูดนตรีหรือนักดนตรีเป็นสิ่งที่ช่วยสร้างอัตลักษณ์และตัวตนของพวกเขา ซึ่งสอดคล้องกับองค์ประกอบสำคัญของการมีสุขภาวะทางจิตที่ดีตามแนวคิดของ Ryff (2008) ซึ่งการที่บุคคลสามารถยอมรับในตนเองและมีความภาคภูมิใจกับสิ่งที่ได้ทำ รวมถึงรับรู้ว่าสิ่งที่ทำเป็นสิ่งที่มีความหมายต่อตนเอง รวมถึงสอดคล้องกับแนวคิดของทฤษฎีการกำหนดตัวเอง (self-determination) ของ Deci and Ryan (2000) ที่ได้อธิบายว่า การรับรู้ถึงความสามารถ (competence) ของตนเองนั้น เป็นหนึ่งในปัจจัยที่สร้างแรงผลักดันและการรับรู้คุณค่าในตัวบุคคล นอกจากนี้การเห็นคุณค่าของตนเองและดนตรีมีส่วนเอื้อในการประกอบร่างอัตลักษณ์ทางดนตรีของผู้ให้ข้อมูลนั้น สอดคล้องกับการศึกษาเรื่องอัตลักษณ์ทางดนตรี (Musical Identity) ในประเด็นขององค์ประกอบทางอารมณ์ (emotional component) ในอัตลักษณ์ทางดนตรี ซึ่งเป็นส่วนที่สะท้อนและแสดงออกถึงตัวตนและความรู้สึกภายใน รวมไปถึงการรับรู้ความรู้สึกและอารมณ์ที่เกิดขึ้นเมื่อมีส่วนร่วมในกิจกรรมดนตรีของตนเอง (Burland et al., 2022) ซึ่งผู้ให้ข้อมูลทั้ง 6 ท่าน เกิดความรู้สึกยินดีกับสิ่งที่ตนเองทำ ส่งผลให้เกิดความเชื่อมั่นและมั่นใจในตนเอง จนหลอมรวมเป็นอัตลักษณ์ทางดนตรีของตนเองในที่สุด

ประเด็นสุดท้าย *ดนตรีช่วยให้ผ่านเวลาที่ยากลำบาก* ผลการศึกษาพบว่าดนตรีช่วยให้ผู้ให้ข้อมูลจัดการอารมณ์และผ่อนคลายเมื่อพบกับช่วงเวลาที่ยากลำบากในชีวิตหรือเส้นทางดนตรี ช่วยทำให้เกิดความสุข ความผ่อนคลาย ซึ่งสอดคล้องกับการศึกษาวิจัยที่ผ่านมาที่ระบุว่า ดนตรีเป็นปัจจัยหนึ่งที่สามารถกระตุ้นภาวะความสุขที่แท้จริง (Authentic Happiness) ตามแนวคิดของ Martin Seligman (Lamont, 2011a) และการที่ดนตรีเป็นสิ่งที่ทำให้ผู้ให้ข้อมูลสามารถจัดการกับปัญหาบางอย่าง ณ ขณะนั้น หรือแม้แต่การหลีกหนีจากความคิดหรือความรู้สึกเชิงลบที่ไม่น่าพึงพอใจชั่วขณะ ยังสอดคล้องกับการศึกษาวิจัยที่ผ่านมาที่กล่าวว่าเนื้อเพลงและเสียงดนตรีมีส่วนช่วยให้บุคคลในวัยนักศึกษาจัดการกับปัญหาได้ เพราะดนตรีสามารถปรับอารมณ์ ช่วยทำให้รู้สึกดีขึ้นได้ในชีวิตประจำวัน (Pikel, 2024)

ข้อเสนอแนะ

ผลการวิจัยสะท้อนให้เห็นถึงประสบการณ์ทางจิตใจในการสร้างและการรับรู้อัตลักษณ์ในตนเองผ่านประสบการณ์ดนตรีของนักดนตรีวัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้น องค์ความรู้ที่ได้สามารถนำไปใช้เป็นประโยชน์ต่อนักเรียนและนักศึกษาดนตรี ตลอดจนนักการศึกษา ครูอาจารย์ผู้สอนดนตรีใน

โรงเรียน มหาวิทยาลัย และสถาบันดนตรีต่าง ๆ รวมถึงนักจิตวิทยาการปรึกษา เพื่อทำความเข้าใจประสบการณ์ของผู้เรียนดนตรีอย่างรอบด้าน และนำไปใช้ในการส่งเสริมหรือพัฒนาความชัดเจนในอัตลักษณ์และตัวตนทางดนตรี ตลอดจนสนับสนุนการพัฒนาศักยภาพของนักดนตรีแต่ละบุคคลให้เหมาะสมกับบริบทและความต้องการเฉพาะของตน

นอกจากนี้ ผลการวิจัยยังสามารถนำไปใช้เป็นแนวทางเชิงปฏิบัติในการออกแบบกระบวนการเรียนการสอนดนตรีที่คำนึงถึงมิติชีวิตและประสบการณ์ภายในของผู้เรียนมากยิ่งขึ้น โดยเน้นบทบาทของครูดนตรีในฐานะผู้เอื้อให้เกิดการเรียนรู้ที่ไม่จำกัดอยู่เพียงการพัฒนาทักษะทางเทคนิค หากแต่รวมถึงการสนับสนุนให้ผู้เรียนได้สำรวจ ทำความเข้าใจ และประกอบสร้างอัตลักษณ์ทางดนตรีของตนเองผ่านการเรียนรู้ การฝึกซ้อม และการแสดงดนตรีในบริบทชีวิตจริง และในเชิงการดูแลและพัฒนาผู้เรียน งานวิจัยนี้ยังมีประโยชน์ต่อการทำงานของครูดนตรีและนักจิตวิทยาการปรึกษาในการทำความเข้าใจความท้าทายทางจิตใจของนักดนตรีวัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้น เช่น ความไม่มั่นคงในตัวตน ความกดดันจากความคาดหวัง และความสับสนในเส้นทางอาชีพ ซึ่งความเข้าใจดังกล่าวจะช่วยให้การสนับสนุนผู้เรียนเป็นไปอย่างสอดคล้องกับประสบการณ์ชีวิตจริง และเอื้อต่อการเติบโตทางดนตรีอย่างมีความหมาย ยั่งยืน และสอดคล้องกับตัวตนของแต่ละบุคคล

อย่างไรก็ตาม การศึกษาวิจัยครั้งนี้เป็นการศึกษาประสบการณ์ของนักดนตรีวัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้นที่มีอาชีพนักดนตรีและครูดนตรีที่ส่วนใหญ่เป็นนักดนตรีสากล นอกจากนี้การใช้ระเบียบวิธีวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ ซึ่งเก็บข้อมูลโดยการสัมภาษณ์ผู้ให้ข้อมูลจำนวน 6 คน เป็นเพียงการสะท้อนประสบการณ์ของนักดนตรีวัยผู้ใหญ่ตอนต้นกลุ่มใดกลุ่มหนึ่งเท่านั้น หากเพิ่มความหลากหลายโดยการเก็บข้อมูลในนักดนตรีที่เล่นดนตรีประเภทอื่น แนวเพลงอื่น รวมถึงนักดนตรีไทยเพิ่มมากขึ้น อาจจะทำให้ได้เห็นประสบการณ์ที่แตกต่างออกไป ซึ่งประเด็นนี้ควรได้มีการศึกษาเพิ่มเติมต่อในอนาคต

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THE CULTURAL PRACTICES AND LEARNING TRANSMISSION OF THREE PHILIPPINE COMMUNITY RONDALLAS

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Abstract

In the Philippines, community rondalla pedagogy has not previously been examined through a digital ethnographic approach. This study investigates the content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge of three community rondalla groups: the Sariaya Community Rondalla, Kabataang Silay Rondalla Ensemble, and Dipolog Community Rondalla. Data were collected through online interviews, online focus group discussions, and digital analysis of photographs and documents. The findings reveal that: (1) content knowledge is expressed through instrument selection and tuning, as well as the use of notational aids; (2) pedagogical knowledge is primarily manifested in strategies for group management and rehearsal motivation; and (3) pedagogical content knowledge aligns closely with established rondalla pedagogical practices articulated by Espejo, Calubayan, De Leon, Pasamba, Narzo, and Dadap. The study further highlights the importance of local government funding in sustaining community rondalla groups and supporting the continued promotion of Filipino Musical culture.

Keywords: rondalla, Philippine music, community music, digital ethnography, rondalla pedagogy, music education, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, community music pedagogy, cultural transmission, traditional ensemble

Introduction

"Rondalla is our heritage, it's our patrimony. We got that from Spain but we sort of modified it into our very own performing ensemble so it expresses our feelings, it expresses our emotions so you can't take anything away from that."

- Ramon P. Santos, National Artist for Music
(Strings of Unity 2018)

The rondalla became a symbol of Filipino heritage as Filipinos incorporated their own sentiments into its performance practice (Santos 2018). However, rondalla music could not have been fully developed with genuine feelings and emotions without a pedagogy at hand. For this reason, teaching within a performing ensemble requires not only knowledge of instrumental technique, but also an understanding of how musical knowledge is transmitted through effective pedagogical content knowledge that can benefit learners from diverse backgrounds. For instance, rondalla playing could not be delivered sentimentally without the knowledge of dynamics at the onset of instruction as evident from the Celso Espejo Method (Guadalupe 2016).

The rondalla reached a significant milestone in its development as a form of cultural heritage in the Philippines by being recognised as the "original product of the Filipino mind" (Pasamba 1966, 13), and through its sustained preservation through the transmission of skills and competencies within academic contexts. In addition, local competitions and international festivals have provided platforms for Filipino musicians to flourish while performing their own Musical traditions. Taken together, the early adaptation of the rondalla, its institutionalisation in the academe, the emergence of competitions and festivals, and the conduct of training and seminars have contributed to the establishment of standards in rondalla

pedagogical content knowledge, despite the scarcity of written documentation. Accordingly, the primary aim of this study is to document the content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge of rondalla trainers working with community-based ensembles.

The researcher was inspired to study community-based rondalla pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) since there was no exact study applying PCK as a tool for analysis in rondalla pedagogy. Previous documentation on rondalla methodology had solely focused on school-based settings (i.e. De Leon 2016 & Pasamba 1966), and on bandurria pedagogy as a solo instrument (i.e. Dadap 2007 & Culig, 1995). Previous studies of rondalla transmission in communities were general ethnographies such Fabro's (2014) Rondalla Ilokana and Oracion et.al (2012) Dauin's Rondalla Tradition. Specifically, this study had answered the following:

1. What is the Content Knowledge employed in the teaching of three selected community rondallas in the Philippines?

2. What is the Pedagogical Knowledge employed in the teaching of three selected community rondallas in the Philippines?

3. How is the Pedagogical Content Knowledge applied among the members of the three selected community rondallas in the Philippines?

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In relation to Dr. Ramon Santos' idea of rondalla as our heritage and patrimony, the selection of rondalla groups is based on the different localities or municipalities in our country that served as the sample for this study. Hereof, the content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge employed by the three community rondalla groups were investigated based on the theory of Shulman. The diagram below shows that the content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge through music education are factors in understanding rondalla methodology. In the figure below, the pedagogical content knowledge occupied a region wherein the content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge were interconnected with one another (Schulman 1987, as cited in Forrester 2015):

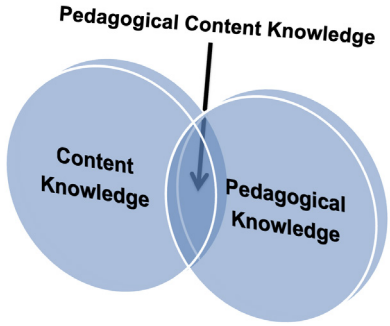

Figure 1. Visual representation of the PCK Framework (Shulman, 1987)

The theory on Pedagogical Content Knowledge of Schulman (1987, as cited in Forrester 2015) had been relevant in this study whereby the relationship of the elements of Content Knowledge, Pedagogical Knowledge, and Pedagogical Content Knowledge with rondalla teaching was examined. The curricular and student's knowledge was not included in this study since the learning was taking place in the community, and not in the school setting.

In relation to Santos' (2018) idea of rondalla as our heritage and patrimony, the selection of rondalla groups were based on the different localities or municipalities in the country that served as the sample for this study. Hereof, the pedagogical content knowledge employed by the selected rondalla groups was investigated based on the theory of Shulman (1987, as cited in Forrester 2015) on Pedagogical Content Knowledge. Furthermore, the diagram showed that the content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge through music education were essential factors in understanding rondalla pedagogical content knowledge (PCK).

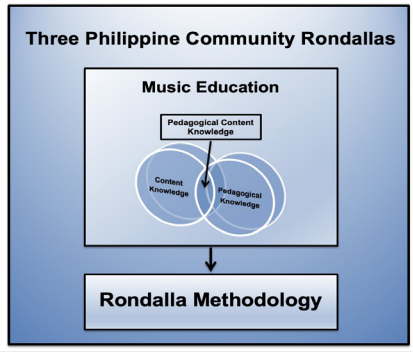

Figure 2. Conceptual framework, adapted from Shulman's (1987) framework.

III. RELATED LITERATURE ON RONDALLA METHODOLOGY

The diagram below shows the comparison among rondalla methodologies. In this part, it was evident that the Espejo method had no commonality with the Pasamba method (Narzo 2020). On the contrary, there was a similarity between the De Leon method (Peters 2016) and Espejo method (Guadalupe 2012) in terms of their utilization of a chart and use of finger and scale exercises. Espejo utilized chart notation symbols while De Leon used the finger and fretboard chart. Similarly, the Calubayan method (Rockell 2012) also implemented rehearsal management in teaching in the same way as the Espejo method. Interestingly, the Pasamba Method exhibited a methodology of utilizing so-fa syllables in rondalla teaching. In addition, the researcher was a former member of Philippine Normal University (PNU) Rondalla under Pacita M. Narzo. With this, he observed other rondalla methods as practiced by the group such as 1) learning note reading was given importance at the onset of instruction; 2) versatility in playing rondalla instruments among members was practiced; and, the 3) alternating upward and downward picking on legato playing.

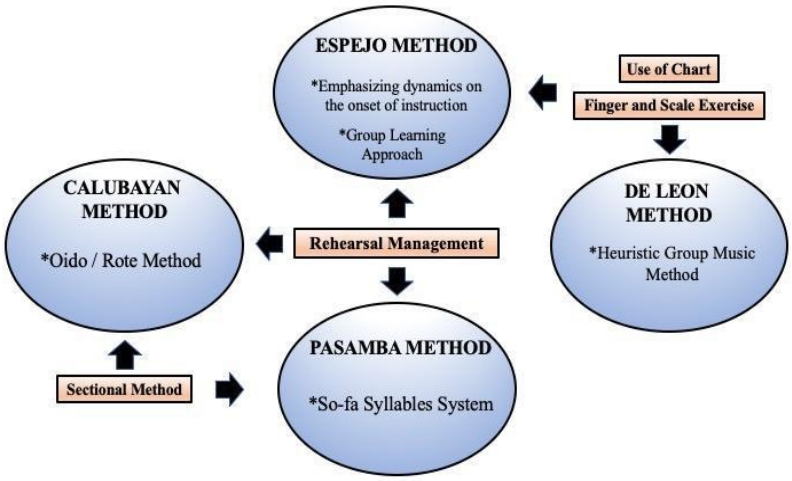

Figure 3. Comparison of Rondalla Methods

III. RELATED LITERATURE ON PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

Pertinent studies and literature reflected on the three elements of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge. In this regard, these three elements would serve as a partial basis for the analysis of methodology employed by the three community rondalla conductors in their rondalla teaching. Since this was ethnographic research, the framework for analysis was iterative in which the data found had informed the framework with its discovered new methodologies and terminologies during the process of data gathering. Hence, the researcher had included the discovered methodologies in the study. The diagram below illustrated the overall review of related literature pertinent to the theory of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK).

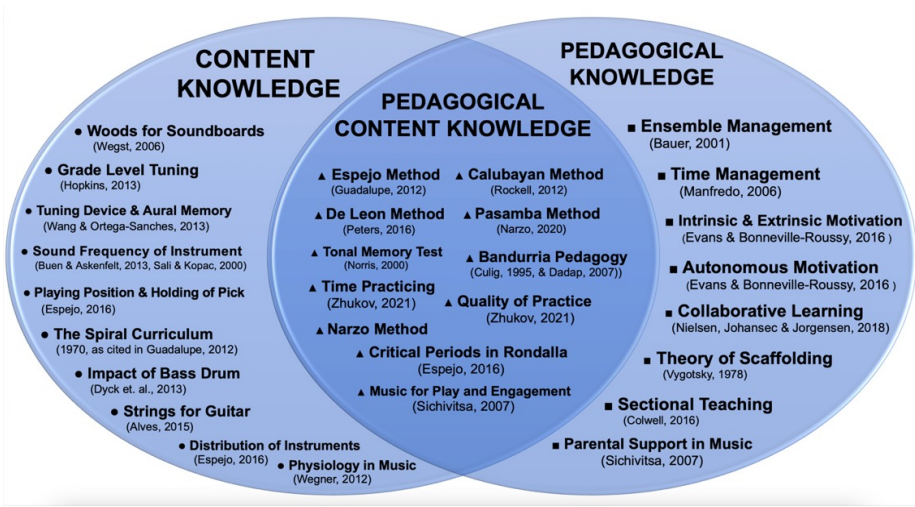

Figure 4. Map of Related Literature Pertinent to Theory of Pedagogical Content Knowledge

III. METHODOLOGY

The researcher utilised qualitative analysis through digital ethnographic research to investigate the pedagogical content knowledge employed by the three selected community rondalla groups in the Philippines. The analyses were supported by the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the study, together with data gathered through digital observation.

A purposive sampling technique was employed (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison 2007) in selecting community rondalla groups to participate in the study. The targeted total number of participants interviewed across the three rondalla groups was fifteen (15), comprising both rondalla members and conductors/trainers.

The selection criteria included: (1) one community rondalla located in Sariaya, Quezon Province (Luzon), one in Silay City, Negros Occidental (Visayas), and one in Dipolog City, Zamboanga del Norte (Mindanao); (2) years of existence; (3) community influence; (4) awards and achievements in competitions and festivals; and (5) the curriculum vitae of the conductor/trainer.

The data-gathering instruments of the study included online interviews with conductors, recorded video rehearsals when available, online video conferences with members, and digital archival research through photo and document analysis of the rondalla groups and conductors.

Prior to observation and analysis, the researcher conducted structured–informal interviews with the conductors, while focus group discussions (FGDs) and semi-structured informal interviews were administered to the members. The set of questionnaires was provided to the conductors prior to the scheduled online interviews.

Data collection was conducted through recorded video conferencing via the Zoom application, as face-to-face interaction was not possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, the researcher had limited direct contact with the groups and relied on videos, photographs, and documents collected from the participants' social media profiles.

During the initial phase of analysis, the researcher transcribed the recorded data and validated them through member checking. The validated data were returned via email and Facebook Messenger. Subsequently, data from online interviews and focus group discussions were interpreted through thematic content analysis and triangulation. For instances in which new terms emerged from the data, indigenous typology analysis was utilised.

As online observation was not feasible, based on the conductors' agreement, the researcher analysed photographs and recorded videos of performances and rehearsals. These materials were collected via Google Drive and reviewed using QuickTime Player and Apple Preview.

Additionally, digital documents such as charts, Musical pieces, teaching handouts, and certificates were analysed and triangulated with data from online interviews and focus group discussions.

For data analysis, thematic content analysis and triangulation were employed to ensure reliability (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison 2007). Interview and observational data were organised into categories, which were then abstracted into broader ideas and Themes. These Themes were subsequently discussed in relation to relevant literature, as outlined in the study's framework.

Furthermore, informed consent was secured from all selected participants. For minors (below 18 years of age), parental consent was obtained through a written agreement form. All photographs and personal information of participants were kept confidential to prevent bias and potential conflicts related to their participation in the study.

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The three chosen participants in this study are the Sariaya Community Rondalla with Herbert D. Perez as the founder, and Reinnard Christian Merano as the current trainer, the Kabataang Silay Rondalla Ensemble with Jegger C. Anjao as the trainer, and lastly is the Dipolog Community Rondalla with Jay Sarita as the trainer.

A. Content Knowledge

The three community rondalla groups utilised their content knowledge through instrument selection, instrument tuning, and the use of notation aids. The data revealed that instruments were selected based on quality rather than cost.

In addition, the classical guitar was the preferred type of guitar for the ensemble. Moreover, the SCR and KSE rondalla groups opted to include a drum set in their ensembles. Lastly, the KSE rondalla preserved their older instruments in pursuit of better sound quality.

In terms of instrument tuning, the three community rondalla groups employed different approaches. The SCR used electronic tuners, the KSE relied on aural memory for tuning, and the DCR used both electronic tuners and aural memory.

With regard to notation aids, the SCR used a pre-reading visual tool known as chart notation. In contrast, the KSE rondalla used its own system of notation written in sol-fa syllables, while the DCR utilised traditional staff notation.

The Sarita Artisan Instrument is the preferred rondalla instrument brand among the three community rondalla groups. In the photograph below, the studio-type banduria is shown on the left, while the concert-type banduria is shown on the right.



Figure 5. "Studio and concert type banduria" photos by Sarita Artisan Instrument, 2019.

The chart notation is a kind of notation written in the Manila paper in which each part of individual instruments was indicated with sofa syllables in the fixed 'do' system together with the traditional rhythm and dynamics symbols. Instead of spelling the notes of the chords, only the chord names were given. The picture below is the chart notation utilized by the SCR.

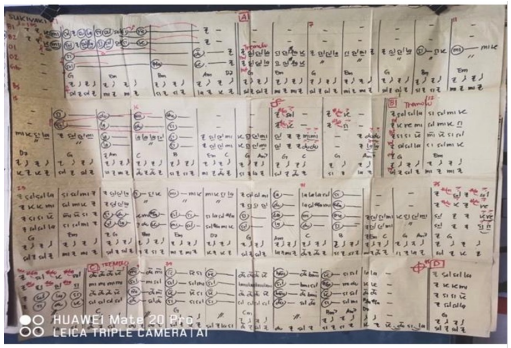

Figure 6. "SCR's chart notation" photos by Katrina Guce, 2018.

An improvised visual tool utilized by the KSE rondalla. In the visual tool, the notation was presented in sofa-syllables instead of note symbols. The sofa syllables were separated by a bar line to indicate the time signature of the piece. Then, the value of the notes and rests were represented by a number below each sofa syllable. Finally, the type of beat was shown through a zigzag line (i.e. down point is the downbeat and up point is the upbeat). Below is the picture of this visual tool.

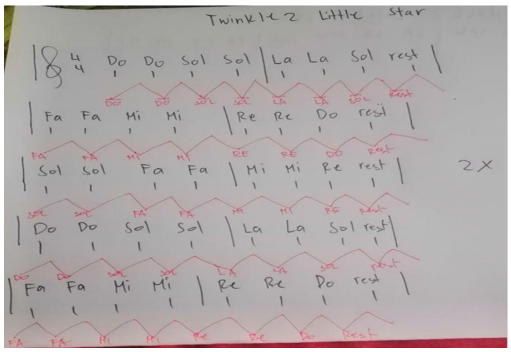

Figure 7. "KSE's improvised visual tool" photo by Nelson Quirit, 2021.

For the analysis of content knowledge, the three community rondalla groups demonstrated a preference for quality instruments over more affordable options. According to Ulrike Wegst (2006), soundboards made of high-quality wood are among the most effective sound radiators due to their low impedance (1445). Low impedance facilitates more efficient sound transmission through the air. In addition, the instrument preservation practices of the KSE rondalla trainer support Wegst's (2006) observation that older instruments can produce enhanced sound quality.

With regard to the type of guitar used in the ensemble, the shared view among the three community rondalla trainers that the classical guitar is more appropriate than the folk guitar aligns with the study of Julio Alves. Alves argued that many guitarists prefer traditional nylon strings because of the fullness and warmth of their sound quality.

In terms of instrument tuning, the practices of the SCR rondalla in using electronic tuners support the findings of Wang and Ortega-Sánchez (2012), who reported that tuning each string within approximately five seconds can result in up to 90% accuracy in achieving the required frequency. Conversely, the practices of the KSE rondalla in utilising aural memory for tuning correspond with the views of Haye Hinrichsen, who suggested that aural tuning may be superior to electronic tuning, as not all electronic devices are capable of accommodating the varying tuning frequencies of different instruments (2301).

Lastly, with regard to notation aids, the use of chart notation by the SCR aligns with the chart notation method of Celso Espejo. In contrast, the use of the sol-fa syllable system for music reading by the KSE corresponds with the pre-reading visual tools advocated by Angelita Pasamba. Finally, the use of staff notation by the DCR is similar to the approach of Pacita Narzo, who emphasised traditional staff notation in both rehearsals and performances.

B. Pedagogical Knowledge

The three community rondalla groups utilised pedagogical knowledge through group management and practice motivation.

In terms of group management, the three community rondalla groups managed their rehearsal time through self-practice and by learning the context of the piece prior to scheduled rehearsals. In addition, the SCR and DCR set long-term objectives for their groups, while the KSE set medium-term objectives. Lastly, the SCR and KSE placed a premium on discipline from the first day of rehearsal.

With regard to motivation for practice, the SCR and DCR employed autonomous motivation by valuing unity and friendship within the group and by treating each member as part of a family. In contrast, the KSE and SCR employed extrinsic motivation by imposing sanctions on members who consistently failed to attend scheduled rehearsals.

For the analysis of pedagogical knowledge in terms of group management, the time-management practices of the three community rondalla groups support the principles of effective time management discussed by Manfredo (2006), as well as the importance of home practice emphasised by Celso Espejo.

Furthermore, the long-term skills training observed in the three community rondalla groups aligns with Bauer's (2001) view that a well-managed ensemble results from long-term learning outcomes. Bauer (2001) also suggested that mid-term planning can be significant in achieving effective ensemble management.

The emphasis on discipline in two of the community rondalla groups corresponds with the views of Angelita Pasamba and Ricardo Calubayan. Pasamba (2020) reiterated that discipline within the group is an essential factor in ensemble success, while Calubayan (2014) asserted that learning cannot take place without the inculcation of discipline.

Lastly, with regard to motivation for practice, the autonomous motivation employed by the SCR and DCR aligns with the findings of Evans and Bonneville-Roussy (2016), who noted that autonomous motivation is supported by the fulfilment of basic psychological needs, particularly relatedness. Meanwhile, the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation utilised by the KSE and SCR also support the framework of Evans and Bonneville-Roussy (2016), in which intrinsic motivation is characterised by engagement for personal enjoyment, while extrinsic motivation involves engagement to fulfil a specific purpose.

C. Pedagogical Content Knowledge

Pedagogical content knowledge was utilised by the three community rondalla groups through the learning of initial rondalla skills, rehearsal breakouts, the application of dynamics, and the achievement of difficult passages within a piece. In terms of learning initial rondalla skills, the three community rondalla groups prioritised downward picking over legato playing. With regard to rehearsal breakouts, the KSE and DCR employed a sectional learning approach, while the SCR employed a masterclass approach.

In applying dynamics to a piece, the SCR introduced dynamics at the onset of learning, while the DCR applied dynamics during the polishing stage. The KSE's approach depended on the level of difficulty of the piece.

Lastly, in achieving difficult passages, the three community rondalla groups initially adjusted the tempo to a slower pace. The SCR and KSE focused on discovering proper finger–fret positioning, while the SCR isolated difficult passages at the early stages of learning.

The masterclass approach was utilised by the SCR in learning a rondalla piece. In the photograph below, the trainer is teaching the banduria section while members of the octavina, guitar, and bass sections listen to their respective parts.



Figure 7. SCR's master class approach. photos by Katrina Guce, 2018.

For the analysis of pedagogical content knowledge, in terms of learning initial playing skills, the emphasis on downward picking among the three community rondalla groups aligns with the recommendation of Michael Dadap (2007) that, in banduria playing, downward and upward picking should be introduced before learning the tremolo technique. However, other related studies, such as those by Celso Espejo, emphasise the tremolo technique over legato playing at the onset of skill acquisition.

In terms of rehearsal breakouts, the masterclass approach employed by the SCR was similar to the group learning approach of Celso Espejo (Guadalupe 2012), in which priority is given to developing aural familiarity with various rondalla timbres and dynamics. This approach can greatly contribute to ensemble balance, sensitivity,

and collaborative awareness. Conversely, the rehearsal breakout approaches of the KSE and DCR align with the sectional learning approach of Ricardo Calubayan (Rockell 2012), whereby the ensemble is divided into sections to allow focused attention on each part through direct instruction.

With regard to the application of dynamics within a piece, the practices of the SCR correspond to the Espejo method, as dynamics are introduced at the onset of learning the piece. In contrast, the practices of the DCR reflect the method of Pasamba (Narzo 2020), in which dynamics are applied during the polishing stage of rehearsal.

Lastly, in achieving difficult passages, the practice of adjusting the tempo to a slower pace, as employed by the three community rondalla groups, supports the findings of Zhukov (2009, 6–7) on effective practice strategies. In addition, the finger–fret position discovery techniques used by the SCR and KSE correspond to Charts 2 and 3 of the Heuristic Group Method approach of Rodolfo De Leon (Peters 2016). Finally, similarities can be observed between the SCR and Celso Espejo with regard to the use of isolation and mastery techniques in addressing difficult passages.

V. SUMMARY

The study had three research questions, which were discussed in the first part. To answer these questions, first, the content knowledge (CK) of the three community rondalla groups was examined. This was evident in their consideration of instrument quality in terms of selection, the use of the classical guitar, and the inclusion of drums in the ensemble. In addition, CK was employed in their teaching through the use of electronic tuners and aural memory in tuning instruments. Lastly, their utilisation of pre-reading visual tools, such as chart notation and sol-fa syllables, also formed part of their content knowledge.

Secondly, the pedagogical knowledge (PK) of the three community rondalla groups was demonstrated through the setting of long-term and medium-term objectives, the implementation of discipline and time management as part of group management, and the use of autonomous, intrinsic, and extrinsic motivation for practice.

Lastly, the pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) of the three community rondalla groups was applied through the emphasis on downward picking as an initial skill, the use of masterclass and sectional rehearsal approaches, the isolation technique, the discovery of proper finger–fret positioning, and tempo adjustment in mastering difficult passages.

This research is beneficial to rondalla trainers and conductors who are currently involved in rondalla teaching. The content knowledge (CK), pedagogical knowledge (PK), and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) employed by the three community rondalla groups can serve as a blueprint, especially for beginning rondalla trainers, in establishing a competent rondalla group. Through this, rondalla groups may gain cultural and financial support from local government units, which could, in turn, inspire other local governments to establish their own community rondalla groups.

VI. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This online ethnographic study substantiated the pedagogical content knowledge employed by conductors from the three selected community rondalla groups. The selection of participants was guided by the idea proposed by Ramon P. Santos (2018) that the rondalla constitutes Filipino heritage and patrimony; therefore, this study delimited its participants to community rondalla groups with established traditions. Specifically, one group was selected from each island cluster: one (1) community rondalla from Luzon, one (1) from the Visayas, and one (1) from Mindanao. Each group consisted of at least ten (10) regular, non-professional members. In addition, the conductors' track records and their groups' achievements in competitions and festivals were considered.

This study was grounded in Shulman's (1987, as cited in Forrester, 2015) theory of pedagogical content knowledge. However, only two domains of the theory—content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge—were included in the methodology and analysis. Curriculum knowledge and knowledge of learners were not incorporated into this study.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations of this study were addressed to the four constituents, namely: the local government administrators, rondalla trainers and players, and future rondalla researchers.

A. Local Government Administrator

The first recommendation stated that there was a need for local government administrators to support and fund their community rondalla groups. Funds provided by the LGU could be allocated to the purchase of quality instruments and to furthering the professional development of conductors through paid seminars and workshops on rondalla teaching and management.

Apart from funding, LGU support could also be manifested by inviting community rondalla groups to perform at various municipal or city events. This would not only showcase the talents and skills of local rondalla groups, but also promote the cultural richness of the community.

Funding and sustained support from the LGU would lead to the development of a sustainable and productive community rondalla group.

B. Rondalla Trainers

The second recommendation was addressed to rondalla trainers and conductors who were currently engaged in rondalla teaching. The content knowledge (CK), pedagogical knowledge (PK), and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) employed by the three community rondalla groups should serve as a blueprint, particularly for beginning rondalla trainers, in establishing a competent rondalla group.

For an experienced rondalla trainer, the three types of knowledge (CK, PK, and PCK) demonstrated by the three community rondalla groups should serve as a paradigm for either reconstructing or retaining rondalla culture and practices. Furthermore, it is highly recommended that rondalla trainers and conductors participate in various rondalla workshops and seminars offered by reputable institutions in order to gain substantial knowledge and skills that could lead to more effective rondalla teaching.

C. Rondalla Players

The third recommendation pertained to the understanding of a rondalla player with regard to the purpose of their practices within the group. The study was able to address questions a player might ask, such as "Why am I doing this?" or "What is the purpose of doing this?"

The study mostly explained the aims and bases of the trainer in establishing particular approaches or styles in rondalla teaching. Henceforth, rondalla players should understand the intent of every task they are doing within the group. Likewise, trainers should find time to explain to their members the purpose or intention of each practice undertaken in the group. Proper understanding and awareness can build trust and develop a healthy relationship between the trainer and the members.

D. Future Rondalla Researchers

Finally, this study was intended for future rondalla researchers. This study revealed only the highlights of the three community rondalla groups, particularly their content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge. Separate studies focusing on each community rondalla group, concentrating on their history, evolution, and methodological development, or employing empirical investigations of group practices, are recommended for future researchers.

For instance, Quezon province was known for their goal of establishing community rondalla groups in every municipality in its province. With this, the methodology and practices of each community rondalla group in the province would be recommended for future study.

On the other hand, the community rondalla group in Silay City was known as one of the long-established-community rondalla groups in the Philippines. A study on evolution and methodological development would be recommended for future researchers.

Lastly, the trainer from Dipolog City was known not only as a conductor of a rondalla group, but also as a well-known and trusted luthier in the Philippines. An empirical study on the improvement and effectiveness of his particular prototype of rondalla instrument would be recommended for future study.

Apart from the aforementioned recommended studies, an academic correlation analysis on the relationship between funding / support and productivity / sustainability of a community rondalla group were also suggested for future studies.

VII. CONCLUSION

As a researcher and community rondalla trainer, I would support the idea of Santos (2018) that rondalla was our heritage and our patrimony. As reflected in the history and profile of the three community rondalla groups, it was evident that the groups were not just mere performance groups because they greatly represent the cultural richness of their local communities as well as they were the pride for the whole country whenever they performed in international rondalla performances. Nonetheless, there would always be effective methodologies employed in every successful rondalla performance.

In fact, the rondalla could be related to a food served with a secret ingredient. This secret ingredient would be the methodologies employed. The cook or chef would be the trainer, who controls the preparation and cooking process of the food. Without the secret ingredient, the food could taste bland or ordinary. Similarly, a rondalla group could not be competent without an effective methodology.

The general purpose of this study was not only to unveil the secret ingredient of the three community rondalla groups, but also to inspire other groups, trainers, and players in terms of: (1) their proven track record in both national and international rondalla exposure; (2) the diversity and richness of their rondalla practices and pedagogical learning skills; and (3) their role as cultural bearers of their respective communities.

The methodologies of the three community rondalla groups needed to be developed and supported in order for them to flourish as significant components of Philippine Musical heritage and tradition. This study was a leap towards generating renewed or increased interest in, and support for, the methodologies of the three community rondalla groups in particular, and for the rondalla as a hallmark of Philippine culture more broadly.

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REVIVING RÓZSA: A STUDY ON RECEPTION HISTORY AND PERFORMATIVE INTERPRETATION OF THE VIOLIN CONCERTO, OP. 24.

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Abstract

This research initiates a historical discussion regarding the reception history and the evolving interpretations of Miklós Rózsa's Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 24 (1953), written for virtuoso violinist Jascha Heifetz. The concerto displays a fusion of artistic virtuosity and lyrical nuances – qualities that later captured the attention of Hollywood film director Billy Wilder, who adapted Themes from the concerto for his 1970 film The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes.

A key focus on how individual performers have shaped its artistic legacy and how perceptions of the work have shifted over time presents an opportunity to understand the evident potential of this work to stand alongside more frequently performed works. Data were collected from concert reviews, critical writing, and recorded interpretations spanning over half a decade, tracing the concerto's journey from its successful premiere to its current status within the violin repertoire.

This research examines the interplay of factors – ranging from stylistic interpretation to performance

challenges and historical context – that may have influenced its more limited presence in mainstream programming. Despite its evident potential to stand alongside more frequently performed works, the concerto has not achieved the widespread recognition seen in some contemporary works. Rather than characterizing this as an underrated work, the research highlights the concerto's artistic value and its potential for renewed interest among performers and scholars alike.

Keywords: Miklós Rózsa, violin concerto, reception history, performative interpretation

Miklós Rózsa and his Violin Concerto

The 19th century revival of Bach's music demonstrates that artistic reputation is historically contingent rather than permanent; in the same way, Miklós Rózsa's concert works that are long overshadowed by his film career, invites reconsideration and potential for a Rózsa revival that comes from renewed performances, scholarship, and advocacy. As Brackenborough (2015a) suggests, an art form demonstrates its continued relevance when provoked by passionate advocacy and critical debate. In this context, a revival of Rózsa's music would require not only the renewal of performances but also active engagement in both endorsement and contention, within today's Musical discourse.

Among the notable contributions to twentieth-century violin literature is Miklós *Rózsa's Concerto for Violin and Orchestra,* Op. 24, which stands as the most compelling case for a Rózsa revival, a work that epitomizes his dual Identity in film writing and concert-hall writing. It was composed for the renowned violin virtuoso Jascha Heifetz, a Russian-American child prodigy who established himself as a superstar violinist upon giving a Berlin concerto debut at age eleven, collaborated closely with Rózsa in shaping this technically demanding and expressively rich work (Haylock, 2022).

Composed during a break from his prolific Hollywood film career, Rózsa's violin concerto stands as a compelling synthesis of classical form and cinematic expressivity within its Hungarian roots. The concerto's three movements display a

variety of dramatic flair and compositional mastery: the first movement's cadenza showcases its demanding virtuosity – a reminder that the work was written for Heifetz, the second movement highlights its romantic lyricism, and the work concludes with an energetic finale (McConell, 2024).

In 1970, the concerto's Themes were adapted for Billy Wilder's film *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes,* with Rózsa reworking its recurring thematic materials into leitmotif-like cues associated with individual character and emotions (McGregor, 2022). Quarterman (2019) corroborated that the second movement's melodic material resembles much with his love Themes from the cinema. This fusion of concert and cinematic language has played a part in the concerto's evolving performative interpretation, blurring the line between concert and film music.

Despite its Musical content and the stature of Heifetz, the concerto, a brilliant work that had no reason not to attract great soloists today, has remained on the border of standard repertoire. However, rather than viewing it as any Musical shortcoming, this study considers factors like its unplayability and its historical reception that may have caused an underappreciation of the concerto. Through the examination of critical reviews, performance history, and recordings, this study aims to reaffirm the concerto's artistic significance and its potential to claim a more prominent place in contemporary violin literature. Brackenborough (2015b) suggests that when an artist gets forgotten, the loss of a unique perspective leaves our culture diminished by the absence of one mind and one worldview.

Rózsa (1907–1995) was a Hungarian American composer who practically led a 'double life' between his classical inventions and his Hollywood career. He is best known for his Oscar-winning film scores, but also celebrated for his contemporary classical compositions. Despite being a celebrity film composer at that time for award-winning films like *Ben-Hur, Double Life,* and *Spellbound* during the 'Golden Age of Hollywood' (1927–1969), Rózsa always had greater interest in composing contemporary classical works (Duffie, 1987). Oliver (1995) observes that, even though Rózsa's film scores and recordings were financially rewarding, he remained dedicated to composing symphonies and chamber works. In his autobiography, Rózsa (1982a, p. 190) stated that working in the cinema was not for the sake of artistic fulfilment or great interest, but simply for the source of income it generated.

Before Op. 24, Rózsa had composed a violin concerto at the age of twenty-one during his time in the University of Leipzig, which was never published. That concerto was considered an immature concerto, because unlike other great composers, he did not have any violinist in mind (Rózsa, 1982b, p. 161). In 1953, he once again attempted to write a mature concerto during his three months summer break from the cinema. Rózsa had Heifetz in mind as he began work on his violin concerto, despite only meeting him once briefly at a concert that Heifetz was giving at the Hollywood Bowl.

Although its reception was successful around the time of its premiere, Heifetz only worked on the concerto, premiered it, recorded it, and never touched it again. During his lifetime, Heifetz commissioned and premiered six contemporary concert violin concertos, in which he encouraged young promising composers to write concertos that displays genuine emotion as well as technical display (Takeda, 2000a, p. 20). All six composers were classically trained, composing concert works, before becoming film composers. Out of all the six violin concertos, Rózsa's violin concerto had the least number of recordings with only seven notable recordings up to date.

Most research on Rózsa have shown in-depth studies on his award-winning film music, and some of his other popular concert works, like the *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra,* Op. 37, and *Theme, Variations and Finale,* Op. 13. However, despite the high standing of the violin concerto within Rózsa's concert-hall compositions, it lacks detailed studies and research, which forms the gap of Rózsa's already limited literature. The current literature provided valuable insights into Rózsa's works and his Musical life, the question of why the violin concerto has yet to receive its permanent place in the repertoire remains unanswered, highlighting the need for further research. Korngold's Violin Concerto and Walton's Violin Concerto was also premiered and commissioned by Heifetz, but they are now becoming or have already become standards in the violin repertoire list due to its popularity and demand (Takeda, 2000b, p. 2). With limited studies, performances, and recordings done on Rozsa's violin concerto, this study provides an as-yet underutilised resource for violinists and musicians to expand their violin repertory. The discussion on this violin concerto intends to identify the reason of its underrated status in violin

literature, even though it had favourable responses during its premiere.

Though performance studies have increasingly turned to Rózsa's concert works, his violin concerto remains underexamined from a performer's perspective. This study explores interpretive strategies conveyed by Rózsa's film background through comparative recordings by various artists over the 21st century. By illustrating the stylistic interpretation embedded in the concerto, this study contributes to discussions on genre hybridity and performative interpretation, supporting the revival of this work to encourage more performances and by introducing this lesser-known repertoire to listeners and musicians. According to Longyear (1970, p. 167), underrated Musical repertoire can be described as music that is good, but fails to receive its fair share of performances. Repertoire outside the standard repertoire list should regain its rightful recognition despite the lack of popularity compared to standard repertoires that is played many times over. This study intends to promote and increase knowledge of Rózsa's violin concerto through an examination of its reception history, defined by Martindale & Hardwick (2015) as the study of reading, interpretation, and re-fashioning of the work, as well as how it has been perceived from its premiere in 1953 to 2018. This study also examines other aspects, including the adaptation of the concerto into the film *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes,* and the canonical discourse surrounding Rózsa's place in 20th century music.

Miklós Rózsa in the Concert Hall: Contextualizing the Violin Concerto

In his autobiography *Double Life: The Autobiography of Miklós Rózsa,* named after his Academy Award-winning 1947 film A Double Life, Rózsa (1982c, p. 9) wrote about his life and career, emphasising the 'double life' he led as both a film composer and a concert-hall composer. The autobiography dates to his childhood days in native Hungary to his days in the University of Leipzig, Paris, London, and finally to Hollywood. His days in Europe were with his true passion and interest, composing concert works. Publishing his works with Breitkopf & Härtel, was the kickstart of his career as a composer. In the 1940s, he was introduced to film composing in Hollywood, which he worked freelance with multiple films before signing with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM). Following his return to Hungary, he

continued his career as a freelance composer in which he finally could compose to his own liking. In the autobiography, Rózsa briefly recounted the writing of the violin concerto in collaboration with Jascha Heifetz and its later adaptation for *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* with Billy Wilder.

Jascha Heifetz played a pivotal role in the violin concertos of the time as an influential Hollywood figure during the 20th century. He was a particularly meticulous violinist, and many had known that he rejected the full work of Schoenberg's violin concerto despite initially approving of the first movement. Heifetz joked that he would need an extra finger if he were to play it; this aside, he simply did not like how the concerto sounded (Sciannameo, 2016a, p. 150). After rejecting Schoenberg, Heifetz was left to commission a work by Rózsa to produce "a violin concerto of sensational appeal" (Lai, 2022). Many contemporaneous concertos that Heifetz commissioned and premiered were specifically written to show off his unique style and virtuosity. In the first chapter of Takeda's dissertation *The Secrets of Jascha Heifetz' Playing Style,* Takeda (2000c, p. 4) examined the relationship between composers and performers, and the evolution of the composer-patron-performer relationships from the Baroque period to the 20th century. The composer-performer dynamic is therefore crucial in playing a decisive role in audience engagement, whether as endorsement or even contention, positioning the performer as an intermediary through whom the reception of the work is interpreted and conveyed to the listeners of the time – patrons. Heifetz was a compositional collaborator with six contemporary composers of the time – Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, William Walton, Louis Gruenberg, Erich Wolfgang Korngold, Miklós Rózsa, and Franz Waxman. Among these collaborations, some have entered the standard repertoire while others have remained in the shadows, among them Rózsa's violin concerto.

Rózsa wrote his violin concerto in 1953 during the three months of his unpaid summer break from MGM in Rapallo, Italy, having approached Heifetz with the help of Emmanuel Bay, Heifetz's long-time accompanist. Soon after, Heifetz responded with interest and had Rózsa write out the first movement of the concerto. Rózsa thought it was a rather risky move as Heifetz was known to reject a number of commissions after approving of it, an unfortunate case that happened

with Schoenberg's violin concerto. Inspired by beautiful Rapallo, ideas flowed naturally from every corner, and the work was completed within six weeks (Rózsa, 1982d, p. 162). Following his return to Hollywood, Heifetz remained silent for six months, despite his initially favourable reaction upon seeing the concerto. Rózsa thought Heifetz had changed his mind, as had happened with Schoenberg's violin concerto, but was surprised by an unexpected phone call from Heifetz regarding the collaboration. The two then worked together on the violin concerto together for over eighteen months, and the piece was finally scheduled to premiere in 1956. Rózsa and Heifetz's longstanding collaborative relationship were like that of Johanne Brahms and Joseph Joachim during the making of the Brahms' violin concerto. This often results from the collaborative process between composer and performer during the creation of a new work, where the composer-performer relationship proves vital, but so is the composer-audience relationship.

The audience functions as the receiving party, while the composer and performer stand occupy the giving role. Reception is, by definition, an act of receiving. In responding to a work, the responsibility lies primarily with the audience as the receivers. Audience preferences evolve along with time and its trends, playing a crucial role in determining the reception of a particular work, even though the work may be brilliantly written or considered a 'good' work. Lillehaug quoting Alfred Reed (1969, p. 13), observed that "the acceptance of the audience on the history of a composition and its performances (including critics, academic, and different social classes) forms an integral part of music history." Lillehaug further identifies a longstanding gap in the composer-audience relationship over the past three hundred years, suggesting that the function of Musical criticism can help accelerate its closure.

This introduces the relationship between the composer and the performer, which would act as the creative interpreter of the composition. As Feinberg (2025) says, "The word *performer* does in fact express the essence of the artistically significant and intensely creative process of Musical interpretation. He is not an executor of another's will; rather the mind of the composer should become the performer's own, and blend with the individual traits of his talent, with his own artistic aspirations."

Feinberg's repeated use of the term *interpreter* to describe the performer highlights that their role is not merely to execute a work mechanically, but to interpret and convey the composer's ideas with the dynamism of an individual's artistic insight to convey a performative interpretation to their target audience. The interpreter must also consider the target audience in the aspects of language, tastes, and preferences, and alter their performative interpretation accordingly to convey the composer's intention effectively. The performing style will evolve due to changes in tastes and moods of the time, endlessly responding to the demands from new audiences, resulting in the development of individual style and qualities in each artist's performance. Therefore, the study in the development of performative interpretation of Rózsa's violin concerto is vital in understanding the difference in artists' personal interpretation and reception over the years.

A comprehensive study by Meyer (2019, pp. 47-57) examined the relationship of the 1970 Holmes film and the violin concerto. It analysed the film chronologically on the specific scenes where the music is implemented into the film. The main Theme from the first movement reflects Sherlock Holmes, the second movement is the love Theme Holmes has written for the mysterious lady Gabrielle Valledon, and the last movement connects to the mystery of the Lochness Monster. This film's influence may have played a part in the development of the violin concerto's performative interpretation to be played in either styles of film music or absolute music.

The violin concerto had an artistic journey throughout the years, from the premiere by virtuoso violinist Jascha Heifetz to its adaptation in a Hollywood film, so what could be the reason for its underrated status today? According to Bridle (2021), "If there is any reason why the Rózsa is underappreciated, however, it is probably because of its incredible technical difficulty present in the work." In Sciannameo's Chapter 9 of his book *Experiencing the Violin Concerto* (2016b, p. 150), Schoenberg's work was deemed *unplayable* and infamously dubbed as Brahms' violin concerto of the twentieth century. A few other classics that were deemed unplayable due to its sheer technical difficulty includes Brahms' violin concerto and Tchaikovsky's violin concerto. In a video interview with Anastasia Khitruk (GalaNYC, 2011), who was Grammy nominated for her album recording of Rózsa's violin concerto, also mentioned that the work was "written to be as

difficult as possible." It is plausible that the concerto's level of difficulty, which may be viewed as unplayable, has discouraged frequent performances thereafter. Most studies examined and discussed about Rózsa's double life, drawing a line between his film compositions and his serious compositions, yet research on the reception history of his violin concerto remains extremely limited. Research focused on Rózsa's violin concerto can acknowledge the controversies and debates while closing the gaps in existing literature. The violin concerto represents a significant yet underrated piece of twentieth-century repertoire for the instrument. Although the standing of the violin concerto within the violin repertory will only be determined by time and personal preferences, this study shall allow the impartial discussion of the reception history of the violin concerto through the distribution of detailed and comprehensive research.

Analytical Approach

This qualitative study adopts an interpretive approach by carrying out a thematic analysis, a process of identifying Themes in the data which capture meaning that is relevant to study the reception history of Rózsa's violin concerto, with the aid of secondary resources, by analysing existing documents with detailed historical context (Willig, 2014, p. 147). The data collected follows through the background and the origins of Rózsa and his violin concerto, including public's critiques and reviews, which were compiled from resources obtained and mentioned in the literature review. The resources include interviews, journal articles, books, blogs, and website articles on the related topics surrounding this study to further validate and support this topic. Certain access to resources or documents may be limited due to the lack of funds in accessing some scholarly works which could be accommodated in this study.

The purpose of the historical background is to recount the segments of Rózsa's life that were most relevant to the creation and the premiere of the violin concerto. These segments include the where, when, and how within the context of Rózsa's career, and his collaboration with Jascha Heifetz and Billy Wilder. Album recordings and film's reviews and comments were utilized to examine public's opinions of the concerto in the twentieth century. Moderate score analysis was

conducted on Rózsa's violin concerto, Op. 24, all three movements, obtained from Breitkopf & Härtel edition. The 1970 Billy Wilder film *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* were discussed as the violin concerto was adapted for the film. Critiques and reviews of the film were taken into discussion for the reception of the violin concerto.

Seven notable recordings of Rózsa's violin concerto were produced by virtuoso violinists: Jascha Heifetz (1956), Igor Gruppman (1997), Robert McDuffie (2000), Anastasia Khitruk (2007), Matthew Trusler (2009), Jennifer Pike (2012), and Baiba Skride (2018). All seven recordings were compared aurally and reviewed from a violinist's perspective by adopting the method of recording reviews. According to Alessandri, Baldassare, & Williamson (2022, p. 3), recording reviews is "a form of reasoned evaluation focused on recorded music as the result of the interpreter's performative choices, by assessing the aesthetic qualities of the performance, but also go beyond that to evaluate the Musical output as the result of the artist's achievement and its importance in the wider music market." The comparison of the recordings will examine each artist's individual reception and their perspective in interpreting the violin concerto artistically, by the chronological development of performative interpretation from Heifetz to Skride.

The recordings span about seventy years of development, and the possibility of the film's influence on the personal artistic interpretation by different artists may evolve with similarities and differences. The recording comparison aims to identify any nuances and artistic elements that may pose an influence on the development of performative interpretation to the violin concerto, from its stylistic viewpoint of absolute music to film music. To limit the endless variables in the comparison of these seven recordings, only the three main Themes from each movement used in the film were compared – Sherlock Holmes, Love Theme, and Lochness Monster. Each Theme was played three times; first impression listening, followed by a second and third listening to search for the evolving nuances from each artistic reception of the violin concerto. During the process of the recording review, it was already limited during the third listening, as the review is only focusing on performative artistic interpretation, instead of a detailed stylistic analysis of the recordings. The recording review only account for the aural representation of

performative interpretation, without any visual representation, due to the focal area of reviewing the seven album recordings available on the violin concerto.

The comparative study of all seven recordings is central to this study, as it reveals how the evolving influence of Rózsa's film career has shaped successive performative interpretations of his violin concerto. By tracing the similarities and differences from Heifetz's seminal 1956 recording to later recordings, this analysis demonstrates how changing audience tastes and cinematic associations have continuously alter the concerto's reception and interpretive tradition. This study shows a discussion on the violin concerto's reception history, the unplayable aspects, the development of its performative interpretation, and the future standing of the concerto.

Critical and Public Reception on the Violin Concerto

Rózsa's violin concerto is made up of a typical concerto form consisting of three movements in a fast-slow-fast manner, with a virtuosic cadenza present in the first movement. All three movements have a recurring thematic material which is used throughout the movement. Rózsa is a twentieth-composer who implements some contemporary compositional techniques into his concert works. However, due to the big influence as a film composer, his works are not typical of twentieth-century compositional techniques, without any notion of atonality and serialism, to name a few. It is apparent that Rózsa implemented significant Musical thematic ideas in the concerto, which moulded the foundation of the concerto.

The Rózsa violin concerto received favourable responses from its premiere on January 15, 1956 in Dallas, Texas, alongside conductor Walter Hendl. There was a standing ovation at the end of the concert premiere, and reviews of the premiere were very enthusiastic. According to Rózsa (1982e, p. 163), "the Dallas critic John Rosenfield wrote of a historic premiere, and the following concert at Fort Worth was also equally well received." Rosenfield acclaimed that Rózsa was a "modern composer who can see a lyrical Theme through and his violin concerto exhibited 'wild passions' and 'a thorough exploitation of colour resources'" (Tobin, 2008).

In *The Dallas Morning News,* Rosenfield writes, "There is no astigmatism of the soundtrack about this concerto. From the fine opus we would judge that he

is contemporary without being avant-garde. There is nothing radical about a three movement concerto of fast-slow-fast arrangement" (Meyer, 2019b, p. 49). The review made by Rosenfield shows a divergence between Rózsa and the works of more 'avant-garde' composers of the time. In twentieth-century concert works, there are usually less coherent use of tonality and melodic elements, whereas Rosenfield praised Rózsa in his sense of lyricism employed in the violin concerto. Rosenfield continues, "What is different is Rózsa's ability to fashion melodious and compelling lyricism in phrases neither too long or too intervallically distorted. Craftsmanship is there profusely but why notice it when there are things to listen to?"

The peak of the violin concerto is the enchanting lyrical and thematic ideas that override the transparency of virtuosity intended from the work. The review made by Rosenfield discusses the memorable melodic elements Rózsa implemented in the concerto while maintaining the virtuosic amenity. Moreover, E. Clyde Whitlock's (Meyer, 2019c, p. 49) appraising review of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram wrote, "The piece has none of the horrors of atonality, being definitely based on key centers. It has a definite and recognizable thematic basis and fascinating rhythmic devices, especially in the final movement." The witness in the accounts of both Rosenfeld and Whitlock is an important point in the reception of Rózsa's violin concerto during its premiere. It is undoubtedly an emphasis made on his commendable compositional writing skills in its contemporary style without being overly unconventional and atonal. As mentioned by Whitlock, he is referring to avant-garde composers of the time such as Schoenberg and Webern. Sciabarra (2025a) also conceded that the melodies are modally coloured with hints of harmonic acerbity, illustrating Rózsa's firm belief in the tonality of Western music. Due to his Hungarian roots, Rózsa's concert works were heavily influenced by Hungarian music elements similar to that of Béla Bartók – sharp-cornered rhythms and strong modal colouration.

Meyer (2019d, p. 49) claims that "one approaches a contemporary violin concerto with misgivings. However, in Rózsa's case there was less apprehension, since a composer who has put out several successful motion picture scores must have his feet on the ground." The latter part of the review made by Whitlock displays the widespread response in favour of the violin concerto during its premiere,

with Rózsa's name in the industry kickstarting its reception. The piece was then recorded by Heifetz alongside Hendl and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra soon after Heifetz had finished his tour. The recording also received ample great reviews and the concerto immediately won an international success (Rózsa, 1982f, p. 163). Following its international success, the concerto continued to be performed around Europe at Baden-Baden, and in America by Spivakovsky at Franz Waxman's Los Angeles Festival. Since its premiere, the concerto had received a total of over 100 performances (Rose, 1970a).

Shortly after that, the concerto however, was not recorded for more than forty years, until the second recording of the concerto by Robert McDuffie in 1996, despite its international success and its widespread reception from audiences. In opposition to Rosenfield and Whitlock, Bernheimer (1988) writes a disappointed piece on the second performance of Rózsa's viola concerto, which is closely associated to the violin concerto because of their similarities. He commended Rózsa on his film music scores, but a contradiction risen with Rózsa's concert works. "His symphonic pieces, however, have proven less endearing, and, thus far, less enduring. Divorced from the elaborate screen images, Rozsa's ultraconservative Musical ideas and impulses tend to sound banal."

The opposing review expressed by Bernheimer reveals differing opinions and mixed reception on Rózsa's concert works. Rózsa's idea of composing with higher restraint for his concert works may therefore result in a less appealing outcome and reception as compared to his film scores. Due to the lack of performances, the concerto's standing and recognition dropped from its international success, leaving many to have little to no knowledge of the work. This results in the possible reasons which may have catered to the violin concerto's dropping popularity – the concerto's technical difficulty or Rózsa's devoid popularity? It can be concluded, however, that the concerto had a successful premiere, but was underappreciated due to the lack of performances which was caused by the level of difficulty in the violin concerto.

Underrated or Unplayable?

Despite his prominence as a film composer, the concert works of Miklós Rózsa remain in uncertainty. They are rarely performed, recorded, and highly dismissed. The underrated reception of his concert works stands in a significant contradictory state of his notoriety as a Hollywood film composer, with many award-winning film scores secured to his name. He rose to fame upon writing for film music, and is considered one of the sought-after film composer of the Golden Age of Hollywood. Nevertheless, the inclination that Rózsa remains renowned to this day may be disputable, unlike the interminable fame of other Hollywood film composers of the time, such as John Williams, Ennio Morricone, and Erich Wolfgang Korngold. Many have heard of these composers, while seldom have heard of Rózsa. Rózsa had won numerous prestigious awards, including three Oscars for Spellbound (1945), A Double Life (1947), and Ben-Hur (1959), and seventeen Academy Award nominations for his other film works. Sciabarra (2025b) added, "Despite Rózsa's traditionalism, his work for the concert hall was often ignored and dismissed by critics simply because he was a composer of film music."

Heifetz is known precariously for his perfection and coolness in his playing. Unlike many prominent soloists of his time, Heifetz never played to catch the audience's eye, consistently refusing to exaggerate the music's emotional content (McLellan, 1987). This resulted in constructive criticisms and debates over Heifetz's Musical style and stage presence. However, despite that, most musicians and violinists agreed that Heifetz was the most technically perfect violinist of the twentieth century. The outstanding praises does not only come from today's generation of violinists, but great virtuoso violinists of the time like Leopold Auer (Heifetz's teacher), Fritz Kreisler, Isaac Stern, Sir Yehudi Menuhin, Mischa Elman, and many more (Timnick, 1987). His impeccable violin techniques was unmatched, allowing him to rise to fame and become the highest-paid violinist at just eighteen years old, surpassing even Fritz Kreisler. Both Rózsa and Heifetz experienced a mixture of acclaim and criticism throughout their careers, influencing perceptions of their artistic output. The reputation of Hollywood stars Miklós Rózsa and Jascha Heifetz influenced the standing and the reception of the violin concerto. According to Teachout (2001a), "Although his concert music was admired and performed by distinguished artists like the violinist Jascha Heifetz, the cellist Gregor Piatigorsky,

and the conductors Pierre Monteux and Bruno Walter, it was taken for granted by the vast majority of classical-music critics that a composer who wrote for Hollywood could not possibly be first-rate."

Fellow contemporary concert and film composer of the time, Erich Wolfgang Korngold, also suffered the same backlash from critics on his concert works. In another article written by Teachout in 1996, he stated that both Korngold and Rózsa had been viewed as notable composers before Hollywood, but it was difficult for them to cater their concert music to audiences afterwards. Film composers of the time are not truly regarded as concert-hall composers, but mainstream film composers. During his time, contemporary concert-hall composers began to experiment with serialism, atonality and other avant-garde compositional techniques, but Rózsa refused to bow down to postwar fashion (Teachout, 2001b). This resulted in Rózsa's diminishing status within the industry. Despite Rózsa's international success and prominence as a Hollywood composer, his concert works including the violin concerto was greatly underappreciated at the time.

During the time of Rózsa, Korngold also had Heifetz commission a violin concerto. The Korngold violin concerto was dedicated to Alma Mahler, the widow of Gustav Mahler, and was premiered by Heifetz in 1947. The concerto has now reached its permanent place in the violin repertory, while Rózsa's violin concerto still remains quite underrated. Korngold's violin concerto was written and premiered earlier than Rózsa's, despite both being commissioned by Heifetz. Although they both share film music elements in their composition, the difference is that Korngold implemented the thematic materials from his films into the concerto, while Rózsa's concerto was adapted later for a film. Both Korngold and Rózsa's concerto are unbelievably technical as usual of Heifetz, but to have more performances of Korngold sets the idea that Korngold may be somewhat more manageable than Rózsa. It is in many ways a sister score to the Korngold, but perhaps that very similarity doomed the concerto to always live in the Korngold violin concerto's shadow. It could be deduced that the concerto is underrated due to the overshadowing popularity of Korngold's violin concerto, which resulted in a lack of concert-hall performances of Rózsa's violin concerto over the years.
Throughout his life, Heifetz served as an inspirational figure to countless musicians

and artists, prompting many composers to write and dedicate works to him, including Joseph Achron, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Louis Gruenberg, Miklos Rozsa, Cyril Scott, and Sir William Walton. Many young contemporary concert-hall composers hoped that Heifetz would play their works, but Heifetz he remained highly selective. In addition to Schoenberg's violin concerto, he also rejected Arnold Bax's violin concerto in 1938, because the pieces were not virtuosic enough (Jung, 2007, p. 7). This further supports the view that Rózsa's violin concerto is technically demanding and virtuosic, well-suited for Heifetz's unsurpassable technical ability, which contributed to its reputation as unplayable.

Transcending Virtuosity: Heifetz's Technical Extremes

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the term unplayable refers to music so complex that it is not capable of being played. Rózsa (1982g, p. 163) expressed that "Heifetz's tone was unsurpassable, and his technique the most dazzling since Paganini." Due to the incredible technical demands found in the violin concerto, it was performed less frequently, as most violinists could not equal Heifetz's technique required to tackle it (Clements, 2021). The following examples highlight particularly demanding passages that contributes to its reputation for being exceptionally difficult to perform.

Figure 1 illustrates the frequent changes in meter, layered with rapid string

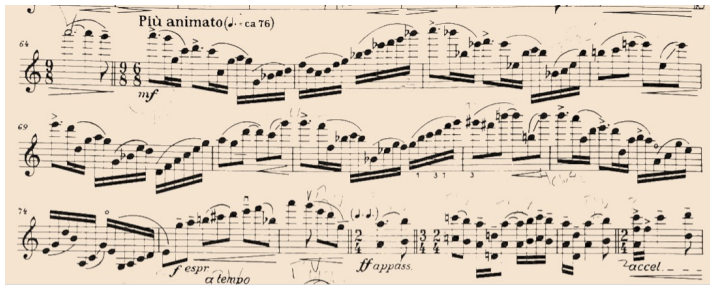

Figure 1. Rózsa's Violin Concerto, 1st movement., mm. 64-80

crossings and position shifts found throughout the work, where the alternating time signatures between bars present significant challenges for the performer in maintaining accurate rhythmic placement, particularly during extended notes and rests. Khitruk also notes the absence of tempo markings as an additional challenge in the concerto (Niles, 2009a). Comparable demands can be found in Korngold's violin concerto, particularly in the opening movement (Figure 2), where rapid string crossings and position shifts mirror the technical intricacy of Rózsa's semiquaver figurations. However, Rózsa intensifies these gestures by embedding them with sharper rhythmic asymmetry and more irregular meters at almost every measure, and requiring them to be executed entirely under multiple slurs, thereby increasing both rhythmic instability and the interpretive tension of sustaining a seamless legato across multiple string-crossings.

On a recent occasion where Tianwa Yang performed Rózsa's violin concerto

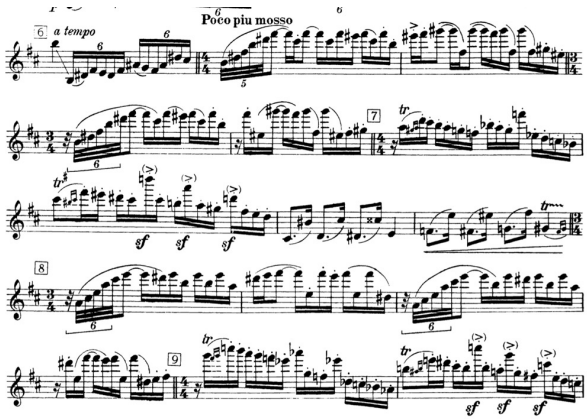

Figure 2. Korngold's Violin Concerto, 1st movement., mm. 39-52

with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra in October 2023, Hall (2023) recounted, "She knows her way around a fiddle. Good thing, because the exciting 1953 violin concerto by Hungarian émigré (known to many as a Hollywood composer) Miklós Rózsa was all over the fingerboard." Why compose a concerto so difficult? Because it was written for the great violinist Jascha Heifetz. Back in the day, the name Heifetz was synonymous with the best.

While appearing like an undemanding semiquaver figuration, Figure 3 poses

a technical difficulty due to the complex fingerings required to achieve necessary clarity and articulation as intended by Rózsa. Korngold's risoluto passage in Figure 4 demonstrates similar semiquaver figurations in sixths that appears undemanding, alternating between triplet-semiquaver transitions. Despite both being technically challenging, Rózsa's extensive 'over the fingerboard' element remains apparently demanding on its own.

Figures 5 and 7 demonstrates some of the most technically demanding

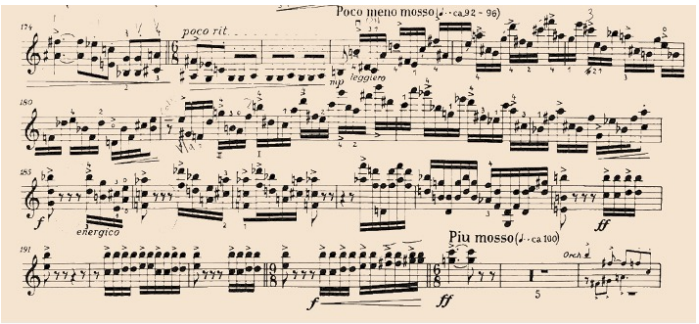

Figure 3. Rózsa's Violin Concerto, 1st movement., mm. 174-201

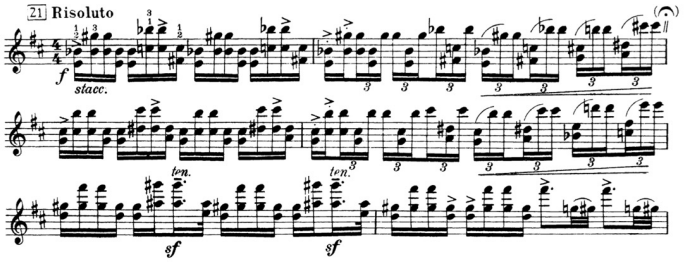

Figure 4. Korngold's Violin Concerto, 1st movement., mm. 113-117

passages in Rózsa's violin concerto, spanning the full range of the fingerboard. Figure 5 features a sequence of sixths in a high register, which can result in tonal instability or unintended sound distortion if not executed with precise bow contact point. A similar passage (Figure 6) found in Korngold displays double-stopping semiquaver figuration, that includes sixths, thirds, and octaves. As if to prolong the virtuosity of the passage, Rózsa returns with an ascension of double-stopping chords including tenths (Figure 7), even further up the fingerboard, where the shortened string length presents additional challenges in intonation and control.

Figure 8 presents a passage that features a down-bow ricochet followed by

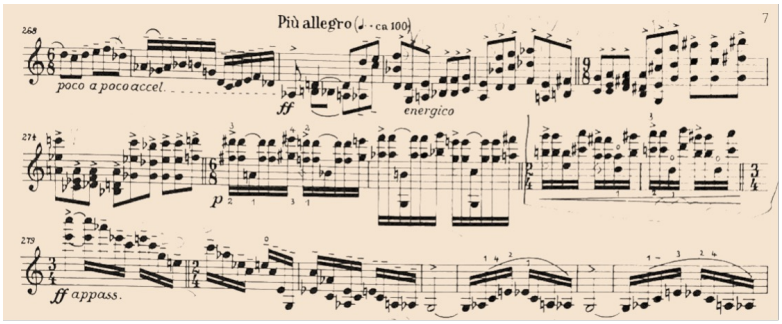

Figure 5. Rózsa's Violin Concerto, 1st movement., mm. 268-285

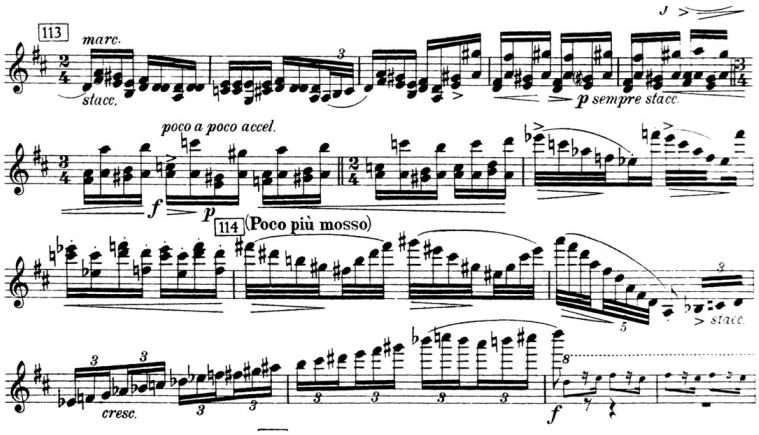

Figure 6. Korngold's Violin Concerto, 3rd movement., mm. 395-409

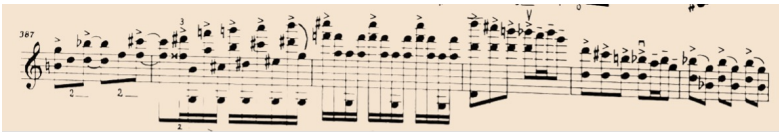

Figure 7. Rózsa's Violin Concerto, 1st movement., mm. 387-392

a sequence of double-stopped fifths. The successful execution of such passages requires precise articulation and clarity to convey the intended virtuosic character reflective of Heifetz's style. As discussed by the examples, the concerto consists of a fair amount of common technical challenges found in violin works: octaves, tenths, thirds, running passages at a swift tempo, ricochet bowing, and others. Moreover, the constant presence of chords, double stops, and high registers integrated together contributes to the difficulty of the concerto.

The relative underrepresentation of Rózsa's violin concerto in mainstream

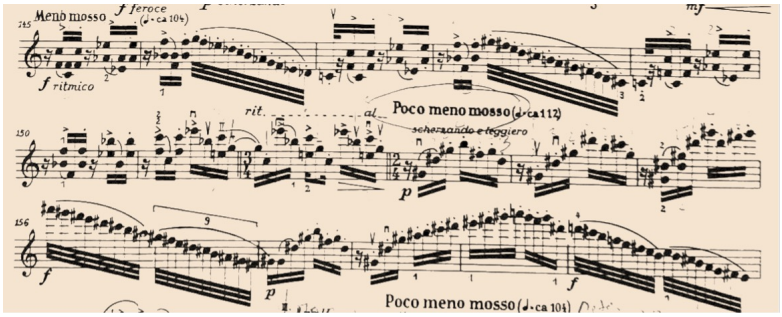

Figure 8. Rózsa's Violin Concerto, 3rd movement., mm. 145-160

programming can be attributed to a combination of factors: the concerto's technical demands and its modern aesthetics. In contrast, Korngold's violin concerto, reached standard programming during the time when audiences hunger for idiomatically rich, tonal music, providing relief from the modernistic cultural landscape. Its complexity may have contributed to fewer performances and recordings over time, but rather than being an impediment, this challenge can pose as a valuable addition to expanding the frontier of advanced violin repertoire. While other highly demanding concertos have secured a place as a standard, Rózsa's concerto offers similar depth of virtuosity and expressive ranges. With growing interest in rediscovering overlooked twentieth-century works, this concerto presents an invitation to violinists seeking repertoires to further enhance their technical abilities and interpretative qualities. The unplayability should not be viewed as a barrier, but as an opportunity for newer generation artists to present its brilliance in mainstream programming.

Adaptation and Identity in The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes

At a Christmas party in 1971, Billy Wilder met with Rózsa and discussed on using his second violin concerto in a Sherlock Holmes picture which he was going to produce. Wilder felt it befitting to implement his violin concerto into the film, which associates Sherlock Holmes to his character as a virtuoso violinist. The film was originally set to have four separate episodes and adventures, and it was over three hours long including an intermission. However, it was later shortened to under two hours and left with only two episodes, because the American directive from United Artists stated that they only needed one big picture. According to Rózsa

(Kraft, 1982a), the first two episodes that was cut out were more exciting than the episode of the Lochness Monster that is now left intact in the film. It was supposed to begin with the characterization of the relationship between Holmes and Watson, followed by a murder scene on a cruise and an upside down room. With exciting bits of these episodes taken out, the film is now left with two episodes – Holmes and his sexuality, and the mystery of the Lochness Monster.

The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes failed to be a big Hollywood hit during its release, which may have caused the failure in boosting the popularity of the concerto. In the interview with David and Richard Kraft (1982b), Rózsa said, "From 4 episodes they made one episode. You can't do that. It wasn't written that way. But United Artists decided they needed only one big picture. So out came a very mediocre picture. The film was made in West Germany with tremendous publicity, a big press reception; all the Munich papers were there. They were expecting a Billy Wilder film. It hardly was and the public didn't come to see it. In America it was no better."

The film has received unfavourable responses from the American critics, despite the excited ravings from audiences in London and Paris. Rose (1970b) iterated that the disapproving reception of the film had to do with the episode cuts made, leaving only one and a half stories out of four episodes, with most of the interesting parts taken out. Besides that, the misconception audiences had towards Wilder's intent of the film poses contribution to unfavourable responses. Rózsa stated that Wilder's intent of the film was misunderstood by audiences, having the idea that Wilder wanted to make Holmes as a homosexual.

The flop of the film was caused by the majority of Holmes' cases in which Holmes took about half hour longer to solve the case than it took the audiences. Ebert (1971) brought out that the movie would have been better if the cases were more interesting. However, Rózsa's adaptation of the violin concerto for the film significantly enhanced its emotional atmosphere, elevating the narrative whenever it showed signs of flagging (Travers, 2013). The only factor that prevented the film from becoming a hit was its complicated plot, which tested viewers' concentration. Consequently, due to the film's poor reception, the concerto's popularity continued to decline, further contributing to its already underrated status.

Performing Rózsa: Interpretive Approaches to the Violin Concerto

Performative interpretation serves as a means to examine each individuality produced by different artists interpreting the same work, and how such differences contribute to the evolution of artistic interpretation, influenced by factors ranging from historical context to the influence of film music. The cinematic adaptation of the violin concerto can influence modern reception and performative interpretation. However, interpretation is a subjective idea, in which it could refer to many angles from stylistic preferences, passages, or throughout an entire performance. While recording the concerto for the 2007 Naxos album, Khitruk stated, "There is something very satisfying – scary, but satisfying – about taking something which only exists on the page and actually creating your interpretation, where you have no guidelines" (Niles, 2009b).

In the film, Rózsa (1982h, p. 195) adapted his violin concerto based on the thematic materials found in each movement, "the first Theme of the first movement was used for Holmes' cocaine-addiction, the second movement for the love Theme; the turbulent last movement became Lochness Monster music." Rózsa implemented the compositional technique of writing and adapting leitmotifs from his violin concerto. The thematic materials derived and taken from the main Themes of the concerto shows the fusion of film music and concert music elements that Rózsa brought in to combine his double-life career. The adaptation of Rózsa's violin concerto for film has led many to perceive it as film music, programmatic in nature, even though it was originally intended as absolute music. Listeners and musicians were clearly aware of the film adaptation as soon as they encountered the concerto, as evidenced by Keller's (2003, p. 30) mention of it in the program for Rózsa's violin concerto during the 2003 debut of the work with New York Philharmonic. This also affects later recordings and performances in the artists'

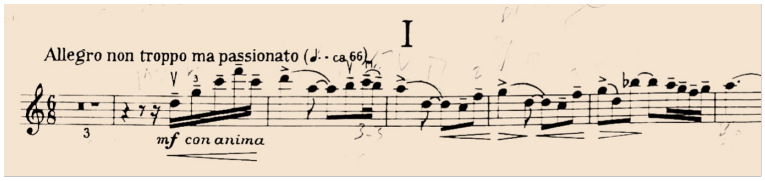

Figure 9. Rózsa's Violin Concerto, 1st movement: mm. 4-9

performative interpretation of the violin concerto.

The three thematic materials adapted into *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes,* represents the medium of comparing the performative interpretation from different artists, ranging from Heifetz, to Erich Gruenberg (a solo violinist for *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*), and twenty-first-century artists. There are numerous performative interpretations of the three thematic materials from each movement, and comparing these renditions serves as a catalyst on the development of the violin concerto's performative interpretation from 1956 to 2018. The performing styles of the violin concerto has developed over the years, kickstarting the second album recording in 1996 by Gruppman nearly after 40 years, and the twenty-first-century recordings proves vastly distinctive from Heifetz and Gruenberg's performing style. Figure 9 shows the main Theme from the first movement, which can be heard throughout the concerto as recurring Themes and reusable Musical ideas. In *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes,* this main Theme is used to describe Sherlock Holmes as a character and his cocaine addiction.

In Heifetz's recording of the concerto, the tone produced were slightly brusque and harsh to prevent the tendency of exceeding lyricism, despite its Musical thematic melodies. Heifetz's first album recording of the violin concerto in 1956, reveals the work played strictly in time, which suppresses any space for a sentimental line, with an added hint of crisp in his tone. Atypical of old-style violin playing similar to contemporaries like Yehudi Menuhin and David Oistrakh, Heifetz's tone exemplifies a Musical style which is vastly different from modern violinists. This can be heard in the rhythmically and technically precise execution of the violin concerto in his recording, with little tempo fluctuations, and a clear, powerful display of the Themes, albeit the lyrical line.

The twenty-first-century performative interpretation of the concerto tends to produce an inclination to render the work more sentimentally. Kozinn (2003) writes: "Maintaining textural clarity was never an issue for him, but in this work particularly, the lure toward an episodic soupiness can be hard to resist. Heifetz, for whom the work was composed, avoided that lure by adding an acerbic touch to the sweet solo violin line." In contrast to Heifetz's strict and virtuosic 1956 interpretation, Gruppman's (1996) recording, the first since Heifetz, adopts a slower

tempo and an expansive legato style, reflecting the influence of the 1970 film adaptation and the late twentieth-century shift toward an emphasis on a lyrical, narrative performance style rather than its virtuosity.

Khitruk's (2007) recording of this Theme poses similar parallelism to Heifetz's musicianship and technical skills. There were less tempo fluctuations, and the energy level was always anticipated, accompanied with a bright tone which emphasised less on the gravity of the strained opening (Schwartz, 2010). Distinctive from Heifetz's brusque tone, Khitruk's tone portrays a broader warm tone, accompanied with perfect intonation that fits well with Rózsa's lyrical but technical composition (Warby, 2025). The performative interpretation might differ among individual artists due to cultural Musical identities, as Khitruk remarked, "Americans like a very straight and even sound. For me this was profoundly inorganic. In Russia, the sound of a violin breathes, and it has a tear in it" (Houdouchi, 2013). Similarly, Skride emphasises on its considerable lyrical materials while not missing on its punchier gestures (Blumhofer, 2018).

Figure 10 shows the main Theme from the second movement, which is a sequential material used throughout the second movement. In the film, this Theme occurs whenever Sherlock Holmes was with Gabrielle Valledon, the mysterious woman involved in his detective case, which portrays the second movement as a love Theme for Sherlock's unrequited love for Gabrielle. Khitruk plays the second movement with intense passion while maintaining firm control over the Musical emotions, by pushing and pulling the listener over the edge (Sutton, 2025). The film music influence had Khitruk portraying the second movement with a gentle, unhurried interpretation to emphasise on the melancholic love Theme, before growing into a climactic peak. The tempo of the overall concerto was leaning on

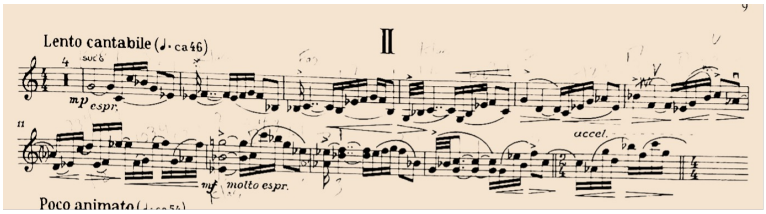

Figure 10. Rózsa's Violin Concerto, 2nd movement: mm. 5-15

the slower side, but reflected both the duality of concert music and film music.

The slow movement is gorgeous and exploits Skride's lyric gifts to the full. McDuffie (2000) played with sovereign tone and agility. Gruenberg's film-adapted version of the violin concerto ranks as the most similar to Heifetz's recording, with a strictly precise approach to rhythm and tempo was strictly precise, despite the concerto's current association to film music. The famous love Theme from the second movement was played with hints of increased melancholic elements to support the narrative of the film, but was evenly matched with Heifetz's performative style.

Figure 11 shows the main Theme of the third movement, less likely to occur throughout the movement. However, thematic ideas and materials are revolved around the main Theme, with its turbulence and intensity representing the Lochness Monster. Music critics often associate fast tempos with Heifetz, noting that "Heifetz's preference for fast tempos was encouraged by his technical virtuosity" (Sarlo, 2010, p. 78). Heifetz executed every note and detail on the score with technical perfection and accuracy that is unsurpassable by any other. McDuffie plays as if his life depended upon it, while Pike's recording of this Theme appears cooler and more contemplative (Dalkin & Anderson, 2025). Druce (2013) adds that "although she plays the brilliant passages extremely well, she lacks something of Heifetz's manic energy and his ability to make each movement a single passionate utterance." Pike's (2012) sound evokes a silvery agility, enhanced by a narrow, moderately fast vibrato. What sets Pike apart from Heifetz is her gentle strokes, enhanced dynamic range, and seductive playing during the lyrical sections. While Heifetz emphasises the relentless virtuosity of the third movement, Pike delivers

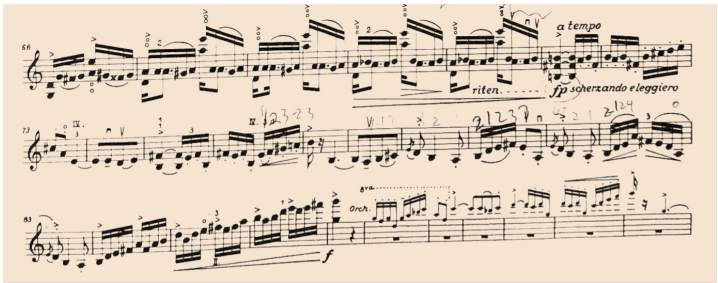

Figure 11. Rózsa's Violin Concerto, 3rd movement: mm. 71-88

a lighter, more dynamic interpretation of the finale's dance rhythms.

There were evident distinctive changes and development in the performative interpretation of the violin concerto from its premiere to the present. Heifetz's performative interpretation stand by the closest to the composer's intention, given the collaborative work between Rózsa and Heifetz on the concerto. However, artists in the twenty-first century tend to adopt a common performative interpretation of the violin concerto that strays away from Heifetz's approach, by leaning towards the emotional and programmatic side. The influence of looking at the concerto from the perspective of film music and Rózsa as a film composer constitutes the concerto as film music today. Rózsa had said in an interview with Vallerand (1982), when asked if one has to see the film to understand the music, "This is dramatic music. But Wagner's music too is dramatic and when we give The Ride of the Valkyries in a concert, nobody needs to see the action to understand. We hear it in the music and it's enough."

The influence of Rózsa's film adaptation on the interpretation of his violin concerto cannot be dismissed as circumstantial. As Rózsa (1982h, p. 156) himself asserted, "There was no difference in my Musical language between the concert hall and the film studio, only in their purpose and scale." If Rózsa himself saw no separation between his film and concert works, then later performers that recorded his work would at least have the invitation to interpret the concerto through that shared cinematic perspective. For instance, the second movement, which is later adapted as the love Theme in the film, inevitably reshaped how audiences and performers approach the concerto. Ever since Gruppman's recording, a gradual shift toward broader phrasing and increased expressivity aligned more closely with Rózsa's cinematic aesthetics. The discussion of evolving interpretive approaches suggests that the film's cultural resonance indirectly guided the performative interpretation of the concerto, transforming it from a concert work of technical into one of narrative expressivity.

Concluding Thoughts: Reviving Rózsa's Concert Voice

A deeper look into the reception history of Rózsa's violin concerto is the foundation to answering the questionable state of his violin concerto in the violin

repertory today. Critiques and reviews serve as a catalyst in the understanding and reflections of any scale of production, which reflects on the responses from the audiences on the receiving point of the violin concerto. A notion on the written analysis of the concerto's reception history from 1953-2018 while examining the unknown and unplayable aspects, to its adaptation of the violin concerto into the Billy Wilder film *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes,* associates with the general reception from the receiving audiences on the concert work.

It is a state of transparency that Rózsa's concert works are underrated within the Western art music industry despite his prominence as a Hollywood film composer. Reception history is not only catered to the listening audience but to each musician and artist's individual interpretation of the work. The study of the development of the performative interpretation of the concerto's main Themes demonstrates how artists and violinists, as receiving audiences, perceived the work between 1953-2018, concluding that the concerto's obscurity is due to its unplayability and Rózsa's disparity as a concert-hall composer.

This study has been ambitious in its scope, attempting to initiate an acquaintance with a work that has a complicated yet unaddressed history. This study has bridged the literature gap by scoping out the reception history and the reasons of the violin concerto's underrated status based on critiques and reviews, and the development of performative interpretation throughout the years of recording. Potential criticisms of such discussion leaves space for future research and discussion in which this research may not have covered. The discussion presented in this study are largely drawn from what is found noteworthy on its reception history. This approach introduces readers to Rózsa violin concerto, a little-known work with limited discourse, encouraging readers to create their own path of enquiry.

Future Standing of the Violin Concerto

The study on the reception of Rózsa's violin concerto poses yet another question looking at the future of the work, whether it will become a standard repertoire in violin literature. The answer seems to be debatable, but with possible chances of entering the standard repertory in the future. The prompt of further

performances and awareness would raise its status among musicians and audiences, increasing the chances of becoming a standard. With the need of further studies and research on Rózsa and his concert works, his violin concerto may soon be on its way to becoming a standard in violin literature.

More performances into mainstream programming of the violin concerto would be a stepping stone for it to become more known and popular within violinists and musicians. Rózsa's violin concerto deserves inclusion in the standard repertory not merely for its technical brilliance, but for its synthesis of virtuosic concert form, Hungarian idioms, and cinematic expressivity, qualities that serve as a compelling bridge between past concert traditions and modern narrative aesthetics. In addition, the concerto offers contemporary techniques and interpretive possibilities that are crucial for the need of advancing contemporary violin pedagogy (Workman, 2025, p. 3).

The concerto's reception history showcased how changing cultural and aesthetic tastes, from the influence of the film and the evolution of performative interpretation, have shaped its interpretation over time. Reviving this concerto within standard programming not only restores Rózsa's reputation as a concert-hall composer, but also broadens the understanding of twentieth century's synthetical modern aesthetics in violin literature.

The research pathways that can be further explored from this initial study are extensive. Detailed analysis of the film, The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes, would be useful to both film music and Western art music students on being exposed not only to the relevant compositional practice, but also how they are adapted for different Musical purposes. Besides that, a detailed analysis of the concerto itself could deepen the understanding of Rózsa's harmonic language, orchestrating practices, and his Hungarian influences, which would stimulate performers to experiment with their performative interpretations. Further empirical research would be required to address these literature gaps on this violin concerto.

This study also highlights a gap in the scholarship of Rózsa's contemporaries, commissioned by Heifetz, beyond the works of Rózsa and Korngold. The other violin concertos should also be warranted further research and studies, as limited resources and performances detracts both the status of the works and the reputation of the composer. These neglected violin concertos could be the next

standard on the violin repertory if the awareness from audiences are gained from studies and research.

As a closing thought, Rózsa's violin concerto might be the next famed standard within the violin concerto repertory, as the advanced and technical challenges acts as a platform for violinists to further hone their technical skills in violin playing. Rózsa and his concert works are unquestionably underrated which constitutes losses for the Western art music scene. Rózsa's revival through the study of his violin concerto offers significant academic, aesthetic, and cultural benefits. Academically, it expands the body of knowledge by situating Rózsa more firmly within twentieth-century concert music. Aesthetically, it reasserts the significance of Rózsa's compositional style, a synthesis of concert-hall and film elements, and in terms of cultural conservation in the revival of Miklós Rózsa and his works.

APPENDICES

Table 1: Jascha Heifetz's Albums on Rózsa's Violin Concerto

YEAR	ARTIST	ALBUM	Label
1956	**Jascha Heifetz** • Walter Hendl (conductor) • Dallas Symphony Orchestra	**HEIFETZ** *Rózsa – Violin Concerto* *Spohr – Concerto No. 8*	**RCA Victor Seal**
1964	**Jascha Heifetz** • Walter Hendl (conductor) • Dallas Symphony Orchestra	**HEIFETZ** *Rózsa Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* *Benjamin Romantic Fantasy*	**RCA Victor Seal**
1988	**Jascha Heifetz** • Walter Hendl (conductor) • Dallas Symphony Orchestra	**HEIFETZ** *Korngold – Violin Concerto, Op. 35* *Rózsa – Violin Concerto, Op. 24 / Theme and Variations, Op. 29a* *Waxman – "Carmen" Fantasy*	**RCA Victor Seal**
1992	**Jascha Heifetz** • Walter Hendl (conductor) • Dallas Symphony Orchestra	**HEIFETZ** *Korngold Concerto* *Rózsa Concerto/ Tema con variozioni* *Waxman "Carmen" Fantasy*	**RCA Victor Seal**
2008	**Jascha Heifetz** • Walter Hendl (conductor)	**The Original Jacket Collection: Jascha Heifetz**	**Sony/BMG Masterworks**

Table 1: Jascha Heifetz's Albums on Rózsa's Violin Concerto

YEAR	ARTIST	ALBUM	Label
	• Dallas Symphony Orchestra		

Table 2: Available Recordings on Rózsa's Violin Concerto

YEAR	ARTIST	ALBUM	Label
1996	**Igor Gruppman** • James Sedares (conductor) • New Zealand Symphony Orchestra	**Miklós Rózsa** *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* *Concerto for String Orchestra* *Andante for Strings*	**Koch**
2000	**Robert McDuffie** • Yoel Levi (conductor) • Atlanta Symphony Orchestra	**Miklós RÓZSA** *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra* *Theme and Variations for Violin, Cello, and Orchestra*	**Telarc**
2007	**Anastasia Khitruk** • Dmitry Yablonsky	**Miklós Rózsa** Violin Concerto,	**Naxos Records**

Table 2: Available Recordings on Rózsa's Violin Concerto (Continue)

YEAR	ARTIST	ALBUM	Label
	(conductor) • Russian Philharmonic Orchestra	Op. 24 Sinfonia Concertante, Op. 29	
2009	**Matthew Trusler** • Yasuo Shinozaki (conductor) • Düsseldorfer Symphoniker	**Rozsa – Korngold:** Violin Concertos	**Orchid Classics**
2012	**Jennifer Pike** • Rumon Gamba (conductor) • BBC Philharmonic	**Miklós Rózsa:** Orchestral Works, Volume 3 Violin Concerto Concerto for String Orchestra Theme, Variations and Finale	**Chandos**
2018	**Baiba Skride** • Santtu-Matias Rouvali (conductor) • Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra	**AMERICAN CONCERTOS** Bernstein Korngold Rózsa	**Orfeo**

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APPLYING BEL CANTO SINGING TECHNIQUE TO SOPRANO ARIAS FOR MODERN TIMES

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Abstract

This research article aims to present core principles of bel canto singing techniques in a concise and accessible form suitable for contemporary pedagogical and performance contexts. The study draws upon two nineteenth-century vocal exercise manuals authored by Manuel García and Mathilde Marchesi—both historically significant and widely used in their time, yet less familiar to present-day learners. Essential concepts from these manuals have been examined and synthesized to provide practical guidance for current practitioners of classical voice. Six soprano arias by Vincenzo Bellini and Gaetano Donizetti were selected as representative repertoire for analysis. These works exemplify the hallmark challenges of bel canto performance, including advanced vocal agility, refined control, nuanced ornamentation, and interpretive depth. Through structural and stylistic analysis, the research elucidates technical approaches and ornamentation strategies that support authentic

bel canto interpretation. The study culminates in a live performance designed to demonstrate the application of these findings. Beyond functioning as a practical extension of the research, the performance seeks to revitalize interest in bel canto arias and broaden public appreciation for this vocal tradition. In doing so, the research highlights the enduring pedagogical and artistic value of bel canto within today's classical singing landscape.

Keywords: Bel Canto technique, classical voice performance, soprano opera arias, singing treatise

บทคัดย่อ

บทความวิจัยฉบับนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อถ่ายทอดองค์ความรู้เกี่ยวกับเทคนิคการขับร้องแบบเบลคานโตในลักษณะที่กระชับ ชัดเจน และสอดคล้องกับบริบทการเรียนการสอนในปัจจุบัน โดยอาศัยการวิเคราะห์ตำราแบบฝึกหัดจากคริสต์ศตวรรษที่ 19 จำนวนสองเล่ม ประพันธ์โดย มานูเอล การ์เซีย และมาทิลเด มาร์เคซี ซึ่งเคยได้รับการยอมรับอย่างกว้างขวางในแวดวงวอยซ์เปดาโกจีในยุคนั้น แม้ว่าในปัจจุบันตำราดังกล่าวจะเป็นที่รู้จักน้อยลง ผู้วิจัยได้ดำเนินการศึกษาคัดเลือกสาระสำคัญ เพื่อให้ผู้สนใจสามารถนำไปประยุกต์ใช้ในการฝึกปฏิบัติได้อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพ การศึกษาครั้งนี้คัดเลือกบทเพลงตัวอย่างจำนวน 6 บทเพลง ซึ่งเป็นอาเรียโซปราโนจากอุปรากรสายเบลคานโตที่ประพันธ์โดยวินเซนโซ เบลลินี และกาเอทาโน ดอนิเซตติ บทเพลงดังกล่าวได้รับการยอมรับว่าเป็นตัวแทนของคุณลักษณะเชิงเทคนิคระดับสูง ทั้งในด้านการควบคุมเสียง การใช้โน้ตประดับอันหลากหลาย และการตีความเชิงศิลปะ ผู้วิจัยจึงวิเคราะห์โครงสร้าง เทคนิคการร้อง และแนวทางการประดับเสียง ที่เหมาะสม เพื่อให้เกิดความเข้าใจอย่างเป็นระบบต่อรูปแบบการขับร้องในแนวเบลคานโต ผลการวิจัยจะถูกนำเสนอผ่านการแสดงประกอบ ซึ่งมีเป้าหมายไม่เพียงเพื่อสาธิตผลลัพธ์ของการวิเคราะห์เชิงเทคนิคและการสร้างโน้ตประดับ หากยังมุ่งหมายฟื้นฟูและส่งเสริมคุณค่าของอาเรียเบลคานโตให้เป็นที่รับรู้และเข้าถึงได้ในวงกว้างยิ่งขึ้น โดยสะท้อนให้เห็นถึงศักยภาพของแนวขับร้องนี้ต่อการศึกษาด้านการร้องเพลงคลาสสิกในสังคมร่วมสมัย

คำสำคัญ: เทคนิคการร้องเบลคานโต, การแสดงขับร้อง, เพลงร้องอุปรากรสำหรับโซปราโน, ตำราขับร้อง

Background, context and significance

The term "bel canto" was widely used in the context of classical music. Thought to have originated in the 17th century, it remains the most performed style in the opera community today, thereby proving its continued relevance, with generations of singers striving to perfect the bel canto style. Although widely used terminologically, it remains esoteric and is on the decline due to a lack of modern updates and interest.

The Harvard Dictionary of Music by Willi Apel describes bel canto as "the Italian vocal technique of the 18th century, with its emphasis on beauty of sound and brilliance of performance rather than dramatic expression or romantic emotion." In "National Schools of Singing" by Richard Miller, Bel Canto was described as a Musical term applied in the latter half of the nineteenth century to a style of vocal writing prominent in the writings of these three composers: Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti. Bel Canto simply means "beautiful singing" in Italian. Its two main pillars are "fioritura" (rapid execution of melismatic passages, or "runs" and feats of agility) and "sostenuto" (sustained, long, flowing legato) are the chief requirements of vocal skill. They characterize the bel canto style.

Bel canto singing is a style of singing that emerged in Italy during the Baroque period and reached its peak in the 19th century. It is characterized by a virtuosic, expressive vocal technique that emphasizes the beauty, clarity, and purity of the voice. Bel canto singing requires a high level of technical skill, including an extensive range, precise intonation, and a mastery of coloratura passages, or rapid runs and ornamentation. The style is also characterized by a focus on the emotional and dramatic content of the music, with singers striving to convey the meaning and feeling of the lyrics through their interpretation. Today, bel canto remains a highly esteemed and sought-after style of singing, with many operatic and concert performers striving to master its techniques and repertoire.

There is a detailed analysis by music pedagogue Robert Toft of what constitutes as bel canto singing. As stated in his book "Bel canto: A performer's guide" the main features of the bel canto style were as follows:

- Use of accent and emphasis
- Matching vocal register and tone to the emotional content of the words

- An importance of creating phrases
- A delivery with several types of legato and staccato
- Use of portamento
- "Messa di voce" as the primary form of expression (Domenico Corri refers to it as "soul of music")
- Frequent alteration of tempo for example: rubato, accelerando, ritardando
- The introduction of a wide variety of graces and divisions into both arias and recitatives
- Gesture as a powerful tool for enhancing the effect of the vocal delivery
- Vibrato primarily reserved for heightening the expression of certain words and for gracing longer notes.

The author investigates the history and characteristics of bel canto singing technique through studying bel canto vocal treatises: Ecole de García: traité complet de l'art du chant or Garcia's School: complete treatise on the Art of Singing by Manuel Garcia Jr. (published in 1856) and Méthode de chant théorique et pratique or Bel canto: Theoretical and practical vocal method by Mathilde Marchesi (published in 1887). Both were well-known upon publishment in the 19th century. The author will create a concise, approachable reading of said treatises, which will be used to publicly present findings through a contemporary showcase relevant to the modern context, achieved through applications of Bel Canto soprano operatic methods.

Objectives

1) Create a concise, simply understandable, and updated reading of original bel canto method books to encourage uninitiated modern singers to practice this method.

2) Perform a creative showcase of the selected bel canto repertoires to promote bel canto method in the contemporary context.

Process/methods proposed

This project will employ a multifaceted research methodology to achieve its goals:

1) Review of primary sources: A core component will involve the in-depth study of selected 19th-century vocal method books, particularly those by Manuel Garcia Jr. and Mathilde Marchesi, focusing on their foundational principles and vocal exercise sections.

2) Secondary source analysis: Scholarly works and critical analyses of the bel canto singing method will be examined to gain a comprehensive understanding of its historical context, theoretical underpinnings, and contemporary interpretations.

3) Repertoire exploration: A selection of bel canto operatic arias for soprano will be chosen for in-depth analysis, focusing on technical demands, stylistic nuances, and historical performance practices.

4) Expert consultation: Collaboration with established vocal pedagogues and/or performers well-versed in the bel canto tradition will be crucial for insights on applying the studied methods to the chosen repertoire.

5) Didactic exercise development: Informed by the research findings, a practical, approachable vocal exercise regimen will be created, drawing on the principles of the studied bel canto methods and tailored for application to the chosen arias.

6) Meticulous documentation: Throughout the research process, comprehensive notes and citations will be maintained to ensure proper referencing and academic integrity.

How the outcome benefits society

1) Enhanced accessibility of Bel Canto: the research demystifies and demythologizes the bel canto method for singers and listeners, thereby providing them with direction for effectively practice and perfection of their bel canto repertoire, ultimately contributing to a larger pool of skilled, studied bel canto singers.

2) Revitalizing Bel Canto appreciation: by promoting the study and performance of bel canto repertoire, the research can renew public interest in classical music - highlighting the beauty and technical brilliance of bel canto singing which encourages active engagement with opera.

Results

From studying, analyzing, and practicing, the author has gathered the background information, summarized the main content and the vocal training methods of following two books, "Ecole de García: traité complet de l'art du chant" or Garcia's School: complete treatise on the Art of Singing by Manuel Garcia Jr. (published 1856) and "Méthode de chant théorique et pratique" or Bel canto: Theoretical and practical vocal method by Mathilde Marchesi (published 1887). Finally, the author applied this knowledge to six arias in the Category of bel canto opera arias. The following songs are from composer Gaetano Donizetti: "Prendi, per me sei libero" from L'elisir d'amore (1832) and "Il dolce suono...spargi d'amaro pianto" (Mad scene) from Lucia di Lammermoor (1835) and from composer Vincenzo Bellini: "Eccomi...O quante volte" from I Capuleti e i Montecchi (1830), "Ah non credea...Ah non giunge" from La sonnambula (1831), "Casta diva" from Norma (1831), and "O rendetemi la speme...Vien, diletto" from I puritani (1835). The author hope that readers will study and utilize the findings for their benefit. The results can be summarized as follows.

Bel Canto Vocal method books

My exploration of bel canto pedagogy began with two key texts. The first was Manuel Garcia Jr.'s "Treatise on The Art of Singing." Published in its final edition in 1924, this book is historically significant as one of the earliest documented singing methodologies. Garcia Jr.'s own father, Manuel Garcia Sr., was a renowned 19th-century singer, lending further weight to the book's content. The second text, Mathilde Marchesi's "Theoretical and Practical Vocal Method," offered a complementary perspective. Praised for its clear and concise approach, this book remains a valuable resource in vocal pedagogy today. Its continued use in schools demonstrates its enduring relevance for singers of all levels. "Garcia's Treatise on The Art of Singing" by Manuel Garcia Jr.

A. Treatise on The Art of Singing – by Manuel Garcia Jr. (1924)

Manuel Garcia Junior was a Spanish singer. He was also a music educator and a vocal pedagogue. His interest in singing and the production of the voice led him to invent the first laryngoscope. He was very experienced in vocal production. He was born into a family full of Musical prodigies and successful singers, his father,

Manuel del Pópulo Vicente Rodriguez García or Manuel Garcia Senior, was a very well-known operatic singer during the year of 1812 to 1827. Manuel Garcia Sr. was known for an unusual talent for singing. Manuel Garcia Jr. went through his father's practices and, adding his own discoveries and knowledge, produced this book. It explains the basics on how the voice is produced, what is the most efficient way to sing, and singing exercises to strengthen and improve the singing techniques.

There are 6 crucial aspects that determines how skillful the voice is to be utilized: The correct vocal anatomy, the correct understanding your vocal register and vocal quality, the correct formation of the voice, the qualification of the singer, the cultivated (or trained) voice, and lastly, the agility of the voice.

The author gives many exercises for singers to practice and follow daily. Examples of these exercises are illustrated in Figures 1–3.

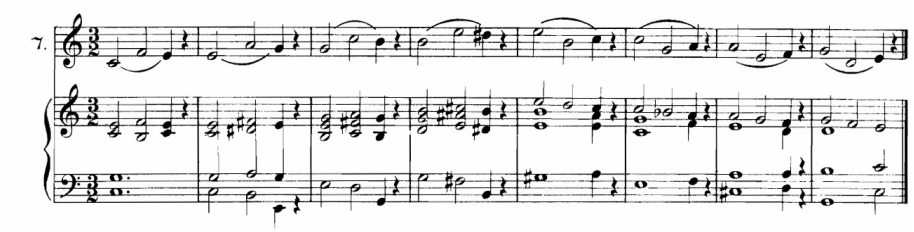

Figure 1. Exercise no. 7, helps practice uniting the chest and the medium register. Garcia's Singing School vocal method book. Page 11.

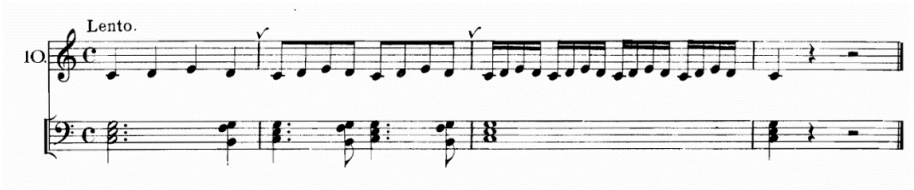

Figure 2. Exercise no. 10 focuses on increasing vocal agility. Page 11.

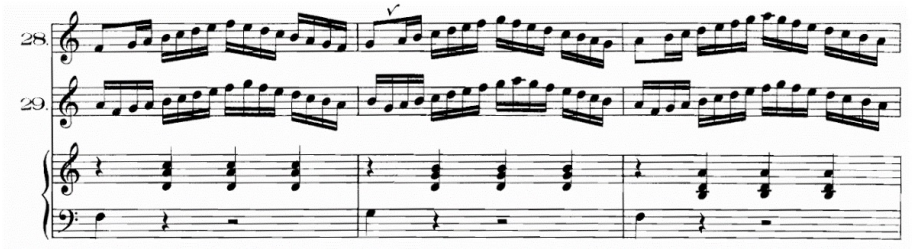

Figure 3. Exercises no. 28 and 29 focuses on ascending and descending melismatic passages. Page 14.

Manuel Garcia Jr. noted that the average practice time for beginners should not exceed five or six minutes. After that, the pupil should pause and take breaks, then continue the next session. However, after practicing for a week, the length can be extended but should still not exceed thirty minutes. Exercise should be sung slowly at first. The singer is encouraged to take breaths between every bar. After some improvements, the tempo can be increased and the breathing frequency decreased. The final goal is to be able to sing the whole passage in one breath with ease and comfort.

B. Theoretical and practical vocal method - by Mathilde Marchesi (1887)

Mathilde Marchesi (24 March 1821 – 17 November 1913) was a German mezzo-soprano, a singing teacher, and a practitioner for the bel canto method. She was a student of Manuel Garcia Jr. Later in life, she became a very successful teacher and was credited for teaching and nurturing many successful opera singers. Marchesi was committed to teaching in the bel canto style. She believes in the natural way of singing and gives importance to vocal registrations.

Bel Canto: A Theoretical and Practical Vocal Method (Originally in French: Méthode de chant théorique et pratique, Op. 31) by Marchesi was published in 1887. Her book is still widely used today and it is especially popular amongst soprano voices.

The following exercises serve as examples. Portamento is a vocal technique that involves connecting one note to another through a smooth sliding motion of the voice, as shown in Figures 4–6.

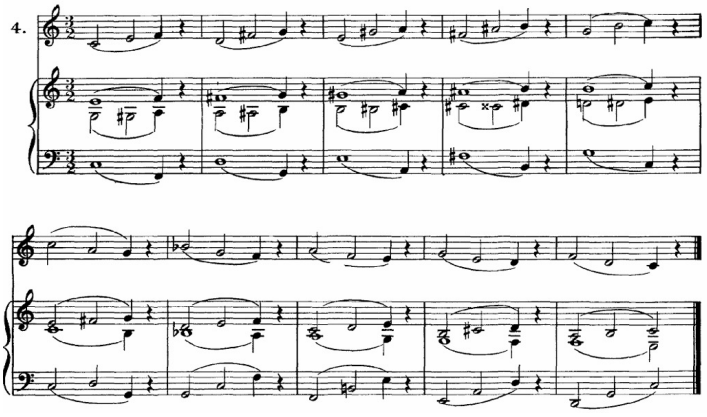

Figure 4. Exercise no. 4 focuses on practicing the “portamento”. Marchesi “Vocal method book Op. 31” Page 14.

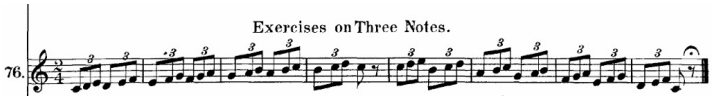

Figure 5. Exercise no. 76, focuses on three-note (triplet) vocalization. Page 34.

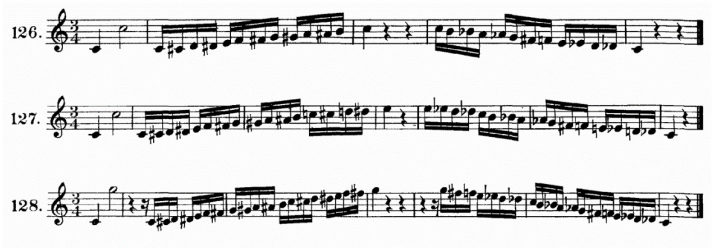

Figure 6. Exercises no. 126-128 focuses on chromatic scales. Page 40.

For singers who have just started practicing, these exercises should be sung for only 5 to 10 minutes at a time. It is encouraged that the singer take long breaks between exercises, and the student should practice only 3 to 4 times a day. The frequency and duration of practice can gradually increase, by 5 minutes to half an hour. It should never exceed half an hour. For full effectiveness, the singer should practice with a full voice, but without forcing or shouting. The duration and frequency could be extended once the pupil is more trained.

C. Applying the findings to selected repertoires

After analyzing the content of the bel canto method books, the content was then applied to these following bel canto arias:

a. Gaetano Donizetti: Prendi, per me sei libero from L'elisir d'amore (1832)

b. Gaetano Donizetti: Il dolce suono…spargi d'amaro pianto (Mad scene) from Lucia di Lammermoor (1835)

c. Vincenzo Bellini: Eccomi…O quante volte from I Capuleti e i Montecchi (1830)

d. Vincenzo Bellini: Ah non credea…Ah non giunge from La sonnambula (1831)

e. Vincenzo Bellini: Casta diva from Norma (1831)

f. Vincenzo Bellini: O rendetemi la speme…Vien, diletto from I puritani (1835)

In bel canto arias, vocal technique complexity is crucial. Each section of a song may require a specific vocal technique to be mastered. Singers should practice these techniques diligently to deliver a nuanced performance. Some prominent

bel canto vocal techniques include portamento, runs of ascending or descending scales (both diatonic and chromatic), messa di voce, sotto voce, trills, and turns.

Examples

The word “prendi” allows for the use of mezza di voce on the fermata in measure 7. The descending note after the fermata is performed with a tasteful

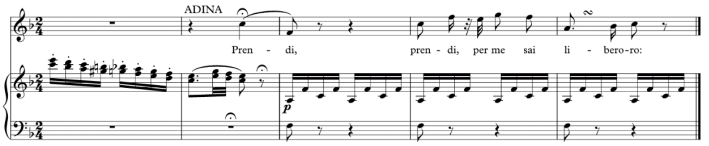

Figure 7. “Prendi per me sei libero” from L’elisir d’amore by Gaetano Donizetti, measure 6-10.

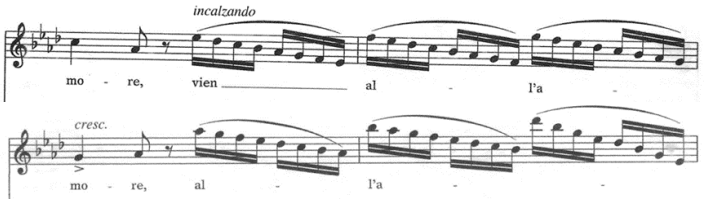

Figure 8. Descending runs from the aria “Vien diletto” from La sonnambula by Vincenzo Bellini, measure 65-68.

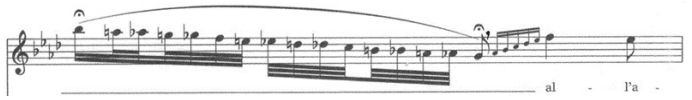

Figure 9. Descending chromatic run before ascending back up from the aria “Vien diletto”. Measure 71

portamento, followed by a turn in measure 10, as shown in Figures 7–9.

Sotto voce – literal Italian translation meaning “under voice”. To sing delicately and softly (Figure 10).

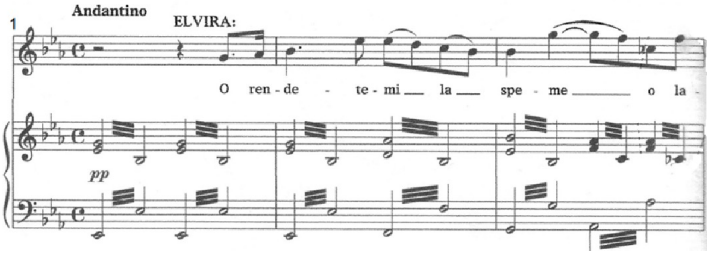

Figure 10. An opportunity for sotto voce on the word “speme” from “Vien diletto”. Measure 3

All the types of vocalization examples mentioned above are found in both Garcia's and Marchesi's method books. By aligning the exercises with the relevant sections of the aria we seek to improve upon, we can achieve effective point-to-point improvements. After diligently practicing and applying the techniques outlined in Garcia's and Marchesi's method books, singers should feel more adept at executing the various challenging aspects of these bel canto arias.

Video result from applying bel canto techniques in aria.

The researcher explored and applied bel canto singing techniques derived from the methodologies of Manuel Garcia Jr. and Mathilde Marchesi. This video presentation demonstrates my vocal development through a comparative analysis. The video features two recordings. The first, from February 2023, captures my initial performance of the cabaletta section from "O rendetemi la speme... Vien, diletto" in Vincenzo Bellini's I Puritani. The second clip, recorded for my final recital showcase in May 2024, serves as a practical demonstration of the progress achieved through the consistent application of bel canto principles over time.

This video focused on the cabaletta section of "O rendetemi la speme... Vien, diletto" from Vincenzo Bellini's I Puritani due to its technical complexity. The agility and vocal demands of this section presented a significant initial challenge. However, through consistent practice informed by bel canto principles and guidance from a qualified instructor, I demonstrated measurable progress in mastering this demanding repertoire.

The link to the video : https://youtu.be/DPkhhBsWJos?si=JZ15but6r_2NAOHv

Qr code to the video:

A video comparison showing the singer's progress on singing "Vien diletto"

D. Embellishments

Historically, bel canto singers embraced ornamentation as a display of virtuosity. Trills, mordents, turns, runs, and cadenzas were expected additions. However, the "come scritto" ("as written") style, employing minimal embellishment, has emerged as a contemporary performance practice. In the bel canto tradition, singers often added embellishments beyond what is written in the score. This study examines alternative approaches to this practice, with an example of an alternative version of the aria "Ah non giunge" by Vincenzo Bellini shown in Figures 1 1to 16.

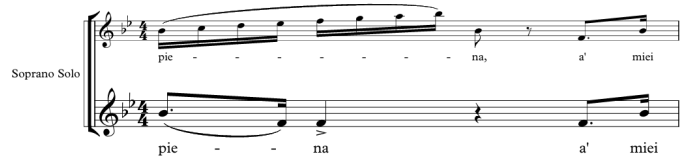

Figure 11: 11 (above) Alternative version from "Ah non giunge" by Vincenzo Bellinii. Measure 88. (below) original written version.

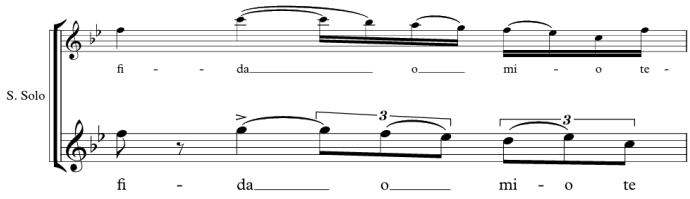

Figure 12: (above) Alternative version (below) original written version from "Ah non giunge" by Vincenzo Bellinii. From measure 91.

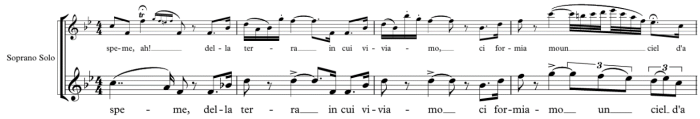

Figure 13: (above) Alternative version (below) original written version from "Ah non giunge" by Vincenzo Bellinii, from measure 96-99.

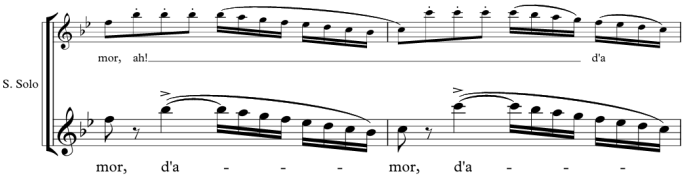

Figure 14: (above) Alternative version (below) original written version from "Ah non giunge" by Vincenzo Bellini, measure 104-105.

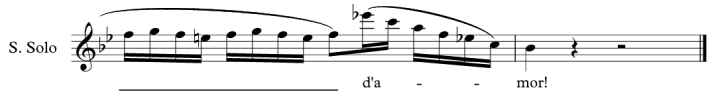

Figure 15: Original cadenza of "Ah non giunge" from measure 107-108.

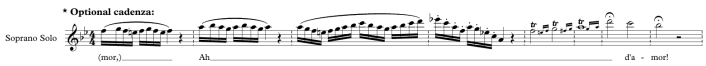

Figure 16: Optional ending cadenza.

E. Outcome Showcase

On May 12th, 2024, at 1:00 PM, the researcher presented a culminating performance in room C312 at the Princess Galayani Vadhana Institute of Music. The performance featured the researcher as the vocalist, accompanied by a pianist. The performance included a brief introduction outlining the research and a slideshow providing concise details about each aria.

The performance garnered positive audience feedback, particularly regarding the clarity and precision of the executed vocal techniques. This newfound confidence empowered the researcher to explore Musicality and creativity within the repertoire with greater ease, resulting in a significantly more enjoyable experience for both performer and audience.

Furthermore, the program selection proved successful. Audience members expressed familiarity with some pieces, while others sparked their interest, prompting them to explore and learn more about these operas and arias.

Conclusion

From all the researched knowledge: learning to sing the bel canto songs, researching and creating new embellishments for said songs, studying the bel canto method books, practicing and applying the techniques from the books to the songs, and finally, presenting to the public in a form of showcase. The researcher has gathered the following:

5.1 Appreciating the bel canto genre:

The foundational stage of this research involved a deep exploration of the bel canto genre. This entailed understanding its unique characteristics, the technical

demands placed on singers, and the enduring appeal of bel canto operas and music. Recognizing the delicate nature and technical virtuosity of bel canto singing fostered a profound appreciation for this genre. This newfound appreciation, in turn, broadened my perspective on classical singing as a whole. Furthermore, it sparked a deeper engagement with music in general, fostering an openness to inspiration from a wider range of Musical styles.

5.2 Encouraging the use of bel canto exercises in school:

Through a dedicated study of Garcia's and Marchesi's vocal treatises, the researcher identified these resources as potentially valuable tools for cultivating singing technique. These treatises offer a structured framework for singers to build consistent practice routines, promoting discipline and fostering a long-term commitment to vocal development. This structured approach may be particularly helpful for singers seeking to establish or refine their practice habits. Additionally, the treatises present a wealth of creative and diverse vocal exercises. The researcher's personal experience suggests that consistent practice of these exercises leads to increased confidence and a noticeable improvement in the ability to execute challenging vocal elements within a piece. These findings support the potential benefits of incorporating vocal method books more widely in both academic and private vocal instruction.

5.3 The variety of embellishments:

The research explored a diverse range of embellishments, encompassing both established and lesser-known examples. This exploration informed the creation of a performance that incorporated a curated selection of embellishments from various sources. Additionally, the researcher collaborated with music experts to develop new embellishments for specific moments within the chosen arias. This approach aimed to revitalize familiar repertoire by introducing fresh sonic elements and maintaining audience engagement.

This practice of incorporating novel embellishments into established works aligns with a call for greater artistic agency within the operatic tradition. It encourages singers to embrace a bolder approach, take calculated artistic risks, and prioritize creative expression. By engaging in a deeper exploration of the music, singers can develop a nuanced understanding that empowers them to exert greater creative

control over their interpretations. Furthermore, this practice offers a compelling solution to combat performance fatigue, allowing singers to revisit familiar repertoire with renewed artistic interest.

5.4 Promoting and contributing to the opera community:

The culminating public performance served as a catalyst for the researcher's deepening engagement with the bel canto genre and its rich traditions. This experience sparked a passion for further exploration of bel canto singing, paving the way for future research endeavors.

The showcase aimed not only to present the arias themselves but also to provide introductory information, fostering a broader appreciation for bel canto repertoire. This approach served as artistic advocacy, piquing audience interest in the genre. Indeed, several audience members expressed a desire to learn more about bel canto operas, underscoring the showcase's success in promoting public engagement with classical music. This positive outcome suggests the potential for similar initiatives to inspire students and music enthusiasts to become more actively involved in Thailand's classical music scene.

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EXPLORING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF AN ARTS-BASED LEARNING APPROACH TO ENHANCING ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract

Using a mixed-methods approach, this study explored the university students' perception of an arts-based learning approach to enhancing English language learning among first-year students in a Faculty of Arts at a state university in Sri Lanka. Data was collected through a survey questionnaire, six focused group interviews, and reflective essays. Findings revealed that arts-based learning approaches create a relaxed, low-pressure classroom atmosphere that enhances motivation, reduces anxiety, and encourages active participation. These methods also support the authentic use of language, promote imagination, and cater to diverse learning styles. Students perceive music and drama, the selected arts activities as enjoyable and memorable ways to engage with the language while building cultural empathy and a sense of community. By connecting theory with practice, this study highlights the potential of creative arts in ESL

education and calls for learner-centered, innovative teaching strategies. The findings offer valuable insights for educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers in developing more engaging and effective language learning environments.

Keywords: arts-based learning approach, English language skills, university students

Introduction

English language education has long held an important position in Sri Lanka, tracing back to colonial times. The British colonization in the 1830s marked the beginning of formal English language instruction on the island, primarily serving administrative and elite purposes (Liyanage, 2021). Since independence, English has been recognized as a second language and continues to function as a link language among the diverse linguistic communities in the country (Kandiah, 1984). However, despite its official status, English is often perceived and experienced as a foreign language by many Sri Lankan learners, especially those in rural or under-resourced areas.

As shown by the researchers the general education reform of 1997 has provided a new momentum for teaching English in primary schools through the Primary English Language Program which was established under a set of guidelines that supported student-centered learning. It also shows that from grade one to three, the students were introduced to activity – based English (Little et al., 2018). From grade three onwards, English is taught by trained English teachers or English graduates, and the subject remains compulsory up to grade eleven. It is assessed at the General Certificate of Education (G.C.E.) Ordinary Level Examination. Notably, only reading and writing skills are tested at this level, while listening and speaking components are excluded due to infrastructural and logistical constraints (Little et al., 2018).

Following the O/L examination, students who enroll in Advanced Level (A/L) classes study General English, which aims to improve their functional language skills. However, many students due to various reasons, such as lack of motivation, lack of facilities etc. tend to deprioritize it during their A/L period (Abdul Halik & Umashankar, 2022). As a result, a significant gap in English language exposure occurs

during these two years, often leaving students underprepared for English-medium instruction at the tertiary level.

In Sri Lankan universities, different programs are conducted to enhance the English language skills of the students pursuing different disciplines. The Departments of English Language Teaching (DELT) of state universities in Sri Lanka are entrusted with this responsibility. Although students pursuing STEM subjects in science, technology, engineering and medical faculties and students in the management faculties complete their degrees in the English medium and secure employments, students of the arts, humanities and social sciences faculties mostly follow their degrees in the local languages, Sinhala and Tamil and consequently find it difficult to secure suitable employments (Gunaratne, Ramanayake & Panagoda, 2018). Wickramarachchi (2008 as cited in Ariyawansa, 2008) too claims that by now, most of the degree programs in management streams have widely been modified and the mode of delivery of lectures including conversion of the medium of instruction into English has shown a progress of employability. However, Ariyawansa (2008) and Chandrakumara (2015) argue that graduates who pass out from Sri Lankan state universities, in particular arts and humanities and social sciences faculties, do not have required professional skills such as communication, negotiation, interpersonal, teamwork, analytical and intellectual skills. In response to these empirical findings, some humanities and social sciences faculties of the Sri Lankan university system have introduced bilingual instruction in arts and humanities and social sciences faculties where students can choose either English/ Sinhala or Tamil medium instruction.

Literature review

Garner and Alexander (1989) argued that students cannot be evaluated or taught on the basis of assumptions that they all have a similar level of intelligence. Instead, they divided the levels of intelligence into eight categories and identified them as "Multiple Intelligences" (Garner & Alexander, 1989). Therefore, different pedagogical approaches are needed to enhance the English language skills of the students. Incorporating creative arts in language education has become popular as an effective approach for improving language acquisition. Traditional language

learning approaches frequently place an emphasis on memorization, grammatical accuracy, and repetitive practice; but these approaches may not be engaging enough to foster true language mastery. In contrast, arts-based approaches like visual arts, music, and drama offer an immersive, interactive experience that stimulates students' emotions, passions, and imagination. Through the use of language in relevant, everyday situations, this method promotes students to become more engaged and active participants. Recent studies suggest that arts-based learning can deepen students' connection to the material, make abstract language concepts more tangible, and contribute to greater retention and motivation (Maley & Duff, 2005). As such, integrating the arts is increasingly recognized as an effective complement to traditional teaching methods, especially in fostering communicative competence and cultural understanding.

The use of arts in language education is supported by a number of theoretical frameworks that highlight the variety of ways in which students learn. Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory (1983) posits that people have different types of intelligence, which include Musical, spatial, and kinesthetic intelligences. This theory promotes teaching strategies that cater to different intelligences, making visual arts, music, and drama one of the options for diverse learners. Similarly, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) emphasizes authentic communication as the main objective of language learning, encouraging teachers to create real-life scenarios in the classroom, which is frequently accomplished successfully through the art of role-playing and drama (Canale & Swain, 1980). Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (1984), which holds that experience and reflection are the best ways for students to learn, is another relevant theory. Students can experience language use in real-world contexts through creative arts, which fosters deeper understanding and improves language memory. These ideas offer a solid basis for integrating the arts into language instruction, arguing that they support a deeper connection with the subject matter and accommodate various learning preferences.

Music and language learning

The use of music and songs in the language classroom is one of the popular approaches that can be used to develop English language skills. There is empirical evidence that incorporation of songs in the English language classroom is beneficial.

For instance, Wahyuni and Hardiyanti (2020) point out that the use of English songs in the ESL classroom has a positive impact on the development of vocabulary. According to Saricoban and Metin (2000), songs can enhance all four language skills namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Integrating music, especially songs, can help learners learn the target language naturally and enthusiastically if they enjoy what they do in the classroom. Therefore, incorporating songs in the process of ESL teaching can help teachers improve the language learning and acquisition of their students. Songs are a particularly good way to teach fluency and pronunciation in language classes as rhythmic and melodic elements of music, as argued by Jalongo and Bromley (1984), help learners improve pronunciation, fluency and vocabulary retention while making learning fun and memorable. Jalongo and Bromley (1984) point out that by enabling students to imitate genuine speech rhythms and intonations, which can be difficult in conventional spoken practice, phonetic and rhythmic alignment within songs promotes accurate pronunciation. Thus, music can help children learn the target language by exposing them to the target language sounds and patterns in a structured and repetitive manner. Songs provide a "Musical memory" for the students, making it easier for them to retain language structures. According to Murphy (1992), students can practice the target language without pressure by singing familiar songs, which reduces the cognitive load that comes with language acquisition (Murphey, 1992). Shen (2009) too shares a similar view and claims that songs are effective tools in teaching language. He defines the lyrics of the songs as authentic teaching materials for EFL learners. Since the songs are meant to be used in real life to convey feelings or messages rather than for educational objectives, the language used in them is authentic. It enables learners to learn language more effectively. Moreover, it provides the learners with a window into the culture of the target language. Students can learn language structures and acquire knowledge of the history, beliefs, and daily lives of native speakers by listening to culturally relevant music. According to Baker (2011), exposure to cultural context is essential for developing intercultural competence, which is important in language education. Moreover, music can create a relaxed, stress-free learning environment, which is conducive to language acquisition. According to Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, lower anxiety levels correlate

with greater language acquisition as students are more likely to absorb language when they feel comfortable and engaged (Krashen, 1982). Music naturally relaxes students, allowing them to immerse themselves in the language without the performance pressure. Thus, music can be used as a source of motivation in the language classroom if the teachers can use it more appropriately and effectively (Medina, 1993).

Apart from the abovementioned benefits on the individual, music fosters a sense of community and collaboration in the classroom. Students form bonds through shared activities when they sing or compose music together, which increases their motivation and willingness to engage in language tasks. This collaborative nature of music-based learning fosters a positive learning environment in the classroom where students can practice their language skills without worrying about being judged (Lake, 2013). So, by using singing activities, teachers can improve students' willingness to communicate and foster a positive language-learning community.

Finally, music in a language classroom has several benefits. It offers learners a fun and emotionally stimulating method of language education, enhances retention through repetition, and fosters a relaxed environment that promotes language use. Furthermore, the ethnic diversity of music exposes pupils to real language in context, which promotes cooperation and understanding across cultural boundaries. Integration of auditory, emotional, and cognitive components through music and songs can offer a comprehensive and successful method of language learning that tends to complement learners' innate learning styles.

Drama as a tool for language learning

The use of drama as a teaching and learning tool in English language classrooms is yet another popular approach. There is empirical evidence that introducing drama activities in language classrooms positively supports language acquisition. For instance, Alasmari and Alshae'el (2020) investigated the effects of teaching English language through drama and found that the use of drama develops participants' language skills, especially the communicative ones such as interactions and conversations. Also, the study showed that the use of drama in the English classroom yields higher proficiency levels as it motivates them

to become more engaged in the learning process (Alasmari & Alshae'el, 2020). McCaslin (2006) too revealed that creative drama enhances the participants' confidence level and communication skills. Similarly, Zakhareuski (2018) highlighted the importance of incorporating drama in English language classrooms and argued that acting not only promotes learners' self-confidence and self-esteem but also lowers speaking anxiety. When learners are less anxious, their affective filter will be low, and consequently, they learn better (Krashen, 1982). Drama also offers students an engaging way to practice language skills in a social, collaborative setting. Through the use of communicative scenarios, drama allows students to practice English in a more social and supportive environment. Students can go beyond rote memorization and internalize language in meaningful ways by participating in drama activities, which frequently require them to take on specific roles and practice language in realistic circumstances. According to Maley and Duff (2005), dramas integrate language skills in a natural way. The integration of reading, listening, and speaking occurs as students engage with the text, listen to others, and perform their roles, resulting in a natural and effective language learning experience. During this process, as argued by Fuentes (2010), students actively engage in performing the drama, resulting in a learner-centered approach to education. Research has shown that drama helps learners develop language skills by encouraging authentic use of language because it involves using the language in a specific context. This promotes meaningful language learning as students can understand the relationship between the language form and its function (Phillips, 2003).

Kao and O'Neill (1998) argued that drama encourages impromptu communication in language classes, requiring students to make immediate choices, think quickly, and modify their language in reaction to their classmates. Researchers have shown that the interactive nature of drama creates a supportive learning environment where students feel comfortable taking risks. Dramatic exercises help learners communicate more freely by lowering the perceived pressure of language production, which gradually improves accuracy and fluency (Sam, 1990). By utilizing body language and facial expressions, pausing and interrupting, and displaying emotions in their interpretations of the play, dramas enable students to acquire the language in a natural way. It helps learners increase confidence. Moreover, it

can be helpful for shy or introverted students to participate more actively because drama allows learners to adopt alternative personas, which helps them distance themselves from possible embarrassment or fear of criticism (Even, 2008).

Hoetker (1969) has shown that the inclusion of drama activities in the classroom can support the learning of literature and communication skills and can be useful for visual or kinesthetic learners to learn language material better. Hoetker (1969) further argues that dramatic activities can help students develop their international communicative skills, stimulate their imagination, and enable contextually situated interaction in foreign language classrooms.

Studies on the effectiveness of drama in language learning show quantifiable improvements in both verbal and nonverbal communication skills. For instance, a study by Miccoli (2003) on Brazilian ESL students, discovered that drama-based training greatly enhanced students' communicative abilities as they grew more comfortable with active listening and language improvisation. Moreover, these drama activities help the students to internalize vocabulary, syntax and even grammar unintentionally through their own mistakes and experiences (Fuentes, 2010).

Beyond the linguistic skills, drama contributes to cultural understanding and empathy as it often involves stories and characters from diverse cultural backgrounds. According to Stinson and Freebody (2006), dramas enable students to investigate diverse perspectives on culture, improving their comprehension and admiration of various beliefs, traditions, and social norms. Additionally, drama fits in well with constructivist teaching methods, in which students actively and cooperatively create meaning. Drama offers a scaffolded framework for language practice in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which was proposed by Vygotsky in 1978. The ZPD holds that learners benefit the most from tasks that are just a little bit above their current skill level (Vygotsky, 1978). As students collaborate, negotiate, and co-create dialogues, they push each other's language competencies, promoting mutual learning and self-discovery (Liu & Ding, 2009).

In conclusion, drama promotes a whole language learning process that surpasses conventional language teaching approaches. It lowers anxiety, promotes the use of real language, and creates a cooperative setting where students can study cultural narratives and develop empathy. Drama offers a dynamic, hands-

on approach to language learning that addresses linguistic and intercultural competencies through role-play, improvisation, and embodiment. However, embarrassment, lack of confidence, shyness and the chaos created by drama practice are identified as challenges to incorporate drama in the language classroom (Alasmari & Alshae'el, 2020). All in all, despite some challenges, advantages gained from drama activities still outweigh the disadvantages.

Research gap

Although there is empirical evidence to support the view that the use of songs and drama helps learners enhance English language skills (ELS), limited studies have been conducted to examine the learners' views regarding the incorporation of both English songs and dramas together in the ELS programs. On one hand, studies have been conducted to investigate the effects of songs on language learning. On the other hand, studies have been conducted to examine the effects, benefits and perception of the use of drama in language learning. However, limited number of studies have been conducted to investigate the learner perception regarding the incorporation of both target language songs and drama activities together in the language classroom. The present study below, therefore, sets out to fill this gap by systematically investigating the learners' views regarding the incorporation of English songs and dramas in an ELS program offered to the students of a humanities and social sciences faculty of a state university in Sri Lanka.

Methods and Material

Research Design

This study adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and Qualitative research methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions of the first-year undergraduates in the Faculty of Arts in a state university in Sri Lanka regarding the use of music and drama in the English language education. In order to gather rich and diverse data the study employed multiple data collection methods, including questionnaires, focused-group interviews and reflective essays. These methods were chosen to capture not only measurable trends but also personal experiences, insights, and suggestions from the students.

By triangulating these sources, the research aimed to develop a nuanced and in-depth perspective on how creative art-based approaches influence language learning, student engagement and classroom dynamics.

Research Questions and Objectives

Research Questions

1. How do university students perceive the effectiveness of English songs and dramas in their English language proficiency?

2. Which forms of creative arts (dramas, songs) do students find most useful to develop specific language skills (e.g. speaking, listening, reading, writing)?

3. How do English songs and dramas influence students' motivation and engagement in English language learning?

Objectives

1. To explore university students' perceptions of the integration of English songs and dramas in English language learning.

2. To identify which creative art techniques (dramas and songs) do students consider most useful to develop specific English language skills.

3. To examine how English songs and dramas motivate students to learn English.

Participants

A total of two hundred and thirteen (N = 213) first-year undergraduate students participated in this study. The participants were selected from a larger group of over 1,200 students who are currently enrolled in the compulsory General English program at a state university in Sri Lanka. The selected group included both male and female students. Their ages ranged from 19 to 23 years. All participants had completed secondary education in Sri Lanka and had passed the G.C.E. Advanced Level examination, qualifying them for university admission.

These students are required to attend a structured English course conducted by the Department of English Language Teaching (DELT) in that university. Classes are held every weekday from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. for two consecutive semesters, totaling approximately 300 hours of instruction. The full cohort has been divided into twenty-one parallel classes, each comprising 55 to 60 students. Each class is co-

facilitated by two English instructors, ensuring consistent exposure to communicative and grammar-focused instruction.

The curriculum is designed to strengthen core language skills, including grammar, reading, writing, and speaking. In addition to daily instruction, a key component of the course is the weekly co-curricular event held on Wednesdays. On this day, three selected classes take turns performing on stage through English-language items such as songs, role-plays, and short dramas, written by themselves with the help of their class teachers. The succeeding paragraphs below present a concise description of the implemented co-curricular event.

Using drama in language learning helps students develop communication skills by encouraging natural speech through role-plays and dialogues. It enhances vocabulary and grammar as learners engage with authentic scripts and improvisations while also fostering creativity, emotional engagement, and self-confidence. Drama promotes teamwork, empathy, and critical thinking as students collaborate, interpret roles, and explore cultural and social perspectives.

Similarly, songs make language learning enjoyable and memorable by improving listening, pronunciation, and vocabulary retention through rhythm and repetition. Music increases learners' motivation, supports grammar learning through lyrical patterns, and provides cultural exposure. Overall, both drama and songs create active, learner-centered classrooms that integrate multiple language skills and nurture linguistic competence alongside creativity and emotional intelligence. Hence, the performances by students aim to build students' confidence, enhance their speaking and listening skills, and promote active participation. Importantly, every student in the performing classes is required to participate in some aspect of the performance, ensuring inclusivity and engagement.

The remaining eighteen classes constitute the audience, providing peer feedback and exposure to spoken English in varied and creative forms. To further enrich the learning experience, a guest speaker, typically a well-known public figure such as a motivational speaker, television presenter, or actor, is invited each week to deliver an inspirational talk in English. This component of the program is intended to expose students to real-world uses of English and to foster positive attitudes toward English language learning.

The students selected for the study were distributed across multiple classes and had been exposed to both the academic and co-curricular components of the program for at least one semester at the time of data collection. Their consistent exposure to interactive English learning activities, both inside and outside the classroom, made them an ideal group for examining the effects of co-curricular interventions such as songs and dramas on language development and learner motivation.

Data collection methods.

Reflective essays.

One day after a performance, a convenience sample of one class was selected, and they were asked to reflect and share their views regarding the advantages and disadvantages of the DELT assembly. Thirty-five students shared their views regarding the advantages and disadvantages of the assembly. Among the four items, students' speeches, English songs, dramas and the talk of the guest, the learners' perceptions regarding English songs and dramas were explored in this study because English songs and dramas are entertaining items, and students generally perform them in groups. Hence, it was assumed that learners may hold positive views regarding the songs and dramas compared to students' speeches and the speech of the guest, which belong to a different non-entertainment genre. Therefore, after the students shared their views regarding the advantages and disadvantages of the assembly in general, the reflective essays were qualitatively analyzed using thematic content analysis in order to find Themes and categories related to English songs and dramas.

Focused group interviews.

To gain a deeper understanding of students' perceptions regarding the use of English songs and dramas in the assembly, six focus group interviews were conducted with the same group of learners. Each focus group comprised five to six students, allowing for meaningful, small-group discussions where participants could comfortably express their views and build on one another's ideas. These sessions were conducted in a relaxed and supportive environment, encouraging students to share their honest thoughts and experiences.

The interviews followed a semi-structured format, guided by open-ended questions designed to prompt critical reflection and encourage elaboration. Sample guiding questions included: "Which specific activities do you find more effective?", "How do you feel these activities impact your English language learning?", and "What specific skills do you think you have improved through these performances?" These questions aimed to explore students' cognitive, affective, and behavioral engagement with the activities.

All interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' consent to ensure accuracy during transcription and analysis. This process allowed the researcher to capture not only the verbal content of the discussions but also non-verbal elements such as tone, emphasis, pauses, and expressions of enthusiasm or hesitation, which enriched the subsequent thematic content analysis.

Survey.

In order to further investigate and validate the emerging Themes identified through the reflective essays and focus group interviews, a Google Form questionnaire was developed and distributed among the students. The design of the questionnaire was informed by both the thematic findings from the qualitative data and relevant literature on the use of arts-based activities in language learning. The purpose of the questionnaire was to gather a broader range of student opinions regarding the effectiveness and impact of the assembly activities, with a particular focus on English songs and dramas.

The questionnaire included a total of eleven closed-ended questions designed to measure students' engagement, perceived benefits, and preferences. These questions employed a Likert-scale format to assess the degree of agreement or disagreement with various statements. In addition, one demographic question regarding gender was included to explore any potential gender-based patterns in student responses. To complement the quantitative data, an open-ended question was also provided at the end of the form, allowing students to share any additional thoughts or experiences in their own words.

A total of 178 students completed the questionnaire. Figure 1 presents the gender distribution of the respondents, offering insight into the composition of the sample and supporting further analysis based on gender perspectives.

Data analysis

The data collected through the closed-ended questions of the questionnaire were analyzed using quantitative methods to produce descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, and averages. This analysis helped identify overall trends in students' responses and provided measurable insights into their perceptions of the English assembly activities, particularly songs and dramas. The statistical data offered a clear overview of students' preferences, levels of engagement, and perceived benefits from participating in these creative components of the program. In parallel, the qualitative data, including the open-ended responses from the questionnaire, reflective essays written by the students, and transcripts from the focus group interviews, were subjected to thematic analysis. This involved coding the responses, identifying patterns, and organizing the data into Themes and sub-Themes that reflected recurring ideas and unique viewpoints. Through this process, a deeper understanding of students' attitudes, emotional responses, and experiences with the assembly activities emerged.

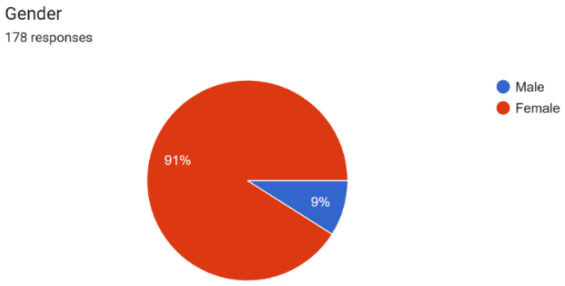

Figure 1. Gender Distribution of the Respondents

By integrating both the quantitative and qualitative findings, the study was able to present a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of learners' perspectives. This mixed-methods approach enhanced the reliability and richness of the findings, addressing the research objectives from multiple angles.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical approval for this research was formally obtained from the Ethics Review Board of the university prior to the commencement of the study. All participants

were clearly informed about the purpose, objectives, and procedures of the research, both verbally and in writing. They were assured that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw at any stage without any negative consequences. To uphold ethical standards, participant anonymity was guaranteed by assigning codes instead of names, and all data were kept confidential and securely stored. The ethical procedures ensured that the dignity, rights, and welfare of the students were fully respected throughout the research process.

Limitations

While the study provides valuable insights into students' perceptions of using English songs and dramas in language learning, several limitations must be acknowledged. The data relied heavily on self-reported responses through reflective writing, interviews, and questionnaires, which may be subject to biases such as exaggeration, social desirability, or selective memory. Furthermore, the research was conducted within a single faculty at one state university, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other educational settings or student populations. Future studies could consider broader sampling across faculties or institutions and incorporate additional data sources such as classroom observations or teacher feedback.

Results and Discussion

The data were analyzed using mixed methods, using responses from the survey questionnaire, focus group discussions, and reflective essays. The analysis revealed strong evidence that integrating creative arts, particularly music and drama, positively influenced students' English language development, confidence, motivation, and cultural awareness.

The initial survey questions explored whether the DELT assembly, an event providing students with opportunities to perform songs and dramas in English, was perceived as useful or a waste of time. The majority of students (approximately 88%) disagreed with the statement that the DELT assembly was a waste of time, while about 74% disagreed with the suggestion that the time allocated for the assembly should instead be used for traditional classroom teaching. These results

clearly show that students valued the DELT assembly as an educationally useful activity.

In addition, 96.6% of participants stated that the DELT assembly should continue in the future, further emphasizing its perceived value as an interesting and effective platform for learning English.

These results support the study's main goal and show how effective pedagogical tools the creative arts can be in promoting active learning and skill development in ESL classrooms.

Enhancing Language Skills

Both qualitative and quantitative results showed that DELT assembly played a significant role in enhancing core language skills of students, especially in speaking and listening. Approximately 61% of students reported that participating in performances enhanced their speaking skills, while 52% indicated improvement in listening. Comparatively fewer students felt that the assembly improved writing (13%), reading (29%), grammar (23%), or vocabulary (28%), indicating that the most substantial benefits were achieved through oral-aural engagement.

Qualitative evidence further supports this finding. Many participants stated

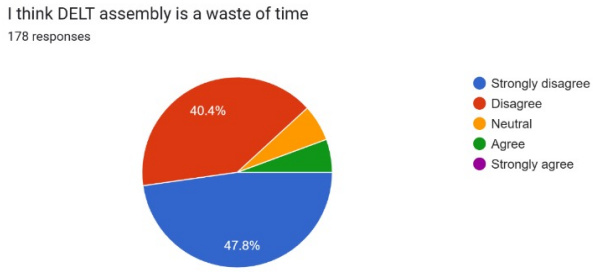

Figure 2. Learner views regarding the usefulness of the DELT assembly

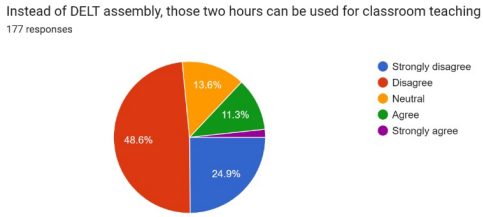

Figure 3. Time allocated for the DELT assembly could be used for classroom teaching.

that these activities helped them "improv[e] English Language skills, especially speaking". Moreover, many of the participants pointed out that frequent exposure to new vocabulary and sentence structures through songs and dramas helped them

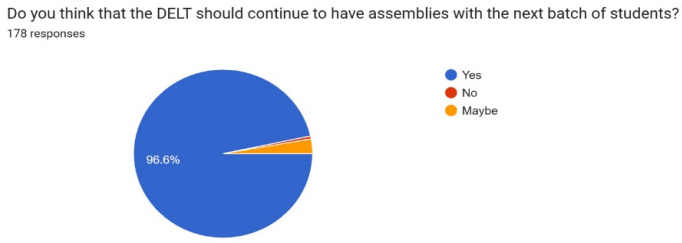

Figure 4. Time allocated for the DELT assembly could be used for classroom teaching.

internalize grammar and word usage more naturally. These results align with studies by Saricoban and Metin (2000) and Lestari and Hardiyanti (2020), who found that songs and drama enhance all four language skills, particularly vocabulary and oral fluency. Similarly, Fuentes (2010) emphasized that experiential and performance-based learning fosters deeper language retention through self-correction and contextual application.

Building Confidence and Reducing Anxiety

One of the major Themes emerged from the data was the enhancement of students' self-confidence and reduction of language anxiety. Over 90% of students stated that the DELT assembly helped them overcome their fear of using English, while 92% reported developing a more positive attitude towards the language.

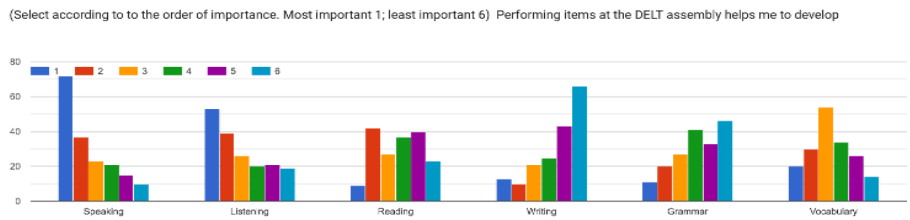

Figure 5. Skills development through performance.

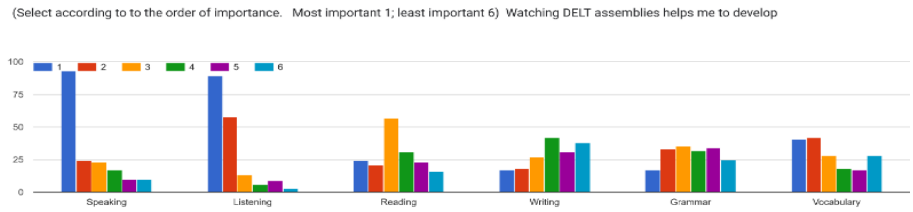

Figure 6. Skills development through watching the assembly.

Many students reflected that performing in front of their peers allowed them to practice English in a low-pressure and an enjoyable environment. Singing and drama created safe spaces for expression, helping learners gradually overcome their fear of mistakes. These findings align with Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, which asserts that reduced anxiety facilitates more effective language acquisition. Supporting this view, Chuang (2011) found that creative arts help learners engage in linguistic experimentation in psychologically safe environments. One participant expressed, "Performing songs and dramas in English made me more confident to speak in public without fear." Thus, the DELT assembly successfully fostered emotional comfort and linguistic risk-taking, two key elements for fluency development.

Making Learning Memorable and Enjoyable

This study also revealed that the integration of creative arts helped make the language learning process more memorable and enjoyable. Nearly 93% of students agreed that the DELT assembly helped them learn English "in a fun way."

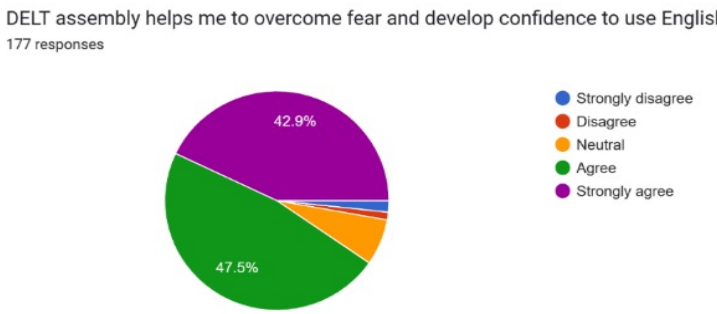

Figure 7. DELT assembly helps to overcome fear and develop confidence to use English.

Students frequently described the learning experience as fun, enjoyable, and highly engaging. Unlike conventional language learning tasks, activities involving songs and drama were perceived as more exciting and interactive. This enjoyment led to increased motivation and active participation. This aligns with Maley and Duff's (2005) argument that drama transforms classrooms into interactive learning spaces that promote deep cognitive processing. Similarly, Gardner (1983) noted that multisensory activities strengthen memory and motivation, especially among second language learners. The findings suggest that when students enjoy the process, their language learning becomes more meaningful and sustainable.

Fostering Collaboration and a Sense of Community

Another key finding is the role of creative arts in fostering collaboration and the sense of community among the students. Over 94% of participants agreed that participating in the DELT assembly helped them develop collaboration and creativity.

Students highlighted how they learned from each other and supported one

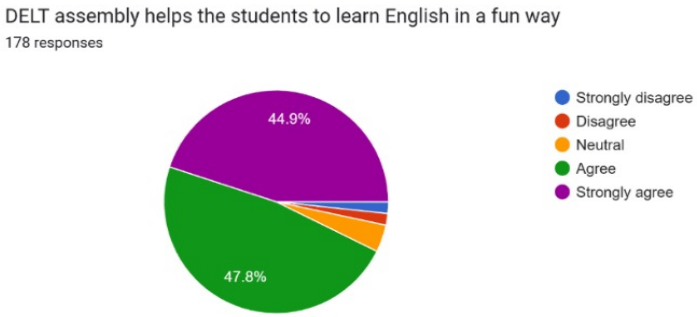

Figure 8. DELT assembly helps the participants to learn English in a fun way

another throughout the preparation and performance process. This collaborative dynamic not only improved their language skills but also strengthened classroom rapport and created a sense of belonging within the learning community. One student commented, "We helped each other and became closer friends through rehearsals and performances." Such experiences reflect Johnson and Johnson's

(1989) social interdependence theory, which highlights the benefits of cooperative learning environments. Drama and group singing naturally require coordination, negotiation, and shared responsibility, fostering a strong sense of community. These findings echo Winston (2004), who emphasized that drama enhances empathy, teamwork, and communication, skills essential for effective language learning.

Encouraging Cultural Understanding and Empathy

Students also have noted that performing culturally significant plays and songs helped them understand the social and cultural dimensions of the English – speaking communities. Through the exposure to diverse cultural contexts, learners

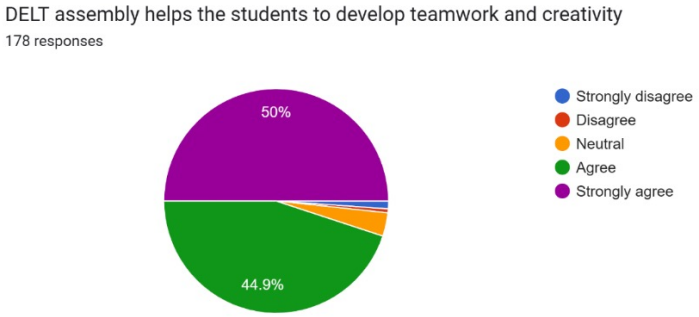

Figure 9. Potential of the DELT assembly to develop teamwork and creativity skills

gained a deeper understanding of the values, customs, and communication patterns related to the target language. These experiences align with Byram's (1997) model of intercultural communicative competence, which emphasizes the link between cultural awareness and effective communication. Similarly, Schewe (1998) argues that drama serves as a bridge between linguistic competence and intercultural empathy. Reflections of the participants showed that engaging with cultural Themes made their learning experiences emotionally rich and intellectually meaningful, which also helped their linguistic development.

Addressing Diverse Learning Style

This study also showed that art-based activities accommodated different learning styles. Visual learners responded well to the performance elements, auditory learners benefited from music and listening tasks, and kinesthetic learners

engaged actively through movement and acting. Participants emphasized that these methods allowed them to "visualize and feel the language" rather than merely memorize it. This reflects Fleming's (2001) notion of arts-based learning as an inclusive pedagogical approach that supports multiple intelligences. Additionally, as suggested by Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory, the autonomy and creativity embedded in such activities enhanced students' intrinsic motivation. The learner-centered, participatory nature of the DELT assembly thus encouraged all students to engage with the language in ways best suited to their individual learning styles.

Authentic Language Use and Real-World Relevance

Finally, the findings highlighted that creative art promotes authentic language use in real-life contexts. Students perceived that performing self-written dramas and composing or adapting songs gave them opportunities to practice spontaneous and meaningful communication in English. Unlike traditional scripted plays, the dramas used in this activity were collaboratively written by the students themselves, with guidance from their teachers. This creative process required them to generate original dialogues, negotiate meaning, and express emotions through language, which closely mirrors real-life communication.

These findings are consistent with Sam (1990), who observed that creative performance tasks encourage practical communication beyond textbook exercises. Moreover, this approach aligns with the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) framework, which prioritizes functional and interactive use of language over rote memorization. Through realistic and emotionally engaging scenarios, the DELT assembly helped students develop linguistic fluency and communicative competence applicable to everyday contexts.

Conclusion

The results of this study highlight the transformative power of including music and drama in English language instruction for the first-year Sri Lankan university students. This incorporation enhances not only the linguistic growth but also the

self-confidence, teamwork, creativity and cultural awareness of the students. The DELT assemblies were perceived by the majority of participants as a purposeful and entertaining language-learning platform that allowed them to use English in real-world, interactive situations. These exercises helped them with their overall language learning process through promoted impromptu dialogue, enhanced pronunciation, and strengthened vocabulary retention.

The study also shows the broader social benefits of arts-based English instruction in addition to linguistic developments. Through performance and collaboration, students developed interpersonal skills, empathy, and a sense of community within their learning environment, which supports the development of balanced individuals.

However, the results presented other aspects such as concerns about stage fright, unequal participation, and time-consuming rehearsals, suggesting the need for more inclusive, flexible implementation strategies. These perspectives underline the importance of balancing creativity with practicality to ensure that all learners benefit.

Overall, this research emphasizes that the integration of creative arts in English language education can significantly enhance both linguistic and personal growth. Future research should look into long-term effects on students' confidence and communication abilities as well as applicable models of this method in various educational contexts.

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Rey Sunglao is a PhD in Music Education student at Frost School of Music, University of Miami. He holds a double Master of Music in Music Education and Double Bass Performance and Literature from the Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester, where he received the Eastman Inclusive Excellence Award and was inducted into Pi Kappa Lambda. Rey earned a Bachelor of Music in Music Education with Double Bass Principal from St. Scholastica's College, Manila, Philippines, holding the very first double bass graduate and very first male valedictorian. He is also an alumnus of The Outstanding Students of the Philippines

Panicha Ponprasit *et al.*

The research team is based at the Faculty of Psychology, Chulalongkorn University, and brings together psychological scholarship with engagement in music education, practice, and performance. The study is situated at the intersection of psychological experience, musical activity, and identity formation.

Dr.Panicha Ponprasit, a Postdoctoral Researcher with a background in music education, works across qualitative and mixed-methods approaches to examine psychological experiences, musical engagement, and meaning-making processes. Dr.Juthatip Wiwattanapantuwong, an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Psychology, Chulalongkorn University, contributes expertise in identity development and psychological research methodology.

The project also involves Napatsawan Ruamsap and Sirathee Maiwong, then undergraduate students in the Bachelor of Science program, who participated in data collection and analysis as part of their research training. Collectively, the team examines musical identity as a psychological process formed through individual experience, musical practice, and social interaction, with attention to how young adult musicians perceive and construct their sense of self.

Andrew Jaye Q. Ocampo

Prof. Andrew Jaye Q. Ocampo holds a Bachelor's degree in Secondary Education major in Music from the Philippine Normal University. He further pursued a Master of Music degree with a major in Music Education and a minor in Bandurria from the University of the Philippines Diliman, College of Music.

During his college years, he participated in the prestigious 2nd International Rondalla Festival, which showcases the finest rondalla groups from around the world.

His research on rondalla methodology earned him the National Commission for Culture and the Arts' MA Thesis Award and the UP Diliman Creative/Critical Thesis grant. He also presented his research at the International Forum for the Saliksik Musika II held at the University of the Philippines, Visayas.

As an executive council member of the NCCA National Committee on Music, he serves as a resource speaker and facilitator for various rondalla workshops across the Philippines. Currently, he is a music professor at Philippine Normal University and the conductor of the PNU Rondalla.

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Kylie Tan is a Malaysian violinist and emerging music scholar whose performance career informs her academic research. She has performed widely across Asia and Europe, including appearances at the St. Thomas Church in Leipzig during the 2024 Bachfest Malaysia tour. Currently pursuing a PhD in Music Performance at UCSI University, Tan holds a Masters in Music Performance Studies and a Bachelors with First Class Honours in Music Performance. Her research interests intersect with performance practice in the area of solo and chamber music. She has studied with renowned pedagogues and participated in masterclasses with international violinists, such as Miclen LaiPang, Ida Bieler, Andrzej Grabiec, Evgeny Zvonikkov, Jeremy Cohen, Chinn-Horng Chen, Lynn Kuo. Her long-time mentors throughout her music journey in Malaysia includes Goh Chia-Chien, Andrew Filmer, Joanne Yeoh, and Winnie Cheah. Alongside her academic pursuits, Tan actively performs as a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral player locally and internationally.

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Rashmi Senevirathne is a dedicated academic and emerging researcher with a strong interest in the fields of education and language studies. She has contributed to various teaching and learning initiatives, focusing on improving student engagement and developing innovative approaches to enhance language proficiency. Her work reflects a commitment to promoting learner-centered practices, cultural understanding, and inclusive education. Beyond academics, Rashmi is passionate about empowering students to develop both their academic and personal skills, preparing them to succeed in diverse social and professional contexts.

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