Story, Song, Voice: Investigating the musical creativities of Australian singer-songwriters

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Table of Contents

Abstract

As artists, singer-songwriters are critically revered for their reflective and introspective craft. They are described and understood as conduits of personal and artistic expressivity, for reflecting the times, for activism and social change, and for self-development. The essence, tradition and duality of their work is identified in the literature as being both musically and ideologically based. While such literature on these segmented creative processes exist, there are limited evidence-based understandings on the singer-songwriter as an artistic entity. The definitions and descriptions of singer-songwriters often focus on the resultant artefacts or the associated style and creator persona. Such accounts often neglect to consider the specific influences that occupy creative practice, and more specifically, the inherent meaningful connections found within the creative processes that bind the individual, the singing voice and the original song. To address this, the following study offers evidence-based understandings on singer-songwriter artistry and creative practice. Through implementing a mixed methods approach, this research adopts qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Of the 115 research participants, 20 engaged in in-depth interviews and 95 completed an online survey. The data included narratives from emerging and established Australian singer-songwriters, and provided broad perspectives on diverse and highly individual, creative practices. The emergent themes signify singer-songwriters as complex and pluralistic artists distinguished by their inherent consolidation of several artforms and behavioural processes. These include singing, songwriting, performance, entrepreneurship, community and social focus, and singing/songwriting as a strategy for wellbeing. This research contributes to the understanding of the contemporary singer-songwriter, the attributes of songwriting through singer-songwriter perspectives, of the singing voice as a creative and performative construct, and of singer-songwriter musical creativities. Lastly, the research findings are used to progressively develop a creative practice framework that situates the contemporary singer-songwriter.

Ethical clearance

This research has obtained ethical clearance by the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee. The ethics approval number for this research is 5201500854. See Appendix T: Ethics clearance.

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Appendices

Abbreviations

ACTCOSS	ACT Council of Social Service Inc. ACTCOSS is the peak body for community services related to raising awareness of Aboriginal Australians, and the reconciliation and social inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian Capital Territory.
AIATSIS	The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. AIATSIS is a national organisation provide knowledge and raise awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.
APRA-AMCOS	The Australian Performing Right Association; The Australian Mechanical and Copyright Society. APRA-AMCOS is considered as the peak industry association for songwriters and music creators in Australia.
ASA	The Australian Songwriters Association Inc.
CMVic	Community Music Victoria
EP	Extended play
FolkTAS	The Folk Federation of Tasmania Inc.
PCM	Popular Culture Musics
SCALA	The Songwriters, Composers and Lyricists Association Inc.

Statement of originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Signed: _____

Candidate: Veronica Stewart

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1 Overview

To start with nothing but an idea, and then to create something that has the potential to influence the thoughts and emotions of others.
(Respondent 56)

1.1 Introduction

Singer-songwriters have drawn diverse forms of scholarly interest and critique (such as Williams & Williams, 2017, 2016; Negus, 2011; Brackett, 2008). In addition, published memoirs and interviews of well-known singer-songwriters offer insights into the craft of such artists[1]. These texts provide subjective perspectives, empirical analyses or musicological approaches on singer-songwriters, and often focus on artists who have a strong commercial presence or who adhere to the traditional notion of the singer-songwriter (Shumway, 2016). While these contribute to understanding the multiple creative facets of singer-songwriters, there is some research that qualitatively investigates the singer-songwriter (for example, Burnard, 2012)[2]. Perhaps this is in part due to the breadth of ability that singer-songwriters encompass. The term *singer-songwriter* itself suggests the interaction between two independent roles and activities. Singing and songwriting are two distinct creative processes that, even in isolation, incorporate a broad collection of skills and influences. These include the physiological skills related to singing and vocal production; it also includes the musical aptitude required for songwriting and the socio-cultural surroundings that influence an artist. All of these concepts inform and underpin singing and songwriting creativity. Additionally, the maintenance of a sustainable creative practice, such as through creative entrepreneurship, entails a host of other distinct skillsets. The study of the singer-songwriter therefore requires understanding that acknowledges the assimilation of individuality, of unique socio-cultural environments, of musically and vocally creative processes, artistic intentions and the impact of popular culture and its musics.

To address this gap and to further the research on singer-songwriter creativity, the following study investigates singer-songwriters as a population in order to gain evidence-based understandings on contemporary artistry and creative practice. The data

[1] Examples of these are Zollo, 2015, Cott, 2006 and Woodworth, 1998.

[2] Burnard (2012) established the term *musical creativities* through the investigation of several musicians, of which two singer-songwriters were included.

collected by this research included narratives from emerging and established Australian singer-songwriters, and provides broad perspectives on diverse, yet highly individual, creative practices. The emergent research themes signify singer-songwriters as complex and pluralistic artists distinguished by their inherent consolidation of several artforms and behavioural processes. These include singing, songwriting, performance, entrepreneurship, community and social focus, and singing/songwriting as a form of therapy and wellbeing. This research therefore contributes to the understanding of the specific singing voice of singer-songwriters, the attributes of songwriting as revealed through the vantage point of artists who sing their own songs, and the aspects of educating and working with singer-songwriter creativities.

1.2 Research objectives, rationale and methodologies

As a singer and songwriter, I have long been interested in the crafting of songs from a singer's perspective. In addition, my experience of working with singers, songwriters and musicians has led to an interest in the influence that life experience plays in the development of creativity. It is this experience that initially provided the interest for this research and that led me to investigate the theoretical underpinnings that surround creativity in relation to singing and songwriting. I subsequently found that the craft of contemporary singer-songwriters is largely under-researched. In the literature, attempts at defining and observing the contemporary singer-songwriter often result in narrow descriptors and dated characteristics that stem from historic traits and musicological traditions. In addition, much of the discussion around singer-songwriters often highlights popular artists, music styles and/or the ideological persona attached or attributed to the ways in which singer-songwriters were once marketed. Such attributions include the pensive artist who plays an acoustic instrument and self-accompanies original songs with a marked level of introspection and melancholy. It is this persona that has long been associated with the singer-songwriter despite the digital disruption and immense changes that have taken place in the realm of music over recent years (Hughes, Evans, Morrow & Keith, 2016).

My initial impetus to research singer-songwriters drew me to the work and research of Burnard (2012) on *musical creativities*. In Burnard's research, the creative practice of

contemporary musicians and artists, including two singer-songwriters [3], were investigated and the presence of multiple *creativities* were observed. Burnard's consolidation of overarching theories of creativity/socio-cultural influence, and the adaptation of such theories to the investigation of the creative practice of popular musicians, introduced me to the respective theoretical lenses of Bourdieu (1980) and Csikszentmihalyi (1988). The concepts of *the self* (Bourdieu, 1980), *the field* (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988) and *artistic realisation* as "multiple manifestations of music creativities" (Burnard, 2012, p. 4), and as used for this research, initially stemmed from Burnard's (2012) study, and in particular, the attention drawn towards singer-songwriters as a fraction of a wider sample of musicians.

The objectives of this research therefore seek to understand how the singer-songwriter has evolved and to analyse contemporary singer-songwriter creativities. The specific research questions outlined in Chapter 3 focus on identifying the contemporary singer-songwriter, on what distinguishes this population from other musicians/artists and on the various processes that inform the singer-songwriter creative practice. The term, singer-songwriter, implies that such an artist writes and sings their own songs. However, such aspects form only one facet of their work. While songs are inherently tied to the creative process of singer-songwriters, this research strives to veer away from the study of songs and the various artefacts that singer-songwriters create. Instead, the research aims to comprehensively examine the contemporary singer-songwriter. For example, the component of singing in the craft of the singer-songwriter is rarely defined or described in the literature. This is despite the research on singing that identifies the musical use of the voice as a creative and embodied process. The following table lists the primary research questions (see Table 1: Primary research questions) that collectively seek to address these considerations.

Table 1: Primary research questions

Primary research questions
What is the creative practice of the singer-songwriter?
Who is the contemporary singer-songwriter?
What are the musical creativities of the singer-songwriter?
What role (if any) does the voice play in the creative process of songwriting and in the songs that emerge?

[3] For Burnard's (2012) discussion and research findings related to contemporary singer-songwriters, see Burnard (2012), pp. 72-97. Further discussions on musical creativities is offered in Chapter 3: Research design and methodology and Chapter 2: Literature review.

As the research investigates the *person*, their *process*, and their respective outcomes more broadly than just *songs*, the research seeks to clarify what defines the contemporary singer-songwriter. The in-depth interview questions (see Appendices A and B) relate to the primary research questions. In addition to determining the contemporary singer-songwriter and associated processes, the findings of this research culminate in the development of a singer-songwriter creative practice framework. It is envisaged that this framework may be used in future research, in music education and/or in support of singer-songwriters more broadly. Additionally, the framework may also be useful in the context of wellbeing and music therapy.

1.3 Research design

Through implementing a mixed methods approach, this research is based on a conceptual framework and utilises qualitative and quantitative methods. Analyses draw on the theoretical concepts of *the self*, *the field* and *artistic realisations* as determined through the respective scholarly lens of Bourdieu (1980), Csikszentmihalyi (1988) and Burnard (2012)[4]. The study is comprised of Part 1 in-depth interviews and Part 2 surveys. The emergent themes from Part 1 were used to determine the Part 2 focus and research questions. The research design and methods are fully outlined in Chapter 3.

1.4 Scope

The scope of this research focused on Australian singer-songwriters with at least three years experience in songwriting. This specific focus was determined to lessen the impact of variables that a broader study may introduce, such as access to resources or audiences; it was also due to researcher locality. The research did not require participants or respondents to identify as being professional artists (participants who are paid for their creative work) though they may offer their work as being available commercially (for example, through independently managed websites). Instead, the research required that participants were actively engaged in creative output that utilised their singing, songwriting and had either produced, or were currently producing, a body of original, creative work at the time of participation. In light of this,

[4] Burnard's (2012) incorporation of the theories of Bourdieu (1993, 1980) and Csikszentmihalyi (1988) in her musical creativities framework (Burnard, 2012, pp. 213-229) formed the foundation for analysing and coding the research data.

and for the purposes of this study, a working criteria of the term 'singer-songwriter' will therefore refer to artists, participants and/or respondents who identify with the term and who compose and sing original works. The research was conducted in two parts. Part 1 involved in-depth interviews of 18 singer-songwriters and two music producers. Part 2 involved an online survey. Interview participants and survey respondents were selected based on the criteria above, their available work portfolio and/or through their connection to related music groups such as songwriting associations or educational institutions. Detailed methods of sample selection and recruitment can be found in Chapter 3.

1.5 Thesis overview

The thesis initially discusses the research aims, the positioning of the research, the theoretical frameworks used to conduct the research and the research design and methodology. The analysis of the data and the emergent themes are collated under each of the main findings chapters (Chapters 4-9). Each of the findings chapters provide evidence in the form of participant or respondent excerpts and narratives that exemplify the emergent themes. The final two chapters provide overarching findings and a comprehensive summary of the research. The contributions of the research and the limitations of the research are discussed. Each of the findings chapters provide perspectives on different identified aspects of the singer-songwriter's creative practice and detail factors related to *the self*, *the field* and *artistic realisations* as relevant to each chapter.

Chapter 1: Research aims and scope - In this current chapter, an introductory context is provided and the research aims and objectives are discussed. A summary of the research questions and the rationale behind the investigation of contemporary singer-songwriters is detailed. Additionally, a summary of each chapter and the overall organisation of the thesis is provided.

Chapter 2: Literature review - The literature review presents and discusses the discourse on singing, enculturation, songwriting and creativity. These concepts directly relate to the singer-songwriter. The section on singing offers detailed information on the voice, the origins of vocal expression, the techniques required in singing and the bodymind connection. These topics relate to singing, sung expression and vocal embodiment. Socio-cultural influences that impact singer-songwriters, such as musical

enculturation, formal and informal learning and other influences are discussed in detail. Songwriting processes are also discussed, including the broad ways in which songwriting is used or represented in the literature. In the final section of the literature review, the limited discourse that directly relates to the definition and observation of singer-songwriters as an artistic entity is explored and discussed. This leads to identifying the gap in the literature, as singer-songwriters continue to be narrowly defined and described against historical and stereotypical parameters despite the disruptions and changed formats that are now evident in musical creativities (Hughes, et al., 2016).

Chapter 3: Research design - This chapter provides the overall design and methods of the research. Theoretical concepts drawn from the literature are discussed in detail to provide a suitable research framework and to determine the areas of investigation. This led to a conceptual framework and the development of the primary research questions. This research was conducted in two parts: Part 1 Interviews and Part 2 Surveys using a mixed methods approach that adapted qualitative and quantitative principles. The implementation of these methods allowed the research to verify and triangulate findings. This chapter therefore provides the rationale for utilising such approaches, along with the methods used for data collection and analysis. The ethical conditions of the research are also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4: The contemporary singer-songwriter - The discussion of findings drawn from Part 1 interviews begins in Chapter 4. In this chapter, the overarching concepts found in Part 1 interviews are introduced in order to frame the various themes, or musical creativities, referred to in Chapters 5-10. Three overarching concepts, termed *creative phases*, were found in the overall creative practice of participants. These phases are termed *the self, the field* and *artistic realisations.* Each phase, based upon the theoretical framing of Burnard (2012), Csikszentmihalyi (1988) and Bourdieu (1980), correlates to a specific grouping of findings, and are the constituents of a broader *creative practice*. The chapter provides a discussion on the findings that led to the identification of each phase. Three distinctive *creative practices* also emerged. Chapter 4 therefore also seeks to provide a preliminary description of the singer-songwriter *creative practice*. The concepts discussed in this chapter are broad and distinct. In order to frame and easily illustrate the various concepts found in this research, and in order to assist in the discussion of more detailed findings and evidence,

an emergent creative practice framework is introduced in this chapter. This framework adapts Csikszentmihalyi's systems model of creativity (1988) and is informed by the musical factors/creativities existent in Burnard's research (2012). It provides a visual representation of the overarching concepts of this research. The creative practice framework is progressively constructed to include relevant concepts at the conclusion of Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 9. It is then proposed in the conclusion of this thesis as an emergent framework of results and as a useful model for use in future studies.

Chapter 5: Singer-songwriter motivation and creative impetus - The findings revealed various singer-songwriter motivations and themes of inspiration. In this chapter, the ways in which singer-songwriters became motivated to create are explored. Themes related to inspiration and creative impetus are discussed. The concept of personal motivations is presented in this chapter as one that frames themes such as introspection, nostalgia, identity, emotion and catharsis, personal expression and being in the state of creative *flow.* Practical motivations are proposed in this chapter as motivations that stem from a pragmatic source, such as to develop a musical skill or to sustain financial work. The findings discussed in this chapter provide the impetus for creativity.

Chapter 6: Interactions, collaboration and the field - The research findings identified that singer-songwriters operate within and occupy various creative contexts. Participants were shown to be influenced by a broad range of socio-cultural factors. Within these factors are the influences of social positioning, formal and/or informal learning, the conventions of music, related sub-cultures and general life experience. The findings also revealed that singer-songwriters create within a continuum of independent and collaborative contexts. In this chapter, the concept of independent, facilitated and collaborative creativity is discussed.

Chapter 7: The singer-songwriter voice - This chapter explores the findings related to the singing voice and the ways in which singer-songwriters utilise the singing voice. The findings discussed in this chapter validate the singing voice as an important component of singer-songwriter artistry. The expressive qualities of the voice and the intimate connection that artists have is discussed in relation to its impact on the artist, the environments they interact with and the various artefacts created. It addresses the primary research question *What role (if any) does the voice play in the creative process of songwriting and in the songs that emerge*? and will explore the findings related to the physical voice, vocal technique and vocal/emotional expression.

Chapter 8: Survey results - Part 2 of the research design entailed the survey of 95 singer-songwriters. Survey questions were constructed around the emergent findings drawn from Part 1 interviews. The specific themes discussed in Chapters 4-7 of this thesis led to the design of broad survey questions in order to compare the findings against a larger sample of singer-songwriters. The survey was constructed using mainly closed-ended, scaled responses and two open-ended responses. In this chapter, the results of the survey are presented. The survey findings validate many of the major concepts discussed in Chapters 4-7. The survey findings also contribute some new and unique themes. In addition, the open-ended questions recorded rich perspectives from a broad number of respondents.

Chapter 9: Artistic realisations - This chapter provides cumulative findings and perspectives related to what this research describes as *artistic realisations* - the songs, artefacts and various personal and/or musical achievements that participants and respondents discussed in Part 1 and Part 2 of the research. According to this study, the concept of *artistic realisation* is not necessarily limited to songs. It encompasses the results, outcomes and achievements that singer-songwriters amass through their engagement with various creative processes. These include the outcomes that lead to artistic creation, re-invention or progression through songwriting, learning in formal or informal contexts, skill building, personal development and other music and/or industry related contexts.

Chapter 10: Conclusions: The contemporary singer-songwriter - In this chapter, the main findings and overarching contributions of the research are discussed. A comprehensive summary of the research findings is provided and an evidence-based definition of the contemporary singer-songwriter, and of the contemporary singer-songwriter practice is also detailed. The complete creative practice framework developed progressively through this research is proposed in this chapter as a visual mapping of the findings and as a useful model for future observations and studies on the contemporary singer-songwriter. In addition, it offers potential contributions of this research to the fields of singing, songwriting, creativity and educational contexts. To conclude, the limitations and scope of the research is discussed along with the implications of the research and recommendations for further investigation.

1.6 Glossary of terms

The following is a list of keywords along with their definition and/or context as used throughout this thesis.

anatomy	Anatomy refers to parts of the human body in relation to singing. In this thesis, this term typically refers to the human vocal mechanism.
artefact/s	In the context of this research, artefacts refer to songs, musical projects and related creative outcomes.
artist	The singer-songwriter/s discussed in this research.
capital	Capital refers to the accumulation of skills and cultural aspects. These may include social capital, financial capital or cultural capital (Burnard, 2012; Bourdieu, 1993, 1980).
collaboration	The act of collaborating and creating music with others.
contemporary	Refers to current and/or modern artists who are active at the time of this research. In the context of this research, contemporary singer-songwriters are singer-songwriters and/or participants who are currently creatively active.
craft	In this thesis, the use of the term *craft* refers to the holistic use of skills and traits.
expression	Refers to a personal form of communication, one that is typically expressive and/or meaningful. These include vocal expression, lyrical expression or musical expression.
field	The environment surrounding the singer-songwriter (Burnard, 2012; Csikszentmihalyi, 1988).
foldback	Foldback speakers or monitors are speakers that provide aural/sound feedback to performers during a live performance.
habitus	The individual disposition of a person. In relation to the singer-songwriter, Habitus may refer to individual musical preferences and performance disposition (Burnard, 2012; Bourdieu, 1993, 1980).
individual	The person. It may also refer to the traits that an individual possesses.

industry personnel	People who work in creative and music industries. For example, music producers.
influencer or influence/s	The term *Influencer* is used specifically to refer to people; *Influence/s* refer to experiences (Hughes, 2011). See page 28 for a discussion on these terms.
larynx	A part of the human vocal mechanism responsible for the creation of vocal sound. In-depth information is provided in Chapter 2: Literature review (see pp. 15-23).
motivation	Refers to the urge, desire or interest to pursue a creative goal or vision.
music genre/s; music style	Different genres of popular culture musics. These may include Rock, Pop, RnB (Rhythm & Blues) or EDM (Electronic Dance Music), among others. Both terms are used interchangeably in this thesis.
participant	Participant/s refer to the interview participants of Part 1 of this research.
pathology (voice)	A diagnosed abnormal condition that affects and impedes the process of singing. An example may be the onset of vocal nodules or a vocal polyp.
performance	The act of singing and performing original songs.
physiology	The functionality of anatomical parts. In relation to the singing voice, vocal physiology refers to the processes required to produce sound.
popular culture musics	A term that encompasses any genre or sub-genre of popular song/music (Hughes, 2010, p. 245).
producer/music producer	An artistic person who works with singer-songwriters in the areas of music production, recording, instrumentation and arranging.
professional	In this research, professional refers to paid work.
process	The way in which an outcome is achieved.
respondent/s	Participant/s refer to the survey respondents of Part 2 of this research.
self	The singer-songwriter; the artist as a person.

singer-songwriter	The singer-songwriter/s are the artists discussed in this research.
socio-cultural	Surrounding social and cultural contexts.
timbre	The quality of a sound. In relation to singing, it often refers to the vocal quality.
vocal folds	A part of the human vocal mechanism responsible for the creation of vocal sound. In-depth information is provided in Chapter 2: Literature review (see pp. 15-23)
vocal production	In this research, vocal production refers to the singing or spoken voice as it is produced by the body.

2 Literature review

Sometimes, it's the sound. Sometimes, it's the words.
Sometimes, it's the memory of why you wrote something.
(Mike Roberts, Participant 8)

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the literature related to the singer-songwriter. It includes a review of the literature on the singing voice, songwriting and associated concepts related to creativity. By deconstructing the term *singer-songwriter,* this chapter aims to provide a discussion of broad aspects related to contemporary singer-songwriters and their creative processes and practice. The first section of this chapter, *Emergence of the singer-songwriter,* historical contexts are discussed. The second section, *Singing*, discusses literature specifically related to the voice and singing. The inherent role of the voice as both a musical and/or personally creative instrument is explored. It highlights the singing voice as being embodied, delineated by "the coordination of the anatomical, physiological and psychological components that produce sound" (Hughes, 2013, p. 14). The role of the vocal mechanism (McCoy, 2004) and the physical embodiment of singing is also discussed. The third section, *Socio-cultural influence,* discusses literature related to the influences that affect artists and that result in creative vocal and/or songwriting processes. The interplay between environment, potential and realised influences on creativity is explored, and the ways in which the "grain of the voice" (Barthes, 1977, p. 179) is informed, nurtured, antagonised or influenced. The fourth section, *Songwriting,* discusses the relevance of the song and the various creative processes that songwriting involves. The last section, *The contemporary singer-songwriter*, provides literature related to the singer-songwriter as both a creative identity as well as a form of musical artistry. The concluding section of this chapter addresses the gap in the literature in relation to the study of singer-songwriters. Themes for further investigation and the position of the following study in relation to this gap will also be discussed.

2.2 Singing

The singing voice is often the central sonic component of songs. Singing is viewed as a musical act, as an embodied function and as a creative process (Hemsley, 1998). It is described as "the only human function that brings together language,

physiology, and acoustics in the service of art" (Miller, 2005, p. 235). This "complex web of interacting factors" ambitiously embraces "perception, cognition, physical development, maturation, society, culture, history and intentionality" (Welch, 1994, p. 3), and thus, the singing voice, and in particular, the contemporary singer, is couched in and may be influenced by, musical genre, psychology, socio-cultural factors and modern technology. They are found in many contexts and heavily informed by different artistic intents (Hughes, 2014, 2010), skill level and purpose. The singing voice can be viewed as both a noun and a verb; as physiologically embodied and with a corresponding function to produce sound (Dayme & Vaughn, 2008; McCoy, 2004; Callaghan, 1999), a sound that, once "cultivated" and mediated (Miller, 2005, p. 235), becomes the source of objective and subjective critique, symbolism and signification. Though many attempts exist at approaching and/or defining singing, the broad topics that underpin the term *singing* prove its reach across cross-cultural and interdisciplinary literature. Its definition relies predominantly on the context in which it is discussed. This section will explore different contexts related to singing and the singing voice will be explored, from the origins of vocal expression and communication, through to the development and role of vocal creativity as portrayed through the work of contemporary singer-songwriters.

2.2.1 Origins of vocal communication and sung expression

Music itself is "characterised both by its ubiquity and its antiquity" (Levitin, 2009, p. 2). In order to understand the role and development of music within the broader scope of history and socio-culture, it is helpful to provide context in relation to the origins of music and vocal communication. As a means for expression, communication and language, the proclivity of the human voice as an instrument for singing stems from ancient traditions (Mithen, 2005). Music and music making "has been encoded into the human genome" through "the evolutionary history of our species" (Mithen, 2005, p. 1). The capacity for vocal production and to produce the sounds necessary for the development of language and song is suggested to have potentially emerged as far as "1.5 million years ago" (Frayer & Nicolay, 2000, p. 232). Collected "*Homo* fossils" show some evidence that "both the respiratory and nasal systems of hominids assumed the form of anatomically modern humans", making it possible that our hominid ancestors had the articulatory and respiratory facilities to "form vowels" and "maintain

high-volume airflow" and that they may have had "the capacity to sing as well" (Frayer & Nicolay, 2000, p. 232).

Further research into the origins of human vocal expression led to the discovery and study of a fossilised Hyoid[5] bone (D'Anastasio et al., 2013). According to researchers, the discovery and study of this bone "indicates that this bone not only resembled that of a modern human, but that it was used in very similar ways" (D'Anastasio et al., 2013, pp. 5-6). This gave researchers reasonable evidence to suggest a link between ancient and current human voice use (D'Anastasio et al., 2013). McDermott (2008) offers a summary of various points that contribute to the broader dialogue of music and its role in the evolution of human society and culture, including theories that associate musical evolution to biological function, sexual selection, "social control and cohesion", or as an "evolutionary antecedent to language" (McDermott, 2008, p. 287). The voice and its propensity for language and communication is central to these theories:

> Music's perceptual basis could derive from general-purpose auditory mechanisms, its syntactic components could be co-opted from language, and its effect on our emotions could be driven by the acoustic similarity of music to other sounds of greater biological relevance, such as speech of animal vocalizations. (McDermott, 2008, p. 287)

Ball (2010) similarly suggests that our ancestors communicated concepts through "music-like vocalization" (Ball, 2010, p. 24) prior to language. According to Brown (2000), *musilanguage* may have been a predecessor of developed music as long as particular elements similar to those exhibited by the singing voice existed:

> [1.] Lexical tone: use of pitch to convey semantic meaning, [2.] Combinatorial formation of small phrases [that include] melodorhythmic as well as semantic structures, [and 3.] Expressive phrasing principles [that] add expressive emphasis and emotive meaning to phrases. (Brown, 2000, pp. 279-280)

Although these statements are based off the fossil record; evidence which form "markers for vocal tract anatomy" (Frayer & Nicolay, 2000, p. 217), such speculations are inconclusive due to the predominantly tissue-based nature of the human larynx, which is mostly averse to fossilisation (Frayer & Nicolay, 2000; Lents, 2015). Additionally, how music "functions today might well differ from [music functions] that were operative when it [first] evolved" (McDermott, 2008, p. 287). Nonetheless, these studies highlight the potential significance of music and vocal sound in the evolution

[5] The Hyoid is the only bone that exists within the larynx (Wicklund, 2010), and thus the only part of the laryngeal anatomy that is conducive to fossilisation.

of humans, adding breadth to questions that evolutionary biomusicologists[6] Brown, Merker and Wallin (2003) pose, and of which this research shares:

> What is music for and why does every human culture have it? What are the universal features of music and musical behaviour across cultures? (Brown, Merker & Wallin, 2003, p. 3)

A relevant example of a cross-cultural piece of music is the *lullaby*; a "universal" feature coupled with a function that "nearly every culture [sings] towards infants" (McDermott, 2008, p. 288). Lullabies combine the familiarity of language, voice and a syntax of musical patterns that trigger specific brain responses associated to rest, bonding and communication (McDermott, 2008). Lullabies involve the use of the mother's voice for the purposes of soothing and connecting with infants. It is interesting to note that mothers (and others) are known to also speak to infants using heightened, song-like speech. Similar to the lullaby, this is informally known as *motherese;* a form of primal and tonal vocal communication shared across cultures (Song, Demuth & Morgan, 2010, p. 389; Gopnik, Meltzoff & Kuhl, 2001, p. 128). It is plausible that the evolution of music included this instinctive act of musicalised vocal expression, and that sung expression may have roots in the biological connection between mother and child (McDermott, 2008; Gopnik et al., 2001). This kind of expressive communication and the concept of shared connection are of interest to this research. Additionally, the prospect of developing a relational bond through the shared experience of song, and particularly, through the shared experience of vocal expression, is also of relevance to this research.

2.2.2 The embodied voice: Vocal mechanism and singing process

In order to understand how singer-songwriters utilise the voice for singing, it is helpful to understand the physiological function of the voice and to frame the term *embodiment*. The singing voice has been described as being "capable of an almost miraculous level of control, variety, and […] tone" (Dimon, 2011, p. 2). Such fascination with the human voice is captured by Barthes (1977) in his seminal text *Image, Music, Text* where he philosophises about "the grain of the voice" (Barthes,

[6] According to Brown, Merker and Wallin (2003), *biomusicology* is a term that encompasses three areas. (1) *evolutionary musicology*, which deals with the origins of music, music evolution and its relationship to human evolution, (2) *neuromusicology*, which relates to the "brain areas involved in musical processing" (Brown et al., 2003, p. 5) and the accompanying neural/cognitive processes involved, and (3) *comparative musicology*, which is the study of the "functions and uses of music" (Brown et al., 2003, p. 5) and its related fields, systems and behaviours.

1977, p. 179), associating a mystique existent in the singing voice to other forms of creativity: "The 'grain' is the body in the voice as it sings, the hand as it writes, the limb as it performs" (Barthes, 1977, p. 188), linking the body to the voice and the embodiment of singing as process, sound and action. Since Barthes' (1977) reflections, research and discussion on the embodied voice, and more specifically, the area of voice science, has evolved to validate what constitutes an *embodied voice*. McCoy (2004) encapsulates singing as "a miraculous, artistic event that has often been shrouded in mystery and secrecy" (McCoy, 2004, p. 15) adding that the human vocal mechanism is the instrument that is responsible for, and enables, this once mysterious process of singing. Research related to voice science and vocal pedagogy affirms that singing takes place through various physiological functions, and through the "active thought and disciplined control of these physical processes" (McCoy, 2004, p. 79). It is an instrument formed of living components, of muscle, bone, cartilage and tissue. The vocal (sung or spoken) sounds we hear or make are produced by the coordination of various components of the *vocal mechanism*. The parameters of the vocal mechanism, such as vocal fold mass, coordination and physical health, are not static elements. These parameters differ from person to person, and explain every voice is uniquely different. It also verifies that the human voice has always been embodied and has always been individual. as without the body, the voice cannot be realised as sound, nor can it be the expressive instrument it is known for. While embodied sound may be influenced by external sources that impact conscious and unconscious vocal production, or the way that a voice is heard (a mediated voice), for the purpose of this discussion, the term *embodied voice* will specifically relate to the process and physical nature of singing. The term will not be used when discussing mediated vocal sound (such as a recorded singing voice).

Singing is the musical creation, manipulation and control of the voice, as generated by the anatomical and physiological function of the human vocal mechanism. McFarland (2015) states that speaking is "one of the most complex of all human skilled movements" (McFarland, 2015, p. 1). In contrast to the speaking voice, the singing voice is typically produced, controlled and delivered in a musical way by adding the nuances of music, emotion and personal interpretation to this complexity. The physiological processes that take place within the vocal mechanism, along with the singer's corresponding auditory system and psychological responses, are sophisticated

and complex. Singing and speaking require conscious attention and control (McCoy, 2004) and the antagonisation of "approximately 100 muscles distributed across the different physiological systems involved in speech production" (McFarland, 2015, p. 1). Singing requires balanced control and use of these physiological systems, which include the respiratory system (for breathing, or as a *generator*), the laryngeal system (for sound production, or as a *vibrator)*, the "oral-articulatory" (McFarland, 2015, p. 1) system (for resonance and articulation) and the hearing/aural sensory system (Zemlin, 1998). Lastly, all processes required for voice production are governed by the brain, which leads the singer by utilising "underlying neural control processes" and "sensory feedback" (McFarland, 2015, p. 1). The voice is comparable to other musical instruments. Using air as a medium, singing and the vocal mechanism, or "vocal instrument"[7] (McCoy, 2004, p. 15), relies on the following specific subsystems in order to sing and to create sound.

2.2.2.1 Generator: The respiratory system

A *generator*, in the context of sound, broadly refers to the energy, or the "power source and actuator" (McCoy, 2004, p. 107) required for sound production. In the process of singing, the respiratory system serves this precursory function and is the "power source and actuator of the vocal instrument" (McCoy, 2004, p. 83). To begin the singing process, the singer inhales air and controls its release through the coordinated use of the muscles and organs of the respiratory system, such as the lungs, the diaphragm, the muscles of the ribcage, and the abdominal muscles (see McCoy, 2004; Dayme & Vaughn, 2008) amongst others[8]. While singing, the release of air passes from the lungs and through the trachea. At this point, air flow is turned into audible sound by the facility of the vocal mechanism's *vibrator*: the vocal folds within the larynx. This process also describes the pathway and role of *sub-glottal pressure*, which are the various levels of air pressure intended or produced by a singer in response

[7] For in-depth information and discussion on the singing voice, and for illustrative, anatomical illustrations related to the vocal mechanism, see Wicklund (2010); DeVore and Cookman (2009); Dayme and Vaughn (2008); McCoy, (2004).

[8] According to McCoy (2004) there are approximately 33 muscles that "contribute in some way to breathing and posture", however there are eight primary muscles that are directly related to singing (McCoy, 2004, p. 103). The muscles most primarily used during inhalation are the diaphragm, a "dome-shaped muscle dividing the chest (thoracic cavity) from abdominal cavity", and the external and internal intercostal muscles which "connect the ribs and elevate the ribcage" (Dayme & Vaughn, 2008, pp. 213-214). Additionally, the muscles required to control and sustain air pressure during a singer's exhalation are the internal and external oblique abdominals, the transverse abdominals and the quadratus lamborum. These muscles assist with the compression of the abdomen, the rotation and flexing of the trunk and provide "abdominal support for expiration" (Dayme & Vaughn, 2008, pp. 213-214). For a detailed discussion of breathing, its physiological functioning and to view relevant anatomical illustrations, see McCoy (2004, pp. 83-106).

to what they are tasked to sing. In relation to contemporary singing styles, Zangger-Borch and Sundberg (2010) state that "the voice source is heavily influenced by variation of subglottal pressure" (Zangger-Borch & Sundberg, 2010, p. 532) and therefore impacts the quality of audible sound[9].

2.2.2.2 The larynx

A vibrating component is required for any musical instrument to create sound. In singing and vocal sound production, (also referred to in literature using the term *phonation*[10]), the larynx, which is "the uppermost unit of the trachea or windpipe" (McKinney, 2005, p. 65), contains the vibrating component of the vocal mechanism known as the vocal cords or folds. Located within the neck, it is a "structural framework […] composed of bone, cartilage, membranes, ligaments and muscles" (McCoy, 2004, p. 113). While its primary anatomical function is to block food from entering the lungs and to increase intro-abdominal pressure, allowing one to hold the breath for lifting or exertion, such as when lifting a heavy object or during childbirth (McCoy, 2004), its purpose in relation to sound production "is a secondary or superimposed function" (McKinney, 2005, p. 65). More specifically, the vocal folds - two thin bands of layered, elastic muscle and tissue that are "in the shape of a letter V at rest" (McCoy, 2004, p. 107) are housed within the framework of the larynx. As air flows through the trachea and *sub-glottal pressure* reaches the vocal folds, they come together and vibrate, or more specifically, oscillate[11], generating sound waves; "the periodic variations in air pressure [that] our ears interpret as sound" (McCoy, 2004, p. 107).

The vocal folds, along with the cartilages and musculature of the larynx, form a complex mechanism[12] where distinct components and "configurations" (Wicklund, 2010, p. 23) govern specific musical and/or phonatory sounds. To sing along a continuum of high and low notes, the vocal folds must accordingly undergo a process of shortening (for low notes) or lengthening (for high notes). Like gears that shift, the components of the larynx must therefore coordinate to produce a singer's intended

[9] For a discussion on sub-glottal pressure and its relationship to voice control, see Sundberg (2018) and Sundberg, Elliot and Gramming (1991).

[10] Phonation, or to phonate, relates to sound that is specifically produced by the human voice.

[11] The vocal folds within the human larynx, contrary to general literature which state that they vibrate (such as McKinney, 2005), in fact, oscillate (McCoy, 2004).

[12] For a more in-depth discussion on the various components that form the vocal folds and the larynx, see Wicklund (2010, pp. 18-23).

sound, and while singing, configure and conform to a singer's available vocal range, or vocal registers. For example, to sing within a singer's "modal register" or "chest voice/speech register" (Wicklund, 2010, p. 24), the vocal range most often used when speaking and most often heard during the initial verses of a popular song, "the vocal folds are in the closed phase [of oscillation] 50% of the time, and open for 50% of the time" (Wicklund, 2010, p. 24). Other commonly used vocal registers, such as "head voice", "mixed voice" or "falsetto" (Wicklund, 2010, pp. 24-25) impart other vocal qualities[13].

Each vocal register often results in a sound that is distinctive. Additionally, it is modified and affected by the unique idiosyncrasies of individual larynges and vocal folds. Vocal fold sizes vary and are "about 1 cm deep" (Gates, Forrest & Obert, 2013, p. 200) and approximately "1.5 to 2.3mm in length" (Benninger, 2011, p. 111). Every singer's laryngeal shape, whilst biologically similar, may differ in size or shape. For example, the female adult larynx is typically smaller in size than its male counterpart (Wicklund, 2010, p. 18), while the larynx of a child is smaller and underdeveloped. The variance in sizes of the cartilages and tissues that compose the larynx, along with its propensity and parameters for movement[14], also lend to subtle changes and differences in individual voices. Further to this, vocal fold mass, density and size affect the folds' capacity to vibrate, therefore causing variations in the quality and frequency of sound waves produced. Changes in the body may also affect the voice. For example, hormones and hormonal fluctuations may affect the voice intermittently, or impact the voice through stages in life. Examples of these include the developmental changes that occur in puberty, and the influence of hormones during pregnancy and menopause (see Brown, 2015; Vigil, 2015; Harries, Griffith, Walker & Hawkins, 1996).

2.2.2.3 Resonating tract

Once sound exits the larynx, it is amplified through the singer's resonators and articulators. A resonator acts as a contained space in which sound is able to reverberate. Without it, vocal sound would merely be aurally perceived as a minute level of

[13] The existence of vocal registers is often debated (Henrich, 2006, p.7). However, for a typical in-depth discussion on different vocal registers, and the various laryngeal configurations and qualities of each register, see Wicklund (2010, pp. 24-27)

[14] For instance, the epiglottis, located along the upper part of the larynx, moves in a hinge-like fashion and covers the top of the larynx while swallowing in order to prevent food from entering the trachea, and to direct food towards the esophagus and digestive tract (McKinney, 2005).

vibration or buzz. Dimon (2011) explains the requirement of a resonator, using a guitar as an example; "if you plucked the strings of a guitar that had no body, the sound would be weak and inaudible; the vibrations of the strings can be heard only because the space inside the guitar proceeds a secondary vibrator that augments the sounds from the strings" (Dimon, 2011, p. 3). Likewise, in singing, the resonating elements are a singer's body, primarily the vocal tract, oral cavity and nasal passages; these act as filters that transform, amplify and modify the frequencies created by the movement of the vocal folds into a sound that is audible and becomes what listeners and singers alike associate as sung or voiced sound. As a singer's facial structure is unique, so too is the resonant sound and tone that is heard. Variations in a singer's resonating system, such as size and bone structure, contribute to the "supplementary vibration" (McCoy, 2004, p. 27) and the environment for sound waves to intensify "beyond the original sound source" (McCoy, 2004, p. 27). This process leads to resonance, amplification and the development of individual vocal tone and/or timbre.

2.2.2.4 Articulators

Articulation, which is defined as the formation of distinctive sound or the expression of an idea or feeling (Oxford, 2017), is an important part of singing. When viewed in a strictly instrumental context, articulation is mostly seen as a "musical phenomenon, described through words such as staccato, legato [and so on]" (McCoy, 2004, p. 27). In relation to the human voice however, the use of articulators allows for the communication of language and the formation of vocally expressive sound. While the voice can also be articulated "through changes in the power source and vibrator", the specific articulators of the vocal mechanism, such as the "the muscles of the jaw, tongue, pharynx and palate" (McCoy, 2004, p. 136), perform a dual function. Along with communication, "it is the only instrument in which articulation is also a function of resonance" (McCoy, 2004, p. 27). There is a "high level of interconnectivity" (McCoy, 2004, p. 144) in relation to the control and use of the articulators; movement of one may simultaneously impact and interact with another, therefore influencing the quality of voice, its clarity, and resonance.

2.2.2.5 Aural perception and hearing

In order for singers to modify ordinary vocal sound (such as their spoken voice) into a musical performance, the "auditory sense" (Thurman, 2000, p. 78) is required for

the singer to reference and/or mentally categorise sound. Singers must utilise their aural and hearing system, which act as a conduit for information, musical or otherwise, to reach the brain, in order for the singer to retain feedback whilst singing and from which singers can ascertain the quality of their singing. Without this ability, it is particularly difficult to self-monitor the singing process. The ear is a particularly responsive organ and instrument. According to Thurman (2000), "the human auditory system is sensitive to and processes environmental vibration frequencies" (p. 78), one that is "capable of detecting changes in air pressure two million times smaller than the ambient, barometric pressure"[15] (McCoy, 2004, p. 151). One of its primary functions is to convert the sound of the singing voice (and any environmental noise or music) into "nerve impulses that are sent to and interpreted by the brain" (McCoy, 2004, p. 151). This "aural feedback loop" (McCoy, 2004, p. 153) therefore allows singers to process, learn and direct their singing voice and/or sync their singing voice appropriately to musical accompaniment.

Additionally, in ordinary cases, musical learning and continued development is reliant on aural perception and a singer's ability to hear. In instances of hearing loss or impairment, attaining feedback becomes difficult or compromised, resulting in a "reduced ability to control intonation, amplitude and timbre" (McCoy, 2004, p. 154). There are instances however where singers have been known to "only "feel" [sic] the sound" (McCoy, 2004, p. 154), referring to an ability to sense sound vibrations through their bodies and to monitor their singing through these sensations alone. Examples of this can be seen in the context of live performance, where contemporary singers are evidenced to "have experienced performing without effective foldback"[16] (Stewart-Monro, 2012, p. 27), resulting in "unfavourable sound conditions that are difficult to perform in" (Stewart-Monro, 2012, p. 28). In these instances, singers must rely not only rely on an ineffective *aural feedback loop*, but also on the physical sensations caused by sound in order to sing with some level of accuracy and control.

2.2.2.6 Posture, alignment and gesture

As the singing process relies on systems within the body (McCoy, 2004; Wicklund, 2010), it is unsurprising that "a balanced, free and flexible posture is

[15] Barometric pressure relates to pressure and force exerted by the surrounding atmosphere.

[16] *Foldback,* or foldback speakers/monitors, are speakers (which are typically located along the floor in front of a performing singer, or through in-ear headphones) that provide singers and musicians on stage with auditory feedback of their sound / music levels.

fundamental to efficient vocal production" (Dayme & Vaughn, 2008, p. 280). Further to this, the process of singing, particularly during performance (whether it be through live or recorded performance), is typically accompanied by movement and gesture. Variations in body movement and alignment therefore influence vocal production. Physical alignment "has a direct relationship" to a singer's "balance, energy, health, voice, breathing, and image" (Dayme & Vaughn, 2008, p. 280), and it is through this connection with body and movement that vocal *embodiment* may be seen as well as be heard.

2.2.2.7 Vocal technique and vocal health

Vocal technique refers to the way in which the voice is controlled or utilised. It also implies the facilitation of optimal voice function, and one that lends to acceptable or accurate singing. In relation to contemporary singing, where the aesthetic of the singing voice and singing function is open to a diverse range of stylistic interpretation, appropriate vocal technique may allow for unrestricted creativity. In this way, vocal technique may help the singer perform artistic intents and expressions in a more fluid way. Though there are some exceptions, most literature on the singing voice and on vocal technique is often specifically oriented towards classical singing (Wilson, 2003; LoVetri, 2003). What is deemed as appropriate technique for classical singing differs from what is appropriate for the singing of contemporary, popular style songs where singers are accepted to be "more adventurous with sound" (Dayme & Vaughn, 2008, p. 297). Regardless, the physiological adjustment or improvement of one's vocal technique centers around the development of the ability to control the voice, and eventually, to implicitly embody such control.

Vocal technique impacts all areas of vocal and musical expression. For example, pitch and intonation, or *singing in tune*, is generally determined by the vocal folds lengthening and shortening; "poor vocal technique can cause a singer to go out of tune by going flat (too far below the pitch) or sharp (too far above the pitch)" (Dayme & Vaughn, 2008, p. 296). Additionally, tension may also "hinder the efficiency of the vocal folds" (Dayme & Vaughn, 2008, p. 296) resulting in inaccurate singing or unintended vocal sound. Efficient vocal technique has a direct link with vocal health as "a healthy, intact vocal mechanism is a prerequisite for producing a healthy, easily produced sound" (Wicklund, 2010, p. 1). As effective vocal production is reliant on a

healthy voice, the ways in which the voice is used (or misused) in the context of singing is relevant. Yet a paradox exists within the broader nature of contemporary singing and its associated industries which typically involve forms of singing and lengths of performance that may not necessarily promote, or be favourable to, optimal vocal health (Hughes, 2013; Stewart-Monro, 2012).

Given that the vocal mechanism exhibits highly individual parameters and variances, it can be said that vocal technique, the fluency and efficiency of control over one's voice, and a singer's propensity for vocal health, is just as individual. Furthermore, vocal issues are not always the result of inefficient vocal technique. Vocal problems may be induced by congenital issues, allergic reactions, poor speaking habits and "through overloading the voice"[17] (Hughes, 2013, p. 80). Issues may unknowingly be further exacerbated by "a lack of implemented vocal understanding and/or care" (Hughes, 2013, p. 81). Where vocal pathologies exist, such as nodules or cysts (Hughes, 2013), the vocal folds are prevented from functioning correctly and the production of sound is impeded, or even stopped completely. When these factors are set against the styles of singing, the musical genres and the forms of creativity that underpin the work of singer-songwriters, consideration must be given to vocal health and technique as these enable the creative use of the voice.

2.2.3 The brain, emotional states and vocal affect

All of the processes conducted by each of aforementioned subsystems is "directed by the most important singing organ of all: the brain" (McCoy, 2004, p. 79). In order to sing, and in order to sing purposely (such as to elicit intended vocal tones and musical notes), "the brain must transform thought into physical action" (McCoy, 2004, p. 153). From a physiological standpoint, the brain sends the neural signals required to instruct the systems related to voice production (Dayme & Vaughn, 2008). Without a cognitive trigger, singers will not be able to produce sound, and it is precisely through this neural capacity that both vocal technique and artistic intent intertwine. From an educational perspective, the singer's brain assimilates and learns musical and vocal understandings "from interactions between the people, places, things, and events of our world" (Thurman & Welch, 2000, p. 1), therefore providing the link between

[17] Overloading the voice usually refers to the over use of the vocal mechanism or the use of too much air pressure that may lead to excess tension or cause the vocal mechanism to constrict.

artistic craft, vocal embodiment and extrinsic influence. The brain does not only respond and react to "sounds that have been physically heard" (McCoy, 2004, p. 153), but also directs the singing process by generating and processing sounds that have first been imagined through a process called *audiation*. According to McCoy (2004), "if we imagine a major scale, the ear and brain direct the vocal folds to elongate as if we were actually singing" (McCoy, 2004, p.153), highlighting a link between aural perception and sympathetic movement.

In relation to singing and songwriting, no studies have yet investigated whether singers imagine their voice in this way. The propensity for singer-songwriters to use their imagination in synchrony to singing and songwriting is highly likely. Likewise, emotion and emotive states are presided over by regions within the brain (Lindquist, Wager, Kober, Bliss-Moreau & Barrett, 2012). Emotions incite psychological change (Lindquist et al., 2012; Scherer, 1995) and signify "reactions to events of major significance to the individual and mobilize all resources to cope with the respective situation, positive or negative" (Scherer, 1995, p. 235). Additionally, when expressing human emotion, "all expressive modalities, particularly body posture, facial features, and vocalization, are involved in emotion communication" (Scherer, 1995, p. 235). In the realm of music therapy, and even more specifically, the relatively new branch of music therapy called vocal psychotherapy (Austin, 2011, 2008), singing is associated with the "permission to feel" (p. 12). As a music psychotherapist, Austin (2008) adds that singing and improvised voice use is a "safe way [for others] to gain access to their feelings" as "singing is more widely as a form of expression than screaming, crying, or other displays of strong emotion" (pp. 12-13). Additionally, singing can lead to an emotional release:

> Singing can provide [music therapy] clients with an opportunity to express the inexpressible, to give voice to the whole range of their feelings. Singing meaningful songs often produces a catharsis, an emotional release, due to the effect of the music, the lyrics and the memories and associations connected with the song. (Austin, 2008, p. 20)

While Austin (2008) is referring to observations of singing within music therapy contexts, it positions the act of singing as an embodied instrument ideal for expressing emotion. This is coupled by the setting of music, lyrics and performance.

There are studies on the voice, the role of emotion and music and the impact that the voice has on emotion (such as Juslin & Västfjäll, 2008; Juslin & Laukka, 2003; Scherer,

1995; Loui, Bachorik, Li & Schlaug, 2013). Within these studies, the common denominator between singers, songs and audiences is the voice, yet only limited research was undertaken to measure any changes in emotive states triggered by changes in vocal quality (singer and audience alike). While this study does not seek to fulfill this gap, discourse related to emotion, voice and music identifies a link between vocal expression and emotion. The singing voice is often referred to in tangential ways, such as when discussing music and emotion, but very little focus is given on the singer themselves. Scherer (1995), while discussing emotional expression in classical opera, shares that "very few studies analyze the role of the interpreter, the singer, in vocally projecting the affective state of the character enacted on the operatic stage" (Scherer, 1995, p. 242), further expressing that this is due in part to the difficulties posed by the breadth of facility that the study of singers requires:

> Obviously, one of the reasons for this is that there is an enormous amount of factors involved: the music itself, the psychological interpretation […] as well as the intuition of the singer, his/her empathy with the character, and the atmosphere created by the audience. (Scherer, 1995, p. 242)

While this relates specifically to classical singers, the same sentiment may also be applied to contemporary singers. In relation to singer-songwriters specifically, the link between emotion, singing, and creative processes warrants further research given that singer-songwriters are stereotypically defined by their ability to portray feeling and emotion into song and vocal performance (Brackett, 2008). Contemporary singer-songwriters are known to typically draw on lived experiences (Hughes, 2014), and as emotional expression "serves the vital function of externalizing an individual's reaction and action propensity and of communicating this information to the social environment" (Scherer, 1995, p. 235), it follows that the influence of emotion within the creative processes of singing and songwriting be investigated as part of this research.

2.2.4 The bodymind connection

The interconnection and synergy between all subsystems of the vocal mechanism demonstrate the voice as a truly holistic and "physically embodied acoustic instrument" (Hughes, 2011, p. 58). The singer must work to coordinate elements of "mind, body, imagination and spirit" (Dayme, 2005, p. 1) in order to craft a desired performance and sound. To do this, singers develop an innate ability; a learned skill to

present their craft as a unified system (Dimon, 2011). Given this embodiment, the singing voice is responsive to even the most subtle of changes within the singer (Thurman & Welch, 2000). The link between the "inseparable intermeshing" (Thurman & Welch, 2000, p. 14) between the mind and the body is well accepted and is inclusive of:

> [(1)]All human sensory and perceptual experience, [(2)] all bodily processings that are commonly referred to as thinking, reasoning, cognition, feelings, emotions, empathies, intentions, judgements, memory, learning, immunity and health, and [(3)] all of the behavioural expressions of those internal processings. (Thurman & Welch, 2000, p. 14)

The term *bodymind* has been used in relation to the discussion of singers (Thurman & Welch, 2000) to encompass the interrelatedness of the mind and the body as used in singing. The term "reflects the unity of psychophysical processes" found in the "neuropsychobiology [18] of perception, memory, learning, behaviour, and health" (Thurman & Welch, 2000, p. 14).

2.3 Socio-cultural and musical enculturation

Artists draw from multiple sources of creativity and carry out forms of authorship and performance that draw from, and respond to, socio-cultural influences. Continuing on from the previous discussion on the voice, this section explores socio-cultural influence, enculturation (Hughes, 2014) and creativity. Welch (2005) shares that artists "acquire sophisticated musical behaviours from pre-birth through enculturated experience" (p. 117). This section will therefore explore the role of socio-cultural influence and enculturation in singing and songwriting. It will also explore the ways in which musical processes are learned and assimilated. The concepts of vocality and musical creativities will also be explored.

2.3.1 Musical enculturation and creativity

Enculturation is broadly defined as the acquisition and assimilation of a surrounding culture or group (Oxford, 2017). In relation to musical enculturation specifically, such enculturation "cannot be avoided" as we come across music "not only by choice, but by default" by virtue that "we cannot shut our ears" (Green, 2002, p. 22),

[18] Thurman and Welch (2000) unpack the term *neuropsychobiology* in relation to singing as *neuro* - the nervous system which is "crucially and powerfully involved" in the processes required for singing; *psycho* – as "all of our physiochemical processes produce our perceived psychological phenomena", and *biology,* to reflect that the "processes that make us *bodyminds* are biological in their essential nature" (Thurman & Welch, 2000, p. 15).

highlighting the potential power of being exposed to certain music styles and conventions. For singer-songwriters, enculturation may progressively take place through socio-cultural contexts, life experiences and relationships. Musical enculturation, which "refers to the acquisition of musical skills and knowledge by immersion in the everyday music and musical practices of one's social context" (Green, 2002, p. 22) takes place from early exposures to music. Green (2002) states that it "involves the early exploration of sound using either the voice, musical instruments or other objects" (p. 22). As enculturation relates to the acquisition of a surrounding environment and culture, it stands that both positive and negative influences may be acquired. Additionally, creative processes and, in particular, musically creative urges, may be influenced by the type of encouragement that artists receive early in life (Green, 2002). According to Green (2002), it is likely that "parents play a prominent role in the formation of popular musicians" (p. 24) while Welch (2005) suggests that "early enculturation can both foster and hinder musical development and the realization of our musical potential" (Welch, 2005, p. 117). This highlights the potential to acquire both beneficial and/or disadvantageous influences.

The work of Bourdieu (1993, 1984, 1980) offers several theories from which enculturation may be illustrated. According to Bourdieu (1993, 1980), individuals are positioned within a theoretical social space or *field* from which capital (such as cultural capital, or social capital) is acquired and *habitus* is developed. Habitus is defined by Bourdieu (1990) as:

> Embodied history, internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history – is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product. (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 56)

Capital refers to particular skills or characteristics attained through exposure to the field, and to others, while habitus refers to the disposition that an individual develops as a result of this exposure. Csikszentmihalyi (2015, 1997, 1990b, 1988) developed a framework in which a systems model (1997, p. 27) is used to position the individual, or *the self,* within a larger environment; *the domain* of previous works, and the specific *field* relevant to the person. According to Csikszentmihalyi (1997), "to be creative, a person has to internalize the entire system that makes creativity possible" adding that "creative individuals are remarkable for their ability to adapt at almost any situation and to make do with whatever is at hand to reach their goals" (p. 50). Additionally, the creative domain and field in which an individual is situated "may help or hinder

creativity" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, p. 38) based on the level of accessibility an individual has to gatekeepers within their respective fields. This is similar to the notion and the presence of *agents* (Bourdieu, 1993, 1980), or influences and influencers (Hughes, 2011), who impact the individual in various ways. According to Hughes (2013) "such enculturation can be heard when music and voice combine in singing" (p. 13). All elements of a song - vocal, lyrical, musical and performance - potentially carry strong facets of the artist's environment.

The basic concept of singing (such as the rudimentary use of rhythmic and melodic contours) begins in infancy (Gopnik et al., 2001) and the elements required to aurally perceive music is evidenced to begin earlier, with the prenatal auditory system developing and responding during a child's time in utero[19] (Gopnik et al., 2001; Welch, 2005). Infants later respond and develop vocal skills parallel to linguistic skills and "spontaneously coordinate their own expressions, gestures and voices with the expressions, gestures, and voices of other people" (Gopnik et al., 2001, p. 31), suggesting mimicry as a marker of early influence and one that facilitates the early learning of language and vocal expression.

Whilst the features required for singing develop early, advanced singing is a skill and behaviour learned over time (Thurman & Welch, 2000). As singing is directed by the brain, singers are equipped to "select learning strategies and cultural abilities" (Gopnik et al., 2001, p. 8). Welch (2005) states that the brain "has specialist areas whose prime functions are networked for musical processing" (Welch, 2005, p. 117), while Gopnik et al. (2001) present that "the capacity for culture is part of our biology, and the drive to learn is our most important and central instinct" (p. 8) it can therefore be argued that learning in the context of singing and songwriting is not only to obtain and develop musical/aural skills and vocal control, but also the formal and informal learning (Green, 2002) coupled with the acquisition and consolidation of the socio-cultural influences that surround the artist.

A singer's exposure to various environments coupled with the singer's ability to respond and react to influences that impact their singing and songwriting processes, the voice becomes highly facilitative to modification, enculturation and acculturation (Hughes, 2013; Meizel, 2011). According to Hughes (2011), the term "influencer" may

[19] The auditory system is functional from approximately week 17 of fetal development (Gopnik et al., 2001).

be used specifically in relation to "people who impart on contemporary vocal artistry" who may "pose opportunities and/or distinct challenges" (p. 60) while the term influences relates to specific experiences. The personal interactions that singers experience (such as familial or collaborative relationships), but will also broaden to include the concepts and themes that influence and impact the singer's neuropsychological self, and therefore, their voice. The term vocality (Meizel, 2011, p. 267) is also used in literature a means of defining the holistic impact that influencers and influences have on the singing voice and on artistry. In particular, the term is used as a way of consolidating the "multiplicity of linguistic, acoustic, cognitive-perceptual, and cultural factors that shape how we produce and hear human voices" (Meizel, 2011, p. 267). The ways in which such cultural factors impact the singing voice may be evident in sung performance, and in song (Antelyes, 1994).

In relation to songwriters, McIntyre (2008), whose qualitative research on songwriters investigated the *domain*, *field* and songwriters as people/*person* (Csikszentmihalyi, 2015, 1997), discussed that songwriters acquired skills through informal and formal learning contexts (Green, 2002), adding that the processes related to informal and formal learning were not "not found to have been mutually exclusive" (McIntyre, 2008, p. 47) adding that, in his research, he found that "the majority of these writers' domain acquisition occurred from within a variety of sources" (p. 47). These sources included the acquisition of "poetic skills", music lessons within a school or peripatetic teaching system, learning song repertoire through, and for, instrumental learning and/or performance, "ad-hoc mentoring", family influence, and by "absorbing the information stored in multiple songs through their access to popular culture transmissions" (McIntyre, 2008, p. 47). The concept of songwriters absorbing song information may also be relevant to singers, and therefore relevant to the ways that singer-songwriters potentially learn or become musically encultured.

These broad sources of enculturation, and the multiplicity of processes that result from such sources, are defined, consolidated and considered by Burnard (2012) as *musical creativities.* When viewing these segmented creative processes, Burnard (2012) proposes the pluralistic term *musical creativities*, as opposed to a singular *music creativity,* to represent the multiple forms of creativity and the processes associated to artists who engage many forms of creativity. In relation to bringing together singing and songwriting, this term is helpful in framing the broad areas of singing, songwriting,

and of musical enculturation, vocality, and musicianship, to name a few. According to Burnard (2012), "the notion of 'musical creativity' is not only singular and individual, as is so often assumed. Rather, Burnard asserts that there are different types of music creativity that are "recognized and awarded differently, insofar as the production context varies" (p. 74), which highlights that, while singer-songwriters may or may not adhere to specific traditions, the contexts that they create within and the impact of such contexts may result in different forms of musical creativity.

2.3.2 Mimicry and cover songs as learning

In the realm of singers, learning repertoire often involves choosing an appropriate song that the singer enjoys, by an artist they relate to. For instrument players, the process is likely the same. Given that musical learning revolves around both formal and informal influences (Green, 2002), and in taking McIntyre's (2008) identification of song influence on the craft and domain acquisition of songwriters (p. 47), it can be argued that the act of singing and playing a cover song facilitates the skills that singer-songwriters must inherently acquire. Mimicry as a tool for learning singing/songs is not a novel idea as all mimicry facilitates the learning of language in the most rudimentary of learning stages. Mimicry is often described in psychological discourse as either *conscious* or *non-conscious*, and defined simply as a person who imitates the behaviours of another, either knowingly or unwittingly, respectively (Lakin & Chartrand, 2003). It is discussed as a behavioural feature used to build social rapport, acceptance and possibly, learning, as evidenced in the following statement:

> Seeing a person engage in a behavior activates that behavioral representation, which then makes the perceiver more likely to engage in that behavior him or herself. Although the perception-behavior link provides one explanation for the occurrence of mimicry behavior […] other factors may also affect the likelihood of behavioral mimicry. (Lakin & Chartrand, 2003, p. 334)

In order to situate this behavioural trait in singing, vocal or artistic mimicry can be described as the conscious or subconscious imitation of another singer's vocal performance. Such mimicry may be inclusive of stylistic idiosyncrasies, artistic traits and persona. As Lakin and Chartrand (2003) state, there are many factors that lead to behavioural mimicry, one of which is to facilitate "rapport and liking" (p. 334) in social interactions. Mimicking in relation to singing, such as when a singing student listens to their favourite singer and imitates the sound of their chosen artist, may be used to facilitate rapport with an audience, and/or to perform familiar songs. Instances of

singing and listening to music often take place in private, informal contexts. Another potentiality is the perceptional ease of learning offered by mimicking. Listening to an artist that a singer likes and mimicking their sound is learning by association and sympathetic movement (McCoy, 2004). A singer may therefore learn to sing in the same way as the artist they adulate and copy.

As popular musicians are encultured by their exposure to music (Green, 2002), the singing of cover songs[20] are a good example in which mimicry, learning, musical enculturation and the development of stylistic interests may occur. In a televised interview, Norah Jones (Stanton & Toogood, 2016) discussed the concept of vocal learning through mimicry:

> I always tried to imitate my favourite singers. So, you know, of course, I never sounded like Aretha Franklin probably, but, I did my best and as I got older, it was Billie Holiday and Sarah Vaughn and I perfected my…my imitations. And it's interesting cause, you know, that's sort of how you learn, but eventually, the thing you really want is to find your own voice. So, you know, it's funny that that's how it starts. (Norah Jones, as interviewed by Stanton & Toogood, 2016)

While covering a song generally means to interpret a song originally written, published/released or sung by another artist, exactly *what* an interpreting singer is *covering* requires consideration. In listening to cover songs, the interpreting singer is obviously mimicking all, or at least most, of the lyrics, the melody, and at times, the ways in which it is sung. A closer look at the ways that the singing voice is covered reveal elements of artistic mimicry, or borrowing, of vocal nuances and stylistic idioms. This act of covering impacts on the vocal artistry, and may influence or hinder their artistry. The resulting cover song is also impacted. Many singers, and in particular, many singer-songwriters, use this tradition in several contexts. Some of these include singing cover songs as a pragmatic and practical tool for learning songs and singing, to perform a requested song for an event, and lastly, to present an individual version of the song. Cover songs are a ground for experimentation and carrying tradition:

> Covers are souvenirs of songs that are great, or good, favourite or familiar, songs that strike a chord or capture a moment, recall a person, place, event ritual or still. A reminder of why we learned to play the song. Why it made us laugh or cry; sing along or dance. They cue chronicle and context - the who, what, where and when, and the reasons why we liked the song in the first place.

[20] Cover songs refer to the performance of another artist's song. Covering a song; or to cover a song, are colloquial statements that infer to a singer performing and/or releasing a song that is not their own original work. It is common practice to perform cover songs in many performance contexts. These include bands and gig performances but also in recordings and releases.

> And remind us why the song is worth repeating, reciting, replaying, revisiting, rediscovering. (Plasketes, 2010, p. 38)

To the singer-songwriter, value of performing a cover song is twofold. One (1) is that it is a way of building rapport and acceptance with an audience who associate such songs as markers of moments of their life, and thus defining and warranting mimicry and (2) a potential entry point to the craft of original vocality and vocal creativity of their own. Interestingly, in Plasketes' (2010) work, many of the interpreting singers he quotes are in fact singer-songwriters in their own right, and the works that are discussed as being covered, are also the works of singer-songwriters. Paul Weller, a singer-songwriter who released a cover album titled *Studio 150* (Weller, 2004), states:

> I decided to cover songs that weren't particularly my favourites but ones I could interpret, songs I could play around with and make my own. (Singer-songwriter Paul Weller as quoted in Plasketes, 2010, p. 29)

This statement suggests a sense of vocal exploration and expressive experimentation cloaked as musical interpretation. Yet interestingly, the singer-songwriters whose interview statements are quoted in Plasketes (2010) rarely discuss their own singing voice. Perhaps this may be suggestive of the *non-conscious*, and implicitly embodied use of the voice. This is highlighted in the following two perspectives of cover songs, as quoted by two singer-songwriters (Plasketes, 2010):

> I learned the song mainly because I felt like I could make it my own. This is more challenging than any song I've ever written. (Singer-songwriter Luka Bloom, as quoted in Plasketes, 2010, p. 29-30)

According to Plasketes (2010) the "adaptation process" can also be "natural" or "accidental" (p. 31). Adaptation by the singing voice is evidenced in the following statement by folk singer-songwriter Eliza Carthy:

> Traditional music is a blank page. You can never imagine what the person who sang an old song originally sounded like. (Singer-songwriter Eliza Carthy, as quoted in Plasketes, 2010, p. 30)

The fact that *imagination* is mentioned in the context of singing traditional folk music poses the possibility that a form of audiation takes place in the process of cover singing. In the above statement, no reference exists as to how a song is delivered, and shows that a level of creative vocal use occurs. It also leads to questioning what form of audiation, and/or other forms of imagination, might take place in the context of covering another singer's song where another voice is heard. This could possibly be seen as a marker of subtle vocal enculturation, where performed cover songs become

the resultant expression. Additionally, cover singing also highlights the potential of vocal interpretation as a form of personal expression:

> Once the song is in your mouth it's just going to come out the way you are. (Lord, 2002, as cited in Plasketes, 2010, p. 30)

The clear potentiality of the voice as a marker of *the self*, and as a conduit of persona irrespective of what is sung, is evidenced in the statement above. Singer-songwriters belong in the "song's lineage" and a tradition of "versions and voices, originals and offspring" (Plasketes, 2010, p. 37), a lineage in which the voice is clearly at the forefront, and "styles, genres, periods and generations" are handed down from one artist to another. Cover songs are a useful example of how two different singers can elicit two sets of meaning and interpretation through a change in its vocal delivery. In addition, there is a modern parallel to the aforementioned Folk traditions of song documentation and musical dissemination. Singer-songwriters may choose to cover songs for new, contemporary and personal purposes, carrying on an albeit adopted version of oral singer-songwriter traditions:

> Songs need new voices to sing them in places they've never been sung in order to stay alive. (Singer-songwriter Emmylou Harris, as quoted in Plasketes, 2010, p. 35)

Covering a song, in essence, provides a means for songs to appeal to, or communicate and engage with, contemporary and ever-changing contexts. In this process, it is possible that the voice enables the opportunity for delivering new constructs of musical meaning and purpose. It is also possible that, through the covering of songs, singer-songwriters learn song structure, delivery and even self-accompaniment skills.

2.3.3 Vocal creativity, self-expression and communication

Frith (1996) states that we hear "someone's life in their voice" (Frith, 1996, p. 186), and while discussing the vocal quality of singer Billie Holiday, adds that the singer's voice shows "a life that's there despite and not because of the singer's craft, a voice that says who they really are, an art that only exists because of what they've suffered." (Frith, 1996, p. 186). Additionally, vocal expression, given its embodiment, is said to be a "very personal, and an extremely sensitive form of emotional and social communication" (Uhlig & Baker, 2015). This statement raises the question of *how* singing portrays lived experiences and emotion (Bhatara, Tirovolas, Duan, Levy & Levitin, 2011; Bachorowski & Owren, 2006). Hughes (2013) offers insight on the

potentiality of the singing voice and its use in popular culture musics[21] (Hughes, 2010; PCM), stating that "the singing voice in PCM explores, improvises [and] communicates in ways that are characteristic of the individual singer" (Hughes, 2013, p. 13). The individualistic characteristics of the voice may therefore effectively allow for the self-expression of lived experiences (Hughes, 2014). Vocal originality is also discussed by Hughes (2010), stating that singing creatively might see the singer "incorporate originality in learned ornamentation or spontaneously improvised words, sounds and phrases". Additionally, creative singing "may be expressed through unique vocal phrasing and accented words, as well as in the vocal tone and dynamics" (p. 249).

Perhaps it is through these vocally creative and potentially original (at least to the singer) deliveries of song that singer-songwriters impart and express their lived experiences. However, when associating life experience to a vocal characteristic, it is important to acknowledge that vocal sounds and their respective potential meanings, if any, are naturally a source of subjectivity and audience interpretation. While expressive traits may be described, its meaning exists within the intent of the singer and the discernment of the listener. Additionally, musical style and genres inherently contain respective rules of engagement which add further meaning and context to a sung performance (Tagg, 2013; Eckstein, 2010). Without the voice, a song's meaning and quality changes. Therefore, the role of vocal and musical characteristics such as timbre, tone, delivery, rhythm (Olwage, 2006; Fales, 2005, 2002) prosody, and even paralinguistics (Lacasse, 2010) play a part in the construction of a song's aesthetic.

In the realm of speech and communication, vocal delivery using expressive speaking has been found to affect perception (Laukka, Juslin & Bresin, 2005; Juslin & Laukka, 2003). Additionally, the role of code switching (Blair, 2011), in which a speaker "adjusts [their] communication depending on [the] setting and [the] audience" (p. 250) in order to best deliver their intended content or to elicit a different response from their audience. As a form of communication, the voice is what "connect us to others [in which] the exchange of sound and energy enable us to resonate with each other, helping to break through walls of loneliness and isolation to form bonds with community"

[21] The term and definition of Popular Culture Musics (Hughes, 2010), or PCM, is used throughout this thesis when referring to contemporary and/or popular music. PCM encompasses "all musical styles in popular culture", and "eliminates potential confusion stemming from the use of the term "contemporary", broadens the narrowness of the term "pop" and lessens the connotation of music as "commodity" as not all performances or musical styles are "commercial" in their primary intent" (Hughes, 2010, p. 245).

(Austin, 2011, p. 13). If vocal nuances and expressive sounds are linked to how a spoken statement is perceived, it seems to follow that the vocal delivery of lyrics in singing impacts on its resultant interpretation and that lyrical delivery relies on the singing voice to best communicate a song's intent. Different vocal qualities may be used by singers in a creative way that, when isolated from lyrics and music, contain qualities that are perceived to communicate holistic aspects of both the song and the person. Singers can therefore also affect not only the melody and pragmatic arrangement of a song, but also its meaning and aesthetic quality. This is highly relevant to all singers. In relation to this research specifically, singer-songwriters typically perform their own original songs and therefore the vocal ways in which they deliver lyric and the aesthetic qualities of the voice potentially affect song meaning.

Timbre is a quality that is arguably be one of the most readily audible, and evocative, characteristics of the voice (Eerola, Ferrer & Alluri, 2012). The discourse that exists in relation to vocal timbre is rightly cautious to describe and define it. Indeed, "timbre is resistant to unambiguous definition" (Eerola et al*.,* 2012, p. 49) given the accompanying subjectivity and adjectival nature that is intrinsically linked to listening to and/or describing music, and more specifically, timbral qualities. Fales (2002) also states, "we're not deaf to timbre: we hear it, we use it - no one has much trouble telling instruments apart - but we have no language to describe it" (Fales, 2002, p. 57). In singing, it is generally easy to tell voices apart. Two singers will rarely sing a song in the same way. Yet in order to discuss timbre, particularly in relation to vocal timbre, some parameters are required. Fales (2002) offers a solution that will be utilised for the purpose of this research, particularly in the investigation of the singer-songwriter voice and voice use within the creation of songs:

> To the general listener, pitch and loudness are variable characteristics of sound, timbre is a condition; pitch and loudness are things a sound does, timbre is what a sound is. (Fales, 2002, p. 58)

It may therefore be argued that, where the *limb* is the object that *performs,* then timbre *is* the *grain* of the voice (Barthes*,* 1977, p. 188). In this context, vocal timbre and vocal creativity may be described as the consolidation of the physical and the perceptual, a signifier of the person and their environment and the use of the voice in an actively creative way. This is often evident in the singing voices found in specific socio-cultural environments or genres. For instance, rock music may lend to a particular vocal style "that doesn't reward a 'sung' sound" (Soto-Morettini, 2006, p. 136) or clear tone

atypical of other genres. Such sound may be utilised by singers of the genre to punctuate and highlight their vocal performance. In contrast, gospel and soul music genres are sung differently to rock, and often utilise a clearer tone and "an extremely melismatic approach" (Soto-Morettini, 2006, p. 110) in which phrases are heavily improvised and vowel sounds are typically lengthened and embellished. The vocal melisma[22], a popular stylistic vocal rooted in gospel, blues genre, is a common vocal device used in popular music of all kinds, but more specifically, pop, R&B and even country music. The creaky singing voice is often used in pop music, and a breathy vocal tone is often utilised in folk. The use of such idiosyncrasies is unique to every singer. According to Frith (1996), "human tones […] are themselves meaningful" (p. 159). Different vocal qualities may be used by singer-songwriters and when isolated from lyrics and music, contain qualities that transport and communicate the holistic story of the song. They can therefore also affect not only the melody and pragmatic arrangement of a song, but also its meaning and aesthetic quality.

2.4 Songwriting

Songs are an important element of everyday living. Not only are they sources of enjoyment, they are also known to be sources of personal support from which to draw reflective thought, learning or understanding (Thurman & Welch, 2000; Middleton, 2001; Scherer, 1995). As popular music history typically reflects social and cultural histories, well-known singer-songwriters are known to have contributed significantly by writing songs that portray and communicate social issues, often as a call for social change or political action (Cross, 2017; Rosenthal & Flacks, 2011; Lankford Jr., 2010)[23]. Songs are the merging of lyrics, music, and voice. Songs therefore combine diverse sources of meaning (Tagg, 2013). In this section, literature related to the song, the songwriting process, and the emergence of the singer-songwriter is discussed.

[22] A vocal melisma is the rhythmic and fast singing of several notes, often sung on the same vowel sound.

[23] Additionally, there are curated collections of archived songs and works related specifically to historical and cultural contexts. Two available collections can be accessed online through the National Library of Australia (such as the *Australian Patriotic Music – Federation of Australia* collection, National Library of Australia, N.D.) and the American Library of Congress (such as *The Library of Congress Celebrates The Songs of America*, Library of Congress, N.D.). The historical and cultural contributions of singer-songwriters can be seen in these resources.

2.4.1 Songwriting processes

Songwriting as a craft is widely discussed (such as Williams & Williams, 2017, 2016; Bennett, 2012) and, like singing, has several components. As musical enculturation begins early in life and progresses through to adulthood (Green, 2002), artists are likely to be versed in some level of musical and singing skill prior to approaching the task of songwriting. At the point in which a person first decides to write a song, they will have encultured vocal and musical traits to use as tools in songwriting (McIntyre, 2008). McIntyre (2008) conducted an ethnographic investigation on the creativity of 83 songwriters, some of whom were noted Australian singer-songwriters. In this study, Csikszentmihalyi's (2015, 1997) systems model of creativity was utilised as a framework to determine and investigate songwriter creativity. McIntyre (2008) identified that "popular music songwriting appears to be governed less by precise rules than it is by convention" (p. 46) and that the craft of songwriting has various components related to "formal structure, conceptual schema, or set of generative conventions that organize the experience of music into song". The components identified by McIntyre (2001, 2008) to be "constitutive aspects" of a song (McIntyre, 2001, p. 110) are:

> 1. lyrics and melody, 2. form and structure, 3, rhythmic components, 4. simple harmonic components, 5. accompaniment, arrangement and orchestration, and 6. performance and production characteristics that enable their work to be manifest in a material form. (McIntyre, 2008, p. 47)

In relation to singer-songwriters, the above framework applies for the creation of songs, particularly due to its inclusion of sung lyric and the primary significance placed on lyric and melody[24] (McIntyre, 2008, p. 46). In relation to the overall knowledge and skillsets required by songwriters, McIntyre (2008) adds that the previously aforementioned aspects construct the conventions required for songwriting:

> It is this set of components that constitutes the conventions of the symbol system, the knowledge structures, and the cultural capital residing in the field of works, that is, the domain that songwriters draw on to produce a contemporary Western popular song. (McIntyre, 2008, p. 47)

The popular, mainstream song is discussed by Bennett (2011) as one that conforms to very specific characteristics. Upon analysing mainstream singles and albums charts,

[24] The inclusion of lyrics would typically distinguish popular songs from classical or contemporary compositions and instrumental pieces.

Bennett (2011, p. 2) compiled common traits exhibited by popular songs. Such traits include "rhyme – usually at the end of lyric phrases", that the song's title is typically included in the lyric, and even that the song is "sung between a two-octave range from bottom C to top C (C2 to C4), focusing heavily on the single octave A2 to A3" (p. 3). The popular song form is additionally often "based on verse/chorus form or AABA form", in "4/4 time; [maintains] one diatonic or modal key" and is likely to be "between 2 and 4 minutes in length" (Bennett, 2011, p. 3), referring to the conventions of song arrangement and form. Similar to singing, creating a song requires for multiple segmented skills to work together. These are skills that, in the realm of popular musicians (Green, 2002) and songwriters (McIntyre, 2008, 2001), are acquired over time.

Songwriting as an activity may be done alone, or collaboratively. Collaborative songwriting is a partnership common in popular musics. The act of collaboration not only results in songs but also the sharing of skillsets and ideals. Bennett (2011) states the following in relation to songwriting in mainstream or professional contexts:

> When two or more songwriters collaborate, they will share a desire for their song to be heard by others; this is frequently economically-driven, but also born of a creative and artistic goal – to make an object that communicates emotionally. (Bennett, 2011, p. 3)

The following section elaborates on the concept of songwriting as therapy.

2.4.2 Songwriting as therapy, meaning making and personal development

Songwriting has been documented as a form of cognitive therapy (Bruscia, 1998) and has been explored and used as a clinical tool for personal development and psychotherapy (Baker, 2015; Baker & Wigram, 2005). Within the field of music therapy, Wigram and Baker (2005) state that songwriting is "generally reported as an intervention used in one-to-one therapy" and that songwriting within groups may "encourage social interaction, group cohesion and feelings of group supportiveness" (Wigram & Baker, 2005, p. 16). Ruud (2005) states that "music therapists have always recognized songs and singing as one of their main approaches" to therapy, claiming that songwriting is "one of the most powerful methods in music therapy" (p. 9). Songs, and the singing of songs, provide an "experience of how to symbolically represent the world, and of how we can use metaphors to understand the meaning of what is happening to us" (Ruud, 2005, p. 9), adding that "singer-songwriters are the heroes of

today's popular culture" (p. 10) due to the combination of singing, songwriting, and the propensity for both forms to "chronicle" not only "the private and personal, but also […] everyday occurrences" (p. 10). The process of songwriting is said to allow music therapists and their respective patients/clients to "[appropriate] popular culture in order to help clients formulate, ventilate, express and communicate", boldly adding that "the song gives the client new context, a freedom and strength to bypass his or her own vulnerability" (Ruud, 2005, p. 10).

It is therefore interesting that in the context of music therapy, the focus of songwriting turns from that of creating a pragmatic "musical work" (McIntyre, 2001, p. 110) to one that is potentially used explicitly for self-development. In such contexts, songwriting is likely facilitated and prompted in some way through the therapist/client relationship. Yet, if indeed music therapy patients/clients benefit from songwriting processes in the ways that Ruud (2005) states, it provides impetus for investigating what potential personal benefits take place, and if self-development occurs, in the creative process of singer-songwriters. Perhaps this is due to the fact that music and songs enable the listener to reflect on their experiences and is considered in music therapy as one of the "ways that human beings explore emotions" (Bruscia, 1998). While music therapy discourse tend to discuss the personal and self-development benefits of songwriting, such as "self-exploration", "coping and/or adjusting" and "life review" (Baker & Wigram, 2005, p. 19), literature related to songwriting, and the musical creativities involved in songwriting (Burnard, 2012) are specifically inclined towards the craft and processes related to the production of a song. Both perspectives are relevant to the following study, particularly as singer-songwriters are known for reflective and introspective songwriting.

2.4.3 Voice use in songwriting

Whether passively or actively, listeners respond to a song, its musical elements, its sung lyrics and/or the sound of a human voice singing. Frith (1996) suggests that, as listeners, we engage with songs and even adopt the likeness of singers by "singing along, moving our throat and chest muscles […] but also emotionally and psychologically, taking on (in fantasy) the vocal personality too" (Frith, 1996, p. 198). It therefore seems relevant that the singing voice is addressed as a part of the

songwriting process, particularly as such sympathetic[25] engagement arises from listening to songs. Yet, qualitative information on the use of the singing voice in a vocally creative and deliberately expressive way within the process of songwriting is rarely explicitly discussed. There are glimpses of this in Burnard's (2012) study, in which deliberate voice use is acknowledged in the songwriting process of one singer-songwriter participant. While discussing songwriting through *jamming*[26], and musical experimentation and improvisation within the jazz idiom, the participant states:

> I feel so much freedom and so much confidence, because you have the freedom to make music and experiment, and improvise […] You've got a set pattern that you're playing within a piece, and you play or sing variants. You go where your voice takes you. (Singer-songwriter Pippa Andrew, as quoted in Burnard, 2012, p. 84)

This statement provides some evidence that the voice is used in the songwriting process. The use of the word *where* alludes to the voice as containing qualities that influence the direction of a song or songwriting session. However, while links were made between the participant's socio-cultural influences, musical creativities and their music, there was no discussion on the connection between the musical creativities of the participant and their singing voice, nor any connection made between the voice and its role within the songwriting process. It provides a point from which to further investigate how, as the participant eloquently states, the "voice takes you" (p. 84) and what influence this has on songwriting and creative process of contemporary singer-songwriters.

In a brief discussion on the "construction" of "sound identity", Burnard (2012, p. 83) considers the voice as a means of conveying personalised emotion and expressivity:

> Most highly successful singers are also celebrities who construct subjectivities, not simply through their music but through the construction of a particularized sound identity. The strength of the audience interaction and feedback depend very much on the performers: applause; exchanges of physical gestures between performers and listeners, the song itself; and the particular qualities of the singing. (Burnard, 2012, p. 83)

The brief mention of "the particular qualities of the singing" (Burnard, 2012, p. 83) is an acknowledgement of the voice in action. Collectively, such qualities of singing may be placed along a wide spectrum of applicable characteristics. The personalised features of a singer's voice, their performing and/or improvisational style and the nuances used

[25] The term sympathetic is utilised here to describe the physical response or action attained by listening to a song, as described by Frith (1996).

[26] 'Jamming' or 'Jam' is a colloquial term used to describe informal musical performances or casual practice sessions where two or more musicians engage in musical activity.

within the genre being performed are all important factors that greatly add to the overall sound that audiences interact with:

> Beyond the assumed individuality of the voice, however, methods of expression necessarily tend to be codified in order to be understood by others: emotional power is portrayed not only through the melody but also through the voice. (Burnard, 2012, p. 83)

This suggests that the voice imparts *codified* characteristics which may possibly influence the constructed meaning of a song. It also suggests that voices are individual, as the vocal performance of a singer can differ from another, therefore further influencing how a song is presented and how its story is delivered. Burnard's (2012) identification of several musical creativities, and the influence of a singer-songwriter's habitus and creative capital, will be used in the context of this study to identify potential influencers that impact on the voice, the vocal performance and the creative process of the singer-songwriter. It offers points from which to question and investigate the relationship between influencers and the creative process, and to vocal delivery, and how these external and internal influences impact on the voice of the singer, their songwriting process, the songs that are created and subsequently, the messages that audiences hear.

In relation to the construction of songs, Frith (1996) discusses songs as meaningful. Additionally, Frith (1996) discusses the voice (Frith, 1996, p. 183) and provides a view on its value within songs through its inherent ability to utter "words being spoken or sung in human tones which are themselves "meaningful" signs of persons and personality" (Frith, 1996, p. 183). This suggests the identification of a person and the possibility of getting to know a person through the listening of their songs. In observing the voice of singers of popular musics, Frith (1996) demonstrates the implications of engaging the term *voice*. For example, when reading lyrics, the reader may be the dominant voice heard (internally or externally, when lyrics are read to others). Additionally, there are other voices that act as protagonists in the background of the text; the writers of the lyric being read. The realm of the singer-songwriter encompasses "the voice of the lyricist, the author, the person putting the words in the "I's" mouth" (Frith, 1996, p. 184) exists, and this multiplicity is highlighted in the following statement:

> We hear the singer's voice, of course, but how that voice relates to the voices described above is the interesting question. To sing a lyric doesn't simplify the

> question of who is speaking to whom; it makes it more complicated. (Frith, 1996, p. 184)

Additionally, the following statement is also relevant in the study of singer-songwriters:

> What is the relationship between the "voice" we hear in a song and the author or composer of that song? Between the voice and the singer? (Frith, 1996, p. 185)

Frith (1996) offers a four part approach to observing the voice in songs based on its ability to portray meaning, personality and story:

> What is the relationship between the voice as a carrier of sounds, the singing voice, making "gestures", and the voice as a carrier of words, the speaking voice, making "utterances"? The issue is not meaning (words) versus absence of meaning (music), but the relationship between two different sorts of meaning-making, the tensions and conflicts between them. There's a question here of power: who is to be master, words or music? And what makes the voice interesting is it makes meaning in these two ways simultaneously. We have, therefore, to approach the voice under four headings: as a musical instrument; as a body; as a person; and as a character. (Frith, 1996, p. 187)

It may be argued that although it has its practicalities, the model presented by Frith (1996) is very much a view that is reliant in audience perceptivity and subjectivity. Additionally, this reflects the voice after influential factors that place prior to the performance of, and perhaps even the writing of, songs. It does not answer how a voice becomes how it sounds due to the impact of enculturated (Green, 2002) musical influences, nor does it relate influence to the actual creative processes that individual singers utilise. It may be argued that as all four traits are held within the body of the person, they are too intertwined and reliant on each other that any attempt to define each one, associatively defines the other. It would be therefore simpler and clearer to acknowledge the singer, and in the context of this research, the singer-songwriter, as a host for many interjecting processes, including those that fall under the umbrella of singing and songwriting, and all belonging to the singer *self*.

2.5 The singer-songwriter

Within the scope and study of contemporary music, singer-songwriters are often referred to as artists who simply "[sing] the songs they have composed themselves" (Till, 2016, p. 291). Indeed, while "the name may appear to simply refer to an artist who writes and performs his or her own material, it also signifies a web of assumptions around what constitutes quality and value within popular music" (Haworth, 2013, p. 72). In a sense, it has been this assumed *value* that has driven many to assess and study

the songs written by well-known singer-songwriters[27]. In this section, literature specifically related to the singer-songwriter context is discussed. It offers a summary of the historical underpinnings of the singer-songwriter, vocal expression through song and how the contemporary singer-songwriter is situated in recent literature.

2.5.1 Origins of early song traditions and popular culture musics

Before the turn of the 20th century, Charles Darwin (1872, 1887) philosophised that humans may have communicated strong emotion through music long before the conventions of language existed:

> It appears probable that the progenitors of man, either the males or females or both sexes, before acquiring the power of expressing their mutual love in articulate language, endeavoured to charm each other with musical notes and rhythm. (Darwin, 1887, p. 639)

Additionally, Darwin (1871) also discussed a connection between the mimicry of naturalistic sounds, vocal communication and singing (Darwin, 1871):

> I cannot doubt that language owes its origin to the imitation and modification of various natural sounds [and that humans] first used his voice in producing true musical cadences, that is in singing […] that this power would have been especially exerted during the courtship of the sexes--would have expressed various emotions, such as love, jealousy [and] triumph. (Darwin, 1871, p. 132-133)

While Darwin's (1887, 1871) comments are clearly philosophical in nature, it is interesting that the concepts and themes of *love*, *emotion,* and therefore, of *relationships*, were perceived by Darwin as a potential purpose for musical expression, and that such perceptions were documented before the advent of 20th century popular music. Anecdotally, such concepts and themes have typically provided context to songs throughout history and the personal and introspective style typified by singer-songwriters. Additionally, Darwin (1871) highlights the human need to connect with one another through vocalised expression – a sentiment carried through the development of popular culture musics (PCM; Hughes, 2014, 2010) from popular[28] movements that began to emerge by the late 1800s (Lord & Snelson, 2008). The concepts and traditions typically associated to the singer-songwriter can be traced back

[27] For instance, the persona and music of singer-songwriter Adele has been the topic of critical discussion (such as Suhadolnik, 2016; Till, 2016).

[28] Lord and Snelson (2008) defines "Popular" or "Pop" music broadly as "terms that cover such variety of styles and ideologies that their scope is open to wide interpretations" (p. 76). More specifically, these exhibit specific and definitive elements that include "mass dissemination, commercial focus, transience" yet also, from an ideological perspective, "provoke questions of quality, cultural hierarchy and intrinsic artistic value" (Lord & Snelson, 2008, p. 76).

to the oral traditions of the *troubadours*, *trouvères*, the Minnesinger and *jongleurs*. They were "court poets and singers" of France and Germany during the high middle ages (Lord & Snelson, 2008, p. 17) whose works helped distinguish the first traditions of secular music. They were travelling *minstrels* who sung or chanted poetry, written mainly on themes of courtly love. Additionally, they were known to be "accomplished secular poets and musicians" and also as "instrumentalists [who] performed in a wide variety of contexts" (Lord & Snelson, 2008, p. 17).

The essence of this musical and poetic craftmanship is repeated in popular music history, where popular forms of *singing* and *songwriting* became significant to the development of popular music. While some artists may have been "referred to as 'singer and songwriter' as early as the 1870s" (Shumway, 2016, p. 11), it was not until the mid-1960s that the term was utilised to distinguish and commercially "promote folk and protest singers" (Wise, 2012, p. 430). Some of the vocal styles and movements in popular music history that preceded the emergence of the singer-songwriter as a commercial category include, but are not limited to, operetta, or the "popular development of opera", in the "1860s to the 1920s" [29], Musical Theatre, the "American Popular Song", the Blues, and Jazz (Lord & Snelson, 2008, pp. 76-78). Such styles led to "the establishment of core genres and markets" prior to the 1950s and subsequently gave way to intercultural genres that "subdivided and intermingled in ever-complex combinations, especially across ethnic boundaries" which "smaller branches [of music run] alongside parent forms" (Lord & Snelson, 2008, p. 86). These movements led to the development of Rock, Country, Folk, Rhythm and Blues, and Pop. However, the "conventionally separate roles of singer and songwriter", and of composers that dominated early popular musics "began to blur in the 1960s through the rise of popular song as political protest" (Lord & Snelson, 2008, p. 87). This overlap and intermingling of artforms saw the emergence of singer-songwriters whose songs drew on "the biographical quality and the oral tradition of [the] blues, and especially folk song" (Lord & Snelson, 2008, p. 87).

[29] Which later informed the development of musical theatre (Lord & Snelson, 2008, p. 78).

2.5.2 Emergence of the singer-songwriter in popular music history

The current notion of the singer-songwriter is said to have emerged in the mid-1960s–1970s (Shumway, 2016; Wise, 2012). Stemming from the folk revival (Wise, 2012, p. 430), it was in the early 1970s that the singer-songwriter established "a new niche in the popular music market" (Shumway, 2016, p. 11). This *niche* has sparked discussion and debate as the "aesthetically loaded" (Wise, 2012, p. 430) term grapples to accommodate the broad nature of artists identified as singer-songwriters. According to Wise (2012), the singer-songwriter "dichotomy could be traced between folk aesthetics [30] and the persona of the singer-songwriter" (Wise, 2012, p. 430), highlighting the term as both a musical convention and an artistic tradition. Additionally, the term was initially considered appropriate for "a performer whose self-presentation and musical form fit a certain model" (Shumway, 2016, p. 11), or performers who depicted "emotional honesty, intelligence, authenticity and artistic autonomy" (Wise, 2012, p. 430). More specifically, and particularly in relation to the industry and/or categorisation and marketing of specific artist-written musics, the term itself has been "used in a narrower sense in order to refer to a group of mostly white, Anglo-American musicians who achieved critical and commercial success in the early 1970s" (Appel, 2017, p. 7). Additionally, the delineation of traditional folk and the popular singer-songwriter is also informed, in part, by song themes. Shumway (2016) discusses that:

> The folk revival of the 1950ss and early 1960s had little to do with reflections of individual lives. Folk music of this era was a celebration of community. It promised to put the listener in touch with 'the people', and even when its lyrics were not explicitly political, the identification of it with the people made it a political statement. (Shumway, 2016, p. 13)

In contrast, early singer-songwriters wrote songs that often centered around personal and introspective themes. Indeed, Dunaway and Beer (2010) rightly point out that the term singer-songwriter was typically applied to commercially represented artists:

> As the chasm between traditional and popularized (singer-songwriter) music broadened, the two sides when their own ways. Or, rather, many ways. (Dunaway & Beer, 2010, p. 168)

[30] In the earlier history of Folk, songs were documented and shared through generations by oral tradition and depicted themes of country, land and community (Shumway, 2016; Lord & Snelson, 2008).

This highlights the split between traditional folk and the emerging popular forms of *singer-songwriter* music.

2.5.3 The contemporary singer-songwriter

Defining the term singer-songwriter proves challenging. As the singer-songwriter implies an array of creative processes, Simos (2017) rightly states that:

> There are hidden complexities in this daunting assemblage of creative tasks – all once immeasurably ancient, yet in their juxtaposition distinctively contemporary. These tasks combine – and to an extent, conflate – a set of skills that, in other musical cultures, and in other Euro-American musical eras and genres, have typically been partitioned across distinct creative roles. (Simos, 2017, p. 17)

According to some discussions (such as Appel, 2017; Wise, 2012), two general approaches to the term exist; one that presents the singer-songwriter from a musical and stylistic perspective, and as a music genre typified by artists "who write and perform their own material" (Wise, 2012, p. 430). This is coupled by the use of "acoustic instruments (the acoustic guitar being the most emblematic)" (Appel, 2017, p. 7). The other approach presents a view of the singer-songwriter as an ideological persona, and as an "aesthetically loaded" format of artistry that implies "emotional honesty, intelligence, authenticity and artistic autonomy" (Wise, 2012, p. 430), despite the fact that specific songs and artists of contrasting genres may easily be prescribed the same description. Appel (2017) discusses a different approach that seems to approach the singer-songwriter as performativity (Neumark, 2010). Neumark (2010) defines performativity as "something that doesn't just describe or represent but performs or activates" (p. 96). Appel (2017) proposes that "we approach [the singer-songwriter] neither as a genre nor a format but a *performative disposition*, one that is evident in the works of many contemporary musicians who would not be conventionally identified as singer-songwriters" (Appel, 2017, p. 8). Appel (2017) describes this concept further:

> The term "performative disposition" refers to a defined, relatively stable set of aesthetic and rhetorical principles that can be tactically deployed by musicians working in different styles and genres, whether throughout their entire career, over the course of a whole album, or just in a single performance or recording. (Appel, 2017, p. 8)

The above description however, seems to imply that the singer-songwriter disposition as fleeting, and solely reliant on the performance of a song. It warrants asking what of the singer-songwriter who identifies as one, yet has no interest in performing per se, yet utilise the set of principles that adhere to atypical singer-songwriter creativity. Appel (2017) makes a good point in highlighting the presumptive nature implied by the typical way in which singer-songwriters are described; "that since the performer ("singer") and the author ("songwriter") are one, then

the work itself necessarily reflects an actual personal truth about the musician who wrote and performed it" (p. 8), yet this point assumes that all singer-songwriters perform in the literal sense[31]. To delimit an approach based on performativity may prohibit the discovery of themes that are relevant to the craft of singing and songwriting, that do not hinge on an intent to perform[32]. However, Appel (2017) proposes "four central principles" (p. 9) to this approach:

> [1.] the foregrounding of the ordinary human voice, as opposed to vocal or instrumental virtuosity [2.] the fabrication of a sonic environment which connotes intimacy, as opposed to spectacle [and 3.] the indication of a direct relation to the individual listener, as opposed to a generalized appeal to a mass audience. And [4.] the connotation of an air of sincerity, as opposed to irony or cynicism. (Appel, 2017, p. 9)

All four principles are helpful in that, as a performative disposition, they draw attention to the holistic aspects of the singer-songwriter. However, there is no evidence to support whether each principle is indeed conclusive of the nature of the singer-songwriter, particularly with respect to singer-songwriters who strongly identify as such, yet may not adhere to all principles. For instance, given that contemporary popular music singing is different, and therefore must be observed without comparison, to classical forms of singing, it is likely that within the realm of popular musics, there are singer-songwriters who exist and enjoy embellishing their songs with highly technical and performatively difficult vocal *virtuosity*.

2.5.4 Musical creativities of contemporary singer-songwriters

While there are some evidence-based approaches to singing, artistry and songwriting[33] which the following study is able to draw from for both evidence and research methodology[34] (such as Burnard, 2012; Hughes, 2010; McIntyre, 2008), there are limited schematic frameworks that lend to a holistic approach to the study of the contemporary singer-songwriter — one that considers the singing voice, the authorship of the artist and the creative processes that underpin songwriting. One such research is the musical creativities framework proposed by Burnard (2012). This was developed through the qualitative research of different popular musicians[35]. Included in Burnard's

[31] For example, community songwriting groups or online songwriting groups (such as the *I Heart Songwriting Club*; see https://www.iheartsongwriting.com) in which singer-songwriters may be members of, may often be educational and community/social-oriented. While they may offer advise or even offer opportunities to perform, not all members engage in live or recorded performance, but may identify as singer-songwriters who pursue this artform in isolation.

[32] Additionally, performing musicians may also be commercially motivated and such motivations may affect the intents and creative processes that precede performance.

[33] More specifically, the singing and songwriting of contemporary, popular music artists.

[34] Such frameworks will be discussed in the next chapter; Chapter 3: Research design and methodology.

[35] Burnard's (2012) study included the investigation of popular musicians, such as DJ's, bands and also, singer-songwriters.

(2012) participant sample were two contemporary singer-songwriters. When describing the musical creativities of singer-songwriters specifically, Burnard (2012, p. 80) focuses on the overall socio-cultural context, or "intercultural creativity" (Burnard, 2012, p. 96) of the singer-songwriter through the analysis of the *cultural capital* and *habitus* contained within their practice. The social positioning of the singer-songwriters was discussed, and issues that influenced their work were provided (Burnard, 2012, pp. 72-97). These included the context, and culture/s, that surrounded their work, their genre of choice, their professional or non-professional work, and their performance history.

It is difficult to deduce the information contained within the habitus of two singer-songwriters, and to study the culture surrounding them, without first acknowledging that the word *culture* is a complicated term to discuss. In a discussion of performance as a key term, Bell (2008) claims that the term *culture* is broad and complex. It is a term that folds into, and stems out of, the subject it is trying to observe. This is validated by Burnard's (2012) study, which uncovered multiple interrelating and overlapping extrinsic and intrinsic musical creativities and influences that are relevant to all musical performers, musicians and singers as a whole. Although the focus of Burnard's (2012) section on singer-songwriters is limited to the study of two participants, the information provided offers a broad view into the elements that influence and impact them and provides brief glimpses in relation to the connection between the voice and the songwriting process from which further questioning and investigations can be made. Such evidence provided by Burnard (2012) and the framework of musical creativities offered by her research (see Burnard, 2012, p. 223; Figure 9.2) forms an essential starting point from which the qualitative investigation of contemporary singer-songwriters can take place. Burnard (2012), summarises the musical creativities of singer-songwriters as follows:

> These creativities include the individual, collaborative, and intercultural practices that uniquely define the songwriting process and the performance of songs, whether live, broadcast, or recorded. Individual and collaborative creativities include the overlapping practices and methods of creating songs, when compositional and improvisational modalities of creativity mediate singer-songwriters practices in ways that are different from the performance of songs, and, when, again, the performance element is inherently different in recording and live contexts. (Burnard, 2012, p. 72)

According to Burnard (2012), there is an "appropriation of other cultures" that takes place in the creative process of singer-songwriters, where "sharing authorship is

increasingly the norm" (p. 73). Such "intercultural creativity" impacts their creative practice (p. 72):

> Singer/songwriter's creative activities or practices are endowed with cultural capital to varying extents, depending on: (i) particular ways of working with material; (ii) the reworking of this material in ways which interpenetrate and emerge from one another; and (iii) the partly unconscious 'taking in' of new forms of diversity, no longer defined by geographical borders, but following cultural interchange processes in ways which highlight the singer-songwriter's own distinctive and original creations. (Burnard, 2012, p. 72)

In the concepts discussed above, Burnard (2012) does not explicitly explain the role of the singing voice, despite revealing the importance of culture. The singing voice is likely implied in Burnard's (2012) inclusion of "the performance element". It would be beneficial, therefore, given that the singing voice is a carrier of enculturation (Hughes, 2014; Meizel, 2011), that the singing voice is given consideration in this research.

2.6 Chapter summary

As songs infiltrate our daily lives, we are, whether aware or not, subjected to the neuropsychobiological and enculturated "singing self" (Hughes, 2013, p. 15) of the artists we listen to. While the literature shows information related to singing and songwriting distinctively, there is little qualitative information and evidence-based information on singer-songwriter creativity. Much of the analyses on singer-songwriters, though informative, often stem from empirical perspectives that focus on the song, rather than the embodiment of vocal creativity, the socio-cultural positioning of the person creating the song, or the purposes and motivations that lead the song creation. Additionally, while qualitative research on both well-known and lesser known singers and songwriters exist (such as Hughes, 2014; Burnard, 2012; and McIntyre, 2008), critical analyses of the singer-songwriter, though informative and are helpful to the following study, tend to discuss the work of commercial and mainstream artists — particularly those whose works became popular between the years 1970–2000 (such as Till, 2016; Brackett, 2008). Typically, these discussions circle around artists whose works and persona particularly align with the long-held characteristics associated with the traditional singer-songwriter. It is perhaps because of this that Appel (2017) argues that the contemporary singer-songwriter ought to now be viewed as a "performative disposition" (p. 8), one that any artist may move in and out of, as part of a broader "contemporary musicians toolkit" (p. 11). Appel (2017) also adds that the term need not be limited to "the aesthetic palette identified with traditional singer-songwriters"

(p. 11). Yet, this may also imply that *any* musician who sings and writes songs can identify themselves as a singer-songwriter, even if only for one song. Nevertheless, such "disposition" is responsive to "changes in cultural and musical standards and practices and the conventional meanings associated with them" (Appel, 2017, p. 11), much in the same ways that the singer-songwriter emerged from the traditions of folk (Shumway, 2016). Investigating and discussing the work of contemporary singer-songwriters, and the various practices they may associate with, is of relevance to the following study. This gap is what the current study seeks to address through the qualitative and quantitative components of the research. In addition, the singing voice of the singer-songwriter is rarely mentioned or observed in the literature surrounding singer-songwriters, despite the enculturation that may be heard and performed through vocal creativity, as Thurman and Welch (2000) state:

> The state of our neuropsychological selves is reflected in the state of our voices. Mastery or lack of mastery of self-expressive skills can contribute to, or subtract from what we sometimes refer to as self-identity, self-esteem, and self-confidence. Vocal abilities are not just valuable in preparing and presenting musical and dramatic expressions, but are quite valuable in everyday living. Fear, anxiety, social pressures, stress reaction, burnout, and depression all affect the mastery and display of self-expressive skills and self-confidence. (Thurman & Welch, 2000, p. 21)

These sentiments may be an echo of Barthes' (1977) theories on the *grain* of the voice. Instinctively, one might view the way Barthes (1977) utilises this term in the way that a piece of wood is engrained. The origins of such wood, its growing conditions and the speed of its growth inform the way it forms its own unique pattern, much in the same way that cultural production and the systems model of creativity (as discussed by McIntyre, 2008; 2016) influence the outcomes of specific artist voices and songs. This holistic view is the perspective in which the singer-songwriter ought to be discussed and perceived. As the "state of our neuropsychobiological selves is reflected in the state of our voices" (Thurman & Welch, 2000, p. 23), the question of how this *state* is manifested in the vocal sound produced by singer-songwriters and the impact it has on the singer-songwriter process is yet to be fully investigated. The following chapter presents the research design and methodology of this research. It discusses the development of a conceptual framework suitable to the qualitative investigation of singer-songwriters and the primary research questions that stem from the literature review. The key terms used in this research are explored in detail, which leads this research into the qualitative investigation of the creative practice of contemporary

singer-songwriters and the ways in which musical creativities (Burnard, 2012) underline their craft.

3 Research design and methodology

That really good feeling you get when your body is resonating with the guitar that you're holding, and the sound is coming out of you.
(Morgan Hann, Participant 19)

3.1 Introduction

The literature review illustrates that singing and songwriting are distinct yet inherently linked artforms. Each is influenced by both musical enculturation (Green, 2002) and personally lived experiences (Hughes, 2014). In order to meet the objectives of this research and to effectively investigate singer-songwriters, a defined set of parameters was required. Such parameters were used to frame the research. This chapter presents the overall research approach, design and methodology. The overarching rationale of this research is discussed. Drawing on the literature, investigative themes and areas of research are explored and a conceptual framework (Miles & Huberman, 1994) is developed. The conceptual framework offered in this chapter provides the overarching areas for investigation. In particular, it adapts the systems model of creativity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, 1990b, 1988), which as utilised in previous studies of singers, songwriters and creative people (such as Hughes, 2014; Burnard, 2012; McIntyre, 2008; Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). The conceptual framework leads to the discussion of primary research questions/sub-questions and the main objective of the research. This is followed by the research design, the methodologies used, methods of data collection and ethical conditions. The chapter concludes with a summary of the research design.

3.2 Conceptual framework

To date, there are limited qualitative studies on singer-songwriters that comprehensively consolidate singing, songwriting and personal creativity. The motivations and impetus that lead people to pursuing singing and songwriting as a craft, and the lived experiences (Hughes, 2014) that lead to their disposition (Appel, 2017), are yet to be researched. Therefore, the potential symbolism of the singing voice, the ways in which this phenomenon is considered in songwriting, and the methods of framing interdisciplinary processes engaged by singer-songwriters, are yet to be fully contextualised. Appel (2017) rightly questions and discusses that the "folk and pop elements of the singer-songwriter are stylistic" as such musically stylistic and/or

vocally expressive elements "determine *how* a singer-songwriter sounds and performs" (p. 7). Additionally, there is an "ideological" side to the singer-songwriter that "determines *what* a singer-songwriter is and *who* is deserving of this title" (Appel, 2017, p. 7). Establishing an evidence-based and comprehensive understanding of the singer-songwriter creative practice, together with determining a contemporary definition of the singer-songwriter[36], form the primary objectives of this research.

3.2.1 Theoretical grounding

Because of the complexities and the types of pluralistic creativities (Burnard, 2012) involved in singing and songwriting, the broad concepts related to the singer-songwriter require a suitable conceptual framework that addresses the person, creative processes and the creative domain and/or the field in which the person is situated. For this reason, the ideologies and theories of Bourdieu (1980, 1993) and Csikszentmihalyi (1988, 1990b, 1997), coupled with the adaptation of such theories for use in the study of musicians/songwriters (Burnard, 2012; McIntyre, 2008), form a suitable context from which contemporary singer-songwriters may be investigated. As noted, the in-depth, qualitative studies of McIntyre (2008) on professional songwriters, and of Burnard (2012) on popular musicians adopt these theories. Both studies utilise Csikszentmihalyi's (2015, 1988) systems model of creativity along with Bourdieu's (1993, 1980) concepts of cultural/social capital, habitus and the self. Burnard's study (2012) led to the development of a "synthesized framework" (see Burnard, 2012, Fig. 9.2, p. 223) in which a three-pronged triangular model draws attention to the areas of, and the relationships between, "habitus [and] person(s)", the "social systems and related capitals [to] field(s)" and the "cultural system(s) and related capitals [to] domain(s)" (p. 223). Within the center of Burnard's (2012) framework lie the "multiple musical creativities" (p. 223) that emerged in her research. This "synthesized framework" (Burnard, p. 223) integrates the work of both Csikszentmihalyi (1988) and Bourdieu (1993), and "encourages us to look beyond the dominant discourse, and to steer constantly back and forth between the circles/triangles of culture, person, and field" (Burnard, 2012, p. 223). McIntyre, Fulton and Paton (2016), in discussing the systems model of creativity and resulting production of artefacts that stem from a range

[36] See Chapter 2, Section 2.5: The singer-songwriter (p. 42) for a discussion on the definitions of the singer-songwriter.

of creative processes, state that "cultural production is a multidimensional phenomenon" (p. 2).

These approaches inform the following study through the respective theories of Csikszentmihalyi (1988) and Bourdieu (1993). In addition, the concept of *musical creativities*, identified by Burnard (2012) as a host of concepts that "can take many forms", and that may "play a wide range of functions" toward the creation of music (p. 213), offer specific musician and artist-related factors to investigate. It also suggests that various factors may exist in the creative practice of contemporary singer-songwriters. This pluralistic approach is conducive to the study of contemporary musicians, particularly as many musicians now engage in broad areas of creativity (Burnard, 2012).

This research therefore seeks to explore and investigate the various influences and processes, or musical creativities (Burnard, 2012), that underpin or influence singing, songwriting and creativity. Additionally, as this research seeks to move away from the subjective and critical analyses of songs and works, this research also seeks to explore the personal processes that precede creativity. Moore (2012) offers the following statement:

> To analyse a popular song is, of its very nature, to offer an interpretation of it, to determine what range of meaning it has, to make sense of it. Such determination, such making, is an after-the-event operation. (Moore, 2012, p. 5)

The analysis of popular music and also of popular singing, typically takes place once a song or a performance has already occurred. Indeed, even theoretical definitions of creativity tend to define creativity as a subjective concept. Csikszentmihalyi (1997) proffers that "creativity does not happen inside people's heads, but in the interaction between a person's thoughts and a sociocultural context" (p. 23). In addition, creativity is said to only be of value once it particularly "it passes social evaluation" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, p. 23). This suggests an observation and/or evaluation of creative results, such as songs, without necessarily acknowledging its associated processes. There is an argument for the study of the antecedent of creativity as a means of understanding its eventual outcomes. While theorists deconstruct the creative process to include influence, field and the impact of socio-culture (such as Csikszentmihalyi, 1988, 1997, 1990b; Frith, 1996), to define creativity based primarily on the observation of its produced outcome seemingly limits the appreciation of

creativity as being present only where a tangible product exists. In relation to singing and songwriting, the products and artefacts, such as the song or a catalogue of songs, only represent a part a broader set of musical creativities (Burnard, 2012). Neumark (2010) suggests that vocal meaning and value also come from the action of the voice. Furthermore, Neumark suggests that vocal performativity is "something that doesn't just describe or represent" (Neumark, 2010, p. 96) ideas or emotions in the way that embodied vocal qualities do (Frith, 1996), but rather, is something that "performs or activates" (Neumark, 2010, p. 96). Although Neumark's (2010) work focuses on voices in media and media art works, the concept wherein meaning is activated through performative voice use may be relevant in identifying traits in relation to the singer-songwriter voice. In songwriting specifically, the voice "as instrument" (Frith, 1996, p. 193) dictates the performed communication and delivery of lyrical content within songwriting. Frith (1996) considers the observation of the voice in popular music and suggests its study should include the voice "as a musical instrument; as a body; as a person; and as a character" (1996, p. 187). This approach is particularly relevant as singer-songwriters utilise, combine and author musical and singing skills. This includes singing as *musical instrument*, vocal embodiment as *body*, and the personally "lived experience" (Hughes, 2014, p. 287) as *person* and/or as *character*. Frith (1996) states:

> For many singers, what they are singing, a word, is valued for its physical possibilities, what it allows the mouth or throat to do […] the singing feels real rather than rehearsed; the singer is responding (like the listener) to the musical event of which they are part, being possessed by the music rather than possessing it. (Frith, 1996, p.193)

The above quote highlights the physicality of singing and the spontaneity that may be involved in engaging the voice. Contrastingly, from the perspective of the artist being "possessed" (Frith, 1996, p. 193) by music, an exploration of how the songwriting process influences and/or develops the artist and their singing voice is warranted. The following study draws on these concepts of vocal qualities (Frith, 1996) and performative voice (Neumark, 2010) to also investigate how a singer-songwriter involves the singing voice in their creative practice.

3.2.2 Development of the conceptual framework

A conceptual framework is used to explain either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied, the key factors, constructs or variables, and the "presumed relationships among them" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 18). In relation to

the study of singer-songwriters specifically, a conceptual framework is helpful in clarifying the context of investigation, and in particular, "what they do (context, characteristics, behaviour)" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 18). In effect, the conceptual framework "specifies who and what will and will not be studied" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 18) in a graphically illustrated and exploratory view. This allows the researcher to map the direction and course of the research. It allows the researcher to substantially and sequentially question elements of the research; to add and remove sections as they pertain to the study and to apply any new data or information as required.

A summation of the concepts and context of themes informed by the literature led to the development of a conceptual framework (See Figure 1: Conceptual framework and areas for investigation). This framework presents a contextual overview of the "interrelationships" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 18) between the various fields related to the research. The conceptual framework was developed in relation to the review of the literature. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that researchers "revise their frameworks, make them more precise, replace empirically feeble bins with more meaningful ones, and reconstruct relationships" until such time that the framework is finalised to be the "current version of the researcher's map of the territory being investigated"; one that becomes "more differentiated and integrated" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 20). As the review of the literature and available data progressed, the conceptual framework was adjusted accordingly to include a more detailed "visual catalogue of *roles* [sic] to be studied" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 18). Additionally, the conceptual framework allowed the researcher to pinpoint gaps within the literature and assisted in the formation of appropriate research questions.

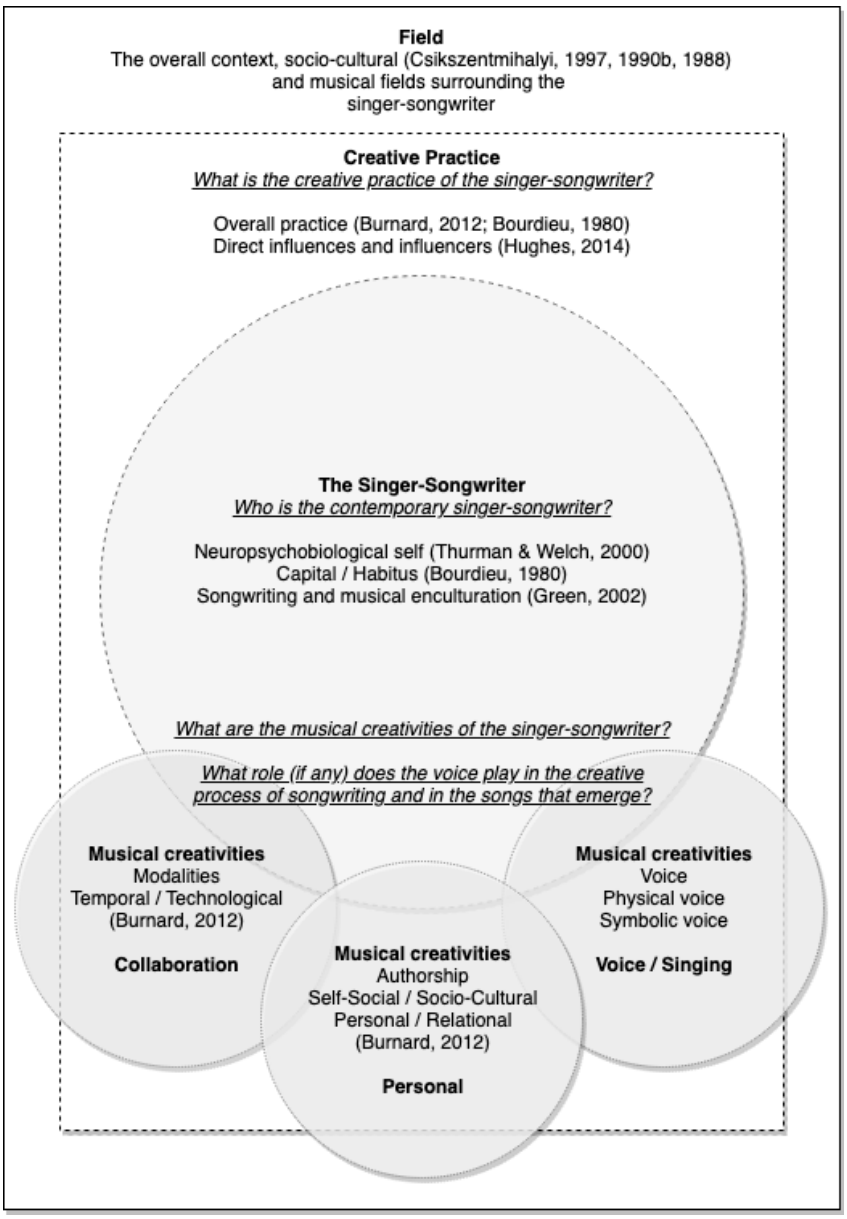

Figure 1: Conceptual framework and areas for investigation

In relation to the study of musicians, and more specifically, the investigation of musical creativities, Burnard (2012) offers useful models of enquiry that incorporate the cultural and creative theories of Bourdieu (1980, 1984) and Csikszentmihalyi (1997, 1990b, 1988). As such, the conceptual framework incorporates four main areas and key terms adopted by this research, and in particular, utilised in the contextualisation of findings.

The field: This represents the overall context, field and/or systems (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, 1988; Bourdieu, 1993) in which Australian singer-songwriters are situated. As Csikszentmihalyi (1988) suggests, persuasive stimulus has "existed long before the creative person arrived on the scene. It had been stored in the symbol system of the

culture, in the customary practices, the languages the specific notation of the 'domain'" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988, p. 325). In the context of this research, this segment of the contextual framework represents the environment in which musical creativity, performance, industry and socio-cultural conditions are couched. The field refers to the context and socio-cultural position of the singer-songwriter. For the participants of this study, this refers to the field of music they are involved in and/or influenced by, and their surrounding socio-cultural contexts. This may include industry, community, education, location, cultural links, and so on.

Creative Practice: Burnard (2012) defines creative practice to be the accumulation of two concepts: a person's habitus and their capital disposition, coupled with their positioning within a field/multiple fields. In relation to this study, the research seeks to investigate the creative practice of participants in order to determine, if any, the holistic practice of singer-songwriters. Burnard (2012) states that creative practices are constructed by "particular configurations" of musical creativities and, as such, form the "locus of musical creativity" (p. 213). This implies that various elements, both intrinsic and extrinsic, exist within creative practice and, as such, encompass the specific influences and/or influencers (Hughes, 2014) that directly impact the singer-songwriter.

The Singer-Songwriter: This section represents the main subject of inquiry; the contemporary singer-songwriter. In relation to the research, it is essentially studying person or *the self* (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, 1990a, 1990b) who is responsible for creativity. It also is the study of the singer-songwriter *practice* (Bourdieu, 1993, 1980) and the practice principles (Burnard, 2012) that underpin embodied and disembodied creative processes.

***Musical creativities*:** This section illustrates additional concepts, processes and attributes that are relative to the singer-songwriter. They are the methods and various tools that singer-songwriters may engage with, or have access to, within their respective creative practices. Such concepts inform the development of research questions. Burnard (2012) argues that musical creativity is not a singular concept and that "multiple musical creativities are observable and can be located in practice" (p. 225). This research seeks to understand the musical creativities of singer-songwriters based upon categories used by Burnard (2012) in the study of popular musicians: 1) Forms of authorship that stem from self-social and/or socio-cultural influences, and 2) Mediating

modalities that are temporal and/or technological. In addition, 3) The singing voice as a potential musical creativity present in the creative practice of singer-songwriters.

3.2.3 Research questions

The discourse related to the study of singers and/or musicians includes implied understanding of singer-songwriters as *artists* and as *musicians*, yet there is little explicit knowledge that distinguishes singer-songwriters from other musicians. While it is implied that singer-songwriters are artists who write and perform their own songs, these aspects form only one facet of their work. While songs are inherently bound to the creative process of singer-songwriters, this research seeks to also investigate other concepts, or *musical creativities*, that emerge from creative practices. Additionally, as songs infiltrate our daily lives, we are, whether we are cognizant or not, subjected to the neuropsychobiological "singing self" (Hughes, 2013, p. 15) and the subtle forms of cross-cultural, socio-cultural and interdisciplinary appropriation situated in the singing voice. The songwriting process, and the broader discourse of music, focuses on the delivered lyric, arrangement and language[37] (McIntyre, 2001) without considering the person and the embodied voice. As the objective of this research is to provide an evidence-based description of the singer-songwriter creative practice, along with an evidence-based definition of the contemporary singer-songwriter, the following primary research questions and subset questions (see Table 2: Primary and subset research questions) were formulated to address the areas for investigation found in the conceptual framework:

[37] Language in this context refers to language of a geographical area (i.e. English, Mandarin) or the dialect, slang or colloquial language of sub-cultures and sub-genres of PCM (i.e. Hip-Hop).

Table 2: Primary and subset research questions

Primary research questions and sub-questions
What is the creative practice of the singer-songwriter? *What does the creative practice of the singer-songwriter consist of?* *What are the outcomes of the singer-songwriter creative practice?*
Who is the contemporary singer-songwriter? *What does being a contemporary singer-songwriter entail?* *Why does the contemporary singer-songwriter create?*
What are the musical creativities of the singer-songwriter? *Who is the singer-songwriter in context?*
What role (if any) does the voice play in the creative process of songwriting and in the songs that emerge? *How is the singing voice used in the creative practice?*

These questions seek to investigate perspectives on creativity, songwriting and the singing voice. In doing so, the creative practice of singer-songwriters and a contemporary definition of their artistry are explored. While the observation of songs happens "after-the-event" (Moore, 2012, p. 5), this research also aims to investigate factors that take arise before songs are created. It seeks to pinpoint influences that prompt the creative process to occur. Lastly, the research also aims to address the role of the singing voice. No qualitative research to date has thoroughly investigated such factors or the role that such factors play in the craft of songwriting. With this context in mind, the research aims to address this gap in the literature and to offer precursory factors that may lead to singing and songwriting; to view the creativities that occur *before the event* of song and performance and the resultant outcome including intrinsic and extrinsic influences on creativity.

3.3 Research design

The study of singer-songwriters involves levels of inquiry that pertain to investigating several concepts. These include the processes and associated phenomena related to singing, songwriting and participants. As such, the paradigm of qualitative research provides an opportunity to access "the meaning a phenomenon has for those involved" and to provide data that shares "how people interpret their experiences" or "construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013, p. 22-23). The qualitative approach provides the "ability to probe into responses" and to gather "detailed descriptions and explanations of

experiences, behaviors and beliefs" (Guest et al., 2013, p. 21). Additionally, it is important to "establish which dimension(s) of the human experience" the research will investigate (Guest et al., 2013, p. 26). When studying human experiences, Guest et al. (2013) suggest the following broad investigative areas – behaviours, attitudes, opinions and perceptions, emotions, values and culturally shared meaning; social structures and relationships, and their environment (p. 26) – when dealing with qualitative human research. The advantageous aspect of qualitative research, where the objective is to understand the complexity of a specific process, is described below:

> Qualitative methods are especially effective at describing complex processes. Whether the process is planting maize…the open-ended and inductive style of questioning that is a hallmark of qualitative research can readily capture the inherent complexity of process. It may take as few as a handful of knowledgeable individuals or may require a somewhat larger sample…but the end result either way will be a pretty good understanding of the process in question. (Guest et al., 2013, p. 23)

As the objective of this research is to investigate the musical creativities of singer-songwriters, it is appropriate to utilise qualitative methods. When compared to quantitative methods, qualitative methods can "directly document causal relationships" (Guest et al., 2013, p. 18), answer *how* and *why*, and therefore facilitate access to in-depth perspectives. Quantitative studies alone cannot provide the type of descriptive detail and perspective required by the objectives of this research. Unlike quantitative studies or results that provide statistical or quantified correlations, access to detailed experiences and perspectives are more conducive to explaining processes and associations (if any) between investigated areas.

3.3.1.1 Consideration of ethnographic principles

The socio-cultural environment in which singer-songwriters create, and the influencers that surround them (Hughes, 2014), are of significant relevance and have been shown to impact vocal ability and identity (Burnard, 2012; Meizel, 2011). As singing is both a personal and relational activity underpinned by concepts of musical creativity, musical collaboration, emotive expression and identity, the research methods found within the field of ethnography "strives to understand the interaction of individuals not just with others, but also with the culture of the society in which they live" (Merriam, 2009, p. 23). According to Merriam (2009), an ethnographic study utilises "interviews, formal and informal, and the analysis of documents, records, and artifacts" (p. 28). Typically however, "immersion in the site as a participant observer is

the primary method of data collection" for ethnographers (Merriam, 2009, p. 28) as participant observation allows the research to capture "important elements of human experience that are only visible to those who are actually there" (Merriam, 2009. p. 77). Participant observation as a method of data collection (through the observation of songwriting sessions) was considered for part of this research. However, initial research findings identified that the nature of songwriting sessions are often personal and/or performed in isolation. It was determined that a level of trust and rapport would be required to successfully encompass such intimate and personal sessions. It was therefore determined that participant observation was beyond the scope of this particular study and the time constraints of the research. However, the researcher considers this to be a potential area for further study. While the nature of ethnography involves fieldwork and participant observation, the implementation of in-depth, semi-structured interviews provides a suitable way in which to study areas of the creative process through the perspectives of singer-songwriters. Additionally, where participants discuss artefacts and artistic works, such works are studied and discussed where relevant.

3.3.1.2 In-depth interviews

This research utilised semi-structured, in-depth interviews with key informants. An in-depth interview is defined by Guest et al. (2013) as "a conversation designed to elicit depth on a topic of interest" (p. 113). In particular, interviews conducted in a one-one setting allow the researcher to "shape the probing questions in a dynamic fashion - keeping in mind both the objectives of an interview and the substance of the participant's previous answers" (Guest et al., 2013, p. 113). Additionally, "unstructured forms of inquiry are great at generating valid data, identifying locally relevant issues, and gaining a deeper understanding of a given research topic" (Guest et al., 2013, p. 31). The semi-structured nature of questioning provides an opportunity for participants to generate and lead the content of the interview within the framework of open-ended questions, yet provides scope for the researcher to connect and inquire further into themes that emerge through prompts.

3.3.1.3 Attitudinal survey

In addition to in-depth interviews, this research also uses an online-based attitudinal survey. While attitudinal surveys are commonplace in quantitative research

to “measure or quantify” (Kumar, 2014, p. 200), this research used a survey to elicit further information on the themes that emerged from in-depth interviews. For this purpose, attitudinal scales, such as a summated rating or Likert scale (Kumar, 2014), are useful in determining the validity of concepts.

3.3.1.4 Rationale for a mixed methods approach

While detailed information and informant context is an advantage of in-depth interview methods, information drawn from this form of inquiry - what Merriam (2009) terms as the “interview encounter” (p. 18) – is open to both participant and researcher interpretation, “subjectivity and complexity” (p. 18). Additionally, Kumar (2014) notes of a ‘power gap’ present between researcher and informant in qualitative studies:

> The ‘power gap’ between the researcher and the study population in qualitative research is far smaller than in quantitative research because of the informality in structure and situation in which data is collected. (Kumar, 2014, p. 133)

As in-depth interviews are reliant (and therefore influenced in part) on researcher-participant interactions, it is important to bring to light that “both parties bring biases, predispositions, attitudes” (Merriam, 2009, p. 109) to each interview. In relation to power gaps, consideration is given to the fact that singer-songwriters may potentially share personal information and processes during interviews. Such concepts, along with the potential of power gaps, were therefore considered during the design of this research. Indeed, it is important that researchers maintain “enough distance” in order “to ask real questions and to explore, not to share, assumptions” (Seidman, 1991, p. 77). Maxwell (2005) aptly states, however, that while rapport may be problematic in qualitative research, “the researcher is the instrument of the research, and the research relationships are the means by which the research gets done” (p. 83). Maxwell (2005) adds that it is the “kind of rapport, as well as the amount, that is critical” (p. 83). The nature of participants, and their level of engagement and reflection, along with the approach of the researcher bears an influence on how interview questions are addressed. This is mitigated and allowed for through the design of appropriate questions and participant sampling. With these issues in mind, there is merit and potential in incorporating other methods of data collection as “integrating methodological approaches strengthens the overall research design, as the strengths of one approach offset the weaknesses of the other” (Guest et al., 2013, p. 16). While this research is primarily underpinned by qualitative principles, its overall design and logical execution

utilises a mixed methods approach (Kumar, 2014; Merriam, 2009) through the addition of a quantitative, attitudinal survey. This provides the research access to "more comprehensive and convincing evidence than mono-method studies" (Guest et al., 2013, p.16).

3.3.2 Research design – Part 1 and Part 2

The overall research design included two parts of data collection. The first part of this research (Part 1) involved qualitative, in-depth semi-structured interviews of singer-songwriters/participants. This part formed the main body of data collection. The second part (Part 2) involved the development and implementation of an online survey using questions drawn from the preliminary themes that emerged in Part 1. The survey added a quantitative element to the research design. In doing so, it is able to "subject the data to categorical analysis" in order to verify or validate themes, or to add new emergent themes (Kumar, 2014, p. 171). There are a number of advantages to adopting a mixed method approach for this research. In-depth interviews of singer-songwriters provided information-rich, broad responses through naturally biased, participant perspectives. On the other hand, survey responses provided focused information. The addition of a survey allowed the researcher to draw from, compare and validate from two sets of data: from broad, intimate perspectives (Part 1) to substantial, categorised responses (Part 2). In doing so, the research was able to, as Kumar (2014) suggests, "enhance the coverage, depth, reliability and validation of findings through the use of another method(s)" (p. 30). In the case of this research, the addition of a survey provided another source of primary data from which to compare findings, and from which to draw more substantiated conclusions and recommendations. The following flow chart (see Figure 2: Research design) depicts the overall research design.

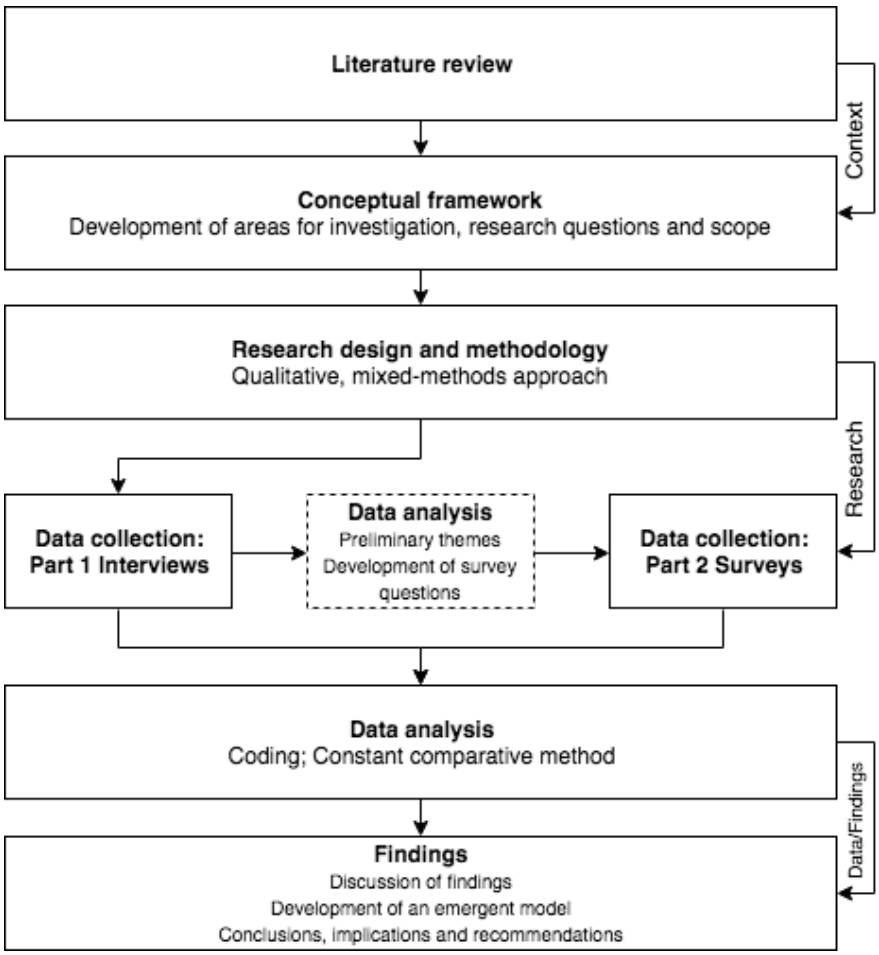

Figure 2: Research design

3.3.3 Data analysis

Analysis of data was conducted using a constant comparative method through the identification, coding and comparison of emergent themes (Creswell, 2012; Merriam, 2009, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This allowed the findings to be grounded in the data collected by adapting a Grounded Theory method of analysis (Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013, p. 13). According to Merriam (1998), adopting a constant comparative method of data analysis involves the "continuous comparison of incidents, respondent's remarks, and so on, with each other" (p. 179) to form categories and sub-categories. Merriam (2009) adds that "recurring patterns or themes" form the findings of the research (p. 23). To code interview transcripts and data efficiently, the researcher applied analytical interpretation of qualitative data through a systematic

process. Interviews were recorded using GarageBand[38], and were documented, transcribed and coded using NVivo[39] software. Online surveys were set up using the Macquarie University Qualtrics[40] survey software and respondent submissions were analysed using both the Qualtrics in-built data reporting and analysis function and NVivo software for further coding.

3.3.4 Research scope

The scope of the research included the investigation of singer-songwriters who identify as Australian and whose works are primarily created and/or performed in Australia. In addition, the research also investigated related professionals who work closely with singer-songwriters during songwriting and creative processes. The research was conducted in two stages. Part 1 of the data collection involved the in-depth interviews of eighteen singer-songwriters and two related industry personnel (music producers, musicians and songwriters). The research did not require participants to identify themselves as professional[41]. Instead, the research required that participants are active in their creative output, in that they have produced, or are actively engaging in producing, a body of creative work (such as an album or an EP). As this research aimed to investigate the *person* and their *process*, and their outcomes more broadly than *songs*, the research sought to clarify what defines the contemporary singer-songwriter. From a musical perspective, participants with backgrounds and experiences within the broader world of popular culture musics (Hughes, 2010) were invited. Based on this, the research did not preclude participants from contemporary genres that are not typically considered as the 'norm' for singer-songwriters (such as, for example, EDM[42]/Dance genres). Additionally, the research did not require participants to subscribe to a specific genre, nor exhibit specific levels of musical skill. Though such concepts were naturally discussed during the interview process, the information that participants provided is used to provide supporting context where required throughout the findings chapters.

[38] GarageBand is an audio recording and editing software.

[39] NVivo is a data analysis software.

[40] Qualtrics is a survey platform and survey analysis software.

[41] In this context, 'professional' is defined as being paid for their work.

[42] EDM in the acronym for Electronic Dance Music.

3.4 Methods

Data collection methods, participant sampling and the ethical conditions of each stage of the research is discussed under the headings of Part 1 data collection and Part 2 data collection respectively. Conducting research in this way has advantages as each stage informs the next, providing opportunities for information-rich findings that contain a particular level of detail (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007) that allows for sets of data to target different research areas and to be integrated and analysed chronologically. While the following study did not strictly adhere to a sequential design, Part 2 surveys were informed by the emergent themes of Part 1 interviews.

3.4.1 Part 1 Interviews

The research aims were to investigate the key areas of the conceptual framework and to address the primary research questions through in-depth interviews. Specifically, interview questions were open-ended and semi-structured, so as to elicit responses in the following areas of inquiry; 1) The profile of participants, such as demographic information, 2) The musical contexts in which the singer-songwriter works, such as musical genre or style, 3) Their broad influences and socio-cultural, such as any formal or informal training, 4) Experiences related to singing and songwriting, and the perspectives, meanings and/or outcomes that stem from their experience, 5) The role of the voice, in their experience/s. For the semi-structured interview schedule and sample questions, see Appendix A: Part 1 Singer-songwriter interview questions. These interview questions were also modified for related personnel. For the latter, please see Appendix B: Part 1 Music industry professionals interview questions.

3.4.1.1 Ethics

Ethical consent for this research as per the conditions outlined below was obtained from the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC; Approval number 5201500854)[43].

[43] The researcher's previous surname was used in the data collection documents.

3.4.1.2 Participant sampling

The research sought to interview up to 20 purposefully sampled Australian singer-songwriters. Based on the concepts of purposive/purposeful sampling (Paton, 2002: Merriam, 2009) the following selection criteria were used in determining participant recruitment. The criteria included experience defined by active creative output and involvement in music industries and communities for a minimum of three years. Singer-songwriters of popular culture musics (Hughes, 2010) which include the genres and sub-genres of pop, rock and indie styles of music were invited to participate. Singer-songwriters are described as artists who primarily write and sing the majority of their creative output. They are artists who actively author most of their music and typically involve the following skillsets - singing, songwriting, instrumental self-accompaniment, music production and/or composition. Lastly, participants were required to identify as Australian and that their work/creative practice is based in Australia. This allowed the researcher and the participants mutual access to interview location/timing as allowed by the scope of the research.

3.4.1.3 Recruitment and advertising

Participants were recruited and invited using two methods:

1. Potential participants were invited by email correspondence (Appendix C) using email addresses found on a publicly published locations, such as websites. An information pack that included an information and consent form (Appendix D) and an information poster and/or a link to an information website[44] (Appendix E and F) was sent with the initial email correspondence.

2. Potential participants were invited using a series of posters and the research website (Appendix E and F) which were distributed in print and in digital format to relevant groups, such as APRA (Australian Performing Rights Association) and the ASA (The Australian Songwriters Association), and to various tertiary educational institutions. Permission from these organisations was obtained prior to the dissemination of posters using the email correspondence template (Appendix C). When participants contacted the researcher, an information pack (Appendix D and E) was sent to potential participants using the email correspondence template (Appendix C).

[44] The research poster and website use a licensed stock photograph obtained for this research.

3. Potential participants were also invited through publicly available social media (such as Facebook). Potential participants were reached by private message correspondence (using the email correspondence template, Appendix C) through their public social media page. Additionally, the digital poster (Appendix E) was posted on the researcher's personal page ad was available to share with potential interested participants. Although the digital poster was available to view publicly, all correspondence in relation to the research was privately maintained. For example, if a potential participant provided an online 'comment' on a digital image of the research poster requesting for more information, information was provided to that person by private message only.

3.4.1.4 Data collection

The interviews of participants were audio-recorded for the purposes of data collection, documentation and transcription. Interviews of participants who resided in the same locations as the researcher (Sydney, NSW or Adelaide, SA) were held in a common, professional space (such as a recording studio or office). Interviews with participants who resided in other states were conducted by phone and were recorded. Interviews spanned between 40-90 minutes in length.

3.4.1.5 Data analysis

Each audio recording was appropriately saved and tagged with the participant name, an abbreviated/code name (such as P1, P2, etc.) and the date of the interview. In the analysis and administration of all research related documents (such as transcripts or through the coding process), abbreviated codes were used. Each interview was transcribed and coded using NVivo software. Once an interview was completed, the constant comparative method (Merriam, 2009) of data analysis was applied throughout the sequential coding and transcription of each interview. The majority of interviews (n=16) took place between March 2016 and May 2017; the remaining four interviews were concluded by July 2018. Recurring themes and concepts were progressively coded and collated during this period. The emergent themes identified between March 2016 and May 2017 were drawn upon in the design of Part 2 survey questions.

3.4.1.6 Summary of participants

During the recruitment process, the research poster prompted interested singer-songwriters to contact the researcher by email or through the research website (Appendix E). Additionally, the researcher contacted potential interview participants by email. Between March 2016 and July 2018 a total of 78 potential participants received the research invitation and the information and consent form. Of those invited, a total of 20 interview participants agreed to participate. Three of the participants belonged in a band that collaboratively wrote songs together and were interviewed in a focus group format. All participants agreed to be identified. Where relevant, participants also noted how they preferred their artistic work to be credited. Some of the participants requested that their work be credited under an artistic moniker. A summary of the participants can be found in Table below (see Table 3: Part 1 Participant summary) and an in-depth/specific participant information and summary is available in the Appendices (see Appendix K: Part 1 Participant summary).

Table 3: Part 1 Participant summary

Part 1 Participant summary		
Participant code	**Name**	**Experience**
P1	Tina Bangel	10yrs+
P2	Ramiro Castellaz Faico (Romy Black)	10yrs+
P3	Dana Gilden (Danah)	Under 5yrs
P4	Nicholas George	10yrs+
P5	Ann Poore	10yrs+
P6	Luke Davies	10yrs+
P7	Kelly Breuer (Kelly Brouhaha)	10yrs+
P8	Mike Roberts	10yrs+
P9	Adrienne Lovelock	10yrs+
P10	Mark Ferris	10yrs+
P11, P12 and P13	Ria, Ross and Christine Pirelli (Audio Vixen)	10yrs+
P14	Niten Devalia	10yrs+
P15	Roshni Dennis (Stella Rhymes)	10yrs+
P16	Amber Lawrence	10yrs+
P17	Tash Parker	Under 5yrs
P18	Deborah Suckling	10yrs+
P19	Morgan Hann	10yrs+
P20	Neil Murray	10yrs+

Throughout the thesis, interview participants are referred to simply as 'participant/s' and are assigned a corresponding number (P#) that aligns to their respective participant information outlined in the summary. Participant numbers are used in-text to enable flow of the discussion; particular participant quotes are identified and used to highlight chapter headings where relevant. In Chapter 9, the discussion of specific artefacts and the concept of *artistic realisation* warrants the citing of participant names in order to give a personified voice to the narratives discussed in the chapter.

3.4.2 Part 2 Survey

Part 2 involved the development and dissemination of an online survey. As previously discussed, Part 2 of the research originally planned to involve the observation of some Part 1 participants during creative songwriting session/s. While ethics approval was granted for optional observations, this was amended to the survey instead. In addition to the reasons previously outlined, the preliminary findings showed individual practices with broad interconnecting themes. The survey enabled further investigation of these interconnecting themes through a number of anonymous respondent answers. Additionally, the survey questions required respondents to indicate their viewpoints using attitudinal scales. Doing so allowed for further investigation of emergent themes and concepts, along with providing a certain level/scale of thematic depth and relevance.

3.4.2.1 Ethics

Once the survey questions were designed, an amendment for the ethical conditions of the research was approved by the Macquarie University HREC in November 2017. The approval of the amendment included the survey questions (Appendix G), the information and consent form (Appendix H) and the research poster (see Appendix I).

3.4.2.2 Survey questions and the use of attitudinal scales

The survey included 22 primary questions, nine of which included sub-topic choices that each required scaled responses. Modified Likert scales and closed option sub-set questions were used to elicit respondent attitudes in relation to specific primary or sub questions (see Appendix G for a copy of the full survey along with the attitudinal scales utilised in the survey). This method was preferred over a sliding scale as doing so would elicit a comparison between concepts. The first five questions requested contextual information. The following 17 questions included 15 scaled and/or multi-choice questions related to singing, songwriting, creativity and various personal and/or experience. Two open-ended questions allowed respondents to provide individual perspectives.

3.4.2.3 Respondent conditions and verification

The survey required respondents to identify as singer-songwriters who resided in Australia and had at least three years of relevant creative singing and songwriting experience. As the survey was set as anonymous, the survey conditions limit the verification of respondent experience levels. This is mitigated in advance through the dissemination of the survey link itself. As the survey link was only shared within an industry network of membership-led associations and organisations (such as APRA-AMCOS, whose membership conditions require that members declare songwriting and copyright ownership, for example), it was therefore only available to purposively sampled, songwriter and singer-focused groups and researcher networks. To distinguish the survey respondents from the interview participants, survey respondents are referred to in-text as 'respondent/s' and are assigned a corresponding number (R3) as relevant.

3.4.2.4 Recruitment and advertising

The following research recruitment and advertising documents were made specifically for the survey:

Appendix H: Respondent information and consent information, specific to the online survey (and published on the first page of the survey for acceptance prior to the survey questions).

Appendix I: Survey research advertisement poster.

Appendix J: Invitation letter for organisations and associations requesting to circulate the survey advertisement poster to their members.

The research advertisement poster and invitation letters led potential respondents to the survey link - https://mqedu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bvIend3gw7a5ICp. This long survey link was abridged using a URL shortening service[45] so that participants could remember it easily when viewing the advertisement online. A QR code[46] provided by the Macquarie University Qualtrics platform program was also included in the advertisement poster. Nineteen identified Australian songwriting

[45] The web service used to abridge the survey link was Tiny URL; www.tinyurl.com. The service creates a shorter web address that routes visitors to the original web address.

[46] A QR code, or a quick response code, is a type of barcode that many mobile electronic devices recognise and link to. The user of a device can capture the code using specific software or compatible camera, and be led to the survey link automatically.

associations/organisations were directly contacted. Seven organisations responded and agreed to circulate the research advertisement and survey link to their members through their own respective correspondence channels which included email newsletters and social media pages. The approved ethical conditions of the survey recruitment process allowed for the use of social media. The following table (see Table 3: Survey organisations/associations) lists the organisations and associations that agreed to share the survey link.

Table 4: Survey organisations/associations

Australian songwriting organisation/association name	
APRA-AMCOS	The Australian Performing Rights Association/The Australian Mechanical and Copyright Owners Society Limited
ASA	The Australian Songwriters Association Inc.
SCALA	The Songwriters, Composers and Lyricists Association Inc.
FolkTAS	The Folk Federation of Tasmania Inc.
Music Australia	Music Australia
Music Victoria	Music Victoria
CMVic	Community Music Victoria

3.4.2.5 Data collection

The Macquarie University Qualtrics survey platform was used to construct the online survey. Several survey protections settings were set up in order to control and limit who is able to partake in the survey as well as how respondent information is held. The survey was set up to be anonymous, utilising an anonymous link (which allows respondents to take part in the survey without needing to leave their name or contact email address). While this feature within Qualtrics meant that only respondents with the survey link could take part in the survey (such as purposively invited organisations who circulated the survey link to their members), it did not completely protect respondent anonymity as typically, according to Qualtrics, "by default, the Anonymous link collects the user's IP address" (Qualtrics, N.D.). In order to fully protect respondent anonymity, the survey settings were set as anonymised responses (this is an additional non-default setting within Qualtrics that stops the platform from tracing respondents IP

addresses). These settings meant that no identifying information was collected and ensured full anonymity. Potential respondents were provided with the research information and consent letter on the first page of the survey (See Appendix H: Survey Information and consent for the full wording of the information and consent statement). Respondents were advised that proceeding with the survey constituted their consent to participate, but were also advised that they may stop the survey at any time without consequence and that the survey would take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

3.4.2.6 Data analysis

The data collected from respondents were analysed using reporting tools built into the Qualtrics survey system/software. Qualtrics allows for the automated and accurate retrieval and reporting of results for all multi-choice and scaled survey answers (20 questions). For the open comment questions (2 questions), respondent answers were exported to NVivo analysis software for separate coding.

3.4.2.7 Summary of respondents

Ninety-five completed surveys were collected between November 2017 and August 2018. Detailed analysis and the findings of the survey are discussed in Chapter 8. Table 5 (see Table 5: Part 2 Respondent summary) provides a brief summary of the respondents based on age bracket, singing and songwriting experience. A detailed respondent summary, including respondent codes, context and date of recorded response is available in the appendices (see Appendix L: Part 2 Respondent summary).

Table 5: Part 2 Respondent summary

Age bracket	Age bracket (count)	Songwriting experience			Songwriting experience	
		<3yrs	*3-10yrs*	*10yrs+*	*3-10yrs*	*10yrs+*
18-24	*n*=12	*n*=5	*n*=6	*n*=1	*n*=2	*n*=10
25-34	*n*=17	*n*=1	*n*=4	*n*=12	*n*=3	*n*=14
35-44	*n*=11	-	*n*=2	*n*=9	*n*=2	*n*=9
45-54	*n*=20	-	*n*=1	*n*=19	*n*=1	*n*=19
55-64	*n*=27	-	*n*=5	*n*=22	*n*=2	*n*=24
65-74	*n*=8	-	*n*=1	*n*=6	*n*=1	*n*=7

3.5 Chapter summary

In analysing the data, broad themes emerged in relation to the conceptual framework and the primary research questions. The findings provided rich narratives and information that pertain to the singer-songwriter as an artist. In the chapters that follow, the term singer-songwriter and artist are therefore used interchangeably. The emergent themes are discussed throughout the following chapters, and are organised as follows: Findings drawn from Part 1 of the research are presented and discussed throughout Chapters 4-7. Part 2 research survey data is discussed in Chapter 8. Chapter 9 provides findings that discuss the artistry of the singer-songwriter. Chapter 10 provides the main findings of the research along with a comprehensive summary of the thesis.

4 The contemporary singer-songwriter

Be your own individual self.
(Nicholas George, Participant 5)

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive introduction to the research findings and the development of a creative practice framework based on overarching concepts drawn from Part 1 interviews. The interview participants offered information-rich accounts and perspectives on their unique circumstances. As such, the research findings comprised diverse participant experiences and included a broad range of attributes, affects and processes. Contrary to earlier descriptions[47] of the singer-songwriter (such as Brackett, 2008), in the practices exhibited by participants, introspection, isolated creativity and self-accompaniment form only a fraction of a more complex and interrelated collection of musical creativities (Burnard, 2012). Analysis of this data highlighted a range of stimuli, intents and skill sets; all of which are accommodated within, and mediated by, a broader context and creative practice. Concerning contemporary singer-songwriters specifically, the research findings discussed in this chapter validate what Burnard (2012) proffers as "the pluralist character of musical creativities" and that a variety of musical creativities can lead to "multiple phases of musical creativity in the practices of real world musicians" (Burnard, 2012, p. 38). Additionally, the findings also validate the presence of distinct areas of creativity (McIntyre, 2016, 2008; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990b, 1988) and the interactions between socio-cultural influences, capital and habitus (Bourdieu, 1993, 1980). The findings also verify that the production of cultural/creative works includes both the "psychological and the sociological" (McIntyre et al., 2016, p. 2) factors related to participants.

In order to present the broad overarching concepts identified by the research, the analysis of participant perspectives therefore sought to address the primary and subset research questions related to determining 1) *what* the creative practice of the contemporary singer-songwriter is, and 2) *what* being a contemporary singer-songwriter entails. This resulted in the identification of parameters within the respective creative practices of interview participants. In order to present these parameters, and to

[47] This is inclusive of the historical attributes of the singer-songwriter as a tradition and movement (see Shumway, 2016) and empirical observations of the singer-songwriter ideology and music (such as Brackett, 2008).

define what constitutes the singer-songwriter practice, this chapter adapts the concept of *multiple phases* and *real world practices* (Burnard, 2012, p. 38). It also adapts the concept of *the singer-songwriter disposition* proposed by Appel (2017) as a set of artistic factors[48] that may be deployed "to serve a specific work" (p. 11). These theoretical precepts will be used to frame two overarching concepts found by this research: 1) the existence of multiple discrete singer-songwriter *creative phases* and 2) distinctive and deployable *creative practices*. Based on interview analyses, three contextual *creative phases* specific to contemporary singer-songwriters are proposed in this chapter as *the self*, *the field* and *artistic realisation*. Secondly, the chapter introduces three distinctive singer-songwriter *creative practices* as *the songwriter who sings*, *the singer who writes songs,* and *the hybrid artist*. These overarching concepts are utilised throughout the rest of this thesis to frame the traits that underpin or determine contexts of contemporary singer-songwriter creativity. Lastly, this chapter provides a visual representation of these concepts through the introduction of an emergent creative practice framework. This framework is introduced in this chapter and is sequentially built upon[49] to accommodate more detailed findings and concepts as they are subsequently discussed in following chapters.

The concepts discussed in this chapter seek to frame the research findings that address the overarching research questions: *Who is the contemporary singer-songwriter?* and *What is the creative practice of the contemporary singer songwriter?* The discussions in the chapters that follow build upon the concepts introduced in this chapter. It is helpful to note that while evidence is provided in this chapter to support the broad concepts determined by Part 1 of this research, Chapters 4-7 and Chapter 9 provide in-depth, detailed findings and further evidence in the form of participant excerpts and narratives.

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[48] For a more in-depth discussion of the literature, see Chapter 2, Section 2.5: The singer-songwriter (p. 42). In summary, Appel (2017) discusses that the singer-songwriter is not necessarily an artistic persona or ideology, but rather, a performative disposition. In his article, he includes the observation of contemporary artists who may not be strictly identified as singer-songwriters, such as Kanye West and Frank Ocean, as purveyors of the singer-songwriter *disposition*, and proposes that "the singer-songwriter disposition should be understood, in this context, as one of the many tools in the contemporary musician's toolkit, a tool that can be deployed whenever its effects – proximity, vulnerability, sincerity, intimacy, and emotional honesty - are required to serve a specific work" (Appel, 2017, p. 11). While the following study does not necessarily agree with the descriptors used to define this performative disposition, having a *deployable* set of parameters is adopted by this research in the framing of distinctive singer-songwriter creative practices.

[49] By constructing the emergent creative practice framework in a sequential manner throughout this thesis, the research applies and adopts Burnard's (2012) suggestion, as discussed in Chapter 3, Section 3.2.1, Theoretical grounding (p. 53), of approaching the study of musical creativities through the constant "steer[ing]" between areas of musical creativity and factors related to "culture, person, and field" (Burnard, 2012, p. 223).

4.2 Creative phases

While participant experiences were highly individual, there were overarching similarities in the ways in which they journeyed through various contextual schemas, or, what McIntyre (2016) states as "a [creative] system at work" (p. 18); a system influenced in large part, by enculturation, social positioning and learning (Green, 2002). The findings identified that participants traversed between phases of personal, musical and or/artistic development. Each phase becomes an opportunity for influence, or implication. A glimpse of this concept can be seen in the following participant excerpt, which highlights the notion of movement, and particularly, of *progression* between different areas of influence and/or development:

> *I started out from way, way back in the day as a kid in choirs, which progressed into singing lessons and singing RnB [and] rap gigs, live music, acoustic gigs. Then that progressed into writing for myself, which then progressed in to writing for other artists. And it went from everything from Pop to RnB. And then slowly, Dance became more prevalent [and I think] how did I even get to this? Then more and more dance influence started seeping into my songwriting and my vocal style. And before I knew it, […] I had evolved into every Pop, every Dance genre under the sun basically. Just a very strange journey from choirs to where I am now.* (P15)

The following participant excerpt also exhibits a similar progression between segmented areas of temporal influence, affects and circumstances:

> *I actually got the second lead role in 'Calamity Jane'. So that was Year 11 and that was awesome, I loved that. I loved performing, loved the singing. But then [in] Year 12 [I] just studied, [I] concentrated on my studies [and] did nothing musical. [At] University, nothing, no music except maybe [the occasional] karaoke […] I finished Uni [sic] when I was 20 and then got a job as a graduate and started earning money, so I started paying for singing lessons. So, singing lessons led to an audition for my first kind of duo, which was, you know terrible, just terrible. […I stayed for] six months but you know we only did 20 gigs in that time minimum. […] I quit […] that was the first one. Then I auditioned for a band, a party band, and I got that job and that was amazing! You know it was three nights a week for three years and […] that's where I got my experience.* (P16)

The first example was shared by Participant 15, who identifies as a full-time musician and singer-songwriter. At the time of this research, Participant 15 continues to work primarily in Pop and Dance contexts, holds a fully equipped private music production and recording studio and engages both solo and collaborative music production in her songs. In the second example, Participant 16 shared her early experience in collaborative, band performance environments. She highlights that a negatively perceived experience led to a different trajectory. At the time of this research, Participant 16 continues to work as a solo, full-time Country singer-songwriter who has released five albums. While the concept of *creative practice* and the attributes that discriminate between different singer-songwriter practices is discussed in further detail later in this chapter, the research findings highlight that singer-songwriter practices develop through the progression between areas, or *phases* of creativity.

In this section, the *creative phases* identified by the research – defined here as phases of personal, musical and/or artistic development, are explored in detail. Three discrete phases within the broader practice of contemporary singer-songwriters were found. These phases were identified as *the self* (Phase 1), *the field* (Phase 2) and *artistic realisation* (Phase 3). Each phase is adapted from Csikszentmihalyi's systems model of creativity (2015, 1990b, 1988), which cites *the self* as the person, *the field* as the environment, and the concept of *flow* as a process experienced through the creation of a new work or the attainment of a personal goal or challenge. The previously mentioned participant excerpts, though broad, provide concise glimpses of each phase. At the level of *the self*, Participants 15 and 16 experienced a level of enjoyment or displeasure influenced by exposure to experiences and others in *the field*. Such experiences may or may not have led to *artistic realisations* in the form of songs, performances, and/or personal/music development.

Additionally, the emergent themes within each phase consisted of factors that seemed to relate to the person/*the artist*, or to a specific *process*/*es*. For example, themes related to formal or informal learning (as discussed by Green, 2002) were identified as a process or a set of processes. Other identified processes include those related to singing, songwriting (such as writing lyrics), song recording and performance, to name a few. Additionally, participants also discussed physical processes, such as vocal technique or instrumental skill. This suggests that physically embodied processes are evident in the work of singer-songwriters, though it is often couched as accrued skill/s, musical

aptitude and/or vocal control. The *processes* engaged by artists therefore refer to the ways in which artists systemise or strategise in order to accomplish their creative work. A simple example of a process in *the field* includes the structure of a recording studio session in order to record an album of songs. A more complex example of a process, this time identified in *the self*, is the recognition of a skill deficit (such as the lack of ability in playing an instrument) during a songwriting session. Such recognition occurs in the intrinsic and introspective process of self-awareness (the recognition of the limitations posed by a skill deficit) where an impetus to seek skill improvement may become evident. This is then actioned in *the field* (Phase 2). With the intention of extending or developing personal ability, skill deficits may be addressed by instrumental lessons. This in turn raises the likelihood of *artistic realisation* (Phase 3), particularly if the required skill is realised and the goal to complete a song is achieved.

> *I decided to quit the band. And then I went to Tamworth in 2004 and went to a place called 'The Academy of Country Music', [which offered] a two-week live-in course, and that's kind of when I basically kickstarted my Country Music career. (P16)*

Where a participant is affected by certain process/es, such as the acquisition of musical skill/s or socio-cultural influence, or exhibited a strong personal connection, such themes were associated to *the artist*. The research findings included themes related to the intrinsic, personal factors that singer-songwriters encompass, engage with or acquire during specific creative phases. These elements relate to concepts of motivation, purpose, intent, the processing of knowledge and the reactivity/resilience and/or response that an artist applies in or to their experience/s. These personal applications in turn impact the creative processes they use and the ways in which creative decisions and intents are exercised. The findings identified that participants interact and engage with such traits in ways that are dependent on the context of each creative process, experience or event. Personal processes in this sense therefore also include psychological factors such as the emotional reactions that artists may have in relation to their influences and/or experiences. Examples of these include personal events and themes related to emotional and personal self-expression, validation from peers, and self-confidence. Participant 16 continues:

> *Yeah, it's a while ago now. Oh yes, that was amazing and that [was]…I would say it was life changing for me in many respects.* (P16)

In Participant 16's case, attending 'The Academy of Country Music', an opportunity afforded by processes within the *field*, traverses her earlier experience of working with a cover band towards a trajectory of solo artistry and songwriting. Additionally, as the experience was reported to be profound, it validates the presence of *flow* (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990a) in the sense that the experience allowed her to *artistically realise* and achieve a new outcome. This progresses *the self* towards a different configuration of creative, musical practice. It also potentially exposes *the self* to new environments and influences, thus continuing the cycle, or system, of creativity.

All phases offer foundations and opportunities for musical creativity and contribute to an artist's holistic creative practice. These creative phases are not intended to be viewed in an entirely linear way. Instead, they are intended to frame the complex pathways and influences that mediate or shape an artist. Creative phases may be activated in direct relation to an episode or development of creative work[50]. There are distinctive elements that differentiate each creative phase. Such elements can be seen to relate to the *artist* or to the *processes* engaged by the artist. These terms form the headings for the following discussion and are utilised to discuss each creative phase. Collectively, they contribute to the overall qualities of artistry, and to the qualities of singing and songwriting in which artists engage. In the following subsections, each phase and its corresponding *artist* and *process/es* related factors are discussed in detail.

4.2.1 The Self (Phase 1)

The self represents the intrinsic and personal factors related to the singer-songwriter. Csikszentmihalyi (1990a) states that the self is "one of the contents of consciousness" and "one that never strays very far from the focus of attention" (p. 34). Additionally, *the self* "contains everything else that has passed through consciousness" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990a, p. 34):

> All the memories, actions, desires, pleasures and pains are included in it. And more than anything else, the self represents the hierarchy of goals that we have built up, bit by bit, over the years. (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990a, p. 34)

The concept of *the self* is therefore utilised to specifically frame the findings related to the singer-songwriter as a person. It pertains to factors that directly speak to their

[50] Creative work may be defined here as a specific or singular musical project, or a broader artistic vision that encompasses several different threads of musical and/or personal creativity.

personal sensibilities, such as skills or behaviours. *The self* frames the singer-songwriter as an individual who engages in musical artistry. The themes discussed in this section are further discussed in Chapter 5: Motivation and creative impetus. The following subsections provide the contexts that led to the identification of this phase.

4.2.1.1 The Artist, the self

An artist is determined by this research as a person who engages in creating original material and who exists within a wider musical, social and cultural context. Through the conduit of *the self,* artists process their experiences. In this sense, *the self* is the collection of intrinsic factors, motivators or intents that initiate the choice to engage in creative musical practice or a creative endeavor/project. All participants reported a range of elements that belong to the *artist* in the phase of *the self*. These include personal factors that represent the psychological and physical propensities of the individual. It also included the interaction between these two propensities, and the accumulation of personally identifiable, and musical, tendencies. In the following excerpt, Participant 1 shares an example of a personal goal and a passion about her artistry. In the analysis of the findings, expressions such as this may be seen as an example of motivation and personal intent:

> *That's my aim, to just sing, but sing with passion and just to sing without holding myself back. (P1)*

As the next example reveals, personal enjoyment was also of prime importance:

> *It begins with my own enjoyment of singing and songwriting. And then, the outward reactions that I get, I guess, [is] the secondary part of it. (P19)*

The findings generally showed that singer-songwriters are creatively propelled by different intrinsic purposes and motivations. These can be deeply personal, private or introspective in nature (n=13), altruistic or of service to others (n=8), or for commercial or financial purposes, to make a living and to forge a career (n=11). Participants revealed that such purposes are also typically project or context dependent and are open to changing through the course of their creative practice and/or career. Additionally, such purposes are sometimes compared against other life areas or priorities. While all participants expressed that singing and songwriting processes involved a large part of their lives and their identities, some expressed that their creative practice sat alongside a greater set of other unrelated personal and life interests and/or responsibilities such as

travel, family or working full-time (*n*=6). This is evident in the following participant excerpt where *artist* discretion or priority is used to mediate between potentially contrasting artistic and personal freedoms:

> *I enjoy having my 'creative' freedom and my 'freedom' freedom [sic]. I enjoy being able to go on a holiday and maybe find inspiration in another country. I enjoy being able to have a car and go for a drive up to the beach or a cliff and just relax, and some [artists] don't mind not having that but for me…having a car for me is freedom to just think and write and sing so it depends what sort of a lifestyle you want […] money is a big factor. (P3)*

For some, singing and songwriting occupied a share of a broader creative practice that involved other related forms of creativity such as poetry (*n*=6), creative writing (*n*=1), music production (*n*=6) and visual arts (*n*=4), among others. Participants also showed a strong, intrinsic need to be heard (*n*=9) or to feel the validation of an audience (*n*=16). It is at this phase that a singer-songwriter generates a vision for themselves as artists and where aspirations and intents are laid. These include the desire for connection with others (*n*=15) or personal expression (*n*=16). These aspects lead towards, and underline, the broader practice of songwriting and singing. Collectively, they form the impetus to create.

4.2.1.2 Processes of the self

The processes of *the self* relate to functions intimately tied to *the artist* and can be organised into two categories that inform each other – the psychological and the physical. The findings revealed that participants engaged in psychological processes that relate to personality, behaviour and responses. These processes pertain to the enactment of thought processes, ideas and the engagement of imagination throughout the singing and songwriting process. There are various psychologically related processes that individual singer-songwriters engage in that are unified under *the self*. Examples of these processes revolve around introspection, personal purpose and/or an intrinsic need to seek for qualities that develop the artist's level of self-confidence, self-esteem and/or maturity. All participants, for instance, discussed introspective processes that involved reflecting on and the processing of circumstances. Analyses of interview data revealed that self-awareness is a trait that participants possessed (*n*=18). This process relates to the ability to articulate personal criteria in which creative abilities and limitations are evident. An example of this is the openness and a willingness to share

potential or perceived vulnerability during the discussion of personal processes. In instances where artists were not satisfied with a specific area of their creative practice, a level of confidence and comfort was evident in their acceptance of such limitations (*n*=16). Some limitations were even seen as a representation of their own artistry. A particular example of this is highlighted in the following excerpt where Participant 13 expressed that they enjoyed working creatively within their skill level:

> *It was only really when I came into my twenties that I appreciated [my voice] and that I maybe don't necessarily need to do that [in reference to singing like others] and sort of started playing with my lower registers a little bit more and appreciating the fact that that's maybe sometimes a little bit more rare [...] I don't try and strive for something I'm not [...] I am who I am and that's it. (P13)*

From a physical perspective, processes within this phase included factors related to the participants' skill levels, musical proclivities, encultured engagement and the propensity for learning. Vocal technique, vocal health and vocal control, as well as any non-voice musical/ instrumental skill were identified as encultured traits that singer-songwriters inherited through life and learning experiences (in formal and/or informal contexts). These were identified as forming part of an artist's set of intrinsic skills, and therefore fall within the context of *the self*. Being drawn to a creative urge led participants to seek information, inspiration and infrastructures that enabled them to enact their creative vision and/or develop personal creative goals. All participants showed an interest in developing through the experience of new forms of creativity or through extending their creative experiences. This suggests that artists enjoy and benefit from creative challenges; the *flow* within their creative practice. The psychological and physical processes that artists employ function as 'tools' that allow artists to seek, create and/or act on the opportunities (or obstacles) that are encountered in the second creative phase of *the field.* Additionally, *the self* is greatly influenced and shaped by experiences in *the field* and by *artistic realisation.* Such experiences can impact both the psychological and physical nature of the artist in ways that might enable or disrupt creative progress. In the following account, Participant 7 shares factors of herself in relation to *the self* and that creative *processes* allow her to express such factors. In particular, she discusses an awareness of the neuropsychobiological connection (Thurman & Welch, 2000), and its relation to music:

From the research that I've done, apparently, music and exercise are the only two things that engage the entire brain and all of its parts all at once. Which is [the] mindfulness [that I experience in songwriting]. The brain thrives on it so much. Which really intrigued me when I found that out. Because I knew that music made me feel good and I knew that writing songs and playing those to people made me feel good, but I didn't understand why. So I […] looked into it a bit further and started doing some research on psychology and physiology of the brain and that kind of thing. It's fascinating to find out […] I'm a sensitive, creative person. I'm a deep sympathetic and the world gets on top of me often. I use music as my way to manage that really well. I'm really glad that I've got that. (P7)

4.2.2 The Field (Phase 2)

This second creative phase, *the field*, is used to frame the various contexts in which participants are engaged. These include the environments that enable musical creativity and/or the experiences that inspire personal expression, singing and songwriting. Broadly speaking, these contexts are related to socio-cultural environments, learning contexts, creative contexts (such as collaboration) and industry/career approaches. The themes discussed in this section is further discussed in Chapter 6: Interactions, collaboration and the field. The following subsections provide the contexts that led to the identification of this phase.

4.2.2.1 The Artist in the field

Singer-songwriters work, connect with others and develop skillsets within the scope of the opportunities and resources available to them. Analysis of the interview data revealed that contemporary singer-songwriters create and operate through experiences that intersect circumstances with artistic identity and personal discretion/choice. In these experiences, participants were found to engage and interweave individual preferences to the processes of music making and creativity. There is a fluid relationship and commitment between *the self* and the influences and influencers[51] (Hughes, 2014) found in *the field*. Such relationships provide validation in broad areas of music creation, and in both personal and musical development:

[51] Influences refer to experiences or events, while influencers refer to other people, such as industry personnel (Hughes et al., 2016; Hughes, 2014).

> *It's really cool getting good feedback from other people, like people that listen to the music or hear me play live and people really enjoying that. I get a big buzz out of that as well. (P19)*

Additionally, factors in the field were also identified by participants as sources of inspiration and influence. Such influence develops the *artist* through their exposure in *the field.* In the following example, Participant 4 highlights the potential influences that impact his songs, and even his voice, yet maintains a level of identity and ownership over his original work:

> *It's a blend of all of them and then you come out and be you. Be your own individual self. I'm being [myself], I'm not trying to be anyone else. I'm not trying to be like Elvis, even though this new song has a bit of an Elvis sound to it vocally, but overall, it's me. I try to be as original as I can. (P4)*

4.2.2.2 Processes in the field

One of the primary findings is that singer-songwriters actively seek opportunities and resources within *the field* in order to express their creative vision or to develop their creative practice. The processes found in this phase related to the following areas: formal and informal learning (Green, 2008, 2002), family and relationships, communities and immediate sub-cultural contexts, collaborations, performance, audience interactions (both local and international) and industry. Formal learning refers to experiences that occurred in schools (pre-school, primary, secondary), tertiary education (such as universities and related colleges) and private musical tuition. Informal learning refers to experiences where individuals seek to self-teach, such as through online platforms, reading, or learning through work experience. Not all processes that participants discussed were directly related to making music. Many encompass factors beyond singing and songwriting. Participant 20 shares an example of such factors and processes in *the field*:

> *You can have the best song in the world, but if no one hears it, no one knows it, it means marketing, promotion, and all those sorts of things which in the true sense of the world, you're not thinking about that when you're actually writing the song. (P20)*

Participants discussed connections to 1) others (such as relationships), 2) related industry personnel and 3) fellow singer-songwriters. In the following example, Participant 16 shares a sense of satisfaction and challenge during a collaborative

songwriting session experienced with others who she deemed as highly established songwriters. It is an example of artistic development through the process of collaboration:

> *I love it actually because you have to rise to the occasion. Because you're in Nashville and they're good [referring to other artists]. You're not just writing next door. You're writing with people who've got records, gold records on the wall and you just kind of rise to the level and your creativity suddenly just comes out of nowhere because you have to. But in the same regard, I think the reason I don't like co-writing is the pressure of having to finish in that time. But I'll continue to do it. (P16)*

Positive relationships between the artist and their respective families, communities and sub-cultural contexts were found to influence the artist by providing inspiration, encouragement, practical support and/or infrastructure. Some participants claimed that such relationships enabled creative endeavours to be realised (n=6). Unfortunately however, support was not always forthcoming as it was also identified that some relationships, collaborative experiences or learning contexts were not always encouraging (n=2). Perhaps this is why singer-songwriters find and establish relationships with other like-minded people within their local community, such as through workplace interactions (n=1) or purposeful songwriting groups (n=5):

> *Music has always been [a pastime] for me. [It's] something I do with my friends in my spare time for leisure and I've spent lots of free time either going to folk clubs and jamming with people in informal groups. Now that I'm retired I'm spending a lot more time on music and I'm able to do things now that I didn't have time or head space to think about. I go to singers workshops and you get the emerging artist who is somewhere in their late teens to mid 20s and [then there's me]. I try not to let that faze me because artists and writers emerge at all sorts of different parts of their lives and so it shouldn't be something that fazes anyone. Music has always been a leisure activity for me and it's now becoming like a job in that I'm spending more time on it. (P9)*

In the above example, Participant 9 highlights the personal value she places on music, and the energy she is able to invest in creative relationships at this particular time in her life. Participant 9 also adds that such purposeful groups were a source of connection, friendship and inspiration:

> *I started going to folk clubs and discovered there was a whole world of people out there who sang for fun, who played music for fun some of them [were] great performers. It was really nice to mix with adults of all different ages. I think It was through music that I first started making my first real friends beyond school or beyond family connections or beyond work, and in some cases those have been friendships that have lasted for a lifetime and in my experiences it's […] continued to be like that. You keep meeting new people of all ages, people [who are] older, younger, of all different backgrounds. But the thing we all have in common is we like to play music and we like to share the music with each other and the hearing [of] the music and the playing [of] the music and the sharing [of] the music is much more important that whether they are fantastic performers or really accomplished people or not. It's such a social activity. (P9)*

Like Participant 9, other participants who do not work full-time as singer-songwriters and related music industries[52] (*n*=4), were found to involve and link their creative practice to the rest of their respective life areas. For example, Participant 5 works as a nurse. For this participant, songwriting is a way of processing the interactions that take place within her workplace, sharing that "some of my songs would be [to process] a story that I heard, and other songs [are to process] my own emotion" (P5). Likewise, other participants who work in unrelated employment were found to connect through writing about locally relevant events and sharing these through local networks such as community radio (*n*=3) and community songwriting groups (*n*=5). As highlighted in the previous example, there are a broad range of interactions and factors that, despite being non-music related, often result in musical creativity. Collaborations exist in local and accessible environments (for example, a recording studio in close proximity or a home studio), or in an international context. The latter contexts include instances where artists cited travel (*n*=4) for the purposes of collaboration or occur in the digital space, where artists collaborate remotely through the use of the Internet, social media and technology (*n*=7). The processes found allowed artists to engage and connect with audiences in many ways, including interacting and sharing songs through a live performance contexts (*n*=14), or by interacting with audiences online (*n*=8). Other

[52] This refers to participants whose full-time careers are non-music related.

means included interacting with an audience through tangential industry related work, such as radio announcing (n=2) or teaching music (n=7).

Participants revealed that while there are intrinsic and introspective aspects found in *the self*, there was an exceptionally high level of interaction, connection and collaboration with others in *the field*. The acquisition of, or the deconstruction/dissipation of, personal knowledge and skills adopted through the experiences and processes in *the field* were determined to have the potential to also impact *the self*. This was evident in the ways that influences affected the level of maturity, confidence and esteem that participants generally expressed in relation to their craft. Where *the self* might inspire an artistic vision or impulse, the intent to fulfill an artistic vision was attempted in *the field* (Phase 2) which therefore led singer-songwriters to engage in the creative process. The relationships and interactions found in all of these areas were seen to mediate the exchange and the development of ideas and/or skills. The findings showed that creative process varied for each individual and context. The quality of the phase itself can also vary for each creative vision or experience.

4.2.3 Artistic Realisation (Phase 3)

In this creative phase, *artistic realisation* (Phase 3) relates to the outcomes that result from processes enacted in *the* self (Phase 1) and *the field* (Phase 2). Artistic realisation in this context refers to an artist successfully finalising the creative projects, goals or events that they set out to achieve. The themes discussed in this section is further discussed in Chapter 9: Artistic realisations. The following subsections provide the contexts that led to the identification of this phase.

4.2.3.1 The Artist and their artistic realisations

Participants showed that achieving a creative outcome in the form of a finished artefact, project or goal not only completed an artistic vision, it also benefitted the artist by providing a sense of personal satisfaction. This may be through the completion of an album or a single song in which the intent and/or the goal of an artist was realised. However, it may also be related to achieving a higher level skill or the satisfaction of attaining a goal. *Artistic realisation* in this context is therefore defined by personal satisfaction, growth and the expression of personal fulfilment through a creative

process. It is achieving a sense of finishing what was started. These factors were also seen to raise artistry to a seemingly higher level of maturity, skill, comfort and creative flow. Participants generally expressed that they achieved a sense of enjoyment, self-confidence and self-esteem during this phase, as expressed by Participant 1 after the completion of her first EP:

> *The biggest achievement was creating [my] EP. Cause I think it's been something that I've been wanting to create for a long time but just didn't know how to create it. Didn't know where to start. (P1)*

The term 'success' related to the perceived satisfaction from goal achievement, project completion or realised creative vision. Such realisation was found to contribute back to *the self* with a new perspective/s. Examples of these varied and were dependent on the overall experience of the artist. These included instrumental accomplishment through formal or informal learning, the completion of an album or EP, or the creation of an artistic image (such as through visual arts, fashion, and what the industry colloquially refers to as 'the whole package'). *Artistic realisation* is therefore the completion of, or the culmination of, an artistic vision. From this, a renewed Phase 1 was then established. This led to a new a level or a new perspective that welcomed re-invention, or a re-calibration of intrinsic motivators. These, in turn, were found to prompt the artist to take on new, original, and for some, more complex or highly skilled creative practices that incorporated multiple musical creativities.

4.2.3.2 Processes in artistic realisation

The processes found in artistic realisation entailed both a mix of personal, musical and interpersonal processes that are intimately tied to the interactions between *the self* and *the field*. In the following excerpt, Participant 1 engages a producer in order for her creative vision to be realised.

> *But because of the way that technology is now, it's so much easier to just do it. I produced it in someone's lounge room, with [my producer], at [his] place. He had all the equipment. It wasn't like an actual recording studio. (P1)*

The completion of a specific music-related project requires different process, as expressed by Participant 15 below. In this example, the challenge associated with releasing songs independently led to confidence, having learned a new process. However, it also brought with it a level of vulnerability:

> *I've released two songs as Stella Rhymes by myself, independently, just to get an education […] I couldn't find what I [wanted, so] I just decided to do that myself. They're not my favourite tracks but they mean something to me because it was something that I thought was unattainable and not within my reach. But once I realised how easy it was, I felt quite exposed because it was like my little babies that [I'm] putting out to the world and I've never done it before. A lot of the things [was a learning curve], looking back, you only know what you know. No regrets, it was a good experience. (P15)*

Participants who had experienced multiple *artistic realisations* (*n*=11*)* showed more depth in their discussions and reflections than those participants who had only experienced this phase intermittently or were in the earlier stages of their artistry (*n*=6). This was highly evident through those participants who had achieved or completed several creative works such as completing more than two albums or having extensive (over 10 years) solo and collaborative singing and songwriting experience (*n*=16). Artists with this level of experience showed a high level of self-directed creativity and confidence in applying their own individuality.

> *I don't give it much thought […] even if I'm just doing a cover of someone, I do my own thing of it, you know. I'm not worried about [it]. I played in bands when I was younger and I thought… I was so pedantic about [the] record sounding like this [or] we should do that, I thought… […] That can't be right. You just got to do your own thing […] And that's how I approach it now. If I sound like someone, great. If I don't, [then I don't]. I'm not [thinking] about [it]. It doesn't enter into my consciousness. (P6)*

Musical processes in highly experienced participants (*n*=18[53]) were found to include broader skillsets and a reduced reliance on the directive input of others in order to create. For example, the integration of creative entrepreneurship and a sense of control over business related aspects were identified (*n*=8). While collaboration and working with other like-minded musicians was still evident, there was a strong sense of direction from the artist, and collaborative ventures were engaged for the potential of shared creativity. This differs from participants who had reached *artistic realisation* only through the facilitation or direction of others (*n*=2).

[53] This includes the perspectives on experienced singer-songwriters drawn from the two music producers who were interviewed. Both expressed that artists who were more experienced tended to direct music production.

4.3 Creative practices

The identification of creative phases revealed that artists acquire and document personal and musical aspects within each phase. Collectively, these aspects become the creative practice equity. In this research, *creative practice* is therefore identified as the frame in which the aforementioned *creative phases* are situated. As these phases provide the contexts and resources from which a creative practice is developed, the term *creative practice* is used to broadly encompass the *habitus* of the artist (Bourdieu, 1993; 1980); what Fulton and Paton (2016) define as "an individual's possession of varying degrees of *capital (social, cultural, economic, symbolic)"* (p. 30) that stem from the *field* and the *domain* of the artist (Csikszentmihalyi, 2015, 1988). Each participant held a highly individual practice. Yet despite having individualistic traits, comparable groups of singer-songwriters showed similar traits in their creative process. As Appel (2017) rightly states, "the historical fact that the singer-songwriter disposition first became popular when it was performed with acoustic instruments and recorded with a naturalistic production does not mean that this is the only way to perform it" (p. 11). Considering this, and by steering away from the performance/music style of participants, the *creative practice* of the singer-songwriter is not defined "on the basis of a contingent aesthetic form" (Appel, 2017, p. 11), but rather, the similar creative processes and focal points common to groups of participants.

Three creative focuses in the practices of singer-songwriters were identified: The *songwriter who sings*, the *singer who writes songs*, and the *hybrid artist*. Each specific practice showed similar themes and approaches within *the self* and *the field*. This was irrespective of musical style, experience, age or *artistic realisation*. *Artistic realisation* in the form of artistic re-invention, development or a re-design of personal, artistic and musical preferences, can occur in any given stage of each of the three creative practices proposed. In this sense, it is possible that changes might prompt a singer-songwriter to engage in a different creative practice or adopt some of the principles of another type of creative practice. In considering Appel's (2017) definition of the singer-songwriter as a performative disposition (2017, pp. 8-11), it is possible to deploy the *creative practices* introduced in this chapter as needed and/or if made possible by an artist's context.

It is important to note here that these creative practice categories do not imply demarcated forms of singer-songwriter artistry or practice. With further research, it may be possible that other practice categories may exist. They are not intended to be viewed or used as a reflection of artistic or personal maturity, skill level or musical style. Instead, these categories seek to simply add context to the types of creative singer-songwriter practices that emerged. They reflect the common patterns and themes found in the ways in which participants communicated their own practice. They are also a reflection of the core focus of the artist and whether they exhibited a stronger connection to one of the following: their singing voice, their songwriting, instrumentation, or other elements of creativity (such as music production). For example, some participants were confident in instrumental skills and were highly connected to their ability to play an instrument (n=9). Similarly, participants who were more confident in their ability to sing had a very strong connection to, and showed confidence in, their vocal ability (n=7). Lastly, each practice draws from a range of creative processes and approaches. It does not usually account for entrepreneurial sensibilities as these did not typically correlate to approaches to creativity or were exclusive to a specific practice. For example, some participants expressed the potential for commercial success by being recognised as a part of a global, mainstream music industry (n=5), citing that connection within community can take the shape of actual collaborative ventures or the form of global, online groups (such as followers, fans and online collaborations). Yet this entrepreneurial factor did not correlate with a specific creative practice, an artist's skill, musical attributes or professional experience. The following subsections provide descriptions on the three creative practices identified by this research.

4.3.1 The songwriter who sings

There are singer-songwriters who identified primarily as songwriters and whose principal focus is in the craft of songwriting and instrumentation. These artists discussed lyrical content, the arrangement of songs and the meaning of the song. Participant 4 shares a narrative typical of artists whose practices seem to align as songwriters who sing:

> *I don't think it's just about sound. It's about the lyrics. You've got to have good lyrics, you've got to have the right market, good melodies in the song, [and]*

> *good production. The most important part of it all, is the song needs to stand out acoustically on a guitar before you record it. If it doesn't sound good straight out on guitar, don't worry about recording [it] because it won't come out any good. That's the way I see it. it has to be acoustically right first and then you can work on building the song up. Melody is everything and I think a lot of problems with music today is that there's too much focus on production and not the basics, [and] about getting the song right in the first place. (P4)*

Practices that seemed to correlate with this category tended to exhibit confident musicianship or self-accompaniment skills. Artists seemed to consider their ability as instrumentalists to be of significance (n=8). Their connection to their own singing voice is not as significant however an awareness of vocal limitation was evident, as Participant 4 highlights:

> *With [my] EP, I had some [vocal] training for one of the songs because it was very high and I wanted to make sure I was hitting the notes right. So I went to see this girl who was an amazing songwriter herself and a really good singer herself and she gave me some tips on how to get that vocal right. because I was thinking how am I going to get that high note because I was writing this high note and I was thinking how am I going to sing it. and I surprised myself that I could actually sing it. (P4)*

Some of the participants expressed that they would be content to have other artists perform their songs (n=4). In such instances, there was a level of disembodiment to the performance of songs, yet a deep connection to songwriting and the validation that may stem from another singer performing their song. Participant 6 describes this concept in the following statement:

> *Basically, you know, my fantasy world would be to you know, basically […] be like a staff writer […] let other people sing the songs […] I think if they want to do a version of my song I'd be honoured. The best flattery is someone doing that […] I'm not that well-known, you know. I've often had, other artists say to me "Well who wrote that one?" and I say I wrote it myself. I think that's a nice comment. (P6)*

In this creative practice, artists typically displayed a high level of connection to the process of songwriting. They also seemed to generally have a high level of song ownership (in the context of copyright) as they are able to write and sing their songs, as well as compose and arrange their own accompaniment. There is a preference for

one or two instruments such as the guitar, piano, or even the harp in one participant's case (P5). While collaboration may be present in their respective practices, it was often evident in supporting the musical arrangements already created by the artist. These artists tend to align with the more traditional notion and description of the singer-songwriter.

4.3.2 The singer who writes songs

The singer who writes songs is the artist whose creative attention and focus is on singing and the voice. Instrumental skills were secondary, where evident. The findings revealed that this practice correlated with artists who identified as strong or experienced singers, who had experienced singing in various singing contexts (such as choir or acapella groups, *n*=4). Participants whose practices correlated with this category considered singing and their voice to be their primary instrument (*n*=4) and often learned singing prior to an instrument (*n*=2). Participant 9 highlights songwriting as an "extension" (P9) of her creative practice:

> *Writing my own stuff, I enjoy singing it because it's a chance to play around with ideas and have them heard and [to] have [people] listen to me sing and it's not all about showcasing the voice either, because often I write things that I can't sing well, [I'll write a tune that is] slightly out of my range, but I still attempt them and I find ways to get around them and it's sort of an extension of being a singer. (P9)*

For some artists, instrument skills were not evident or were cited as rudimentary (*n*=2). These participants often expressed an aspiration to develop their instrumental skill, much in the same way that some *songwriters who sing* sought to improve their singing (*n*=4).

> *I can play about 4 chords on [my guitar] at a decent level. My interchanging isn't great yet between the chords, that's just my laziness but I'm trying to get better at that. I want to start over summer [at] putting effort into that. Piano I can, if I really want to work on a song and work out what note I'm singing, I can work it out on a piano. I can play chords but again, I'm not pianist, I could never support myself with piano. It would be more to get notes out. (P3)*

In this category, writing songs and reaching *artistic realisation* typically led such artists to become highly collaborative in their engagement of others, such as fellow musicians,

producers, other songwriters and/or other singers. While a high level of collaboration may challenge the accepted notion of the solitary 'singer-songwriter', the authorship and ownership (in the context of copyright) of the creative output of *the singer who writes songs* remains secure. Creativity, in this context, is underpinned by others who assist in the communication of musical ideas, lyrics and melody in ways that fulfill the creative vision of the artist.

For some (n=2), creativity may be assisted to fruition. Yet, such facilitation is usually sought due to a specific skill deficit, such as a lack of self-accompaniment skills. *The singer who writes songs* exhibits a strong interest in singing and vocality (Meizel, 2011), and is generally at ease with vocal skill and technique. They are motivated by a creative aspiration to communicate utilising vocal skill, unique voice and individual expressivity. The singing voice is often cited by such artists as the means of expressing emotion. By focusing on vocal sound and delivery, artists use these traits to add depth and meaning to his/her songs and lyrics. Additionally, participants whose creative approaches fell within this category were often skilled in using technology to capture their ideas and/or to collaborate efficiently with other musicians or producers. For instance, the research involved two participants who identified as 'topliners' as well as 'singer-songwriters' (P3, P15). Their creativity is varied and broad; both are experienced singers who studied singing in various formal and informal contexts. Each participant knew how to operate recording equipment and software, and both were experienced in working with producers in Australia and internationally.

4.3.3 The hybrid artist

This practice encapsulates those artists who displayed a comprehensive connection of the musical, lyrical and vocal areas of their creative practice. The research showed that such participants (n=6) accompanied themselves on multiple instruments. Additionally, they had a strong connection to their own vocal sound and were confident as singers. These participants were also skilled users of technology and had some level of music production experience. These participants did not discuss singing, songwriting and/or instrument playing as discrete entities but as entities that influenced each other. The following narrative by Participant 19 highlights the broad range of creativities that he engages in his work:

> *I was on tour with my band that I am playing [in]. In this band, I actually contribute to writing the songs and contribute to arranging and I'd play keyboards and electric guitars and bass depending on what song we're playing. But apart from that, I'm a singer-songwriter myself for a solo project that I've been doing for a while, where I write my own songs and record them myself, play all the instruments myself and produce these recordings and then I do some solo gigs like that. I also have a duo project with my wife where we write songs together and record them and play live. So yeah, that's the context of what I do in music, I guess. (P19)*

Participants are often multi-instrumentalists and versatile singers, and had experience in performing covers. They were equally confident in engaging in levels of collaboration with other musicians or in creating alone. In the following narrative, Participant 17 exhibits an engagement in diverse projects and contexts of creativity:

> *[In] an acapella group [that I'm a part of], we sing each other's [original] songs. So, that's [group member names withheld] and we're all singer-songwriters and we all contribute our songs. […] Then the work that I do with [collaborator name withheld] is very much like Folk, Country [music] but with a bit of a Pop aesthetic to it. […] I'm [also] working on [a project] with [producer name withheld] in Brisbane is more of I would probably call Electronic Alternative Pop, where we're definitely using pop structures a lot more and [producer name withheld] produces most of our sounds. We do a lot of sampling of environments and acoustic instruments and then we kind of manipulate those. Change them into programmed electronic sounds. So, the way that I write for that project is in a few different ways. Some of the [other] songs I've written [are] just on ukulele or on guitar, [which is] traditionally how I would have written. But then I also started using Ableton Live[54] and using things like a sample loop or just starting with a rhythm part. (P17)*

As such, this is a diverse creative practice, with no stream being more important than another. Participants also incorporated a broad range of elements in their practice, such as band work (*n*=6), duo work (*n*=3), music production (*n*=6) and creative entrepreneurship (*n*=4). Hybrid artists are therefore those who integrate concepts of musical creativity, personal creativity and other methods of creative entrepreneurship and/or creativity into their practice.

[54] Participant 17 is referring to Ableton Live music production software.

4.3.4 Creating within practices

During the interviews, all participants at various times seemed to be deeply connected to their craft of singing and songwriting. Other times, they expressed a clear connection to experiencing new ventures of creativity outside of their usual creative practice. An example of this may be the *songwriter who sings* who, as an artist who was once focused on the craft of songwriting and self-accompaniment, decides to collaborate with a music producer who introduces forms of technology as a means of instrumentation. In this example, the artist may then acquire a high level of interest and learning, and subsequently integrate this into their own creative practice. Such creative practice would be more typical of the *hybrid artist.* Overall however, participants seemed to thrive when working within the confines of their skill levels until such time that their goals lead them to seek skill development.

Seeking further development or new forms of inspiration also occurred when participants experienced a creative 'block'. For the areas of creativity where the relevant skill level was deemed to be low or in instances where artistic aspirations were beyond current skillsets or immediate access, singer-songwriters were adept at utilising and engaging a wider musical community of collaborators or teachers. For example, a singer-songwriter not yet confident to self-accompany would engage musician/s when developing and/or recording their original songs (n=3). At times, participants felt the need to step away from their typical creative practice. For instance, Participant 17 took a break from creating music for three years, opting to study visual art. She finished a Degree in Fine Arts and reflects on this experience as one that allowed her to identify as an artist, rather than a just a musician:

> *Before I'd done [the degree], I thought of myself as a musician but not as an artist. And when I did the Fine Arts degree, I realised that actually, I'm an artist and that my main medium as an artist is my voice and lyrics and language. (P17)*

According to Participant 17, stepping away from pursuing music, even after already creating and releasing an album, allowed her to "be an amateur again in a creative field" (P17), citing a release of pressure and expectation associated with delivering a creative product and the learning process of releasing an album independently:

> *You've been in this really critical load around your music to kind of perfect and polish [it] once I had released that album, I was actually really happy in my life at the time. I didn't have a lot that I needed or wanted to say. I didn't actually have a way of continuing to write songs or play music and so, I sort of got really burnt out from learning all the kind of business side of things of doing a self-manage release. (P17)*

Although creating music is described as an enjoyable experience, sustaining a creative practice and/or pursuing career trajectory goals require a broad range of entrepreneurial skills, all of which demand time, effort and learning, and as such, are skills that may divert artists from being able to fully focus on their music. As Participant 17 also notes above, a purpose to create songs must also exist in order to motivate continued creativity. In her example, pursuing a different artform and path opened her creative practice to include other forms of creativity (in her case, visual arts), which in return fueled and reinvigorated her original craft as a musician and singer-songwriter. Creative practices may also be influenced by a change in musical or artistic priority. Participant 9 shares an example of this in the excerpt below, where she discusses that her musical interactions have changed over time:

> *[I don't do] much in the way of formal performances in front of an audience. [I do] a lot of stuff at folk clubs, which are real collaborative jam sessions or singing around a circle taking turns, going to a few open mics, occasionally [my partner] and I will get invited to perform at a club in a concert setting, but it's all very low-key. Back in the day, I did do some singing for money and performing, and national folk festivals but that's a long time ago and I don't think I'll revisit that kind of thing. (P9)*

4.4 Creative practice framework

The concepts of *creative phases* and *creative practice* are utilised in this section to develop a creative practice framework. In the chapters that follow, this framework is referred to and sequentially built upon after the discussion of detailed research findings. According to Fulton and Paton (2016), Csikszentmihalyi[55] "calls the systems model" of creativity "a map" (p. 30). The conceptual creative practice framework adopts the principles of Csikszentmihalyi's systems model of creativity (1997, p. 27), and is

[55] Csikszentmihalyi (1988, p. 329, as cited in Fulton & Paton, 2016, p. 30).

intended to perform two purposes: 1) to sequentially provide a visual mapping of the various concepts, themes and findings that emerged in this research and 2) to contribute an adaptable framework for future use in the study and observation of contemporary singer-songwriters. The concepts discussed in this chapter are illustrated in the figure below (see Figure 3: Creative practice framework). The diagram is an adaptation of Csikszentmihalyi's (1988) systems model of creativity (p. 329):

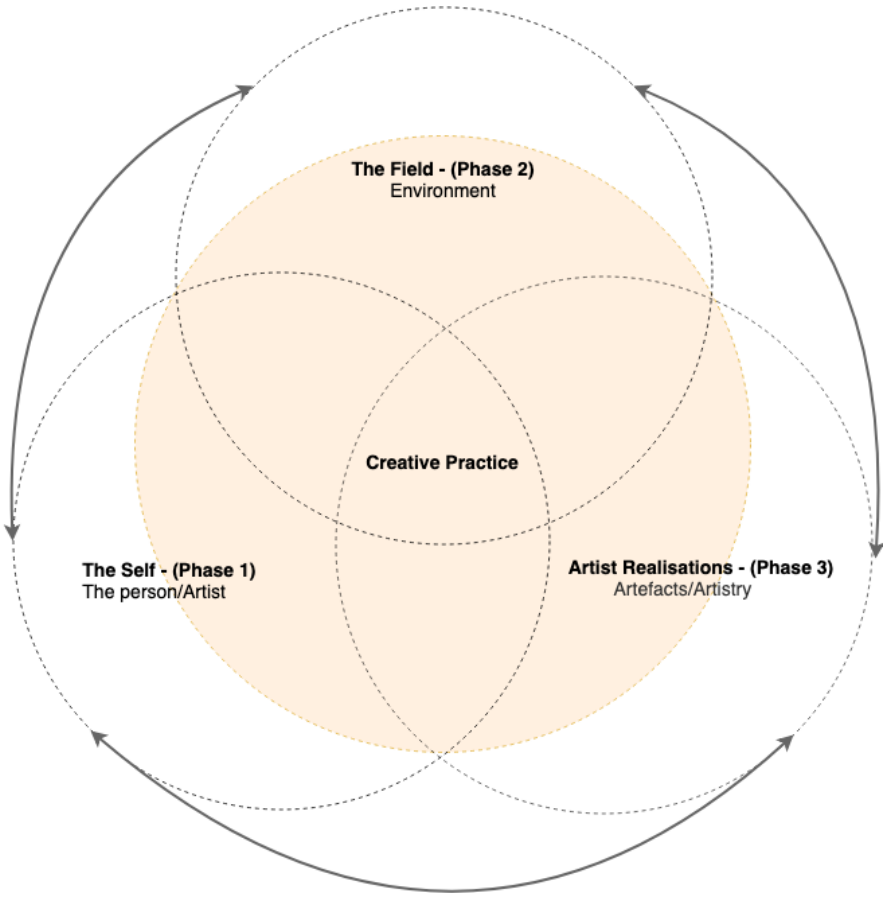

Figure 3: Creative practice framework

The self (Phase 1) relates to the intrinsic values and personal traits of the singer-songwriter. It includes their personal intents, motivations and the processes of enculturation and learning that may occur within artistic and personal experiences. *The field* (Phase 2) relates to the environment of the singer-songwriter and the opportunities, limitations and resources that influence their artistry. *Artistic realisation* (Phase 3) is the achievement, or satisfactory completion, of a creative vision; this phase usually extends the singer-songwriter into a new level of lived experience, artistry and personal

development. It is often accomplished through the finalisation of a work, a collection of creative artefact/s or the achievement of a personal goal (that is, a goal that an artist has generally set out to pursue in Phase 1 or 2). Each area is interconnected, and visually represented by arrows that link each phase. *Creative practice* is the collective *capital, habitus* and *individuality* amassed by the artist through their interactions in each creative phase.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter introduced two overarching singer-songwriter concepts that emerged in the research: *creative phases* and *creative practices*. While both imply discrete overarching areas that are relevant to the singer-songwriter, the research findings show that each concept informs and influences the other. As such, *creative phases* exist within *creative practices.* For example, c*reative phases* were at times found to have been informed by a singer-songwriter's overall *creative practice*. This indicates that creative phases are contained within a practice, yet may also dictate the trajectory of a singer-songwriter's *creative practice*. This also suggests that a *creative practice* is built on the existence of *creative phases*. Therefore, phases and practices are not intended to be viewed or understood as a hierarchal scheme. Instead, this chapter proposes that they are two influential areas that evolve and affect the creativity of the singer-songwriter at any stage of their trajectory.

The findings revealed that factors related to *the self* (Phase 1), *the field* (Phase 2) and *artistic realisation* (Phase 3) all impact and contribute to the singer-songwriter. Each phase is relative to the resources and socio-cultural positioning of the artist. These phases contribute to the overall definition of *the creative practice of the singer-songwriter.* Three creative practices were identified as *the singer who song-writes*, *the songwriter who sings* and *the hybrid artist*. Emergent themes were also identified within two, and at times discrete, contexts of *Artist* and *Processes*. The identified creative phases and associated contexts also signify that singing and songwriting is an interplay an artist and the influences that surround them. Singer-songwriter creativity is subject to encouragement and enablement, but equally suffers from disruption. The latter may be caused by both intrinsic and/or extrinsic factors that can result in the artist's creative practice and/or their potential to reach *artistic realisation* to be affected.

The concepts discussed in this chapter and the creative practice framework validate processes as being "systemic, rather than an individual phenomenon" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, p. 24). In the context of the contemporary singer-songwriter, the findings identified that the *creative practice* adopts this systemic overview. It is through the interactions of *the self, the field,* and *artistic realisation* that singer-songwriters practice skill, musical development and personal maturity. There is a strong sense of intention and challenge, as well as passion, in the creative processes engaged by singer-songwriters. In the following chapters, the concepts related to *creative phases* and *practice* are further substantiated through the detailed discussions on creative motivation and impetus (Chapter 5), socio-cultural interactions (Chapter 6), the role of the singing voice (Chapter 7) and artistic realisation (Chapter 9). Additionally, the concepts are also utilised in the design of the Part 2 research survey and in the discussion of the survey findings (Chapter 8).

5 Motivation and creative impetus

The process can vary, but I've got to be moved somehow, by something.
(Neil Murray, Participant 20)

5.1 Introduction

The research findings revealed a broad range of sources and contexts that motivated artists, indicating the relevance of motivation in the creative practice of singer-songwriters. The concept of motivation, defined generally as the "reasons for acting or behaving" and the "desire or willingness to do something" (Oxford, 2017) encompass both the intrinsic and/or extrinsic events that provide the singer-songwriter with the inspiration, ideation and drive to pursue musical creativity. By exploring the findings related to motivation found within the creative practice, and by associating these findings to the creative phases of participants (*the self, the field*, and *artistic realisation,* as discussed in Chapter 4), this chapter seeks to define the concept of motivation and creative impetus in relation to the singer-songwriter. It addresses the sub question of *why* the singer-songwriter creates. Motivating factors that commence the creative process; such as events and experiences that relate to concepts of identity, enculturation, personal interest and/or obligatory factors, together with their salient role in the creative process, will be discussed. In doing so, this chapter establishes the link between human motivation, intrinsic need and musical creativity through the introduction of a framework based on motivational theories (Maslow, 1954). Additionally, and in this chapter specifically, motivations related to *the self* will be discussed, while identifying how personal and intrinsic motivating factors lead to contexts of creativity within *the field* and/or artefacts and *artistic realisations.* In summary, this chapter provides specific detail and findings related to motivations that influence the creative practice and musical creativities of singer-songwriters.

5.1.1 Motivation and the flow state as creative impetus

The *flow state*, defined by Csikszentmihalyi (1990a) as a personally rewarding state of "optimal experience" (p. 67), is discussed in the literature as a way of gaining personal satisfaction through the attainment of a challenge or through purposeful and meaningful work. It is defined as an "autotelic" experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990a, p. 67) where an activity is undertaken without "the expectation of some future benefit,

but simply because the doing itself is the reward" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990a., p. 67). In relation to this research, factors that motivate participants illustrate contexts and experiences that form the impetus for creativity, and of rewarding *flow* states and experiences by engaging in creative processes.

In relation to the singer-songwriter, the concept of *flow* potentially represents a state of being that is underpinned by the processes of singing and songwriting; one that is motivated by a broad range of factors. In contrast, it may also be a cause for engaging in singing and songwriting. The findings reveal that participants (*N=20*) achieve a level of enjoyment and personal satisfaction attained by engaging in musical creativity, along with a sense of challenge and of creativity, suggesting that *flow* exists in the creative practice of singer-songwriters. However, enjoyment and personal satisfaction were typically discussed by participants as incidental effects that come as a result of the creative process. This raises the relevance of factors that potentially precede creativity and how such factors provide the impetus to engage in songwriting. As such, interview questions specifically enquired about concepts related to artistic inspiration, motivation and influences.

All participants broadly discussed contexts and experiences that inspired or motivated them to pursue musical creativity and the findings identified that creative processes were often preceded by experiences that ignited ideas, or an intrinsic urge to create. Such experiences include both influential, music related themes, such as listening to and/or admiring other artists, as well as non-musical experiences, such as life experience, community events or interrelation experiences. As participants discussed a broad range of potential motivating factors, the findings exposed themes that spoke of human motivation, self-expression, and at times, a deep longing or strong personal need to create. Research on human motivation shows that human needs lead to specific motivating factors (Maslow, 1954; Alderfer, 1972). Such factors influence the ways in which people interact with the world around them (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005). Additionally, motivating factors, social interactions and life experiences influence intrinsic goal setting (McClelland, 1961) and general satisfaction (Herzberg, Mauser & Snyderman, 1959). The research findings identified similar pathways related to human motivation, need (such as a strong urge to create), and personal factors in the creative phase of *the self*. These factors were shown to typically precede songwriting processes.

Research related to motivation is generally and broadly referred to in business, management and leadership related discourse as "content" or "process" theories of motivation (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005, p. 930). Content theory is defined by Bassett-Jones and Lloyd (2005) as a theory that assumes "a more complex interaction between both internal and external factors" while process theory "considers how factors internal to the person result in different behaviours" (p. 930). Herzberg, Mauser and Snyderman's (1959) seminal work on motivation in workplace contexts identified two categorical factors that differentiated and influenced personal satisfaction and motivation in the workplace. These were distinguished as 'motivational factors' or 'hygiene factors', the former relating to concepts of personal recognition, positive feedback, validation and interrelatedness; the latter relating to the existence of pragmatic and fair working conditions. Herzberg et al. (1959) aimed to measure motivation and satisfaction in the workplace, which found that in instances where motivating factors were lacking, employees reported a reduction of both personal motivation and work satisfaction. In instances that lacked hygiene factors, only a reduction in job satisfaction occurred. Where hygiene factors were sufficiently met and motivating factors were unmet, their research findings indicated a reduction in employee motivation. In these instances, employees did not associate their work as being positively meaningful, thus suggesting the importance of motivating factors – recognition, validation and positive feedback stemming from their work – to an employee.

Although the following study is not explicitly related to the discourse and research utilised in business, the findings of Herzberg et al. (1959) proposes that personal motivation and meaning is fueled when foundational needs and motivating factors come together. In relation to the development of *the self*, Maslow (1943, 1954) suggests a hierarchy of human needs, wherein a person moves through levels of personal development. These sequentially begin from physiological and survival needs, the needs of safety and security, social belonging, self-esteem and self-actualisation (Maslow, 1943, 1954). Physiological and safety needs relate to factors such as food, shelter and basic living requirements. Social belonging relate to factors such as love, interrelationships and community. Self-esteem relates to personal confidence and stability, and self-actualisation refers to a person engaging in acts that are felt as personally challenging and satisfying, much like the state of being in *flow*

(Csikszentmihalyi, 1990a). Maslow (1996) later adds the concept of *self-transcendence*, wherein a person engages in acts of altruism and service to others. According to Csikszentmihalyi (1990a), deep motivation to fulfill one's potential revolves around "building a complex meaning system" that "seems to involve focusing attention alternately on the self and on the other" (p. 222). Motivation can therefore be defined as a trait where one is "continuously reacting" to "internal impulses, and also to the external environment" (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005, p.931). The concept of *creative flow* can therefore be argued as a state of being that capitalises on motivating factors. The sources that provide motivation link both intrinsic and extrinsic artistic contexts. As such, all phases of creativity are subject to motivation and its occurrence within the holistic creative practices of individual artists.

The theories offered by Herzberg et al. (1959), along with related motivation theories proposed by Maslow (1954), Alderfer (1972) and McClelland (1961) have been debated (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005; Goebel & Brown, 1981; Bandura, 1977) however, they continue to be used to frame new or replicated studies. These are found particularly in relation to business management, team leadership and personal performance (see Abulof, 2017; Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005; Locke, Shaw, Saari & Latham, 1981). These concepts offer a platform from which motivation, and in particular, the motivation for musical creativities can be further investigated or framed; as yet, no link between musical creativity, and more specifically, singer-songwriter artistry and motivational theory has been made. Yet the factors of human motivation, need and purpose are relevant to musical creativity, as outlined in Chapter 4. These factors consistently appear in the literature on human motivation and while related theories evolve, they are useful in framing and differentiating distinct factors that motivate singer-songwriters. It establishes a link between human motivation, needs and musical creativity.

5.2 Personal and practical motivation factors

A multiplicity of motivating factors were identified through the analysis of the in-depth interviews. Participant perspectives addressed the primary research question *What is the creative practice of the contemporary singer-songwriter?* and were comparatively coded. Through this process of analysis, themes relating to creative motivation emerged. The findings identified that the broad range of factors that influence the realm of the artist's musical creativity are segmented in similar ways that

align, in theory, to *motivating* and *hygiene* factors (Herzberg et al., 1959). These included sources for conscious motivation, validation and meaning. In addition, the impetus to fulfill specific foundational, industry or obligatory[56] needs were also found. Contexts and themes that emerged from this research showed comparably distinctive traits. There were motivating experiences and themes that illustrated a sense of deep meaning and personal purpose. These contexts seemed to invoke an associated personal state from which creativity emerged (such as intrinsic purposes, personal aspiration or emotional catharsis). Such contexts are intrinsically linked and align as motivating factors that operate from the level of *the self*. Other experiences seemed to be more pragmatic or practical in nature, where an extrinsic reward and/or requirement influenced the purpose of artistic engagement. These contexts seem to exist in *the field*, where creative processes were more extrinsically driven and structured. Additionally, these contexts often demonstrated specificity. Examples that participants expressed included to underwrite a specific project (n=3), to engage with a specific community (n=6), or for contractual/commercial requirements (n=5). Such experiences may also include learning a skill, or to achieve a goal through the collaboration with others for the purposes of a specific collaborative project brief. Experiences such as these seem to similarly align as *hygiene* factors, where creativity is motivated, facilitated and enabled in a more practical and pragmatic way.

This chapter therefore utilises these theoretical concepts (Herzberg et al., 1959) to frame the research findings related to the overarching theme of motivation. Motivating factors found in this research will be contextualised as either *personal* motivation or *practical* motivation. Personal motivations refer to themes of motivation that seem to closely relate to the creative phase of *the self*, while practical motivations refer to themes that involve an extrinsic element within *the field*. These provide a distinction between contexts that motivate an artist from an intrinsic level to contexts that provide extrinsic purpose for the singer-songwriter to engage with musical creativity. Both of these categories seek to represent the overall impetus of singer-songwriter creativity and in doing so, add context and impetus toward the creative practice framework introduced and discussed in Chapter 4. Participant perceptions and responses relating to motivating factors and creative impetus will be detailed throughout this chapter. This

[56] Such as the development of skills required for creative practice or contractual requirements that the artist is required to meet. Survival needs may include financial responsibilities or familial commitments.

chapter will conclude with the chapter summary and the inclusion of personal and practical motivation factors to the overall conceptual creative practice framework.

5.2.1 Levels of motivation

The findings showed that motivating experiences provided participants with varying levels of motivation and/or inspiration for songwriting and creativity. Some instances were expressed as strong motivating experiences that led to immediate songwriting and creativity. Participants seemed to be drawn to discussing sources and events that they perceived as highly motivating in detail. Perhaps this was due to the fact that such motivating factors prompted immediate creative action and therefore more swiftly supported the general aims of the singer-songwriter. For example, P9 described her experience of highly motivating instances as immediate creative action and its strong impetus for writing complete songs.

> *I know it happens. It [has] happened to me a few times. I have had songs that come very, very quickly, and once I've got them down, I haven't done very much in the way of changes to them […] but that doesn't happen a lot. (P9)*

Participant 9 continued, stating "It'd be great if it's all inspiration but it's not" (P9), suggesting that while a strong inspiring instance of motivation may form the impetus for creativity, such ideas may or may not manifest into complete songs. Others expressed motivation as "purpose-driven" (P16):

> *I'm certainly not a person that wakes up in the middle of the night with a compelling reason to get up and write. It's never happened. […] I'm much more purpose-driven with songwriting. (P16)*

There were instances where participants reported having the strong motivation and inspiration for creativity, but may or may not be have had the opportunity or faculty to enact such motivations (*n*=2). These participants engaged in other life areas (such as work commitments or responsibilities), which contributed to a delay in their ability to pursue creativity or in affecting a reduced energy and drive available for creativity.

> *I've always wanted to but got caught up [in] doing other stuff. [I] sang in cover bands and worked as a [singing] teacher. (P1)*

5.2.2 A note on motivation and its association to positivity

The term motivation connotes an association to positivity due to its clear role as an incentive for and of creativity. Participants shared specific situations and/or life experiences that led to the development of themes and contexts discussed in this chapter however while such events were shown to motivate an artist to pursue creative action, it is important to note that motivation in this context is not a reflection nor a measure of the positive or negative nature of specific motivating events. Rather, such events are simply those that become sources that inspire creativity. The following sections present the specific themes of personal or practical motivation factors that influence *the self*, *the field* and *artistic realisation.*

5.3 Personal motivating factors

The findings revealed that singer-songwriters (n=18) engage in musical creativity as a means of personally processing their own respective experiences and were intrinsically motivated to do so as a means of understanding events and as a means of self-expression. In addition, the music producers interviewed for this research worked closely with singer-songwriters (n=2) and agreed that singer-songwriters were often drawn to writing songs about personally experienced or observed events. This section therefore discusses the motivation factors that seem to be affected by *the self*, and presents the related themes that emerged from the research.

5.3.1 Observation, introspection and the development of ideas

Participants (N=20) discussed that inspiration for songwriting can come from many sources. Such sources can be personally introspective. Inspiration may also come through the observation of others and of events that cause a personal reaction. Events that elicit ideas and inspiration may be drawn from simple or complex experiences (such as catharsis; discussed further in this chapter). Ideas can be formed from the simplest interactions with others. Participant 9 shares his/her thoughts on what can potentially inspire a song:

> *Sometimes it's just an idea, or a word, or a series of phrases [...] you know you're walking past people in the street and you catch two words of their conversation and you write that down. It's tremendous. (P9)*

An artist building a song out of a potentially simple interaction such as this suggests the role of curiosity and observation in the creative process. All participants generally revealed a consistent observation of their respective environments, even when participating in the experience itself. This observation is followed by the contemplation of their environments and/or experiences and seemingly, where a stimulus is elicited, such as through an event, experience or emotion that attracts the attention of the artist, potential lyrical and/or melodic song ideas are documented for later use in songwriting/singing processes. It seemed that, for participants, "anything can trigger [a lyrical] line [of a song]" (P5) and that additionally, inspiration can be felt strongly at times. It can be experienced sporadically or unpredictably. Participant 5 discussed her perspective on inspiration while drawing on three specific experiences:

> *I remember something [I had] seen, a little Robin […] and this line came into my head: 'Roses fly on wings of jets' […] when I went home that night, it was a long drive, [and while driving] I just put a song together in my head […]. It all came about from the one line. (P5)*
>
> *[During a trip to Canberra, a friend] grilled me for about two hours on PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) and he asked me, "why do soldiers [withhold] their feelings and what [experiences] happened?", and I said, "because they're afraid that their loved ones would look at them with different eyes and treat them differently". […] Those two words, 'different eyes', […] by the time I actually got home, got back in Yass* [A location in NSW, Australia], *I had the first draft. [I] finished it when I got home and put it to music. Sometimes it's […] just that. A phrase. Just thumping in my head. Another song [came to me in the] five minutes [it took for me to make] my way home from shopping [where I was] thinking about the Don Dale*[57] *detention scandal. And literally, five minutes later, the words, and it sat there for weeks and weeks and weeks and I've only just pulled it out now to put music to it. (P5)*

These specific examples illustrate that ideas may come from contrasting sources of inspiration. Such instances of inspiration may only yield a simple line of lyric that is developed further in due course. Additionally, these examples highlight that ideas may

[57] Participant 5 is referring to the Don Dale Juvenile Detention Centre scandal in which media outlets widely reported incidents of gross juvenile mistreatment between 2014-2016. An example of one report is written by ABC News journalists, Meldrum-Hanna and Worthington (2014).

form or develop during the isolated time experienced by driving, which was also cited by other participants:

> *It just comes from me. I'll catch myself singing without planning to, [while] walking, or in the car. (P3)*
>
> *I'll be in the car and the melody will be in my head. (P7)*

More significantly however, the earlier examples provided by Participant 5 suggests the potential role that implicit or unconscious mental function, such as those that operate during the task of driving (Sternberg, 2016), plays in the development of songwriting ideas. These examples exhibit that song ideas seem to independently form while more implicit tasks are performed. In relation to traveling more specifically, Participants 7 and 20 also shared that inspiration and ideas for songwriting seem to occur while travelling in general, potentially highlighting the role of travel in creative ideation. Travel, particularly when travelling alone, offer opportunities for observation, contemplation, introspection or nostalgia. It even may be suggested that movement and travel may be helpful to the creative process by providing the "space" (P7) for reflection to occur.

> *When I'm on [an] airplane, I'd write lyrics. I don't know why that space allows [it]. […] I get inspired when I travel. I guess […] I do a lot of people watching and a lot of analysing human nature. (P7)*

For Participant 20, travelling is found to have traits that seemed conducive to creativity.

> *I find it very evocative, travelling. Often I might have had half a song idea and I need to move, travel, and get the lyrics for it. That's happened on many occasions,* "Calm & Crystal Clear" [Murray, 1989, track 1], "Bring Thunder And Rain" [Murray, 2014, track 4] *were all generated by travelling. I had a melodic idea and I didn't have the lyrics for it [and I] flew from Melbourne to Broome [and] I got off the plane and I came up with a lyric idea […] it's uncanny how that can happen sometimes. (P20)*

When inspiration and ideas occur, they are, where possible, often initially documented in a simple format, such as by recording melodic ideas into a phone (n=4) or by writing lyrical lines in a journal (n=6). Participant 9 highlights that songwriting ideas can often accumulate over time into a collection:

> *Sometimes you go back to something and ages later. You've had the idea around for ages but it takes a while to see where it's [going to] go. I carry this little book with me that I write my ideas in. They haven't all been developed yet. (P9)*

> *There are ideas here [in this journal] that I wrote at the beginning of 2014 and I know they're going to turn into a great song but I haven't got there yet. (P9; Interviewed in 2016)*

At times, participants shared processes of ideation as a form of flowing thought, akin to a *flow state* of concentration (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990a).

> *If I let something take it's natural course, it's like a little river flowing down a mountain. [The] course of less resistance comes out with something lovely. (P5)*

Participants also reported other motivating sources that sparked ideas for songs. These included the use of visual imagery, fictional characterisation and/or supporting or couching inspiring and truthful events with fictional lyric writing. Participant 5 shared her perspectives on this concept by describing the process of writing her song, "Dragon's Tears" (Poore, 2016, online release). Her perspectives and feelings surrounding news reports on asylum seeking refugees inspired the song, which combines mythological characters and metaphor to her expression on real world issues.

> *I'm bringing myth and legend […], the myth and legend of the dragon's tears crying for the sins of mankind. That's what a sun shower is, but also the biblical legend of the rainbow, meaning hope. So I brought that in as well. (P5)*

This suggests that the use of visualization, imagination and the crafting of fictional imagery may work as a means of facilitating the creation of song lyrics.

5.3.2 Phenomena

The findings identified the existence of certain concepts that lead to creativity yet were expressed by participants as factors that were difficult to define. The concepts that were discussed seem to align with the broader definition of phenomena. Indeed, the term phenomenon is defined as "a fact or situation that is observed to exist or happen, especially [where its] cause or explanation is in question" (Oxford, 2017). Participants who related specific experiences as phenomena felt that such concepts

were unpredictable and unexplainable. These included concepts such as dreaming, participant perspectives on their sub-conscious, phenomenological perspectives, spirituality and what participants described as an unknown source of inspiration. Participant 1 discussed that dreaming has been a source of melodic ideas:

> *I'd have dreams of hearing instruments and melody. It's almost like my sub-conscious saying "keep writing" or "do something" […] then I'd say [to myself, while dreaming], "Ok wake up!" and I'd dream that [I had] woken up and recorded it but I hadn't really recorded it physically. And I'd be excited […] but I haven't really woken up properly. (P1)*

This example suggests that dreamt song ideas may or may not be remembered and that, if remembered and documented, may become the impetus for a song/s. As a case study specifically, and to provide context, P1 expressed that she had always wanted to record her own original music, yet despite over 10 years of experience in working professionally as a singer and music educator, felt prohibited by other factors (such as other commitments). In the excerpt provided above, P1 appropriates dreaming as a distinct sub-conscious prompt to pursue creativity. Such dreaming was discussed by P1 as one of many other factors that helped motivate her to record an EP. What seems interesting in this specific context is in the potentially inherent association between a phenomenon (in this example, dreaming[58]) and creative action. This association seems to exist in similar participant accounts related to phenomena. For instance, Participant 4 expressed that a song he wrote was motivated by a strong "personal experience" (P4). In this experience, he recalls seeing an unexplainable vision and that doing so formed a strong impetus for writing a particular song (P4):

> *I was working [one day when] I saw an image; a halo image trying to get my attention, and I saw something…and I'm looking and thinking, "what the hell is that?" [so] I look again and I saw it. The song is about that experience […] What happened was [that] someone in the family [had] passed away and they came to visit me before they passed away and this song is about that […] It's about someone spiritual coming to visit you. I saw something, and that's what I can't believe and I had to put it into music. (P4)*

[58] Dreaming is defined as an *epiphenomenon*, and one that relates to the physiology and study of sleep (Blackmore, 2004). This study does not include in its scope the ability to unpack the phenomenon of dreaming, as it is defined and described in the literature, but is included here as a phenomenon discussed by related participants.

Some participants discussed that at times their creativity was experienced as a distinct, unexplainable concept, as though creative inspiration and ideation arrived from an external source or phenomena. The word 'magic' was used by some participants (*n*=4) to explain this concept. In instances where participants discussed experiences in detail (*n*=2), participants seemed to express that creativity flowed freely, and that on such occasions they did not fully understand the experience. Participant 7 shared that this concept led to songwriting processes in which songs did not necessarily require many changes. She claims that her best work include songs that were influenced by this concept.

> *I sit down with my guitar and it just comes out, and I don't know what happens […] there's often magic there […] a lot of my best songs […] they're the same as they were the first time I wrote them. (P7)*

Additionally, Participant 7 seemed to attribute such creativity to an external phenomenon or source.

> *When I'm in that place too, it's not really me. I'm just catching the music somewhere and it's being delivered through me. But it's not necessarily mine to deliver. (P7)*

Participant 8 also shares this form of attribution after discussing a strongly inspired experience of songwriting in which he felt compelled to write about a personal experience.

> *In 15 minutes, the whole song was written. I did not change a word. And to this day, when I tell the story [I say] I don't know who was holding the pen. I'm not a religious guy. I don't know who or what intervened but the whole thing was written in 15 minutes. (P8)*

According to these participants (*n*=2*)*, such experiences seemed to allow for a very free flowing kind of creativity that is well beyond what they deemed as their usual creative process or pattern.

> *Sometimes they turn out okay (referring to songs that are motivated in other ways), but when you just get taken over by something and it's really spooky […] something very different [happens]. I wish it could happen every day! That would be fantastic. (P8)*

It is noted by Participant 8 that such experiences are typically rare.

You read about people [who] say that it happens (referring to the concept of phenomena) and [it had] never really happened to me [until that song]. I think it [has] happened a few times since but never that dramatically. (P8)

5.3.3 Identity and embodiment

The concept of *the self* is strongly represented by singer-songwriters through their embodiment of creativity. The findings indicated that all participants valued their creativity, as they perceived creativity to be a part of themselves. Because of this, the concept of creative identity and embodiment seemed to motivate creativity as it was viewed as a "function" of living (P15), as opposed to the notion of creativity as a form of work or hobby. The overall creative practice of singer-songwriters, which at times included creativities that were beyond singing and songwriting, such as visual art (P17, P15) or poetry/creative writing (n=7), was viewed by all participants as representative of themselves. Singer-songwriters typically view their creative processes, and the songs that are formed, as parts of themselves. A deep connection between the artist and the songs exist. This is evident in the endearing ways in which participants discussed their songs in detail and specificity, and the pride of having made songs that they perceived as personally meaningful. This level of embodiment suggests songwriting as being motivated by the enjoyment and connection held by artists. Creativity is used by participants as a way of identifying themselves and how they perceive and connect with their world. Participant 15 associates her creative processes as a function of her body, displaying an association between creativity and embodiment:

It used to be an escape but now it's more a part of who I am […] it sounds silly to say [that it is] a bodily function [or a] process that my body goes through […] I breathe, I eat, I sleep but I do music like it's just another function of who I am. (P15)

Participant 6 shares this notion of embodiment, stating, "[I'm not] into it to make money…you [sic] got to do it. It's part of what you do" (P6). These examples suggest that the creative process of songwriting is highly valued by artists. For Participant 15, it is a process she engages in, as she perceives being creative as an inherent and embodied part of her identity. Participant 6 shares that creativity is engaged not only to write a song, but to enact an embodied experience. Participant 17 encompasses this

concept in the following statement in which she relates songs as merely the by-product of a more valuable, embodied experience:

> *It's the way that I understand the world and what actually happens by accident is [that] I have a commercially viable product at the end. It's never the intention [to be] a famous songwriter [or that] I'm doing this as a business. (P17)*

For other participants, creating music is reflective of their individuality, and an importance is placed in being "your own individual self" (P4).

5.3.4 Catharsis, emotion, introspection and seeking meaning

The concept of identity and embodiment in songwriting is perhaps due to the process itself being identified by participants as a form of understanding themselves and the emotional reactions that come from life experiences. In this process, artists are able to reflect, construct meaning and develop a higher level of understanding their world. Participant 7 discussed songwriting as a form of "therapy" (P7):

> *[Songwriting] really helped me manage my mind in a way [like] nothing else […] It's therapy as well. (P7)*

Participant 1 shares this concept of 'therapy', noting that the song, the process and the singing forms a holistic way of communicating feelings and thoughts that might otherwise be left unsaid:

> *I think it's therapeutic for me. I guess it's something that I don't get to talk about with people, but in my songs I can. In the lyrics, in the process of writing the lyrics […] and in singing. It's very close to me. (P1)*

In instances of strong, complex or emotionally demanding life experiences, participants shared that songwriting becomes a form of catharsis that allowed for the understanding and processing of such events. Catharsis is defined as "the process of releasing, and thereby providing relief from" (Oxford, 2017). The process of songwriting, through its relation to communication, expression of thought, writing and musicality, seems to provide an infrastructure for providing a form of relief that may enable some singer-songwriters to function while living in, or living through, emotionally complicated and/or demanding circumstances. Participant 5 shared that the process of songwriting assisted her in being able to manage her work:

Basically it started out to process, […] I was struggling to cope with the stories I was hearing […] and the only way that I had to […] was to start writing and it just so happened I started writing songs, and then writing poems. (P5)

The role of introspection seems to be most connected to instances where participants discuss songs related to situations that they identify as emotional or cathartic. Participant 2, a music producer who works with many artists, including singer-songwriters, outlined one potential cathartic source of creative inspiration.

Pain. Even though I write dance music right, so it tends to be [...] pretty uplifting and party driven. But all the songs that have ever really touched me tend to come through someone's melancholy, sorrow or pain. You can relate to that sad moment. That to me is a deeper feeling than the feeling of joy and confidence. (P2)

There is a responding empathy present in the experience of catharsis and perhaps it is this empathy that motivates expressivity in songwriting.

5.3.5 Expression, connection and communication

Participants identified songwriting as a way for them to self-express. The research findings identified that the reasons for expression stem largely from the artist's need to communicate and connect with their external world. Through this communication and connection, the construction of a story, and of meaning, occurs. Participants (*N*=20) expressed that storytelling and communicating their story was a main reason for songwriting.

I get to tell stories through the song. (P8)

This suggests two contrasting motivating factors. The first is for singer-songwriters to express themselves through the process of songwriting in ways that may otherwise be difficult. Participant 7 offers the paradox of self-expression and performance that seems evident in the findings, as singer-songwriters seem to utilise songwriting as a way to communicate themselves in a unique way:

You get scared over on the stage [yet] I guess it's really got this weird kind of world where I am separated from having to do with the confrontation of [a certain topic]. (P7)

In this context, songwriting is engaged with for *the self* and not necessarily for others. The performance, recording and dispersion of such songs however, offers artists an opportunity to share their expression and to be heard. The second motivating factor is therefore to communicate artistic and personal expression with others. While the need to tell a story does not necessarily require strong emotion to underpin it, expression for the singer-songwriter seems closely linked to a primal need to connect with others and to communicate ones lived experience.

> *[Songs made for the sake of writing] are never as good as the ones we genuinely have a reason to tell a story. (P8)*

The reasoning for this seems to be two-fold. The first may be to process and express personal catharsis or experiences. The other is to explain and to communicate. Both reasons offer an opportunity to gain forms of validation and understanding while connecting with *the self* and with others. Expression, in the latter context is validated by its ability to connect and communicate with others, but also mediated by the response that such personal expression might get from audiences.

> *On stage, if I can tell my story and sing my song […] the audience love it. I can't do that in person with people. (P7)*

> *How it makes you feel. How powerful it is and how powerful music is. How you can bring out a message through it. (P4)*

Participant 5 expressed that sharing their songs to audiences can feel vulnerable, indicating the strong connection between song and artist:

> *I hope they hear the emotion. I hope they hear the sadness, and I hope they hear the hope. One thing I have found that was a little bit difficult for me at first was that once I sing a song and it's out there in audience land, what people make of my songs. I free this song to everyone's personal interpretation. And it took a little bit of work for me to get my head around that. But I'm actually happy enough if people say that meant whatever to me. (P5)*

Validation by peers or audience members is a feature of the creative process, and more specifically, the performance process. The findings revealed that gaining validation is as a form of connection with peers and audiences. The level of validation required by participants varied and often such a requirement related to very specific parts of their creative process. Often, it related to areas of creativity where the skill level or the experience of the participant was low, suggesting that low confidence in a certain skill

or area of creative practice may lead to the requirement of validation from peers and/or audience members. This was identified in instances where singer-songwriters were helped by more experienced collaborators and producers. This type of facilitation was needed in order to fulfill gaps in some singer-songwriters' skillsets. For example, one participant co-wrote her EP with the guidance of two producers (P1). During the interview, the participant expressed her inexperience in the songwriting and recording task. This was despite having a high level of aspiration for creating an artistic and original body of work, and being a highly experienced singer. It suggests that aspirations may not always reconcile with *capital* found in an artist's creative practice. In this example, the participant's singing experience did not necessarily provide the confidence in the songwriting process, but did provide her confidence in the performance of the resultant songs.

In addition to being a mode of personal expression, some participants (n=4) also identified and associated their songwriting process as a form of service towards others. This was identified as being more applicable to participants who classify as *songwriters who sing*. In particular, these participants engaged with the stories of others[59]. Songwriting processes in this context combine personal expression and motivation with the purpose of giving to others. This may be in allowing another's story to be heard or giving voice to an event, experience or strong opinion. In this way, singer-songwriters give such situations or other people a platform to be understood. Participant 18 discussed the concept of service in relation to her project, *The Soldier's Wife* (Suckling, 2015), a collection of songs and a book about Australian war widows:

> *When the opportunity came to work with people who aren't necessarily songwriters but have got these wonderful stories to tell, it actually is an amazing experience that myself and the girls* [referring to a co-writing team] *as songwriters because it gives us so much to work with. It also gives back to that person. (P18)*

At times this can lead to future action, such as in the case of Participant 8, whose songs about nuclear testing in rural areas of South Australia (Roberts, 2017) received state-wide radio airplay and a level of political attention (ABC Radio, 2016).

[59] For example, in instances where singer-songwriters craft a song about the lived experiences of a minority group, or current world/community events that impact society and/or community groups (such as rural communities).

5.3.6 'Flow' and the state of 'flowing' musical creativity

The term *flow* (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990a) is described as an experience that lends itself to personal satisfaction, happiness and focus. Participants reported seeking this state of *flow* and the personal feedback and/or reward that arrives from engaging in the creative process. The state of *flow* seems to be described by participants as a state of mental focus or freedom:

> *It's the only thing that, when I do it, I'm really present. (P7)*
>
> *You just go into a different level, especially when you perform live […] If I'm in the right mood, I really let go. (P4)*

Yet in contrast to *flow,* participants reported instances that seem to hinder it, such as critically analysing one's own work (*n*=4) or where participants felt that their skillsets were insufficient in an area required to fulfill creative ideas (*n*=2). Such instances seemed to disrupt creative flow and therefore participants showed a preference to situations where creative flow was consistently present. Participant 3 discussed this concept in relation to arranging and notating.

> *It takes away the creativity out if I have to sit and think about it and work it out. So again, I can do it but I don't enjoy it. I did music theory and I should be able to write out a full composition […] but for me it just takes away the flow of it […] and it becomes too theoretical. One day I might decide to focus on that again and do something but at the moment but I enjoy singing and writing out what I'm thinking. (P3)*

Participant 5 shows songwriting as a potential form of *flow* state:

> *And I've learned just not to fight that sort of thing. Because every time I fight with a piece of music, it goes nowhere. (P5)*

5.4 Practical motivating factors

While motivating factors that have been determined as *personal* relate primarily to *the self*, some experiences described as motivating were often shown to often involve all phases, including *the field* and *artistic realisation*. As an example, the events and experiences shared by participants coded under the theme of 'career/professional' were reported as primarily operational in *the field*, where the motivation itself was associated with a connection and exposure to music industries and audiences. The motivation

‘aspiration’ however, was identified as a more personal and introspective trait, despite its pragmatic role in kick-starting the potential of an artist. Contrastingly, the motivation ‘catharsis’ was generally enacted through personal introspection and reflection, and often occurred in isolation. The following interview excerpt reflects the multiplicity of motivating sources available to an artist. It highlights that motivation can come from collaborative experiences within *the field*:

> *Yes. I'm writing, I'm singing, I'm recording myself. Sometimes it's [a] collaborative effort. A lot of the times they leave the creative side open to me to completely run with whatever I feel from the music. Sometimes they'll give me direction where it might be a word or a whole theme for the whole song or just a feeling or emotion or a visual inspiration. It really varies. (P15)*

In addition to the personal motivating factors discussed in this chapter, the research also identified motivating factors that seemed more practical or pragmatic. These motivating factors were described by participants as goals and achievements, or signposts of validation within *the field.* How participants approached their career, the commercial possibilities of their songs and themselves, the various challenges of the music industry (such as commercial competition) and belonging to a specific community are some of the more practical and pragmatic factors and contexts that participants discussed. An example of a practical motivating factor can be seen in the following excerpt, where Participant 15 considers the practical side of songwriting for an audience and the impact of musical trends on consumer listening, and therefore, a sustainable career as a singer-songwriter.

> *I always write [to a] certain extent for myself but I’m always thinking of the endless [influences related to] the current sound, what’s on radio, what will turn next […] I do like to keep on trend [yet also] create something unique, and more unique, each time. I do think it’s important […] I just feel it’s the way to connect [with others or with my audiences]. Time’s moving so quickly, trends are dying every second and [I] just really encourage everyone I work with, every producer [or others] to create something that’s unheard of, unique. (P15)*

Participant 20 also explains the role of *the field* in the process of sharing and disseminating music. The role of audiences in determining the success of a song is

highlighted as separate to the achievement of personal expression and the actual process of songwriting.

> *In the end, if you're brutally honest with yourself, you've got to find your own voice and your expression should be unique. But whether it's something that people can hear and appreciate is another thing […] I'm saying because the fact is the business side of it comes into play […] you can have the best song in the world, but if no one hears it [then] no one knows it. It means marketing, promotion, and all those sorts of things which in the true sense of the world, you're not thinking about that when you're actually writing the song. (P20)*

Artists must therefore reconcile their personal motivation to communicate, self-express and "be heard" (P1) to the pragmatics of disseminating, sharing and collaborating their artistic work with others. These were shown to be more prevalent in contexts that the research identified as belonging in *the field*. Factors that motivate singer-songwriters in both personal and practical ways are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated that there are intrinsic and extrinsically rewarding factors that motivate singer-songwriters. Such factors are embedded within all three creative phases of the singer-songwriter's practice; *the self, the field* and *artistic realisation*, and seem most prevalent in *the self.* The findings discussed in this chapter also proposed two types of motivations: personal and practical factors of motivation. These factors highlight that the craft of songwriting integrates personal introspection and self-development, life events, career approaches and an eagerness for communicating with others through song. In linking the craft of songwriting and its related processes to a creative practice framework, songwriting is entrenched and deeply related to each artist's highly individual needs and the needs of their own respective practices. These needs involve coping, interrelatedness and connection, the achievement of creative goals, *artistic realisations* and artefacts, and personal growth. These needs seem to align with the motivational theories and the hierarchy of needs as

proposed by Maslow (1943, 1954, 1996), Herzberg et al. (1959), Alderfer (1972), and McClelland (1961)[60].

It is important to clarify that this research does not seek to utilise motivational theories as strict frameworks from which to compare the motivations for creativity. However, the following study identifies a plausible link between motivational theories and entrenched human needs as presented by the respective theories of Maslow (1943, 1954, 1996), Herzberg (1959), Alderfer (1972), and McClelland (1961). The research identified that musical practices and the motivations that inspire musical creativity are operational in all hierarchal levels of need and purpose, as opposed to the notion suggested by Maslow (1943, 1954), that creativity exists only when lower order needs are met. In fact, quite notably, the research identified that the processes of songwriting and singing, even where songs were not finished or fully realised, functioned in hierarchal levels associated as lower levels of need, such as a need for safety and security, or survival. The findings revealed that instances and events associated with perceived negative life events (n=8) may in fact spur, encourage and reinforced their songwriting process. In contrast, some artists (n=7) perceived that their songwriting was part of a wider scope of other life areas that provided them with other experiences, personal satisfaction and goal trajectories, such as to travel (n=3) or to maintain financial security/stability (n=4).

In these instances, the songwriting process was not as strongly associated with concepts of survival or therapy, but rather, as a way of documentation or as a vocation that sits parallel with other musical creativities. These creativities include music/singing teaching (n=6), singing as a cover/band performer (n=6), and composing for others (n=4), among others. Additionally, participants also reported that inspiration could also be drawn from simple events or experiences. Conclusively, these varying examples of motivation generate an impetus for creativity. In addition, the level of motivation, or the sense of connection or heightened initiative that such motivation brings, was also

[60] According to Maslow (1943, 1954, 1996) and Herzberg et al. (1959) a hierarchy of human needs exists and that there are segmented motivations affected by the context of a person's environment, such as *hygiene* and *motivating* factors discussed by Herzberg et al. (1959) specifically. The lower orders of these needs are mostly related to personal security, safety and general self-esteem. The middle level order of needs are related to social aspects, communication and connection, or interrelatedness. The higher order needs relate to the achievement of self-actualisation, spirituality and a higher purpose for living (Maslow, 1996). According to McClelland (1961), humans also have needs related to learning, achievement, competence, social and personal power, and affiliation.

identified as influencing the initial drive to create. It is this initial drive that facilitates ideation and the conception of songs.

The findings showed that the level of motivation is influenced by the context and experience that the singer-songwriter is engaged in. Similarly, it seems the level of motivation and connection to a particular factor can change with time, age and life experience. Validation from others also impact artistic motivation. Motivation levels are also dependent on the creative context or task they engage with. For example, what was once a cathartic source of motivation may not remain this way. Additionally, the concept of *flow* seems to exist as part of an artist's intrinsic motivation to create a song as a means of documenting an event; a need to communicate, process or express *the self* and all that entails. The findings discussed in this chapter identify that singer-songwriters at times purposefully seek to attain this state by the means of creating songs or through developing new skills and undergoing new experiences related to music making in order to effectively pursue their creative ideas.

The motivators discussed in this chapter were shown to primarily affect *the self* and are precursors to the following phases of *the field* and *artistic realisation*. The findings revealed broad motivations that provide impetus for songwriting, resulting in a clear link between human motivation and musical creativity. More specifically, the musical creativities and processes related to singing and songwriting seem to be the points in which life experience, creative and/or musical skills and motivation intersect. In order to create songs, and before participating in creative processes that result in *artistic realisations,* artists must first be ignited by motivations and/or purposes that garner sufficient interest and energy to lead into creative contexts. As the findings identified that motivating factors have a direct impact on the creativities and processes of singer-songwriters, the research argues that creativity exercised by *the self* cannot exist without a motivating source.

The following Figure (see Figure 4: Personal and practical motivations in relation to the creative practice framework) conceptually includes the findings related to personal and practical motivations discussed in this chapter to the creative practice framework introduced in Chapter 4. This allows for the visual representation of personal and practical motivations in relation to their relevance in each phase of creativity within the creative practice of contemporary singer-songwriters. This visual context will also be

utilised and continued in the following chapter, where the concept of motivation and impetus enables the creative process and enacted musical creativities found in *the field*.

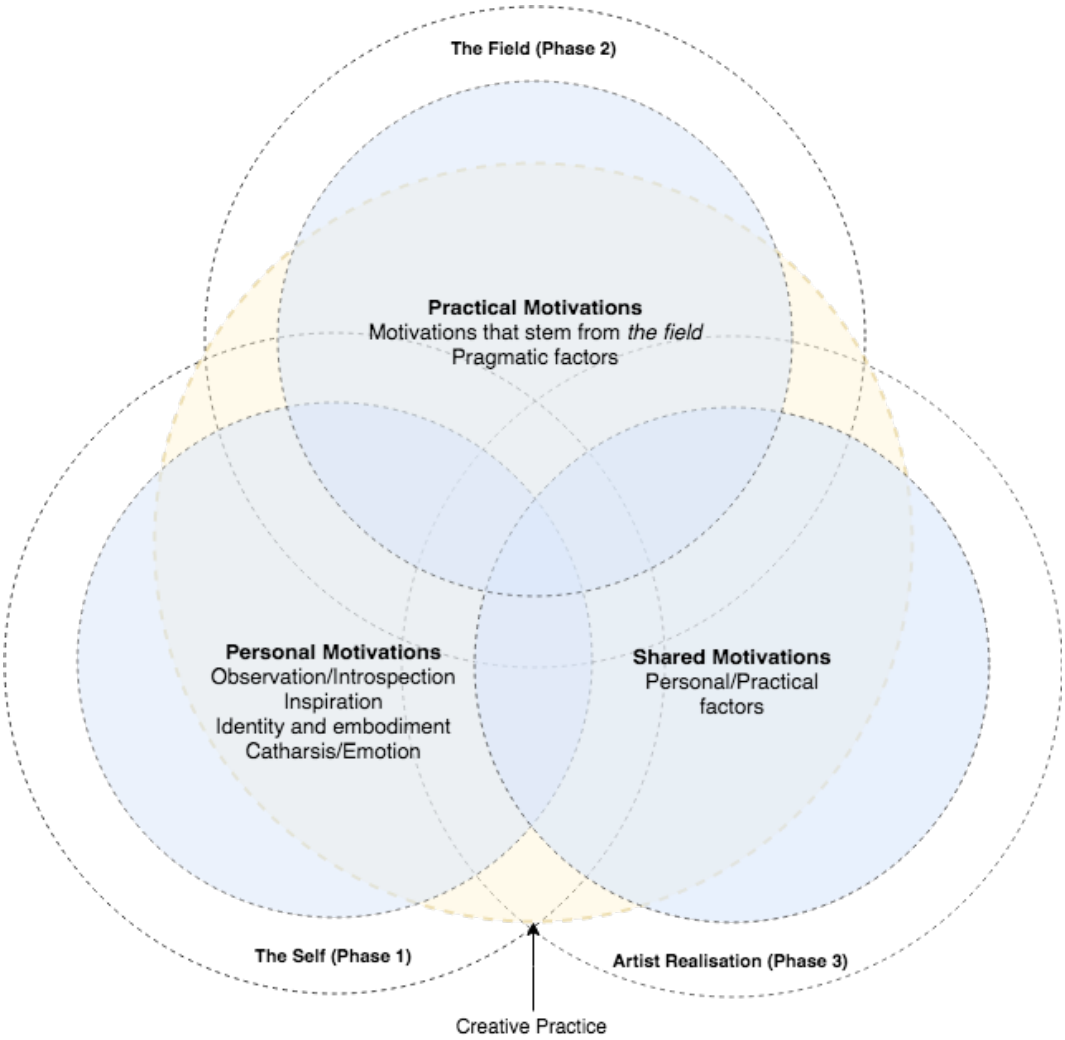

Figure 4: Personal and practical motivations in relation to the creative practice framework

The motivations listed are not to be viewed as static but as factors that are fluid and that can direct/engage the artist to move from one creative phase to another depending on the creative task at hand. For example, in addition to being introspective, a personally cathartic motivation may provoke a strong impetus for collaborative creativity. In such instances, collaboration may traverse the motivation of 'catharsis' from the phase of *the self* to the phase of *the field*. In this way, motivations can be seen as seeds of creativity that are cultivated through various creative processes and purposes. Motivations and/or associated purposes that engage the artist cannot therefore be fulfilled as creative works without the role of creative processes and/or facilitating

modalities and mediators to support its development from an idealised form to an artistic product.

Similarly, pursued motivations and purposes are also subject to negative impact and influence at every phase of creativity, highlighting the cyclic affective nature of the creative process. The following excerpt highlights the changing nature of motivations and purposes for engaging in musical creativity. The statement below belongs to a singer-songwriter whose motivations to document a historical and geographic story of a group of female Irish settlers who migrated to South Australia led to the writing of a theme-specific song. The song was entered into a local songwriting competition a few years after its creation, suggesting the changing nature of song use and artist motivation. The song received positive feedback in the form of an emotional response from a person pivotal in the competition, due to its relevance to the audience member's life, giving the artist a level of positive validation for their work and adding a positive incentive towards their craft as a singer-songwriter:

> *There was a folk festival down in the peninsula here, and they have a songwriters competition [...] and there were various rules [one of which required] that it has to be a song about South Australia. Well not all that long ago [in] 2014, I'd written this song about a bunch of nuns who'd come originally from Ireland via South America to live in Adelaide and they found a convent in Angus St., and so I'd written this song and I thought I could put that in the competition and have a go [...] It's a song in the old traditional ballad format, it's just one verse after the other and tells the story from the perspective of one of the nuns who made this journey and came here and some of her observations. It's called 'Journeys Of Mercy'. The idea behind it, apart from telling the story of these women who made this epic journey across all these years from living sheltered lives in Dublin to living for 24 years in Argentina and then coming to Adelaide because they had to leave Argentina [due to] war and then they come to Adelaide where this white fellow settlement 40 something years old. So it's very "frontier town" and it's supposed to be a more equal free society where you can make yourself rather than [be] constrained by the old rules and social strata [of] England and Ireland and so it was [meant to be] a bit of a paradise. And they came here to do work and by the time they got here, there was already social strata starting to rise up again and things weren't paradise at all, so I've imagined this nun saw all of this. So, I wrote this song using an old traditional tune and, in the end, it didn't*

> *win, it came 3rd but afterwards as I was walking out and everyone was leaving, the guy who is the coordinator and founder of the festivals…came up to me and had tears streaming down his face and he said 'I grew up in a Catholic family and that song just goes through the centre of my heart'. I felt really good about that. So it must be a song that speaks. (P9)*

Creative impetus may therefore be contextualised as being heightened by one or more personal or practical motivating factors. These motivations are drawn from, or affect *the self*, and lead to subsequent artistic action in *the field*, which determines whether such factors manifest as *artistic realisations*. Following the discussion in this chapter, creative approaches and contexts where artistry is engaged in *the field* is further discussed in Chapter 6. The concept of *artistic realisation* and the outcomes that stem from creative processes is explored in Chapter 9.

6 Interactions, collaboration and the field

It's just magic. I can't actually pinpoint what it is but I think for me, it's connection and community. An expression all in one.
(Kelly Brouhaha, Participant 7)

6.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters discussed research findings that led to the development of a creative practice framework. This framework was shown to encompass three phases of creativity. The phases of creativity detailed in Chapter 4, namely *the self, the field* and *artistic realisation*, and the concepts of personal and practical motivations align with the dialectic theories of hierarchal human motivations and needs (Maslow, 1996, 1943), Similarly, Csikszentmihalyi's (1990a) discussion of *flow* proposes that in order for *the self* to be developed, satisfaction and pleasure is initially attained when "energy is invested in the need of the organism"[61] (p. 222). From this investment, it follows on that a person may "begin to invest attention in the goals of a community". In relation to the creative practice of singer-songwriter, attention is directed toward *the field*.

The findings identified in Chapter 4 introduced the creative practice of singer-songwriters. Chapter 5 discussed themes that were primarily related to *the self.* It explored the personal and artistic motivations of singer-songwriters and the ways in which such motivations underpin authorship and musical creativity (Burnard, 2012). This chapter moves on from the concepts of *the self* and explores the research findings related to the various socio-cultural influences that impact the craft of singer-songwriters and the broad contexts in which they occur. It explores the creative interactions and/or contexts that take place within *the field*, and the ways in which such contexts underpin the relationships between all phases of creativity.

In addition, this chapter addresses several of the research questions by providing a broad understanding of 1) *who* the singer-songwriter is in context, and 2) *what* their creative practice consists of. In doing so, this chapter explores the various forms of creativity that singer-songwriters engage in. The findings identified varying levels of connectedness to creativity. Some of the experiences described in this chapter were

[61] Csikszentmihalyi (1990a) utilises the term *organism* (p. 222) to represent the person within the ecosystem of a community.

pursued by participants as peripheral creative tasks while others were described as important or more connected to the artist. This chapter therefore concludes with a discussion of the continuum of soft, weak, or hard creativity (Madden & Bloom, 2001, pp. 412-413; Hughes et al., 2016, pp. 10-11). Lastly, it introduces what the research identifies and determines as *core* and *peripheral* creativity, and its relation to the creative practice framework.

6.1.1 Artist circumstances

The research findings showed that individual circumstances over time form the foundation for influential experiences. In the literature, such experiential environments are often presented as socio-cultural underpinnings (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988, 1990a, 1990b, 1996; Bourdieu, 1980). In relation to singer-songwriters specifically, the following study identifies that socio-cultural environments are affected by circumstances that are situational, temporal, and therefore, almost always in flux. For the participants of this research, the circumstances that led them to creativity were often influenced by their changing environments. However, the configuration of such circumstances showed shifts that were not necessarily confined to specific socio-cultural boundaries. Throughout their artistic journeys, moving between contrasting socio-cultures, from both musical and cultural perspectives, was evident. This implies that influence, and as such, *artistic realisations*/artefacts can be the result of socio-cultural environments and temporal considerations. Circumstances are typically dependent on available resources, upbringing and whether music making and creativity was encouraged, and so on.

In contrast, the concept of "luck" (P20), in relation to levels of access to the right people, resources and musical skills, impacted the ability of artists to realise their artistic intents. In essence, influences are identified as being affected by circumstance. For example, a chance encounter between an artist and collaborator may result in productive creativity, but only if the circumstances allow for it. An example of this are participants/singer-songwriters who are parents (P1, P18). Becoming a parent changes the artist from one who may be open to certain types of performance and/or artistic work (such as heavy touring or late-night gigs), to one who is not able to commit to such work due to contraindicated commitments. Another example are financial requirements and commitments, and where *making a living* becomes the priority. In

these real-life situations, circumstances are shown to be temporal. As these circumstances change, so do the creative practices of the artist.

6.1.2 Opportunities, disadvantages and others

As discussed in Chapter 5, intrinsic and personal motivations or inspirations often stem from experiences or factors that are typically extrinsic to, but within access of, the singer-songwriter. The findings revealed that connection and collaborative relationships were of relevance to all participants. Participants often quoted specific samples of their work, relating their interview responses to their projects, songs, albums or performances. As such, the various ventures that participants undertake in their pursuit of personal expression and/or artistic realisation will be discussed where relevant. These provide specific contextual examples of singer-songwriter creativity and/or collaborative interaction. In doing so, this chapter broadens the understandings of the singer-songwriter *self* to include the influential aspects of social, socio-cultural and musically collaborative relationships found in *the field*. Hughes (2011) defines *influencers* as intermediaries who work directly with singer-songwriters, such as music producers or other musicians. *Influences* are specific situations, experiences or scenarios that directly influence the music and musical creativity/artistry of a singer-songwriter (Hughes, 2011, p. 60). Additionally, Burnard (2012) describes *mediating modalities* as potential temporal and technological markers that influence musical creativities (pp. 222-223).

The research findings discussed in this chapter build upon these concepts to posit evidence-based themes of the influences and mediation of the craft of singer-songwriters. The research findings showed that there are a broad range of influences that impact the work of singer-songwriters. While many of these influences were expressed by participants as being beneficial to their craft, there were experiences with influences or influencers that proved disadvantageous. Interestingly however, is that irrespective of whether an influence/influencer was deemed as an advantage or disadvantage, often such experiences formed the initial motivation or creative context that artists utilised in order to actively create. It seemed that factors seen to limit or obstruct the potential of a singer-songwriter may heighten creative activity or lead it in a different direction.

This chapter presents the various themes that influence the singer-songwriter as identified by the research participants. The chapter begins with socio-cultural influences that form the initial markings over a conceptual timeline of musical/creative influence. It will be followed by the contexts of creativity that artists occupy. The processes and relationships that exist within such contexts, and the importance of emotion, expression and connection to singer-songwriters are discussed. Lastly, this chapter concludes with a conceptualisation of such themes and includes these findings in the creative practice framework presented in Chapter 4.

6.2 Socio-cultural influences

The research findings showed that socio-cultural factors and contexts influence singer-songwriters. Each participant shared experiences and associations related to their respective creative practices and contexts. These included the role of music and familial support, formal and informal learning, musical enculturation, music genres and their sub-cultural music conventions.

6.2.1 Music exposure and early life

Parental and familial encouragement in the development of music skills has been discussed by Green (2002; 2008) as an influential part of becoming a popular musician:

> It is clear that adults and other surrounding people, including siblings and friends, have a profound effect upon the ways in which infants and young children are encultured into music. […] parents play a prominent role in the formation of popular musicians. Indeed it may well be that due to the increased emphasis on enculturation in popular music learning practices, it is more [sic] likely that popular musicians will come from musically interested families. (Green, 2002, p. 24)

Indeed, the research findings identified that singer-songwriters are exposed to music and its related contexts early in life through a varied mix of learning and listening opportunities. These range from indirect or casual experiences and listening contexts, such as music within the home, instrumental and/or singing lessons, through to direct forms of exposure and learning where family members were either musically inclined or were musicians and/or singers. Participants often commented on growing up surrounded by some form of music. Some of these comments stated that they "grew up listening to a whole range of styles" (P13) or that "there was a lot of music in the house" (P10). These examples show that rudimental exposure to music may have stemmed

from both a combination of passive and active listening, or more specifically, through formal and informal learning experiences. Even in instances where singer-songwriters may not have had obvious or direct exposure to music, the impact of musical listening may leave a long lasting impression on artists. The following excerpt emphasises the potential of music influence despite cases where such exposure to music was indirect:

> *No one in my family was musical. My grandparents were musical but I was never brought up around their music[ality] at all […] they were singers in choirs but otherwise there was nothing else music related. Music was played in the house. My dad would play it and make me listen to things as a kid so I was always watching those music shows and I was very much aware of music and singing, and I guess trying to emulate artists from a young age. (P3)*

Musicality in parents and family members was also present, with many participants commenting on the musical abilities of their parents or other family members. For example, Participant 10 shared that "my mum was very musical, [and] so was my dad […] mum played [the] violin" (P10), while Participants 13 and 16 both spoke about parents who also sang. Instrumental lessons or exposure to instrument playing also took place for many of the participants. This shows an early exposure to musical form and arrangement through the learning of an instrument.

> *I [took] piano lessons [at] about 11 years old to 12 years old and I played at church, home and then kind of stopped music from about Year 8. (P16)*

While it seems apparent that an artist who grew up in a musical environment may set out to pursue music, it is interesting that having a "non-musical" (P7) family environment was also expressed as a form of strong motivation:

> *I don't fit into society as it would like me to. [My parents] are non-musical […] they freaked out and I had a lot of people trying to […] get me to do other things cause you know, making music for a living is hard. (P7)*

The excerpt above highlights two themes; 1) the capacity to pursue creativity is important and of value, and 2) the concept of belonging. Being connected and valued by a like-minded community is of importance. The opportunity to pursue creativity and connection, even when doing so may cause doubts in others close to them, seems to remain paramount.

6.2.1.1 Songwriting from an early age

Participants discussed that early exposure to music lead to personal ties and affinities to music that may have encouraged and supported the potential for creative behaviour and songwriting from an early age. Retreating into music and songwriting were indicated as potential avenues for young singer-songwriters to express their feelings and thoughts. This was shown by some participants who indicated that they began songwriting early in life, typically by the age of 16 (*n=6*).

> *My earliest memory is some song I wrote when I was 10 or 11 in some old diary that was about friends. So I think maybe then, I may have realised it was a thing, it could have been from school. I just don't remember, it's just something I've done. (P3)*

For these participants, while direct or indirect exposure to music may have been a daily part of their regular lives, the concept of expressivity through song were outlets for expression. Songwriting, in this sense, was used as a way for participants to understand their environment, manage emotions and to process their respective life experiences as young people:

> *It was always an outlet I think for me to express my emotion growing up [and to] help me through a lot of tough times as a kid. (P15)*

In some instances, the opportunity for songwriting and music making at school assisted learning in other areas.

> *It was really quite traumatic for me to move away from my people, and I had no friends so I started playing guitar [...] because I had nothing else to do. And then I discovered that singing songs made me do really good [at school]. (P7)*

6.2.1.2 Access to formal and/or informal learning

Carrying on from music exposure in early childhood, singer-songwriters reported a mix of both formal and informal learning contexts (Green, 2002). Green (2002) defines formal music learning as one that "places emphasis on relatively conscious learning practices" (Green, 2002, p. 60) in which the following learning processes occur:

> When learners are aware that they are learning, or attempting to learn, have explicit sets of goals combined with procedures for reaching them, such as a

> structured practice routine, and are able to consider, name or otherwise conceptualize and isolate their learning practices. (Green, 2002, p. 60)

Formal learning therefore includes the contexts of peripatetic voice or instrumental lessons, educational contexts such as secondary music classes or tertiary music degrees and other structured or semi-structured forms of learning in which singer-songwriters are likely to be more consciously aware that they are assimilating new information. Informal learning is explicitly defined as the opposite of formal learning, in which "learning practices occur without any particular awareness that learning is occurring; they lack goal-directed design, are unfocused and may not be considered, named or otherwise conceptually isolated by the learner" (Green, 2002, p. 60). Green (2002) also states that "informal music learning practices and formal music education are not mutually exclusive, but learners often draw upon or encounter aspects of both." (Green, 2002, p. 59). Indeed, the findings of this research reveal that participants experienced an array of both formal and informal learning experiences, validating the statement that "informal popular music learning stretches between the two, varying in the degree of awareness on the part of the learner from virtually unconscious learning by enculturation, to highly conscious autodidacticism" (Green, 2002, p. 60).

In addition to exposure and rudimentary musical contexts experienced in early age, all participants discussed that some form of consistent formal and/or informal learning carried their early interests in music into adulthood. The role of secondary school teachers, tertiary teachers and peripatetic music and singing tutors were sometimes discussed by participants. The findings identify that music and singing teachers alike played a role in how artists learned and understood their craft. Experiences with teachers were varied, suggesting the breadth and capacity of teaching styles and the ways in which formal learning contexts are potentially structured. Some participants noted positive experiences with teachers.

> *The teacher at school encouraged me to start writing songs [even though the songs] were terrible. I have been writing and playing ever since. (P7)*

Some experiences were varied. Participant 5, a singer-songwriter who plays the harp and the piano, discussed her experience with two different teachers. These teachers exhibited different styles of teaching, and therefore, different forms of learning:

> *It was only when I got a very, very [sic] good [harp] teacher, who lets me and encourages me to do what I wanted [in order] to follow my own path. So [my*

> *teacher] was never "this is the music, this is what you have to do". [Another instrument] teacher was very lovely but was much more conventional. My harp teacher […] encouraged me to follow my own path and a couple of other influences I had, because I also like early music. [My harp teacher] would say, the printed page is only a guide. Here's what we will also do that's not written down. So […] I learned [that] I can also do my own stuff. (P5)*

The above quote highlights two different opportunities for learning. It may be seen that the latter, in which the harp teacher encourages improvisation, the sense of an "own path" (P5), may have provided the enculturation, approval and validation required to attempt a form of original creativity, such as songwriting. The "conventional" (P5) piano teacher may have provided the opportunity to learn the framework of musical skills required to craft a song. Both forms of teaching may each be seen as helpful to the overall creative practice. Contrastingly, lacking access to helpful teaching or encouraging learning environments may negatively impact or hinder creativity, as Participant 5 also shared:

> *I [stopped] singing entirely because I was so shy, and so terrified [that] showing that side of myself off to anybody was pretty well unbearable. I didn't have the right people around me to encourage me and enrich me and give me all of the positive strokes that I needed to actually be able to continue. That didn't happen until […] I started with my current harp teacher who is also a singer and she […] was the one that gave me the positive feedback I needed to actually start and to keep going. I re-found my pitch, re-found my voice [and] found my confidence. (P5)*

It is interesting that, in this example specifically, an instrumental teacher who also happens to be a singer, was pivotal in empowering and encouraging creativity to occur, or to be "re-found" (P5). It suggests the enabling capacity of commonality and shared interest. The above example also highlights the importance of validation in order for musical learning to continue, particularly at the "beginnings" of an artistic practice (Green, 2002, p. 22). In instances where formal learning contexts (such as instrumental or singing lessons) are discouraging, a preference for an informal form of learning, or a less formal approach, opting instead to "learn by watching and [asking] questions" (P6) may develop. Participant 6 discussed a discouraging learning experience with an instrumental teacher:

> *I've been to a couple of lessons and got intimidated and never went back. […] I had one [instrumental] lesson [with a teacher who] pointed out all the things I was doing wrong and I thought, well. […]. Yes, [you can] get overwhelmed by a teacher [and] it can stop you! [It can make you] start thinking about the things you're doing badly. (P6)*

Participant 10 highlights a duality in musical learning. as he shared the following:

> *I wasn't particularly good at piano and I didn't enjoy it immensely, but I did enjoy writing [songs]. (P10)*

Accessing collaborative experiences also act as learning opportunities. Working with another musician or artist may encourage different forms of creativity, as Participant 1 states:

> *He was there to guide [me] which was nice. I really enjoyed working that way because I find [that] because I've sung so many covers over the years […] being in a cover band and singing [songs] the same way as you would hear on the radio, I was kind of stuck in that mindset of making it sound [the same way] […] He gently guided me out of that mindset of sticking to that same melody. (P1)*

For Participant 1, discovering new ways of singing, one that is of difference to cover singing, shows an exploration into the unknown using embodied singing and musical skill. Concepts of improvisation and composition are unlikely to be possible without such skills, yet an exploration into original creativity, at least one that is new or original to the artist, is a potentially segmented skill learned after it is experienced. Additionally, the research findings reveal that this skill is perhaps one that requires a form of validation and encouragement to occur. Such validation and encouragement may come from *the self* in the form of the self-confidence gained from discovering a new creative form. It may be gained through teachers, producers, fellow musicians, family and others. Through learning, and through validating and encouraging experiences, an artist's skill level and confidence likely develops. A stronger sense of artistic originality and individual craft may therefore begin to emerge. In the following perspective, Participant 2 explains a trait he has observed in singer-songwriters. He makes a distinction between learning and mimicking as one form of artistic learning, and of seeking artistic development through maturity and differentiation:

> *It's interesting because there are people who obviously grow up replicating singers. There's always the singer out there who sounds like [another artist], […] and there's nothing wrong with that. That's how a lot of singers would learn to sing right, through copy. That's how I learned to produce music. Deconstruct [the songs of] other people, [and so] I get it. But I think as people mature, they find their own way and some people may never do that. I think that's where people learn to differentiate themselves. (P2)*

Artists who "find their own way" (P2) are most likely delineated by both formal and informal learning contexts that influence their direction. Informal learning was shown to occur through incidents of adoration or idolisation. Participants identified that at the influential stages of musical exposure, listening to specific artists seem to leave an impression (*n*=7). Admiring other artists, however, was also identified in adulthood as one of the ways that lead artists to experiment or partake in different forms of music making or creative practice. Additionally, idolisation shows a form of connection to other artists. This may lead to an element of mimicry wherein artists "just imitate your heroes" (P6) as a way of achieving two things: learning music and songs, and secondly, assimilating the musically stylistic techniques and cultural conventions associated with the artist who is idolised. While this may sound counterintuitive to an artist's pursuit of originality, it is important to note that socio-cultural influence happens largely by an almost osmotic process through exposure, and a sense of connection to the other. In the instance of artists who mimic other artists, the act of doing so suggests several separate ways of engaging with music. It may be used a tool in learning the pragmatics of music or singing, for example, when taking part in music or singing lessons, and learning the repertoire created and performed by others.

6.2.2 Poetry

The concept of poetry and creative writing was discussed by some of the participants (*n*=7). Such participants were attracted to the craft of writing, poetry arrangements and language, citing poetry as a precursor to songwriting processes. Participant 15 shares that poetry would sometimes develop into song lyrics:

> *It really started off actually, initially as poetry which then developed into song lyrics. (P15)*

Other participants, such as Participant 5, discussed poetry much like a songwriting strategy:

> *I write songs as a poet. So, I will write the word and it will be poetry […] I will work out whether or not [the words] can be put to music. So then, because it started like a poem, every single word counts, and every single word has meaning […] You don't need to […] over dramatise the poem too much because the words are all very, very deliberate. So there, the words have got to carry it, and if my voice is the, what's the word I'm looking for, my voice just carries the word. My voice is just the instrument through which the words come out, the words flow. (P5)*

The use of the voice, and in particular, the singing voice as one that "carries the word" (P5) differentiates written and read poetry to sung lyric. It is also a trait that differentiates singer-songwriters through their combined use of the singing voice, lyric writing, poetry, and musical accompaniment. Indeed, the "meaning" (P5) discussed in the above example may be unpacked to include the possible meanings derived from vocalising a word, singing the lyric, the vocal timbre and the stylistic sensibilities used, and the musical accompaniment that complements the delivery of the words. The findings related to such concepts are discussed in Chapter 7 of this thesis.

6.2.3 Music genre conventions and sub-cultures

The rudimentary stages of influence in early music exposure seemed to establish the ground to extend an artist's musical interests. Participant 20 shares that being influenced by "existing songs" (P20) helped in the development of his creativity. In addition, he highlights the connection between performing the songs of others, and relating to such songs:

> *Learning to play the covers of songs that I liked […] you take that on and intuit how song structures work, I think from there it was a small step then to me making my own songs […] Being moved by existing songs that are out there, being transported, and playing them, and then being moved emotionally myself. (P20)*

An interest in specific form/s of music may therefore contribute to the stylistic and musical interests and preferences of the artist. For singer-songwriters, performing and learning through cover songs was discussed by several participants (n=9), some of

whom also work in cover bands or as cover singers (*n*=5). Cover songs are a way for artists to engage with and explore the music of their preference, to learn, to be influenced and to gain inspiration. Participant 16 describes that cover songs can fulfill a purpose during live performances:

> *I like singing cover songs because sometimes I think they can fill a gap in the show that you haven't been able to fill with your own stuff. Also, if you could sing a song that is vocally a little bit challenging [and it's a] cover song [that] people know [to be challenging], you've given the audience a little bit of [credit], I suppose, rather than when you just sing your own songs. I just choose songs that I just enjoy singing. Mostly because they do something that I haven't been able to do. (P16)*

The above example highlights cover singing as an enjoyable way to perform. Perhaps this may be due to the fact that there is a sense of disconnection with cover songs given that they are not originally owned by the covering artist. The covering artist somewhat joins the audience in celebrating another artist's song, albeit by singing it using their own voice. Participant 17 shares this in the following statement:

> *I love covers [because] if I can't find the words to say myself but [find them] in [the songs of] other people, and deliver them in my own way, I'm happy with that. (P17)*

Performing a song in her "own way" (P17) signals a form of creative exploration, and Participant 17 also adds that cover singing seems a typical activity for singer-songwriters and artists in Australia, and that such singing is popularised and celebrated through a weekly radio segment called "Like A Version" (Triple J, Australian Broadcasting Corporation):

> *When you think about what the normal trajectory is for an artist in Australia, [it] is to eventually get to the point of doing "Like A Version" on Triple J and I thought about what song I would like to do with that [...]. Months ago I did a cover and it is really, really fun. (P17)*

Cover singing, especially with the aim of delivering a song in an individually unique way, also exposes singer-songwriters to a variety of artists and music genres. There were a broad range of music genres that were identified as influencing singer-songwriters and, interestingly, these were not limited to contemporary and/or popular culture musics (Hughes, 2010). Participants cited musical influences that included

classical music (P10, P5) and world musics (P15, P10, P5), which often occurred through association to their own personal cultural heritage or through music lessons and exposure in childhood. Participant 10 explains how African music is a strong influence of his music:

> *The rhythms and the percussiveness and the vocal harmonies of African music were all around in different forms, both in sort of folk singing and the popular music of that period. (P10)*

For the most part however, participants cited most popular culture musics as influencing genres. While the traditional notion of the singer-songwriter is associated with folk and acoustic music, the findings identified that contemporary singer-songwriters engage in many styles of music. The participants identified with, and created music within, the genres and sub-genres of country, blues, folk (n=8), as well as pop, rock, soul (n=8), dance/EDM (n=2), classical (n=2), rap/hip-hop (n=1) and spoken word (n=4). Many times, artists reported ascribing to several genres (n=9). This suggests that singer-songwriters do not typically align with one specific style of music. It is possible to subscribe to, and utilise, an array of stylistic musical traits. More importantly, while discussing genre and genre conventions, there was a preference for simply creating within one's own artistic means experiencing and experimenting with other musical styles. Participant 16 describes herself as a country artist, but adds that her songs do not always prescribe to a country aesthetic:

> *Although my songs, you know, they kind of fly between straight down the line country songs, to singer-songwriter, to quite poppy. (P16)*

Participant 17 similarly shared that her work draws on multiple genres and that her music does not necessarily align to that which is typical of the singer-songwriter:

> *I identify as a singer/songwriter, even though I sort of work in a few different genres not necessarily like […] a singer/songwriter entry. (P17)*

The construction of meaning and the process of lyric writing was found to vary between styles. For instance, participants who identified with the genres of pop/dance discussed the challenge of writing lyrics as in these genres, short lyrical phrases were the norm (P15, P2). Despite this limitation, participants who associated with this genre intended to still create meaningful lyrics, as Participant 15 notes:

> *I like dance music because you don't, they don't expect you to have as many words but they do expect more meaning like you have to have so much more meaning in such a short lyric. I think I like that challenge. I like that challenge of getting attention, getting the message out in a verse and you know and encourage them to stay long for that course. (P15)*

Participant 17 describes her music as "folk country, but with a bit of a pop aesthetic to it" (P17), yet, as she creates works in different contexts that involve other singers, or music producers, some of her projects also ascribe to different, contrasting styles of music and music-making.

> *I would probably call it electronic alternative pop, where we're definitely using pop structures a lot more [...]We do a lot of sampling of environments and acoustic instruments and then we kind of manipulate those, change them into sort of programmed electronic sounds. (P17)*

In the examples above, participants seem confident about exploring different ways of approaching music and genre conventions.

6.2.4 Making music

For singer-songwriters, the research showed evidence that artists make music and sustain creative practices using accumulated skills related to singing, instrumentation, technology, business and communication skills. In instances where an artist feels a lack in skill, they seem adept at outsourcing or learning new skills in order to achieve their music making goals. Some participants were artists who did not play acoustic instruments in the ways and skill level traditionally associated with singer-songwriters. Perhaps due to more accessible technology, it is possible for artists to create songs without requiring major instrumental or musical skill. Participant 15 is experienced in engaging music technology and incorporates recording and production techniques as part of her creative practice. She does not accompany herself with an acoustic instrument, and when asked whether this impeded her work, stated "No. I play with words" (P15). She elaborated on this statement by saying that while self-accompaniment was once an interest, it is no longer a priority in her current creative practice.

> *I used to get down that I didn't learn any instrument and I always wanted to but now I'm over it. It'd be great to do it but I feel like if I haven't by now it's probably not going to happen. (P15)*

Other participants expressed that a lack of instrumental skill affected their creativity. For example, Participant 1 felt that identifying as a singer-songwriter without effective instrumental skills felt prohibitive. This is despite her being a highly experienced singer who always had an interest in songwriting:

> *I don't play an instrument fluently and so that kind of held me back […] because you don't play the piano fluently, or the guitar, why would you call yourself a songwriter […] so I stopped. I didn't do it. I didn't write a lot of songs unless I was inspired. (P1)*

Interestingly however, participants typically moved past the potential limitations of not playing an instrument, opting instead to invest their energy towards the strengths of their creative practice. Some participants (n=2) highlighted that attempting to play an instrument detracted them from free flowing creativity. An example of this is offered by Participant 3:

> *I can do it [play piano or guitar] but I don't enjoy it. I did music theory [in reference to a degree in music] and I should be able to write out a full composition out if I wanted but for me, it just takes away the […] it becomes too theoretical. One day I might decide to focus on that again and do something but at the moment I enjoy singing and writing out what I'm thinking. (P3)*

This suggests that although skill limitations may be an obstacle in some creative scenarios, it often leads the artist to pursue other ways of creating music, usually through the use of technology or by seeking out facilitative and/or collaborative contexts that allow them to fulfill their creative ideas. New and inventive ways of creating music was also evident. In the case of Participant 6 for instance, integrating his songwriting with an interest in crafting instruments from "recycled and salvaged materials" (Davies, 2012) led him to record an album of songs (Davies, 2012) performed entirely using recycled instruments he made.

6.2.5 Life experience, cultural heritage and environmental factors

The non-musical environment of the singer-songwriter influences their creative craft. Often, a common response when questioned on what inspires an artist is simply "life experience" (n=18). This response was so prevalent that 18 of the 20 participants responded with these exact words. This suggests that while music skills and interests provide a framework for music making, lived experiences (Hughes, 2014) form the precursor for song content. When artists relate life experience to songwriting, it shows that music making is utilised as a medium for processing, discussing, understanding and communicating their respective lives. Doing so through music, particularly in instances where the created songs and artefacts are shared publicly, clearly defines the singer-songwriter practice as an active and deliberate form of personal and social communication or commentary. Even in instances where songs are never shared with others, the act of deliberate creativity through music denotes a personal act of expressivity. As such, lived experiences may or may not be musically related, and are a stand-alone influence that not only potentially impact the content of songs, but also impact the person. What differentiates the singer-songwriter is that *life experience* is often expressed and represented, and personified, through song.

6.3 Creative approaches

The findings identified that singer-songwriters approach creativity through different means and contexts, and that such contexts allowed for creativity to occur. These approaches are determined by the research as 1) independent creativity; in which artists are able to confidently create in isolation, 2) facilitated creativity, which refers to assisted or supported contexts of creativity, and 3) collaborative creativity; where the task of creativity is equally shared between two or more artists. These approaches seemed to appear irrespective of the artistic sensibilities, experience or creative practice of the participants. Instead, singer-songwriters engage in various, and at times overlapping, creative contexts that hinge largely on their individual creative motivations, skill level and artistic goals. For instance, one song may be written independently, yet another, by the same artist, may be written collaboratively. In this section, the approaches reported by participants are explored.

6.3.1 Independent creativity

Singer-songwriters, for the most part, seem to be highly independent and multi-skilled artists. They typically engage in creative processes in independent and self-driven ways. Independence in this context is not to be mistaken for isolation or introspection. It relates to the ability of the artist to satisfactorily create alone, therefore engaging in the creative process without the assistance of others. All of the participants in some way engaged in some form of independent creativity, and utilised their own individual skill in order to start, fulfill and/or complete their songs and projects. Some of the participants reported a high degree of independent creativity (n=16) largely in part due to their multi-skilled abilities. For example, P7, P15 and P19 were experienced in music technology, and discussed that many of their creative projects were largely facilitated by their ability to write, record and produce their songs on their own. P7 and P19 are skilled in multiple instruments and utilise their ability to complete songs from conception to finish. This encompasses concepts that include the writing of songs, instrumentation, recording and production.

6.3.2 Facilitated creativity

Creative approaches also include instances of facilitation, assistance and project-oriented collaboration. In contrast to independent creativity, facilitated creativity is where the artist engages in creative relationships with others who specifically assist, support or complement the artist's individual artistic practices. This may be for the purpose of fulfilling gaps in skill, or to complete solo projects (such as an album) or group/collaborative projects. However, all singer-songwriters are likely to engage in some form of facilitated creativity at some point of their practice in order to complete a specific artistic goal or vision. For example, irrespective of the skill of the artist, it is unlikely that they will undertake all tasks associated with the completion of an album. Tasks such as mixing, mastering, recording and the like, are tasks in the songwriting or album-making process that typically require third-party assistance and facilitation.

The findings identified a spectrum of facilitated and assisted creativity. Some participants (n=2) described a prominent level of assistance or support that allowed them to attain their own artistic goals. For these singer-songwriters, by means of engaging other musician/industry persons led to the fruition of their own ideas and

projects. Participant 1 is an artist with over 20 years of singing experience. Although she has some experience in playing the piano, her ambitions to turn her original songs and ideas into an EP required her to engage the skills of other songwriters and music producers. Doing so, led to the completion of her project and the realisation of her own individual artistic goals that may have otherwise remained latent. Participant 1 reflected on this process of assisted and facilitated creativity:

> *I liked working with [name withheld; music producer] because he would just say, ok. I'd give him ideas, basic chords […] then he'd make it into something better […] I hear this particular line [in my mind] and I like this line and then he'd just play something. (P1)*

Another participant shared a similar creative process to Participant 1, and stated that working with a music producer allows her to fulfill her creative ideas. Participant 3 is a singer-songwriter who is able to articulate ideas by singing and through some piano and guitar skills, but notes that working with a producer allows her more creative freedom.

> *I feel like I can be more creative when I work with a producer who can put together the track. […] I worked with someone and I kind of sung it to him and together he just played the chords to what I'm singing […] it takes away the creativity out of it if I have to sit and think about it and work it out. (P3)*

In the above excerpt, the role of a music producer bridges the artist's conception of musical ideas – in the case of both P1 and P3, the articulation of melodic or lyrical ideas specifically – to a finished song or project. In this context, a sharing of skills takes place with the aim to assist and support the artist into a completed project. The examples above also represent acts of vocal audiation, in which melodic lines are first mentally heard. The singing voice is used as a primary way of communicating a melodic idea. Additionally, such facilitation is what potentially allows for creativity to occur. Such contexts become conducive for creativity to develop and for artistic ideas to come to fruition. A lack of access to facilitated contexts may be a potential limitation for artists whose skillsets focus primarily on singing, performance and lyric/melody writing. Without the engagement and interaction of another artist or music producer, the completion of songs or the development of ideas may never be realised.

6.3.3 Collaborative creativity

Singer-songwriters engage in many different collaborative contexts. While facilitated contexts are a form of collaboration, collaborative contexts usually refer to broader situations of creative interrelation. These include songwriting partnerships, community groups, shared musical projects, and so on. Creativity in this context becomes a means for connecting with others, connecting through a shared artistic vision, and allows for the reciprocation of ideas. Contrary to the notion that singer-songwriters work as solitary artists, all participants engaged in various and diverse forms of collaboration. In most examples, collaboration was welcomed by the participants as an enjoyable way of creating music, to connect with others and as a means to curb isolation. Participant 17 regularly engages in collaborative contexts within her own creative practice. As a singer-songwriter, she creates with music producers, other singers and singer-songwriters. She states:

> *I love it. The only way I want to work. So boring and lonely on your own [...] I love it because I feel like I get such an amazing energy out of the fact that what you're creating, what you end up with [...] it's not just yours. It's something that's been created [that's] more than the sun of its parts. (P7)*

When discussing collaboration, participants spoke fondly of the connection and enjoyment that comes from collaborative creativity (n=16). Singer-songwriters seem to show an affinity for working with others, and place value in the importance of social connection within the creative process. This may be for several reasons. While the most obvious is to engage in another's abilities, skills and creativities/musicalities, isolated creativity is a concept that participants also experienced (n=7). Collaboration therefore allows artists to move away from isolation, and/or a primarily independent creative practice.

Contrastingly, collaborative settings also present their own set of challenges. For artists who deem parts of their creative process as private, the act of collaboration presents a situation that requires an artist to open their creative craft and themselves to the interpretation and potential critical judgement. Collaboration in this way is what Participant 7 cites as "allowing more people into my space" (P7). Personalities and skill levels are also implications that may or may not support collaboration. In contrast to a facilitated context where skillsets are more explicitly pronounced and the skills/services

of engaged creatives are a lot more transparent, collaborative contexts are often put together for broad aims and purposes. For example, industry personnel may team several artists together for a songwriting session. These sessions take place between artists who may have never met, and therefore, communication skills, professionalism and each artist's individual musicianship/songwriting and singing skills are potentially tested.

In situations like this, Participant 16 discussed that collaboration can sometimes be an opportunity to "rise to their level" (P16), adding that "your creativity suddenly just comes out of nowhere because you have to" (P16). This shows a certain flexibility is required in some collaborative contexts. It also shows a level of perceived pressure. Participant 16 adds that "in the same regard, I think the reason I don't like co-writing is the pressure of having to finish in that time" (P16) and that as an artist, "you have inhibitions to get over, insecurities, and also, sometimes you're just not on the same page" (P16). This implies that collaborative sessions do not always result in free-flowing creativity as the expectations of skill, style and motivations may be vary between artists/songwriters. Participant 7 stated that "it's hard to put your trust in a songwriter who has different influences on them and who has a different vision" (P7). This highlights that the diversities of an artist can both benefit and impede the creative process. She offers this summation:

> *It always comes down to the other songwriters skill level. I think you should only write within your toolbox, I guess. So depending on what their style preferences were and what kind of feel, like I've written some folk songs with folk songwriters, and then some country [...] They ended up so different depending on who I'm working with, and also what I can do. (P7)*

Often, a middle ground for collaborative processes emerges. Participants explored that through experience, and in instances where collaborative partnerships are held over a period of time, a system and process that works for all parties emerges. These lead to successful creative partnerships that often turn into long standing relationships, friendships and professional networks. Participant 18 shared that "in the collaborative process, you have to be really giving" and to "not take offence at anything when people want to change things and move things around" (P18). This suggests that collaborative relationships for singer-songwriters are an exercise artistic contributions may be

negotiated. Successful collaborative contexts are therefore built upon effectively communicating and contributing in professional, personal and creative ways.

> *He and I have a really similar vocabulary around [songwriting process], well, he's able to translate my vocabulary around describing sound. (P17)*

In successful collaborative partnerships, collaborative contexts may allow for artistic expression to occur. A sense of belonging, as discussed earlier, becomes evident in successful collaborative circumstances.

6.4 Artistic contexts

As previously discussed, the findings identified that singer-songwriters have varied approaches when pursuing creativity. Independent, facilitated and collaborative approaches are applied under different contexts of specific creativity. In this section, examples of creative contexts are provided. Participants provided information regarding specific experiences in which independent, facilitated or collaborative creative approaches were utilised.

6.4.1 Connecting with others

There is a philanthropic side to the craft of singer-songwriters, many of whom may take on the experiences of others for the purposes of creating a song. Specific song projects and *artistic realisations* related to philanthropy and solidarity are discussed in Chapter 8. For these contexts, the creative process takes on a mix of introspection and observation. To the participants that apply these motivations, singing, songwriting and being creative is valued for its ability to move others, to elicit strong emotion in themselves and in their audience, and most importantly, to share and document stories. This is often for the purposes of raising awareness, assisting people, and to support communities or a cause. Artists create alongside an innate need to craft an honest message, as Participant 18 describes:

> *For me, it's all about how to actually portray a feeling in a song that's actually going to move an audience member or the person that it's for. They're my priorities now in terms of singing and songwriting. It's really about that making an emotional connection with whoever we're writing for or who we're singing to and ensuring that those messages and nice songs are really portrayed to the best of my ability and as emotionally as possible too, so that they're walking away with a feeling. (P18)*

The concept of 'moving' an audience means that artists seek an objective to connect with others not only in a superficial way, but in a way that results in a meaningful experience for the listener and/or for the artist. Collaborative songwriting with and for or for others is one way in which meaning is shared and experienced. In such instances, artists exhibit traits of empathy, connection, and closeness within a short timeframe, as Participant 17 shares:

> *It turns into a counseling session really [as we attempt] how we [can], as quickly as possible, get on the same emotional page about what it is we're trying to write a song about […] often what happens is […] we get half an hour in and we're both pouring our hearts out about [experiences, like] when we first got our heart broken or how this felt or that felt or what […] this experience with this friend [was like] and so, you get [quite] intimate with someone or with the people that you're working with but it's really important to have that level [of connection] because if you don't have that, [it won't] translate with the final outcome. (P17)*

The findings also identified that songwriting may provide a sense of belonging. There is an innate motivation by singer-songwriters to communicate not only to express themselves and share stories, but also seek to belong and be situated within a particular group, such as a local community, a songwriting group, or a sub-culture of music listeners. It may be to become a part of a wider community, particularly of a community of fellow songwriters where the sharing of information and stories take place or goals are shared through specific groups. In the following examples, Participants 17 and 9 discuss certain groups they engage with in order to facilitate ideas or feedback:

> *It's like a community of people who do these one-hour songwriting challenges. (P17)*

> *There's a few of us that write a bit, and we use each other as a sounding board, we play our new stuff to each other and give each other feedback/suggestions. (P9)*

6.4.2 Commercial and entrepreneurial objectives

When it came to discussing the creative process and the purposes for doing so, most participants felt that a commercial career was not of priority. While commercial

and financial rewards were welcome, these did not reflect the main reasons for pursuing creativity.

> *It doesn't even enter my head anymore. I am not singing or rushing to the fame or to get a record deal or get on the radio. All of those things are absolutely not in my brain or in my career objectives. (P18)*

Participants and respondents share a broad range of industry experiences. While all had recording experiences, not all participants considered their career as a full-time career.

> *In the music business world or artist development, they're getting told these things by the industry and then the industry don't even go with what they say. They'll say do this, this and this and then you do it and then they're like, "Oh no, not that". (P7)*

There were times however where a full-time career in music and the networking avenues that take place within the industry were reported as a source of enjoyment, and may also be a form of motivation and validation. This may perhaps be due to the peer support that may take place in the networking and awarding process.

> *Winning a Golden Guitar [award] for Female Artist of the Year 2015. That was a big one. (P16)*

Networking and the ways in which artists were exposed to the field may lead to artistic goals being met.

> *So I went into the talent quest. It was a whole big process to actually get to the final. When I got to the final, 20 people [were in it] and then I got to the top 5 […] I was seen by the industry and that just started everything. (P16)*

6.4.3 Online audiences and engagement

Participants all indicated the use of various online platforms. Developing a connection with audiences and acquiring a following online was shown to benefit artists. This form of engagement was cited by some participants (n=5) as an important aspect of their creative practice. It provided a means of building a fanbase and of connecting with audiences, consumers and current and/or future possible collaborations. Additionally, depending on the message and purpose of the artist, it is also a means of sharing a strong message or opinion through song. Participant 8 wrote a song called "Welcome To The Nuclear State" (Roberts, 2017, track 4) on the topic of

proposed nuclear waste disposals in rural South Australia. A music video was uploaded on YouTube, along with other songs:

> *I've had pretty amazing response to the song I wrote [called] 'Welcome To The Nuclear State'. I had 24,000 hits on the various posts at the mark. That kind of stunned me, I was pretty amazed with that. (P8)*

Views on the online platform often denote that an uploaded video has been shared or discussed, and therefore listened to several times, by a person online. It typically indicates interest in the song/artist. From these views[62] and depending on the online platforms used to view the music video[63], online media platform algorithms may promote the video randomly, therefore providing it with exposure to a broader online audience. This ability to share and market songs and for an artist to present their work in this way is an opportunity that has only been present in more recent times[64] and in some ways, seems to act as the online equivalent of an audience interacting with an artist. Additionally, social media plays a role in the work of some participants (n=2) and is a part of how they are both able to attain and source work, as well as distribute work.

6.4.4 The paradox of commercialism and creativity

Despite the fact that commercial activity was evident in most of the participants (n=14), commercialism was also associated as a negative trait. Some participants discussed that commercialism was not a valid component of a creative practice, and that commercialism stopped creativity and expression for some. Participants seemed very apprehensive about commerciality in general, citing its potential affect on creative practice. For example, in the following excerpt, P7 associates commerciality as the potential removal of true expression in songwriting:

> *I think essentially song writing can be the truest form of expression of yourself if you allow it but I think there's a lot of commercialness [sic] in music that forces us out of it somehow. But that's of me and my sound whereas you know I've got others that I work with that would never touch a guitar because it just won't fit. You know and writing songs to with who you are, not just you know*

[62] And therefore, audience engagement.

[63] As music videos can be embedded on websites, news articles or on social media, such as Facebook.

[64] YouTube has been present since 2005.

> *writing songs for a purpose like trying to get played on Triple J or whatever. You know I think essentially song writing can be the truest form of expression of yourself if you allow it but I think there's a lot of commercialness in music that forces us out of it somehow. (P7)*

Also at times, creative practices were affected, limited or stopped due to opposing priorities or relationships. Some participants reported feeling a need at times to justify pursuing of their creativity to the close relationships around them.

6.5 Conclusion

Chapter 5 proposed that the concepts of personal and practical motivations act as artistic impetus. From the personal motivations of *the self* stem interactions, influences, contexts and/or experiences that take place in *the field.* These begin from humble interests and exposures to music, informal and formal learning contexts (Green, 2002), through to large-scale collaborative projects. This chapter discussed the varied contexts that singer-songwriters were found to engage in or be influenced by. The research themes identified and discussed in this chapter seem to reveal different forms of creativity and creative outputs. Singer-songwriters are not just song-makers. They are singers who may work as cover singers (n=6) or music teachers (n=6). They are songwriters who sometimes create for others (n=4). Some make songs as a source of primary income/career (n=5), while others make songs to connect with their community (n=5). In many of the participant experiences reported, such contexts and experiences were also found to overlap.

These diverse creative experiences seem to reside along a broad spectrum that similarly align with the concepts of hard, soft or weak creativity (Madden & Bloom, 2001, Hughes et al., 2016), in which hard creativity signifies strictly original works, while soft or weak creativity relate to works that are new, but not necessarily original. Madden and Bloom (2001, p. 413) discuss that there is a continuum between "hard" and "weak" creativity, defining both terms as processes that lead to novel and/or inventive original works, or works that are simply produced respectively. In addition, Madden and Bloom (2011) propose the concept of "soft" creativity as one that represents "*reproduction*, i.e. non-inventive production [sic]", adding that the "distinction between hard, weak forms of creativity is useful when considering artistic creativity" p. 413). In considering these concepts, the findings revealed that while hard creativity was evident, there were also instances where hard creativity seemed delimited. This seemed to apply in

instances where hard creative processes (such as songwriting) were engaged, yet were experiences that did not necessarily align with the core of an artist and were merely engaged as a complementary activity. One example of this is where a participant (P3) reported an experience where there was a clear reason and purpose to engage in songwriting – in this specific example, a contractual obligation and source for financial work, and thus a highly practical motivation to engage in creativity – yet the process is delimited by the requirements of an opportunity or obligation:

> *I get sent a lot of Electronic Dance Music, which is not necessarily my strength but they're the producers and people that need the songwriters. [These are the] jobs that are there for me at the moment […]. I also love writing country music as well and would love to work with artists in Nashville or something. So I'm not limited as a songwriter but you learn what your sound is as an artist […] I'm not a country artist. (P3)*

This is suggestive of the existence of a delimited form of creativity and this research defines this as a form of hard creativity that is facilitated by specific requirements. It is exercised in instances where opportunities or obligations exist as motivations to create, yet is similar to art practices that are commissioned with a specific brief. It also suggests the possibility for its opposite, where an opportunity or obligation may provide an artist with the practical motivation to create, yet there may or may not always be a more intrinsic and personal motivation to do so.

Additionally, the themes revealed by this research also seem to similarly alight to the concepts of P-creativity, or psychological/personal creativity, and H-creativity, or historical creativity (Boden, 2004). The former describes a creative result that is "new to the person" while the latter is creativity that "has arisen for the first time in human history" (Boden, 2004, p. 1). Boden's (2004) definition of creativity hinges on "ideas and artefacts that are *new, surprising, and valuable [sic]"* (Boden, 2004, p. 1). The processes and *artistic realisations* that exist within the realm of singer-songwriters seems to primarily align with the definition of P-creativity. However, a problem occurs in that the concept of value within P-creativity is subjective to the perception of the creator, while value within H-creativity is reliant on such ideas and artefacts having 1) a wide audience reach, and 2) an audiences perception of its value. All participants engaged in both soft and hard forms of creativity, signifying that both forms exist within the creative practice of singer-songwriters. An example of this is in instances where

participants supplemented or complemented their original works, or *hard* creativity, with cover singing, band singing or other forms of *soft* creativity.

These theoretical concepts form a basis from which the findings discussed within this chapter may be contextualised and progressively included in the creative practice framework. In the context of the singer-songwriter specifically, this research adopts these concepts and proposes that, instead of a continuum of creativity, a superset/subset form of core creativity and peripheral creativity exists. The following Figure (see Figure 5: Core creativity and peripheral creativity within creative practice) illustrates the broad themes discussed in this chapter, along with the concepts of *core* and *peripheral* creativity:

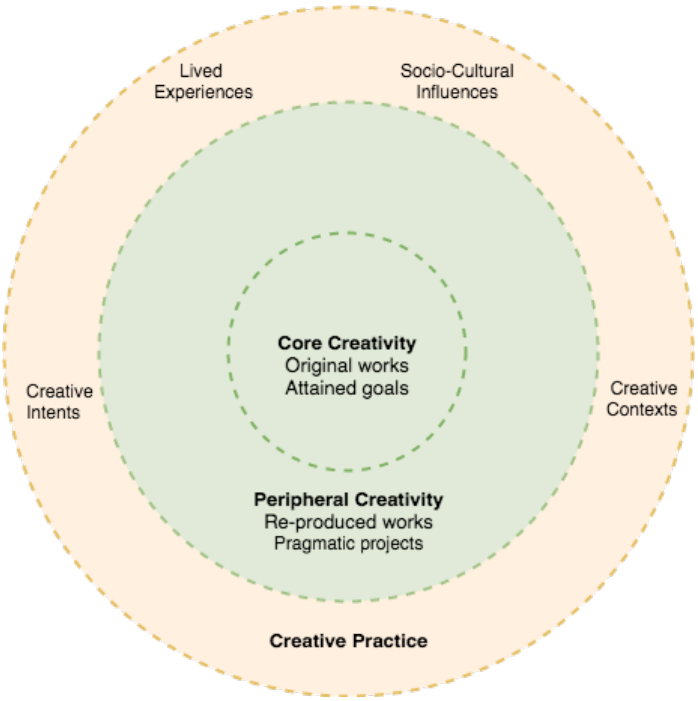

Figure 5: Core creativity and peripheral creativity within creative practice

Core creativity, illustrated in the center of Figure 5, refer to creative instances that are felt to be original to the artist. It is creativity that seems to deeply align with their respective and individual skillsets, goals and/or personal motivations. It is proposed here to define a form of creativity that adheres to two concepts – that a deeply connected *artistic realisation* is reached, and that such realisations are confidently directed by the artist. It primarily aligns with *hard* creativity, in which works are largely driven by the artist's intrinsic abilities, objectives and personal drive. However, a distinction must be

made that this is irrespective of whether such realisations are made through collaborative, facilitated or isolated contexts. In this sense, core creativity not only means hard creativity. It encompasses a strong sense of identity, embodiment, the ownership of works and a deep connection to craft – one that may be exercised in isolation, or within *the field.* While the research findings identified that these traits were consistent with maturity and extensive experience, as both allow for such creativity to develop, it does not necessarily rely on age. Rather, it is proposed here to signify a strongly held connection and a confidence in one's ability and craft.

On the other hand, *Peripheral creativity*, which is illustrated in Figure 5 (see Figure 5: Core creativity and peripheral creativity within creative practice) as a superset outside of core creativity, yet within the creative practice, is defined here as a form of creativity that may or may not result in original work. Rather, it is creativity that results in re-produced works, or in which core creativity is utilised, yet in delineated or limited ways. It is creativity that is motivated by practical means. Peripheral creativity also encompasses the creative processes involved in singing and songwriting that may or may not necessarily be original or novel, but are likely to be re-produced.

An example of peripheral and core creativity may be an artist who is working towards their own solo album, yet writes advertising jingles as a way of supplementing his or her creative practice in order to fund the core creative project. The advertising jingles may be original, but is not the main motivation of the artist. Additionally, the same artist may be a highly talented jingle writer, yet an emerging singer-songwriter who produces work that may not be to the standard of a particular audience, yet this is not necessarily of relevance to the artist and may not impact their zeal for their core creative goal. Granted, for another kind of artist - someone whose core creativity lies in crafting advertising jingles and may have little to no interest in writing a solo album, the opposite may likely apply. This example offers a hypothetical situation in which core and peripheral creativity may best be suited to describe forms of artistry without a need for utilising a scaled continuum. Core creativity may therefore be viewed as a deeper subset of peripheral artistry, and that either of which may be more prevalent in some artists than others, or may be more prevalent at a time in an artist's life. In this sense, core and peripheral forms of creativity are best determined by the artist. In the following Figure, (see Figure 6: Core creativity and peripheral creativity within the creative

practice framework), these concepts are further illustrated in relation to the creative phases and motivations within the creative practice framework:

Figure 6: Core creativity and peripheral creativity within the creative practice framework

As creative success is described differently by each participant, opportunities deemed as conducive to effective and fulfilling creative interactions vary. Fulfilling creativity, as revealed in this chapter, is a combination of skill acquisition, collaboration, motivations and encouragement through validating experiences. By feeling validated and encouraged, and in pursuing creativity based on the motivations determined in Chapter 5, the singer-songwriter, "having achieved a sense of belonging to a larger human system" is able to confidently make "attempts at self-actualization, to [experiment] with different skills, different ideas and disciplines" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990a, p. 222). These may be said to also develop the potential for *artistic realisation.*

Working and connecting with like-minded singer-songwriters, musicians, producers and the like, are often reported to be what spurs artists into a trajectory towards *artistic realisation,* wherein a sense of artistic connection, communication and embodied self-expression is realised. The concept of *artistic realisation* and the impact of both *core* and *peripheral* forms of creativity, along with further discussions related to the process of artistry, are offered in Chapter 9 of this thesis. In the following chapter, the ways in which the singing voice is engaged within the contexts discussed in the current chapter, and Chapter 5, is explored in detail.

7 The singer-songwriter voice

I feel like songwriting and singing go hand in hand.
(Danah, Participant 3)

7.1 Introduction

The participants shared perspectives specifically related to voice and voice use. Such perspectives were identified as relevant throughout all phases of the creative practice. However, phases of *the self, the field* and *artistic realisation* seemed to encompass different forms of voice use and vocal creativity. The participant perspectives provided insight into the ways in which singer-songwriters view their voice. This includes the various functions of singing, vocalisation in songwriting and where the voice is situated within the overall holistic practice of creativity. This chapter therefore seeks to address the primary research question, *What role (if any) does the voice play in the creative process of songwriting and in the songs that emerge?* It also seeks to address *how* the singing voice used in the creative practice.

The research determined that singer-songwriters are highly aware of their voice. Given that their craft hinges on singing as well as songwriting, it is not surprising that the voice, and the act of singing, was found to be a musical creativity. Furthermore, singing and voice use, and the personally expressive ways in which artists utilise their voice, is a major component of singer-songwriter artistry. Without the inclusion of singing, the creative practice of the singer-songwriter focuses on one dimension, the song, and may not be as implicitly influenced by the multiple and creatively influential facets of the voice. While this may seem simplistic, the research revealed that the voice represents much more than its implied role. Firstly, the concepts related to the voice, and the singing voice specifically, undeniably differentiate the singer-songwriter practice from that of songwriters. Similarly, the concepts related to voice use in songwriting and authorship differentiate singer-songwriter practices to that of singers. This chapter explores the concept of singing and voice use in the creative practice of the singer-songwriter. It includes singing, voice use, vocal creativity, and the ways in which the singing voice is discreetly or explicitly utilised.

7.2 The singing voice and embodiment

The singing voice is determined as an embodied instrument influenced and impacted by "neuropsychobiological" processes (Thurman & Welch, 1997, p. 23). The concept of vocality, vocal identity and artistry are terms that encompasses vocal physiology, socio-cultural influence and, to some extent, artistic identity (Hughes, 2013, 2010; Meizel, 2011). Together, these concepts form the holistic voice. Singing is therefore deeply and personally expressive. For some, there are inherent benefits to be gained by singing. For the participants, singing reflected its embodiment and the capacity to connect with *the self*, to personally express and to communicate:

> *Probably the way it makes you feel […] I guess that's where it came from initially for me [...] it made me feel good, it made me feel connected and emotional and just hard to describe. But you know that's why initially I wanted to sing […] I love audience reaction too. (P16)*

> *I think it's quite a therapeutic thing […] it's something that I've always done and I find it very easy. It's not something that I've had to work very hard. (P17)*

The following discussion expands the concepts noted above and relate to the embodied singing voice and the emergence of vocal identity. The findings in this section predominantly relate to *the self* and *the field.*

7.2.1 Singing *for* self-communication

The research findings identified that the singing voice is a way in which artists can communicate beyond the scope of and different to the emotive capability of normal speech. Several participants (*n*=13) noted that singing enabled them to communicate in a way they deemed comfortable. In this sense, singing words that were meaningful allowed these singer-songwriters to avoid repressing thoughts or ideas. Participant 1 emphasized that singing has the potential to allow an artist to consider what they intend to express:

> *My voice is important because...I normally don't…I feel uncomfortable talking sometimes, so singing is a way to express myself easier […] I think what it is about singing is - I prepare. And I get to prepare [and to] fix things up. Whereas when I'm talking just normally or if I'm presenting something, if I don't prepare, I get tongue tied. I think singing is a way that I don't get tongue tied. And I can just express […] It slows everything down for me. (P1)*

> *I didn't like talking and [I] don't love necessarily speaking about my feelings. Whereas in singing, you are able to. (P18)*

The above examples delineate singing as a discrete method of communication. It is interesting to note that in this sense, singing enables the musical expression of words, lyrics and themes that would otherwise be left unheard. Seeking to sing meaningful and personalised lyrics for the purposes of comfortably communicating *the self* may therefore be a potential instigator for songwriting.

For those participants who began as singers (*n*=5), songwriting became a way of extending their creative practice. In this way, the combination of singing and songwriting involved a personal progression as Participant 9 explained:

> *I've been singing with people and in public for 40 years and in that time, you can't keep on singing the same stuff [...] you come through an evolutionary process and you move onto something new and writing stuff and singing my own stuff is part of that evolution. (P9)*

Contrastingly, one participant discovered that her songs attracted attention during a workshop experience. This provided the inspiration to pursue *both* singing and songwriting:

> *I probably learned there that, okay I didn't stand out as a singer or a guitarist at that time, but my songs did. (P16)*

7.2.2 Vocal learning, enculturation and adaptation

Learning and becoming adapted to singing and/or singing environments through both formal and informal contexts was a common finding (*n*=18). In the enculturation process, there were several instances where participants reported being influenced by family settings (*n*=13). Interestingly, the role of the mother's voice, which was discussed in the literature review[65] as a potential source for early influence and connection, was specifically mentioned by two participants:

> *I feel like singing as a bit of a hereditary component. So my Mum can sing. She's not a singer but she has a nice voice and I sound like her. So you know, I kind of could always sing. (P16)*

[65] See Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1: Origins of vocal communication and sung expression (p. 13) and Section 2.3.1: Musical enculturation and creativity (p. 26)

> *Singing is something that I've always loved. My mother is a brilliant, brilliant singer. And to this day I use my memories of her voice as a benchmark of a good singer. (P5)*

For other participants, singing lessons had enabled a better understanding of their own voice (*n*=8) and a greater ability to control their singing:

> *I think there's such thing that people don't understand the voice is an instrument and they should train it like an instrument. So they just think you're born and you can sing that way. (P7)*

> *Something interesting in terms of how I found singing lessons [is that] you learn things about what you can and can't do with your voice […] But you still go back into your habits when you're not consciously singing. (P3)*

> *I think my singing was good. So, my parents gave me a lot of lessons and I learned technically some things on how to sing. And yes, I [think] it's interesting. I like the human voice as a medium. (P10)*

The second example raises the interesting concept of *consciously singing.* For many singers, the ability to be in the moment – a *flow* state (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990a) – enables singers to focus in their holistic performativity rather than one particular aspect of it. Contrastingly, singing lessons were also shown to disrupt creative flow (*n*=4):

> *[I] dawdled too much on warming up and practicing different techniques and different exercises and […] focused on where I was going wrong with the technique, or the pitch […] Whereas now I just feel the music and go into it straight away. (P15)*

Principally though, formal vocal learning afforded participants the opportunity to communicate creative ideas more fluently and/or to potentially experiment with incorporating new vocal sounds and techniques:

> *I have been getting lessons for the last few years and I realised that, actually, even though a lot of people will always, you know, say, "Wow, you have such a lovely voice."[…] I didn't realise that I'd only been using probably about 10% of its actual capacity as an instrument […] I've been getting lessons recently and I'm finding that's an amazing kind of thing. It's unlocking this ability to articulate my creative ideas so quickly. (P17)*

As the following example acknowledges, Participant 17 felt that singing lessons assisted not only their ability to sing and access technical skill, but to aid confidence and lessen perfectionist tendencies:

> *So much, and just the confidence too. You know, I think the biggest thing that holds me back in my singing is not what I'm physically capable of at all. It's my own emotional connection to doing it wrong [I'm] a little bit of a perfectionist in that sense and my singing teacher's constantly like […] but you've been singing an octave and a half higher than that and [in] the exercises just before this and you can absolutely do this. (P17)*

Learning singing and being introduced to vocal capabilities was shown to enable a better understanding of singing in ways that benefited participants more broadly (*n*=12). The following example shared the ways in which learning through different singing and music teachers allowed experience in different ways of understanding the complexities involved:

> *Each experience really taught me so many different things like I had one teacher that just really taught me how to connect on stage and others how to really work on the technique. Others who help me find different parts of my voice that I didn't know existed. And that others that really encourage me to find my own way as well. (P15)*

Performing and engaging in peripheral forms of creativity also became opportunities for learning singing. For example, many of the participants (*n*=8) had engaged in cover band work at some stage in their experience. These forms of work allowed for frequent singing and stage performance experience. Additionally, such opportunities may have allowed for an acknowledgement of the voice as an instrument and its inherent parameters and limits:

> *[I was playing] four gigs a week and sometimes [during] the weekends [I] would [have] two gigs a night. […] I lost my voice at one point [and thought] "I better take care of this", but there were performances there [for me to do]. (P12)*

Early performance and singing experience also allowed for the learning of audience communication how to manage a performance on stage.

> *Yes, [the cover band work was my] apprenticeship in holding the attention of an audience and [what to do] when things go wrong. (P11)*

7.2.3 Vocal physiology, vocal health and voice care

All participants showed an implied awareness of the voice as a function of the body; some participants explicitly discussed physiology, health or care strategies (*n*=10). There seemed to be an overarching understanding that the voice is a physiological function of the body and this was expressed in the broad ways, including:

> *I am fascinated by the voice. In every aspect. I teach it as well so physiologically I'm in awe of the way the human body can produce sound. (P7)*
>
> *It does take a really long time to kind of learn all those bits and pieces of your body and your voice. (P18)*

The research findings identified that artists cared about their vocal health and their respective vocal abilities with a view to long-term voice use. When posed with the question "Is your voice important to you?", several of the participants responded with answers that reflected their views on the importance of their physiological voice function (*n*=5). This seemed surprising as interview content discussed songwriting processes and the ways in which artists choose to express themselves. It seemed that "vocal importance" would have garnered a response related more to the inherent vocal expression found in songwriting. Instead, participants discussed various perspectives on voice and body care, such as limiting alcohol (*n*=1), or managing an appropriate diet (*n*=2), and practicing an awareness of the body and the holistic nature of singing:

> *I don't smoke, I warm up, I keep hydrated, I eat well, and I don't shout. (P16)*
>
> *We get older, our physiques change, everything about us changes and if you don't nurture your voice, if you aren't serious about it, well, that's going to show on your age and your health, like, big time. (P11)*

Despite the awareness and perceptions on vocal care shown by participants, vocal health issues and associated pathologies, such as vocal nodules, were identified in the research findings. Three participants reported having experienced vocal nodules. These participants reported developing vocal nodules early in their careers as singers, during busy periods of high performance load and/or while singing in cover bands. Some participants expressed a good awareness of potential causes that may lead to vocal health issues and difficulty in performing. At times, potential causes were related to staging and the ability to hear, audio equipment and/or environmental factors. At other

times, participants offered that vocal health issues may stem from difficult performance settings or through overusing, and therefore overloading, the voice:

> *Through too much singing and too loud and not enough foldback. (P16)*
>
> *Knowing when to push and not to push and when to emphasize and not to emphasize and not being scared to be, I mean, when you're singing and you're trying to get a point across, you might use a voice more powerfully [when] you don't need to. (P18)*

In some circumstances, participants did not view vocal issues (*n*=2), such as nodules (*n*=1), as being negative. Rather, they were just one way of attaining a unique vocal sound. While potential vocal impairment here seems to be perceived as a sonically beneficial characteristic, vocal impairment has implications on vocal health and the long-term longevity of an artist's voice. Such impairment has been known to be disruptive or detrimental to an artist's career (Hughes, 2013, 2017; Stewart-Monro, 2012). In contrast, the voice is pivotal to the pragmatic components of creative practice, and particularly in cases where the artists are financially reliant on their craft as artists:

> *Everything. At the moment, my voice is [important because] I've got a radio show now, too. So, my voice is what brings me income and […] if I didn't have my voice, well, I'd need to get a whole new life, a whole new job. […] I can't scream, I really don't. I know when to, I know how to project and speak properly so that I don't place extra pressure on my voice in a loud environment. You know, I'll never lose my voice, touch wood, if I've got a concert or I'm out all night, I don't lose my voice. (P16)*

There was also an awareness of utilising the voice in a way that aligns with the individual's own parameters and technical abilities. This implies that using the voice in this individualistic way is not only best practice for vocal health and longevity but also allows the artist to express their uniqueness. In the following example, a Participant 7 expresses concern for when singing is more aligned to vocal mimicking:

> *When I started teaching in 2008, we had a lot of kids sounding like Missy Higgins and then fast forward to three years and then they all sounded like Ed Sheeran. Fast forward to now and they're all about weird, hipster, indie, pop sounds happening. And they've all got vocal issues because of it […] everyone's struggling with their vocal health [because] they're mis-modulating [sic] their voice to create a sound that isn't achievable. [For*

example], they're trying to be big belters like Jessie J. and they're not naturally fitted to belt. (P7)

7.2.4 Vocal technique, technical ability and skill parameters

Vocal technique refers to the use of the vocal mechanism in order to produce sound. Optimum technique implies a healthy way of producing the voice. The findings identified instances where participants were faced with the paradox of singing correctly, or optimally, and an urge to sing expressively. While it is possible to do both, participants utilised the term technique to imply 'correct singing'. Many participants expressed that they liked their voice when they were able to achieve the type of vocal performance they intended or hoped for, highlighting that vocal technique is relevant in being able to produce a vocally pleasing and musical sound:

Yes, I kind of do like it when I get it right, you know? (P8)

At the very least, rudimentary vocal technique allows for an ability to control one's singing voice sufficiently and/or effectively for the purposes of eliciting a required or intended vocal performance. This is particularly relevant given that some styles of music and songwriting necessitate greater technical skill.[66] Additionally, as technical ability usually determines a singer's ability to control volume/dynamic contrast, and as such variances in volume align with vocal expression, vocal technique is relevant to singer-songwriters. Having the facility to manage the voice and to possess the technical skill to determine how one sings enables a singer to realise his or her intended vocal delivery. Participant 1 shares her thoughts on vocal technique from the perspective of being a singer-songwriter, a singing teacher and a professional singer:

I think that's what you want to have, a balance of [technique and letting go] because if you kind of just let yourself go, sometimes it could be too much. Maybe you need to bring yourself back and then think about whether you need to have that technical mind still, or if you are singing in the right place [...] it's hard isn't it? That balance is hard. (P1)

This difference between "that technical mind" and "right place" (P1) in singing suggests different possible performance states that imply technically proficient singing

[66] For example, the aural and technical skill required to sing a quick, pentatonic melisma differs from that of a slow, easy musical phrase.

and singing states in *flow* (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990a) performance. These paradoxical singing states were discussed in various forms by some participants (*n*=4). For these participants, it is technical ability that allows singer-songwriters to sing efficiently and even curate their vocal expression. This aligned to the earlier finding in relation to vocal training where consciously or actively thinking of vocal technique or production can negatively impact performances. Constantly thinking about vocal technique was also found to be a disruption:

> *I probably dawdled too much on warming up and practicing different techniques and different exercises, and probably [wore] myself out too […] Whereas now, I just feel the music [and] go into it straight away. (P15)*

In her discussion of the difference between singing and performing implicitly, another participant discussed emotional expression, technical skill and deliberate manipulation of the voice:

> *[It's about] how to deliver things in a way [that] the human body reacts. In real life there's [a] part of your voice that you can manipulate [like] the natural response to smiling […] And the same with sad[ness], there's a specific technique, so I add those specific kinds of mechanical techniques into my singing. But also, it's just getting inside out of your head and into your body, being in the moment rather than thinking about the technique […] There's that line, "Are you performing or are you just rehearsing on stage?". You know, that's very different and I think that's what people are moved by. (P7)*

The concept of implicit singing may therefore be defined as singing in a state of *flow* and a type of singing that encompasses the accumulated skills, expression and individuality of the singer. Technical singing can therefore be termed as explicit singing, in which singing is performed in a deliberate way in order to give consideration to concepts of vocal technique, health, care, and more deliberate styling and expression. The findings of the research revealed that the paradox between the two exists in the craft of singer-songwriters. In this context, implicit singing is valued for its individuality and *flow,* while explicit singing is valued for its technicality and deliberate malleability.

7.3 Vocal individuality

The findings revealed that singer-songwriters value their voices and associate their voice as a way to express their humanistic and creative identity. There is an element of ownership evident in participant responses, which suggests that the voice is a true marker of *the self* and all that it entails. Viewed in this way, the singing voice is means of identifying an artist and of signifying one's *individuality*:

> *You want someone to be able to hear you and know who you are. (P3)*
>
> *I get to be exactly who I am when I sing. (P7)*
>
> *[They] said to me, 'I hear that you're a protest singer' I had never thought of myself as a protest singer. (P8)*

A 'perfect' voice was not always prized. This suggests that acceptance, pride and ownership are encompassed within vocal individuality:

> *The importance of it? […] This is the best voice I've ever had even with all its imperfections, I still love it. (P15)*

The deep connection to singing and having the ability to sing were also found to be important factors in life and of *the self*. For example, despite the hardships that potentially come with choosing a career as a singer-songwriter, singing and identifying with singing was *the self*:

> *I can sing. I'm really lucky, I should never take that for granted [despite the] worries at times […] I feel like it would be wrong not to sing. (P16)*

This and the following discussion provides insight specifically on voice use as expressed in the creative phase of *the self*. It is what this research determines to be *vocal individuality*, which includes findings related to vocal perception, or the ways in which participants perceive their voice, the notion of *unique sound* and vocal ownership.

7.3.1 Vocal perception

Participants were questioned as to their own voice perceptions. When asked whether participants liked the sound of their own voice, responses varied from being confident about their vocal sound, to having a dislike to hearing their own voice, or both. Such vocal perception was seen to change over time:

I'm liking it more and more, yeah. It's not what I wanted it to be still even though […] and you would think I would have thought by now [that] I'd be okay with my voice. (P15)

Some participants admired their voices (*n*=4) and were happy with how they sounded. These participants expressed a strong sense of connection and confidence about their voice and how their vocal sound relates to the kind of "sound" (P3) that they create:

I like the tone of my voice […] I don't get jealous of [another artist's] sound. I love that I have my sound. (P3)

Even in instances where participants did not consider themselves as skillful singers (*n*=6), participants accepted and even embraced the limitations of their voice. These participants cited such limitations as strengths by acknowledging their vocal parameters and relating these to their identity as artists. For some, there was difficulty in listening to their own recorded voice at times (*n*=3). This was, in part, due to vocal limitations and included pitch related issues, even despite one participant liking her vocal tone. The inability for singers to listen and like their own sound manifests in different ways:

I never used to [like listening to my voice]. When I started performing and listening and recording and listening to myself, I [would] cringe. (P5)

I enjoy singing [but] I can't stand listening to myself which you'll find is a common thing; A lot of artists can't bear to listen to themselves. (P6)

Again, having a positive vocal perception was viewed as one that happened over time and may be impacted by singing in ways that were intended or by getting it "right" (P8):

I never used to but I'm okay to live with it. Yes. That's an embarrassing thing to admit. Yes, I kind of do like it when I get it right, you know? (P8)

This indicates a level of self-reflection in the processes of singer-songwriters in which vocal self-perceptions also double as constructive or analytical self-critique. For some, such self-reflection is formative for realising an intended vocal outcome in recorded or live performance contexts:

Things that I thought are nice about my voice, ok I can keep that, and then other times I think oh gosh, that sounds really boring. (P1)

If I was performing live, I might mess around with the songs I'm singing but now that I know from [singing] lessons that I can sing [a bit] higher, […] I

> *might try [and] mess around with what does sound better […] and when I'm in the studio […] I'll try a few different versions of something just to see what really does sound better for the song. (P3)*

These examples suggest the potential benefits for singer-songwriters who reflect on their vocal ability and develop individual perceptions of their voice. At times, such perceptions reflect on their musical and technical ability, while other times, perceptions seemed to focus on vocal expression and their ability to perform a song as intended. This concept of segmentation extends to the singing voice being utilised as a way of connecting with others. Despite some singer-songwriters expressing that they do not believe themselves to be the *best* of singers, they expressed pride in their capabilities and limitations, and were confident with their own individuality. This suggests that, to the singer-songwriter, technical voice function is potentially secondary to having an individual voice. This adds to the earlier discussion that the singing voice is heralded for its tonal and expressive qualities above its technical potential.

> *I'm not the world's best singer […] I don't have a big voice you know, but there's something about my voice that people want to hear and I feel so lucky and privileged because every person I meet says to me, "I wish I could sing". (P16)*

7.3.2 A unique sound

Having a unique vocal sound is highly valued by singer-songwriters. In one case, possessing a unique vocal sound was so significant, that the participant chose not to address underlying vocal health issues for fear of losing their individual vocal characteristic. This participant added that the vocal issue began at a young age. Due to this, the vocal issue was perceived as a part of their history and identity, and therefore an important vocal trait. Defining what constitutes a unique sound is difficult. One way, that was apparent in all participant perspectives (including the two music producers who were interviewed for this research), was to describe the inherent link to the person, and to identity, by virtue of the voice belonging to that person. The voice, however, is what identifies and distinguishes an artist from others by its very *uniqueness.* A unique vocal sound may therefore be defined specifically as an identifying sound or a "signature sound" (P1). It is something that is not *taught*, but rather, is a concept potentially developed over time:

> *No-one really teaches you how to do it. I guess. And that signature sound is what you want to create…It's pretty important because […] if someone plays your song on the radio, you want them to know, "oh that's [participant name], that's [researcher name]" […] it identifies you. (P1)*

Having a vocal sound that individualises and distinguishes artists was deemed as being "special" (P3). It was capable of attracting an audience's attention.

> *The voice is one of the most evocative of instruments […] It's just got that quality to it. (P13)*

Contrastingly, for another participant, variety in vocal delivery was valued, highlighting that, for this participant, diverse vocal sounds are associated as vocal individuality:

> *Oh, I suppose I'm still finding it and I don't know if I'll ever have a sound. I don't know if it's possible for me because I enjoy the variety so much. (P15)*

7.3.3 Vocal ownership and identity

Throughout participant responses, a unique sound was often discussed in parallel with vocal traits and persona. The following statement highlights this perception:

> *I think there [are] a lot of artists trying to be someone that they're not and it's not even that they're trying to copy people, they just think they need to be a certain sound […] And I coach a lot of artists and when we find that place of that open space where they get to be who they are, it's really magic and it's always just in the toning. (P7)*

In this statement, the voice is considered as being fluid and *owned* by the artist. In this sense, it becomes reflective of the person it belongs to. In the above example, the issue of *copying* another artist's voice is raised. This may be as a form of borrowed influence, perhaps in a bid to *find,* learn or uncover one's own voice. It seems that the confidence to claim ownership over one's voice happens over time, and perhaps through maturity:

> *I think for me, it took me a very, very long time to appreciate what my voice is capable of […] growing up I was always like 'why can't I do that?' [referring to other singers] and it was only really when I came into my twenties that I appreciated the fact that I maybe don't necessarily need to do that and sort of started playing with my lower registers a little bit more and appreciating the*

fact that that's maybe sometimes a little bit more rare […] But I don't see it the same way. I don't try and strive for something I'm not. I'm just, I am who I am and that's it. (P13)

In the following example, Participant 9 shares a strong and confident ownership of her voice, and of being a singer.

I'm a singer first and foremost. I love singing and I've always been a good singer. I've never been trained or anything, but I was lucky enough to have a naturally good voice. It's very different now to what it was when I was younger. I used to have a high clear voice, but the thing your mother doesn't tell you is that when you get to about [age] 50, you go through a lot of physiological changes and one of them is [that] your voice goes downwards and becomes very deep and my voice has gone through that change, and I love it…I have this deep gutsy blues voice! (P9)

This interestingly conveys the possibility that vocal perception and ownership may potentially be linked to self-confidence, self-esteem and maturity. This may be due to learned skills that become better and more implicit over time, reducing the level of self-critique and analytical reflection that tends to take place in the earlier stages of learning singing and of building a creative practice:

You know as you get older, you know your limitations. You know what you can't do. Anything you do in life whether it's music [or other things] knowing what you can't do, it's a big asset. Once you realise that, you're gonna [sic] grow. (P6)

Additionally, such ownership and being able to find comfort in one's own singing voice potentially takes confidence and courage:

Trying to find your own voice […] takes a very long time and you really have to be confident enough in yourself to go, 'Okay, I want to sing in my way because I actually really don't care what people think and I don't care about what the radio plays or any of those things'. (P18)

7.4 Vocal authorship

In the process of singing and songwriting, and particularly when thinking of the voice as the human vocal mechanism and instrument, vocal authorship may be defined as the way in which the voice is used in songwriting and song performance. It includes the singer's ability to control their voice using their embodied voice, in both an implicit

or explicit way. This dictates the musicality, the vocal tone or timbre that is produced by the singer and the ways in which the singer articulates sung lyrics. It also includes the singer's individual vocal delivery, connection, emotional expression and artistic sensibilities. The findings revealed that vocal authorship is deemed a highly important and valued component in the process of songwriting and song performance/delivery.

7.4.1 Vocal expression and delivered emotion

The findings identified vocal expression and emotional delivery as being important to singer-songwriters. These concepts were deemed by participants (*N*=20) as the way in which songs are able to flourish. It is interesting to note that some participants (*n*=2) used the word 'deliver' when discussing or explaining emotion in performance. This suggests that while an emotion may be felt by the singer-songwriter, the way in which it manifests through the voice is of relevance. It seems that emotional or expressive *delivery* may be a more appropriate way of describing such vocal representation of emotion and how it is perceived:

> *The delivery of a really emotionally honest vocal performance is everything in a song. I think that if you're singing perfectly in tune with perfect form in a trained way it can, you know, sound technically correct but it can contain nothing and give you nothing, [and no] other feeling from that performance. (P17)*

This associates an emotional vocal delivery with honesty and is suggestive of a certain philosophy of creativity that singer-songwriters may deem more important and/or superior to vocal technicality and skill. This notion of creative philosophy and its segmentation from vocal technique is also discussed by a participant who is a music producer:

> *What I deem a good voice […] it just needs to be real. It needs to be on point technically as well, don't get me wrong […] I guess what I mean by that is if someone's not as technically gifted but they've got that raw energy, and that deep emotion, it can be 10 times more powerful than someone that's got all the technique in the world. […] If I can get that capture [during a recording, and] bottle that emotion, then that's what it's about. (P2)*

Additionally, participants (*n*=9) discussed songs more broadly, offering perspectives pertaining to honest delivery:

> *If a song says something that I wouldn't believe myself, [or] that I wouldn't want to say myself, I won't sing it because I think music can be such a truthful thing [and] I wouldn't want to abrogate that at all. (P9)*

While some participants discussed the value of vocal expression (*n*=3), Participant 10; a composer, arranger, and singer-songwriter, discussed vocal quality as a song-led concept:

> *The vocal quality, and I don't mean good or bad, I mean the appropriateness. And there [are] so many examples of this. A bad singer could express so much. I hate to sound trite but authenticity, the ability to sing like you really mean it is the critical thing. (P10)*

Concepts related to technique, vocal health or vocal care were not typically considered when participants spoke about the importance of vocal expression. Interestingly though, was an implicit awareness that physical and mental responses may lead to specific vocal results. This was expressed as a dichotomy between the mental and physical side of singing, and the vocal sound and expression that takes place as a result. It highlights the potential that the body and mind may have to antagonise the voice, and that such antagonisation is reactionary:

> *I'm not too sure which way around it goes. If I'm feeling confident, my voice comes out a lot better. If I'm feeling scared, I really restrict my breathing and my throat, my throat just closes over [and] having the process of writing [processes] the emotion. So then I can get to [process it] and actually sing the words and express […] the grief and the anger that way. (P5)*

Additionally, consideration of vocal capabilities during songwriting and utilising those capabilities in ways that artistically and creatively deliver a song was identified in the research:

> *But really looking at what you're singing and […] using what voice you have because […] we've all got restrictions on our voices and where they can go and how they can move and things like that. (P18)*

7.4.2 Singing during songwriting processes

In relation to songwriting processes, the possibilities of creating songs with the voice was determined as offering artists a flexible instrument to work with (*n*=9):

> *I'm not sure that I would have written songs if I didn't enjoy singing so much and if singing wasn't something that came naturally to me. I might have written different things or short stories or something. (P9)*

Participants discussed that songwriting processes related specifically to the writing of melodic parts were often delimited by vocal range and skill. Changing the key of a song or crafting a song within a specific range of notes seemed common practice:

> *Okay, I think I could change the key. Does it work better a little bit high[er]? Does it work a little bit lower? Does it work on its own or with lots of accompaniment in it? [...] and how is it best done through the voice that I have. And I think that's what I've learned over the years. I'm singing a lot differently now than I used to and also not scared to try anything. (P18)*

The concept of the "safe song" (P18) seems to imply that original songs written by the artist may facilitate the most flattering use of the voice. Participant 20 expressed the following:

> *I write because of my own voice and my own limitations. I write accordingly. (P20)*

This allows the singer-songwriter to perhaps focus on the song itself, as opposed to focusing on being able to achieve technical agility. Contrastingly, writing songs that challenge the voice were discussed by some participants (n=2):

> *Sometimes I will write songs that deliberately challenge my vocal range. (P5)*

In relation to songwriting processes in recording and music production, one producer stated that the voice "tends to be the lead instrument" (P2) within the mix of a song. Additionally, some participants cited that the requirements of song style and the conventions of musical genre were relevant in songwriting processes. Due to this, the singing styles that such songs required or entailed were also considered (n=2):

> *I think if it's a voice that can't [deliver] then it's going to be unsettling to listen to and you're not going to want to hear what they're saying [...] I think certain voices and tones do work better over certain styles of music than others. You're not going to want a big rock voice or a heavy metal voice on a country track, because you're not going to listen to the story being sung. (P3)*

In relation to songwriting specifically, a music producer articulated the differences in the vocal characteristics required by specific music genres:

> *If I'm getting like a folk singer in on [what] I've written [as a] big soulful sounding track […] and I get [a singer] who can sing really well but they are more like a timid folk singer, the song won't actually be successful […] But if I had someone else come in who is, you know, a big soulful vocal singer and had them sitting [sic] in the same lyric […] I don't think any singing is bad. Some will be more suitable or better than another but it's built on people's ideas prior to going into a session. Most people obviously have a solution or goal in mind for a song, so I'll come in and go 'I'm writing this kind of song, and this is what I'm after', and that's the reason I'll approach a specific person for the song or a specific singer. (P2)*

While the above example seems more relevant to songwriting contexts in which a session singer is commissioned to sing for an already written song, it also highlights that different singers have their own individual sound and that each can impact the resultant song and, potentially, the *success* of the song. Similarly, it touches on the concept of what constitutes a "successful" (Hughes, Keith, Morrow, Evans & Crowdy, 2013) song or singing. It highlights that there may be different successful outcomes and different forms of *artistic realisation.* As Hughes et al. (2013) state, "for many contemporary artists, success may simply be 'satisfaction' in musical achievements" (p. 78). For singer-songwriters who write songs primarily for themselves and their own personal purposes, and who do not necessarily seek a broader audience or commercial outcomes, success may simply be in the engagement of creativity. For others, success may be aligned to their respective career fields and audiences.

Some singer-songwriters reflect on their vocal performance in songwriting processes. This is often heightened during recording processes:

> *[I'll listen to it and think] 'I've done that lick [referring to a vocal melisma/riff] [and] there are particular parts in the songs […] where I think, 'Why did I do that again? Why did I do that vocal lick again?' Or maybe I could have changed that. (P1)*

Artists also reflect on their vocal performance when working with others (such as producers). At times, artist attempts to ensure that the vocal takes reflect their intended artistry is mediated and managed by others in *the field* (Hughes, 2013). Therefore, the processes of recording and production influence not only the resulting vocal recorded tracks, but may also potentially affect the artist and the phase of *the self* in a positive and/or negative way. The following quote shows an example of how listening to a vocal

take during the recording and production process can influence an artist's perspective on their voice:

> *One of the things […] in the recording studio and you think you did a really good job […] you listen to it, you know that's not bad [and think], 'Why [are] you [editing] that?' All right, now I can hear it. You better [edit] the next one too! (P8)*

As discussed in previous sections, songwriting by the singer-songwriter engages the voice but does not necessarily showcase the voice. In this sense, songwriting and singing original material validates the earlier discussion in that singing may act as a facilitator in all phases of creativity (*the self*, *the field*, and *artistic realisations*). For some singer-songwriters, singing is utilised and necessary to the practical process of songwriting but may not necessarily be the primary consideration:

> *I can see how having a unique sound can be beneficial to make you stand out from the crowd but I guess my voice hasn't changed much since I started singing and I don't see it as particularly unique. But for me I haven't chased that […] I try to write a song that's listenable, that people will hear the words to and isn't drowned out by music. Words that might resonate with a percentage of the audience and that's how I guess, I try to be successful. (P8)*

7.5 Vocal kinship and connection through song

Participants discussed audience connection, the sharing of a life story and shared empathy. As the findings have identified, a component of such connection in and through song is the inherent use of the singing voice as means of demonstrating artistic individuality and of authoring songs. Audiences, collaborators or community contexts may be sympathetically connected by the *artistic realisations* – the trigger of which may be the artist's voice. The findings identified a deep connection to song, connection and the sharing of stories and experiences. In a sense, there seems to be a form of kinship evident between artists, audiences, collaborators and communities, and songs. The following example demonstrates how this kinship extends to audiences that may connect specifically to the sound of the singing voice as the focal point of songs:

> *I'm so lucky that somehow people connect to my voice. (P16)*

The concept of kinship, which is defined broadly as a close relationship, bond or lineage, rests on the idea that singers elicit a reaction in those that listen to them. While

a song's arrangement, production and instrumentation offers a musical bed and context for the voice to be heard, several participants believed that a connected audience or listener reaction rests largely on the expressive qualities of an artist's individual singing voice. For example, the following producer explains the experience of working with a singer-songwriter who is able to elicit a strong, connected reaction:

> *The pain in someone's voice I guess […] it's hearing emotion, if that makes any sense? […] It's almost like, I feel…I can feel through what they're singing. I can feel through the audio that they are in pain. I get it and it's real. (P2)*

This is a listening experience underpinned by empathy, and one that seems to be coveted. There is a deep level of connection and importance given to the singing voice here, and highlights the capacity for the singing voice to both communicate and impact. It is an importance that several participants shared, yet discussed in various ways:

> *[To] capture the authenticity of the songs. To me that's the key factor, the ability of someone to at least appear like this is the most important thing that they've ever said in their lives. That's the feeling you want [for your] audience. (P10)*

The concepts of connection and empathy were also revealed when participants discussed songs that they perceived as sad, melancholic or reflective of difficult life situations:

> *All the songs that have ever really touched me tend to come through someone's melancholy, sorrow or pain. You can relate to that sad moment. That to me is a deeper feeling than the feeling of joy and confidence. (P2)*

Indeed, this level of 'depth' associated with sad or melancholic songs is stereotypically associated with singer-songwriters. Perhaps the reason for this is due to the fact that empathy and reflection are inherently associated with difficult life experiences. It is possible that this form of empathy is deepens appreciation for an artist's song or music and enables it to become a connection. This may be the result of sympathetic listening in which the listener reacts to aural cues. The sense of connection and kinship seems to be a trait that singer-songwriters consistently seek through their singing voice (n=11):

> *You need to have that emotion in the song for the audience to understand [it], [and in] singing you kind of follow that emotion […] There's something about connecting with people through music that really gets me. You know, getting on the stage and singing a song to someone and having them come up to you afterwards and tell them what they think about that song or you know, how*

that song helps them. Oh, it's just magic. I can't actually pinpoint what it is but I think for me it's connection and community, an expression all in one. (P7)

7.6 Conclusion

For the singer-songwriter, the singing voice offers a range of seemingly hierarchal creative capabilities and functions. Essentially, it is a technical instrument that pragmatically communicates sung melody, vocal range, technical elements, song concepts such as rhythm, dynamic contrast, and so on. It is also, however, an expressive instrument that conveys emotion and the ability to convincingly deliver lyrical concepts. It is due to these two seemingly paradoxical concepts – the technical and the expressive – that the research findings determine that vocal expressivity is of explicit importance to the artist and that vocal technique is implicitly exhibited as a means of enabling expression. Vocal technique allows for the singing voice to function as artistically required, while vocal expressivity allows artists to draw their focus on the delivery and communicative elements of a song. Additionally, a theme emerges in which singer-songwriters, and those who work closely in creating songs, seem to function with an overarching philosophy that associates the singing voice with personal integrity, honesty, emotional delivery and therefore, an element of, at times, vulnerability. These traits seem to be most prevalent in the ways in which the voice is used in vocal performance.

In relation to *the self*, the voice is utilised for its physiological function and parameters as a musical instrument. It is through *the self* that emotions are felt and delivered. Additionally, voice use within this phase depicts a sense of ownership and identity. It is therefore appropriate to term this voice as individualistic, one that is intrinsically embodied and affected. In relation to *the field*, the voice is utilised as a way of communicating. The artist's speaking and singing voice is used to link *the self* and *the field* during contexts and processes of creativity, such as collaboration or recording. The singing voice may be managed and mediated by others during these processes, which can affect *the self* and the *artistic realisations*. Within *the field*, voice use is appropriated to reflect its role in communication and song authorship, in which the voice is utilised specifically in the processes that bridge *the self* and *artistic realisations*. When artefacts are completed, the voice traverses from the individual, to communication and authorship, to a song form that reflects a deeper, shared connection to both *the self* and *the field*. The findings therefore reason that the resulting voice use

in the phase of *artistic realisation* exhibits a form of kinship and a deeper connection with others. These concepts are summarised in the following diagram (Figure 7: Vocal concepts) which illustrates the interrelating vocal traits of the singer-songwriter within each phase of creativity.

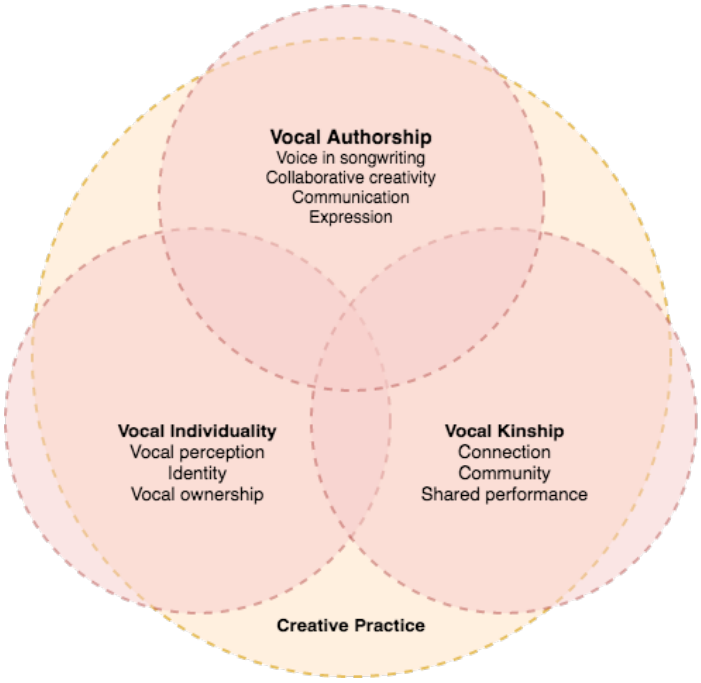

Figure 7: Vocal concepts

The following Figure (see Figure 8: Vocal concepts within the creative practice framework) illustrates these findings by incorporating the concepts identified in this chapter to the previously determined creative practice framework.

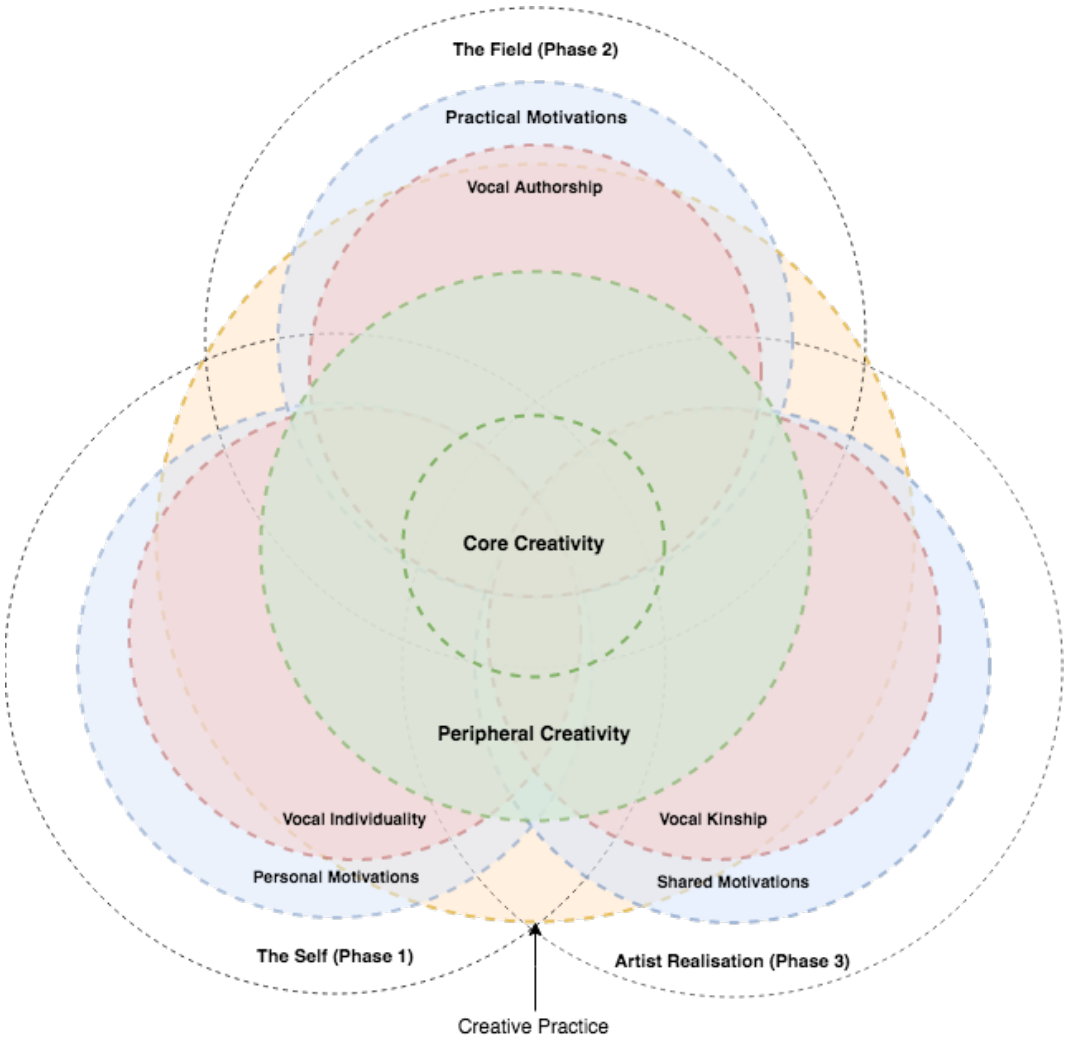

Figure 8: Vocal concepts within the creative practice framework

In instances where songs or projects (such as an album) are completed, songs and the singing voice are no longer exclusive to *the self*. Instead, they become realisations that offer opportunities for relating, understanding, meaning-making and enjoyment for anyone who accesses and connects as an audience in *the field*. Songs therefore offer a chance for belonging and relating through story, song and voice:

> *No one else can sing the way that you sing or tell the stories that you can tell. (P17)*

It is evident, through the analyses of the singer-songwriter perspectives, that the singing voice primarily represents *the self* and signifies identity. When songs are realised and shared, then kinship with others is largely achieved by the voice and its humanness.

8 Survey results

I write as a way of processing my personal life experiences,
to connect to my diverse cultural roots via language, rhythm and harmony,
and to discuss and question the world, and my place in the world.
(Respondent 65)

8.1 Introduction

The research was conducted in two parts of data collection: Part 1 interviews and Part 2 surveys. Chapters 4-7 discussed the findings that emerged from the Part 1 interviews of eighteen singer-songwriters and two music producers. In order to further research the emergent themes from a larger population sample, Part 2 data collection entailed a survey of questions that were based on the preliminary findings of Part 1. The survey findings provide a qualitative and quantitative report of respondent perspectives. Survey responses and interview perspectives led to the cumulative and comparative analyses discussed in the concluding two chapters of this thesis. The survey findings discussed in this chapter paralleled the themes found in Part 1 and therefore validated the major concepts that progressively emerged in the previously determined creative practice framework. A detailed discussion on the survey methodology is found in Chapter 3. However, as the survey was progressively built upon the themes that emerged from Part 1 of this research, this chapter begins with a detailed discussion of the survey design and the development of survey questions. Themes drawn from the survey findings along with the related survey data are discussed in the proceeding sub-sections. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the relevance and significance of the survey to this study.

8.2 Survey design

The survey was designed to be completed anonymously. It was distributed over a period of approximately ten months from November 2017 through to August 2018. A total of 95 Australian singer-songwriters (N=95) completed the survey. This section discusses the design of the survey and the development of the survey questions.

8.2.1 Survey structure

The survey included a total of 22 questions (see Appendix G: Survey questions). The survey itself included twenty closed superset/subset questions and two open-ended

questions. Eight of the closed-ended questions included subset options. All closed-ended questions offered a multi-choice response option or an appropriate scaled option.

8.2.2 Question design

As discussed in Chapters 4-7, themes emerged from Part 1 analyses and these themes were collated to form the basis of the subsequent survey questions. As discussed in Section 3.3.2 (see p. 62), the survey aims to clarify or validate Part 1 findings. Therefore, the scope of Part 2 is informed by the summary of Part 1 emergent themes. The corresponding survey areas for investigation are summarised in the table below (Table 6: Survey themes).

Table 6: Survey themes

Part 1 theme	Thesis chapter	Survey areas for investigation	Survey questions (See Appendix G: Part 2 Survey questions)
Contextual information	Chapter 3	Age, songwriting experience, singing experience and associated genre/s	Questions 2-5
Creative phases of the self, the field and artistic realisation	Chapter 4	The presence of each phase	Questions 6-23
Motivation, impetus, creative purpose and importance	Chapter 5, 6	Personal and practical motivations; The role of emotion, self-expression and validation	Question 8, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22
Collaboration	Chapter 4, 6	Collaboration with others	Question 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18
Socio-cultural influence	Chapter 4, 6	Informal/formal learning contexts and music related experiences	Question 7, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18
Industry related processes	Chapter 6	Songwriting devices	Question 19
The singing voice	Chapter 7	Perceptions on the singing voice and its presence in the songwriting and creative process.	Question 9, 10, 12

Each theme and the corresponding survey questions devised to address each theme are discussed below.

8.2.2.1 Contextual information

Questions 2, 3, 4 and 5 asked for respondent age bracket, singing experience and songwriting experience, and any music genres to which they associate. As Part 1 findings revealed that singer-songwriters associate with a broad range of music genres, survey respondents were facilitated to choose more than one genre in Question 5: *Do your songs fit into any of the following?* Eleven genre options were offered, including two open-ended answers where respondents could also note their ascribed genre. Findings drawn from responses to contextual information on singing, songwriting experience and age bracket of respondents allowed cross-tabulation with other data.

8.2.2.2 Creative phases and practices

As Part 1 identified that the singer-songwriter practice is segmented into three creative phases, survey responses were analysed to investigate and verify the presence of these creative phases: *the self, the field,* and *artistic realisation.* As the research itself focuses on the artist and not the song, questions that investigated the presence of *artistic realisations* were related more broadly to creative processes and songwriting.

8.2.2.3 Motivation, impetus, creative purpose and importance

The concept of personal and practical motivations was identified in Part 1 of this research. Survey questions 8, 11-12, 16-18 and 20-22 each investigated the motivations of respondents. For example, Question 8: *Please briefly explain what inspires you to write songs* was an open-ended question that allowed respondents to detail their perspectives on inspiration, impetus and the purpose of songwriting. Questions 11-12: *Do the following apply to you as reasons for writing songs / singing?* offered respondents 16 scaled options relating to motivation, expression and communication. Options included emergent Part 1 concepts such as *For personal development* and *For self-help* and therefore related to personal motivation, whereas *To earn a living* related to practical/pragmatic motivations. Question 18: *When do you feel a strong urge to create a new song?* asked respondents to indicate their level of experience within six scenario options. These options stemmed directly from the participant experiences identified in Part 1. Examples of the subset options for this

question included *When a strong or important experience happens* and *When I hear about something that I feel I connected to.* Each subset option sought to verify themes related to motivation, impetus and inspiration.

8.2.2.4 The field: Collaboration, socio-cultural influences and industry processes

Part 1 of this research offered broad findings related to collaboration, socio-cultural influence and industry related processes. These were devised into investigative superset questions or subset options that addressed diverse areas of *the field* in questions 7, 11-12, 13-15 and 17-19. Scaled responses provided a snapshot of how relevant certain superset or subset options were to singer-songwriters. For example, Question 19: *Do you use the following in your songwriting process?* offered 17 various subset options and allowed respondents to record their response to each relevant subset option along a frequency scale. Some of the subset options included *Fellow musicians, Home studio, Music producers* and even *Mobile devices*. Question 15: *What best describes your experience with the following types of teachers?* directly related to the instances of formal teaching found in Part 1. Subset options included *Music teachers (School/Tertiary), Singing teachers, Private music teachers* and *Other coaches / mentors*. Respondents were asked to indicate their response along a scale to ascertain whether experiences with such teachers were encouraging or otherwise.

8.2.2.5 The singing voice

Chapter 7 of this thesis explicitly discussed the Part 1 findings in relation to the singing voice and its role in the creative practice of singer-songwriters. The Part 2 survey therefore sought to further investigate voice related factors. Questions 9, 10 correlated to the singing voice, while Questions 11-12 correlated to the reasons for songwriting and singing. The Part 1 findings revealed concepts associated with vocal individuality, ownership and authorship. To investigate these themes, the survey questions on the singing voice included subset options that asked respondents to rate the importance of specific vocal concepts. In Question 9: *In relation to your voice, are the following important to you?* the following subset options were offered: *A unique and different vocal sound, A vocal sound that is true to me, Vocal technique and singing skill, Communicating what I have to say using my voice* and two open-ended options. Question 10 asks respondents *Do you like the sound of your voice?* and offers seven

multi-choice options which included scenarios such as *Never thought of how my voice sounds*, *Sometimes; it depends on what I am singing,* or *No, I do not like the sound of my voice* and *I am not sure*. In addition, it also allowed for open-ended responses under the option of *Other.* Question 11: *Do the following apply to you as reasons for writing songs?* offered several options such as *For personal development, To be heard,* or *To collaborate with others.* Question 12 asked the same question, but in relation to singing: Question 12a: *Do the same reasons apply to your singing?*

8.2.3 Data analysis and emergent themes

A total of 97 respondents were recorded as anonymously undertaking the survey by the survey platform, Qualtrics. Of these, 95 respondents completed the survey while 2 respondents only completed the initial demographic and context section. These were therefore excluded from the statistical analysis and related findings however, as the analytical function of the survey platform accordingly tags/codes each respondent, the respondent summary (see Appendix L: Part 2 Respondent summary) preserves the numeric code applied to each respondent (such as R1, R2, etc.). Due to this, the summary shows respondent codes up to 97 respondents. However, of these, respondents 24 and 83 were excluded from the data analysis as these respondents did not proceed with completing beyond the first section of the survey. Those that completed the survey responded to all superset questions, with the exception of some open-ended questions and some subset questions. As the survey allowed respondents to skip questions or to choose multiple relevant answers in questions where several subset options existed, the analysis of questions and the data provided in the following discussion includes the number of responses related to each superset or subset question. The statistical findings are reported as n=# (the number of responses) together with the corresponding percentage of the total number of possible responses (N=95).

As the survey primarily contained closed responses, graphs have been included in the discussion to illustrate results however, as this chapter focuses on descriptive statistics, analytical statistics and cross-tabulations between responses are discussed in this chapter where relevant. Open-ended responses were comparatively coded using the data analysis platform, NVivo, which was also used for Part 1 analyses. The codes utilised in Part 1 were also utilised to code themes that emerged from the open-ended survey responses. For example, scaled responses to the subset questions of Question

10: *Do you like the sound of your voice?* correlated to the emergent codes applied in Part 1 that related to vocal self-perception. Importantly, Part 2 analyses also included new codes as appropriate. The discussion of survey findings in the following sections of this chapter therefore provide verifying and additional information where relevant. Statistical mapping and cross-tabulation analyses provided further depth to the findings and are referred to where relevant (See Appendices M-S).

8.3 Respondent context

The beginning of the survey (Questions 2-5) asked respondents to provide contextual information relating to age bracket, singing experience, songwriting experience and the musical genres with which respondents identified. Questions 20-22 provided information on the perceived importance of singing, songwriting and creativity, and therefore provided additional contextual information about the population of artists more broadly.

8.3.1 Age, experience and musical background

All respondents indicated their age bracket. Over half of the respondents were aged over 45yrs and the age range of all respondents was between 18-74yrs. A 75+ age bracket was also included however no respondent indicated this bracket. The majority of respondents (49%, *n*=47) were found in the 55-64yr age bracket (28%, *n*=27) and the 45-54yr age bracket (21%, *n*=20). The remaining respondents were: 8% (*n*=8) of respondents in the 65-74yr age bracket, 12% (*n*=11) in the 35-44yr age bracket, 13% (*n*=12) in the 18-24yr age bracket, and 18% (*n*=17) in the 25-34yr age bracket. The average median age of respondents was indicated in the 35-44 age bracket. A summary of this is graphically illustrated below (see Figure 9: Respondent ages). The age range of almost half of the participants being between 45-64yrs indicates that many respondents had longstanding life experiences.

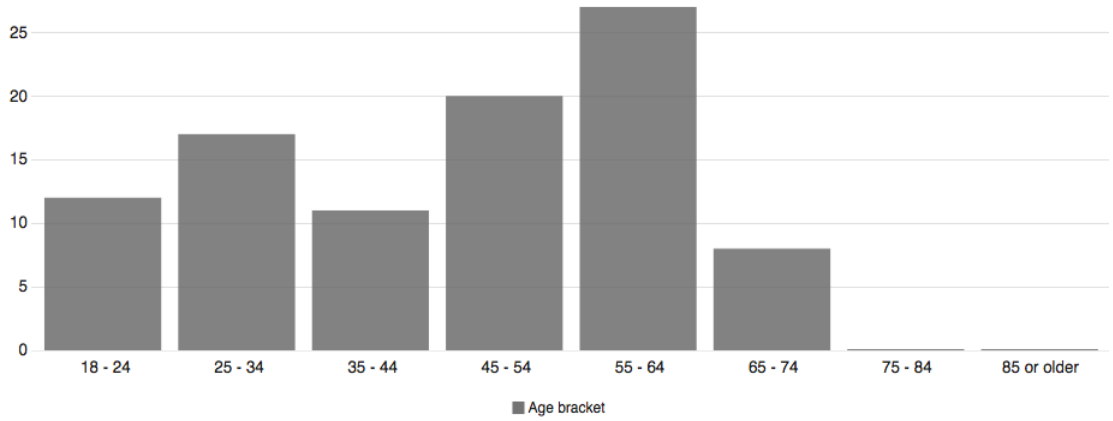

Figure 9: Respondent ages

Question 2 and 3 of the survey asked respondents to indicate their singing and songwriting experience. The following fields were offered to respondents: *Under 3yrs*, *Between 3-10yrs,* and *10yrs+*. Questions 2 and 3 asked for respondent experience in singing and songwriting respectively, in which all respondents (*N*=95) indicated their experience.

The majority of respondents indicated more than ten years singing experience (*n*=83; 87%) while a minority (*n*=12; 13%) stated that they had between 3-10 years of singing experience (see Figure 10: Singing experience). Similarly, in relation to respondent songwriting experience (see Figure 11: Songwriting experience) the majority of respondents (73%, *n*=69) indicated they had over ten years of songwriting experience, while 20% of respondents (*n*=19) indicated that they had 3-10 years of experience. Despite the survey consent requiring a minimum of three years of experience, some respondents (*n*=7; 7%) had under three years of songwriting experience. This suggests that these respondents were experienced singers and emergent songwriters. This was supported by two respondents indicating having 3-10 years of singing experience and the remaining five having over ten years of singing experience. This further suggests that for these singer-songwriters, singing had until recently been a primary component of their creative practice.

In comparing cross tabulations of singing and songwriting responses, the majority of respondents (*n*=66; 69%) indicated that they had over 10 years of both singing and songwriting experience. Further cross-tabulations revealed that respondents in the higher age brackets with more life experiences, were also the more experienced in singing and songwriting when compared to younger respondents. While this may seem

an obvious summation, the inclusion of some emergent[67] singer (n=4) and songwriter (n=7) respondents in the higher age brackets (45yrs-74yrs) suggests that the impetus to become a singer-songwriter can occur at any age. Additionally, respondents who indicated as being new to songwriting (under 3yrs experience), yet have over 3yrs of singing experience (n=6), suggest that the craft of songwriting may occur through an established singing practice. Statistical analysis of respondent age and their singing/songwriting experience can be found in Appendix M: Age/Singing experience and Appendix N: Age/Songwriting experience.

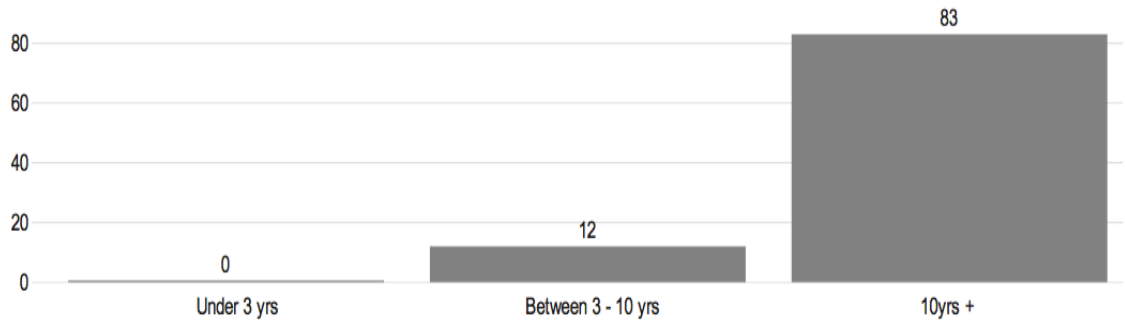

Figure 10: Singing experience

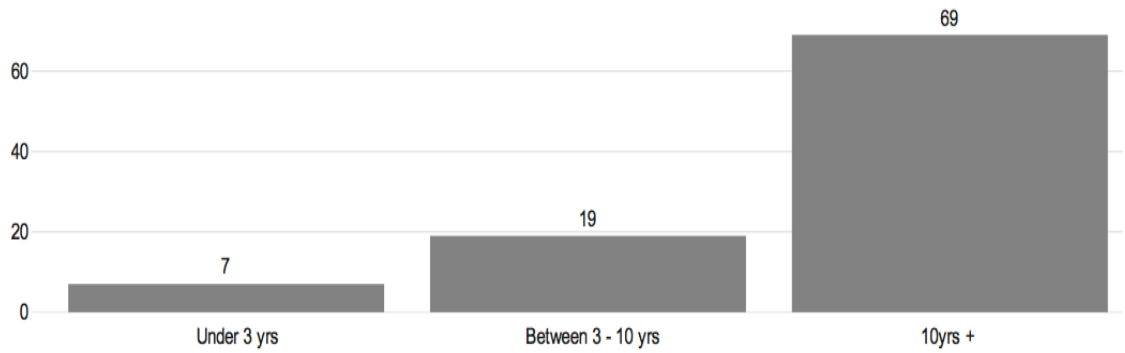

Figure 11: Songwriting experience

In Question 5, respondents were asked to indicate the musical styles and genres that they identified with. Question 5 also asked respondents to indicate their related musical accompaniment habits, such as whether they were self-accompanied artists or were accompanied by other musicians.

[67] The term 'emergent' refers to respondents who indicated that they had under 10 years of singing and songwriting experience.

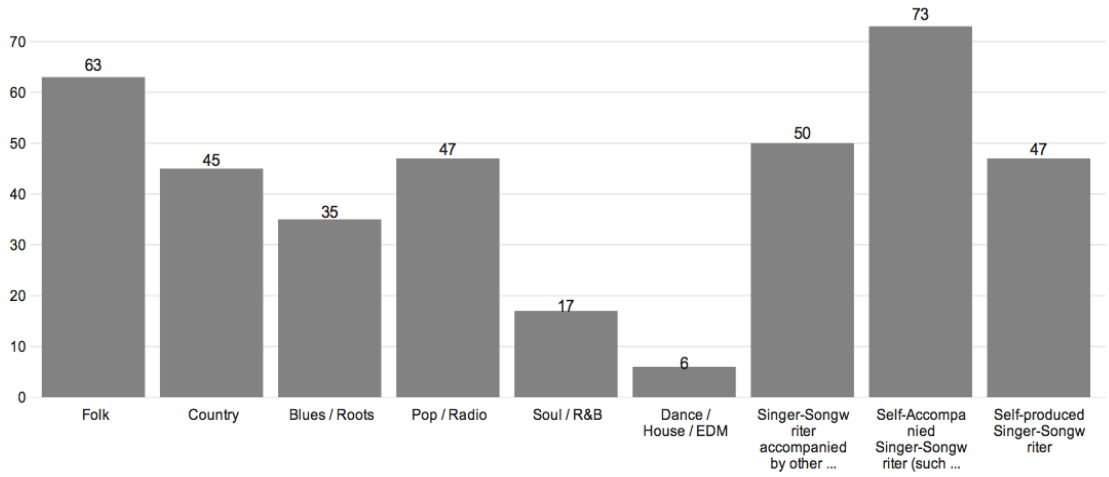

Figure 12: Music genre and style

All respondents (*N*=95) indicated their stylistic and genre preferences. Multiple responses were allowed in Question 5 in order to investigate possible multi-genre influences that may exist in the singer-songwriter practice. The preceding graph (see Figure 12: Music genre and style) illustrates the music genres and styles indicated by respondents. The majority of respondents identified music and practice preferences as being Folk music (*n*=63; 66%) while Pop (*n*=47; 49%), Country (*n*=45; 47%), and Blues/Roots (*n*=35; 37%), were also indicated as major genres. Importantly, some respondents (*n*=30; 32%) also indicated "other" musics and identifying genres. These included Aboriginal Australian (*n*=2), variations of Rock music, such as Pop/Rock, Indie/Alternative (*n*=8), Choral and community music (*n*=3) and Gospel and/or Christian music (*n*=4). 73 respondents (77%) identified as self-accompanied artists. 50 respondents indicated that they were, or were additionally, accompanied by other musicians (*n*=50; 53%) or that they identified as self-produced singer-songwriters (*n*=47; 49%).

For a detailed analysis and cross-tabulation of respondent age brackets, experience and music genres, see Appendix O: Music genre/Singing and songwriting experience. In this cross-tabulation (Appendix O), it can be seen that Folk, Blues/Roots and Country were more predominant in artists between the age bracket of 45-74yrs. Pop/Radio was highly cited by artists between the ages of 18-34ys, yet interestingly, also predominant in the 45-64 age bracket. Self-accompaniment became more prevalent in the later years. This may possibly be due to instrumental skill level and confidence. These cross-tabulations suggest that various music genre and style are concepts that may not necessarily adhere to specific age groups.

8.3.2 Importance of songwriting, singing and creativity

The final questions of the survey (Questions 20 – 22) asked respondents to indicate the importance of songwriting, singing and creativity. Specifically, each question related songwriting, singing and creativity with *the self* by asking how important *songwriting, singing* and *being creative* was 'to you'. By adding 'to you', the survey question was devised to allow respondents to consider the personal value placed upon these concepts, rather than the value each concept might have on their career, or their audience. All respondents (N=95) indicated their answers for each of these questions. The majority of respondents (n=79; 83%) indicated that *being creative* was *extremely important* to them (see Figure 13: Importance of being creative). Additionally, other respondents indicated that being creative was *very important* (n=13; 14%), while only 3% (n=3) cited that being creative was *moderately important* (n=1) or *slightly important* (n=2). This is illustrated in Figure 13: Importance of being creative and shows the overwhelming relevance and value of creativity to singer-songwriters.

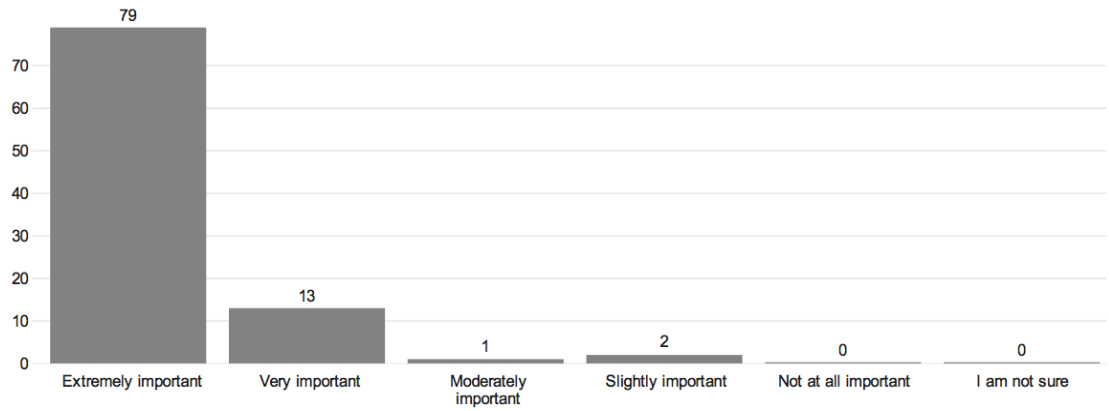

Figure 13: Importance of being creative

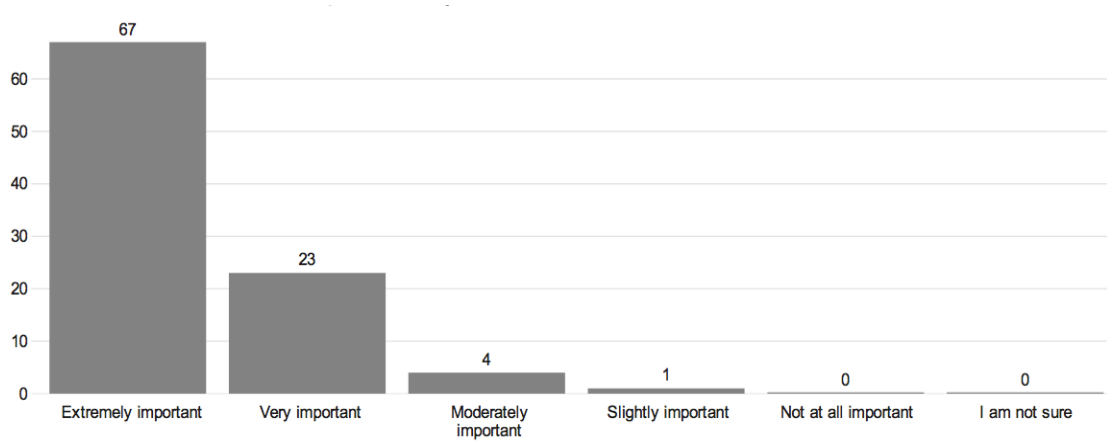

Figure 14: Importance of songwriting

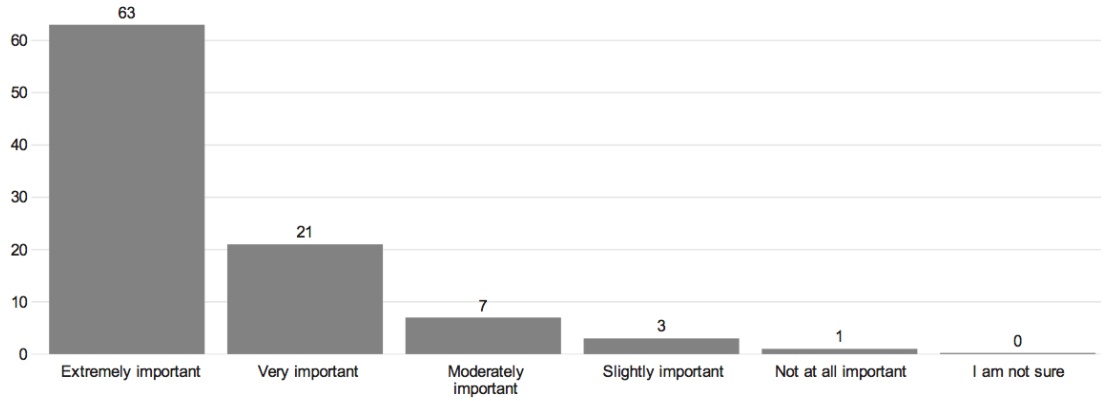

Figure 15: Importance of singing

Similarly, respondents were asked to also specifically indicate the important of songwriting and singing (see Figure 14: Importance of songwriting and Figure 15: Importance of singing). Again, the majority of respondents (*n*=67; 70.5%) indicated that songwriting was *extremely important* to them, that songwriting was *very important* (*n*=23; 24%), that songwriting was *moderately important* (*n*=4; 5%) or *slightly important* (*n*=1; 1%). No responses were recorded for *not at all important* and *I am not*

sure. In relation to singing (see Figure 15: Importance of singing), a similar majority (*n*=63; 66%) responded that singing was *extremely important,* that singing was *very important* (*n*=21; 22%), and that singing was *moderately important* (*n*=7; 7%), *slightly important* (*n*=3; 3%) or *not at all important* (*n*=1; 1%). These findings identify that creativity, songwriting and singing are all highly valued components. It is also interesting to note that singing is valued almost as highly as songwriting which implies that both artforms are almost equally valued by singer-songwriters as part of a more holistic and broader creative practice. Additionally Appendix P: Importance of creativity, singing and songwriting, offers several cross-tabulations between the importance to creativity, singing and songwriting, to age and experience. A more detailed analysis and cross-tabulation between the importance of singing in comparison to songwriting may be also be found in Appendix Q. The comparison offered in the analysis found in Appendix Q shows that both singing and songwriting are typically viewed as equally important. There are a few instances where singing is deemed to be only *moderately* (*n*=5) or *slightly important* (*n*=1) and in the same instances (*n*=6), songwriting was cited as *extremely important.*

8.4 Songwriting

Respondents were asked to comment on songwriting and songwriting processes. Questions included those that investigated the personal objectives of songwriting, the importance of feedback from *the field*, concepts related to inspiration. In addition, the role of modalities (Bernard, 2012) such as technology and/or other songwriting devices was also investigated.

8.4.1 Aims of songwriting

The following question, *Which of the aims below apply to your songwriting in general?* investigated the general aims of songwriting. Respondents were requested to indicate their answers in relation to ten subset options (see Table 7: Songwriting aims); a total of 489 responses were recorded.

Table 7: Songwriting aims

Which of the aims below apply to your songwriting in general?	
Subset option	Response rate
To tell a story	*n*=81; 85%
To write good lyrics	*n*=63; 66%
To express my opinion	*n*=47; 49%
To sing well	*n*=33; 35%
To collaborate and work with other musicians or producers	*n*=39; 41%
To communicate with others	*n*=57; 60%
To process events	*n*=46; 48%
To find meaning	*n*=47; 49%
To be musical	*n*=54; 57%
Other	*n*=22; 23%

It is interesting that the majority of responses associated the aim of songwriting as a way to connect and communicate with others (*n*=57; 60%), through lyrics (*n*=63; 66%) and by being musical (*n*=54; 57%), in and through storytelling (*n*=81; 85%). These findings validate the themes of communication, self-expression and connection identified in Chapters 4-7. The aims that attracted slightly lower response rates related more deeply to personal introspection and *the self*, such as *To find meaning* (*n*=47; 49%) or *To process events* (*n*=46; 48%). *To express my opinion* also attracted 47 responses (49%), indicating that songwriting is a way for artists to express themselves but also, more specifically, a chance to express potentially meaningful or important opinions. Importantly, an additional 22 responses were recorded as "other" aims. These responses gathered various perspectives that included connecting with others, emotional processing, career aims and even social commentary or as a "form of meditation" (R55). They included:

> *For connection to my body and roots. (R65)*
>
> *To heal myself and others. (R23)*
>
> *To get work. (R12)*
>
> *Political and social action. (R35)*
>
> *To help process emotions and to document life. (R29)*

To create product (musical recordings). (R12)

At the risk of going all cosmic on [you], it's a very effective form of meditation. (R55)

These additional songwriting aims often signified purposes that are not always related to musical concepts. It seems that, to these respondents, songwriting also affords self-development, artistic realisation, as well as cathartic and healing capabilities.

Respondents were also asked about their reasons or the motivations that lead to songwriting. Sixteen scaled subset options offered different reasons for songwriting (see Table 8: Motivations and reasons for songwriting). These included options related to both *the self* and *the field.* Respondents were facilitated to indicate a response to all or any of the options that were relevant (and were allowed to choose more than one or none) over a six-point Likert scale.

Table 8: Motivations and reasons for songwriting

Do the following apply to you as reasons for writing songs?
Personal development
Self-help
Self-awareness
Confidence
To be heard
To express myself
Process events
Communicate
To share with audiences
Process emotion
Collaborate with others
To be musical
To perform
To earn a living

The charts found within Figure 16 (see Figure 16: Songwriting motivations) provide a summary of option responses related to *the self* and personal development. In these

responses, it can be seen that the majority of respondents indicated that the concepts of personal development, self-help, self-awareness and confidence were relevant at some level for songwriting. For example, the majority of respondents (*n*=76; 80%) indicated that personal development was always (*n*=16; 17%), mostly (*n*=25; 26%) or sometimes (*n*=35; 77%) the reason for songwriting. Similarly, respondents (*n*=68; 72%) indicated that self-awareness was always (*n*=12; 13%), mostly (*n*=24; 25%) or sometimes (*n*=32; 34%) the reason for songwriting. Respondents primarily indicated *always, mostly* or *sometimes* for subset scaled options. However, *To express myself, To communicate, To share with others* and *To process emotion* were reported as predominantly being either *always* or *mostly*.

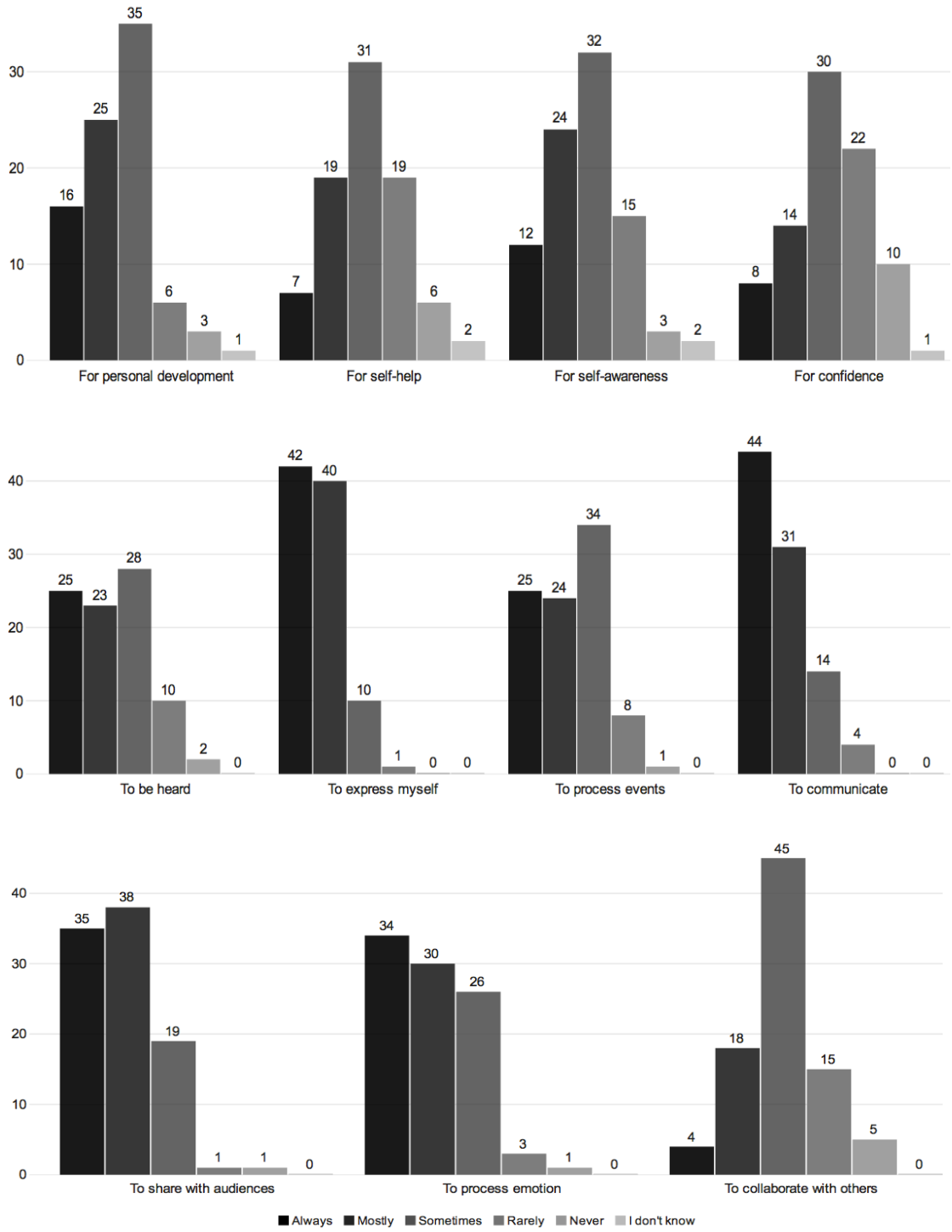

Figure 16: Songwriting motivations

In addition to the above, another category elicited 14 responses, some of which included the following as motivations for pursuing creativity:

> *To inspire others (for joy, happiness). (R31)*
>
> *Enjoyment of words. (R35)*
>
> *Love of music. (R94)*

These responses suggest positive associations as motivations for songwriting. Question 8 was an open-ended question that allowed respondents to openly write what inspires their songwriting; 93 unique, open-ended statements were recorded and are discussed in the sub-sections below. These responses were coded using a constant comparative method with coding utilised in the Part 1 data analysis. Responses explained varying sources and purposes for songwriting, many of which validated earlier findings. The primary descriptive words used by respondents to describe their inspirations for songwriting can be found in Figure 17 (see Figure 17: Word summary - Inspirations for songwriting). Figure 17 below illustrates a word cloud summary of the 100 frequently used words drawn from Question 8 responses. The gradient of colour represents frequency of use, with darker words used more frequently.

Figure 17: Word summary - Inspirations for songwriting

The themes that emerged from this question were concepts that related to life experience (*n*=26), storytelling (*n*=10), communication (*n*=5), expression (*n*=2), self-reflection (*n*=3), emotion (*n*=15) or enjoyment (*n*=4). The following respondent excerpt sums these concepts in one statement:

> *I write as a way of processing my personal life experiences, to connect to my diverse cultural roots via language, rhythm and harmony and to discuss and question the world and my place in the world. It's usually easier for me to express complex or introspective topics through songwriting. Creating interesting music and developing a performance are certainly main focuses but usually if I have something to say, the music and performance will be real*

and as groovy or soulful etc. [sic] as need be - for me, they are tools for telling the story. (R65)

The following sub-sections discuss the emergent themes from Question 8 in further detail.

8.4.1.1 Life experience and expression

The findings revealed that songwriting is used to document and process life experiences. In response to Question 8, all respondents cited concepts that were generally related to inspiration and life experience. However, there were responses that explicitly mentioned 'life experience' or 'life' (*n*=17). These respondents expressed songwriting as a way of documenting their lived experiences and/or of understanding the world around them:

To process life and reflect on life, love and my journeys in life. (R81)

It's challenges, hopes, dreams, innovation, space travel, science discoveries, social and economic inequalities and the search for equity, social taboos, wars, and environmental destruction. (R31)

To articulate my observations of life around me, in and of the world. (R42)

Similarly, in response to a later question of *Have the following been inspiring in your creative process?*, analyses revealed themes that include life experiences, relationships, community, other artists and other songwriters, as providing inspiration for creative processes. In the following graphs (see Figure 18: Inspiration), it can be seen that the primary response was life experience (*n*=65; 68%). Further analysis and cross-tabulation of this finding identified that life experience was considered a strong source of inspiration in respondents within the 55-64yr age bracket (*n*=19; 30%) and the 25-34yr age bracket (*n*=13; 20%), suggesting that maturity may therefore lead to inspired creativity. In this context, songwriting may be a form of reflection, observation and documentation, albeit delivered and crafted utilising the facility of singing and music making. In relation to Question 8, the term *storytelling* was used in some of the open-ended answers (*n*=10). As with life experience, storytelling was used to classify songs as ways of communicating narratives and experiences also through nostalgia, observation, reflection or even fiction as the following example highlights:

Stories about character and events that have happened to me, I've heard about or just made up to communicate a feeling. (R28)

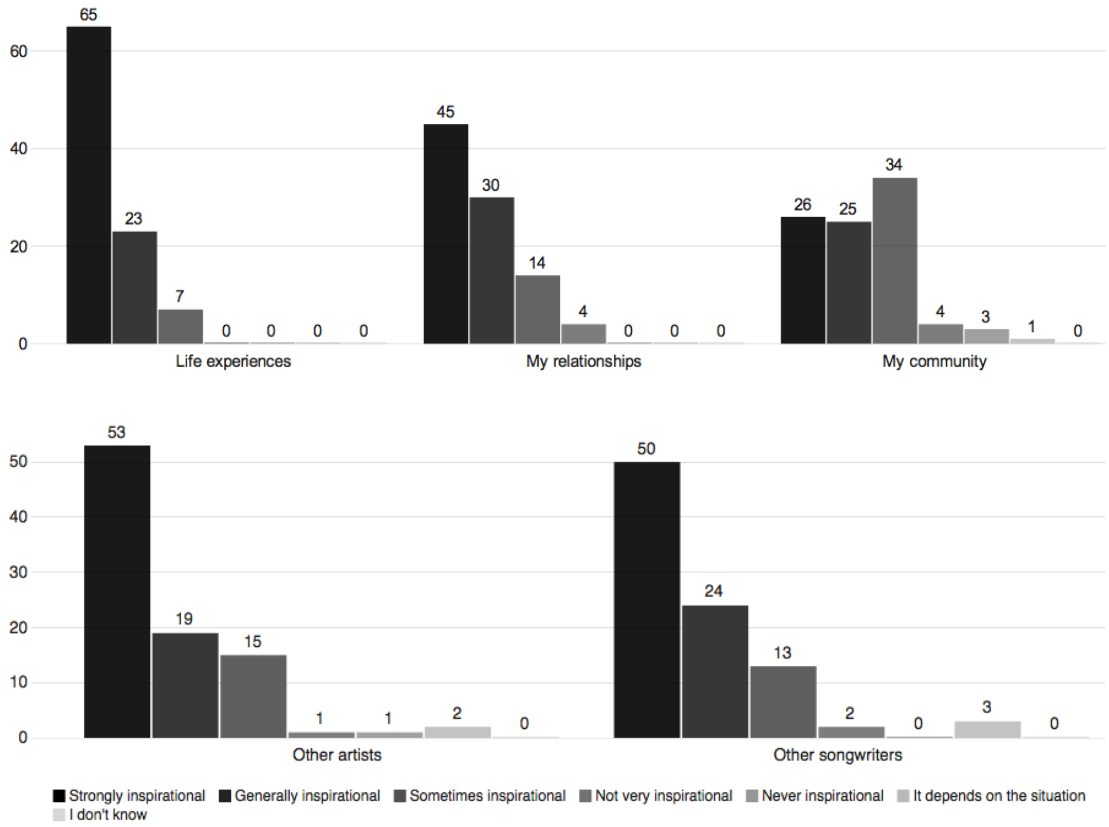

Figure 18: Inspiration

8.4.1.2 The human condition, emotion and identity

The findings in relation to Question 8 also revealed perspectives that seemed to align with a deep need or urge to create. This was not only for the purposes of documenting life experience or to make music, but was also identified in relation to a deeper necessity to express personal emotion and to construct meaning. The themes of catharsis, emotional expression and self-reflection elicited detailed responses in which respondents deeply associated songwriting as a means of processing such events and "to communicate the experience of being alive" (R17). Two respondents specifically associated songwriting as a way of articulating "the human condition" (R31; R49):

> *For me, songwriting is the exploration of what it means to be alive or existing, so I am inspired by the human condition. (R31)*
>
> *The human condition. I am overwhelmed by the emotional harmony and dissonance of existence. (R47)*

There also seemed to be a very strong connection to songwriting as a way of coping and as a potential form of personal therapy:

Songwriting is my therapy. If I need to sort out thoughts in my head about anything, I write a song. Also, if I need closure. It helps me to be concise about my true feelings. (R69)

The above excerpt highlights several concepts. To this respondent (R69), songwriting is associated as therapy, as a form of thinking and comprehension, and a way of understanding emotion. Songwriting enabled this artist to reconcile their environment, the events of their life and the communication of such events through song. Catharsis and emotional expression were also indicated as an inspiration for songwriting:

I write from past experiences in my own personal life, most of which are the bad experiences. Before songwriting, I was never able to communicate how I felt about these experiences out loud. (R38)

Catharsis. Completely unburdening myself. (R42)

One respondent associated song ideation to "unconscious" thinking (R55) in a similar way to the findings related to phenomena as discussed in Chapter 5:

Anything and everything can be inspirational. The best songs pop fully formed from the unconscious. Others are more a product of craft and hard work. (R56)

The survey findings revealed a possible association between songwriting and personal behaviour or lifestyle. Singer-songwriters feel compelled to write as though it were an involuntary behaviour, or an integral and inherent part of their day to day living. It was often described as if it were an involuntary function (n=15). This was drawn from respondent perspectives in which artists expressed that songwriting was simply something they must do as a function of who they are.

Because I must. Words and melody just pop into my head so I grab a guitar and sing. (R50)

It's less inspiration and more compulsion. (R61)

Writing songs is an intrinsic part of who I am. It's an activity I must do. (R66)

Music is a way of experiencing life, and the idea of this motivates me to create. It is a desire I cannot control, but love doing. (R53)

8.4.1.3 Commercial or career requirements

In response to Question 8, the findings also revealed that songwriting inspiration can come from obligatory requirements such as career or commercial aims.

This concept validated the research findings discussed in Chapter 4 in which motivations for songwriting were identified as either *personal* or *practical motivating factors*. One respondent specifically stated a career goal as impetus for songwriting:

> *Mostly professional though, [i.e.] We have [a] tour coming up, we need product to sell. Write ten tunes for a recording we can sell. That is the principle goal. The rest is just a means to an end. Whatever works! (R12)*

8.4.2 Processes and devices

Several of the survey questions asked respondents to indicate the importance of emotion, creative urge, the reasons that spur songwriting and the devices used for songwriting (Questions 16, 18-19). The findings related to these concepts are discussed in the following subsections.

8.4.2.1 The urge to create: Emotion and expression

All respondents (*N*=95) indicated answers to the question of *How important is emotion to your songwriting?* (see Figure 19: The importance of emotion). The majority of respondents (*n*=62; 65%) indicated that emotion was *extremely important*, while lesser number indicated emotion to be *very important* (*n*=27; 28%). The remaining 6% cited that emotion as *slightly* (*n*=2) or *moderately* (*n*=4) important.

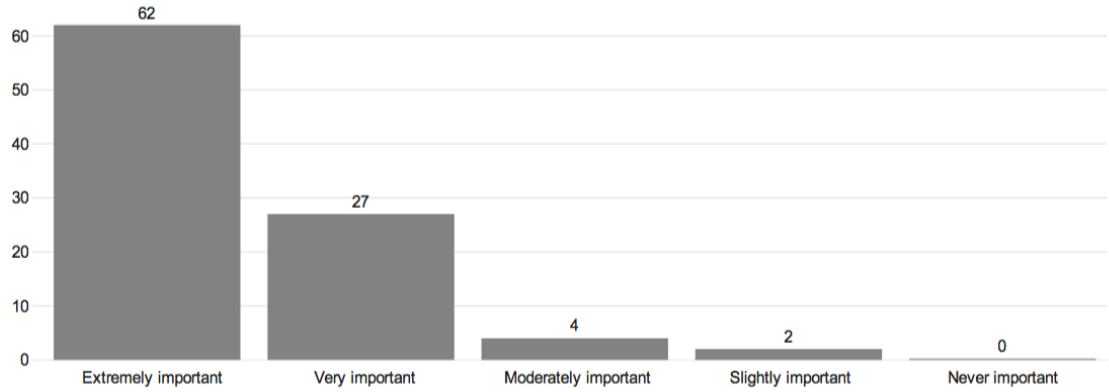

Figure 19: The importance of emotion

In response to the question *When do you feel a strong urge to create a new song?*, respondents were provided with six related subset options. Each option offered a seven-point Likert scale of agreement and respondents were allowed to choose more than one relevant field. The graphs found in Figure 20 (see Figure 20: The creative urge) provide a visual summary of results for all options. Responses to each option were varied. For example, *When I am working and collaborating with others,* did not elicit as many

responses as only 83 of 95 respondents indicated a level of agreement. This may be indicative of the possibility that some respondents did not collaborate with others. Similarly, *When someone gives me an idea,* received 87 of a possible 95 responses which again suggests that shared creativity is not an option for some respondents. Overall, the findings show that collaboration can be a source for strong creative urges as the majority of responses from *strongly* to *somewhat agree* reveal (*n*=63; 66%). The creative urges drawn from collaborative experiences however, may not be as strong as experiences in or with which the singer-songwriter feels connected. For example, *During a strong emotional experience* elicited the highest respondent majority from *strongly* to *somewhat agree* (*n*=81; 85%). These statistics imply that, for many, emotion is a strong motivator. It should also be noted, however, that the type of emotion was not identified. Emotion, in this context, may therefore refer both positive or negative contexts.

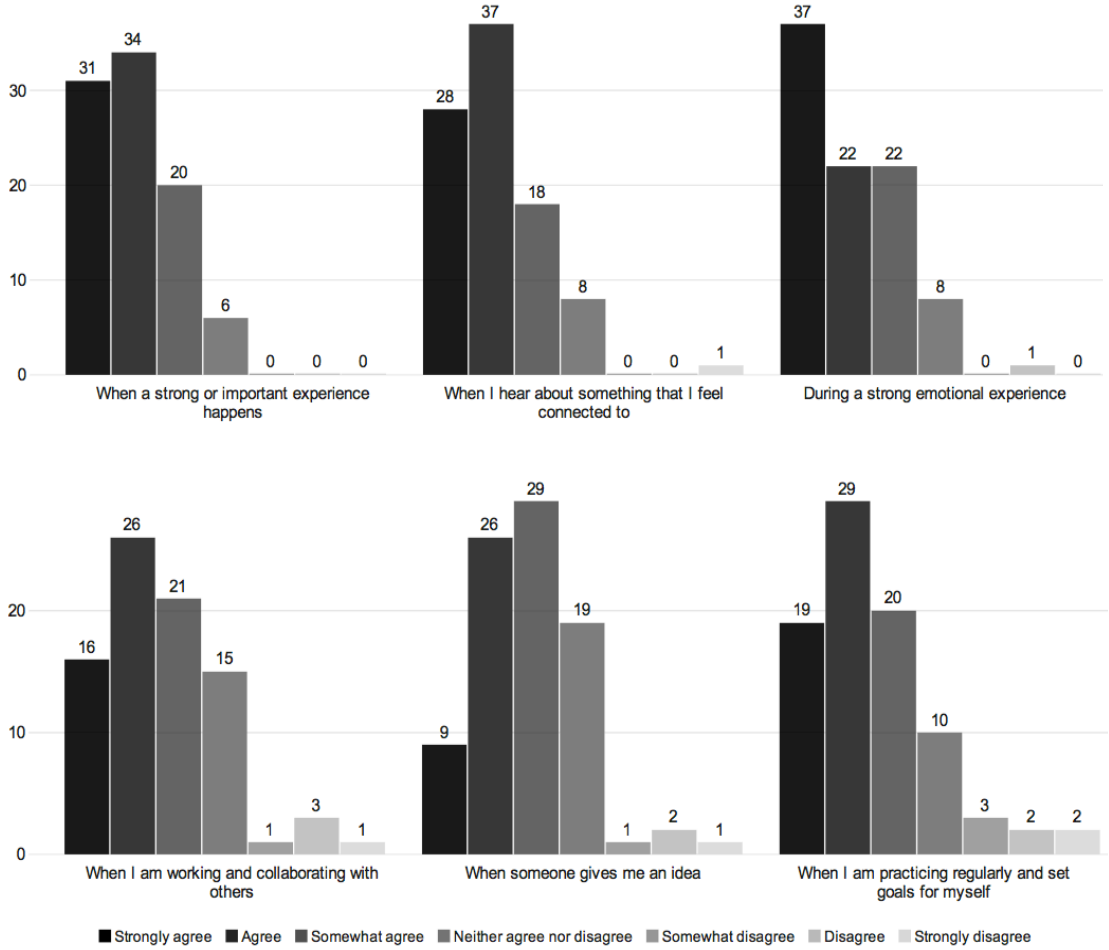

Figure 20: The creative urge

The survey findings also broadly validated the findings related to the role of emotion, connection and collaboration that were identified in Part 1. Additionally, *When I am practicing regularly and set goals for myself*, received responses that validated that role of personal goal setting. These findings related to practicing and, when compared to the findings related to emotion or connection, highlight the potential hierarchy and/or segmentation between personal and practical motivations. They also highlight that both may be relevant and that personal motivators may provide singer-songwriters with a stronger sense of urgency to create.

In addition to the scaled responses, open-ended answers were also solicited and enabled respondents (n=20) to note other sources that lead to a strong urge to create. Respondents noted varying sources. Interestingly, several (n=11) of these responses aligned to the concept of *phenomena* as discussed in Chapter 4:

> *Often it just comes out of the blue. (R76)*
>
> *Songs come when I least expect them to. (R39)*
>
> *Songs just come to me – they pester until I make them happen. (R9)*
>
> *Electrical charge in the air [or] After a vivid dream. (R45)*
>
> *When the song comes to me. (R52)*

The rest of the responses noted under *other* also included the concepts of nostalgia (n=2), a project deadline (n=1), watching "an inspirational live gig by another singer-songwriter" (R23) or general life experience or occasions (n=5).

8.4.2.2 Songwriting devices

The question, *Do you use the following in your songwriting process?* offered 17 subset options of different songwriting devices. Respondents were requested to choose options (see Table 9: Songwriting devices) that were relevant and to indicate such relevance along a Likert scale. Respondents were also able to note down other songwriting devices where relevant.

Table 9: Songwriting devices

Do you use the following in your songwriting process?
Fellow musicians
Other singers
Other songwriters
Music producers
Sound engineers
Being able to play an instrument (such as the guitar / piano)
Being able to produce my own music
Connection on social media platforms
Money
Vocal looper
Recording software
Home studio
Commercial studio
Mobile devices
Industry support
The internet
My relationships
Other

As the Part 1 findings identified that singer-songwriters are impacted by both influences and influencers (people; others), the fields offered in relation to this question included a mix of influencers, such as industry and related personnel, together with potential songwriting influences. The findings confirmed that singer-songwriters are multi-skilled and utilise ways of engaging technology, instrumentation and self-production (see Figure 21: Usefulness of songwriting devices - technologies and instrumentation).

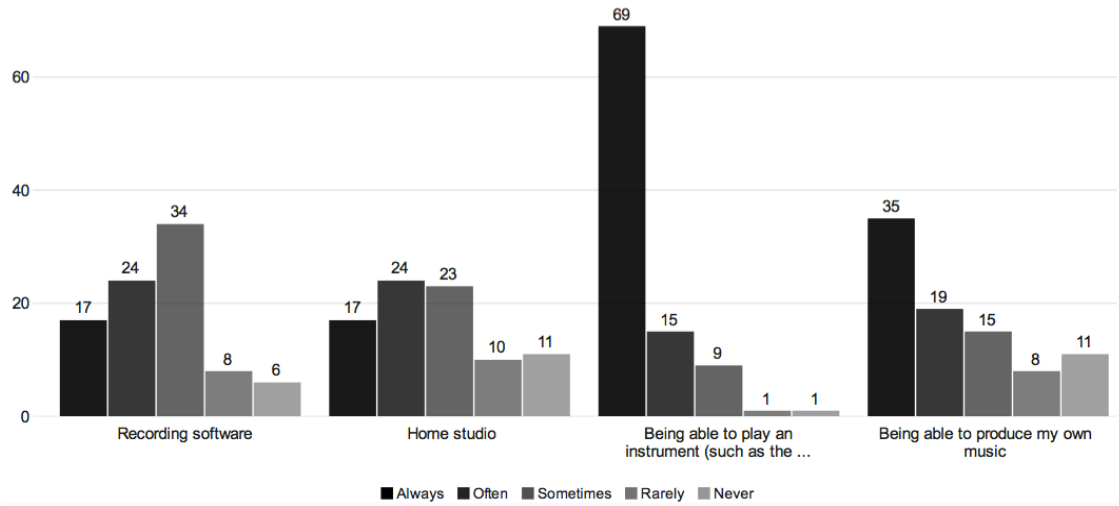

Figure 21: Usefulness of songwriting devices - technologies and instrumentation

The option, *Being able to play an instrument,* obtained 95 responses in which the majority of respondents (*n*=69; 73%) indicated that this skill was *Always* used. The remaining respondents identified that it was *Often* used (*n*=15; 16%), *Sometimes* used (*n*=9; 9%), or *Rarely* (*n*=1 1%) and *Never* used (*n*=1 1%). This indicates that having the ability to play an instrument is highly useful and valued in the process of songwriting. Additionally, it suggests that the singer-songwriter practice typically includes the ability to engage with a musical instrument as well as the singing voice. Contrastingly, *Being able to produce my own music,* attracted 88 responses, of which 35 respondents indicated that they *Always* produce their own music (*n*=35; 37%), 19 indicated that it was used *Often* (*n*=19; 20%) and 15 indicated that it was used *Sometimes* (*n*=15; 16%). It should be noted that self-production in this context may refer to the production and arrangement of recorded instrumentation. Nonetheless, the response endorsed the previous findings which indicated that singer-songwriters are often multi-skilled in their abilities to compose or record their music. In addition, the results also indicate that singer-songwriters are skilled at using recording devices, equipment and/or software to aid their creative work as the majority of respondents were found to use recording software (*n*=89; 94%) and home studios (*n*=85; 89%). The findings also determined that singer-songwriters often utilise other people and contexts in order to aid in the creation of songs (see Figure 22: Usefulness of songwriting devices - others and contexts).

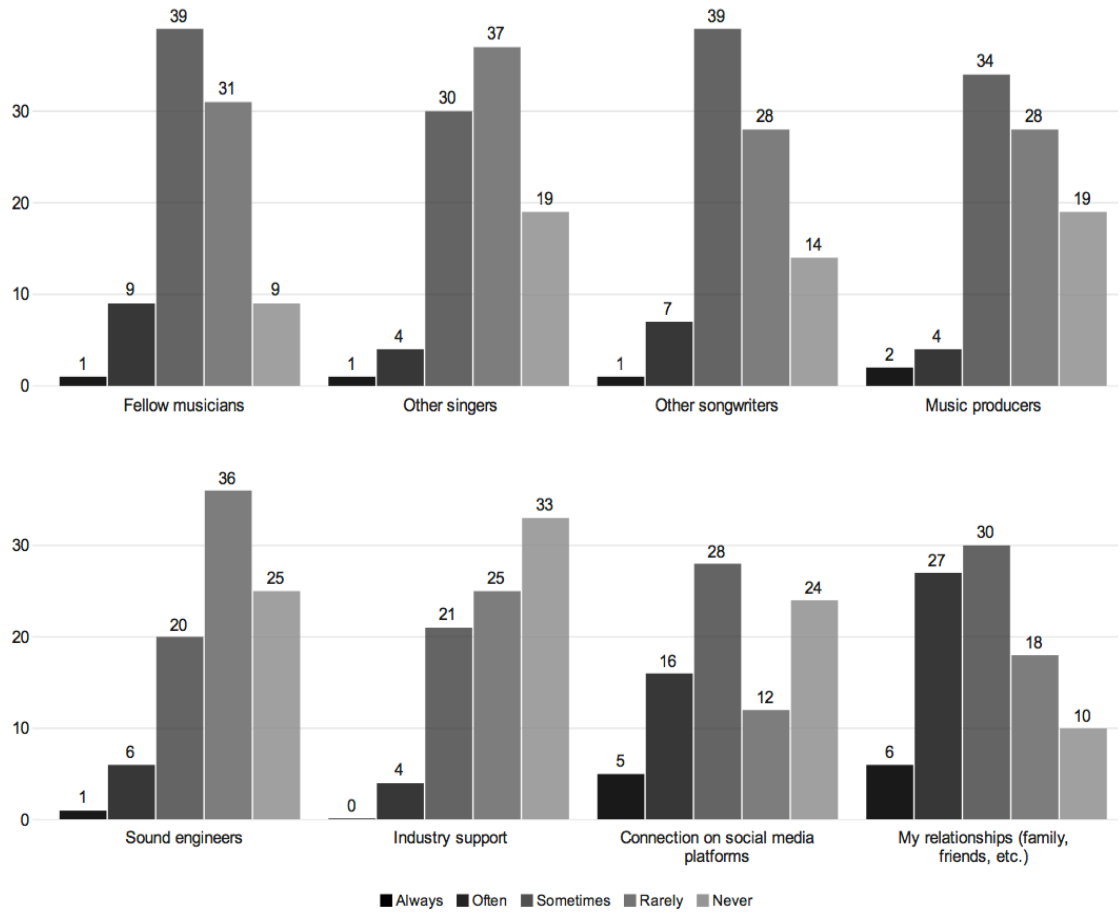

Figure 22: Usefulness of songwriting devices - others and contexts

Responses broadly indicated that working with others was *Sometimes* useful in the process of songwriting. The majority of responses indicated that *Fellow musicians* and *Other songwriters* were *Always* to *Sometimes* used in the songwriting process. In contrast however, other responses also stipulated that these were *Rarely* or *Never* useful. This suggests that collaborative practice is a component of the singer-songwriter practice, but that practices do not necessarily depend on it. The findings also identified that such collaborative practice may not be given priority, or may be project dependent, as only a small number of respondents in each category (*Always; n*=0-6) relied on others. This aligns to the differences in singer-songwriter types and practices identified and discussed in Chapter 4. It is interesting to note that *My relationships (family, friends, etc.)* elicited a majority of responses that also indicates that personal relationships are often utilised in songwriting processes (*Always* to *Sometimes*; *n*=63; 66%). It is unclear how relationships explicitly aid the creative process however one possibility is that relationships may provide the validation and encouragement, and/or the connection or life experience/circumstance that help support creative work.

Other devices were also found to aid songwriting (see Figure 23: Usefulness of songwriting devices - other devices and resources). These included vocal loopers, commercial studios, mobile devices, the internet and money/finances.

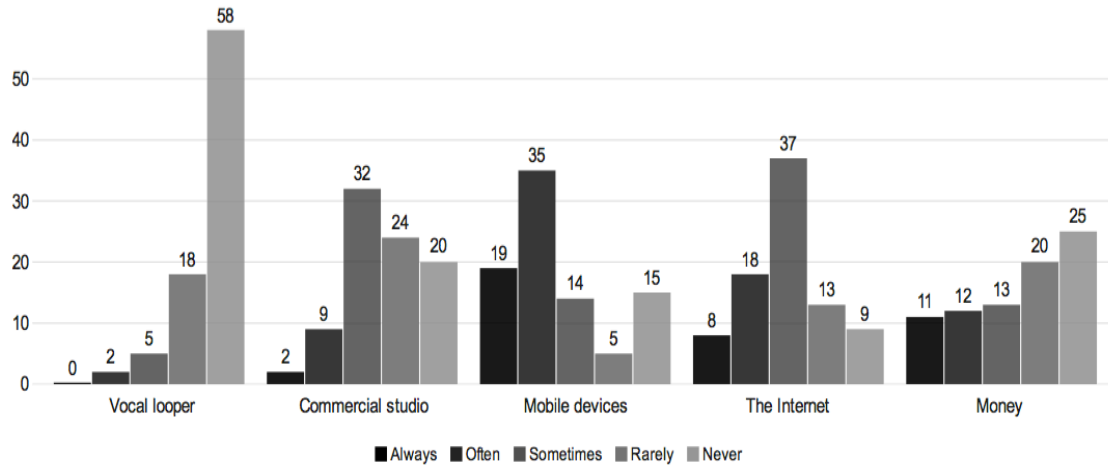

Figure 23: Usefulness of songwriting devices - other devices and resources

The use of a mobile device received strong results (*Always* to *Sometimes*; *n*=68; 72%). This may be to document song ideas. In relation to using a commercial studio, less than half of the respondents indicated that they used a commercial studio (*Always* to *Sometimes*; *n*=43; 45%) and almost the same number of respondents (*n*=44; 46%) indicated that they *Rarely* (*n*=24; 25%) or *Never* (*n*=20; 21%) used a commercial studio. The lack of using vocal loopers (*n*=58; 61%) is also interesting given their contemporary popularity with high profile singer-songwriters such as Ed Sheeran (Hughes, 2015; Hughes & Monro, 2014). At an initial glance, perhaps this is due to the age of respondents. Yet upon further analysis, the findings showed that seven respondents between the ages of 45-74yrs cited that they *rarely* use the looper, signifying that such technology is present, albeit in a rare way, in the creative practice of singer-songwriters in the later ages. Utilising financial resources elicited more balanced responses across the spectrum. Additional responses (*n*=14) cited other devices and/or resources that included poetry (*n*=1), the environment (*n*=6), travel (*n*=1) or studying the works of other singer-songwriters (*n*=1). The distinction was also made between the use of the devices and resources during the processes as opposed to the artistic realisation:

> *Although most of these things are of little use (to me) [sic] in the actual song-writing process, many of them are indispensable once the song is actually written. (R55)*

This statement highlights the perceived segmentation and difference between songwriting process and the task of sustaining the process of songwriting within a broader practice. Appendix R: Songwriting devices offer several cross-tabulation and further analyses of the devices illustrated above in order to provide demographic context against the ways in which songwriting devices may be utilised during the creative process when compared against respondent age bracket.

8.4.3 Importance of positive feedback

The questions, *How important is receiving positive feedback about songwriting?* and *Have the following been personally encouraging in your creative process?,* investigated the importance of positive feedback from peers and *the field*. The first question included seven subset options and asked that respondents to indicate the level of influence of each option on a Likert scale. These subset options are noted in Table 10 (see Table 10: Questions 7 and 14 - Subset options).

Table 10: Questions 7 and 14 - Subset options

How important is receiving positive feedback about songwriting?	Have the following been personally encouraging in your creative process?
Friends	Music producers
Audiences	Musicians
Your partner	Other singers and artists
Family	Other songwriters
Industry	Life experiences
Other musicians	Family
Other songwriters	Friends
	My partner
	My community

Positive feedback (see Figure 24: Importance of positive feedback in songwriting)from audiences was cited as an important aspect of songwriting with respondents indicating it as *extremely important* (*n*=38; 40%) and *very important* (*n*=42; 44%). Positive feedback from other musicians and songwriters was also cited as important in

songwriting. This is perhaps due to the fact that musicians and other songwriters may potentially be the most critical of works and are valued due to their musical skill and experience (when compared with family and friends who may or may not be musical). Respondents indicated that feedback from other songwriters as *extremely important* (*n*=38; 40%) and *very important* (*n*=38: 40%). Other musicians were also cited as *extremely important* (*n*=33; 35%) and *very important* (*n*=40; 42%).

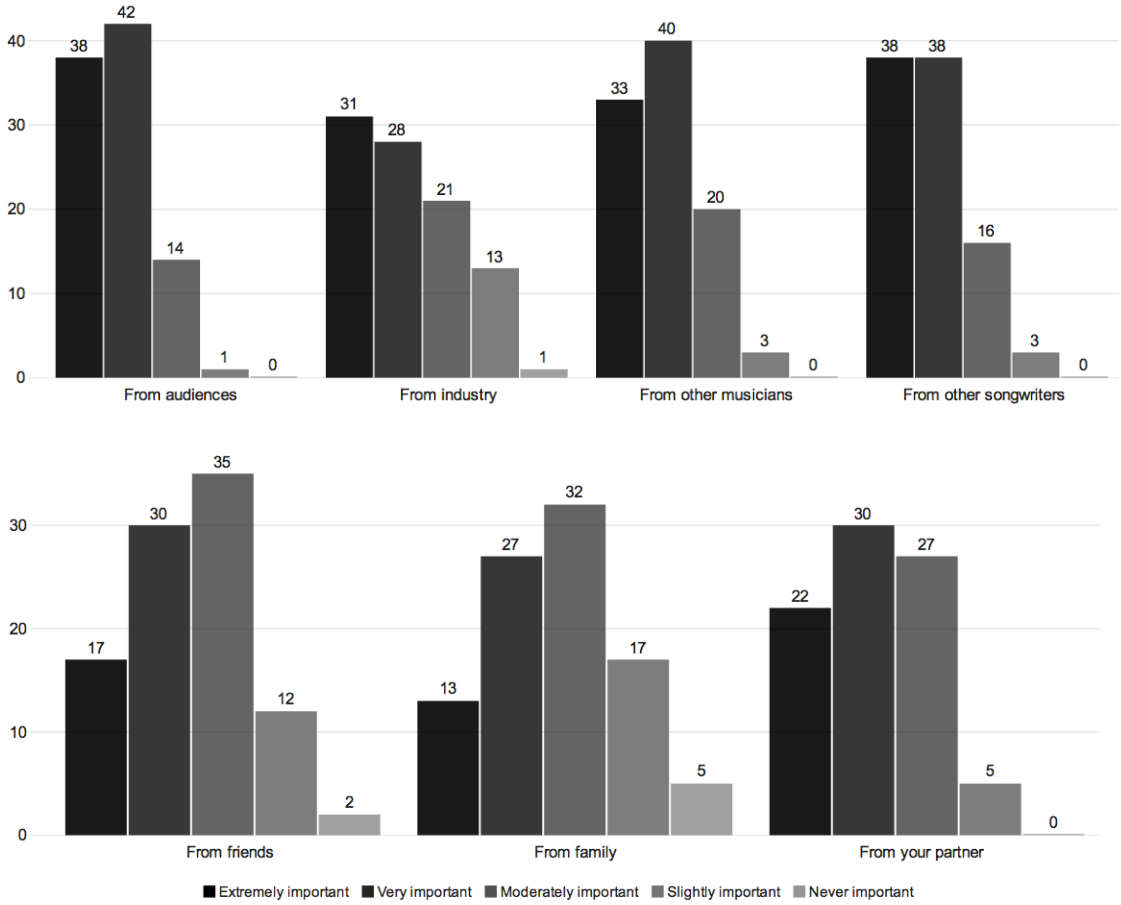

Figure 24: Importance of positive feedback in songwriting

The question, *Have the following been personally encouraging in your creative process?,* included eight subset options to investigate 1) whether encouragement was relevant to singer-songwriters, and therefore probing the relevance of validation from others, and 2) to gather data in relation to the potential impact of others on the craft of singer-songwriters (see Figure 25: Sources of encouragement).

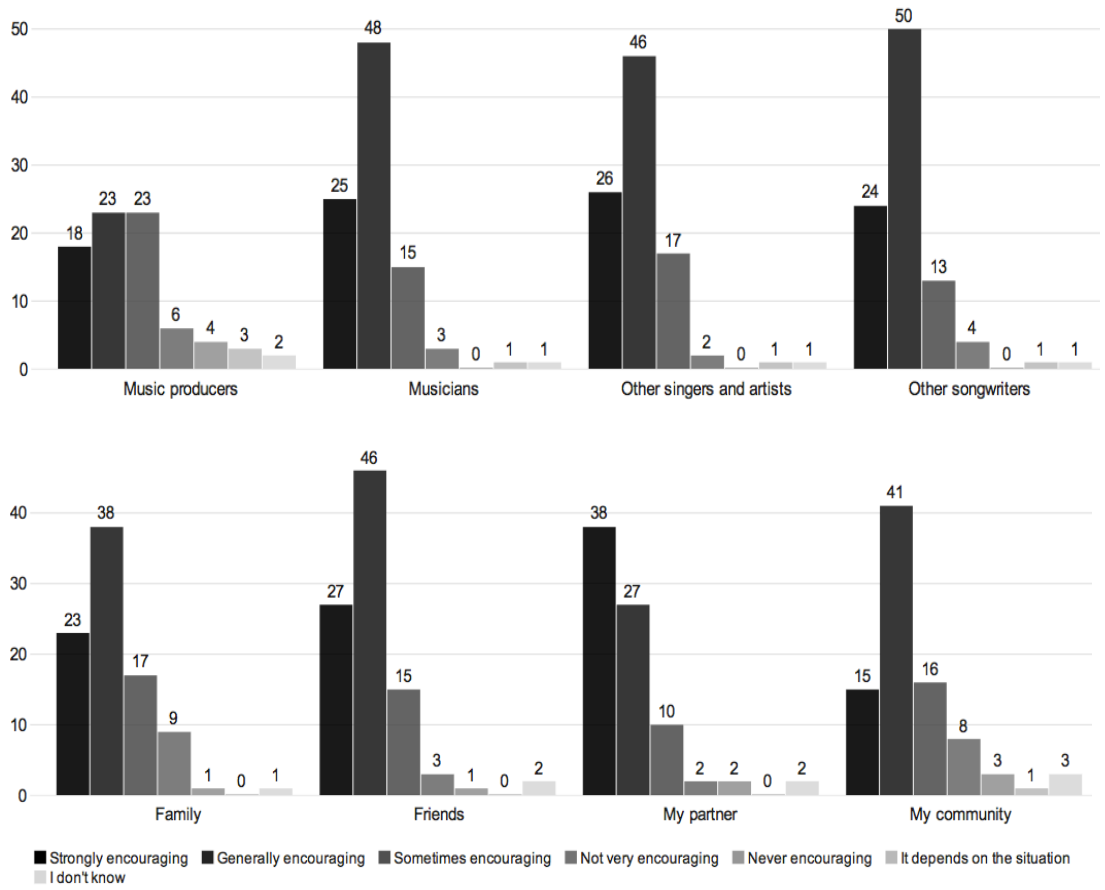

Figure 25: Sources of encouragement

Given that respondents did not have to indicate a response to these subset options, these findings illustrate that encouragement and feedback from others is deemed relevant by singer-songwriters. The findings revealed that *Musicians* (*n*=93; 98%), *Other singers and artists* (*n*=93; 98%), *Other songwriters* (*n*=93; 98%), and *Friends* (*n*=94; 99%) attracted the most responses. The majority of responses indicated that encouragement from all subset options were generally or strongly encouraging. This also indicated that validation from others is valued by singer-songwriters, and is unsurprising given that communication and connecting with others was identified as a major motivation of singer-songwriters in Part 1. *What best describes your experience with the following types of teachers?* asked respondents to indicate whether formal learning experiences in a range of contexts had been encouraging, positive or negative (see Figure 26: Formal learning experiences). Overwhelmingly, the highest number of responses in each category indicated that respondents had experienced encouragement in formal learning contexts which had positively influenced their subsequent work. This highlights that for those pursuing formal musical training, the encouragement offered and received in these contexts needs to be positive if, in turn, it is to be a positive influence.

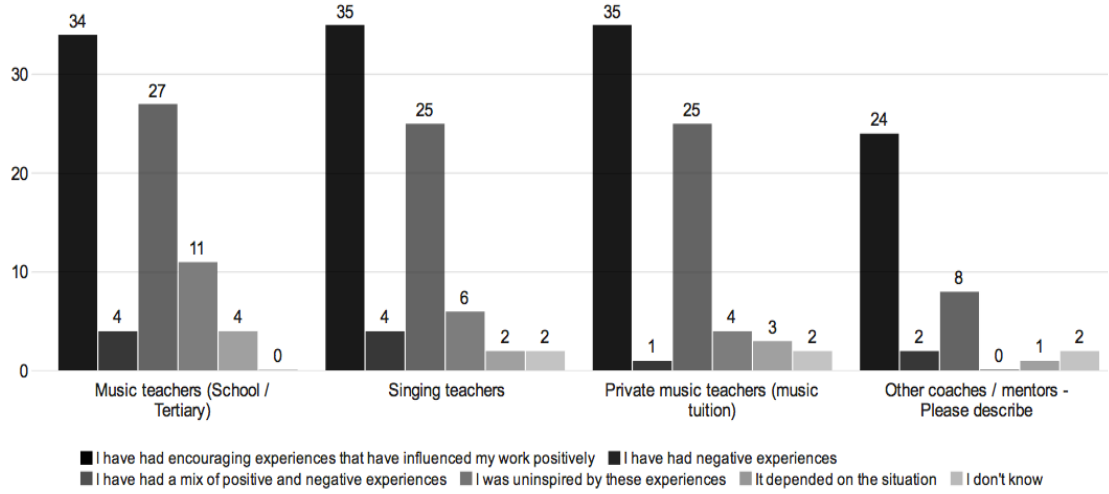

Figure 26: Formal learning experiences

8.5 Singing

Respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions of their singing voice. In response to *In relation to your voice, are the following important to you?*, provision was made for closed subset options (see Table 11: Question 9 - Subset options).

Table 11: Question 9 - Subset options

In relation to your voice, are the following important to you?
A unique and different vocal sound
A vocal sound that is true to me
During a strong emotional experience
Vocal technique and singing skill

The first two subset options asked respondents to indicate their perceptions about vocal timbre and sound. The summary of these findings (see Figure 27: Vocal factors) highlight that, although of importance, having a *unique* vocal sound was not as important as having a sound that was perceived to be *true to me.* The majority of respondents (n=93; 98%) indicated a response to *A unique and different vocal sound.* The findings illustrate that many of the respondents felt that a unique and different vocal sound was either very important (*n*=30; 32%) or moderately important (*n*=26; 27%) or to them. All respondents recorded a subset option for *A vocal sound that is*

true to me, of which the majority of respondents agreed that it was either extremely important (*n*=51; 54%) or was very important (*n*=35; 37%). This signifies that respondents value their *own* voice, which aligns with the emergent theme of vocal ownership discussed in Chapter 7.

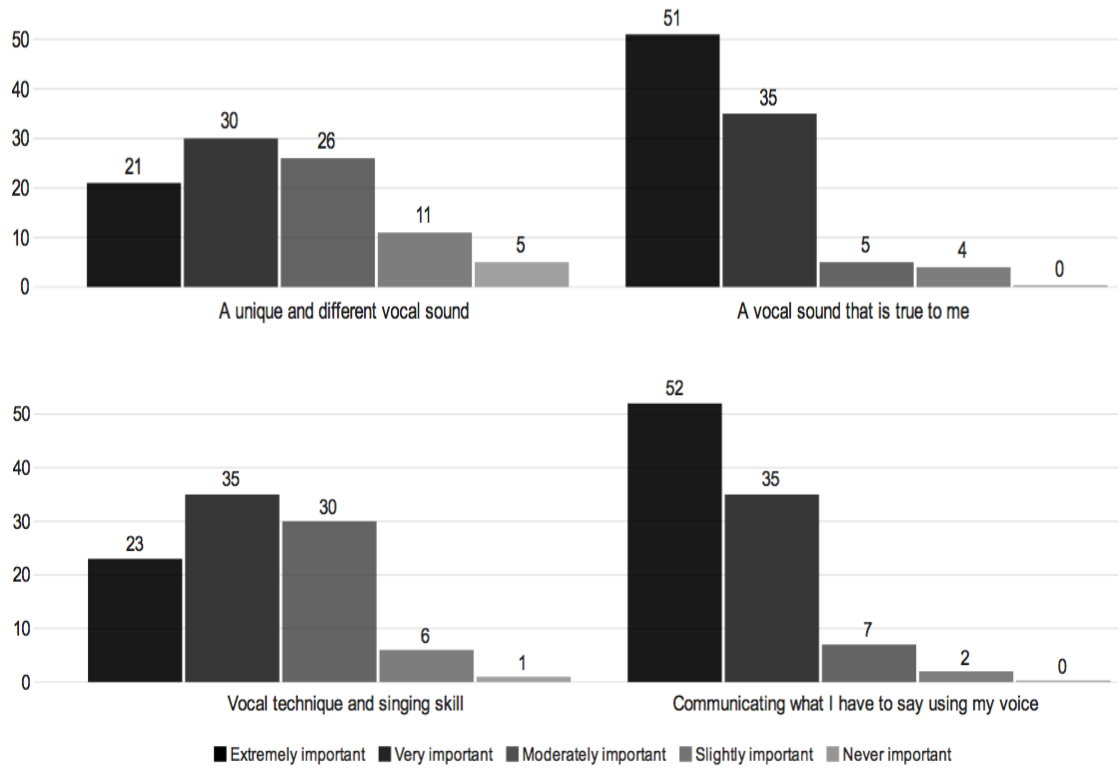

Figure 27: Vocal factors

Respondents also valued the role of vocal technique and communication. The findings related to vocal technique and singing skill revealed that the majority (*n*=88; 93%) of respondents value the ability to efficiently sing by indicating that vocal technique and skill was either or extremely important (*n*=23; 24%), very important (*n*=35; 37%,) or moderately important (*n*=30; 32%). Only a minority of seven respondents indicated that vocal technique and skill was either slightly important (*n*=6; 6%) or never important (*n*=1; 1%). Communicating personal thoughts was also identified as being highly valued by respondents with the majority (*n*=87; 92%) indicating it as extremely important (*n*=52; 55%) or very important (*n*=35; 37%). The high importance of communication therefore implies the aim of sharing of experiences and ideas through singing or song. Vocal technique was also highly valued which suggests that vocal technique is considered to be relevant and, perhaps even required, in order to fulfill the

purpose for singing - for instance, to communicate. In addition, two open-ended options allowed respondents to include their own perceptions about their voice. Twenty-eight respondents indicated open-ended answers to these options. Interestingly, many of these responses identified specific elements of vocal technique and/or vocal health, including articulation and vocal range, as important:

> *Clear voice that can articulate lyrical content and easily understood. (R60)*
>
> *Use of the breath. (R11)*
>
> *Pitch ability/control. (R35)*
>
> *Vocal health. (R31)*

Singing within one's own parameters was also mentioned. This may be viewed as another way of recognising one's own inherent skill level and the embodiment of the voice:

> *Singing within my range. (R46)*
>
> *Making the best of my instrument. (R53)*

Singing as a way of connecting with others, and as a representation of self-expression and even "healing" (R11), was also noted as important:

> *Singing with honesty & heart. (R76)*
>
> *Healing vibration in my body and heart. (R11)*
>
> *Having fun singing harmonies and blending with others, bonding. Playing with my voice, impro[visation] is so much fun and it's great mental and physical pain relief too. (R23)*
>
> *Ensuring I have given the audience a quality performance both vocally and through my presentation of the song. (R62)*

The above examples also attest to the ways in which the singing voice represents a meaningful mode of communication. Appendix S: Vocal qualities/Importance of singing provides a cross-tabulation between respondent perceptions on vocal qualities and the importance of singing. In this analysis, it can be seen that the majority of responses cite both singing and vocal qualities as *very* or *extremely* important. Yet interestingly, some respondents cite singing as only *slightly important* yet cite vocal qualities, such as a unique and different vocal sound, as *extremely important*. For instance, three respondents cited singing as *slightly important* yet also cited a *unique*

and different vocal sound, and *a vocal sound that is true to me*, as *very* or *extremely* important. This may suggest a distinction between the value of singing as a process and the value of the ownership an artist has over their voice.

Respondents were asked the question, *Do you like the sound of your voice?* They were asked to indicate their vocal perceptions across a range of options (see Table 12: Question 10 – Subset options). Respondents were permitted to choose more than one option, and to provide open-ended response as required.

Table 12: Question 10 - Subset options

Do you like the sound of your voice?
Never thought of how my voice sounds
Yes, I don't mind how my voice sounds
Sometimes, it depends on what I am singing
Often, I don't like the sound of my voice
No, I don't like the sound of my voice
I am not sure

A total of 134 responses were recorded. The main responses were recorded as *Yes, I like how my voice sounds* (*n*=49; 52%), *Sometimes, it depends on what I am singing* (*n*=40; 42%) and *Yes, I don't mind how my voice sounds* (*n*=21; 22%). In addition, eleven open-ended responses were recorded. These responses highlighted a broad variety of perceptions and the potential journey that an artist takes in reaching a vocal sound that he or she *likes*. This is particularly highlighted in the following example:

> *As I am getting older, I realise that the style of voice considered 'popular' is quite different to how I sing. As long as I like what I hear, I'm pretty satisfied. I find that I have to really let go of 'hitting all the notes' and listening to get technicalities right if I am to authentically convey the lyrics and emotions of a song. I found that quite difficult for a while, but I'm getting better at it. (R74)*

Interestingly, the above example illustrates the notion of "popular" singing as being technically efficient singing where a singer is assumed to sing "all the notes", and likely, in particular the high and often difficult notes. Secondly, that conveying lyrical authenticity and emotion is separate to vocal "technicalities". This perspective shows

that the respondent's perception on singing does not necessarily reconcile that technical ability *is* what allows the voice to be controlled by the artist, and that the very act of conveying lyrics and emotion likely requires a level of vocal technique in order to do so efficiently. It may equally be as a result of utilising the voice according to the parameters of their own embodied instrument. Interestingly, as this trait is discovered or stumbled upon, it seems that singing confidence emerges:

> *I lacked plenty of confidence vocally until I understood my sound. (R93)*
>
> *I love how my voice sounds and it has taken many years for me to be this happy with it. (R31)*
>
> *Thanks to Mentors I can believe in my voice. (R47)*

Contrastingly, some respondents expressed that they felt they wanted an improvement or change in their voice:

> *I wish I could sing better than I do. (R39)*
>
> *I generally dislike it, but sometimes I'm surprised and do. (R53)*

8.6 Overall creative practice

Respondents were asked to indicate any final comments relating to their songwriting, singing and overall creative process. Over half of the respondents (n=53; 56%) answered with a broad range of perspectives. For these respondents, songwriting, singing and remaining creative was seen as a meaningful and holistic act. Delivering self-expression, thoughts and processing experiences through song allow artists to be heard through a medium that combines several creativities at once as the following example highlights:

> *I chose songwriting because I couldn't see a way to be heard through other writing forms. Analysing a song's lyrics is such a different experience to reading a book or a short story. Songs have to get messages across through a variety of means - all interacting at once. (R42)*

For singer-songwriters, the song or *artistic realisation*, and the various processes entrenched in being a singer-songwriter, were viewed as allowing for personal motivations, musical inclinations and creativities to be embedded into one artform and creative practice. In such practices, songwriting was viewed as "the vehicle of choice" (R92) and that the creative practice is seen as a way of "expressing emotion" (R18).

The creative practice seemed to align as an actual lifestyle for these artists in which creativity was inherently valued. These processes were at times seen as implicit functions of *the self* as expressed by the following respondent examples:

> *Not sure how I would express myself or process emotions without songwriting/music. (R91)*
>
> *While it's been an almost 50-year passion of mine, at some point it became inseparable from who I am and what I do. [Regardless] of any financial or social benefits to be had (or not) from it. At this point in life, creating music (and the grandkids) are what keep me hanging around. (R55)*

The craft of songwriting and singing was also considered as a positive part of life, as this respondent shared:

> *A beautiful way to spend time and so wonderful to share that with others. I am so grateful I can write and sing songs, a precious gift and [a] skillful craft. (R11)*

The processes related to singing and songwriting were often expressed as a collective, and were processes that took time, maturity and experience.

> *It is all about finding your process and your sound. With these in place you can believe in your artistry. (R47)*
>
> *It took about ten years to reach a smoothly running creative process for my songwriting that operates with ease and brings great results almost every time. While my songwriting took time to develop, my singing voice matured very early and it took a while for these to sync with my confidence levels. Teaching singing for 10 years taught me a lot of patience, and that good things, like experience and confidence, takes time to grow. (R31)*

For singers specifically, songwriting was seen as a way of extending their musical craft and to expand their creative practice:

> *I sang for a long time (covers) and I just found that I didn't feel as though it was enough so I started to write songs. I always love the outcome and I love the recording process. It is very satisfying to hear a song written by yourself being played on the radio or getting some kind of recognition. (R74)*

The above excerpt provides example of *the self*, *the field* and *artistic realisation* that occurs in the practice of the singer-songwriter. Additionally, it also provides an

example of the different forms of voice use that this research identified. Vocal *ownership* (in the form of singing, and singing covers), vocal *authorship* (through the process of songwriting and managing factors related to *the field*) and the voice of potential *kinship*, in which songs are realised and released to public for the opportunity of connection, and for audiences to relate. Additionally, the above excerpt highlights the enjoyment and connection achieved through songwriting and through having *artistic realisations* enter *the field*, and subsequently gain some form of positive feedback such as hearing oneself or "some kind of recognition" (R74). This is also a way in which confidence is built and such confidence potentially impacts *the self* in a circular way.

8.7 Additional findings and unique emergent themes

There were additional findings that emerged in the survey data. These findings and themes were not explicitly identified in Part 1 interviews. Four unique themes were identified from a small number of the responses to the two open-ended questions; *Please briefly explain what inspires you to write songs* and *Final comments*. These themes are discussed under the relevant headings below.

8.7.1.1 Sobriety and its influence on creativity

One respondent (R35) shared a detailed account on the influence of sobriety on creativity. Interestingly, this respondent was the only research participant who mentioned alcohol/drug use in either Part 1 and Part 2 data collection. The research (Part 1 interviews and Part 2 surveys) did not require information of this nature, yet R35 offered their detailed perspective on this subject:

> *I stopped drinking or doing drugs 18 months ago and the benefits to my well-being, my consistency of practice, my ability to be confidently proactive and public with who I am and what I do, without fear that things will fall apart around me, or that I'll be unreliable to myself or others, has disappeared. In a big way, being a performing singer-songwriter convinced me to become sober, because the night before I did, I had been playing a gig and only slightly intoxicated, was disassociated enough to realise how dangerous it was for the communication of my art. (R35)*

8.7.1.2 Artificial intelligence, songwriting technology and blockchain

The existence of artificial intelligence/technology in relation to songwriting was mentioned by one respondent (R37). This respondent stated that it was not yet particularly helpful. However, there is no mention of the specific type of songwriting technology being referred to[68]. Additionally, this respondent also discussed the potential of *blockchain*[69] technology for potential embedded use in new music files and/or contracts:

> *Artificial intelligence and songwriting. I've had a look at it so far, it's not very good. New technology like the blockchain I think is a good idea [which could be used for] new music file [and] smart contracts. (R37)*

8.7.1.3 Determining beneficial and appropriate creative habits

Some respondents discussed the value of developing individual and tailored creative habits (*n*=5). These responses were distinctly different to those that discussed creative processes wherein respondents implied the existence of a process. This was evident in the latter respondents, for example, by discussing what inspires them or the ways in which their processes are enacted. In the case of the following respondents, the value of discovering and defining a specific set of habits that benefitted their creativity was evident. One respondent shared that their creative process often involved a level of work and consistent labour. The following excerpt highlights the value of finding a set of creative songwriting habits that works:

> *[Songs] don't come easily to me unless I'm working on something every day. If I get caught up in working, family [and] general day to day [responsibilities] and I haven't played around with song ideas for weeks and weeks, I find it difficult to go back to because it seems like a 'chore'. I have recently written two songs in a fairly short time and it goes to prove that if I do a little something every day, songwriting becomes much more of a pleasant experience. (R74)*

---

[68] There are online, cloud based and/or software-based songwriting platforms. Some of these include *Masterwriter* (see www.masterwriter.com), *HookTheory* (see www.hooktheory.com) and *TuneSmith* (see www.rhymegenie.com).

[69] Blockchain technology is based around the concept of *decentralised* ownership. It refers to a digital ledger that may be used to track data and is more popularly known for its use as the underpinning technology behind *cryptocurrency*. It is in its early stages of development and marketisation. In relation to music, it has been discussed as a potential solution for piracy, music contracts and the embedding of identification within music files. See Lee (2018) for a short introduction on blockchain and its potential future use within music and music industries.

Another respondent also shared that songwriting entailed an element of labour, and that such labour influenced the success of a songwriting experience. It also highlights the habit of working through material in a potentially consistent way so as to reach a point of inspiration. Additionally, the respondent pointed out that the survey did not explore this concept, yet in doing so, reveals that there are *successful* songwriting sessions, and therefore also, unsuccessful ones:

> *Often songwriting is a matter of grinding through the bad stuff to get to those moments of real inspiration. This survey didn't talk about what percentage of songs or songwriting sessions are successful in that sense. (R78)*

Another respondent explicitly used the term *creative habit* to describe the different ways that benefitted their creativity. Additionally, the respondent revealed the personal prioritising of tasks and routines in order to achieve:

> *[I] Change things, refresh the process [and/or] try something differently, [and to] build better habits, to reflect more carefully on my process, my results, my identity as a creative. [This] is something I've really valued in the past few years, the steady inflow of good information, coupled with the building of routines and creative habits, such as knowing that I can be quite productive before midday if I don't engage with my phone or emails, or even having breakfast, and definitely keeping the breakfast lighter as processing food taxes the energy. (R35)*

Again, reflecting the personal nature of crafting a song, the following respondent provided a perspective on the term *songwriting process* and noted that it was, in the respondent's opinion, "misleading". This suggests that, for this respondent, a specific set of creative habits and processes may not have a logical or sequential order. It denotes that *process* is not always a step-by-step experience, not is it the same for all songwriters:

> *One often hears of the 'songwriting process'. I think this term is a bit misleading because process suggests a certain logic of inputs and outputs. My experience is nothing like that. (R71)*

8.7.1.4 A lack of resources and Australian support for emerging singer-songwriters

Five respondents noted perspectives on the ways in which Australian audiences, industry and the general public support their craft and/or the craft of singer-songwriters

and musicians in general. These respondents specifically shared a sense of being undervalued. One respondent shared a highly detailed account of a negative experience. This respondent included information on finding encouragement and validation in others who saw value in their craft, and the ways in which this experience impacted their view of the support that Australia, as a general society, affords. It is acknowledged that some of the comments made in the excerpt below are very general. Additionally, some words were withheld to deidentify the respondent. However, what should be noted, is the value and importance that this respondent places on creativity, and the potential downside to their psyche and wellbeing in situations where such creativity is perceived to be undervalued:

> *Living [in a specific location] of Australia destroyed me. Australian society is extremely hostile towards the arts, but especially so towards music. My experiences there utterly destroyed me and changed me. I was very sick mentally and emotionally. Constantly devalued, discouraged and attacked for being a professional musician. But I am very good in my field. From 2011-2015 I made a living teaching music 8hrs a day 5 days a week, yet was told I would never be employable as a musician. I could not get a gig or advance professionally. Because I was good, [a university] offered me a scholarship to study my instrument. It was the first time in my life I was genuinely given encouragement and investment. Since then I have absolutely thrived. […] I have a huge amount of resentment toward Australia and what it did to me. (R12)*

Similar sentiments in relation to the "Australian Music Scene" were also identified. According to the following respondent, there is a lack of support for emerging singer-songwriters.

> *There is definitely not enough resources or research in this topic - well done and good luck! Australian Music Scene doesn't do enough for showcasing emerging singer-songwriters, and the same ones are done to death on radio of all kinds. (R29)*

Additionally, the notion of being undervalued can also be seen in the following comment:

> *We need to value it more in Australia! (R51)*

Monetary value and a lack of royalties was also identified:

> *Why radio doesn't pay enough? I have my music played all over Australia and I am not getting enough royalties. (R87)*

And lastly, one respondent discussed a "lack of confidence" in sharing their story. It seems there may be a potential apprehension attached to sharing Aboriginal stories through song and a fear of being subjected to potential racism:

> *Lack of confidence that Aboriginal stories will be understood rather than racially judged. (R94)*

8.8 Conclusion

The primary objective of the Part 2 Survey was to investigate Part 1 themes more broadly in order to clarify and add depth to the emergent themes. The findings discussed in this chapter illustrate that the broader survey findings do indeed verify the themes discussed in Chapters 4-7. Additionally, the survey findings also illustrate the importance of the creative practice, the personal and practical motivations of songwriting and creativity, the role of emotion and self-expression, and the role of connection in the craft of singer-songwriters. The singing voice was shown to be relevant and of importance to singer-songwriters. The additional findings offered new perspectives, particularly in relation to the Australian music or industry context and highlight the role of an artist's specific field and the impact that their particular positioning may have on the ways in which their craft is valued. The concept of being or feeling undervalued, given that validation was found as a theme in both Part 1 interviews and Part surveys, is a relevant new finding. Such perceived "undervalue" was determined in relation to a lack of encouragement or encouraging experiences, financial reward or sustainability, and an apprehensiveness that personal stories. In addition, an apprehensiveness in relation to the ways in which Aboriginal stories may be judged. These new themes were compared with Part 1 interview data in order to find possible comparative correlations as part of the constant comparative methodology utilised by this research (Merriam, 2009, 1998). The overall findings of the survey contribute to the progressive findings discussed in the following two chapters.

9 Artistic realisations

I realised that actually, I am an artist and that my main medium as an artist is my voice and lyrics and language.
(Tash Parker, Participant 17)

9.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, the three creative phases identified by the research as *the self*, *the field* and *artistic realisation/s* were introduced and discussed. Chapter 5 explored the personal and practical motivations found within *the self.* Chapter 6 discussed the various creative contexts and interactions that take place within *the field*. Chapter 7 presented findings related to the singing voice and the role of the voice within the creative practice. Chapter 8 sought to investigate emergent research themes through a larger sample of respondents. Throughout each of the aforementioned chapters, the concept of *artistic realisation* was implied as a by-product of various creative processes. This chapter further explores and defines the concept of *artistic realisation* as the third phase of creativity. It draws on selected outcomes identified in Part 1 and Part 2 of this research. In doing so, this chapter addresses the research sub-question related to the outcomes of the singer-songwriter creative practice. Research findings specifically related to *artistic realisation,* such as artist perspectives on specific songs, along with perspectives on the craft of artistry, are presented and discussed. Additionally, to bring the artist voice alive, this chapter addresses Part 1 participants by their name or their preferred artistic moniker[70]. This chapter uses extended quotations where appropriate to give credence to the singer-songwriter voice and to honour their respective creative works. As the Part 2 surveys were anonymous, respondent perspectives remain unidentified. Lastly, the chapter concludes with a discussion of *core* and *peripheral* creativity; concepts that were introduced and determined in Chapter 6, and their relation to *artistic realisation* within the creative practice framework developed by this research.

[70] Permission to be identified, and where identified, the correct form of artistic attribution (by name or by artistic moniker) was sought from participants in accordance with the approved ethical requirements of this research, and as discussed in Chapter 3, Section 3.4: Methods (p. 67).

9.1.1 Defining artistic realisations

In the context of this research, participants and respondents alike provided perspectives and evidence that songwriting processes were pursued not only to create songs and engage in music, but to process life events, and to engage in the multiple creative processes and skills required by singing/songwriting. The attainment of personal goals by merely partaking in the creative process may therefore be deemed by artists to be as valuable as the creation of songs and artefacts themselves. An *artistic realisation* may therefore be defined as the progression or development that occurs after the attainment of a personal goal or artistic intent through the process of creativity. It may include the benefits that develop through simple and/or complex creative processes, as well as completed artefacts and creative projects. In the headings that follow, specific contexts related to artistry, artefacts and artistic realisation drawn from Part 1 and Part 2 findings are discussed. The discussions that follow provide contextual snapshots of participant works/realisations and participant/respondent perspectives. The perspectives and experiences used in the discussions that follow naturally imply the role of *the self* and *the field* in the development of *artistic realisations.*

9.2 Singer-songwriter artistry

As *artistic realisation* implies the artist and a form of artistry, it is helpful to first define the term *artistry.* In relation to singers and singing, the term "vocal artistry" (Hughes, 2010, p. 246) has been defined as one that "characteristically involves individuality as evidenced through artistic inventiveness or vocal creativity", recognising that such inventiveness varies depending on the person or performance context (Hughes, 2010, p. 246). In relation to creativity and invention more broadly, engineer and inventor Jacob Rabinow, a respondent of Csikszentmihalyi's (1997) study on creativity, offers the following perspective on creativity and the creative person:

> A good creative person is well trained. So he has first of all an enormous amount of knowledge in that field. Secondly, he tries to combine ideas, because he enjoys writing music or enjoys inventing. And finally, he has the judgement to say, "This is good, I'll pursue this further". (Jacob Rabinow as quoted in Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, p. 50)

Artistry in the context of the singer-songwriter may therefore be defined as the integration of enculturated knowledge (Green, 2002). It is through the inventive integration of singing/songwriting (Hughes, 2010) that artistry is engaged and/or performed. As one respondent states, the creative process is reflective of "artistic

expression [and] inherent desire" (R90). Another respondent (R36), in their summation, seems to validate Rabinow's statement (as quoted in Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, p. 50) in that singer-songwriter artistry entails a broad array of factors, and that despite this, an enjoyment and commitment exists:

> *I could write a book, there are so many facets and once you are committed to it, it becomes a beautiful, all-consuming life pursuit like few others, because there is so much to draw upon, and so much to contribute, so much to develop, and so many institutions and industries to interact with. (R36)*

The factors found within each creative phase provide impetus, motivation and a progressive infrastructure for artistry to develop. The Part 2 survey data identified that developing an individual set of tenable creative habits/behaviours is helpful to the development of an artist's creative practice. As such, singer-songwriter artistry may be defined as the holistic process of continuous progression and development contained within an individual's creative practice. The creative habits and processes that artists utilise are highly individual. Additionally, habits and processes may potentially change in order to best accommodate the creative intent/s of the artist:

> *I have multiple, different creative processes in different situations and stories. (R9)*

Respondent 58 offers their own process of songwriting and highlights the value of embodiment, wherein the mind, the voice and the creative process are evident:

> *The way that I like to write, which I believe to be most natural, authentic and cathartic [...] is by picking up my guitar and composing from a stream of consciousness. Without trying to craft a song too carefully upfront, I really think the strength of the song (message, tone, lyrics, dynamics etc.) grow out of prosody. And prosody is generated [...] by the sonic relationship between what you're saying and how you're saying it [...] Instead of deciding what you'll write about, you let whatever shows up (through stream of consciousness storytelling and composing) inform what you should explore next in music. (R58)*

The skillful integration of musical concepts and emotion may lead to *artistic realisations* that the artist perceives as a satisfactory form of work. Neil Murray (P20) discusses that the communication and delivery of meaning is facilitated and framed by

appropriate musical components. When these components come together in a unified way, an "emotional truth" may be heard through song.

> *The simplest things in songs work the best often, if it's married [to the] right melody, the right movement, the right chord progression. They can convey an emotional truth that perhaps can only be captured with a lot more words in a poetic way. (Neil Murray)*

For Tina Bangel (P1), the following was reported, highlighting a collaborative nature and facilitated creativity in her process:

> *When I created, I went and wrote lyrics, and then I took it to [my producer], and then we spoke about the lyrics and then what I heard in the melody or what I wanted the song to feel like. (Tina Bangel)*

Contrastingly, the following respondent shares a different take on the songwriting process:

> *Sometimes I want to tell a story so with limited time in a song, I try to tell that story in the best possible way. At other times, I want to explore and express an emotion in a musical way, and at other times I want to make people laugh. I think a lot of my inspiration comes from my personal life experiences […] sometimes, I just want to record an event with as much accuracy as possible. (R62)*

The previous chapter discussions and the findings provided for each creative phase demonstrates the ways in which motivations and intents are initiated by life experiences. The process of artistry therefore brings together both musical and personal interactions. As such, artefacts[71] may be described as the tangible documentation of artistry and lived experience (Hughes, 2010, 2014). The process of artistry is the intangible process of development and progression of musical/personal creativity, with an aim to reach and attain artistic realisations. Artistry, when viewed as the process of being a singer-songwriter, was identified by this research as a process. As highlighted in the examples above, and in the examples offered in the earlier chapters of this thesis, reaching *artistic realisation* varies greatly for each artist. The connectedness and/or the importance that each participant held for their artistry are distinctly individual. In some instances, songwriting was to communicate observed stories, and in others, it was to

[71] Such as songs, albums, EPs and other creative works such as poetry, video clips or other related concepts.

process experiences of *the self.* Artistry, given the role of life experience and influence, may be said to develop over time. As such, the purpose for writing songs may change over time. Amber Lawrence (P16) shared this concept in the following statement:

> *Early on, the songs [I wrote were] when I was heartbroken […] They were flying out of me because I was like learning guitar, and I have the guitar sitting with me, and obviously I'm very sad so here's another sad song. But now, it's more of, "What do I want to say? Well, I don't want to say it. Who wants to hear this? Does anyone here want to hear another song about that from me?" That's a bit more purpose-driven. (Amber Lawrence)*

In relation to *artistic realisations*, artefacts offer an opportunity for the communication of lyrics, personal expression and craft. Neil Murray (P20), while discussing the influence of poetry and poetry groups in his artistic journey, cited that such groups led to the development of artistic communication. Having "something to say" influences the craft surrounding songwriting:

> *You had to have something to say, and you had to be able to say it in a fresh way. All of these things have a bearing on songwriting. (Neil Murray)*

Artistry seems to also exhibit traits of connectedness within oneself and the self-awareness exhibited by an artist's reflection of emotion. Examples of these are offered in Chapter 5[72]. In addition, respondents also voiced examples of such connectedness:

> *I find immense pleasure in performing and singing, and find the process of songwriting very polarizing. It hurts, it feels fantastic, groovy, melancholy. The emotions can be both overbearing or subdued. All completely influenced by the immediate moment. Being so in tune with what you feel is both a blessing and a curse, because you get to witness and experience everything, in all its beauties and pains. (R35)*

> *I need to always be true to myself. I write what I know, and if I don't know about something, I do some research so the audience gets an authentic and realistic performance and experience. (R62)*

There is a sense of flux evident between self-reflection, observation and songwriting. It may be said that developing one's artistry is to also improve one's ability to recognise

[72] See Chapter 5, Section 5.3: Personal motivating factors (p. 110), for examples of perspectives related to self-awareness, reflection and emotion as motivations for songwriting.

and realise through reflection, and to communicate and document such realisations in song. Stella Rhymes (P15) offers a candid example of how this process might take place in the inception of songwriting, and that such an intimate process may likely vary for every artist. In the example below, she reflects on concepts of story, character and music by utilising creative visualization as a way of ideating a song:

> *I'll just close my eyes and just really follow. I usually, I always put myself in the shoes of the sort of character telling the story of the song. So I sort of imagine myself as the music […] depending on the first few notes, I'll visualise where I'm standing and sort of take a walk. I really do imagine film clips, that's what I do, and I'm the person telling the song […] I'm very visual […] so then I will be able to [write, and] usually the first few words will come out [as] what I'm doing in that video clip. Am I laying in bed or am I looking at someone who's hurting me or I might just be walking straight or in the snow […] or am I seeing a snowflake. And that's usually [how] the first word or a chorus comes to me. And then basically, I'm just telling the story. (Stella Rhymes)*

9.3 Storytelling the self

Singer-songwriters pursue creativity as a form of storytelling and communication. At times, they may share stories of *the self*; other times, of stories observed from their environment. In a way, artists share parts of *the self* that may otherwise be held privately. Romy Black (P2), one of the music producers interviewed in this research, discusses his experience of working with singer-songwriters and shares that such artists may arrive at a recording or songwriting session with a book or collection of lyrics that they treat in the same way as one might a personal diary.

> *Most of the singer-songwriters that I come across, a lot of them actually have their little black book of lyrics, it could be about a situation; it can be very personal for them. I've dealt with singers where they're like, no, I don't want to show you this stuff [because to them] it's very personal. (Romy Black)*

In addition, Romy Black (P2) adds that artists who sing and write their own songs typically draw on life experience. He also suggests that the combination of singing and songwriting seems to allow the potential for audience/listener connection:

> *Most singers would write lyrics from past experience […] I think with their vocal and lyrics, people have an opportunity to take on a little more cognitive*

> *load. They have to actually think about it and then either relate to it, not relate to it, take the song for what it is, relate it to them. (Romy Black)*

It is through the holistic and embodied songwriting process that storytelling is made possible. As such, storytelling becomes a mode for self-expression. It accommodates and encompasses *the self* and all that it potentially entails. In contrast to Respondent 58's process, Respondent 11 shares a more purposeful philosophy on songwriting, highlighting a personal connection to the creative process:

> *Mostly my emotional inner being, wanting to express myself with depth and dignity. Also, the stories of stories; to give respect to them. (R11)*

Giving respect to such stories may allude to a sense of honouring that which has been experienced by the artist. It seems that this concept may not only drive song creation, but allow for a deeper sense of meaning. There may also be a sense of legacy, and of wanting to "give respect" (R11) by documenting such lived experiences through song. For instance, participants Tina Bangel (P1) and Mark Ferris (P10) discussed specific songs that were inspired by their experience as parents. Participant 1 shares her perspective on a song she wrote about the challenges of motherhood:

> *"Tomorrow Will Be A Better Day" is about [my child] and the way it is to be a mother. The song is about [how] we all have our bad days […] and it's about starting over again and we'll try again tomorrow. We'll see how we go. [As long as] we're trying, both of us are trying. (Tina Bangel)*

In this instance, the song offers a glimpse into the connection between the artist, her role and/or personal identity as a mother, and her relationship with her child. It may be said that the experience of recording the song allows this glimpse to be documented into an artefact with two purposes. One is to share with others a story of *the self* and the perspective of the artist. The other is as an *artistic realisation* in the form of a song that symbolises the artists' family. As the experience between parent and child is recorded, in doing so, an heirloom is also created for the artist's family to access in later generations. In a sense, family heritage, and the potential meaning or story behind relationships is documented through song. This is a meaningful and connected form of songwriting, and may therefore apply as a *core*[73] form of creativity given the depth of

[73] See Chapter 6, Section 6.5: Conclusion (p.153), for a discussion of core and peripheral creativity.

meaning that such songs may carry. Mark Ferris (P10) offers a similar example of this in the narrative below:

> *Some songs are very meaningful because of the moment in time that they capture for me, which could be very positive. It could be a sadder [sic] type as well […] they are moments in history for me, and they take me back to what was happening at that time. I'm trying to give you a specific example. I'm thinking [of] one song which captures relationships […] I'm using my [child] as an example. My [child] has been important in my song writing because a lot of what I've expressed has been an observation of [my child's] life and growth. So, I'm thinking of some of it. On the album there's a song that you'll find, it's a song called "Tanuki". Now, [the] Tanuki is a little animal which lives in Japan and [at our] house, we used to get visited by this Tanuki, [who] would come into the garden and all that and we sort of, [my child] was young, very young [so] we created little stories. Who's this Tanuki and who [its] friends are and all that. I wrote a song to capture that. Why it's important to me is because it takes me back to that time. That time which I can't recover. (Mark Ferris)*

The songwriting process allows for personal nostalgia, introspection and captures a story deemed important by the artist. Other times, it may be to represent a sense of artistic re-invention. Stella Rhymes (P15) reflects on this concept and the potential for songs to symbolise personal and/or artistic change. In her journey as an artist, Stella Rhymes (P15) took on the moniker of a different artistic name, and reflects that a certain song may have represented this change:

> *One of the songs "Lullaby" was all about saying goodbye to someone you love. A lot of people felt it was about death […] but looking back, I think it was, in a way saying goodbye to my old life and to be reborn as Stella Rhymes. (Stella Rhymes)*

Songs are also a chance for artists to share personal wisdom through song. Both Tina Bangel (P1) and Stella Rhymes (P15) spoke about deliberately including inspiring lyrics as an artistic stamp of their songwriting:

> *"Dorothy Ruby Shoes" is about my shoes […] people would come up and say to me, "What size are your shoes?" and they'll take photos of my shoes, not of me, but my shoes [so] the song is about how we turn to outside sources, like*

putting on make-up and looking good and finding people to make us confident, but it's really within us. (Tina Bangel)

The underlying thing that I always kind of sneak in there is about finding your true purpose. I've always sort of slipped that in every song, whether it's finding the light or finding yourself. (Stella Rhymes)

9.4 Storytelling the field

As evidenced in the earlier chapters, singer-songwriters write songs based on their lived experiences. Experiences that take place within their lives and their environments may form the impetus for creativity. Storytelling events within *the field,* or collaboratively with others, is a primary finding of this research. *Artistic realisations* that result from collaboration or through inspiration drawn from *the field* provide opportunities for communal creativity and shared meaning. For instance, some of the singer-songwriters interviewed in this research engage with singing and songwriting within small social/community groups (*n*=5). In these groups, fellow singer-writers meet regularly as a social way to share stories and/or collaborate. A connection is formed through collective self-expression and for most, this form of creative engagement is a not only an interesting activity/hobby, but a source of personal, and shared, fulfillment.

Singing in a community setting is my idea of heaven. Writing for community singing is my goal. (R22)

Co-writing with other music makers, such as music producers, also allows for shared *artistic realisation*, as both Tash Parker (P17) and Respondent 92 state:

I get such an amazing energy out of the fact that what you're creating, what you end up with is, you know, it's not just yours. It's something that's been created [that is] more than the sum of its parts. (Tash Parker)

When I write songs for myself to sing, I write to express and find the authenticity of my own voice. When I co-write with others, I am inspired to work toward getting the best result we can for ourselves. (R92)

Collaborating with international artists without the need of a gatekeeper is made possible by various online platforms [74] (P3, P15). These platforms open up opportunities for *artistic realisation* to occur. Collaboration may therefore also take place for artists who may not have the resources, or access, to local musicians, producers or studios. In such scenarios, connecting with others takes place through online means. Stella Rhymes (P15) explains:

> *I get a lot of messages through social media. I'm also a member of Vocalizr, which is like a basically a LinkedIn for writers and producers to connect. I book a lot of jobs through that site. And we might just start off chatting, getting to know each other or sometimes they might, the producer or DJ might just look through my profile, make up their mind and send me a request to book a job. (Stella Rhymes)*

Stella Rhymes (P15) also adds that such collaborations may or may not require her to write songs. Producers approach her in her capacity as a session singer[75].

> *Sometimes they'll say "we have no idea, just want a vocalist" or "this is for a particular label and this is the sound that they want and this is the direction for the video clip". It could be that detailed or they could even say "here's the lyrics that we want you to sing and here's the melody and we just want a vocalist to sing it as is". Every track varies. (Danah)*

These instances show a potential example of *peripheral* creativity, wherein the artist is engaged in a form of creativity that may not necessarily be their main creative intent/goal. This form of creativity is conducted in order to attain work, add to an artist's portfolio of work or to learn a new skill.

9.5 Australian heritage and themes

The research findings included artistic contexts and *artistic realisations* specifically underpinned by Australian themes. Such themes included songs inspired by history, landscape, Indigenous culture[76], local community themes and political issues. While some of these contexts were discussed in Chapter 6, this section seeks to

[74] Such as Vocalizr (see www.vocalizr.com), which is a platform specifically for vocalists and producers and was cited by two participants (P3, P15) as a useful online tool for collaboration. Other platforms include Kompoz (see www.kompoz.com) and ProCollabs (see www.procollabs.com).

[75] Session singing/session singers refer to singers hired to sing and/or record an existing composition/song.

[76] The term Indigenous is used in this thesis to include both Australian Aboriginal people and culture and Torres Strait Islander people and culture (see AIATSIS, 2018).

detail the deep connection and energy that some participants and/or respondents expressed towards writing songs inspired by an Australian context. Participants Mike Roberts (P8), Amber Lawrence (P16), Deb Suckling (P18) and Neil Murray (P20) each provided various songwriting experiences or projects that were inspired or motivated by Australian themes. Deb Suckling (P18) discussed a large-scale collaborative project; a collaborative compilation album/CD and accompanying book titled *The Soldier's Wife* (Suckling, 2016). In this project "a small group of Queensland songwriters" collaboratively "embarked on a journey to tell the intimate stories of women whose partners and families have served in military conflict over the past 60 years" (Foreword, Suckling, 2016). A singer-songwriter and record label owner, Deb Suckling (P18) managed this project wherein its songwriters engaged with "almost 100 women — aged from 25–104 years old" (The Soldier's Wife, ND). The process in this project, where war widows share their life stories and welcome artists to listen, shows an act of trust, vulnerability and friendship that may only be reasonably expected in long standing relationships/friendships. A collaborative process such as this offers the potential for connection, communication and expression for all involved. In this example, the subjects of loss, grief, and related topics, are shared and brought to light within the creative process. This brings with it an array of possible potentials and/or implications. The women who took part in the project were also able to collaborate in the song arrangement as well as song content.

> *[In this experience], you're the third party [...] listening to their story. You're really trying to take it all on board and you're really looking for those key phrases and nice key points to their story that will actually work in a song format. [As a group of songwriters, we consulted on] how [they] would like [the song] to go in terms of feel and in terms of tempo and in terms of style. So they're all having that input and then you're just trying to really format with them and how their stories [are] going to be portrayed using music. (Deb Suckling)*

The collaborative interactions that took place in The Soldier's Wife (Suckling, 2016) required explicit permission from women who were willing to share their stories. This required a careful, empathetic listening process on behalf of the singer-songwriters who took part. Approaching their writing partnerships in a respectful and open way was important to the group due to the potential vulnerability of the topics being discussed:

> *You're listening to their entire stories [and] it takes a lot [for them] to share [such stories]. So you're taking it very slowly and very cautiously and also very gently. You have to be so mindful that you're not going to trigger somebody or ask something that could be really painful [yet] we're complete strangers so there is that comfort in knowing that we don't know any of their networks or their community [and] there is a big safety in that. (Deb Suckling)*

In the above excerpt, the nature of such interactions seem to take on some of the properties of what another participant, Tash Parker (P17) described as "a counseling session". There is a sense of understanding through nostalgia. In such experiences, life events are discussed, and identified topics; some of which are implied as difficult or "painful" (P18) in this example, are processed through the creation and arrangement of a song. It is therefore important that trust is built, and the role of trust in this specific project was built through time, experience and the seeking of permission and approval from the women whose stories were being shared:

> *It has taken a really long time because you have to build that trust and it is having that really big integrity about how we got around the whole process […] from the very beginning of meeting the women, the songwriting process, the recording process; never putting out anything that they are not 100% happy with. All of those things, an approval every step of the way. So that they feel that they're being honored and we feel that we're doing our best possible job of honouring them. (Deb Suckling)*

Deb Suckling (P18) was involved in the four-year project and was respectful of the project encounters and interactions with war widows. The concept of honouring their stories, and in particular, by "celebrating these wonderful women […] and their resilience and their strengths, and the massive role they've played in our society" (Deb Suckling, P18), the project shows a philanthropic side of the creative practice. Additionally, it shows a motivation that reaches beyond the immediate benefit of the artist, one that moves towards the service of others. Additionally, and importantly, the social impact of her work fuels her motivation further:

> *There's definitely a social impact that's coming out of that very simple thing of taking guitar to sessions and starting writing songs with women. (Deb Suckling)*

The concept of contributing to the broader landscape of Australian history and/or culture is a motivation shared by other singer-songwriters. One survey respondent discussed a motivation to write and share "Aboriginal stories" and culture (R94), while another respondent associated creativity as "being part of the evolving Australian story" (R14). This thread of storytelling and of drawing on history is discussed by Amber Lawrence (P16), who wrote a song called "100 Year Handshake" (A. Lawrence, 2017) to commemorate the "hundred year friendship between Australia and America" (Amber Lawrence, P16). Amber Lawrence shares the process of writing the song and the research that informed its lyrical construction:

> *I had to do a bit of research to make sure I understood it. Then I remember writing down the line that I thought was a good start to the song on: 'Reads like a story played on the silver screen', because one of the war heroes that I talk about in the song, they based [a movie] on […] his name [was] Leslie Allen but I changed it later on to his nickname; 'Young 'Bull' runs back on in/ to carry out the wounded boys he's never met', which again, I changed those lyrics [and the words]. 'Red, white and blue' came and so, that was just lyrics and then I picked up the guitar and […] made up a melody for that first line and that just led to the next melody, and that led to the chorus […] because I liked the verse and I liked the melody, [it] just led me to the chord that led me to the chorus, and I just made it up out of nowhere, 'Look out for your friends, look out for your mates' and then the hook of the song 'The 100 Year Handshake', and that was my angle on [it]. Instead of saying "we've been friends for a hundred years', you know? I did try to say it in a different way. So, songwriting is definitely an element of 'create, but then wait'. (Amber Lawrence)*

In the song "100 Year Handshake" (A. Lawrence, 2017), Amber Lawrence (P16) refers to Leslie "Bull" Allen, an Australian soldier remembered for carrying American servicemen to safety in the battle of Mt. Tambu during World War II (Howell, N.D.). The song has since been performed and utilised in diplomatic commemorations between Australia and America. Writing songs related to Australian history or stories are of relevance and focus to these participants (n=4). Mike Roberts (P8) wrote two songs related to the plight of Australian war veterans and farming families, highlighting a sense of empathy to those affected by such circumstances.

> *We pick numbers out of a hat and send our kids off to die somewhere? […] When economic circumstances beyond the control of a farmer means that he's in need…do we just end that way of life? (Mike Roberts)*

A deep connection to Australia is shared by Neil Murray (P20), whose work as a member of the Warumpi Band[77] and as an established singer-songwriter, were inherently influenced and motivated by themes of the land, country, and Aboriginal people[78]. In the narrative below, Neil Murray (P20) shares his connection to country and Aboriginal culture. Through this connection, he developed an important and personal goal of experiencing and connecting with Aboriginal people and to seek the meaning of land.

> *I was particularly drawn to wanting to work and learn from and wanting [to] be with Aboriginal people. I had an innate love of the land […] on wanting to be with them. I just felt that this was something that I needed to do to get an understanding of this country I was born into. And that's been [an] ongoing commitment. I also felt there was a lack of songs that [are] eloquent about the deeper meaning of this land and I felt that that was where I wanted to go to try and express that. To try and capture something in that. So that's been an ongoing kind of aim, I suppose, is to try and deepen the sense of meaning and articulate it from this land that we live in […] at the end of the day you have to write from your own life and times if you're gonna [sic] move people and I felt that there was a lack of songs that were eloquent about our life and times in this land…I thought, well that's where I've got to go and express myself. (Neil Murray)*

A deep curiosity and a sense of seeking meaning provides a profound impetus for pursuing creativity and a way of self-expression. It can be seen in the above example that Neil Murray (P20) exhibits a highly articulated creative purpose, one that deeply aligns with *the self.* The beginnings of this motivation led him to travel, learn and develop his connection with and understanding of Aboriginal culture. In witnessing the ways in which Aboriginal culture deeply honours land and country, Neil felt the

[77] The Warumpi Band is an Australian Rock band that "originated in the Aboriginal settlement of Papunya" (Murray, N.D., para. 1), in the Northern Territory of Australia. The band is cited as "the first Aboriginal band to sing rock'n'roll in an Aboriginal language" (Flanagan, 2011). For more information about the Warumpi Band, see www.neilmurray.com.au/wb_history.html.

[78] Aboriginal is used to reference Australian Aboriginal people and culture (see ACTCOSS, 2016).

impetus to encapsulate this knowledge through song, and to share it with mainstream Australia:

> *I was moved by the story in this country, particularly that story from an Indigenous perspective and I felt we've got to bring this to the mainstream somehow and that became the modus operandi of the Warumpi Band […] I felt I had to go bush to learn, and to kind of gain an insight. And I didn't expect to end up in a band that came from a remote part of the country. And even more so I didn't really anticipate ending up in a band of Aboriginal blokes, but then in hindsight now it just seems like the perfect vehicle. [It] dovetailed incredibly well with everything that I was passionate about. (Neil Murray)*

Discovering the fabric of Aboriginal culture, the relevance and significance of country, and the deep connection that Aboriginal people have with the land led a passion for writing songs that centre on themes related to kinship, respect, the landscape, travel and personal introspection. The reference to land connotes a loaded, deep significance to Aboriginal culture. Neil Murray (P20) endeavours to "honour" this through song. In discussing one of his works, titled "Myall Creek" (N. Morris, 2011), a song inspired by a documentary where two women come together in an act of reconciliation:

> *It's really honouring a truth that I saw in that documentary. [Two women] descending from respective sides of that conflict, coming together, embracing each other, and calling themselves "sister", and I saw that that was a healing spirit. And I wanted to honour that and try and capture that in song [so that] would resonate and that people would feel that, and that then would come forth and help; socially would help. People would hear that and be moved, and kept them thinking that way, about the importance of healing in this country that's had such an awful, awful history that's been hidden. And just recently, I was told that they have an annual gathering there at Myall Creek, every year, to commemorate that event. People now are starting to sing that song now […] It means a lot to me. It doesn't matter that I'm not singing it, as long as someone is, you know, and someone's hearing it. (Neil Murray)*

It can be seen that the song, upon the process of *artistic realisation* and the development/progression of personal connection, became a source of shared meaning. As audiences and listeners relate to its lyrical content, what was first an impetus in the artist's mind becomes an artefact emblematic of the story it represents. The song becomes a source of shared connection and of resolution, to those who relate to it. A

strong philosophy underwrites the songwriting of Neil Murray (P20). He articulates a sense of craftmanship in songwriting and lyrical writing, in which certain words contain a sense of heritage. The use of such words provide songs with greater depth and meaning:

> *You have to honour that truth. That emotional […] feeling that's either true or not, you can't fake it. At least I can't… fake it and get away with it. I think it's the same for all artists. Being incredibly honest with how they feel and then being able to express that truthfully […] It's kinda nice to drop in a phrase or a word that has been used in a song in a particular way, to add an extra resonance to something you've got, but you've got to be aware of its history otherwise you can't do it with a sense of respect. (Neil Murray)*

9.6 Conclusion

The concepts of *core creativity* and *peripheral creativity* introduced in Chapter 6 provide the contextual underpinnings from which *artistic realisations* take place. As determined by this chapter, *artistic realisations* may be defined as the progression, development and the attainment of personal and/or artistic goals. Artistry may develop and change through both positive and/or negatively perceived life experiences. As artistry progressively develops, core and peripheral forms of creativity are engaged and as a result, both *core* and *peripheral artistic realisations* may therefore occur as the third phase of creativity; an integration between *the self* and *the field*. By utilising the creative practice framework thus far, Figure 28 (see Figure 28: Artistic realisations) illustrates this concept of progression which takes place between the wider superset of the creative practice, to the peripheral and core realisations that make take place within it:

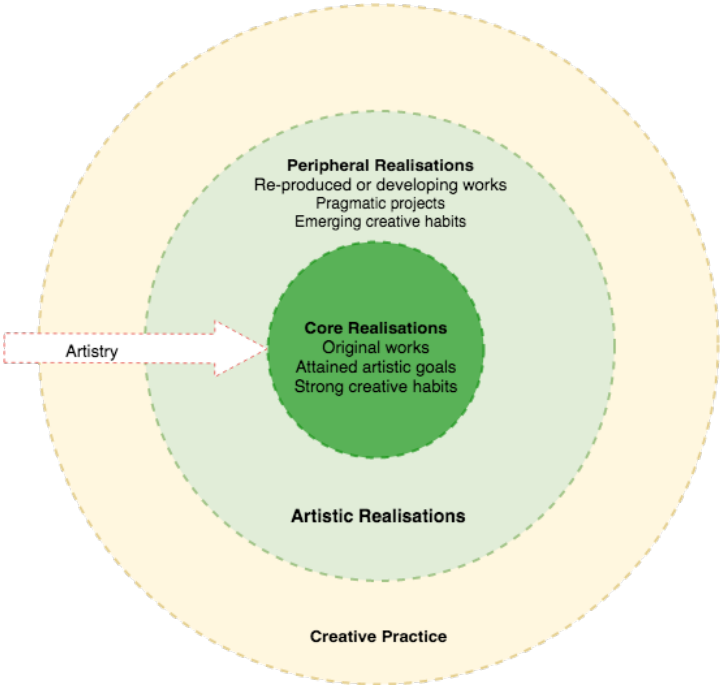

Figure 28: Artistic realisations

As the research also determines that such realisations may take place in both personal and/or collaborative scenarios, it may be said that *artistic realisations* may also occur in areas of *the self* and *the field*, as well as an integration of both. The following figure (see Figure 29: Core and peripheral artistic realisations within the creative practice framework) takes the above illustration and superimposes this over the creative practice framework in order to illustrate how core and peripheral *artistic realisations* may take place in each phase, and as representations of artistic progression.

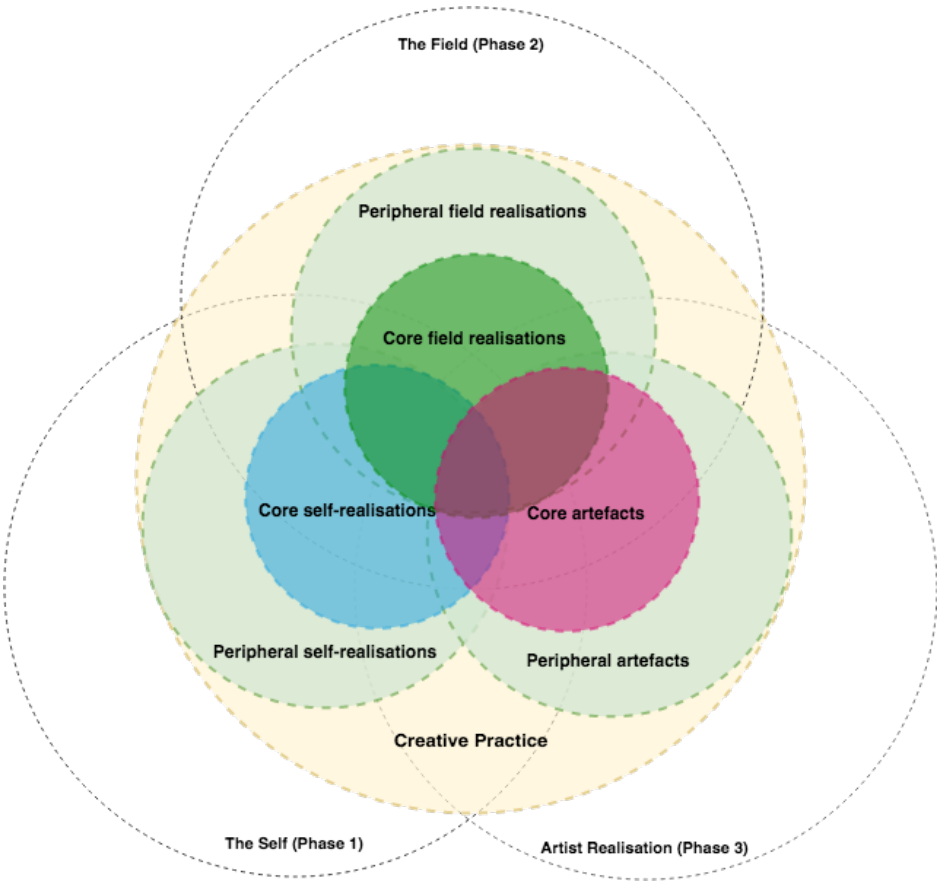

Figure 29: Core and peripheral artistic realisations within the creative practice framework

The previous thesis chapters showed that singer-songwriters may benefit from their overall creative practice at any point and in any of the three creative phases. The research data pinpointed that creative satisfaction may not always arise from a completed song, and that completed songs or creative projects, such as an album, are not the primary motivations for songwriting. In Chapter 5, motivations to pursue creativity were shown to be more personally rooted in *the self* and in an intention to develop or process personal events/experiences. As artists progress or move through phases of creativity, changes, influences and developments in the creative practice occur. Such changes were shown in Chapter 6 to be both beneficial and/or disruptive to the creative process. Therefore, it is through beneficial experiences specifically; experiences which progress an artist closer to their artistic intent or vision set at the phase of *the self*, that provide the artist with a sense of personal satisfaction and enjoyment. It can be argued that these types of experiences, or episodes of beneficial/positively perceived development, may or may not result in the completion of songs per se, yet result in the attainment of a personally set, artistic goal.

Csikszentmihalyi (1990a) theorises that, through the experience of *flow* episodes — such as through the creation of new work — "the self becomes more differentiated [as] overcoming a challenge inevitably leaves a person feeling more capable, more skilled" (p. 41). The artistic progression that takes place in the creative practice framework reflects the depth and connection to craft, but also a connection to reflecting parts of *the self*, that the research identifies. This progression starts from the influences that surround the person, and the impetus to create, to the acquisition and engagement of skill. From these beginnings, the progress may continue on to the engagement of peripheral and core forms of creativity, from which *artistic realisations* have the opportunity to occur. The singer-songwriter creative practice framework provides an overview of these concepts and lead to a broader understanding of the contemporary singer-songwriter as a creative artist. In the following concluding chapter, the research findings are summarised and overarching concepts are brought together to provide a comprehensive definition of the contemporary singer-songwriter.

10 Conclusions: The contemporary singer-songwriter

Songs have a life of their own, and the more people
that sing them, the more life they've got.
(Adrienne Lovelock, Participant 9)

10.1 Introduction

In this concluding chapter, a comprehensive summary of the thesis is provided and the overall contribution of this research is discussed. While previous chapters have addressed specific research questions, in this chapter the findings drawn from Part 1 Interviews and Part 2 Surveys are consolidated in order to address the first two primary research questions: *What is the creative practice of the singer-songwriter?* and *Who is the contemporary singer-songwriter?* This chapter provides an evidence-based definition of the contemporary singer-songwriter and situates this within the emergent singer-songwriter creative practice framework. This framework has been progressively constructed from the findings outlined within Chapters 4-9. The overall contributions, limitations and potential impact of this research are also discussed.

10.2 Overall findings and thesis summary

A brief overview of the research and thesis was provided in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 provided an extensive review of the literature related to singing, songwriting and creativity. Additionally, discourse related to music history, songs, and the socio-cultural underpinnings of singer-songwriter musicality was also discussed. The review of the literature revealed that much of what has been written on singer-songwriters often offer a somewhat subjective perspective on artists largely studied through the lens of musicology and/or critical listening. In addition, discourse related to songs typically approach these from a musicological perspective, often drawing on observations of the singer's voice or the songwriter's stance. There are limited qualitative studies on musicians and artistry that view such craft as being embodied, encultured and/or personified (Burnard, 2012; Hughes, 2010, 2014). Burnard (2012) offered a framework from which to study musicians more holistically, claiming that musical creativities not only encompass elements directly related to music, but also those that impact, influence or delimit musicians as people/artists. This research utilises aspects of Burnard's framework of musical creativities (2012) to investigate singer-songwriters specifically,

and to develop an emergent and evidence-based framework in relation to singer-songwriters in Australia.

Chapter 3 discussed the design of the research, which utilised a mixed methods approach, and adopted qualitative and quantitative principles. The research was conducted in two parts: Part 1 Interviews and Part 2 Survey. The analysis of the data led to discussion of the findings in Chapters 4-9. Chapter 4 sought to provide a preliminary definition of the singer-songwriter and it did so in identifying the three creative phases. These phases were identified as *the self*, *the field*, and *artistic realisation*. *The self* relates to the person, *the field* relates to others and interaction in industry/socio-culture, and *artistic realisation* relates to the songs, projects or goals of the artist. Additionally, there were distinctive creative practices that also emerged. These were *the singer who writes songs*, *the songwriter who sings* and *the hybrid artist*. The research did not seek to label specific participants as belonging to a particular practice, but instead, to reveal that discrete practices exist that were based on the interactions and experiences offered by participants. *The singer who writes songs* relates to artists who are primarily experienced as singer and vocalists, and in which songwriting is a complementary and secondary craft. *The songwriter who sings* is the opposite of this and relates to artists whose primary craft is songwriting and who sing in order to perform their own songs. Therefore, such artists may or may not be as experienced in singing and vocal technique. *The hybrid artist* relates to artists who seem to combine a balance of both songwriting and singing, and who may use other creativities such as music production.

The research identified that singer-songwriters are motivated artists who engage in the craft of singing and songwriting for various reasons. Motivation and inspiration were identified as influential to the creative phase of *the self.* The reasons and purposes for some artists may be commercial or career driven, yet for others, singing and songwriting are artforms that complement their lives in non-career oriented ways. Two distinctive forms of human motivation were also identified as being practical and personal motivations. Practical motivations were found to relate to artistic purposes that are linked to necessity, such as contractual requirements or a need to make a living. Personal motivations were determined as being deeper, purposeful and meaningful connections to creativity. These include songwriting for self-expression, catharsis, or to seek connection with others.

In Chapter 6, the singer-songwriter interactions within the second phase of *the field* was explored. The findings identified that singer-songwriters seek connection and avenues for communication and community. They are artists who are also impacted by socio-cultural influences. The role of collaboration was also found to be important to the contemporary singer-songwriters and three forms of creative collaboration were identified. These were 1) facilitated creativity, which relates to artists whose skillsets require facilitated assistance in order to fulfill *artistic realisations* and goals. In such cases, another artist or facilitator, such as an instrumentalist or music producer, acts to fulfill songwriting requirements, such as accompaniment. The second is 2) independent creativity, which relates to artists who are skilled and able to manage and support their own creativity and songwriting, and 3) collaborative creativity, in which artists confidently share the task of songwriting with others. Additionally, the concept of core and peripheral creativity was also proposed. The findings identified that singer-songwriters engage in projects or works in which their skills may or may not be fully utilised. The concept of core and peripheral creativity is adopted from the concept of soft, weak and hard creativity (Hughes et al., 2016; Madden & Bloom, 2001), in which hard creativity relates to creativity that is original and new, while soft or weak creativity depicts creativity that may not be completely original or new.

Chapter 7 explored the role of the singing voice in the practice of singer-songwriters. The review of the literature showed the singing voice to be an embodied instrument. Yet, definitions and discussions of the singer-songwriter rarely addressed the singing voice of the artist. The chapter provided participant perspectives related to their singing abilities and the ways in which they value their voice and utilise the voice as a creative process. Concepts related to vocal expression, vocal technique, vocal health and identity were discussed. The chapter identified that the singing voice is used for communication and personal expression through song. Through this, the singing voice is seen as a connecting element that links singer-songwriters to others. The findings revealed different variations of voice use in *the self,* the field and in *artistic realisations.* The concepts of vocal individuality, vocal authorship and vocal kinship were introduced and defined. Vocal individuality refers to the ways in which participants embody their singing voice and singing skill. Vocal authorship describes how the singing voice is explicitly used in creative processes, such as songwriting. Vocal

kinship speaks of the shared connection delivered by the voice in contexts of shared or collaborative creativity.

Part 2 survey findings were presented and discussed in Chapter 8. The Part 2 survey results provided data from 95 respondents and its findings identified parallel themes to Part 1 interviews. The survey was designed to further investigate the emergent Part 1 themes and to provide perspectives from a larger respondent sample. The survey design included both closed and open-ended responses. The closed responses provided quantitative data related to broad themes and creative experiences such as the role of influences, the singing voice and motivations for songwriting. The open-ended responses provided rich perspectives. While many of the survey findings verified the emergent themes from Part 1 of this research, new themes also emerged. These themes contribute to the findings discussed in the final two chapters of this thesis.

Chapter 9 discusses the concept of *artistic realisation* and its role in the creative process of singer-songwriters. *Artistic realisation* is related to the achievement of a particular creative goal or vision, or the production of a creative artefact, such as songs, an album, or a specific project. The research found that *artistic realisation* is the third of three phases of creativity, and is often the consolidation of *the self* and *the field*. Participant and respondent perspectives on artistic goals, songs and projects were presented.

In this final chapter, the main findings drawn from Part 1 and Part 2 research findings are discussed, and the holistic practice principles of the contemporary singer-songwriter. This chapter also provides an evidence-based and comprehensive definition of the contemporary singer-songwriter. The complete creative practice framework is provided as a visual illustration of the overarching concepts and themes identified by the research. The chapter also provides a comprehensive summary of the thesis, the contribution of the research, the research limitations, and the implications and directions for future research.

10.3 The contemporary singer-songwriter

The primary objective of the research was to investigate the musical creativities of Australian singer-songwriters in order to comprehensively distinguish and define their proprieties as musicians and artists. Through the in-depth interviews of 18 experienced singer-songwriters and two music producers, and the survey of 95 singer-songwriter respondents, this research is able to determine and define the distinctive

traits of singer-songwriters as a population and the existential ways in which their creative practices are engaged and constructed.

10.3.1 The contemporary singer-songwriter is integrative, embodies artistry and multiple creativities

The research findings discussed in this thesis signify singer-songwriters as artists who integrate various forms of creativity. The findings identified that singer-songwriters comprehensively consolidate different artforms and creative roles. Through this consolidation, participants enter phases of creativity; each phase provides an opportunity for creative development and artistic realisation. Respondent 23 provides a summary of the craft of singer-songwriters in a statement that encapsulates the presence of *the self*, *the field* and *artistic realisation:*

> *Being a singer is how I express myself most freely in the world. I could be a writer instead, but it wouldn't use all of me at once. Being a singer-songwriter allows me to be writing myself as a song into the world and that is the form of expression that feels most complete and natural to me. (R23)*

There is a sense of complexity identified in the practice of singer-songwriters that aligns with a description of creative processes offered by Csikszentmihalyi (1990a) as being "the result of two broad psychological processes: *differentiation* and *integration*" (p. 41). Embodiment exists in the creative practice of singer-songwriters, as does the concept of *flow states*, or the variations in which *flow states* related to creativity found within embodiment:

> *I can't help it. Songs just come to me randomly out of the ether without any particular inspiration usually. (R88)*
>
> *Usually good songs find their own way of manifesting. For me, it would be quite difficult to generalise about how songs are written. Sometimes they arrive fully formed, other times, they sit half written for years. (R71)*

Csikszentmihalyi (1990a) defines *flow* as a state in which "thoughts, intentions, feelings, and all the senses are focused on the same goal", and is a state in which "experience is in harmony" (p. 41). Singer-songwriters are artists who engage distinctive traits in an integrated way, and whose processes focus towards a creative goal. Firstly, singer-songwriters encompass the craft of singing. To do so makes them generally aware of their voice and the technical and musical necessities of singing. They

engage with vocal authorship and individualisation. Secondly, they also encompass the craft of songwriting. This includes lyric and melody writing, song arrangement, composition and instrumentation. It can be argued that each of these aforementioned crafts are skills that individually and for others may form a single creative focus. Yet for the contemporary singer-songwriter, such skills are integrated into a holistic, creative practice. This holistic approach is one that singer-songwriters encompass, but it also includes personal aspirations such as those that result from the perception and esteem of artists who display multiple abilities:

> *[Compared to singers], I think there's more respect for [singer-songwriters]. Unless you are a singer like Whitney [Houston] and Celine [Dion] who have phenomenal voices and their voices are the ones that stand out. That's their thing. Whereas if you're not the strongest singer, but you can write songs, and communicate a story, I think that's something substantial. I think it's part of the whole package. I think if you can write a song and you are communicating a story through that song, you're telling a story, then people see you more as a whole performer, a whole person, rather than a person that's got this beautiful voice and has given, been given this song. (P1)*

Indeed, it is this "whole package" (P1, P10) that seems to give the singer-songwriter a level of perceived prestige or advantage. Participant 10 noted that it is through the combination of singing and music that song is communicated and "powerful" (P10):

> *The ability to express and move people through good singing can be very, very powerful. Of course, that said, you very seldom hear only singing. You hear accompaniment. And so, it's a whole package that is moving you [...] I mean if you go either modern singer-songwriters, or even if you go back to lieder, or other accompanied singing, it's the whole package that's powerful. (P10)*

Unlike other accompanied singing, however, the singing, accompaniment and the song are all authored by the singer-songwriter. The research also identified that the personal creativity of singer-songwriters was valued. It also found distinctive forms of creativity that was original *to singer-songwriters*, even in instances where artefacts may have been facilitated by others or were inspired by stories that were external to the artist. Due to this, it is difficult to ascertain such creativity as strictly being either *hard* creativity or *soft* creativity (Hughes et al., 2016; Madden & Bloom, 2001). In many cases, the artefacts that singer-songwriters personally perceive as original works are

often individual creations that combine intrinsically personal and extrinsic elements. The personal rendition of a cover song, for example, may be perceived as *soft* creativity. Yet, it may fall under the realm of *hard* creativity particularly if the song form or even the vocal delivery is found to be highly unique or individual.

Given such notions of originality, it was appropriate to assign a term that encompassed the creativities found in the practices of singer-songwriters. Therefore, the concept of *core* and *peripheral* creativity was introduced in order to frame the multiple forms of creativity that singer-songwriters engage in. These terms allow for a distinction between forms of creativity and authorship. *Peripheral* creativity refers to tasks that are approached or performed along the fringes of an artist's main creative goal and that influence the artist's creativity by providing an opportunity for musical enculturation (Green, 2002) to occur. An example of this may be the development or inclusion of creative work for practical or pragmatic reasons. This may include writing advertisement jingles, or working in a band, while pursuing an original album. *Core* creativity, refers to works that reflect an artist's primary intent or goal. These concepts are not designed to be viewed as a reflection of skill, nor should they be viewed as static within an artist's creative practice. Such concepts may also be used to distinguish between the fluid areas and evolving nature within the singer-songwriter practice.

In addition, singer-songwriters perceive their creative practice, and the various interweaving processes that make up their creative practice, as a reflection of personal values and standards. It reflects identity and "who [they/we] are" (P7). Irrespective of vocal/musical skills, competence or experience, singer-songwriters deeply associate creativity as a part of their identity. The ways in which singer-songwriters discussed their creativity speak to endearment and strong personal ownership:

> *It's not something that can be controlled. If you're a writer and a singer and it's in your blood, it's there forever (R52)*
>
> *Children play; songwriters write. I like to create moods for others to connect with and write words others can't/don't say or that they need to hear. Nothing inspires me, I just do it -like a child just plays. (R81)*

The voice, songwriting and the musical underpinnings correlate strongly with the artist's idea of the self. Interestingly, this was also evident in the ways in which participants spoke of other artists. When participants spoke broadly of other singer-songwriters, there was a tendency to evaluate the creative output of an artist in terms of

how others sang, or made music. These were often expressed as assumed, credible markers of that artist's personality, identity, and even integrity. The following example notes this, and in doing so, shows the perceived association between song, voice, and identity:

> *You look at the people gigging as just as an example and there's no differentiation, you know, the song's similar, their voice is similar, they look similar and I don't get that […] like they're afraid to be who they are or something. Or maybe they haven't found it. I've seen artists change as well with the time [sic]. They've got that wall up and that kind of cuts off their connection somehow. (P7)*

While such opinion may be subjective, the above example suggests that an association exists between creative output and the notion of authenticity. Artistry then may be linked to personal maturity, experience and to personal integrity. Participant 7 speculates that the absence of an authentic communication of the self leads to a lack of connection and an inability for audiences to engage more fully. This also exemplifies the association between embodied creativity and the expression of oneself.

10.3.2 The contemporary singer-songwriter and sustainable creative practices

Creativity was determined to be a sustainable and highly valued life practice of singer-songwriters. As such, many participants and respondents described a process of learning how to accommodate their creativity as part of their lives. Respondent 35 compared creativity to raising a child, and described *artistic realisations* as a form of legacy:

> *The creative process is like fathering a child - one day it appeared as an important part of my life and now I must take care of it, socialise it, educate it, keep it healthy, help it be strong and smart and kind and caring, and gradually let it be a part of the real world with the rest of the art that is out there. (R35)*

Yet, defining or determining a sustainable creative practice was identified as varying among participants; some participants were found to work full-time as artists while others maintained their creative practice alongside another profession. As the purposes for pursuing a creative practice differ, motivations to maintain a sustainable practice also vary. For those who primarily work as artists, a sustainable practice often involves

a diverse range of projects and music-related work. Participants also accounted for their individual lifestyles and career trajectories, and tended to aim towards a portfolio of work (*n*=14) that allowed for, if relevant, sustainability through entrepreneurial principles and activities. It was noted as being a satisfying way of working, particularly for one participant who juggles motherhood, running a record label and her creative work (P18). Participant 18 stated that collaborative projects, and in particular, philanthropic projects, is a "much more tenable way to continue your career and be creative" (P18) as it avoids the rigours of a typical performing schedule. Another participant, structured and designed school visits and workshops with live music and musical performance into her creative practice. She considered this "altruistic in some senses" (P16), along with being an enjoyable part of her work, but stated that "it's also protecting my future job" (P16). The school programs that she has designed introduce children to live music in a broader sense. While this would have the added benefit of introducing herself and her work to a new audience and network, it also provided a connection to her creative practice. She showed a strong motivation to educate children as to the existence of live music which is a concept that is beneficial to artists and communities alike:

> *I want young kids […] first experience [of music] to have been of acoustic, real music, and them saying "I want to find out more about that". (P16)*

The concept of curating a tenable practice and developing effective creative habits were discussed by participants and respondents as concepts that require time and workmanship, particularly in instances where there may be little access to the tools of *the field:*

> *It's very hard if you don't have any musical training or if you don't have any kind of creative arts kind of training [to know] how to have a good practice., You don't develop a way of working so, for me, when I was writing in my early 20s, it was this sort of compulsion and I just did it and I sort of coasted on talent and angst mainly, to write songs and work on music […] I feel like the biggest thing that I've gone through is getting past that and realizing that it's so important to develop a really strong practice of constantly creating and finding a way to be non-judgmental about that when you're in the creative process, and then obviously learning all the skills of how to refine things and kind of work from there […] everyone's journey is different. (P17)*

> *It took about ten years to reach a smoothly running creative process for my songwriting [to] operate with ease and [to] bring great results almost every time. While my songwriting took time to develop, my singing voice matured very early and it took a while for these to sync with my confidence levels. Teaching singing for 10 years taught me a lot of patience, and that good things, like experience and confidence, takes time to grow. (R31)*

Adapting a flexible practice was identified as also being relevant. This was highlighted by a participant who elaborated on past opportunities for performance being replaced by new and different ways of performance:

> *Those same festivals come and go. [They've] diminished in size, performance opportunities have decreased […] I couldn't pick a number but I'd say [such opportunities have] halved at least […] I think it's going to be much harder for people to break through because there [are] just less opportunities to. But you know, you work around it and things like house clubs that still didn't exist in 2004, well, they do now […] this thing called house concerts and they're pretty popular and I think people like them because we're a bit more skewed to stay at home these days because of our technology. […] all they have to do is bring their friends […]. Then there's the online concerts, you know you can do a Facebook Live. (P16)*

The above example also emphasises the evolving or fluid nature of the creative practice of singer-songwriters. It also highlights the impact of the recent disruption to past music industry formats (Hughes et al., 2016, pp. 17-35) wherein technology and social media infrastructures permit new forms of independent performance and music distribution. This has allowed artists to take more control of their creative practice and work. In the realm of the singer-songwriter, pursuing creativity is considered a journey; a journey that provides artists with the benefit of self-expression, joy, and a seemingly irreplaceable connection to *the self* and *the field*. Yet this journey, and the decision to pursue and sustain a creative practice, also comes with obstacles and challenges that influence, and sometimes limit or stop, the artist from reaching their creative aspirations, purpose or full potential. The urge to satisfy personal creative needs and the high regard for creativity often means that singer-songwriters must navigate through external influences/influencers for the chance and the opportunity to continue their creative practice. This includes the potential impact of commercial trends:

> *Yeah. It's interesting. I feel like thinking about the music industry and the commercial side of things. I think that people actually have to tame down their uniqueness in a way and find a way to make things a little bit more kind of digestible or palatable to what's in fashion at the time and what's fitting in. (P17)*

Some obstacles are gaps that may be considered minor, generally arbitrary and relatively easy to resolve. For example, an artist with limited instrumental/music production skills may decide to collaborate with another more skilled musician in order to bridge the skill gap. At times, however, such obstacles include major life challenges and limitations that challenge the artist. An example of this includes a challenging upbringing or other unrelated obligations and commitments. Sometimes it is simply life or making a living that impedes creativity:

> *I could do more of it if I could make a living out of it. I am unable to reach my full potential as I am busy making a living etc. (R30)*

Other examples include a lack of time, funding and the difficulty of sustaining a creative practice due to the constraints of day to day living. Even for more established artists whose creative histories span decades, the motivation to sustain a creative practice hinges on the resources, energy and time available at any given point of their artistic journey. While creativity itself seems infinite, creative options may present for some as either finite or at least potentially fragile. This was compounded by the notion that being a musician was not a "real job" (P3, P11, P12). To surmise, the findings suggest that the choice that singer-songwriters make in pursuing musical creativity is serious and largely rests on forming the singer-songwriter identity.

10.3.3 The contemporary singer-songwriter and empathy, personal stance and documentation

The concepts of nostalgia, reflection and sharing opinion were identified in the research, and as such, a sense of empathy was evident in the process of singer-songwriters. Songwriting processes were shown to sometimes begin from an artist's own need to question the status quo, or to voice a strong desire to challenge pre-conceptions and assumptions. Such instances included community and/or politically charged experiences. This was evident in the case where a participant wrote two songs related to the plight of Australian war veterans and farming families.

> *We pick numbers out of a hat and send our kids off to die somewhere? […] When economic circumstances beyond the control of a farmer means that he's in need…do we just end that way of life? (P8)*

A deep purpose for creativity that involves a connection to experiences or events that take place in *the field*, and to document such experiences through the storytelling aspect of songwriting was also identified[79]. Storytelling was a major emergent theme not only in the pragmatic process and craft of songwriting, but also as an overall principle of the singer-songwriter. In this sense, artists felt a strong importance towards constructing meaningful songs and determined superficial songs as those that failed to state or communicate a useful, meaningful, constructive or powerful story/message. For singer-songwriters, storytelling was found to represent a strong, collective need for communication, connection and relation to others. This was in addition to exercising a personal benefit of enjoyment and fulfillment, and at times, personal therapy, from the process. In relation to songwriting specifically, the concept of storytelling was identified as being valued, and was almost discrete to the process of generating song arrangement and style (such as writing a song in a specific genre or time). This is highlighted in the following excerpt:

> *Sometimes I try to write a song about something. Oh, I need to write this country. I got a song or write a song about the pickup trucks and dead dogs or you know, you try to do something to a formula and I have to say I've done it more than once but then never as good as the ones we genuinely have a reason to tell a story. (P8)*

While it can be argued that all songs communicate some form of narrative or message, the idea that this can be either *formulaic* or *intrinsically* motivated is interesting. It is the latter that this research argues is a strong musically creative and communicative trait:

> *I think that a unique story is really important like I think that a lot of people, a lot of audience are looking for, they're looking for a unique story and wanting to connect with the story behind the artist as well. (P17)*

Though singer-songwriters are typically described as artists who are introspective, and who describe personal stories, the participants and respondents showed that on many

[79] Chapter 7 discussed the role of the singing voice in communicating story and self-expressivity. Chapter 9 discussed various participant perspectives on songwriting and songs.

occasions, artists convey the stories of others. Singer-songwriters may therefore be connected and/or committed to giving others a voice. As such, there was a strong sense of service attached to the craft.

10.3.4 The contemporary singer-songwriter's personal development and wellbeing

Participants and respondents alike discussed or noted associations between their creativity as a whole, to concepts of wellbeing, personal development and even mental health:

> *I really feel for the artist who hasn't really connected with their creativity yet. And they're just struggling along cause they don't fit and the world doesn't make sense to them yet because they're not creating. I guess we're all creative people but some people just repress it. When creative people don't create, they go mad. (P7)*
>
> *Without the ability to write songs, I honestly don't know where I would've ended up in life. (R64)*
>
> *Like many others, I just have to write. It's who I am. Without it I would wither and die. (R47)*
>
> *These have become an integral part of my life, not sure how I would cope if it ceased to be. (R7)*
>
> *Song writing is a growth experience for me. (R63)*

The process of creativity was identified as affording some singer-songwriters with their own in-built, and strategic, infrastructure for self-therapy/self-awareness. In a sense, statements and perspectives such as the examples offered above suggest that the songwriting process itself offers artists an opportunity to express thoughts, organise ideas, process scenarios and create meaning. In collaborative contexts, the songwriting process was identified as providing opportunities to discuss and process their thoughts with others:

> *Songwriting is my therapy. If I need to sort out thoughts in my head about anything, I write a song. Also, if I need closure. It helps me to be concise about my true feelings. (R67)*

The following respondents provide further examples of the ways in which singer-songwriters relate songwriting as a way of processing life events and personal circumstances:

> *I believe it's a gift and has helped me overcome many obstacles in my life. (R70)*
>
> *Not sure how I would express myself or process emotions without songwriting/music. (R91)*
>
> *It's just something I have to do. I think I'd go mental if I had to keep my thoughts inside my head. (R93)*

10.4 The creative practice of the contemporary singer-songwriter

Singer-songwriters have been conventionally stereotyped and are typically identified for their pensive craft and/or as a specific style or music (Brackett, 2008). While much of the creative output and songs of artists who broadly identify as singer-songwriters entail a level of introspection[80], it may be argued that the same concept of introspection is a reflective trait shared by many artists irrespective of their musical and/or stylistic affiliation. Somewhat contrary to such long-held beliefs, the research findings discussed in this thesis identify that contemporary singer-songwriters engage in, and create, under the banner of all popular musics. The singer-songwriter disposition (Appel, 2017) in the contemporary sense does not necessarily always adhere to specific notions of emotional honesty or stereotypical instrumentation. The findings of this research show that the singer-songwriter has evolved to include many forms of musical creativity (Burnard, 2012) and that singer-songwriters are generally self-directing artists who drive the creative vision for their originally penned and personally sung works. *Originally penned* and *personally sung* is an important distinction in relation to the definition of the contemporary singer-songwriter. This is because there are instances in popular culture musics, and in the broader music community, where others who are not typically singers or songwriters attempt to sing or to song-write.

In relation to music, singer-songwriters associate with varying forms of music-making and engagement that result in different styles of songs. Where *folk* music is broadly defined as music based on oral tradition and communal story-sharing (Dunaway &

[80] Introspection, here, is defined as the process of observing and examining one's own thoughts or feelings (Schultz & Shultz, 2012).

Beer, 2010; Lord & Snelson, 2008), the research showed a further adaptation and contemporisation of the traditional folk view of the current singer-songwriter. Though singer-songwriters are traditionally linked to folk music, the research identified that their music now falls within all forms of popular culture musics (Hughes, 2010). They may be hybrids of music styles and genre. Stylistic sensibilities however are only one factor and, the deployable singer-songwriter disposition, in the way Appel (2017) defines[81], is in fact only *one kind* of contemporary singer-songwriter artistry. The traditional definition of the singer-songwriter describes the singer-songwriter as an artist who typically accompanies themselves. In the 1960s and 1970s, this was seen as an artistic persona in which a singer was self-accompanied by an acoustic guitar (Shumway, 2016). The findings of this research, however, proffers that in the realm of the contemporary singer-songwriter the singer-songwriter may be defined as a pluralistic musician that engages with multiple phases of creativity within their respective practices. The essence of self-accompaniment still holds true today, except that the methods of self-accompaniment have now changed to include other forms of self-accompaniment. Technology has played a major role in the ability of singer-songwriters to self-accompany. They are often adept at accompanying the lyrics and melodies they create with their own musical arrangements, compositions and productions. They often utilise technology to fulfill this ability.

While their existence is throughout popular culture musics, participants did not seem to be heavily concerned with notions of popularity, celebrity or general popular culture. They were, for the most part indifferent to popular artists who draw attention to other aspects of contemporary popular culture, such as fashion, visual arts and other unrelated entrepreneurial ventures. Most participants drew significant attention towards their connection to the various themes associated with the craft of songwriting, such as singing, introspective lyric writing or skillfully playing an instrument/proficient use of technologies. There was a prominence in the discussion of skill development in relation to these themes. Singer-songwriters who brought attention to the concepts of popularity and general popular culture generally showed a less intimate connection with their own songs, lyrics or musical craft yet expressed a strong connection to developing and connecting with a fanbase through the methods of social media, gigs and live

[81] See Chapter 2, Section 2.5.3: The contemporary singer-songwriter (p. 46) for a discussion on the singer-songwriter disposition (Appel, 2017).

performance. Such artists were identified as being highly concerned with distributing their music and expressed a strong connection to being a creative artist.

10.4.1 The creative practice framework

Chapter 2 presented the broad areas of discourse related to singing, songwriting and creativity. As such, it highlighted the need for a suitable framework and approach towards the study of contemporary singer-songwriters. The discussion of the theoretical grounding[82] in Chapter 3 led to the development of the investigative areas[83] of this research in which the theoretical works of Bourdieu (1993, 1980) and Csikszentmihalyi (1988, 1990b, 1997), and the ways in which Burnard (2012) integrated such theories, was determined as a suitable set of theoretical principles. In Chapter 4, a creative practice framework that adopts the principles of Csikszentmihalyi's (1997, 1988) systems model of creativity (1997, p. 27) was introduced in order to sequentially and progressively illustrate the emergent themes of the research. This framework allowed the researcher to provide a visual mapping of emergent concepts throughout the discussion of findings in Chapters 4-7 and Chapter 9. The framework was progressively constructed to include overarching concepts drawn from the findings of each chapter. These led to the final singer-songwriter creative practice framework (see Figure 30: The singer-songwriter creative practice framework).

[82] See Chapter 3, Section 3.2.1: Theoretical grounding (p. 53).

[83] See Chapter 3, Section 3.2.2: Development of the conceptual framework (p. 55).

Figure 30: The singer-songwriter creative practice framework

This research-based emergent framework accounts for creative practice in relation to the artistic self, the artist's context and creative processes. Each of these broader interconnecting areas; *the self*, *the field*, and *artistic realisation* (represented by the arrows) inform the contemporary singer-songwriter, which is conceptually represented by the central triangle of the framework. The following figure (see Figure 31: The contemporary singer-songwriter) expands this central section in order to illustrate the overarching traits of the contemporary singer-songwriter.

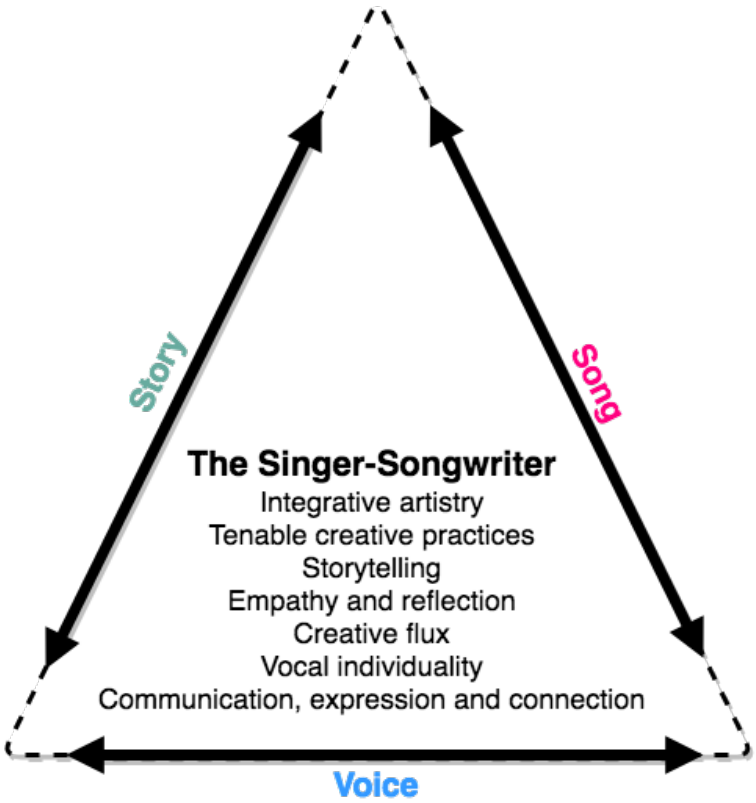

Figure 31: The contemporary singer-songwriter

The progressive findings, the interrelating areas found in the creative practice framework (see Figure 30: The singer-songwriter creative practice framework), and the traits inherent within the singer-songwriter as an artist (see Figure 31: The contemporary singer-songwriter) therefore underpin and inform the following definition of the singer-songwriter and of the singer-songwriter creative practice:

> *The singer-songwriter is a musical Creative*[84] *who has a deep connection to the self and who communicates to the field through original songs and the process of artistic realisation. The creative practice of the singer-songwriter typically engages elements of the singing voice, the craft of songwriting, musical creativities, instrumentation, self-development, and if relevant, creative entrepreneurship. Contemporary singer-songwriters encompass a holistic approach to artistry and occupy an individualistic creative practice.*

This definition does not infer that there needs to be an equal balance between singing and songwriting as it includes the various creative processes found within the practices

[84] The term 'Creative' is used here purposely in order to highlight the significance of the creative processes utilised by singer-songwriters.

of *the songwriter who sings*, *the singer who writes songs*, and *the hybrid artist*. While the definition considers the ways in which singer-songwriters have been defined in literature, the definition offered here is not limited by those definitions that generally focus on only one or two areas of an artist's broader creative practice. For example, notions of self-accompaniment, personally provoking lyrics and introspective, solitary creativity (Brackett, 2008) may exist in the creative practice of an artist (and arguably, such traits might also exist in many performing artists), but they also may not. The findings support the suggestion by Leonard (2003) that "the term 'singer-songwriter' is often seen as constricting and narrow" (p. 201). Leonard added that the term is sometimes considered by artists as "overbearing and unwelcome" and while others, including musical critics, utilise the term "as a framing device" (Leonard, 2003, p. 201). This includes to identify and relate works to that of an artistic style that is represented as a special craft, to "convey their worth and integrity" or to publicize an artist through utilising the term as a "marketing vehicle"[85] (Leonard, 2003, p. 199). While all of these elements may be appropriate for one singer-songwriter, they may not be for another. The research definition offered above is therefore not based on musical industry merit or other commercial aspects (such as CD or album releases or chart success). Yet, a distinction must be made to differentiate the singer-songwriter from other artists who lightly engage in diverse musical creativities[86] that may or may not include songwriting and/or performing.

The main pre-requisite in defining *the singer-songwriter* is therefore the combined vocal and song ownership of works. Creative ownership in this context refers to originally created material where song elements such as vocal expression, lyrics, melody, instrumentation and production stem from the creative processes of the singer-songwriter. This does not preclude works where artists engage in forms of collaborative creativity, such as *singers who write songs* or *hybrid artists*. Such artists, despite utilising collaborators to fulfill instrumental and/or musical production requirements, may also maintain creative ownership of the musical, lyrical and vocal content. Having

[85] The term singer-songwriter became a "movement" (Leonard, 2003, p. 199), and became utilised as a term to market singer-songwriters such as Joni Mitchell, Arlo Guthrie and Van Morrison. It was also during this time that professional songwriters, such as Carole King and Randy Newman, moved from exclusively songwriting to singing, performing, recording and releasing their own original material as singer-songwriters (Leonard, 2003; Brackett, 2008).

[86] For example, pop artists such as Calvin Harris; A music producer who creates popular music through music production, singing collaborations and as a DJ, yet has also written lyrics, melody and has sung in some his own original songs. Such artists utilise a broad scope of musical creativities that may also include some singing and songwriting, but do not identify as singer-songwriters specifically.

said this, *songwriters who sing* are generally much more easily defined as singer-songwriters due to the fact that, in addition to vocal ability, they create lyrical and musical song components; *songwriters who sing* may not be reliant on creative collaboration but may choose to collaborate. The events that lead into this creative ownership vary from person to person and the diverse practices of singer-songwriters mean that simply defining this group of artists based on genre, vocal style, instrumental ability or commercial outcomes would not be inclusive of all the creative practices and purposes which contemporary singer-songwriters were found to engage.

10.5 Research contributions

The findings of this research contribute to the literature related to singing, songwriting and creativity. In particular, the outcomes provided in this research progress the long-held definition of the singer-songwriter to be more inclusive of a broader set of attributes that reflect the modern practice of the contemporary singer-songwriter. In the following sub-sections, the contributions of this research are discussed in relation to specific fields of discourse.

10.5.1 Singing

As the research investigated a population of singers, and/or songwriters who sing, the findings of this research, and in particular, those discussed in Chapter 7 are relevant to the field of singing. More specifically, the information discussed in this research may be of particular relevance to contemporary singers of popular culture musics (Hughes, 2010). The themes and data related to vocal perception and vocal identification, or the ways in which artists hold ownership over their voice, is of relevance to the fields of vocal pedagogy and singing education. The vocal sections contained within the creative practice framework may be utilised in the observation of singers and singing contexts. Additionally, the information on formal and informal learning as provided by participants and respondents provide a perspective on how singer-songwriters enculturate musical learning.

10.5.2 Songwriting

The research contributes to the literature on popular songwriting by providing information related to the motivation and impetus that bring artists to pursue the craft

of songwriting. As much of the literature on songwriting tends to focus on the song and the musical and/or prosodic elements that are used to write a song, this research provides a point of difference by providing perspectives related to creative impetus and personal purpose for songwriting. By understanding the motivations that influence or inspire songwriting, artists are viewed in a more holistic way. Accessing information related to motivation may also allow others to support artists by understanding their reasons for songwriting.

10.5.3 Creativities

The creative practice framework provided in this research is an adaptation of Csikszentmihalyi's (1988) systems model of creativity. As it was constructed based on the overarching themes found in this research, it is specifically suited to the study of singer-songwriters. In addition, the concepts discussed in each of the findings chapters provide evidence on, and highlight, the musical creativities (Burnard, 2012) of singer-songwriters specifically. The findings verify that a multiplicity of musical creativities (Burnard, 2012) exist in the realm of contemporary singer-songwriters. The findings also led to the identification of two forms of creative approaches in the singer-songwriter. These approaches were termed *core* and *peripheral* creativity and are based on the discourse surrounding hard/weak and soft creativity (Hughes et al., 2016). These approaches differentiate forms of creativity in which singer-songwriters engage. In such instances, artists utilise their voice and personal/musical skill to perform the songs of others, and such work, depending on the artist, may sit towards the *peripheral* of their intended creative practice. If relevant to the artist, performing and creating original songs may be considered to be at the *core* of their creative practice.

10.5.4 Music therapy

While the following study did not set out to research the therapeutic benefits of singing and songwriting, participants and respondents identified that the concepts of singing and songwriting were considered to be activities that were similar to self-therapy. This prompted the research to address literature related to singing and songwriting within the field of music therapy. Although there is a large body of literature on music therapy, the specific and integrative use of singing, creative voice use and songwriting is an emerging branch of music therapy (see Baker, 2015; Austin,

2008). The findings, concepts and themes discussed in this research are concepts that may be helpful in the continuing research in singing and songwriting as music therapy as the findings in this research offer evidence from a population who specifically utilise singing and songwriting as part of their lives and personal practices.

10.5.5 Broader applications

Although this study was based on an Australian context, with Australian participants, its findings, methodology and the final emergent creative practice framework have broader applications in relation to the understanding of the creativity and work of singer-songwriters located internationally, with the exception of the Australian-specific themes discussed in Chapter 9. The findings related to creative motivation may hold potential relevance for artists who compose their own work albeit in other areas of the performing arts. This may include dancers who choreograph, actors who write screenplays and musicians who compose, as examples of potential further applications.

10.6 Research limitations and scope

The research scope allowed for the investigation of Australian contemporary singer-songwriters through in-depth interviews and a broad survey. This research utilised a mixed methods approach and included both qualitative and quantitative elements. The scope of the research was limited to the in-depth interviews of 20 Australian participants and the survey of 95 respondents. Research participants and respondents were required to identify as artists with at least three years of related singing and songwriting experience. The interviews were conducted through a mix of face to face interviews and phone interviews, which may have led to a difference in rapport during the interview process. As the findings emerged, it became evident that singer-songwriter practices were broad and highly individual, and hence, the identification of three different forms of practice were identified. Part 1 of the research was limited to 20 participants and as such, further research on artists who identify with each of the specific practices: *the singer who writes songs*, *the songwriter who sings* and *the hybrid artist* warrants further research.

In relation to gender, Part 1 did not suggest that singer-songwriting was a gendered activity. There was a mix of interest between male and female participants, however

subsequent research may choose to investigate potential gender biases and related issues, particularly given the recent media focus on feminism and women's issues[87]. The Part 2 survey was anonymous in order to provide verifiable confidentiality to respondents, which allowed for information rich responses. The anonymity of respondents also prohibited the researcher from verifying respondents as experienced singer-songwriters. However, the highly detailed nature of the survey questions prohibited non singer-songwriters or inexperienced singer-songwriters from effectively participating. In addition, the research was distributed to Australian singing/songwriting groups and/or relevant Australian associations.

The research did not include artists with less than three years of experience or participants/respondents who did not identify as being an Australian artist. While the study focused on Australian artists, many of the participants and respondents had substantial experience including that at an international level. The findings therefore have a broader relevance. While specific localities may have particular proclivities and regulatory frameworks, further research could investigate the findings and the emergent frameworks in additional contexts to provide international insights.

10.7 Directions for future work and research

The findings identified and discussed provide a comprehensive definition of the broad areas of creativity applicable to the contemporary singer-songwriter. Further research into the areas of practice, such as the different phases of *the self*, *the field* and *artistic realisation,* and into the potentially evolving practices of singer-songwriters, may provide further insights into the contemporary singer-songwriter and their related creativities. The emergent creative practice framework provided in this thesis may be tested through further research and/or participant observation. Recommendations for further research and the implications of this research in relation to specific areas identified within the research are discussed as follow.

10.7.1 The role of music education and music industry on personal creativity

The research findings strongly identified the role of personal motivation and creative impetus in the singer-songwriter practice. Songwriting, in this context, is not

[87] Such as the #metoo campaign.

just about creating a song. At times, artists assign deeper connection and meaning to the process of songwriting. In relation to the education of popular and contemporary artists, there may be ethical considerations and behavioural implications given that songwriting is closely and personally held as an intimate form of communication by artists. As such, this area of artistry must be given consideration by educators and/or when designing curricula that may impact the artists on a personal level. Further research into the role of influencers and the differentiation between what forms a negative and a positive or encouraging experience may provide insights into best practices in education and/or in the support of singer-songwriters. From an industry perspective, there is an element of vulnerability exhibited in the practice of singer-songwriters. Perhaps this is also why it is considered a powerful method of music therapy and one of the reasons that it benefited the participant and respondent sample of the research as a form of personal wellbeing. Yet, such benefits may also accompanied by personal vulnerability. The implications of exposing such vulnerability in industry contexts were not explicitly investigated in this research however, the concept of industry validation and support emerged in the findings. As such, further research on the impact of education and industry on the personal creativity of artists is warranted.

10.7.2 Singer-songwriter creativity and wellbeing

As the participants and respondents of this research identified nostalgic introspection, and even themes related to melancholy, mood and specifically, *pain* from an emotional sense, there is a potential implication on general mood and behaviour that warrants further investigation. This is particularly relevant given the recent link between contemporary musicians and mental health issues/related concerns (Van den Enyde; Fisher & Sonn, 2016). The role of songwriting and singing processes, and whether such processes help alleviate and improve such mental health issues, or exacerbate issues, is yet to be fully studied. While this research does not identify a link between creativity and mental illness, the acts of nostalgia and journalistic writing through the act of deliberate lyric crafting, and melancholy may warrant further investigation. In addition, this research also identified themes related to Aboriginal heritage and the conveying of Aboriginal stories through songwriting. The importance, relevance and impact of storytelling through the perspective of contemporary singer-

songwriters who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, poses an opportunity for future research and more in-depth understanding.

The research identified that creativity is deemed important to singer-songwriters. Access to creativity through opportunities such as songwriting, projects, personal time/space allow singer-songwriters to engage in what they identified as an important part of their life. The implications of limited creativity therefore require consideration. Limitations or a lack of access to creativity may affect those who choose to write and sing their own songs as a form of deep, and personal connection or expression. This research purposively sampled a population who engaged in creativity. Yet, it is possible that there are singer-songwriters who may wish to engage more fully in creativity but are limited in their capacity to do so. This warrants asking what would foster creativity in instances where it was not allowed, unsupported or if it ceased to function in the way an artist originally expected it to, such as in the case of singer-songwriter Mandy Harvey, whose hearing impairment developed at the start of her tertiary degree (Pattison, 2018; Nick, 2017). How would such situations be managed by people and how would it affect them, particularly in cases where a high value is placed on personal creativity, irrespective of skill and competence. Further research on the effect of unfulfilled creativity, or more specifically, unfulfilled *artistic realisations* in singer-songwriters, or popular musicians, may provide perspectives on how to best support or educate emerging artists.

10.8 Concluding remarks

This research addressed four primary questions and provided evidence that the creative practice of singer-songwriters incorporates singing, songwriting, creative processes, personal authorship and music. Additionally, the participants and respondents of this research identified that the motivations and impetus for creativity reflect perspectives on the human experience and a propensity for connectedness through the art of singing and songwriting. Songs born out of this process represent a documentation of the experience of the songwriter during a point in their lives and/or a point in their individual creative practice. The voice, both in literal and symbolic contexts, is the method used to lyrically communicate lived or observed experience. The song is the means of encapsulating experiences in a format that allows it to be shared and to impart personal heritage and legacy to the artist's field.

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MACQUARIE University
SYDNEY·AUSTRALIA

STAGE 1 - INTERVIEW: Singer-Songwriters

Story, Song & Voice: Investigating the musical creativities of Australian singer-songwriters

I. Participant profile and background

Name & Contact
Can you tell me about your music?
What style or genre do you consider your work?
What is the biggest achievement you've done in your career?

II. Influences

- What led you to singing and writing songs?
    - Was music always a large part of your life and childhood?
- What do you like about singing?
    - How / When did you learn to sing?
- You play the [instrument/s]. What drew you to this instrument in particular?
    - Did you take formal lessons to learn your / these instruments?
    - Why these / this instrument?
- There's an importance on having a 'unique' sound as an artist. What are your thoughts on this?
    - How did you find your own sound?
    - [If they discuss music and not singing] How about your voice as a singer?
    - Do you think about your voice much?
        - ♣ Do you like the sound of your voice?
        - ♣ If so, how did you come to like your voice?
        - ♣ If not, please explain.
            - Do you change how you sing until you like what you hear?
- Have you always created [genre] music? Was there a time where you sang other genres?
    - What did you like about these genres?
    - Did these other genres influence you? If so, please explain
    - [If they discuss music and not singing] Do you think these genres influenced your singing voice?
- [If there is evidence of performing cover songs] You've recorded / performed a few cover songs such as [cover song]. What's your approach to singing songs written by others?

III. Motivation, The Voice, Singing, Songwriting & The Creative Process

- What inspires you to sing?
  - Can you share a time where it felt great to sing?
  - How about a time when it didn't.
- What inspires you to write a song? Can you tell me a bit more about your process?
  - Have there been situations where you had to write even when you didn't feel like it? If so, please explain.
- What is it like working with producers or musicians when writing a song?
  - Have you ever been asked to change how you sound?
  - If so, why do you think so?
- Is there a particular song you like that means a lot to you?
  - What is the story behind that song?
  - How did you write that song?
  - What was it like to sing that song?
- Can you tell me about the song [song name]? (Do this for two songs)
  - What is the story behind that song?
  - What do you hope your listeners hear when they hear that song?
- Is your writing process similar for each song?
- In [song name], as a listener, it seemed the vocal sound was [sound/singing style, I.e. Strong, soft].
  - Did you intend to sing it that way? If so, why?
  - Do you think about how you sing whenever you write?
  - What do you hope your listeners hear when they listen to that song?
- [If participant has several albums] In [album / works] your singing was [sound / singing style] and in [album], as a listener, It seemed that the voice was more [sound / singing style].
  - Can you tell me about the difference in vocal sound?
  - What do you hope your listeners hear when they hear that album?
- Do you feel the style of singing and vocal sound that you have contributes to the success of your songs; and to you as an artist?
  - Have you ever wanted to sound different? If so, Why? How did that feel?
  - Have you ever had to sing in a different style outside of your comfort zone?
- Is your voice important to you (as a singer, songwriter or person)?

MACQUARIE University
SYDNEY·AUSTRALIA

STAGE 1 - INTERVIEW: Music Industry Professionals

Story, Song & Voice: Investigating the musical creativities of Australian singer-songwriters

I. Participant profile and background

Name & Contact
What is your role in the music industry?
What led you to this role?

II. Perspectives on singing

- Can you discuss the work you do with singers?
  - Do you work with singer-songwriters? If Yes, Please discuss
- There's an importance on having a 'unique' sound as an artist. What are your thoughts on this?
  - How important is having a unique sound to artists?
  - [If they discuss music and not singing] How about the voice of a singer?
  - When working with singer-songwriters, can you elaborate on what a recording or creative session is like?
- What is your creative process working with a singer-songwriter like [artist]?
  - Is it easy?
  - Are there difficulties?
- What do you think about their voice and singing?
- What do you think about their songwriting?
- In your experience, where do singer-songwriters and singers get their inspiration.
  - Is it easy?
  - Are there difficulties?
- [If participant has several recorded works as a music producer and/or musician] In [album / works] the singing was [sound / singing style] and in [album], as a listener, It seemed that the voice was more [sound / singing style].
  - Can you tell me about the difference in vocal sound?
  - What do you hope listeners hear when they hear that album / song?
- Do you feel the style of singing and vocal sound that an artist has contributes to the success of their songs; and to them as an artist?
- Is the artist's voice important to your work as a [role]?

The Faculty of Arts
Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies
Building Y3A, Balaclava Rd, Macquarie University
Dr. Diane Hughes
Director of Learning and Teaching
Phone (02) 9850 2175

Dear (Potential Participant Name),

Singing and songwriting in Australia is an activity that engages thousands of people through music and is a source of communication and personal expressivity for many Australians. Despite this importance, the creative process of Australian singer-songwriters, the relevance of their singing voice, their impact on Australian music consumers and the influence of environmental and professional factors on their creative process are topics that are largely under researched.

As a current PhD candidate in the Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies, Macquarie University, I am conducting my PhD research on these topics and therefore seeking to interview and study the creative process of Australian singer-songwriters and the relevance of industry and environmental influences on their craft with an aim to provide and support Australian music communities and industries with relevant, research based information.

I would like to invite you to take part in this research and have attached information for your consideration.

If you would like to take part in this research, I may set up a time and place convenient for you to meet or I would be willing to discuss the project further if you would like any extra information.

Kind Regards,

Veronica Monro

The Faculty of Arts
Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies
Building Y3A, Balaclava Rd, Macquarie University
Dr. Diane Hughes
Director of Learning and Teaching
Phone (02) 9850 2175

Dear (Organisation, Institution or Association Name),

Singing and songwriting in Australia is an activity that engages thousands of people through music and is a source of communication and personal expressivity for many Australians. Despite this importance, the creative process of Australian singer-songwriters, the relevance of their singing voice, their impact on Australian music consumers and the influence of environmental and professional factors on their creative process are topics that are largely under researched.

As a current PhD candidate in the Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies, Macquarie University, I am conducting my PhD research on these topics and therefore seeking to interview and study the creative process of Australian singer-songwriters and the relevance of industry and environmental influences on their craft with an aim to provide and support Australian music communities and industries with relevant, research based information.

I would like to ask for your permission to circulate the attached information to your members / students. I have included the following documents for your consideration and circulation.

- Research information advertisement

With your permission, I would like to request to set up a time and place for me to post a printed copy of the research advertisement to your noticeboard and/or a digital version on your online social media page.

Thank you for your consideration,

Veronica Monro

The Faculty of Arts
Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies
Building Y3A, Balaclava Rd, Macquarie University
Dr. Diane Hughes
Director of Learning and Teaching
Phone (02) 9850 2175

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION & CONSENT LETTER

Story, Song & Voice: Investigating the musical creativities of Australian singer-songwriters

Dear (Participant Name),

You are invited to participate in a study titled **Story, Song and Voice: Investigating the musical creativities of Australian singer-songwriters.** Singing and songwriting in Australia is an activity that engages thousands of people through music. Despite this importance, the creative process of singer-songwriters, the relevance of their voice and their impact on Australian music consumers is largely under researched. This study researches the singing voice and creative process of Australian singer-songwriters and the influence of industry and environment on their creative process.

By participating in this study, you will be contributing to knowledge on the craft of singing and songwriting, and contribute to the facilitation of appropriate, research based music education for emerging singer-songwriters, singers, music educators and industry professionals.

Who is conducting this study?

This study is being conducted by Veronica Monro to meet the requirements of the Doctor of Philosophy, under the supervision of Dr. Diane Hughes, Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies, Faculty of Arts, Macquarie University.

What are the requirements to become a participant?

Australian singer-songwriters with over three years of professional or semi-professional music industry and/or active creative community experience are invited to participate. Participants must be Australian citizens or permanent residents over 18 years of age, and must be the primary songwriter, composer and/or arranger of their original works. Music industry professionals and music educators who work with singer-songwriters are also invited to participate in this study.

If I decide to participate, what is involved?

This research will be conducted in two (2) stages. Participants are required to participate in stage 1 (an interview). Stage 2 (creative session observation) is optional. The details can be found in the table below:

Research stage		Information for participants	
Stage 1	Interview	30-45min	Audio will be recorded for documentation purposes only.
Stage 2 (Optional)	Creative session observations	Up to three (3) sessions will be observed. The number and duration of sessions is up to the participant.	Audio and video/film footage will be recorded for documentation purposes only. Video stillshots may be use, but only with the permission of participants. Please note that if other professionals are present during each session, they are required to provide consent for the research to be conducted.
A summary of the results of the data will be made available to participants upon the completion of the research.			

How will the research results be used & will I be identified?

The results of this study will be documented in the PhD thesis of the researcher. If the findings of this research are published or presented, such as in an academic journal article or educational conference presentation, participants may be identified by their preferred artist name or choose to be de-identified. All interview and session recordings will be used for documentation and analysis purposes only. Video/film footage will not be released publicly and will remain confidential. If the results of the research are used in a an academic publication or educational conference presentation, participants may be identified by their preferred artist name. In such instances, video still shots (images from the video footage) may be used to illustrate the research findings. If still shots are used, prior permission and approval will be sought from the participant.

Will my copyright and intellectual property be protected?

Yes. Participants maintain full ownership of all copyright and intellectual property. Your work, if discussed, will be credited using your preferred artist name in all written and verbal presentations of the research.

Consent:

I, _____ , have read *(or where appropriate, have had read to me)* and understand the information in the research information letter and participant consent form. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research, knowing that I can withdraw from further participation in the research at any time without consequence. and consent to participate in the research titled Story, Song and Voice: Investigating the musical creativities of the singer-songwriter. I acknowledge and agree to the following:

1. I would like to participate in the following stages of the research titled *Story, Song and Voice: Investigating the musical creativities of Australian singer-songwriters* (please tick):
   - ○ Stage 1: Preliminary interview of approximately 30-45min
   - ○ Stage 2 (OPTIONAL): Creative session observation of up to three (3) creative sessions (such as a songwriting or recording session).
2. Do you agree to being identified in this research? (please tick):
   - ○ Yes, I agree to being identified in this research. I would like my work,

where presented, to be credited as _____.

- ○ No, I do not agree to being identified.

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval number 5201500845). If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the Committee through the Director, Research Ethics (Telephone (02) 9850 7854; email ethics@mq.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome.

Participant Signature:
Participant Name:
Date:
Investigator's Signature:
Investigator's Name:
Date:

PARTICIPANT COPY / INVESTIGATOR COPY

ARE YOU AN AUSTRALIAN **SINGER-SONGWRITER**?

Story, Song & Voice is a study on the voice and creative process of Australian singer-songwriters and the influence of their environment and surrounding music industry on their singing, their songwriting process and the songs they create. If you are an **Australian singer-songwriter,** you are invited to **share your experience** through a series of interviews and optional creative observations.

If you would like to **share your story, contribute to knowledge and participate in this research**, or if you would like more information, please contact Veronica Monro:

Contact: Veronica Monro
storysongvoice@gmail.com

This research is approved by the Macquarie University Human Ethics Committee - 5201500854

MACQUARIE University

MACQUARIE University

Story, Song & Voice

Investigating the musical creativities of Australian Singer-Songwriters

Story, Song & Voice

Investigating the musical creativities of Australian Singer-Songwriters

Thank you for your interest in the research titled **Story, Song & Voice: Investigating the musical creativities of Australian Singer-Songwriters**.

Singing and songwriting in Australia is an activity that engages thousands of people through music. Despite this importance, the creative process of singer-songwriters, the relevance of their voice and their impact on Australian music consumers is largely under researched. This study researches the singing voice and creative process of Australian singer-songwriters and the influence of industry and environment on their creative process.

By participating in this study, you will be contributing to knowledge on the craft of singing and songwriting, and contribute to the facilitation of appropriate, research based music education for emerging singer-songwriters, singers, music educators and industry professionals.

Request more information

If you are interested in more information or in being a participant of this research, please contact Veronica

Monro to request an information and consent form:

Email: storysongvoice@gmail.com
Alternatively, please use the form below.

Name

Email

Message (Optional)

Send

Story, Song and Voice Survey

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1 **Story, Song & Voice: Investigating the musical creativities of Australian singer-songwriters**

Survey information & consent:

You are invited to participate in a study titled Story, Song and Voice: Investigating the musical creativities of Australian singer-songwriters. Singing and songwriting in Australia is an activity that engages thousands of people through music. Despite this importance, the creative process of singer-songwriters, the relevance of their voice and their impact on Australian music consumers is largely under researched. This study researches the singing voice and creative process of Australian singer-songwriters and the influence of industry and environment on their creative process.

By participating in this study, you will be contributing to knowledge on the craft of singing and songwriting, and contribute to the facilitation of appropriate, research based music education for emerging singer-songwriters, singers, music educators and industry professionals.

This study is being conducted by Veronica Stewart-Monro to meet the requirements of the Doctor of Philosophy, under the supervision of Associate Professor Diane Hughes, Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies, Faculty of Arts, Macquarie University.

If you decide to participate, you agree that you are over 18 years of age and that you are an Australian singer-songwriter with over three years of professional or semi-professional music industry and/or active creative community experience. You will take part in an online anonymous questionnaire that takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee (Ethics Approval Number 5201500854). If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the Committee through the Director, Research Ethics (Telephone (02) 9850 7854; email ethics@mq.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome.

By continuing on to the first section of this online questionnaire you give your agreement to participate. If you agree to participate in this research, you can withdraw from further participation in the research at any time without consequence.

Please ensure you click on the arrow button at the end of every section to ensure your responses are recorded.

End of Block: Default Question Block

Start of Block: Block 1

Q2 What is your age range?

- 18 - 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 - 44
- 45 - 54
- 55 - 64
- 65 - 74
- 75 - 84
- 85 or older

Q3 How long have you been SINGING? (This can include informal / pre-professional singing, such as choir experience or singing at school)

- Under 3 yrs
- Between 3 - 10 yrs
- 10yrs +

Q4 How long have you been SONGWRITING? (This can include non-professional and/or professional songwriting experience)

- Under 3 yrs
- Between 3 - 10 yrs
- 10yrs +

Q5 Do your songs fit into any of the following? (You may choose more than one)

- ☐ Folk
- ☐ Country
- ☐ Blues / Roots
- ☐ Pop / Radio
- ☐ Soul / R&B
- ☐ Dance / House / EDM
- ☐ Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians
- ☐ Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
- ☐ Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
- ☐ Other (1) _____
- ☐ Other (2) _____

End of Block: Block 1

Start of Block: Block 2

Q6 Which of the AIMS below apply to your SONGWRITING in general? (You may choose more than one)

- ☐ To tell a story
- ☐ To write good lyrics
- ☐ To express my opinion
- ☐ To sing well
- ☐ To collaborate and work with other musicians or producers
- ☐ To communicate with others
- ☐ To process events
- ☐ To find meaning
- ☐ To be musical
- ☐ Other (1) _____
- ☐ Other (2) _____

Q7 How important is receiving POSITIVE FEEDBACK about SONGWRITING?

	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Never important	I don't know	Not applicable
From friends	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
From family	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
From audiences	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
From industry	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
From your partner	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
From other musicians	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
From other songwriters	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q8 Please briefly explain what INSPIRES you to WRITE SONGS:

_____

End of Block: Block 2

Start of Block: Block 3

InQ9 In relation to your VOICE, are the following IMPORTANT to you?

	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Never important	I don't know	Not applicable
A unique and different vocal sound	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
A vocal sound that is true to me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Vocal technique and singing skill	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Communicating what I have to say using my voice	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other (1) - Please describe	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other (2) - Please describe	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q10 Do you LIKE the sound of YOUR VOICE? (You may choose more than one)

- ☐ Never thought of how my voice sounds
- ☐ Yes, I don't mind how my voice sounds
- ☐ Yes, I like how my voice sounds
- ☐ Sometimes, it depends on what I am singing
- ☐ Often I don't like the sound of my voice
- ☐ No, I do not like the sound of my voice
- ☐ I am not sure
- ☐ Other - Please describe _____

End of Block: Block 3

Start of Block: Block 7

Q11 Do the following apply to you as REASONS for WRITING SONGS? (You may choose more than one)

	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	I don't know	Not applicable
For personal development	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
For self-help	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
For self-awareness	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
For confidence	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To be heard	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To express myself	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To process events	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To communicate	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To share with audiences	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To process emotion	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To collaborate with others	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To be musical	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To perform	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To earn a living	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other (1) - Please describe	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other (2) - Please	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

describe

Q12a Do the same reasons apply to your SINGING?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know
- Not applicable

Display This Question:

If Q12a = No

And Q12a = I don't know

And Q12a = Not applicable

Q12b Do the following apply to you when you are SINGING? (You may choose more than one)

	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	I don't know	Not applicable
For personal development	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
For self-help	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
For self-awareness	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
For confidence	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To be heard	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To express myself	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To process events	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To communicate	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To share with audiences	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To process emotion	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To collaborate with others	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To be musical	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To perform	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
To earn a living	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other (1) - Please describe	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other (2) - Please	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Block 7

Start of Block: Block 4

Q13 Have the following been INSPIRING in your creative process? (You may choose more than one)

	Strongly inspirational	Generally inspirational	Sometimes inspirational	Not very inspirational	Never inspirational	It depends on the situation	I don't know	Not applicable
Other artists	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other songwriters	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Life experiences	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My relationships	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My community	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other (1) - Please describe	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other (2) - Please describe	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q14 Have the following been personally ENCOURAGING in your creative process? (You may choose more than one)

	Strongly encouraging	Generally encouraging	Sometimes encouraging	Not very encouraging	Never encouraging	It depends on the situation	I don't know	Not applicable
Music producers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Musicians	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other singers and artists	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other songwriters	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Life experiences	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Family	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Friends	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My partner	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My community	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other (1) - Please describe	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other (2) - Please describe	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q15 What best describes your experience with the following types of TEACHERS. (You may choose more than one)

	I have had encouraging experiences that have influenced my work positively	I have had negative experiences	I have had a mix of positive and negative experiences	I was uninspired by these experiences	It depended on the situation	I don't know	Not applicable
Music teachers (School / Tertiary)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Singing teachers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Private music teachers (music tuition)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other coaches / mentors - Please describe	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other (1) - Please describe	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other (2) - Please describe	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Block 4

Start of Block: Block 5

Q16 How important is EMOTION to your songwriting?

- ○ Extremely important
- ○ Very important
- ○ Moderately important
- ○ Slightly important
- ○ Never important
- ○ I don't know

Q17 How important is LIFE EXPERIENCE to your creative process?

- ○ Extremely important
- ○ Very important
- ○ Moderately important
- ○ Slightly important
- ○ Never important
- ○ I don't know

Q18 When do you feel a strong urge to CREATE A NEW SONG:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
When a strong or important experience happens	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
When I hear about something that I feel connected to	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
When I am working and collaborating with others	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
When someone gives me an idea	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
When I am practicing regularly and set goals for myself	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
During a strong emotional experience	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other (1) - Please describe	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other (2) - Please describe	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q19 Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	I don't know	Not applicable
Fellow musicians	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other singers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other songwriters	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Music producers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Sound engineers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Vocal looper	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Recording software	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Home studio	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Commercial studio	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Mobile devices	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Industry support	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Being able to play an instrument (such as the guitar / piano)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Being able to produce my own music	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The Internet	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Connection on social	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

media platforms							
My relationships (family, friends, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Money	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other (1) - Please describe	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other (1) - Please describe	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Block 5

Start of Block: Block 6

Q20 Is BEING CREATIVE important to you?

- ○ Extremely important
- ○ Very important
- ○ Moderately important
- ○ Slightly important
- ○ Not at all important
- ○ I am not sure
- ○ Not applicable

Q21 Is SINGING important to you?

- ○ Extremely important
- ○ Very important
- ○ Moderately important
- ○ Slightly important
- ○ Not at all important
- ○ I am not sure
- ○ Not applicable

Q22 Is SONGWRITING important to you?

- ○ Extremely important
- ○ Very important
- ○ Moderately important
- ○ Slightly important
- ○ Not at all important
- ○ I am not sure
- ○ Not applicable

Q23 Do you have any final comments you would like to add about your songwriting, singing and overall creative process?

_____

End of Survey

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SURVEY PARTICIPANT INFORMATION & CONSENT

Story, Song & Voice: Investigating the musical creativities of Australian singer-songwriters

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This study is being conducted by Veronica Monro to meet the requirements of the Doctor of Philosophy, under the supervision of Associate Professor Diane Hughes, Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies, Faculty of Arts, Macquarie University.

If you decide to participate, you agree that you are over 18 years of age and that you are an Australian singer-songwriter with over three years of professional or semi-professional music industry and/or active creative community experience, and you will take part in an online anonymous questionnaire that takes approximately 15 minutes to complete.

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Please ensure you click on the arrow button at the end of every section to ensure your responses are recorded.

ARE YOU AN AUSTRALIAN **SINGER-SONGWRITER**?

Story, Song & Voice is a study on the voice and creative process of Australian singer-songwriters and the influence of environment and industry on singing and the songwriting process. If you are an **Australian singer-songwriter,** you are invited to **share your experience** through an **anonymous online survey** that takes approximately 20mins to complete

Visit the following link to participate or scan the QR code here:

https://tinyurl.com/storysongvoice

If you would like to **share your story, contribute to knowledge and participate in this research**, or if you would like more information, please contact Veronica Monro:

Contact: Veronica Monro - storysongvoice@gmail.com

This research is approved by the Macquarie University Human Ethics Committee - 5201500854

MACQUARIE University
SYDNEY·AUSTRALIA

The Faculty of Arts
Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies
Building Y3A, Balaclava Rd, Macquarie University
Dr. Diane Hughes
Director of Learning and Teaching
Phone (02) 9850 2175

Date

Dear _____,

Singing and songwriting in Australia is an activity that engages thousands of people through music and is a source of communication and personal expressivity for many Australians. Despite this importance, the creative process of Australian singer-songwriters, the relevance of their singing voice, their impact on Australian music consumers and the influence of environmental and professional factors on their creative process are topics that are largely under researched.

I am a current candidate conducting my PhD research to meet the requirements of the Doctor of Philosophy, under the supervision of Associate Professor Diane Hughes, Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies, Faculty of Arts, Macquarie University, researching the singing voice and the creative process of Australian singer-songwriters, and the relevance of industry and environmental influences on their craft with an aim to provide and support Australian music communities and industries with relevant, research based information.

I am seeking **survey participants** who are Australian singer-songwriters and would like to ask for your permission to circulate the attached information to your members / students. I have included the following documents for your consideration and circulation.

- Research advertisement and Survey link (https://tinyurl.com/storysongvoice)

The information and consent for survey participants is also attached to this letter

Thank you for your consideration,

Veronica Monro

Part 1 Participant summary

Participant Name	Code	Experience		Context
Tina Bangel	P1	10yrs+		Singer-Songwriter. Tina is also a singing teacher and an established professional singer.
Ramiro Castellaz Faico (Romy Black)	P2	10yrs+		Music producer, DJ, drummer and guitarist. Produces music under PCM genres such as R&B, Dance and Pop.
Dana Gilden (Danah)	P3	5yrs+		Singer-songwriter. Has recorded several songs and is writing towards an album.
Nicholas George	P4	10yrs+		Singer-songwriter, guitarist, music producer and band member. He independently releases original music online and on YouTube.
Ann Poore	P5	10yrs+		Singer-songwriter and harpist. Ann writes songs that also involve the harp as an instrument.
Luke Davies	P6	10yrs+		Singer-songwriter who has released an album with his band, the Recycled String Band. Luke has also recorded several songs and performs at folk and blues themed festivals throughout Australia.
Kelly Breuer (Kelly Brouhaha)	P7	10yrs+		Singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist. She has released an album and continues to record and actively perform her music. Kelly is an experienced band member and also works as a singing teacher.
Mike Roberts	P8	10yrs+		Singer-songwriter and guitarist who has released several EPs/Albums and songs. Mike's music revolves around themes of Australian country and history.
Adrienne Lovelock	P9	10yrs+		Singer-songwriter and guitarist who has released several songs and an album.
Mark Ferris	P10	10yrs+		Mark Ferris is a classical composer who began writing contemporary songs for choir singers, and began singing his own repertoire. http://pacificopera.com.au/news/vwp-past-winners
Ria Pirrelli (Audio Vixen)	P11	10yrs+		Ria, Ross and Christine Pirrelli are siblings who form the band *Audio Vixen*. All three members are also solo singer-songwriters and all share and collaborate the tasks of songwriting and
Ross Pirrelli (Audio Vixen)	P12	10yrs+		

Christine Pirrelli (Audio Vixen)	P13	10yrs+		singing as leads for their original songs. They have released several songs and an album, and also work professionally together as a cover band.
Niten Devalia	P14	10yrs+		Music producer and guitarist. He produces music under the PCM genres of R&B and Hip-Hop.
Roshni Dennis (Stella Rhymes)	P15	10yrs+		Singer-songwriter and rapper. Regular collaborator with international music producers and engages with technology and online platforms in order to create and release songs.
Amber Lawrence	P16	10yrs+		Singer-songwriter with extensive professional and artistic experience. Amber has, to date, released nine albums as a country artist. She is also an award winning artist (Such as the Country Music Association of Australia - CMAA Golden Guitar Award) with experience in radio, recording and collaborative songwriting.
Tash Parker	P17	5yrs+		Singer-songwriter who collaborates and performs with other singer-songwriters specifically. Tash has released several songs and is experienced in performing and recording in stage and other mediums such as radio.
Deborah Suckling	P18	10yrs+		Singer-songwriter and experienced industry collaborator. Her projects have included albums as well as philanthropic works that center around music, songwriting and touring. She is an artist but also a record label owner, and works closely with other singer-songwriters as both a collaborator and manager.
Morgan Hann	P19	10yrs+		Morgan Hann is an experienced singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist who creates music as a solo artist and as part of a duo and a band. He has recorded and released several songs.
Neil Murray	P20	10yrs+		Neil Murray is a highly experienced singer-songwriter who has recorded and released several albums. He is also an experienced songwriter/collaboratir and creates music surrounding themes of Australian culture, heritage and a connection to land. He is one of the founding members of the *Warumpi Band* and has released several albums as a solo artist.

Part 2 Respondent summary

Respondent Code	Response Recorded	Age Bracket	Singing Experience	Songwriting Experience	Context
R1	6/11/2017 18:20	18 - 24	10yrs +	Under 3 yrs	Folk,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians
R2	13/11/2017 16:59	18 - 24	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Folk,Blues / Roots,Pop / Radio,Soul / R&B,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R3	13/11/2017 23:07	18 - 24	10yrs +	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Pop / Radio,Soul / R&B,Dance / House / EDM
R4	14/11/2017 19:10	65 - 74	10yrs +	10yrs +	Country,Pop / Radio,Soul / R&B,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Other (1)
R5	15/11/2017 7:12	55 - 64	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Country
R6	4/12/2017 17:18	25 - 34	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Other (1)
R7	7/12/2017 22:33	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R8	12/12/2017 1:18	25 - 34	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R9	12/12/2017 1:54	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R10	12/12/2017 1:49	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Blues / Roots,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-produced Singer-Songwriter,Other (1)
R11	12/12/2017 2:10	55 - 64	10yrs +	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter

R12	12/12/2017 17:03	35 - 44	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R13	12/12/2017 23:41	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R14	13/12/2017 15:29	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk
R15	13/12/2017 21:34	35 - 44	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter,Other (1)
R16	14/12/2017 15:37	65 - 74	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R17	14/12/2017 16:06	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R18	14/12/2017 16:02	65 - 74	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Pop / Radio,Soul / R&B,Dance / House / EDM,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R19	14/12/2017 17:14	65 - 74	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Pop / Radio,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R20	14/12/2017 18:30	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Blues / Roots,Other (1)
R21	15/12/2017 0:27	55 - 64	10yrs +	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Folk,Other (1)
R22	20/12/2017 17:39	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter,Other (1)
R23	21/12/2017 2:19	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Blues / Roots,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter,Other (1)
R25	21/12/2017 21:23	35 - 44	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)

R26	21/12/2017 23:10	35 - 44	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Pop / Radio,Soul / R&B,Dance / House / EDM,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R27	8/01/2018 17:02	18 - 24	10yrs +	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Soul / R&B
R28	8/01/2018 18:38	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R29	8/01/2018 18:46	25 - 34	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter,Other (1)
R30	8/01/2018 18:55	55 - 64		10yrs +	Folk,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R31	9/01/2018 4:17	35 - 44	10yrs +	10yrs +	Blues / Roots,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R32	10/01/2018 5:25	35 - 44	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R33	14/01/2018 18:06	45 - 54	10yrs +	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Folk,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R34	17/01/2018 17:35	18 - 24	10yrs +	Under 3 yrs	Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R35	17/01/2018 18:23	25 - 34	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Folk,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter,Other (1),Other (2)
R36	17/01/2018 18:24	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R37	17/01/2018 20:55	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Country,Pop / Radio,Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R38	18/01/2018 15:14	25 - 34	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians

R39	18/01/2018 17:26	65 - 74	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R40	22/01/2018 2:09	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R41	24/01/2018 20:00	25 - 34	10yrs +	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Folk,Country,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R42	24/01/2018 20:06	35 - 44	Between 3 - 10 yrs	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R43	24/01/2018 20:18	35 - 44	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Blues / Roots,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Other (1)
R44	24/01/2018 20:16	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Pop / Radio,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter,Other (1),Other (2)
R45	24/01/2018 20:11	35 - 44	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R46	24/01/2018 20:20	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Country,Blues / Roots,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Other (1)
R47	24/01/2018 20:58	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians
R48	24/01/2018 21:01	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Pop / Radio
R49	24/01/2018 21:10	25 - 34	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Pop / Radio,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R50	24/01/2018 21:23	55 - 64	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Folk,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R51	24/01/2018 22:44	25 - 34	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Blues / Roots,Soul / R&B,Other (1)

R52	24/01/2018 23:25	18 - 24	10yrs +	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Pop / Radio,Dance / House / EDM,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R53	25/01/2018 0:07	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter,Other (1)
R54	24/01/2018 23:45	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Pop / Radio,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R55	25/01/2018 1:19	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter,Other (1),Other (2)
R56	25/01/2018 3:19	25 - 34	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R57	25/01/2018 5:24	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Pop / Radio,Soul / R&B,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R58	25/01/2018 20:27	25 - 34	10yrs +	10yrs +	Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Other (1)
R59	25/01/2018 21:27	35 - 44	10yrs +	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Folk
R60	26/01/2018 13:39	25 - 34	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Under 3 yrs	Folk,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R61	26/01/2018 14:03	25 - 34	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R62	27/01/2018 12:19	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Other (1)
R63	28/01/2018 17:58	65 - 74	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R64	28/01/2018 18:44	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Blues / Roots,Pop / Radio,Soul / R&B,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter

R65	29/01/2018 2:25	18 - 24	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Soul / R&B,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Other (1),Other (2)
R66	29/01/2018 18:36		Between 3 - 10 yrs	Under 3 yrs	Pop / Radio
R67	29/01/2018 22:55	25 - 34	10yrs +	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Country,Pop / Radio,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R68	4/02/2018 0:15	18 - 24	10yrs +	Under 3 yrs	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians
R69	4/02/2018 2:47	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter,Other (1)
R70	4/02/2018 3:13	45 - 54	Between 3 - 10 yrs	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R71	4/02/2018 4:26	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R72	4/02/2018 13:08	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R73	4/02/2018 15:12	35 - 44	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians
R74	4/02/2018 16:57	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Country,Pop / Radio
R75	4/02/2018 20:16	65 - 74	10yrs +		Folk,Country,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R76	5/02/2018 14:30	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Pop / Radio,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter,Other (1)
R77	6/02/2018 20:15	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter

R78	7/02/2018 8:07	25 - 34	10yrs +	10yrs +	Pop / Radio,Soul / R&B,Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R79	9/02/2018 18:51	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Blues / Roots,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter,Other (1)
R80	14/02/2018 23:16	25 - 34	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Pop / Radio,Dance / House / EDM,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R81	17/02/2018 3:03	25 - 34	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Pop / Radio,Soul / R&B,Dance / House / EDM,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R82	28/06/2018 1:02	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Soul / R&B,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R84	5/07/2018 19:46	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Pop / Radio,Soul / R&B,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R85	10/07/2018 21:32	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R86	18/07/2018 18:59	65 - 74	10yrs +	10yrs +	Country,Pop / Radio,Soul / R&B,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter
R87	18/07/2018 19:29	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Country,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R88	18/07/2018 19:41	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Country,Pop / Radio,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Other (1)
R89	18/07/2018 19:52	18 - 24	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Folk,Country,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R90	18/07/2018 22:37	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R91	19/07/2018 0:53	45 - 54	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Pop / Radio,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter

R92	19/07/2018 2:46	55 - 64	10yrs +	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Folk,Country,Blues / Roots,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R93	20/07/2018 7:00	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Other (1)
R94	24/07/2018 22:49	55 - 64	10yrs +	10yrs +	Folk,Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar),Self-produced Singer-Songwriter,Other (1)
R95	7/08/2018 20:33	18 - 24	10yrs +	Between 3 - 10 yrs	Folk,Pop / Radio,Soul / R&B,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R96	17/08/2018 3:53	18 - 24	10yrs +	Under 3 yrs	Folk,Pop / Radio,Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)
R97	28/08/2018 4:02	18 - 24	10yrs +	Under 3 yrs	Pop / Radio,Soul / R&B,Other (1)

Age/Singing Experience

		What is your age range?								
		18 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 - 74	75 - 84	85 or older	Total
How long have you been SINGING? (This can include informal / pre-professional singing, such as ch...	Under 3 yrs	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Between 3 - 10 yrs	2 18.18%	3 27.27%	2 18.18%	1 9.09%	2 18.18%	1 9.09%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	11 100.00%
	10yrs +	10 12.05%	14 16.87%	9 10.84%	19 22.89%	24 28.92%	7 8.43%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	83 100.00%
	Total	12 12.77%	17 18.09%	11 11.70%	20 21.28%	26 27.66%	8 8.51%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	94 100.00%

		What is your age range?
How long have you been SINGING? (This can include informal / pre-professional singing, such as ch...	Chi Square	2.59*
	Degrees of Freedom	14
	p-value	1.00

**Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.*

APPENDIX N

Age/Songwriting Experience

		What is your age range?								
		18 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 - 74	75 - 84	85 or older	Total
How long have you been SONGWRITING? (This can include non-professional and/or professional songwr...	Under 3 yrs	5 83.33%	1 16.67%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	6 100.00%
	Between 3 - 10 yrs	6 31.58%	4 21.05%	2 10.53%	1 5.26%	5 26.32%	1 5.26%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	19 100.00%
	10yrs +	1 1.45%	12 17.39%	9 13.04%	19 27.54%	22 31.88%	6 8.70%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	69 100.00%
	Total	12 12.77%	17 18.09%	11 11.70%	20 21.28%	27 28.72%	7 7.45%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	94 100.00%

		What is your age range?
How long have you been SONGWRITING? (This can include non-professional and/or professional songwr...	Chi Square	44.09*
	Degrees of Freedom	14
	p-value	0.00

**Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.*

APPENDIX O

Music Genre/Singing and Songwriting Experience

		How long have you been SINGING? (This can include informal / pre-professional singing, such as ch...				How long have you been SONGWRITING? (This can include non-professional and/or professional songwr...			
		Under 3 yrs	Between 3 - 10 yrs	10yrs +	Total	Under 3 yrs	Between 3 - 10 yrs	10yrs +	Total
You may choose more than one option	Folk	0 0.00%	8 12.90%	54 87.10%	62 100.00%	4 6.45%	12 19.35%	46 74.19%	62 100.00%
	Country	0 0.00%	5 11.11%	40 88.89%	45 100.00%	1 2.27%	7 15.91%	36 81.82%	44 100.00%
	Blues / Roots	0 0.00%	5 14.29%	30 85.71%	35 100.00%	1 2.86%	5 14.29%	29 82.86%	35 100.00%
	Pop / Radio	0 0.00%	3 6.52%	43 93.48%	46 100.00%	5 10.64%	7 14.89%	35 74.47%	47 100.00%
	Soul / R&B	0 0.00%	2 11.76%	15 88.24%	17 100.00%	1 5.88%	5 29.41%	11 64.71%	17 100.00%
	Dance / House / EDM	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	6 100.00%	6 100.00%	0 0.00%	2 33.33%	4 66.67%	6 100.00%
	Singer-Songwriter accompanied by other musicians	0 0.00%	5 10.20%	44 89.80%	49 100.00%	2 4.00%	8 16.00%	40 80.00%	50 100.00%
	Self-Accompanied Singer-Songwriter (such as on piano and/or guitar)	0 0.00%	8 11.11%	64 88.89%	72 100.00%	3 4.17%	12 16.67%	57 79.17%	72 100.00%
	Self-produced Singer-Songwriter	0 0.00%	2 4.35%	44 95.65%	46 100.00%	1 2.13%	6 12.77%	40 85.11%	47 100.00%
	Other (1)	0 0.00%	2 7.69%	24 92.31%	26 100.00%	1 3.85%	3 11.54%	22 84.62%	26 100.00%
	Other (2)	0 0.00%	1 25.00%	3 75.00%	4 100.00%	0 0.00%	1 25.00%	3 75.00%	4 100.00%
	Total	0 0.00%	12 12.63%	83 87.37%	95 100.00%	7 7.37%	19 20.00%	69 72.63%	95 100.00%

		How long have you been SINGING? (This can include informal / pre-professional singing, such as ch...	How long have you been SONGWRITING? (This can include non-professional and/or professional songwr...
You may choose more than one option	Chi Square	7.02*	17.44*
	Degrees of Freedom	20	20
	p-value	1.00	0.62

**Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.*

APPENDIX P

Importance of Creativity, Singing and Songwriting/Age and Experience

		What is your age range?									How long have you been SINGING? (This can include informal / pre-professional singing, such as ch...				How long have you been SONGWRITING? (This can include non-professional and/or professional songwr...			
		18 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 - 74	75 - 84	85 or older	Total	Under 3 yrs	Between 3 - 10 yrs	10yrs +	Total	Under 3 yrs	Between 3 - 10 yrs	10yrs +	Total
Is BEING CREATIVE important to you?	Extremely important	11 13.92%	13 16.46%	9 11.39%	17 21.52%	23 29.11%	6 7.59%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	79 100.00%	0 0.00%	8 10.26%	70 89.74%	78 100.00%	5 6.41%	15 19.23%	58 74.36%	78 100.00%
	Very important	1 8.33%	3 25.00%	2 16.67%	1 8.33%	4 33.33%	1 8.33%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	12 100.00%	0 0.00%	4 30.77%	9 69.23%	13 100.00%	2 15.38%	4 30.77%	7 53.85%	13 100.00%
	Moderately important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%	1 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%	1 100.00%
	Slightly important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 50.00%	0 0.00%	1 50.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	2 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	2 100.00%	2 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	2 100.00%	2 100.00%
	Not at all important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	I am not sure	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	12 12.77%	16 17.02%	11 11.70%	20 21.28%	27 28.72%	8 8.51%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	94 100.00%	0 0.00%	12 12.77%	82 87.23%	94 100.00%	7 7.45%	19 20.21%	68 72.34%	94 100.00%
Is SINGING important to you?	Extremely important	10 16.13%	11 17.74%	7 11.29%	13 20.97%	15 24.19%	6 9.68%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	62 100.00%	0 0.00%	7 11.11%	56 88.89%	63 100.00%	7 11.29%	13 20.97%	42 67.74%	62 100.00%
	Very important	1 4.76%	4 19.05%	0 0.00%	6 28.57%	10 47.62%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	21 100.00%	0 0.00%	3 15.00%	17 85.00%	20 100.00%	0 0.00%	4 19.05%	17 80.95%	21 100.00%
	Moderately important	1 14.29%	1 14.29%	3 42.86%	0 0.00%	1 14.29%	1 14.29%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	7 100.00%	0 0.00%	2 28.57%	5 71.43%	7 100.00%	0 0.00%	2 28.57%	5 71.43%	7 100.00%
	Slightly important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 33.33%	1 33.33%	1 33.33%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	3 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	3 100.00%	3 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	3 100.00%	3 100.00%
	Not at all important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%	1 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%	1 100.00%
	I am not sure	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	12 12.77%	16 17.02%	11 11.70%	20 21.28%	27 28.72%	8 8.51%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	94 100.00%	0 0.00%	12 12.77%	82 87.23%	94 100.00%	7 7.45%	19 20.21%	68 72.34%	94 100.00%
Is SONGWRITING important to you?	Extremely important	10 14.93%	12 17.91%	7 10.45%	17 25.37%	15 22.39%	6 8.96%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	67 100.00%	0 0.00%	8 12.12%	58 87.88%	66 100.00%	4 6.06%	12 18.18%	50 75.76%	66 100.00%
	Very important	2 8.70%	3 13.04%	4 17.39%	2 8.70%	11 47.83%	1 4.35%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	23 100.00%	0 0.00%	2 8.70%	21 91.30%	23 100.00%	1 4.35%	7 30.43%	15 65.22%	23 100.00%
	Moderately important	0 0.00%	1 33.33%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 33.33%	1 33.33%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	3 100.00%	0 0.00%	2 50.00%	2 50.00%	4 100.00%	2 50.00%	0 0.00%	2 50.00%	4 100.00%
	Slightly important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%	1 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%	1 100.00%
	Not at all important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	I am not sure	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	12 12.77%	16 17.02%	11 11.70%	20 21.28%	27 28.72%	8 8.51%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	94 100.00%	0 0.00%	12 12.77%	82 87.23%	94 100.00%	7 7.45%	19 20.21%	68 72.34%	94 100.00%

		What is your age range?	How long have you been SINGING? (This can include informal / pre-professional singing, such as ch...	How long have you been SONGWRITING? (This can include non-professional and/or professional songwr...
Is BEING CREATIVE important to you?	Chi Square	12.03*	4.66*	3.77*
	Degrees of Freedom	35	10	10
	p-value	1.00	0.91	0.96

**Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.*

APPENDIX P

		What is your age range?	How long have you been SINGING? (This can include informal / pre-professional singing, such as ch...	How long have you been SONGWRITING? (This can include non-professional and/or professional songwr...
Is SINGING important to you?	Chi Square	31.05*	2.40*	5.52*
	Degrees of Freedom	35	10	10
	p-value	0.66	0.99	0.85

**Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.*

		What is your age range?	How long have you been SINGING? (This can include informal / pre-professional singing, such as ch...	How long have you been SONGWRITING? (This can include non-professional and/or professional songwr...
Is SONGWRITING important to you?	Chi Square	15.83*	5.49*	13.25*
	Degrees of Freedom	35	10	10
	p-value	1.00	0.86	0.21

**Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.*

Importance of Singing/Importance of Songwriting

		Is SINGING important to you?						
		Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important	I am not sure	Total
Is SONGWRITING important to you?	Extremely important	48 71.64%	13 19.40%	5 7.46%	1 1.49%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	67 100.00%
	Very important	13 56.52%	7 30.43%	2 8.70%	1 4.35%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	23 100.00%
	Moderately important	2 50.00%	1 25.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 25.00%	0 0.00%	4 100.00%
	Slightly important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%
	Not at all important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	I am not sure	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	63 66.32%	21 22.11%	7 7.37%	3 3.16%	1 1.05%	0 0.00%	95 100.00%

		Is SINGING important to you?
Is SONGWRITING important to you?	Chi Square	56.31*
	Degrees of Freedom	25
	p-value	0.00

**Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.*

APPENDIX R

Songwriting Devices/Age

		Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Fellow musicians					
		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
What is your age range?	18 - 24	0 0.00%	3 25.00%	3 25.00%	6 50.00%	0 0.00%	12 100.00%
	25 - 34	0 0.00%	2 12.50%	9 56.25%	5 31.25%	0 0.00%	16 100.00%
	35 - 44	0 0.00%	2 18.18%	6 54.55%	3 27.27%	0 0.00%	11 100.00%
	45 - 54	0 0.00%	1 5.26%	9 47.37%	4 21.05%	5 26.32%	19 100.00%
	55 - 64	1 4.17%	1 4.17%	10 41.67%	9 37.50%	3 12.50%	24 100.00%
	65 - 74	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	2 28.57%	4 57.14%	1 14.29%	7 100.00%
	75 - 84	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	85 or older	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	1 1.12%	9 10.11%	39 43.82%	31 34.83%	9 10.11%	89 100.00%

		Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Other singers					
		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
What is your age range?	18 - 24	0 0.00%	1 8.33%	5 41.67%	5 41.67%	1 8.33%	12 100.00%
	25 - 34	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	4 25.00%	7 43.75%	5 31.25%	16 100.00%
	35 - 44	0 0.00%	1 9.09%	4 36.36%	5 45.45%	1 9.09%	11 100.00%
	45 - 54	0 0.00%	1 5.00%	6 30.00%	6 30.00%	7 35.00%	20 100.00%
	55 - 64	0 0.00%	1 4.17%	9 37.50%	10 41.67%	4 16.67%	24 100.00%
	65 - 74	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	2 28.57%	4 57.14%	1 14.29%	7 100.00%
	75 - 84	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	85 or older	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	0 0.00%	4 4.44%	30 33.33%	37 41.11%	19 21.11%	90 100.00%

		Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Other songwriters					
		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
What is your age range?	18 - 24	1 8.33%	2 16.67%	5 41.67%	4 33.33%	0 0.00%	12 100.00%
	25 - 34	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	7 43.75%	6 37.50%	3 18.75%	16 100.00%
	35 - 44	0 0.00%	1 9.09%	7 63.64%	2 18.18%	1 9.09%	11 100.00%
	45 - 54	0 0.00%	2 10.00%	7 35.00%	5 25.00%	6 30.00%	20 100.00%
	55 - 64	0 0.00%	2 8.70%	9 39.13%	9 39.13%	3 13.04%	23 100.00%
	65 - 74	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	4 57.14%	2 28.57%	1 14.29%	7 100.00%
	75 - 84	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	85 or older	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	1 1.12%	7 7.87%	39 43.82%	28 31.46%	14 15.73%	89 100.00%

		Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Music producers					
		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
What is your age range?	18 - 24	2 16.67%	0 0.00%	2 16.67%	7 58.33%	1 8.33%	12 100.00%
	25 - 34	0 0.00%	1 6.25%	10 62.50%	2 12.50%	3 18.75%	16 100.00%
	35 - 44	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	3 27.27%	6 54.55%	2 18.18%	11 100.00%
	45 - 54	0 0.00%	3 15.79%	8 42.11%	2 10.53%	6 31.58%	19 100.00%
	55 - 64	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	10 41.67%	8 33.33%	6 25.00%	24 100.00%
	65 - 74	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 20.00%	3 60.00%	1 20.00%	5 100.00%
	75 - 84	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	85 or older	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	2 2.30%	4 4.60%	34 39.08%	28 32.18%	19 21.84%	87 100.00%

		Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Sound engineers					
		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
What is your age range?	18 - 24	0 0.00%	1 8.33%	1 8.33%	9 75.00%	1 8.33%	12 100.00%
	25 - 34	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	4 25.00%	4 25.00%	8 50.00%	16 100.00%
	35 - 44	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	2 18.18%	6 54.55%	3 27.27%	11 100.00%
	45 - 54	0 0.00%	2 10.53%	7 36.84%	4 21.05%	6 31.58%	19 100.00%
	55 - 64	0 0.00%	2 8.70%	6 26.09%	9 39.13%	6 26.09%	23 100.00%
	65 - 74	0 0.00%	1 16.67%	0 0.00%	4 66.67%	1 16.67%	6 100.00%
	75 - 84	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	85 or older	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	0 0.00%	6 6.90%	20 22.99%	36 41.38%	25 28.74%	87 100.00%

		Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Fellow musicians	Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Other singers	Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Other songwriters	Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Music producers	Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Sound engineers
What is your age range?	Chi Square	22.65*	8.62*	17.84*	37.14*	19.83*
	Degrees of Freedom	28	28	28	28	28
	p-value	0.75	1.00	0.93	0.12	0.87

**Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.*

APPENDIX R

Songwriting Devices/Age

		Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Being able to play an instrument (such as the guitar / piano)						Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Being able to produce my own music						Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - My relationships (family, friends, etc.)					
		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
What is your age range?	18 - 24	7 58.33%	2 16.67%	3 25.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	12 100.00%	1 9.09%	3 27.27%	4 36.36%	1 9.09%	2 18.18%	11 100.00%	0 0.00%	7 58.33%	4 33.33%	0 0.00%	1 8.33%	12 100.00%
	25 - 34	12 75.00%	2 12.50%	1 6.25%	0 0.00%	1 6.25%	16 100.00%	5 31.25%	4 25.00%	3 18.75%	2 12.50%	2 12.50%	16 100.00%	2 12.50%	5 31.25%	4 25.00%	4 25.00%	1 6.25%	16 100.00%
	35 - 44	8 72.73%	2 18.18%	1 9.09%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	11 100.00%	3 30.00%	3 30.00%	1 10.00%	2 20.00%	1 10.00%	10 100.00%	0 0.00%	3 27.27%	3 27.27%	4 36.36%	1 9.09%	11 100.00%
	45 - 54	15 75.00%	3 15.00%	2 10.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	20 100.00%	7 36.84%	2 10.53%	5 26.32%	2 10.53%	3 15.79%	19 100.00%	2 10.00%	4 20.00%	9 45.00%	2 10.00%	3 15.00%	20 100.00%
	55 - 64	22 81.48%	3 11.11%	2 7.41%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	27 100.00%	14 60.87%	5 21.74%	1 4.35%	1 4.35%	2 8.70%	23 100.00%	0 0.00%	5 21.74%	8 34.78%	7 30.43%	3 13.04%	23 100.00%
	65 - 74	5 62.50%	3 37.50%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	8 100.00%	5 62.50%	1 12.50%	1 12.50%	0 0.00%	1 12.50%	8 100.00%	1 12.50%	3 37.50%	2 25.00%	1 12.50%	1 12.50%	8 100.00%
	75 - 84	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	85 or older	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	69 73.40%	15 15.96%	9 9.57%	0 0.00%	1 1.06%	94 100.00%	35 40.23%	18 20.69%	15 17.24%	8 9.20%	11 12.64%	87 100.00%	5 5.56%	27 30.00%	30 33.33%	18 20.00%	10 11.11%	90 100.00%

		Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Being able to play an instrument (such as the guitar / piano)	Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Being able to produce my own music	Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - My relationships (family, friends, etc.)
What is your age range?	Chi Square	12.59*	18.18*	18.77*
	Degrees of Freedom	28	28	28
	p-value	0.99	0.92	0.91

**Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.*

APPENDIX R

Songwriting Devices/Age

		Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Industry support						Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - The Internet						Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Connection on social media platforms						Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Money					
		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
What is your age range?	18 - 24	0 0.00%	1 9.09%	2 18.18%	5 45.45%	3 27.27%	11 100.00%	1 8.33%	1 8.33%	5 41.67%	4 33.33%	1 8.33%	12 100.00%	0 0.00%	3 25.00%	6 50.00%	1 8.33%	2 16.67%	12 100.00%	1 8.33%	1 8.33%	5 41.67%	3 25.00%	2 16.67%	12 100.00%
	25 - 34	0 0.00%	1 6.67%	4 26.67%	7 46.67%	3 20.00%	15 100.00%	2 12.50%	3 18.75%	9 56.25%	0 0.00%	2 12.50%	16 100.00%	2 12.50%	2 12.50%	8 50.00%	0 0.00%	4 25.00%	16 100.00%	1 7.69%	1 7.69%	4 30.77%	3 23.08%	4 30.77%	13 100.00%
	35 - 44	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	4 40.00%	2 20.00%	4 40.00%	10 100.00%	2 20.00%	2 20.00%	3 30.00%	3 30.00%	0 0.00%	10 100.00%	1 9.09%	1 9.09%	2 18.18%	3 27.27%	4 36.36%	11 100.00%	3 27.27%	1 9.09%	1 9.09%	2 18.18%	4 36.36%	11 100.00%
	45 - 54	0 0.00%	1 5.26%	7 36.84%	4 21.05%	7 36.84%	19 100.00%	0 0.00%	5 26.32%	9 47.37%	2 10.53%	3 15.79%	19 100.00%	1 5.26%	4 21.05%	6 31.58%	3 15.79%	5 26.32%	19 100.00%	2 12.50%	5 31.25%	1 6.25%	4 25.00%	4 25.00%	16 100.00%
	55 - 64	0 0.00%	1 4.35%	4 17.39%	7 30.43%	11 47.83%	23 100.00%	2 9.09%	6 27.27%	9 40.91%	4 18.18%	1 4.55%	22 100.00%	0 0.00%	6 27.27%	6 27.27%	3 13.64%	7 31.82%	22 100.00%	4 17.39%	4 17.39%	2 8.70%	6 26.09%	7 30.43%	23 100.00%
	65 - 74	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	5 100.00%	5 100.00%	0 0.00%	1 20.00%	2 40.00%	0 0.00%	2 40.00%	5 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	2 50.00%	2 50.00%	4 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 20.00%	4 80.00%	5 100.00%
	75 - 84	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	85 or older	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	0 0.00%	4 4.82%	21 25.30%	25 30.12%	33 39.76%	83 100.00%	7 8.33%	18 21.43%	37 44.05%	13 15.48%	9 10.71%	84 100.00%	4 4.76%	16 19.05%	28 33.33%	12 14.29%	24 28.57%	84 100.00%	11 13.75%	12 15.00%	13 16.25%	19 23.75%	25 31.25%	80 100.00%

		Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Industry support	Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - The Internet	Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Connection on social media platforms	Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Money
What is your age range?	Chi Square	16.66*	20.61*	20.84*	22.29*
	Degrees of Freedom	28	28	28	28
	p-value	0.96	0.84	0.83	0.77

**Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.*

APPENDIX R

Songwriting Devices/Age

		Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Vocal looper					
		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
What is your age range?	18 - 24	0 0.00%	2 16.67%	1 8.33%	6 50.00%	3 25.00%	12 100.00%
	25 - 34	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	4 25.00%	12 75.00%	16 100.00%
	35 - 44	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	2 18.18%	1 9.09%	8 72.73%	11 100.00%
	45 - 54	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	2 11.76%	15 88.24%	17 100.00%
	55 - 64	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	2 9.09%	4 18.18%	16 72.73%	22 100.00%
	65 - 74	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 20.00%	4 80.00%	5 100.00%
	75 - 84	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	85 or older	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	0 0.00%	2 2.41%	5 6.02%	18 21.69%	58 69.88%	83 100.00%

		Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Recording software					
		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
What is your age range?	18 - 24	4 33.33%	1 8.33%	5 41.67%	1 8.33%	1 8.33%	12 100.00%
	25 - 34	4 25.00%	3 18.75%	8 50.00%	1 6.25%	0 0.00%	16 100.00%
	35 - 44	3 27.27%	2 18.18%	4 36.36%	2 18.18%	0 0.00%	11 100.00%
	45 - 54	2 11.11%	9 50.00%	2 11.11%	3 16.67%	2 11.11%	18 100.00%
	55 - 64	4 16.00%	6 24.00%	12 48.00%	1 4.00%	2 8.00%	25 100.00%
	65 - 74	0 0.00%	3 42.86%	3 42.86%	0 0.00%	1 14.29%	7 100.00%
	75 - 84	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	85 or older	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	17 19.10%	24 26.97%	34 38.20%	8 8.99%	6 6.74%	89 100.00%

		Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Home studio					
		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
What is your age range?	18 - 24	1 8.33%	3 25.00%	5 41.67%	2 16.67%	1 8.33%	12 100.00%
	25 - 34	3 18.75%	3 18.75%	9 56.25%	1 6.25%	0 0.00%	16 100.00%
	35 - 44	2 20.00%	2 20.00%	2 20.00%	3 30.00%	1 10.00%	10 100.00%
	45 - 54	3 18.75%	7 43.75%	2 12.50%	1 6.25%	3 18.75%	16 100.00%
	55 - 64	7 29.17%	7 29.17%	3 12.50%	3 12.50%	4 16.67%	24 100.00%
	65 - 74	1 14.29%	2 28.57%	2 28.57%	0 0.00%	2 28.57%	7 100.00%
	75 - 84	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	85 or older	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	17 20.00%	24 28.24%	23 27.06%	10 11.76%	11 12.94%	85 100.00%

		Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Commercial studio					
		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
What is your age range?	18 - 24	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	3 27.27%	5 45.45%	3 27.27%	11 100.00%
	25 - 34	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	7 43.75%	7 43.75%	2 12.50%	16 100.00%
	35 - 44	0 0.00%	2 18.18%	5 45.45%	3 27.27%	1 9.09%	11 100.00%
	45 - 54	1 5.26%	3 15.79%	7 36.84%	3 15.79%	5 26.32%	19 100.00%
	55 - 64	1 4.17%	4 16.67%	9 37.50%	4 16.67%	6 25.00%	24 100.00%
	65 - 74	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 16.67%	2 33.33%	3 50.00%	6 100.00%
	75 - 84	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	85 or older	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	2 2.30%	9 10.34%	32 36.78%	24 27.59%	20 22.99%	87 100.00%

		Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Mobile devices					
		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
What is your age range?	18 - 24	2 16.67%	9 75.00%	0 0.00%	1 8.33%	0 0.00%	12 100.00%
	25 - 34	5 31.25%	8 50.00%	2 12.50%	1 6.25%	0 0.00%	16 100.00%
	35 - 44	6 60.00%	2 20.00%	1 10.00%	0 0.00%	1 10.00%	10 100.00%
	45 - 54	2 10.53%	10 52.63%	2 10.53%	0 0.00%	5 26.32%	19 100.00%
	55 - 64	3 12.50%	5 20.83%	7 29.17%	3 12.50%	6 25.00%	24 100.00%
	65 - 74	0 0.00%	1 16.67%	2 33.33%	0 0.00%	3 50.00%	6 100.00%
	75 - 84	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	85 or older	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	18 20.69%	35 40.23%	14 16.09%	5 5.75%	15 17.24%	87 100.00%

		Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Vocal looper	Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Recording software	Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Home studio	Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Commercial studio	Do you USE the following in your SONGWRITING PROCESS? You may choose more than one or add your own - Mobile devices
What is your age range?	Chi Square	27.95*	22.01*	22.50*	17.68*	41.18*
	Degrees of Freedom	28	28	28	28	28
	p-value	0.47	0.78	0.76	0.93	0.05

**Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.*

APPENDIX S

Vocal Qualities/Importance of Singing

		Is SINGING important to you?						
		Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important	I am not sure	Total
In relation to your VOICE, are the following IMPORTANT to you? - A unique and different vocal sound	Extremely important	16 76.19%	3 14.29%	1 4.76%	1 4.76%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	21 100.00%
	Very important	18 62.07%	8 27.59%	1 3.45%	2 6.90%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	29 100.00%
	Moderately important	17 65.38%	8 30.77%	1 3.85%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	26 100.00%
	Slightly important	9 81.82%	1 9.09%	1 9.09%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	11 100.00%
	Never important	3 60.00%	0 0.00%	2 40.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	5 100.00%
	Total	63 68.48%	20 21.74%	6 6.52%	3 3.26%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	92 100.00%
In relation to your VOICE, are the following IMPORTANT to you? - A vocal sound that is true to me	Extremely important	39 76.47%	9 17.65%	1 1.96%	2 3.92%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	51 100.00%
	Very important	21 61.76%	10 29.41%	2 5.88%	1 2.94%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	34 100.00%
	Moderately important	2 40.00%	1 20.00%	2 40.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	5 100.00%
	Slightly important	1 25.00%	0 0.00%	2 50.00%	0 0.00%	1 25.00%	0 0.00%	4 100.00%
	Never important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	63 67.02%	20 21.28%	7 7.45%	3 3.19%	1 1.06%	0 0.00%	94 100.00%
In relation to your VOICE, are the following IMPORTANT to you? - Vocal technique and singing skill	Extremely important	19 82.61%	3 13.04%	0 0.00%	1 4.35%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	23 100.00%
	Very important	25 73.53%	6 17.65%	2 5.88%	1 2.94%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	34 100.00%
	Moderately important	17 56.67%	9 30.00%	3 10.00%	1 3.33%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	30 100.00%
	Slightly important	2 33.33%	3 50.00%	1 16.67%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	6 100.00%
	Never important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%
	Total	63 67.02%	21 22.34%	6 6.38%	3 3.19%	1 1.06%	0 0.00%	94 100.00%
In relation to your VOICE, are the following IMPORTANT to you? - Communicating what I have to say using my voice	Extremely important	37 71.15%	11 21.15%	3 5.77%	1 1.92%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	52 100.00%
	Very important	23 67.65%	8 23.53%	1 2.94%	2 5.88%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	34 100.00%
	Moderately important	3 42.86%	2 28.57%	2 28.57%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	7 100.00%
	Slightly important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 50.00%	0 0.00%	1 50.00%	0 0.00%	2 100.00%
	Never important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	63 66.32%	21 22.11%	7 7.37%	3 3.16%	1 1.05%	0 0.00%	95 100.00%
In relation to your VOICE, are the following IMPORTANT to you? - Other (1) - Please describe	Extremely important	12 75.00%	1 6.25%	2 12.50%	1 6.25%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	16 100.00%
	Very important	2 66.67%	0 0.00%	1 33.33%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	3 100.00%
	Moderately important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Slightly important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Never important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	14 73.68%	1 5.26%	3 15.79%	1 5.26%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	19 100.00%
In relation to your VOICE, are the following IMPORTANT to you? - Other (2) - Please describe	Extremely important	7 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	7 100.00%
	Very important	1 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%
	Moderately important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100.00%
	Slightly important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Never important	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 100.00%
	Total	8 88.89%	0 0.00%	1 11.11%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	9 100.00%

		Is SINGING important to you?
In relation to your VOICE, are the following IMPORTANT to you? - A unique and different vocal sound	Chi Square	16.79*
	Degrees of Freedom	20
	p-value	0.67

**Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.*

		Is SINGING important to you?
In relation to your VOICE, are the following IMPORTANT to you? - A vocal sound that is true to me	Chi Square	46.54*
	Degrees of Freedom	20
	p-value	0.00

**Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.*

APPENDIX S

		Is SINGING important to you?
In relation to your VOICE, are the following IMPORTANT to you? - Vocal technique and singing skill	Chi Square	103.99*
	Degrees of Freedom	20
	p-value	0.00

**Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.*

		Is SINGING important to you?
In relation to your VOICE, are the following IMPORTANT to you? - Communicating what I have to say using my voice	Chi Square	60.85*
	Degrees of Freedom	20
	p-value	0.00

**Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.*

		Is SINGING important to you?
In relation to your VOICE, are the following IMPORTANT to you? - Other (1) - Please describe	Chi Square	1.09*
	Degrees of Freedom	20
	p-value	1.00

**Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.*

		Is SINGING important to you?
In relation to your VOICE, are the following IMPORTANT to you? - Other (2) - Please describe	Chi Square	9.00*
	Degrees of Freedom	20
	p-value	0.98

**Note: The Chi-Square approximation may be inaccurate - expected frequency less than 5.*

Appendix T of this thesis has been removed as it may contain sensitive/confidential content