The Interdisciplinary Musician

Negotiating Identities in Higher Music Education

Veronica Ski-Berg

Master’s thesis in musicology

Department of Musicology
University of Oslo
April 2017
Music students are faced with challenges of tomorrow that higher music education does not yet teach them how to handle. The creative hierarchies of institutionalized music have been found to hinder students’ musical autonomy, and are therefore now being challenged by music scholars who argue that the changing job market demands creativities. In tandem with this, there is a trend among music students to experiment with social and musical boundaries through the exploration of contrasting disciplines in higher music education. This thesis has investigated this dual trend, in an attempt to understand the interplay between the rapid changes in music industries, the needs of interdisciplinary music students, and the educational policies that surround them. Why do some students participate in this trend, and what are the implications of this? Twelve students from the Norwegian Academy of Music were interviewed as part of this case study, and while the findings suggest that there are notable misconceptions of creativity present in higher music education, the students were also supported in their creative endeavors — as long as they were resilient. Further, although social expectations are of such strength that it can be dangerous for students to reject the social norms, it was an altered state of mind that liberated the students from their perceived limitations. Despite a lack of creative role models (in particular for female students), they changed directions independently of the social environment, and felt empowered by their actions. It is their transition — with its restrictions, insights, and opportunities — that this thesis presents.
I would like to thank all of the candidates for sharing your stories in this case study. Without your participation, there would not have been a thesis to write. Thank you for your honesty and enthusiasm, and for being a part of the dialogue.

I would also like to thank my supervisor, Kyle Devine, for guiding me through the academic landscape. Thank you for your attention to detail, and for always taking my ideas seriously.

And finally, to my dearest friends and family, whom I can always trust to keep my spirits up: Thank you for your patience and understanding in this intense period, and for offering your honest comments on this study when I have needed it the most. And, of course, thank you for always making me laugh. You are an inspiration to me every day.

Oslo, April 2017

Veronica Ski-Berg
To develop their career creativities, students need to challenge everything they know about being a musician. This includes everything they thought they knew when they chose to study music, everything we have told them since, and every barrier they perceive to be in their way.

Bennett (2014, p. 242)
# Table of contents

## 1 Introduction

1.1 Topic
   1.1.1 Interest
   1.1.2 Research questions and findings
   1.1.3 Definitions

1.2 Context
   1.2.1 Profile
   1.2.2 Delimitation

1.3 Structure

## 2 Literature review

2.1 The sociology of music education
   2.1.1 Hegemonies
   2.1.2 Ideologies
   2.1.3 The mastery misconception

2.2 The call for creativity
   2.2.1 Higher music education
   2.2.2 ‘Museum music’

## 3 Framework

3.1 Creativity
   3.1.1 The systems model
   3.1.2 Multiple creativities

3.2 The music student
   3.2.1 Identity
   3.2.2 Motivation

3.3 The categories
   3.3.1 The window of musical discourse
   3.3.2 The model of synthesis

## 4 Methods

4.1 Research design
   4.1.1 The qualitative research interview
   4.1.2 Selection of interview candidates
   4.1.3 Fieldwork

4.2 Empirical data
   4.2.1 Transcription and coding
1 Introduction

I think that people who listen to music, or go to concerts. Nobody is questioning whether they listen to different music at home or at a party or at a festival. There are very few people that listen to one specific genre all the time.

Candidate G

1.1 Topic

Is the music student merely a reflection of higher music education, or does higher music education in fact reflect its students? Such questions are recognized in educational settings these days, and have even inspired new study programs (e.g. Olthius 2015). The job market is changing due to rapid technological advancements, which has indeed led to an insistence on rethinking the entire music profession, be it the renewal of hierarchical structures or the need to develop musical entrepreneurship (e.g. Burnard and Haddon 2015). However, the diverse disciplines within the musical field (e.g. music performance, composition, musicology) have such competing views on what constitutes musical quality that music students have begun to explore them independently. This trend — the students’ exploration of contrasting disciplines in higher music education — is the main topic of this thesis.

While there are many reasons why students decide to explore new directions in higher music education, the trend itself aligns with larger societal tendencies: The job market that students have to face once they graduate is today expecting more than specialized knowledge (Rowley et al. 2015), whether the potential employer is advertising for collaborative skills, dual competencies, or creative thinking. Further, the specialized nature of music education, with its social expectations and musical ideologies (Green 2008), conflicts with this creative development. This discrepancy between educational policies and the changing job market — which I refer to as a ‘reality gap’ — is the focus of this thesis, and is investigated through fieldwork and interviews with twelve students at the Norwegian Academy of Music, all of whom have become more interdisciplinary during their studies.

1.1.1 Interest

Already when I was a student at the Norwegian Academy of Music myself, this trend was becoming noticeable. It was perplexing to observe other students go through their transitions, because there was not much talk on the subject. In fact, a lot of the literature that has been
relevant to this thesis was not even published at the time, and it is therefore plausible that the creative endeavors of students (in addition to the changing music industries, of course) have been a contributor to the call for creativity in higher education (2.2). However, whether it was the growing amount of research on the topic or the increasing diversity in music itself that triggered the continuing trend, the fact is that I experienced a dischord between the desire to explore and the expectations to conform already as a student in 2010. Despite the fact that the academy encouraged us to collaborate across disciplines in the welcome speech, the culture was only partially open to this. The interest in (the hindrance of) the creative needs of music students has therefore emerged from observed phenomenons, and I was pleasantly surprised to discover that there is now a complementary trend among music scholars on this topic. The opportunity to study the very phenomenon that I had observed years earlier had presented itself, and given my own interdisciplinary background, I was thrilled to exploit it.

1.1.2 Research questions and findings

The aim of this thesis has been twofold: First (at a micro level), it aims to investigate why music students change directions in higher music education (e.g. their needs and aspirations), and second (at a macro level), to study how this perceived trend to become interdisciplinary fits into the bigger picture (e.g. the reality gap). The overarching research question therefore relates to both levels, in an attempt to understand how they intertwine with one another:

‘Why do some students at the Norwegian Academy of Music decide to change directions during their study period, and what are the implications of this trend?’

In order to study how the micro and macro level connect, this thesis understands creativity as created in the meeting of the two levels (3.1.1). Other relevant research questions have therefore been: ‘How did social and musical norms affect the students’ transition?’ and ‘What needs were going unmet in their former musical pursuit?’. Given that my interest in the topic is based on an observed phenomenon, the hypothesis of this thesis is the result of applying theory to personal experiences. I had observed that some students appeared to be pinned down by musical norms against their will, and the hypothesis is therefore that ‘some students are artists trapped in an artisan’s study’.

---

1 The increasing interest in creativity in research, and the insistence on developing creativities in higher education (e.g. Jackson et al. 2006).
The hypothesis was found to be accurate for a majority of the interview candidates, but not for all. However, although the minority did not portray their study program as ‘an artisan’s study’, they still changed directions for the same reasons as the majority group; to achieve autonomy.\(^2\) All of the candidates were motivated by pursuing personal projects, but they also displayed a strong need to balance this expression of individuality with social belonging. The nuances in this area were linked to their backgrounds, where musical ideologies had a major impact on their experiences. However, regardless of these differences, they all recognized the changing market, and adviced the academy to acknowledge the freelancing musician.

1.1.3 Definitions

The research question and hypothesis include some terms that need to be defined. First, \textit{changing directions} may refer to any transition from one musical pursuit to another (e.g. between genres, study programs, instruments etc). Second, the mention of \textit{artist} and \textit{artisan} are taken from the notion of the ‘mastery misconception’ (Hargreaves \textit{et al.} 2012), where the former represents a more creative approach to teaching and learning music, whereas the latter represents a more technical approach.

The title also introduces a key concept: \textit{the interdisciplinary musician}. A \textit{discipline} is here interpreted as any musical tradition or practice (including various study programs, genres and instruments), thus giving the term a broader meaning than it normally has. The reason behind this unusual employment of the term, is that I have refrained from mentioning any specific details of the candidates’ background.\(^3\) With this in mind, the interdisciplinary musician is specialized in more than one discipline, and all of the candidates therefore fit this description.

1.2 Context

This thesis builds on the arguments from scholars that are championing the development of creativities in higher music education (e.g. Burnard 2014a). Although the trend is new, some of the arguments have been coming for a long time: Theories of creativity have since the 1990s advocated the social understanding of creativity (e.g. Csiksentmihalyi 1990), and the social psychology of music has similarly emphasized the reciprocal relationship between

\(^2\) The desire for autonomy is considered to be a typical trait of the ‘artist’ (6.2.1).

\(^3\) This was done in order to protect their identities. However, their connections to each other are still accounted for in an anonymized manner (appendix 2).
the individual and the social (e.g. Crozier 1997). However, in order to study the choices of music students, the most applicable literature has been the sociology of music education, with its interplay between the ways in which music is taught, and the resulting understandings of it in society. Given that higher music education was a neglected area of research until recently (Jørgensen 2009, p. 14), it has been particularly interesting to combine established theories with new realities, such as combining musical ideologies with the propositions of the creative agenda. Within this web of connections, the interdisciplinary musician is presented.

1.2.1 Profile

The Norwegian Academy of Music (hereby ‘NMH’) is referred to as ‘a leading artistic and academic university college with over 600 students’ (Norges Musikkhøgskole 2014, 04.08). NMH did not officially open until 1973, yet the academy has a heritage ‘that extends back to the 19th century’ (ibid.). Although this illustrates a shorter history as an established institution than many other European institutions (Norges Musikkhøgskole 2017, 24.04), the academy has nevertheless managed to create a reputation for itself, and aims to be ‘Europe’s most modern institution within higher music education’ (Norges Musikkhøgskole 2014, 29.07). As the thesis progressed, so did the academy (or at least the impression of it). There have been many institutional changes (only within the time frame of this thesis), and recent interviews suggest that NMH now intends to recognize the ‘creative musician’ (Jensen 2017, 27.03). Indeed, new study programs were introduced when this thesis was first forming (e.g. NoCom, live electronics, and jazz composition), and already one year later there are even more new study programs available to future students (e.g. Opera Répétiteur, film composition, or piano tuner). Drawing from this experience, it is plausible that NMH will offer even more changes with time.

1.2.2 Delimitation

Because the aim of this thesis has been to investigate a phenomenon on both micro and macro level, it has been very important to create some restrictions in this work. Deciding on the research context has been one way of doing this, and the profile of NMH has been another way. However, most of the delimitation took place already prior to the fieldwork, when it was decided that the case study would consist of qualitative interviews with twelve students from NMH. The selected interview candidates had all changed directions during their study period, and therefore acquired an interdisciplinary musical identity, a key criterion for the study.
1.3 Structure

The following chapters of this thesis will account for relevant theory (2) and framework (3), elaborate on the fieldwork (4) and research results (5), and discuss their connections (6).

The second chapter offers a literature review of the sociology of music education, in which relevant studies and theories are accounted for. It will primarily focus on musical ideologies and hegemonies in music education, but also aims to connect the dots between these theories and the realities in higher music education today. The third chapter then explains the chosen framework for understanding this interplay, and includes models on and theories of creativity, identity, and motivation. Given that the framework is built on two main areas of research (theories of creativity and the social psychology of music), the last section of the chapter is dedicated to combining them in a model of synthesis.

Further, the process of delimitation will be presented in the fourth chapter, together with an explanation of methods in the context of qualitative research. Some of the reflections and concerns of the case study are also presented concisely, in particular with reference to the fieldwork and NMH. After this, the research findings are presented in a longer chapter that elaborate on selected quotations from the case study. The findings point towards some of the research already mentioned, and builds on the creative model by Csikszentmihalyi presented in chapter three. The quotations are categorized in a manner that supports the dynamic of the creative model, first with a prefix to the candidates’ desire to change directions, followed by their individual needs and beliefs in 5.1, then their perceptions of the environment in 5.2, and their opinions of the institution in 5.3, and finally their overall experience in 5.4. The last section also offers some suggestion to the Norwegian Academy of Music (and higher music education institutions in general), based on their personal (yet collective) needs.

The discussion chapter will merge the presented literature and findings together, first with an introduction of the key findings in 6.1, then by zooming out to the larger issues. While the first subchapter discusses the negotiation in identities, the following subchapters discuss the findings in the light of misconceptions in higher music education and the reality gap of the changing market. All three areas are then brought together in the shorter final section, as a concluding remark to the chapter. Chapter seven will serve as a shorter coda to the thesis, in which further research is proposed, the most significant research findings are accounted for, and the conclusions from the discussion chapter are summarized.
2 Literature review

The literature presented in this chapter is an overview of relevant theories from the sociology of music that have been employed in this thesis. The chapter first introduces more general phenomena (2.1), and then those that are specific to higher music education (2.2). Because there is a lot of literature on the sociology of music education, the focus has here been on the hegemonies and ideologies that are applicable to higher music education (e.g. the teacher/apprentice relationship). However, all music students have been exposed to pre-college music education, and so all of the phenomena described in this chapter relates to higher music education in one way or another.

2.1 The sociology of music education

The sociology of music education is interested in how music education relates to wider, societal issues (Wright and Davies 2010). There are undeniably many issues that need to be dealt with properly in education (e.g. differences in class, gender and ethnicity), but the main interest of this thesis has been to delve into the distrust in musical ideologies (e.g. Garnett 2014; Hargreaves et al. 2012; Green 2012; Goehr 2002). The reason for this is that higher music education is challenged by a reality gap, between the educational content that it offers and the actual demands of students’ future careers. This discord is the basis of this thesis, and the main topics of this literature review are therefore the hegemonies and ideologies of music education. Many of the terms that are introduced in this subchapter have been borrowed from Green (2008), a leading scholar on music education, and it is her perspective on music sociology that has been employed. As Green notes:

… music sociology must construct its objects, in full recognition of the complexities of individual and social mediation. It must therefore consciously construct both the institutions in which individuals think and act, and the subjectivity of individuals themselves in connection with musical structure; and it must negotiate with thinking and interpreting actors who have their own ideas and experiences, being confronted with various styles of music in different settings; but it must remember that the coexistence of all these spheres creates the phenomena that are its object of study.

Green (2008, p. 16)
2.1.1 Hegemonies

Already in the lower grades of music education, the classroom is filled with cultural codes and norms that are internalized by pupils (Hallam 2009, p. 291). This makes the teacher very powerful, as the keeper of knowledge, and children who receive support from their teachers are more likely to excel in music (Davidson et al. 1997, p. 290). However, while the teacher’s friendliness is particularly important in the early stages of musical development, it has been found that the teacher’s professional qualities become increasingly important in adolescence (Sloboda and Howe 1991). This tendency aligns with the transforming curriculum in music education, from being inclusive and expressive with younger children, to focusing more on performing goals with the older (Lamont and Maton 2010). Professional qualities are even more emphasized in higher music education, where teachers are expected to be working as professional musicians in addition to teaching (Jørgensen 2009, p. 135). Even though this is of importance to the teacher’s status, it has also been found that tension in the student/teacher relationship is limiting to the student’s musical development, and that it can hinder students in developing creative thinking (e.g. González-Moreno 2014; Burt and Mills 2006). As Green (2010) argues, teachers need to consider that music students are required to engage in music that may conflict with their personal values and desires. Without dialogue, the student will simply recreate the teacher’s musical ideas (illustrated in 2.2.3).

Another area that could cause tension in music education is the notion of gender roles. This was finally put on the agenda during the 1950s and 60s (Kemp 1997, p. 35-36), followed by devout research in Sweden during the 1990s (Olsson 1997, p. 292). It has been found that twice as many girls than boys learn to play instruments, that girls are more positive towards musical activities, and that they perform better in examinations (Gaunt and Hallam 2009; O’Neill 1997). Despite these findings, musical works of women tend to be viewed as less worthy than men’s work (Clarke et al. 2010, p. 26), and teachers often think that boys are more capable of composing music (Green 2012, p. 270). This is so surprising if one thinks about the extensive lack of female role models in music history (e.g. Citron 2000; Battersby 1990), but does it not present a problem? Only recently has there been an increase in female professional musicians (Goldin and Rouse 2000) and music students (Jørgensen 2009), and most teachers in higher music education in the US and Canada are white, male and around fifty years old (Hewitt and Thompson 2006). If less stereotypes are to be achieved, it is vital for teachers to be sensitive to the prejudices that students have been (and perhaps still are) exposed to in higher music education.
2.1.2 Ideologies

An ideology is here understood by Green’s (2008) description of it as a ‘collective mental force which both springs from, and perpetuates our material social relations’ (p. 2). In other words, ideologies are essential to society, because it is through the ‘historical character of experience that we can in any degree share with others, or have society at all’ (p. 7). At the same time, ideologies also explain things ‘in a way that is to the advantage of certain social strata and the ill of others’ (p. 2), meaning that there are some parties in music education that benefit from the current ideologies, while others do not. The dominant ideology is (and has been throughout the twentieth century) the ideology of aesthetic autonomy, firmly grounded in the classical canon (Green 2012, p. 267). This ideology was founded in the ‘great tradition of nineteenth-century art’, in which the ‘human essence as the transcendent, ideal realm of eternal and unchanging capacities’ was the ideal (Green 2008, p. 199). When the nineteenth-century art was brought into academia as an ‘object of study’, and scholars consequently became ‘guardians of its traditional meaning’ (Frith 1996, p. 116), that preserved music was titled the ‘great music’ (Green 2008, p. 156). Its autonomy had, as it was interpreted, survived history. Green elaborates further on this phenomenon:

The ideology of autonomy makes it appear that music gains existence by virtue of its own natural and ahistorical laws. … [It] denies the fact that it is necessary for us to have socially-derived, learnt familiarity with inherent meanings, in order to recognise music at all: this denial makes the materials of music and their organisation appear to be understandable by virtue, not of social knowledge and historical being, but of nature.

Green (2008, p. 181)

As Green (2008) argues, we can only interpret the meaning of a dominant seventh chord ‘if we are familiar with tonal harmony in the broad classical style’ (p. 54). Musical style is reincarnated through social relations and institutions, and musical meaning is ‘collectively defined through history’ as a social construct (ibid., p. 69). Ideologies, then, exist not only in the immediate words and actions that take place in the classroom, but also in the written culture of music education, such as music text books and the curriculum itself (ibid., p. 83). Popular music, for example, was not a part of music education until the 1970s (and later), and it has taken time for teachers to adapt to the changes (Green 2012). The consequence was

---

4 In fact, a few months prior to the publishment of this thesis there was an online debate on whether NMH should include popular music as a study program or not (Schwencke 2017, 16.02; Johansen and Rian 2017, 20.02).
that most popular musicians learnt to play music by ear in groups as a leisure activity, while classical music was typically taught in private lessons that included written material (ibid.). Ironically, both musical styles strive for the same ‘artistic greatness’ that is autonomy, and therefore act on the same musical fetishism (Green 2008, p. 187).5

Another ideology that also fetishizes autonomy, is the anti-notation ideology. But while the classical canon cherishes the ‘great music’, the anti-notation ideology intend to forget the past masters, or rather, ‘fight alienation and the power wielded by writing’, in order to relate to the immediate environment (Green 2008, p. 240). This was brought into music education by the ‘creative music movement’, where children were encouraged to perform, improvise, and compose music freely, without needing any specific knowledge of musical style or technique (ibid., p. 224).6 While this approach has certainly led to more creative activities in the music curriculum (e.g. Webster 2009), its ‘apparent freedom from rules and conventions’, and the fact that ‘skill and technique’ (or ‘anything to do with classical music in particular’) were treated as if they were ‘cold barriers to an authentic, self-expressive liberated, autonomous and essential musical experience’, ironically resonate the very ideology that was meant to be rejected by it because both idealize autonomy (Green 2008, p. 225).

Following Green’s (2008) argumentation, this thesis will use the ideology of autonomy as an overarching frame for the desire for autonomy in any musical style or expression, as well as in and amongst musicians and their musical identities. The two orientations, the classical canon and the creative music movement, both answer to this ideology, and they both strive for (or rather fetishize) autonomy, even though their musical styles are very different. This is because the ideology is closely linked to the ‘myth of the starving artist’, where the artist is portrayed to be a ‘Bohemian rebel, outsider and social critic who sacrificed status, money and material comfort for the supposed freedom this afforded the imaginative spirit to pursue individual creative expression’ (Bain 2005, pp. 28-29). With this in mind, it is possible that the some interdisciplinary musician (with relevant background) is more aware of the nuances in the two orientations, and that this can lead to more dialogue and understanding in different environments. This is one of the questions that this thesis hopes to shed some light on.

5 Musical fetishism is the act of perceiving innate musical qualities as an autonomous essence, ‘as if they were beyond us’, despite the fact that this quality is produced ‘collectively and diversely’ through history (Green 2008, p. 156).

6 The ‘creative music movement’ developed in the beginning of the 1970s by music educators such as Paynter and Aston (1970), and is an important reason why there has been an increase in compositional content and activities in music education (Green 2008, p. 224; see also Webster 2009).
2.1.3 The mastery misconception

There is a ‘hierarchy of musical ability’ present in music education, and the evaluative and public nature of it can make it challenging for children to feel musical because ‘differences among peers may become readily apparent’ (Austin et al. 2006, p. 222). Music performance is the most critical activity, because it presents one of the main goals of the classical canon, namely to master an instrument (Gaunt and Hallam 2009, p. 278). The requirement to learn the technical skills of instruments before being able to engage in more creative activities, could also lead to the oversight of a diversity of musical strengths and many musical children (Kemp 1997, p. 30). The classical canon has therefore, for better or worse, motivated (and frightened) many aspiring musicians to strive for technical perfection and the recreation of repertoire, ‘an obsessive goal for many young musicians’, prioritized at the expense of their creative thinking and personal expression (González-Moreno 2014, p. 87). Because research has neglected the study of drop-outs (e.g. McPherson and Hallam 2009, p. 258), there is no way of knowing whether the neglect of creativity could be one of the underlying reasons why students drop out. However, Kemp (1997) suggested that this could be the case. Although his suggestion was made already two decades ago, it is still valid.

At this point we may wish to speculate whether certain implicit beliefs within music circles may also be reflected here as well as possibly causing drop-out. The view that pupils must initially learn the skills and knowledge of music in order to be fully initiated into the discipline before engaging in interpretative, imaginative, and creative activities might render the early stages of learning too uncomfortable for the more independent types.

Kemp (1997, p. 30)

The relevance is evident in the increasing split between elite and mass music in society. In fact, this split led music educators to challenge the dominant ideology in music education, and their demands resulted in new approaches to teaching music. As a result, it is now common to distinguish between the classical tradition’s specialist approach and the creative movement’s generalist approach. The former selects talented pupils and gives them expert tuition in order to ‘reach high levels of achievement within the classical tradition’, whereas

---

7 Although there has been a lack of study on drop-outs, there have been studies on amateur musicians that show a rise in amateur creativity (e.g. Burnard 2014a). There could be a correlation.

8 The classical canon was for example challenged by the ‘creative music movement’ in the beginning of the 1970s, then by music educators who fought for a broader curriculum (Green 2012). This also took place simultaneously as the ‘new sociology of education’ movement (Green 2008, p. 75).
the latter is based on the premise that ‘music can be performed, composed, and appreciated by all pupils at all levels’ (Olsson 1997, p. 295). Because musical talent can go unnoticed if musical abilities are measured in terms of instrumental skills only (McPherson and Williamon 2006), teachers tend to prefer the generalist approach (as the creative movement proves). Furthermore, research has suggested that children are more inclined to think of themselves as musical when participating in the generalist approach, given that the specialist approach distinguishes between the ‘musical’ and the ‘unmusical’ (Hargeaves et al. 2012). The belief that children with the most technical skills are the most musically gifted has therefore been rejected by music scholars on the premise that it is a misconception. Hargreaves, MacDonald and Miell (2012) refer to this the ‘mastery misconception’:

The consistent emphasis on the technical aspects of performance in music education in many countries, and the corresponding lack of emphasis on critical thinking and the development of creativity, could be another reason why many people feel ‘unmusical’. This ‘artisan’ approach to music education, in which students are required to develop advanced technical skills, underplays the importance of creative thinking and creative expression, and contributes toward the ‘fundamental mastery misconception’.

Hargreaves, MacDonald and Miell (2012, pp. 130-131)

The mastery misconception is not only related to the early stages of music education. It is also present in higher music education as the demands for perfection in the teacher/apprentice relationship. Indeed, several studies indicate that teachers are the ‘talkers’ whereas students are the ‘doers’ in instrumental lessons (e.g. Karlsson and Juslin 2008; Young et al. 2003). There are, however, notable differences in genres concerning this norm. For example, jazz musicians are more free to develop a ‘sense of exploration ... spontaneity and creativity’, while classical musicians are ‘expected to pursue accuracy’ (González-Moreno 2014, p. 89). These findings make sense, given that the most valued performances in classical music often ‘falls within well-established traditions’ (ibid., p. 88). However, this norm conflicts with the current call for creativity in higher music education, and an increasing amount of classical music students desire more entrepreneurship and creativity in their studies (e.g. González-Moreno 2014; Bennett 2007). The mastery misconception will therefore address any neglect of creative thinking as the result of a favoritism towards technical skills in this case study.

---

9 An overview of the current ‘teacher/apprentice relationship’ situation in higher music education can be found in Jørgensen (2009, p. 66). See also Clarke (2011, p. 22) for a historic description.
2.2 The call for creativity

Education as an institution has been concerned with transmitting past knowledge, yet the future needs of students are no longer dependent on specialized disciplines but rather on their ability to think critically. In a world that is increasingly shaped by rapid developments in technology, connectivity and globalization, scholars have begun to question how universities are preparing students for their future careers and challenges (e.g. Reid et al. 2008; Jackson et al. 2006). One of the reasons behind this trend could be that teachers are often ‘expected to perform in specific and regulated ways’ (Burnard 2014a, p. 7), a result of governments taking increasingly control of the teaching profession (e.g. Alexander 1992). Music educators, then, strive to be heard in politics as well as within the music domain itself, to fight the established ideologies and finally ‘achieve improved social status and legitimacy’ (Burnard 2014a, p. 6). Even though there has been ‘a growing interest in improvisation’ (Burnard 2006, p. 379), and composition has entered the classroom at last (e.g. Kanellopoulos and Maton 2010; Webster 2009), these regulations cause fixed guidelines to and interpretations of the music curriculum. However, while all teachers are obligated to teach specialized material in isolated disciplines, research has at the same time indicated that graduates need to have a broader skillset now than what was needed in the past in order to meet the demands of the current job market (Rowley et al. 2015). This reality gap, between educational policies and the actual market, has triggered many debates concerning the role of universities. Csikszentmihalyi, a leading scholar on creativity, claims that education need to change:

Schools teach how to answer, not to question. They teach isolated disciplines that, as the years pass, become more and more difficult to integrate. Reference to the present, let alone the future, is lacking in most school curricula which are dominated — understandably, perhaps — by a concern with transmitting past knowledge. Yet the past is no longer as good a guide to the future as it once had been. Young people have to learn how to relate and apply past ways of knowing to a constantly changing kaleidoscope of ideas and events. And that requires learning to be creative.

Csikszentmihalyi (2006, p. xix)

As Csikszentmihalyi (2006) argues, applying past ways of knowing to current and future circumstances is what education needs to prioritize in order for students to cope with the realities of contemporary society and its radical changes. Scholars are now advocating the role of creative thinking in education, and even though higher music education has its own set of specific challenges, this overarching debate has surely influenced the current championing
of creativities in higher music education (Burnard 2014a). The will to expand and interpret the music curriculum is also present in elementary music education, and the use of music technology, for instance, has become very popular (e.g. Webster and Hickey 2006). The call for creativity is, in other words, a phenomenon connected to wider, societal issues, in which students need to be better prepared for their future careers. In order to understand the role of the interdisciplinary musician in this context, the next sections will elaborate on higher music education as an institution, as well as on how the nature of music as an object of study.

### 2.2.1 Higher music education

According to Jørgensen (2009), there are two broad categories of higher music education institutions: the conservatoire tradition and the university tradition (p. 24). NMH belongs to the former, the European conservatoire tradition, but its tradition is shorter than the average European institution (1.2.1). In light of the call for creativity, this prerequisite is beneficial for meeting the requirements of the changing climate in the conservatoire tradition, because higher music education institutions are constantly reorganized, and there is a growing trend to include scientific studies in institutions (Jørgensen 2009). Research was primarily carried out in musicological departments in universities in Scandinavia until the 1970s, but has been increasingly included in most of the music academies since then (Jørgensen 2004). While this growth is ‘the major force behind the increase of research in music education’ (ibid., p. 291), the inclusion may lead to ‘conflict in values and traditions between artistic, educational, and scientific ways of thinking and working’ (Jørgensen 2009, p. 25).\(^{10}\) However, while research on music education in general has increased, research on higher music education itself was neglected until recently, in Norway and elsewhere (ibid., p. 14).

Another trend in higher music education is the amalgamation of institutions, often forced on them by governments. Because higher music education institutions usually generate little of their budget themselves, they are dependent on governmental funding (Jørgensen 2009), especially when student fees are as low as in Norway. One of the consequences of this is that the government oversees the institution’s activity and development, and initiates changes if necessary. According to Roennfeldt (2007), more than two thirds of university based music institutions in Australia have experienced changes during the past ten years as a consequence of amalgamation, and while such changes can lead to more interdisciplinary work, it is also a

\(^{10}\) While this is true, NMH has in fact made an effort to blur the lines with study programs such as The Norwegian Artistic Research Fellowships Programme (Norges Musikkhøgskole 2016, 30.09).
recipe for competition (e.g. in terms of resources). While there is no conclusive research on the topic yet (Jørgensen 2009), studies have indicated that some institutions may need to be amalgamated with other institutions due to a lack of enrollment or sufficient income (Gandre 2001). Even so, amalgamation is seen as a threat by almost half of the institutional leaders of higher music education institutions (Lancaster 2006), also at NMH.11

Again, this trend affects higher education in general, but it is plausible that arts institutions could be particularly challenged by amalgamation due to the elusive and social nature of art, the ideologies connected to it, and the fact that cultural changes may easily affect institutional autonomy due to these elements.12 Despite the fear of forced change, higher music education institutions indeed need to change in order to ‘adapt to new constraints and opportunities within a globalized cultural life’ (Jørgensen 2009, p. 24). Scholars are therefore encouraging institutional leaders to take charge of their institution’s development in order to include the creativities that are necessary in order to be adaptable:

Our ability to imagine and then invent institutional change is one of our greatest assets. To be successful, we need to recognise and harness our own creativities, and those of our colleagues and our students, while continually adapting and inventing creativities for accomplishing complex institutional change in an ever-changing and increasingly complex world.

Haddon and Burnard (2015, p. 277)

This complex picture of regulations and academic trends in higher music education may be the reason why NMH has decided to be ‘Europe’s most modern institution within higher music education’ (Norges Musikkhøgskole 2014, 29.07). This is a positive vision in terms of the reality gap, and also aligns with the proposition that ‘institutions need to consider whether they are still holding a gatekeeping role that is now redundant’ (Haddon and Burnard 2015, p. 272). Many higher music education institutions claim that their purpose is to teach students how to perform (Jørgensen 2009, p. 22), yet this does no longer prepare students sufficiently

---

11 The amalgamation trend is also visible in many Norwegian higher education institutions, also within the arts (e.g. Oslo School of Arts, Communication and Technology and Oslo National Academy of the Arts). The government has even suggested that NMH should be amalgamated with Oslo School of Architecture and Design and Oslo School of Arts in order to become an ‘Arts Academy’, but all of the institutional leaders have remained skeptical to this proposition (Larsen and Lie 2017, 26.01; 2017; Lie and Nordstrøm 2014, 23.10).

12 Jørgensen (2009) portrays institutional autonomy as a relative concept, but introduces its relevance in the context of addressing ‘independence and autonomy in what spheres [of the institution], and in relation to whom?’ (p. 27)
for their future careers (e.g. Rowley et al. 2015; Bennett 2007). Further, given that NMH has a short tradition, the modernization of the academy could be a wise development not only for meeting the demands of the job market but for building a reputation and enrollment numbers. NMH’s profile has indeed gotten more creative, as displayed in an article (published on the academy’s web pages merely a month prior to the publication of this thesis) where the principal stated the following:

The creative musician has to be given more weight; musicians who are specialized in one area, and at the same time able to work with other artistic processes. The distinction between the performing and creating musician is about to lose its meaning. The performing musician is expected to co-create, co-improvise and co-compose.

Jensen (2017, March 27)

The emphasis on creativity is a fairly recent development at the academy, and could be portraying how the call for creativity in academia influences institutions. However, there are still many questions to answer in terms of the implication of such changes, for example how creativity is to be assessed (Creech et al. 2014), whether or not the content of higher music education and pre-college music education should align (Jørgensen 2009, p. 161), and how the roles of external stakeholders such as orchestras would change (ibid., p. 187). In order to develop sustainable framework, scholars also claim that understanding ‘how young musicians most effectively learn and higher music education teachers most productively and creatively teach’ is a necessity (Burnard 2014a, p. 9). This, and the growing consensus among scholars that entrepreneurship is one way of achieving this understanding, could help music students cope with the changing norms in professional practice.\footnote{NMH has recently displayed an increased focus on entrepreneurship, in the curriculum as well as via entrepreneurial competitions and research conferences (Norges Musikkhøgskole 2017, 24.04).} It is therefore interesting to envision how the call for creativity may affect musical ideologies in higher music education, and how the needs of interdisciplinary students relate to this relationship.

2.2.2 ‘Museum music’

In the midst of academic trends and a changing job market, it is important to be aware of how musical values shift. The call for creativity can be traced back to the creative movement in the 1970s, when music educators started challenging the dominance of the classical canon in the music education curriculum. The result was a broader and more inclusive curriculum,
but also new study programs in higher music education.\textsuperscript{14} However, although the classical canon has led to an insistence on perfection and recreation, research has also indicated that other genres are reincarnated over time (e.g. Green 2012; Danielsen 2006). The critique is therefore not directed at the musical style of the classical canon, but at the musical experience that it offers. This distinction, between product and process, is also found in modern concepts such as ‘flow’ (Csikszentmihalyi 1997; see 5.1.1) and ‘musicking’ (Small 1998).\textsuperscript{15} It is first and foremost the institutionalized nature of the classical tradition that has been criticized (e.g. Goehr 1992). In fact, it has been argued that any musical discipline can be taught more creatively if we recognize how the diverse disciplines portray music in their hierarchies of creativity, as indicated by Garnett (2014) underneath.

Redefining music in terms of musical activity rather than musical works affects how we think of the musical experiences from which students will learn. In particular, it changes the way in which we think about creativity and different creativities. Rather than attributing the ability to create music solely to the composer of a ‘work’ that is realized in performance and listened to by an audience, we can recognize different forms of creativity in different musical traditions.

Garnett (2014, p. 14)

Higher music education institutions are changing, and the question that needs to be raised is not which musical discipline is more valuable but rather how institutions could be able to provide a multitude of disciplines by re-evaluating their approaches to teaching music. The split between elite and mass music, specialist and generalist approach to teaching music, is not an absolute. It even appears as though the musical styles strive for the ‘autonomous’ value and quality. What appears to be the underlying problem, then, does not concern aesthetics, nor value or tradition, but rather how institutions are forced to measure different expressions of art. Given that governments demand more regulations of educational institutions, I propose that the most reincarnated musical styles simply have more framework for measuring that kind of art. It is not the musical styles themselves that are being challenged in the call for creativity, but more precisely how the styles are taught — through creative hierarchies that have surfaced from canon formations.

\textsuperscript{14} According to Tønsberg (2013), ‘popular music programmes were established at all former purely classical music conservatoires in Norway’ between 1979 and 2004 (p. 145).

\textsuperscript{15} Music was made into a verb: ‘musicking’. Small (1998) states that ‘to music is to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing material for performance (what is called composing), or by dancing’ (p. 9).
Why does this line of argument matter to the interdisciplinary musician? I want to present two main reasons for its relevance: the misconception that classical music is museum music, and the risk of implementing creative exclusion. First, Green (2008) defends classical music as a style by explaining how its hierarchy of creativity emerged from canon formation. The fact that pupils are required ‘to accept and study the established meanings if they are to be successful’ in music education has led to a specific interpretation of classical music, and is one of the reasons why ‘musical fetishism has been largely unavoidable’ (ibid., p. 256). This is a direct result of institutionalization, yet the anti-notation ideology often refers to the style as if it ‘never included, or as if it integrally excluded, imitation or aural transmutation’ (Green 2008, p. 240). Green further dismisses the notion that classical music belongs in a museum by arguing that ‘music is living if it is invested with life by performers, and the only piece of music that is a museum-piece, is a score in a museum whose notes are never brought to sound’ (ibid., p. 240). Her argument also supports the proposition that any musical discipline is creative if we recognize its processes (as opposed to products). A similar perspective, that the institutionalization of music history is behind the manifestation of creative hierarchies, is also shared by Burnard (2014b):

… the primacy of composition and its associated hierarchy of ‘masterworks’ that were thought of as being perfectly formed, finished and ‘untouchable’, which came to emerge as ‘facts’ of music history, while, all the time, Mozart, the epitome of the ‘great genius’, employed a range of different practices, rather than just one.

Burnard (2014b, p. 78)

Second, the definition of creativity is both enhanced and constricted by its cultural context, and if a systems view of creativity is implemented in education without sufficient knowledge of the musical field (or creative learning and teaching), then such a framework might exclude the creative endeavours of students and cause less opportunities for creative choice (Burnard 2006, p. 357; see also Schmidt 2014). With the right framework, any musical style is creative. Debating which is the most creative is not what the creative agenda intend to achieve, and it is utterly important that the pitfalls of creative exclusion is recognized before creativity is institutionalized and integrated as part of the institutional culture. The challenge facing music educators today is therefore being able to create a balance between the ‘performance agenda and its standards of measured achievements’ and to offer students creative freedom (Burnard 2014b, p. 78).
Because of the dominance of the ideology of autonomy, it is plausible that some students may not want to ‘demystify the notion of divinely inspired creativity’ (Creech et al. 2014, p. 319). However, it is also plausible that they do not realize why they are identifying in this way. For example, a study by Bennett (2007) found that classical music students tend to identify as instrumentalists, but that it was easier for them to call themselves ‘musicians’ after gaining interdisciplinary experience (p. 188). Given that most music performance students aim for a performance career, this identification might have been expected of them. Thus, if students start to identify differently, then the changes in higher music education could imply an actual shift in ideals. Green (2008) claims that ‘gradual development of opposition will result in gradual overall change’ in ideologies (p. 83), and the relevant question is therefore: will there be a new ideology?

Only if it is accompanied by radical change, or the expressed desire for radical change, can any force expose the fact that the dominant ideology of the day springs out of historical, social relations: for in making this exposition, it correspondingly exposes ideology’s lack of application to the very concepts of abstract truth and legitimacy that ideology itself perpetuates, and upon which the continuation of the society in its present form relies.

Green (2008, p. 4)

Higher music education institutions are responsible for offering an education that properly prepare students for the changing job market (Rowley et al. 2015). The responsibility of NMH has therefore been presented as a dilemma in this chapter: On the one hand, higher music education serves a role as the guardian of music tradition and history (e.g. Frith 1996), but on the other hand, it must adapt to the ever-changing world in order to equip students with the skillset that they will need in their future careers (e.g. Jørgensen 2009). If ‘the purpose of higher music education is to equip student musicians for music careers’ (Bennett 2014, p. 234), then perhaps the time is ripe for changing from the dominant ‘romantic view of individual creativity’ to a broader understanding of the concept (Burnard and Haddon 2015, p. 3). This idea will be presented in the next chapter, accompanied by models and framework that have been employed in the case study.
3 Framework

In order to address the interplay between the changing market, educational policies, and the needs of music students, the systems model by Csikszentmihalyi has been employed (3.1.1). The reason for this is the interest of synthesis, given that it offers a triangle of reciprocal influence that is ideal for this case study. Further, models of identity (3.2.1) and motivation (3.2.2) have been used to explain the individual needs of the interview candidates, based on theories from the social psychology of music. Finally, all of the framework is combined in a model of synthesis (3.3).

3.1 Creativity

Although creativity as a phenomenon has been debated ‘in Western intellectual life since the time of Plato and Aristotle’, it was not until the latter half of the twentieth century that it gained recognition as a research topic of serious nature (Barrett 2009, p. 179). Since then, it has become a popular topic of research, and it is now acknowledged that ‘young people need to be able to cope with social and cultural change’ (Hargreaves and North 2008, p. 14). Music scholars and educators are therefore advocating the role of creativity in music education, and the growing amount of studies on the topic — referred to as the ‘creative agenda’ (Burnard 2014b, p. 78) — challenges the mastery misconception and other creative hierarchies that have been found to hinder creative freedom. It is therefore not the creative process itself that is important to this thesis, but rather how creativity fits into the needs of music students. This is the sociological approach to creativity, where it is studied as a cultural construct. As illustrated by Frith (2011):

For a sociologist the ‘question of creativity’ is not why are some people creative and others not, nor how can we develop and encourage creativity in everyone, nor even what sort of mental processes does creativity involve. Rather, sociologists are interested in creativity as a discourse — under what social and cultural circumstances are some human activities considered ‘creative’ — and an ideology.

Frith (2011, p. 62)

16 The ‘creative hierarchy’ is for example found in orchestral music, where the music is centred around the ideas of the composer (Frith 2011, p. 66).
Frith’s description provides a useful angle, yet he also argues that creativity as a term may be ‘more of a hindrance than a help’ in the investigation of it (ibid., p. 71). The reason behind this claim could be that music scholars are currently redefining creativity, in an attempt to make the enigmatic term more tangible for the musical field. Burnard and Haddon (2015), for example, have introduced a ‘spectrum of distinctive practices of musical creativities’ (p. 14), and their multiple creativities is built on the notion that creativity is a cultural construct (as opposed to the ‘singular’ creativity in the ideology of autonomy, presented in chapter 2). Their idea is a continuation of Csikszentmihalyi’s (1997) systems model, and both have been employed in this thesis.

3.1.1 The systems model

Csikszentmihalyi (1997) portrays creativity as ‘any act, idea, or product that changes an existing domain, or that transforms an existing domain into a new one’ (p. 28). This is added on by Burnard (2006), who argues that creativity reflects the rules, traditions and practices that operate ‘within the dominant culture’ (Burnard 2006, p. 357), thereby suggesting that creativity may be understood differently in diverse cultures. This notion is highly relevant to music education, given that the assessment of creativity is managed almost exclusively by the teacher, which in turn can lead to the dismissal of children’s (and later of students’) creative efforts. Csikszentmihalyi’s systems model has unquestionably served as a catalyst for the recent interest in how children express themselves creatively (e.g. Kanellopoulos and Maton 2010; Burnard 2006), and it is therefore music scholar Burnard’s (2006) interpretation that has been employed in this thesis. As Burnard explains:

Judgements about the nature and achievement of musical creativity will depend upon the relationships that hold between the domain discipline (musical opportunities and constraints), the person (the child creator or children), and the field (usually teachers or researchers who make judgements about what constitutes quality in the domain).

Burnard (2006, p. 356)

The model consists of a triangle of reciprocal influence between the domain, the field and the person. Turning to higher music education, this picture becomes rather complex. There is a diversity of fields (‘judgers’) and domains (‘resources’), and different study programs may

---

17 Four categories for multiple creativities are presented (collaborative, communal, intercultural, and empathic) which could certainly be useful for teaching multiple creativities in higher music education, or as terms for freelancing entrepreneurs (Burnard and Haddon 2015, pp. 14-16).
therefore consist of contrasting rules and expectations. Moreover, the person (‘student’) could easily be interested in more than one study program, and consequently be exposed to several hierarchies of creativity and experience a contradiction in value. As a cultural construct in the systems view, creativity is ‘dependent on cultures to enhance and constrain what is possible, what is supported, what is accessible, what is valued, and what is not’ (Burnard 2006, p. 355). The diversity of fields and domains in higher music education therefore has the potential to both restrict and liberate the student’s understanding of creativity.

While Csikszentmihalyi’s model represents a fundamental shift in the understanding of creativity because it no longer is regarded as a separate entity but rather as being ‘dependent upon people’s judgements’ (Burnard 2006, p. 356), such a systems view of creativity might also lead to a ‘lack of opportunities for creative choice’ if it is implemented without the sufficient understanding of the musical field (ibid., p. 357). This pitfall, called the ‘creative exclusion’, could lead to another hegemony in the form of normative creativity, rather than celebrating the creative endeavors of music students. One idea that this model will address is therefore whether or not different interpretations of creativity is one of the reasons why students decide to change directions in higher music education.

### 3.1.2 Multiple creativities

The rapid development of new technologies has opened up for more connectivity among professional musicians, new collaborations within the arts, and a new-found accessibility in immediate music-making, both in and out of music education (Burnard 2014a; 2014b). The ‘singular and individualist discourses which define musical creativity in terms of the Western canonization’ is therefore currently being challenged (Haddon and Burnard 2015, p. 262), and successful musicians are now seen as entrepreneurs with ‘well-developed skills in diverse musical creativities’ (Burnard and Haddon 2015, p. 3). It is also suggested that ‘new forms, practices and relationships between creativities will develop’ (ibid., p. 16), as illustrated:

> The complexity and demanding nature of the myriad forms of multiply mediated musical creativities that arise in musical spaces are deeply influenced by; complex societal factors; different communities of taste; the political economy of music; ... digital technologies that influence the mobility of music-making practices; the globalization of the music industry; and local market forces. This all suggests a broadening and deepening of the relationship between creativities and practice.

Burnard (2014b, p. 79)
In short, the notion of ‘multiple creativities’ has emerged because creativity no longer can be treated (nor solely defined) as a singular phenomenon. While scholars argue that ‘music and creativity are … inseparable facets of a unified whole’ (Burnard 2006, p. 368), school is teaching children that creativity is to be found in the ‘romantic, idealistic view of the primacy of composition’ (Burnard 2014b, p. 78). In fact, research has indicated that children position themselves as active ‘creative decision-makers’ on the playground (Burnard 2006, p. 357), but that this is unlearnt as soon as they enter the classroom. School requires of them that they adapt to the ideology of autonomy — the fetishized romantic view of individual creativity — and thus begins the mastery misconception. This case study will therefore view creativity as multiple, defined in various ways by a diversity of fields and domains. It is also recognized that musicians bring ‘new practices into existence in the moment of creation’ (Burnard 2014b p. 79), and that creativity, therefore, exists in all musical engagement (Burnard 2006, p. 361).

3.2  The music student

The meaning of music cannot be understood solely through its aesthetic dimension. Music also has personal and social meanings, and just as it is complicated to separate an individual from the social, it is hard to ‘entangle specifically musical meanings from the meanings of the activities of which music is a part’ (Cross and Tolbert 2009, p. 29). Green (2010) claims that ‘whether you play music, sing it, listen to it, compose it, study it or teach it, music can be taken on and worn rather like a piece of clothing, to indicate something about your class, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, sub-culture, political values and so on’ (p. 31). Making musical choices as a music student is therefore not only interpreted as creative judgements, but as social statements. What, then, are the personal and social consequences of changing directions? This will be addressed by theories of identity (3.2.1) and motivation (3.2.2).

3.2.1  Identity

There is no legal control for what being a musician actually contains, and so becoming a musician undoubtedly requires a lot of identity work, from the moment children start to think about the social and personal meanings of their musical development, to the point where music students start reflecting on their individual practice and potential musical success, to the professional musician’s evaluation of his or her lifestyle (MacDonald et al., p. 469). We all adapt different roles that will be negotiated and merged together over time, and the friction
and reciprocal influence in between these emerging roles is referred to as identity paradoxes (ibid., pp. 463-464). The term identity is used to describe ‘the overall view that I have of myself’, and can be defined as the representation of what individuals think about themselves and their relationship with others (Hargreaves and North 2008, p. 46). According to Crozier (1997), an individual’s identity consists of both social and personal identity, where the former represents ‘the social categories to which people belong, aspire to belong, or share important values with’, and the latter the ‘unique qualities, values, and attributes’ of the individual (p. 71). It is further elaborated that the personal identity can be split into the private self, ‘the self that only you know’, and the public self, ‘the you that others know’ (p. 71). All four terms have been utilized as a framework for this thesis, often to clarify what parts of the candidate’s identity are visible to others, and to whom they are visible (or not).

With this in mind, it could be argued that the musical identity constitutes the sum of an individual’s personal and social relationships with music, serving as an umbrella term in this case study. Because creativity is a cultural construct, endlessly adapting to its surroundings, it is crucial that the musical identity is understood in the context that it arises, on its own terms and with its own set of paradoxes. For example, even if a child loves classical music, the fear of social rejection or humiliation can lead to secrecy because classical music is perceived to be weird in many schools (Davidson et al. 1997). This is a typical identity paradox between personal and social identity, a common finding in studies on how expectations from parents, teachers and peers affect children’s musical development (e.g. Lamont 2002; O’Neill 2002). Could it therefore be that music students change directions because they experience identity paradoxes, for example in terms of how music is valued?

3.2.2 Motivation

Theories in motivation have since the 1970s transformed from focusing on biological and behavioural aspects of motivation to theories that ‘recognize the role of personal cognition and social context’ (Austin et al. 2006, p. 213). The terms that are most commonly used to address motivation in music education research are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, where the former describes a ‘natural, unforced and high’ interest in something, whereas the latter describes an interest in ‘external rewards’ (MacDonald et al. 2009, p. 467). Another way to distinguish between the counterparts, is by considering whether an individual is pursuing an activity for its ‘inherent satisfactions’ or ‘to obtain a separate outcome, such as praise, a reward, or the avoidance of punishment’ (Austin et al. 2006, p. 224). While the motivation to
engage in musical activities can certainly be numerous, the majority of research on musical development has indicated that an intrinsic interest is ‘key to early stages of learning’ because it stimulates further commitment and self-efficacy (ibid., p. 224). According to Hargreaves and North (2008), self-efficacy can be described as ‘our view of our own ability to perform effectively’ (p. 46), and musically talented children ‘constantly seek to improve themselves and those tasks that they choose to study’ (McPherson and Williamon 2006, p. 245). Self-efficacy is particularly important for staying motivated in music, given that music is still seen as an innate trait by most (Davidson et al. 1997).

Another relevant concept in this context is provisional selves (Clarke et al. 2010; Hallam 2006). Because children have a natural need to understand the outcome of their learning and performing (Austin et al. 2006), they depend upon the feedback that they receive in order to develop musically. The development of self-efficacy involves the visualization of various pathways and provisional selves, yet ‘without a sense of permanence or expectation’ (Bennett 2014, p. 239). This imaginative act serves as a self-fulfilling prophecy, a domino effect based on the child’s belief in own competence, where the children who are encouraged to think of themselves as musical will pursue their musical development, while the children labeled ‘unmusical’ tend to reduce their effort as a coping mechanism in order to maintain their self-worth (Clarke et al. 2010, p. 136; Hallam 2006, p. 289). In light of this tendency, it should come as no surprise that the children who excel in music are usually given the most external support from parents and teachers (e.g. Davidson et al. 1997), and that not all children think of themselves as musical (e.g. Lamont 2002).

Even though social acceptance of an individual’s musical identity is vital to stay musically motivated, it is primarily intrinsic motivation that can predict any future investment in music. This thesis accepts this presumed superiority for three reasons: First, an individual would be less hurt by social rejection if the main interest in music is intrinsic rather than extrinsic. Second, research on aspiring musicians has shown that extrinsic motivation is important in order to establish the structure that is necessary for becoming musically skilled, but that the same external control often is rejected in later development (Kemp 1997, pp. 41-42). Third, self-efficacy and provisional selves are direct results of an internal imagination, and therefore correlate with a strong intrinsic interest in music.

---

18 Being able to master the task at hand is often necessary for future motivation because it is strongly linked to positive feelings of mastery, although some gifted children seem to place ‘unreasonably high expectations’ on themselves in their desire for perfection (McPherson and Williamon 2006, p. 246).
3.3 The categories

The findings of this case study resulted in four main categories: individual, environment, institution, and exploration. The latter is an elaboration on how the candidates experienced the change, but the three first categories align with Csikszentmihalyi’s systems model (3.1.1) in order to address their relationship with creativity. The individual represents the person category of the systems model, the environment represents the field, and the institution represents the domain. The dynamic from the model is therefore in place, and creativity is judged by the field (e.g. classmates and teachers), while the resources for creative projects are offered by the domain (the policies of their study program at NMH). I propose that all of the candidates have acted creatively by changing directions, given that ‘valuing creativity means valuing new ways of doing, thinking, being’ (Custodero 2011, p. 373). Moreover, they were all aware of the social norms yet they still acted independently from their environment. This behavior will be explained in later chapters through the window of musical discourse (3.3.1).

3.3.1 The window of musical discourse

While it is common to think of musical creativity in terms of expressiveness or style, the term also includes qualities like ‘inventiveness, the discovery of newness, and enabling and enacting new reflective practies with imagination and originality’ (Burnard 2014b, p. 80). Inventiveness is therefore a key concept to music students, and I have chosen to borrow a term from the social sciences in order to demonstrate how inventiveness can be applied to higher music education. Though unconventional, the Overton window of political possibility has proven itself surprisingly convenient to this thesis, because it resembles ‘the relationship between novelty and acceptability’ that musicians experience when they experiment with new ideas (Clarke 2011, p. 30). The fact that politicians ‘almost always constrain themselves to taking actions within the «window» of ideas approved of by the electorate’, and therefore need to ‘move the window of what is politically possible’ (Russell 2006, 04.01), is similar to the evaluative process of many creative professions.

Politicians are constrained by ideas, even if they have no interest in them personally. What they can accomplish, the legislation they can sponsor and support while still achieving political success … is framed by the set of ideas held by their constituents — the way people think. … A politician’s success or failure stems from how well they understand and amplify the ideas and ideals held by those who elected them.

Russell (2006, January 4)
Musicians are expected to be driven by intrinsic motivation, and so the Overton window (also known as the window of discourse) will serve as a framework for the perceived external window that their ideas are expected to be appreciated in. Like creativity, ideas are received differently in various domains, and it is therefore plausible that music students may ‘move the window’ to different environments by changing directions. However, because it is only an interpretation of the theory that is employed here, the theory will be called the ‘window of musical discourse’. The reception of ‘the idea’ (whether that is a new musical expression or a shift in identity) will span from popular to radical, and the premise of the model is that the most popular ideas safely align with the dominant ideology. An intuitive understanding of the model is therefore to prefer, and it will be understood in the context of Csikszentmihalyi’s systems model of creativity, as illustrated in the synthesis model in the next section.

3.3.2 The model of synthesis

In order to comprehend how the presented models fit together, I have created a model of synthesis that illustrates their connections. For example, the candidates’ social identity aligns with the environment category from the case study, and therefore also with the field category from the systems model. Further, this particular ‘circle’ in the synthesis model also represents the extrinsic motivation of the candidates (because social identity is connected to the external world), as well as the hegemonies in music education (2.1.1) that have emerged from social structures. The circle to the right, on the other hand, represents the institution — NMH — its norms and its function as the domain, as well as the public identity of the candidates. While both social and public identity fuel extrinsic motivation (and in fact may overlap because of the social nature of higher music education), the former is interested in social status (in the field), whereas the latter is interested in recognition (within the domain).

The final circle represents the candidates themselves, as interdisciplinary music students, and illustrates how their different identities overlap with the systems model and categories. Their private self is portrayed to be the ultimate intrinsic motivation (autonomy), with policy as its opposite. Because their exploration happens in the space where field/environment and domain/institution overlap with the person/individual, the musical identity is the combination of private, public and social identities. In short, the candidates’ exploration includes all of the above, and the next chapter will describe how the candidates were interviewed about this.

---

19 However, status and recognition is viewed as the compromise between policies and autonomy. This was added as an afterthought because of the candidates’ responses (e.g. 5.1.2).
The window of musical discourse

Radical — Acceptable — Popular — Acceptable — Radical

Model 1 (appendix 1)
The synthesis model
4 Methods

The question of methodology has from beginning to end influenced the development of this thesis. It has foremost brought attention to structure, resources and ethics, and these areas have matured in tandem with the increasing amount of empirical data. From preparation to analysis, the fieldwork has been an interesting path towards knowledge, where the purpose has been to study interdisciplinary music students and their needs. This chapter aims to explain the series of choices that was made in order to do precisely that.

4.1 Research design

Kvale and Brinkmann (2012) open their book on the qualitative research interview by asking the reader: ‘If you want to know how people view the world and their lives, why not ask them?’ (p. 19). The first step towards a research design was therefore to determine the interview design that would be best suited for this case study, and both the quantitative and the qualitative research approach were considered. According to Ryen (2002), qualitative research generates hypotheses, whereas quantitative research tests hypotheses (p. 28). Even though the quantitative approach was intriguing at first, the resources and theories available to me were more in alignment with the nature of qualitative research, and the thesis would therefore ask questions rather than answer them. Another important factor in this decision was the lack of potential candidates, given that there were not enough students in the chosen target group yet. Furthermore, going in-depth on a topic that the candidates could potentially experience as intense (or at least personal) seemed like the right decision to make, and it was preferable to contextualize the responses from the interviewees because of this. Besides, the nuanced quality of qualitative research was appealing given that the culture of an institution, with its ‘sacred myths and beliefs’, was to be uncovered:

Interpreting the events of daily life in a university department or research institute as sociological phenomena is not palatable to people who run such institutions or to those who live by them and profit from them; for, like all institutions, universities and institutes have sacred myths and beliefs that their members do not want subjected to the skeptical sociological view.

4.1.1 The qualitative research interview

One of the benefits of the qualitative research interview is that it produces knowledge in the moment through acknowledgements between the interviewer and the interviewee (Kvale and Brinkmann 2002, p. 22). The qualitative interview is therefore described as social, inter-subjective (ibid., p. 37), and is associated with social constructivism, where researchers have a desire to understand the world in which they live, and ‘develop subjective meanings of their experiences’ (Creswell 2013, p. 36). As a method, the qualitative research interview makes general theories of knowledge applicable to the human sciences (Ryen 2002, p. 23), given that its purpose is ‘to understand the world view of the interviewee’ (Kvale and Brinkmann 2002, p. 21). However, it is natural for researchers to interpret empirical data based on ‘their own personal, cultural, and historical experiences’ in qualitative research (Creswell 2013, p. 25), and so it is important that the researcher aims to contextualize in order to be engaged in the life world of the interviewee.

The most suitable layout for learning about the needs and experiences of interviewees is the ‘life world interview’, a nuance of the qualitative research interview that is semistructured and simulates a normal conversation (Kvale and Brinkmann 2002, p. 47). Although it follows an interview guide, it is flexible and reactive in its execution (Johannessen et al. 2011, p. 422), and allows the interviewer to be guided by intuition, flexibility and creativity (Kvale and Brinkmann 2002, p. 104). This type of interview is commonly used when the researcher seeks to understand the interviewee’s perspectives on everyday life, and aims to gather information around the life world of the interviewee and to interpret its meanings (ibid., p. 23). The natural setting for such fieldwork is ‘face-to-face interaction over time’ (Creswell 2013, p. 45), an option that would have been very suitable for this thesis (and that undeniably sounded intriguing). However, there was not enough time to follow the candidates’ changes over time, unfortunately. The alternative (in terms of resources) was therefore to select as many interview candidates as possible, and a number between ten to fifteen candidates was considered to be ideal. The target group would in this way still be nuanced, with the potential to offer contrasting stories.

---

20 Intersubjectivity is defined as an ‘agreement or understanding between two or more people about an observation or an argument’ (Kvale and Brinkmann 2002, p. 323). In social constructivism, the reality is pluralistic and socially constructed (Fangen 2010, pp. 26-27).

21 Life world is defined as ‘the world as we encounter it in daily life’ (Kvale and Brinkmann 2002, p. 324).
4.1.2 Selection of interview candidates

Although many of the requirements for the target group remained unknown until most of the research design was put together, other criteria were perfectly clear. The main themes, for example, were always the ‘sacred myths and beliefs’ (as Becker put it) of NMH, and how these affect the students. According to Ryen (2002), the researcher should invest in interview candidates that are familiar with the phenomenon that you want to study (p. 88), yet Fangen (2010) claims that it is valuable to select different candidates in order to receive breadth as well as depth (p. 57). I also attempted to keep an open mind during the entire fieldwork to be aware of my own bias, and so I imagined a multitude of potential candidates, ranging from the dual identities of music education students (e.g. Freer and Bennett 2012) to the struggles of former students, all the while knowing that a selection of ten to fifteen students would probably not give a complete picture of the institutional culture.

As the thesis progressed and the theoretical framework matured, I noticed a trend among the students. More and more students changed study programs or musical genres, and were known for their multiple skills. There have been many institutional changes at NMH, such as new study programs and new professors, and students were pursuing new areas as a result of this. Drawing from this experience, I began questioning whether the changes were designed for students to become more interdisciplinary, or as the result of students’ own interest in disciplinary fields. The target group was manifested from this notion: Music students that had changed directions during their study period at NMH. Because the institutional changes are relatively recent, I made sure that their change had taken place within the last five years. This group has the potential to answer my research questions, and even to be representative.

The target group was thus a selection based on the idea of purposive sampling, fronted by Silverman (2013), who claims that interview candidates should be purposively selected based on what your research problem addresses (p. 203). In order to do just that, I chose students from a variety of study programs that had changed directions within the last five years. The target group was therefore familiar with the phenomenon that was to be examined, yet all of the candidates had different backgrounds. However, because there is no archive of such students at NMH, they were recruited with the use of ‘the snowball method’ through some preliminary fieldwork at NMH, where I asked students if they knew any potential candidates for the case study.22 Another reason for using this method was to avoid the recruitment of

---

22 In ‘the snowball method’, potential candidates are mentioned by experts in the field the researcher wants to study (Johannessen et al. 2011, p. 117).
students that I already knew (to the extent that it was possible). The end result was twelve interview candidates, eight male and four female, and then the fieldwork could begin.

4.1.3 Fieldwork

The fieldwork that was undertaken in this thesis is categorized as a case study. According to Fangen (2010), a case study gathers detailed information of an individual, a group or a place (p. 187). This particular case study has focused on a specific group of students from a specific place, and consists of twelve interviews, all executed in the time span of a month. As Ryen (2002) states, ‘the analyses of the empirical data that is obtained will influence the remaining fieldwork, and this in turn will influence the next analysis’ (p. 161). In an effort to avoid this effect, the interview period was planned to be as short as possible, and the same wording was carefully selected in each interview. However, the qualitative research interview is not learnt merely by reading about it (Kvale and Brinkmann 2002, p. 105), and the last interview in the series seems more on point than the first. This could be the result of feeling more comfortable with the interview situation, or the result of gaining more insight along the way and subsequently ask better follow-up questions (ibid., p. 99).

An important awareness to cultivate as the interviewer, is that there is an asymmetrical power balance. Even between colleagues, the interviewer has more control over the material because the very nature of an interview dialogue is instrumental (ibid., p. 52), and it is the interviewer who has monopoly on interpretation (ibid., p. 53). To prepare this mentality, I did a pilot interview with a friend that happened to be the target group of my case study. This ‘piloting’ is an exercise in the role as interviewer, and a good way to test the interview guide (Silverman 2013 p. 207). It is also assumed that the interview works best when the researcher can balance opposing traits such as structured yet friendly, clear yet sensitive, open-minded yet critical, and so forth (Kvale and Brinkmann 2002, pp. 177-178), and the pilot interview helped me get familiar with this balancing as well. It was especially helpful to discuss the nature of the interview with my friend afterwards.

All of the interviews were executed with a time frame of thirty to forty-five minutes. Even though I followed an interview guide (appendix 5), none of the interviews had the same order of questions or even the same focus. I always opened and ended the interviews with the same questions, but the flexibility of the semistructured interview allowed me to capture the unique story of every candidate, and to build upon their perspectives and ideas (Johannessen et al.

23 The interviews were executed between the 30th of August and the 23rd of September 2016.
2011, pp. 145-146). All interviewees received a document with information about the study beforehand, but the first minutes of each interview were still spent on introducing the study and myself. The purpose of this was to create a welcoming atmosphere that would allow the interviewee to ask questions if necessary. Each interview took place at a different location (of the interviewee’s choice),\(^{24}\) and the total fieldwork was finished in nine hours (speaking time). Organizing the empirical data, however, was a much more demanding task.

### 4.2 Empirical data

No form of representation, text or rapport is innocent. All types are charged with the interests and intensions of the researcher.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2002, p. 285)

All of the twelve interviews were recorded on tape, and had to be treated confidentially in the aftermath of the fieldwork. The researcher can organize and work with the empirical data, but storage of personal data is not allowed unless explicitly given permission. The case study was therefore reported to NSD, as required by law, before any of the data was obtained.\(^{25}\) Because of this obligation, the candidates had to sign a document of written consent where the implications of the case study were explained (appendix 4).\(^{26}\) Afterwards, the recorded interviews were transcribed and translated, categorized and coded, then interpreted. The next sections of this chapter will elaborate on this intricate process.

#### 4.2.1 Transcription and coding

Transcriptions are literally ‘translations of the spoken word to the written word’ (Kvale and Brinkmann 2002, p. 187). The interviewer may therefore easily forget details such as the social atmosphere or the interviewee’s body language, and interpret from selective memory. To transcribe is to ‘transform the material’, often into ‘decontextualized reproductions’ of the spoken interview (ibid., pp. 187-188). I decided to draw as much detail as I could from the

---

\(^{24}\) Three candidates chose to be interviewed at home, four candidates chose to be interviewed at school, and five candidates chose to be interviewed in coffee shops.

\(^{25}\) Research projects in Norway are reported to Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjenese (NSD — Norwegian data service for the social sciences), which is a national archive for empirical data from Norwegian research (Norsk senter for forskningsdata 2017).

\(^{26}\) This precaution is also linked to the ethical dimensions of fieldwork (discussed in 3.3.2).
transcriptions in order to get a fuller grasp of the content. Every word (even stuttering and thinking sounds) was transcribed, and laughing and pauses were notated with various letters in a system of my own creation.\textsuperscript{27} Another reason for being so thorough in the transcription, was that the transcriptions had to be translated into English because the interviews had been conducted in Norwegian. During this stage of the process, the candidates were given letters (A, B, C, and so forth) based on the chronological order they had been interviewed.\textsuperscript{28}

The next phase, coding the interviews, was accomplished by the means of systematic text condensation (Johannessen \textit{et al.} 2011, pp. 195-199). I used a software called NVivo in this process, and started with condensation of meaning, the first stage, where longer phrases are reduced to categories. These categories can be developed before or during the condensation (Kvale and Brinkmann 2002, pp. 209-210), and I chose the former, by giving the quotations categories based on the content from the interview guide (appendix 5). The second stage was to give the themes different codes, and this was when the most relevant quotations were selected. Between the second and third stage, the quotations were translated into English, adjusted to written language, and anonymized (discussed in 3.3.2).\textsuperscript{29} In the third stage, the codes (and the translated quotations) were linked to relevant theories and models, and then given new meaning. Finally, the edited quotations were assigned to new categories based on the recontextualisation that had taken place in the coding process (Johannessen \textit{et al.} 2011, pp. 195-199). The result of this procedure was the four overarching themes of the case study: (1) individual, (2) environment, (3) institution, and (4) exploration.

\textbf{4.2.2 Interpretation}

There were many conscious decisions to be made during the systematic text condensation approach to coding transcribed interviews. The appliance of codes required an awareness of repeating elements, potential emphases given by the interviewee, surprising findings, and so forth.\textsuperscript{30} Coding and interpretation are in this way intertwined, and the coding (like all stages

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{27} The most frequent symbols indicate pauses (‘..’ represents a short pause, ‘…’ represents a longer pause), hesitation (‘eh’) and laughter (‘@’).
\item \textsuperscript{28} The letters were assigned in order to protect their anonymity. The chronological order was primarily assigned to better recall the interview situation.
\item \textsuperscript{29} According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2002), all quotations (with the exception of sociolinguistic analysis) should be adjusted to written language because it is easier for the reader (p. 283).
\item \textsuperscript{30} It is important for the case study to illustrate and discuss the examples that are both typical and non-typical compared with other studies in order to be valuable to other cases (Fangen 2010, p. 187).
\end{itemize}
of the interview process) is affected by the researcher’s own ideas (discussed in 3.3.2). The portrayed point of view can become evident to the researcher, and this in turn can bring new perspectives or revelations to mind. Another element that accompanies this insight, is how the information was searched for during the interview. It is fairly common to distinguish between ‘the acquisition of knowledge’ and the ‘construction of knowledge’ (Kvale and Brinkmann 2002, p. 67). Given that my research questions were open (1.1.2), the latter interpretation has been best suited for this case study. One way of illustrating this strategy of interpretation is by imagining a traveler who wanders around in a foreign country where the journey can ‘lead the interviewer to new insight’ (ibid., p. 67).

However, knowledge is constructed in many ways, and whereas the knowledge from the interview itself was socially constructed during the interview (3.1.1), the interpretation of that material was hermeneutically constructed, that is, affected by the interpreter’s world (Kvale and Brinkmann 2002, p. 217). Central to hermeneutics is the idea that the lives of individuals are understood in their context (ibid., p. 73), and it seeks valid and general understandings of the world (Alvesson and Skjöldberg 2008, p. 195). One common principle in the hermeneutic analysis is the hermeneutic circle, an approach that leads the researcher to understand the parts based on their connections to the whole, and similarly, the whole in terms of its interdependence on the parts (ibid, p. 193). This technique forces the researcher to ‘give the parts a new relations to the whole’, yet at the same time to trust ‘the intuitive understanding’ that is the researcher’s starting point (Kvale and Brinkmann 2002, p. 216). The hermeneutic circle was applied in the coding process, where the coding shifted between the parts and the whole to create new meaning in the analysis of the data.

Another philosophical dimension where the world is understood through the individual’s experiences is phenomenology (ibid., p. 45). While phenomenology is commonly associated with a descriptive nature, it is the interpretative variant that is relevant to this case study. This approach centers around the fact that the phenomenons in an individual’s life are experienced subjectively, and that the interpretation of these experiences are influenced by the subjective researcher, the culture around, as well as the historical time. Preconditioning is, as is claimed in the hermeneutics, inescapable (Finlay 2009, p. 22). The empirical data in this case study is therefore considered to be affected by the interpretations of the researcher.

---

31 In a phenomenological reduction, for example, the researcher removes preconditions and simply give room to the phenomenons of the individual’s life world (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2008, p. 166).

32 The interpretative version is also referred to as hermeneutic phenomenology (Finlay 2009, p. 22).
4.3 Reflection

Whenever we want to improve things, we are likely to forget (conveniently, it might be said, except that the inconvenience that results is usually astronomical) many of the people, groups or things that contribute to the result we want to change.

Becker (1998, p. 35)

Reflection is a natural part of the entire research process, from the planning of interviews to the chosen interpretation. Research on society should, after all, ‘serve scientific and human interests’ (Kvale and Brinkmann 2002, p. 80), yet the intentions of researchers often become their bias. Purposive sampling (Silverman 2013), for example, leads to relevant interview candidates but at the same time clearly selects the candidates that best suit the ideas of the researcher. It is therefore essential that various methods for reliability, validity and ethics are considered in qualitative research, and the last part of this chapter will therefore discuss and elaborate on the ethical dimensions of this case study.

4.3.1 Reliability and validity

Reliability is, simply put, the consistency within a research project (Kvale and Brinkmann 2002, p. 325). Research in the social sciences is sometimes considered to be unreliable by nature in certain disciplines. There are, however, clear trends in music education research, and because the main features of this case study align with that research, I hope that this study will be recognized as a reliable source and contribution. Validity, on the other hand, does not ask ‘is this research reliable?’, but rather ‘is this research valid?’. Both terms are closely linked to the sciences, where research results tend to be less nuanced and measured more accurately (ibid., p. 249). The question of validity is meant to control the objectivity of the research, that is, whether the research has been conducted by referencing reliable sources or not, and that it has reached general understandings rather than fulfilled personal agendas (ibid., p. 247).

A common approach to verify research results within the social sciences is in terms of intersubjectivity. It is therefore plausible that the verification of this thesis could be achieved through dialogical intersubjectivity, meaning that the results become verifiable through the recognition of other readers, music students or researchers. Such validation can be gained

---

33 Positivistic research in the nature sciences, for example, tends to rely on objectivity rather than intersubjectivity in terms of reliability (ibid., p. 99).
through acknowledgement in references, reviews, conversations, and so forth (ibid., p. 248). Nonetheless, the research results of this case study belong to a master’s thesis in which the ideas and experiences of twelve music students were studied. The aspect of reliability and validity has therefore been a learning technique rather than a tool for gaining recognition, and although the target group may be representative at the moment, the rapid innovations (and how these will influence new music students) at NMH are unpredictable (see 3.1.2).

4.3.2 Ethical dimensions

The experienced qualitative researcher learns how to contextualize (as discussed in 3.1.1) so that ethical challenges are recognized, acknowledged and confronted. One of the biggest ethical challenges in this thesis has been to not be biased. The reason for this is twofolded: First, the very phenomenon that was studied mirrors (to some degree) my own experiences in higher music education, so I had to be careful not to become ‘an inborn’.

The second reason is that I could have applied biased knowledge to serve as a ‘trojan horse’ by going into areas of an interviewee’s life and beliefs that are private (ibid., p. 93). I was aware of both of these pitfalls when conducting the interviews, so that I would not ask leading questions or assume that I had the right interpretation of the phenomena that interested me. I made sure that the research questions were open to interpretation, that it was possible to change focus, topics and terms, and that the interviewees themselves could take initiatives.

Another important dimension was the well-being of the interview candidates. I wanted them to feel safe and included throughout the process, and because the students could easily have been recognized by their instrument (or even genre, seeing as the target group was so small), I decided to anonymize the interviews. I imagined that the interviewees would feel more comfortable sharing their stories and statements in this way, and I wanted the thesis to focus on the subjective experience as a general phenomenon rather than on the journey of specific individuals. This decision led me to refrain from mentioning any genre, instrument, ensemble or study program. Not all candidates found this blurring necessary, but some did. Recognition would reveal loaded stories about third parties (such as teachers, friends, classmates etc), and this could in turn jeopardize their social identity in those environments.

---

34 Becoming an ‘inborn’ is when the researcher ‘identify with the participants so strongly that it is hard to maintain a professional distance’ (Kvale and Brinkmann 2002, p. 92).

35 I wanted to avoid the ‘interview effect’, an outcome where candidates are less willing to reveal bad traits or experiences in the presence of an interviewer (than for example in a survey), and thus some of their stories could cover up the real truth of their experiences (Johannessen et al. 2011, p. 424).
order to avoid this, I followed the traditional four ethical dimensions for conducting a proper research project: informed consent, confidentiality, potential consequences, and the position of the researcher (ibid., p. 86). All candidates were given a document to sign that informed them about the aims of the study, the research process, what would happen to the empirical data, and their right as participants in the project (appendix 4). This document is not only informative, but reassures that the autonomy of the candidates is a priority (Johannessen et al. 2011, p. 95). Each interview began with an explanation of my position, a discussion around potential consequences, and a promise of anonymity. These four dimensions have served as guidelines for the entire research project.

4.3.3 Afterthought

While my background in this case study has made me biased (at least to some degree), it has also made it all the more exciting to discover the nuances of very similar experiences. It has inspired me to constantly search for new information and meaning in the data and elsewhere, in an attempt to understand the experiences of others better. It has been important to me that the thesis represents a phenomenon from the real world, and therefore that the data has been continuously compared with the growing amount of new and relevant literature. I followed the changes at NMH carefully, had conversations with students (thus validating my interpretations along the way), and read as much theory as possible in order to understand the reliability of other studies and to comprehend the status quo within the chosen disciplines. This effort was not given to control the material, but, rather, to contextualize it and let it progress in an active yet organic way. The end result — of the overwhelmingly 91,000 transcribed words — is presented and elaborated on in the next chapter.
5 Research findings

The research findings consist primarily of the experiences, beliefs and ideas of the interview candidates. Twelve candidates participated in the case study, eight male and four female, and they have all changed directions during their study period at NMH during the last five years. Because the intention of this case study has been to uncover the commonalities rather than studying the individuals themselves, no emphasis has been put on specific disciplines or even on the directions that were chosen. However, the ways in which the candidates relate to each other are accounted for, so that it is possible to recognize patterns of similar (and dissimilar) backgrounds without jeopardizing the candidates’ anonymity. In the following subchapters, the quotations are elaborated on and interpreted in the four themes of the research findings: individual (4.1), environment (4.2), institution (4.3), and exploration (4.4).

5.0 Changing directions

What was really clear to me was .. the amount of positive feedback that I received .. when I dared to choose my own repertoire.

Candidate C

Why do some music students change directions during their study period? What needs are going unmet, and what are they seeking in their musical identity? What risks were involved in the changes that were made, and how did NMH respond to their changes? Needless to say, twelve candidates can only provide some clarification to these questions, but there are many shared elements to their stories nevertheless. While ‘breaking rules is a central component of the development and sustainability of careers’ for music students (Bennett et al. 2015, p. 31), it can be frightening for them to exercise this trait in higher music education if they feel as though they are risking interdependent relationships with teachers and peers. It is therefore interesting that the research findings suggest that the candidates were actually empowered by their decision to reject social expectations, and that this caused a sense of liberation for most. However, their change was also a creative risk, involving friction and uncertainties, and their background might have had an impact on this experience (see model 2 / appendix 2).
The hypothesis of this thesis is that the candidates changed directions in order to escape a reality that was hard to endure because of identity paradoxes (1.1.2). While this was the case for a majority of the candidates, the remaining group changed directions mainly because they were curious and had a thirst for knowledge. They wanted to broaden their perspectives and learn new skills, and there were no painful stories behind their choices. The majority, on the other hand, had dealt with intense identity paradoxes, and their process was also longer due to more hesitation before they finally made the decision. This contrast may be explained by the different backgrounds of the candidates. For example, Candidate K’s story illustrates how he realized that the path he had chosen was ‘not at all’ what he wanted (K), whereas Candidate F’s story illustrates an emerging interest in something new rather than a lack of motivation for the old:

I thought, at the time, that playing my instrument was the greatest thing in the whole world. I sort of got sucked into it .. by teachers and parents who thought that I was really talented, and grand parents with high expectations for me .. Everyone expected me to become a musician. I enrolled at NMH, and that was my dream, really .. However, I realized already the first semester .. it wasn’t at all what I wanted. But I’d come this far so I continued to trick myself into believing .. that it was still what I wanted. And then I looked around .. and everyone else was so much more motivated than me.

Candidate K
Well, I just .. wanted to have better technique, really. Focus on that, on the instrumental stuff. I didn’t feel like I’d reached my potential, and .. well, you probably never do. And also .. to check out the repertoire of that discipline, simply to .. Well, I’m interested in understanding different things, and I’m interested in meeting people where they’re at, on their own terms.

Candidate F

The fact that Candidate K felt that he had to ‘trick’ himself into staying in his discipline is a big contrast to the laidback tone in Candidate F’s statement. This contrast, between misery and easy-going, intense and curious, is consistent in the research findings. It was also found that all of the candidates changed directions in order to pursue a discipline that they were intrinsically interested in, and so the most relevant question is not why they chose their new direction, but rather how they experienced the old. This is where the tone of their story is set, in their relationship to the former discipline. Expansion and transformation have therefore been used as metaphors for the narratives of the candidates: Has their musical identity been transformed or expanded? Although not applicable to all of their stories, these metaphors have still proven to be very useful when distinguishing between the differing (and common) features of the two main groups.

In this context, I propose that the two processes are two parts of the same whole: One cannot transform into something without expansion, and it is similarly impossible to expand something without it being transformed in the slightest. The difference, therefore, lies in the degree to which the processes take place and where the emphasis is put. Both have layers of musical expressions and experiences, but the transformed musical identity has chosen to focus on the current musical pursuit, whereas the expanded musical identity lets the layers coexist. An example of this is Candidate G’s preference for expansion, illustrated in his claim that ‘it was never like I went «now I’m tired of this, I’ll try this instead». I just wanted to explore different things and learn more stuff’ (G). This was the case for Candidate D as well, who expressed that he was driven primarily by his curiosity:

It was a world that I hadn’t really .. I’d only experienced the music from the outside, but I found it incredibly fascinating. The way the discipline was working .. and that kind of music. Things I didn’t know how to do. I just wanted to get a better understanding.

Candidate D

As illustrated, the preference for expansion correlates with the group that is found to be easy-going, whereas the preference for transformation aligns with the group that experienced misery. An example of this is Candidate C who stated that ‘I’ve never doubted that I wanted
something else, yet there were no alternatives available to me; I had to study the discipline that I studied’ (C). Later in the interview, she explained that she had changed directions to be able to ‘play music on my terms, and to be seen … as the musician I actually am’ (C). This is particularly interesting because all of the female candidates expressed the same need to be more autonomous, despite differences in background. Candidate I, for example, wanted to be free of ‘tampering’:

It sort of killed my interest .. that pressure to conform .. so I started doing something else, and felt like .. by doing that, no one could really .. tamper with my music anymore because it was so different anyway. So .. I ended up feeling empowered.

Candidate I

The actual transition is elaborated on in the final subchapter, but first will the candidates’ experiences be presented as part of the synthesis model (3.3.2) in the next three subchapters.

5.1 Individual

What does it mean to be a musician? When is it allowed to identify as one? Who allows this? Why have music students decided to become musicians, and what do they envision for their future careers? Because there is no legal control for what being a musician actually is (MacDonald et al. 2009, p. 463), the answers to these questions are dependent upon cultural criteria and personal beliefs. This subchapter focuses on exploring the multiple identities of the interview candidates, and investigates whether or not there are any shared characteristics among them. Questions such as ‘why is music important?’ and ‘what lifestyle is desirable?’ have been relevant in order to find out why some music students seek out new arenas for learning about music, and if their motivations for doing so resemble one another.

5.1.1 Being a musician

Each interview was opened with the same question: ‘What does it mean to be a musician?’ The candidates were asked to take some time to think about it, and to answer for themselves based on their personal ideas, not those of other musicians. Although the answers were varied and different definitions were used, all candidates emphasized intrinsic motivation in one way or another. Some of the candidates displayed a desire to express themselves through musical creations, whereas others viewed musicianship more in terms of lifestyle (5.1.3). What was
ultimately the shared essence of the answers to this question was a desire for ownership and autonomy, that is, having the freedom and resources to be able to both live life and play music on their own terms. This, however, did not correlate with a sense of entitlement, as might have been expected. Instead, as the quotation beneath illustrates, the candidates seemed humble and grateful to have a musical career.

There are many aspects of being a freelancing musician, of course, and there’s so much that you .. have to do .. in order to be lucky enough to even get to that point .. to be able to play concerts for an audience .. to create those energies. But despite the work load, those musical moments are the essence of it all. So .. I’d say that the identification happens through the experience .. the creation .. as flow .. where the intellectual mind ... If it doesn’t cease to exist, then at least it’s bypassed in some way, and melts together with .. the unconscious ...

Candidate F

An interesting element in this quotation is the use of flow, a concept originally developed by Csikszentmihalyi (1990). While Candidate F described this in a poetic manner, Candidate L demonstrated the same by stating that she enjoys to ‘lose track of time and space’ (L) in her musical endeavors. According to Csikszentmihalyi, flow is ‘a state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter’ (p. 4), and it builds on the idea that ‘the best moments in our lives … usually occur if a person’s body or mind is stretched to its limits in a voluntary effort to accomplish something difficult and worthwhile’ (p. 3). As it happens, Candidate F demonstrated this effort and willingness by saying ‘despite the work load’ (F), and the theory and practice of flow therefore seem to align. Closely linked to this phenomenon, is the feeling of mastery (when the accomplishment has taken place). Candidate H pointed out that ‘no matter what you create, really, you get to experience your own work and be able to say «this is something that I made»’ (H). Such statements about the need to create were frequent, and they often reflected a desire for creation as a process, a personal quest, rather than needing to be in possession of the music. Candidate H stated that he wants ‘to cherish the things that make me unique … to find my own voice’ (H). The search for a ‘voice’ correlates with several of Candidate K’s statements. To him, doing music is about ‘an idea that you have in your mind, about what you .. want to express’ (K).

Candidate K

If you have an emotion .. that you want to express in some way. And then you create some music .. that sort of mirrors that emotion. And then you listen to the music and you get that emotion .. To me that’s quite magical, you know?
The ideas presented so far — creating energies (F), losing track of space and time (L), searching for a unique voice (H), and mirroring emotions (K) — all refer to the enjoyment of music as a process, and therefore indicate that the candidates believe that being a musician is about the experience of music, rather than the actual possession of music. Even though the musical process was described in various ways, the fact that the reason for engaging in music was the experience of music itself, indicates strong intrinsic motivation. This notion is further confirmed by Candidate J’s inclusion of personal growth in his musical process:

It’s in a way .. that feeling, that I create music because I want to learn something. I don’t feel like I’m showing people things that I already know. It’s more like my music is seeking something, and that I want to contribute towards some kind of .. development, really. It’s something of a mission to me. @

Candidate J

The findings so far have neatly aligned with the expected. In fact, research has indicated that intrinsic motivation is the best predictor for a child’s musical development (Austin et al. 2006, p. 224), and that aspiring musicians tend to display autonomy by rejecting social norms and external control (Kemp 1997, pp. 41-42). However, Candidate I put forward the idea of an ‘artistic image’ to the case study. She displayed intrinsic motivation herself by stating that music is something that happens ‘on the inside’, but she also claimed that ‘being an artist’ is a stereotype that many musicians are ‘concerned with’. This ‘artistic image’ could therefore be a matter of social status, hence extrinsic motivation, rather than of personal fulfilment. That said, it is not necessarily an either or proposition. This is her statement:

Well, I feel like so many musicians are concerned with .. being an artist, you know? That whole stereotype .. being creative and artistic and «blablabla». I’m not really a big fan of .. that image, really. I think it’s kind of .. Well, art and music both mean so much to me, but .. it’s like .. Maybe it’s something that .. that happens inside of me, somehow, more than .. It’s the same with religion, I think, that it happens on the inside .. inside of the person that believes in something.

Candidate I

5.1.2 Balancing identities

Although there was an emphasis on intrinsic motivation, the candidates also expressed a reliance on extrinsic motivation such as social acceptance and public recognition. More often than not, the answers to ‘when are you happy as a musician?’ were about achieving the right balance between the two motivations, either in the dynamic of the present and future self, or
in the coexistence of personal and social identity. Feeling connected, to their music as well as to other musicians, was another phrase that repeated itself in their answers. The connection to the external world was therefore important to all candidates, although their priorities seemed to differ. Some highlighted the need for a well-received public identity, while others stated that their happiness was strongest when they felt comfortable with their social identity. For example, Candidate J explained that ‘you travel a lot together .. so to me, the most important thing is to work together with musicians that I’m friends with’ (J). Candidate I, on the other hand, claimed that ‘the average musician is happy when some level of success is involved’, and explained that she was most happy when she was both ‘pleased’ with her own music and had gained ‘recognition .. from the audience that matters’ (I). As suggested by Candidate G below, it could even be that extrinsic motivation fuels intrinsic motivation in this way:

> When you get gigs or other jobs, and .. good reviews or whatever .. then I’m happy. Because you get positive feedback on your creative work, and that balance ... Like, the motivation is supposed to come from the artistic side of being a musician, but if nothing ever happens in your career then it gets pretty hard to motivate yourself to keep going. And sometimes you just have to kickstart your career in order for the artistic side to blossom.

Candidate G

Indeed, a strengthening of the public identity could make the personal identity shine, but only if the two mirror each other. However, even a misrepresented (hence unwanted) public identity could fuel intrinsic motivation if the person was motivated to correct the error that was made by being more autonomous in the future. Following this line of argument it is obvious that the two identities influence each other, and it is therefore interesting to note that ‘motivation is supposed to come from the artistic side’ (G). Candidate L also mentioned the ‘artistic’ motivation by stating that ‘the artistic drive comes from within, and when .. when the focus is on technique, it’s mostly connected to the demands from school, or the times I’ve felt .. a little behind, for example’ (L).36 The two statements confirm the existence of the ‘artistic image’ (I) in this case study, and therefore triggers the argument that the social and public identity (and consequently, extrinsic motivation) may affect music students’ personal and private beliefs more than the stereotype allows for. The idea that musicians should reject social norms in an attempt to be autonomous was not reflected in the research findings to the degree that is usually portrayed (e.g. 6.2.1).

36 This statement was an elaboration on L’s self-defined two sides of musicianship: art and technique.
In addition to public recognition, the ability to ‘play well’ (F) with others was emphasized. Candidate F stated that he was happiest when he worked with ‘the right musicians .. those you play well with, socially and musically .. and to play the music that I personally want to play’ (F). This intricate balance between personal and social identity seems to suggest that the chemistry between musicians is very important to their happiness. Further, the combination of autonomy and connection was emphasized by a majority of the candidates, and is here interpreted as a mutual self-indulgence where musicians are happiest when they work well together in partnership based on their shared individual wishes. Candidate C demonstrates this phenomenon in her statement about what makes her happy as a musician:

Well, there has to be a balance between .. the thing that I was referring to before .. being involved in music, at many different layers, and being a creator of some sort. It’s a balance between that .. and being able to work well together .. musically.

Candidate C

Another interesting phenomenon was how Candidate L motivated herself by envisioning her future identity. The image of how ‘awesome’ it would be to reach certain goals motivated her intrinsically, though the task at hand was typically found to be extrinsically motivating to her. This behaviour is the foundation of the ‘self-determination theory’, where external motivators are internalized in order to re-evaluate the value of an activity, such as ‘when a committed young musician practices technical exercises that are far from being inherently pleasurable, but valued for their beneficial effect on technique’ (Austin et al. 2006, p. 224). Candidate L preferred to practice expression over ‘technical stuff’, and so the example above reflects her own acknowledgement that ‘you certainly have a broader spectrum of expression when you have better technique’ (L). The self-determination visible in her statement also reflects the motivational strategy ‘provisional selves’ (3.2.2), given that she was motivated by an improved future self, as illustrated:

You always try to evaluate what will make you happy in the moment .. and tomorrow. There needs to be a balance .. and I’ve always thought that «if I’m that good..», «it has to be awesome to get to that level!» and «why can’t I play like that?», and sometimes that has inspired me to work with different things, even technical stuff.

Candidate L

---

37 In this context self-indulgence is to be understood in a positive way, as an expansion of autonomy.
5.1.3 Managing autonomy

Questions about being unhappy triggered many responses that were associated with a lack of external freedom, mostly in terms of a hindrance of autonomy. Examples of being forced into doing something that felt wrong (or forcing themselves to) were most common, although the candidates had no explanations for why this was so hard on them. Candidate J suggested that ‘I think it shines through easily .. to the audience, for example, if you do something that you don’t really connect with. I think it’s very hard to fake it, so it’s very important .. to feel that you’re doing the right thing’ (J). Similarly, Candidate B shared a story about when his new mentor told him that ‘if you don’t love the music, then don’t play it because it won’t be good enough’ (B), thus advocating autonomy. The difficulty to ‘fake’ music was also pointed out by Candidate C:

Trying to communicate a text you don’t truly comprehend .. That’s simply impossible. If the material doesn’t speak to you, then you can’t communicate it to others .. in a convincing way. People notice .. «she doesn’t really believe that». It could be a beautiful melody in the second movement, but if you .. think it’s embarrassing to play because it’s full of clichés, then ... @ I don’t know how, but .. you can tell. It’s like an actor who doesn’t know his lines. It’s not fun to witness.

Candidate C

At this point I want to make it clear that the idea that musicians have to ‘connect’ with the musical material in order for the music to feel ‘right’ (J), is slightly different from the basis of the ideology of autonomy (2.1.2). Music cannot be autonomous in itself because musical meaning is socially constructed (Green 2008, p. 69), but musicians can create music that feels autonomous to them. This distinction, between the autonomy of music and the autonomy of musicians, is important to keep in mind in this context. It may be that the ‘artistic image’ points to the ideology of autonomy, whereas the need to ‘connect’ with music relates more to the candidates’ personal autonomy. Candidate I illustrated this by describing how different it felt to her, if her music was ‘forced’ or spontaneous (as flow):

The things I force myself to do somehow .. Those pieces always sound forced to me, while on the other hand, the music that I like the most .. I can’t even remember when or where that music was created, I just remember .. that it was created in a certain period, but the process itself .. That happens all the time when I’m happy with my music. It’s like .. the memory has vanished .. and then I can tell that the music was created .. spontaneously, and absolutely .. That it’s unforced and right, sort of. I think that’s .. a good thing.

Candidate I
The desire for autonomy in their musical experiences was expressed alongside the need for a lifestyle that felt ‘right’. Candidate C explained that she could easily get drained ‘in periods where I don’t get to .. do my own projects’ (C). To her, ‘doing things that others tell you to’ often felt like a lot of ‘work’ (C). This statement supports the notion that some musicians may be happiest when they take part in mutual self-indulgence (5.1.2), because their lifestyle is a part of a musician’s autonomy. The importance of lifestyle was brought up by several of the candidates, and the main reasons were autonomy, variation, spontaneity and inspiration. For example, Candidate J said that it was important to him ‘to do a lot of different things because it inspires me’ (J), and two other candidates explained more specifically why a varied lifestyle was fundamental to their happiness as freelancing musicians:

> It’s important to me that life ... Boring is perhaps the wrong word, but .. I don’t want to be able to predict the outcome of my day. I want there to be spontaneity in my everyday life. That’s really important to me, to be able to be spontaneous ... I don’t want to fall into the trap .. that every day is the same.

Candidate B

> Well, an allrounder, sort of. I don’t want to be a specialist, really. That would be boring, to only do one thing @ ... all my life! You have to work for forty, maybe fifty years. How does anyone have the capacity to do only one thing? I just don’t get it.

Candidate E

A varied lifestyle often correlates with uncertainty in personal finances, but this was not seen as a problem. In fact, Candidate B stated that ‘if I wanted to get rich I could have done something else’ (B), and Candidate E echoed this by stating that ‘you don’t study music or decide to become a musician because you want to earn money’ (E). Other candidates also had similar ideas concerning their livelihood. Candidate I, for example, claimed that ‘I think that you need to be more passionate .. if you’re a musician .. because it’s so hard to make a living’ (I). When the candidates were asked why their efforts were worth it, Candidate E explained that becoming a musician was ‘like turning what you love into a job’ (E), and Candidate F stated that ‘you’re not born with the right to make your dreams come through by the means of financial aid, and so .. When my economy works well, that’s just a bonus’ (F). Both of them called their musical career a ‘self-realization’ (E, F), which confirms the notion that it was important to them to experience autonomy in their lifestyle as freelancing musicians. In this sense, intrinsic motivation was overall stronger than extrinsic motivation in their way of life, as predicted by the hypothesis.
5.2 Environment

How are music students supposed to behave? Who are their role models and what values do they idealize? Who is given social status, and how do social groups form? Are hegemonies perpetuated in the social environment in higher music education? One of the beliefs that this thesis is built upon is that environmental stimulus can be altered, and perhaps even should be if it increases the prospect of achieving musical potential (Hargreaves and North 2008, p. 53). However, the aim of this subchapter has not been to establish what the concrete expectations are, but rather, to give an impression of how the candidates experienced their social role at the academy, and how the ‘field’ judged their creative attempts.

5.2.1 Social status

The musical field is particularly social in that its knowledge is socially constructed and its participants often need to collaborate in order to engage in the field at all (see chapter 2). In fact, research indicate that music students are dependent on a strong peer network in order to have a successful transition from being a student into working as as a professional musician (e.g. Creech et al. 2008). Candidate F claimed that ‘your classmates are often the people you end up working with later in life’ (F), thus confirming this indication. Further, musicians’ salesmanship seems to appear more and more on the internet, and has therefore become an expected platform for young musicians to launch their musical careers (e.g. Rowley et al. 2015). Candidate A confirmed that social media has indeed become a part of a musician’s career by claiming that ‘if you’re not on Facebook, you’re nowhere’ (A). Being visible and approachable in the environment is, in other words, crucial for professional musicians, and the social identities of music students are therefore significant in higher music education. Candidate F elaborated on this in a positive light:

You often play .. you’re often asked to play with someone because of who you are. That’s liberating, really. If you’re asked to play with someone, and you’re like «wow, I’m playing with that musician?», then you still don’t have to change a thing, because you’ve been asked to play because they like your sound.

Candidate F

The ‘sound’ (F) is an expression that can be associated with both the ‘artistic image’ and with the musician’s desire for autonomy. Whether ‘who you are’ (F) refers to the student’s reputation (public identity) or the actual unique qualities of the student (musical identity) is unclear, but the fact that students ‘don’t have to change a thing’ (F) still stands. It seems that
receiving social approval has the power to determine if a student’s ‘sound’ is any good, and therefore confirms that the field determines the quality of music (3.1.1). Candidate G spoke about music critics and how their social approval was incorporated into the environment by claiming that ‘some guy has an opinion, and suddenly that becomes ridiculously significant and everyone reads it’ (G). Some of the candidates felt smothered by the necessity of social approval, while others had a different perspective on how to navigate the social landscape. Candidate J, for example, even thought of his status as a minority as a benefit:

I was affected by it in the beginning. I was behind on certain things, but still felt like I had a lot to say, even without the tools. I even viewed it as a benefit, because you have to think differently about things, and I experienced that most students wanted to learn from people that had different backgrounds than they did.

Candidate J

The quotation above is an answer to a question regarding social norms, and portrays how it is possible for students to reposition themselves in the environment by embracing the status as a minority instead of fighting it.\(^{38}\) However, almost all of the candidates did not do this until they decided to change directions, and so there were many stories about feeling isolated and misunderstood. Candidate H experienced that his class was focused on a project while he was interested in other things, and stated that ‘I’m a little bothered by that, when the others leave, and I’ve .. chosen to focus on other things’ (H). He further explained that ‘even if there’s no talk about it, you kind of feel .. a little left out .. because everybody else shares that goal’ (H). Candidate K claimed that he got the social status as ‘the guy that doesn’t care’, something he truly disliked because he had ‘always worked hard’ and had never viewed himself as ‘that guy’ (K). A similar story was shared by Candidate C, who illustrated how easy it can be for other students to misinterpret unusual behaviour because only ‘half of you’ (C) is visible:

I probably appeared to be a little .. absent .. to my classmates. When everyone else started auditioning or whatever .. I showed no interest. And people started asking me about it and told me that I seemed a little .. disengaged. No one knew it at the time, but I was preoccupied with my own projects that didn’t fit into the discipline. And then there is a friction .. because you’re not recognized .. as you are. Only half of you is represented .. and that means that you are half a person.

Candidate C

\(^{38}\) Although the opportunity for liberation was to be found within the students themselves, the act of identity embracement is here referred to as *emancipation* (further discussed in 5.4.2 and 6.1.4).
Music students will in other words probably gain more recognition if they pay attention to the social norms and trends (the ‘field’) at the academy, even if they dislike them (or perhaps especially in such circumstances). However, social awareness may be a blessing in disguise if it leads to stage fright or an exaggerated focus on appearance. Candidate D, for example, stated that he sometimes felt anxious on stage because he started thinking ‘that every phrase counts .. that it needs to be perfect’ (D). He quickly admitted that ‘of course, people don’t notice, they don’t even care’ (D), but the thoughts still surfaced to remind him of his social status. As portrayed in this section, the field is powerful. It can therefore be difficult for music students who prefer something other than the norm because they risk sacrificing their sense of autonomy. Because the social expectations can lead to misinterpretations among the students, it can be challenging to appreciate or even approve of the social status of an unusual student. This was summed up by Candidate A in an upfront manner:

And if you were doing other things or other kinds of musics, then you were «special», you were different, you were whatever. But that’s just how I experienced it.

Candidate A

5.2.2 Social norms

Although NMH has become very modern over the last decade (1.2.1), the candidates still felt pressured to conform to specific norms in order to fit in with the rest of the majority (as is natural in a discipline that relies on social construction of knowledge). Candidate I tried to compromise in order to fit in, and explained that ‘I guess I tried to be a little weird at the end, just to .. to please them, but I also did it .. for myself’ (I). She then added that ‘I tried to find the middle ground, where I could be happy with myself and .. still be able to please them’ (I). This balancing act was explored by several of the candidates as a way of trying to resolve the friction in their situation, but the ability to stand your ground in the midst of well-established social norms was mostly wishful thinking rather than an actual solution to their problems. In fact, pre-existing traditions may even be a stronger force than the curriculum itself (Olsson 1997, p. 302), as experienced by Candidate C:

There is this force at NMH ... Even though I knew that I didn’t have the same goals as the other students from my discipline, I still wanted to be accepted and respected. And the only way to get that was through repertoire, and so I got dragged into .. that thing.

Candidate C

\[39\] This balance was also found to make the candidates happy, if their autonomy was accepted (5.1.2).
Research on higher music education has confirmed that there are noticeable norms present in many institutions, spanning from the choice of repertoire to established policies (Jørgensen 2009, pp. 65-66). This was also reflected by the candidates in statements such as ‘everyone has their own .. well, their own preferences, you know, but .. it’s one kind of music .. that’s the main focus .. and most people are involved with’ (H). This ‘one kind of music’ was also expressed by Candidate I who shared a story about a friend of hers who ‘went through almost the same thing .. that he got a little confused, you know, because of all those .. conventions, about what was right and wrong’ (I). She then explained that ‘it wasn’t much that was said out loud, but .. you could still be .. strongly affected by it’ (I). The ‘silent’ ways in which conventions affect students were also illustrated by Candidate F:

When I started at the academy, I already thought I’d found my sound. Well .. my sound was pretty deconstructed after some time. Not by the teachers, but by the environment. And not directly or even consciously, but because people have strong personalities and opinions, and everyone’s interested in understanding each other and playing together. You want to learn, you know. At least I did.

Candidate F

As this quotation suggests, Candidate F’s transformation did not happen consciously but as a result of voluntary social mediation in the environment. However, a willingness to learn does not guarantee that a student will like the information (or even the musical expression) that is taught to them (2.1). The ability to detect the conventions, to understand what is ‘right and wrong’ (I), is managed with the application of the window of musical discourse (3.3.1). It was Candidate D who first brought this phenomenon to the case study, although it was then defined and referred to as the ‘genre police’ (D). Clarke (2011) discusses a similar concept that appears in conventions of performance practice, the ‘relationship between novelty and acceptability’ (p. 20), and how the ‘fluid boundaries’ between the creative and the normative get altered over time because of cultural changes (p. 21). After introducing the ‘genre police’, Candidate D illustrated how such ‘boundaries’ are changed over time:

You have role models, you know? You look up to musicians and they become .. heroes, sort of. They’re not necessarily the genre police. I even think they have experienced the same phenomenon .. been bothered by the same thing. But then .. let it go, and just play the music that they .. love. But then the new students arrive, and they look at the heroes .. «We have to become like them!», but they should just be themselves, really. And then a new set of rules are created, so probably the rules change over time.

Candidate D
This social conditioning is therefore driven by the students’ admiration (and idolization) of older students (or other musicians) that are portrayed as ‘heroes’ (D). Once these heroes have been selected and given status, the students develop individual aspirations and envision themselves as the coming heroes, possibly by yearning for the musical skills or the reputation of the heroes. But then, as Candidate D explained, they usually decide to ‘let it go’ (D). It seems that the unspoken rules about what is ‘right and wrong’ (I) therefore are the result of social mediation at the academy, just as Candidate F claimed. The environment (‘field’) teaches students how to behave and what is considered to be good music (as found in 5.2.1), and the window of musical discourse makes the spectrum of ‘right and wrong’ clear to them. This phenomenon may not be visible in any of the academy’s policies, but is nonetheless apparent in its ever-changing culture. Candidate D was asked to elaborate on the ‘genre police’, and gave an answer that may describe how it feels to be taught the window of musical discourse:

They decide what’s acceptable and what rules to play by .. the repertoire and .. Okay, you start school and you practice the standard stuff, you know, and you’re supposed to practice these scales and those pieces, and then «why in the world are you joining that ensemble outside of school?», you know? That wasn’t allowed, apparently.

Candidate D

The ‘genre police’ (the window of musical discourse is therefore a phenomenon that the students experience in their social environment. It is the social mediation and reincarnation of musical ideas, beliefs and values in higher music education, established by students and their aspirations. When Candidate D was asked who the ‘genre police’ was, he said ‘well, nobody, really .. not on purpose’ (D). Candidate L was also asked where the social expectations came from, and she answered that ‘it’s very hard to tell where the expectations come from; school, teachers, parents .. all those things .. to know what’s what isn’t easy’ (L). What is interesting about the ‘force’ (C) at NMH, is that it seems to burden only the students who let it burden them. Being familiar with the window of musical discourse is therefore a restriction as well as an opportunity (discussed further in 6.4), as Candidate F expressed when he stated that ‘it’s wise to know the rules .. before you break them’ (F).

5.2.3 Competition

Higher music education is often considered to be a competitive environment because the students are constantly competing against each other (e.g. Burt and Mills 2006). However, while some students feel inadequate in the presence of outstanding classmates, others thrive
in such environments because the tension can serve as a catalyst that ‘enhances their musical creativities’ (González-Moreno 2014, p. 89). While there certainly are clear variations in the disciplines on this topic (ibid.), social interaction will nevertheless have an impact on the students’ well-being during their studies (Jørgensen 2009, p. 153). Candidate D experienced another discipline as sometimes demeaning, and stated that ‘I know they’re thinking «those with the bad technique» and «we play the real instruments»’ (D). He then admitted that ‘I’ve gotten comments like that, unfortunately’ (D). Candidate K also stated that ‘I think there’s a noticeable difference between the disciplines’ (K), and later explained why:

When you’re in an environment where people create, then no one’s the best, it’s just .. everyone creates different things. While .. in an environment of recreation, where everyone recreates the same things .. and the music has to be interpreted in this or that way because «the teacher has so», and the teacher decides .. Then it’s the person who imitates the teacher the best who becomes the best musician. And that .. automatically leads to competition.

Candidate K

The comment about ‘recreation’ is here interpreted as the emphasis some disciplines put on recreating music in new and innovative ways, that is, ‘building on the past knowledge and recasting it for the future’ (Bennett et al. 2015, p. 23). Candidate K elaborated on the subject by explaining that ‘the moment you .. look around and realize that everyone else is far more motivated than you are, but you sort of have to keep up .. in that sense, music can be a competition too’ (K). This portrayal of self-assessment was commonly found (as illustrated in 5.2.1), and is probably a natural consequence of the evaluative nature of music education (2.1.3). According to Jørgensen (2009), peer assessment has become regular in many higher music education institutions (p. 142), yet studies have shown that assessment by staff and peers usually differ from the conclusions in self-evaluations (p. 143). It could be that music students are overly critical towards their own performances, given that musically gifted children have been found to place ‘unreasonably high expectations’ on themselves in their desire for perfection (McPherson & Williamon 2006, p. 246). If so, this could be the reason why Candidate L claimed that ‘well, it’s common knowledge .. that lots of tears are shed at NMH @ it’s kind of @ .. to say that it’s all pleasure is completely wrong’ (L). This could also be why Candidate E claimed that ‘it’s a bit taboo at NMH to talk about such things .. like being unhappy’. If students struggle with conflict in between ‘expectations of professional strength’ and their own fragility when taking creative risks (Haddon and Burnard 2015, p. 271), then perhaps displaying weakness could lead to a lack of status due to competition?
Another interesting finding is that two of the female candidates mentioned gender roles in the context of competition. Candidate C admitted that ‘it can be hard to find your identity .. at least within that discipline .. if you are female’ (C). Candidate I was more puzzled by her own impression, and stated that ‘there’s been one girl .. every year, three years in a row, and every girl has sort of .. experienced the same thing’ (I). The ‘thing’ she spoke about was not being able to fit in with the social norms of the discipline. Both candidates referred to disciplines that are ‘mostly influenced by men’ (C), thus suggesting that being a minority female student leaves little room for social affirmation. Candidate A also admitted that ‘I didn’t want to tell anyone that I was trying’ (A) as a comment on her initial transition. Could this be, at least in part, due to the potential difficulties of ‘finding’ an identity as a female musician (C)? The final female candidate was relieved to be older the second time she studied at NMH:

Well, there’s a lot of .. competition .. at NMH, and .. It’s a very competitive environment, really. I think you’re more exposed too it when you’re younger. Or at least I thought it was liberating to be a little older the second time around. I managed to distance myself from that culture.

Candidate L

Gender roles and age will be further discussed in chapter 6, as well as the hindrance of autonomy. However, while it is clear that competition can lead to feelings of isolation and misunderstanding, and that ‘there’s a competitive atmosphere on certain floors at NMH’ (K), this tension can also make students become more creative. For example, Candidate F stated that, in his discipline, ‘they believe that friction leads to creativity’ (F). This notion is also supported by Bennett, Reid and Petocz (2015) who investigated how music students defined creativity, and found that ‘many students positioned creativity as the act of breaking the very rules that were central to their undergraduate courses’ (p. 31). In other words, deliberate rejection of the norm was seen as a creative act. It is therefore safe to claim that all of the candidates in this case study have behaved creatively by changing directions. As a closing comment to this section is Candidate H’s afterthought to the confusion he experienced while in the competitive environment:

So then .. well .. at a certain point I didn’t really know «what should I do?» or «what am I supposed to do here?». But .. I think that’s sort of the point also .. in order for you to start thinking independently.

Candidate H
5.3 Institution

How is NMH adapting to the current needs of aspiring musicians? Given that ‘the purpose of higher music education is to equip student musicians for music careers’ (Bennett 2014, p. 234), it is NMH’s responsibility that its offer aligns with the realities of the changing market (e.g. Rowley et al. 2015). However, the reality gap (2.2), where some graduates experience that they are unequipped for their future career (e.g. Bennett 2007), could be maintained by the fact that aspiring students decide where to study based on the reputation of the academy (mostly associated with prestigious history or famous teachers) rather than on its adaptability (Jørgensen 2009, p. 71). It has therefore been one of the goals of this subchapter, in particular because NMH claims to be modern (1.2.1), to investigate how the candidates were initially met in their creative attempts by the institution.

5.3.1 Dominating norms

I wasn’t allowed to play the piece with vibrato because everyone told me «but the composer didn’t want that». But then my question is «how do you know that?». It’s most unlikely that anyone has actually talked to the dead composer.

Candidate K

As the quotation above and the previous sections indicate, NMH is not free of norms (nor was this expected). The ideology of autonomy (2.1.2) was clearly portrayed by several of the candidates, but it looks as though it could be perpetuated through social norms (field) rather than institutional criteria (domain). However, the friction in between the role of ideology and the creative aspirations of the candidates gave rise to identity paradoxes, and these will be described in this section. The fact that Candidate K ‘wasn’t allowed to play’ in a manner that differed from the norm was embellished on with explanations such as ‘if there’s something you need to play in a certain way, you have to write it down and remember it everytime you play the music’ (K) and ‘everything has to be like you’ve planned it’ (K). To him, neither the field nor domain offered space for creativity because it was demanded that ‘everything had to be written down .. from the smallest dynamic’ (K), which accordingly deprived him of his creative freedom. Candidate D had experienced a similar restriction in a different discipline. He admitted that ‘I created something terribly boring .. I thought «oh shit, I have to do it right!»’ (D), and the bottom line was that ‘it was the world’s most boring phrase ever’ (D).

40 The discipline (‘study program’) represents here both the field and the domain.
The experiences have different styles of restriction, in that Candidate K felt forced into doing something while Candidate D forced himself, but the ideology is present in both, manifested as a ‘collective mental force’ striving for ‘artistic greatness’ (2.1.2). The real friction here is therefore how art is defined and valued, as portrayed by Candidate L:

I wondered about auditioning for a master’s degree in the same discipline .. and I also thought about applying at an arts academy instead. I wanted to work more with the artistic aspects of music, and didn’t feel like I could do that at NMH, at least not at that instrument .. I thought it was restrictive in many ways, especially if you want to be an artist.

Candidate L

This is where the identity paradoxes come into play. While Candidate L did not view her discipline as an ‘art education’, other candidates portrayed NMH as demanding in terms of quality, one of the characteristics of the ideology of aesthetic autonomy. Candidate C stated that ‘the pressure is huge .. to maintain your practice, your projects .. all the time’ (C), and Candidate A echoed this by stating that ‘you were expected to be extremely skilled and dedicated’ (A). The issue, therefore, is not whether NMH offers an art education or not, but rather how the institution and its students define art. It appears as though there could be a gap between the definitions, and this was portrayed by Candidate C when she stated that ‘it was sometimes difficult to combine the requirements of the study discipline with the amount of work that my own projects demanded of me’ (C). If her individual projects were considered to be outside of the norm (either by the institution, the environment, or in terms of her own understanding of the window of musical discourse), the projects could have been rejected. When she was asked what the discipline required of her, she gave an elaboration on what she considered to be the norms:

The norm is that .. you should work goal oriented towards a permanent job. If you’re extremely ambitious, on the other hand, then potentially towards becoming a soloist. Alternatively, you could become a freelancing musician, that’s also accepted, but you still have to focus on auditions. The result of this is a lot of standard repertoire and audition stuff, and also mandatory attendance on specific concerts.

Candidate C

The same norms were also mentioned by other candidates when they were asked what was expected of them in their discipline. Several of them also displayed a frustration towards the ‘standard repertoire’, in particular in relation to entrance exams. Candidate B claimed that ‘it doesn’t matter what kind of music you’re going to focus on in your master’s degree, you have
to play the standard repertoire on the entrance exam, even though the study program itself is quite open’ (B). He then added that ‘I also find it a bit strange that the audition pieces for the master’s program and permanent ensembles are literally the same’ (B). Candidate E, on the other hand, stated that ‘I think that everyone in this discipline have expectations of landing a permanent job. It’s sort of the road that’s laid out for you here at NMH’ (E). Although it was perceived as strange to Candidate B that this was still the case in the master’s program, he also shared a story that illustrated the strength of this norm:

I was talking to a musician from a permanent ensemble, and there was a job opening at the time. He was wondering if I was going to audition, and I was like «no, why?». And he replied «but why are you a musician, then?». So ... a lot of people don’t get it.

Candidate B

The fact that music students who seek alternative ways of being musicians are asked why they are musicians at all, displays a clear domination of the norms already portrayed in this section. However, these experiences were first and foremost related to some disciplines, not all (as illustrated in 5.2.3). Even so, if ‘music and creativity are ... inseparable facets of a unified whole’ (Burnard 2006, p. 368) and ‘valuing creativity means valuing new ways of doing, thinking, being’ (Custodero 2011, p. 373), then it seems clear enough that certain areas of NMH are at least perceived to be of hindrance to the autonomy of some students (again, not all). Being in an environment where expectations cannot be met due to friction between personal and social identity (that is, autonomy and expectations), could indeed lead students to struggle with identity paradoxes, as illustrated by Candidate C:

It was very confusing at that age. I told myself «well, if you don’t want to play this, and you don’t want to play that, then maybe you .. shouldn’t become a musician?». You know, it was .. pretty tough to live with that uncertainty .. for many years. In some ways it took almost a decade .. before I got comfortable .. with my own musical identity.

Candidate C

5.3.2 The superiority of the teacher

One of the reasons why dominating norms and ideologies are reincarnated in higher music education, is that the teacher has the power to reinforce them (2.1.1). Instrumental lessons are also typically taught in a ‘teacher/apprentice relationship’, and the reputation of the teacher is often a humbling force in itself because of its high rank. Candidate I claimed that ‘the culture
is probably hard to end, unless .. all the staff is replaced’ (I). She later added that ‘in some ways that’s almost the case these days, so it could be that it’s a lot better now .. than just a couple of years ago’ (I). This observation might be correct,41 and this development is also reflected in research on higher music education. Although not thoroughly researched yet, there seems to be a trend towards hiring teachers who have multiple skills instead of one single speciality teaching area (Jørgensen 2009, p. 58). Even so, this section does not seek to advocate the ‘replacement’ (I) of staff, but rather to highlight how the hierarchical structures of teaching music have affected the candidates. As Candidate F explained, the students are often ‘victims’ to (the superiority of) their teachers:

Well, you’re probably .. a victim .. not only to your environment, but also to your teacher .. because you don’t know better. So you have to do what you’re told. At least that’s what you think, or .. or you think that in order for you to succeed, you «have to do this» and «have to master that». It’s like a feedback system, you know, the teachers. «Okay, now that you’ve done that thing, you’re ready for this thing.» And then they lead you onto a path that’s probably well trodden.

Candidate F

The assumed superiority of the teachers was also indicated by Candidate B, who claimed that ‘many teachers would be insulted if you went to another teacher to learn something, even if they weren’t interested in the topic or didn’t have the required skills’ (B). Given that it is often expected of the teachers to also have a professional career as a musician in addition to their teaching position (Jørgensen 2009, p. 135), this comment may be portraying a deeper issue of how teachers gain status in higher music education. Candidate K also expressed that it was difficult for him to discuss the desire to change directions with his teacher, because ‘you were supposed to practice like «this and this and this», otherwise you wouldn’t get a permanent job’ (K). He then explained that ‘to tell my teacher «listen, I’m not interested in that job» .. was very hard, because he wouldn’t have understood’ (K). Unfortunately, the belief that the teacher would not understand was common among the candidates, and surely for good reasons in some cases. However, several of the candidates were surprised to be proven wrong when they finally decided to share their struggles, because their teacher was more accepting than they had predicted (5.4.1).

41 There have indeed been many changes at NMH, and it is therefore important to remember that the experiences of the interview candidates in this case study may be different from the experiences of the academy’s current students.
As demonstrated, the social norms provide a framework for the status of both students and teachers, and become an integrated part of the institutional culture. While teachers in higher music education have been called ‘mentors’ due to their nature as guardians to their students (e.g. Jørgensen 2009, p. 80), there are still hierarchical structures in the environment that affect this relationship, independently of the individual teacher and student. On occasion, the students were even ‘paralysed’, according to Candidate F. He claimed that ‘they didn’t dare to comment because there was a teacher present, and they weren’t sure if they knew enough about the topic to comment on it’ (F). Again, this perceived demand for quality is most likely an illustration of the ideology, although Candidate F also thought that the reserved nature of the students could be linked to their national heritage rather than the institution, given his claim that ‘the students are also, in my opinion, very Norwegian in that way’ (F). Whether it is the ideology or the students’ heritage that leads to ‘paralysis’ is not important here. The thing that matters is whether or not the teacher is capable of meeting the students where they are at. Candidate F experienced that ‘some of the teachers were better at creating dialogue than others’ (F), and this was also the experience of Candidate J:

The teacher becomes «the boss», sort of, and .. delivers the blueprint. And I experienced that some .. some teachers were very positive and open-minded regarding rules and norms, while others were more conservative and had a strict perspective on the discipline .. that you should .. well, «deserve it», being able to call yourself a musician or in order to have that career.

Candidate J

Here I want to propose that the belief that you need to ‘deserve’ to call yourself a musician is strongly related to the ‘artistic image’ (5.1.1), and that both notions stem from the ideology of aesthetic autonomy. The yearning for ‘artistic greatness’ is undoubtedly present, and this therefore includes a *hierarchy of creativity* in the classroom, where students are given their place in the hierarchy through social mediation with teachers and classmates. Further, the teacher’s superiority is evident through wording such as the ‘feedback system’ (F) and the ‘blueprint’ (J), and Candidate I also illustrated this phenomenon by claiming that ‘I think the teachers .. they put «the selection» on the table, but the students really follow the examples they set, so it’s growing in that way, like .. an evil circle’ (I). The ‘selection’ is the set of music, values and ideals that are conveyed to the students, and its ‘evil’ nature seems to be the portrayal of the reincarnation of ideologies. In this web of norms and social expectations, some students may feel that their autonomy is overlooked because they are expected to listen
to the ‘feedback system’ and learn the ‘blueprint’. It is ironic that the ideology of autonomy seems to cancel out the musician’s individual autonomy, as was Candidate L’s experience:

There wasn’t much focus on what I wanted to do, what music or genre or direction I wanted to explore, or how my path was going to be. Nobody talked about those things. I presented some music to my teacher, and he responded that «we don’t play that kind of music at the most prestigious academy in the country». @ Yeah, and that music was my main interest ...

Candidate L

This situation, where Candidate L wanted to invest in her own musical expression instead of following the norm but was met by resistance (and even ridicule) by her teacher, is a clear illustration of how a musician’s autonomy can be denied in an instrumental lesson. Again, not all students will experience such identity paradoxes, yet it is important that the students who experience friction between intrinsic desires and external expectations are met with openness and compassion if they are to display any autonomy at all. Candidate B claimed that ‘the curriculum actually states that you’ll have a mentor in addition to an instrumental teacher’, and then added that ‘I know that some of the disciplines recognize this, but my discipline often ignores it and focuses solely on instrumental lessons’ (B). The idea that there was little focus on mentorship was also expressed by Candidate A, who claimed that ‘not at all are we talking about these kind of possibilities’ (A). While some candidates were frustrated with this reality, other candidates thought that it was the students’ responsibility to take control over his or her own path. Both perspectives are valid, and it is perhaps the combination that have led the candidates in this case study to change directions. Although somewhat simplified, there is certainly some merit to Candidate G’s proposition:

I think the relationship many students have with their teachers, the fact that when the teacher says something you «have to do it», that’s strange to me. If that’s a cool way for you to learn music then great, but if you don’t think it’s cool then find something else to do. No one is forcing you to study with that teacher, or even to study that discipline.

Candidate G

5.3.3 The modern institution

What is a ‘modern’ higher music education institution? If defined by research, then NMH should already be ‘developing, promoting and supporting diverse musical creativities with explicit learning tasks, frameworks and materials’ (Burnard and Haddon 2015, p. 16). While the experiences of certain norms and social expectations were expected findings in this case
study, the idea of modernity has been more perplexing in that it offers less established terms and more room for interpretation. The understanding of modernity is therefore based on the need for developing musical entrepreneurship in higher music education institutions in order to make musicians’ education more relevant for the contemporary job market (e.g. Burnard 2014a). Despite the unquestionable existence of norms at NMH, it seems that the academy itself (domain) is open to entrepreneurial activity, and that the environment (field) is the main source of both ridicule and resistance. Candidate E stated that there was a standard repertoire to learn, but that the academy was also ‘very open to new things’ (E):

When you audition for that discipline at NMH, it’s expected that you’re acquainted with certain repertoire .. and you’re supposed to do music in specific ways too. I guess that’s sort of the nature of institutionalization, or at least academia. Though .. at the same time, I feel like NMH is very open to new things .. that you get the freedom to explore in your own way after you’ve passed the entrance exams.

Candidate E

The reference to ‘institutionalization’ is on point. Music has indeed become an ‘object of study’, and music students are consequently the ‘guardians of its traditional meaning’ (Frith 1996, p. 116; see also 2.2.2 and 6.2). The institutionalized nature of the ‘selection’ (I) — the musical repertoire that is reincarnated through higher music education, and the values that consequently are conveyed to students — is visible in certain arenas at NMH. For example, the distinction between ‘creation’ and ‘recreation’ (5.2.3) was given by Candidate K because he experienced that there was a strict hierarchy of creativity in his discipline. His role was to ‘be an extension of the leader who’s an extension of the creator’ (K), and he expressed that ‘if you’ve created the music, then great, because then you can do whatever you want to’ (K). The same frustration was expressed by Candidate C, who claimed that ‘the hierarchical structure in certain ensembles can really destroy the interpersonal communication’ (C). This was even expressed by Candidate F (who had a different background) when he jokingly stated that ‘it’s like the power positions transform them into masochists’ (F). However, he praised NMH for being open-minded, and added that other places in Europe may be more institutionalized.42

I think it’s different if the transition is the opposite, changing disciplines from the «this is the way it is» .. into a more open arena. At least at NMH, that discipline .. is much more open-minded. It’s probably more institutionalized other places in Europe.

Candidate F

42 NMH has a shorter history than many higher music education institutions in Europe (1.2.1).
There are three relevant points to this statement: 1) the candidates have probably had very different experiences, 2) NMH is referred to as ‘open-minded’ (F), and 3) this could be the result of its Norwegian culture and history. The third point may be on point because, as Candidate G stated, ‘the music environment, at least in that discipline in Oslo, is very supportive and .. caring’ (G). He then explained that ‘sometimes people criticize each other, but that happens, it’s not like .. people attack each other or something like that, and there are many different people that play a lot of different music’ (G).\(^{43}\) The fact that NMH is described as being open-minded could therefore be a reflection of the diversity of musical expressions in Oslo. This diversity was also elaborated on by Candidate J:

More and more students viewed the academy as .. this place with four walls and lots of great people to meet. So if we could manage to throw away those categories, «they study this and they study that», and everyone could just talk to each other, then it would be easy to talk about these things and to be inspired by each other.

Candidate J

The desire to blur categories were one of the common findings, and is perhaps one of the reasons why NMH appears to have become more open-minded. Candidate A expressed that ‘the studies were more traditional before, and now they’re opening up’ (A). She then added that ‘but I don’t think the teachers themselves know that it’s happening, or even want it to happen’ (A). In other words, Candidate A gave NMH (domain) credit for ‘opening up’, even if her impression of the teachers’ (field) participance in this change is, at best, hesitant. This remark happens to align with Candidate J’s impression that the students changed their view of NMH, and could therefore indicate that the academy accommodates its students. That said, Candidate H also had a mixed impression of the teachers in this context, and claimed that they ‘try to push you .. in a specific direction .. by the courses they offer and the music they focus on’ (H). However, he also admitted that ‘the individual lessons are very .. open-minded, really’ (H), and explained the reasons for his ambivalence:

The two first years are like «you have to do this» .. practice technique, become technically advanced. But after that .. when you reach a certain point .. around the third or fourth year, it’s more like «do whatever you want», as long as you become a better musician. Develop musically, that is.

Candidate H

\(^{43}\) The belief that NMH is open-minded because of its Norwegian culture also correlates with the fact that Norwegian students previously were portrayed as ‘reserved’ (5.2.3).
Several candidates referred to the difference between the first two years and the two latter, and stated that the change in creative freedom was reflected in their curriculum. The academy therefore offers a more traditional approach in the first half of their studies and a more open-minded approach in the latter half. The idea that NMH is ‘opening up’ could thus be a result of the candidates’ own musical development throughout their studies, and the elements of age and maturity cannot be eliminated from the equation. However, due to the external changes that have been displayed by NMH, it seems clear that the modernization of the academy is, in fact, an accurate portrayal of the academy’s development, and NMH is therefore considered to be modern in this thesis. The interplay between fields and domains is therefore of interest to chapter 6, in particular because Candidate H illustrated that the mastery misconception is present at NMH. To be clear: an emphasis on technique is not automatically unsuitable for music students, but the neglect of creative thinking is (in particular if the student expresses interest). The research findings in the next subchapter will elaborate on some of these issues by sharing the needs of the candidates, and how they experienced their transition.

5.4 Exploration

The three categories of the systems model (3.1.1) have now been presented, and the last subchapter is dedicated to how the candidates experienced and experimented in their change. How was their process? What did they gain? The individual experiences of the candidates will be described in more detail here than in previous sections, and then the candidates’ suggestions to NMH will be described. While their experiences were certainly personal, it is interesting to note that they were asking more or less for the same future at the academy. This could indicate that there is a shared tendency in needs, despite the differences in experiences.

5.4.1 Reactions and support

Some of the candidates transformed their musical identity by leaving their environment in order to find musicians who shared the same interests and needs. Other candidates expanded their musical identity by exploring new environments that they could be a part of. How were

---

44 This ‘modernization’ should not be mistaken for being modern in a musical sense. NMH is modern as an institution, meaning that the academy aims to equip its students with skills that musicians need in contemporary society.

45 The key findings will be summarized in 6.1.
the candidates met in their musical pursuits? Was their social status at the academy altered? How did NMH respond to their changes, and how did their teachers react? While the social expectations are stronger in certain disciplines than in others, the degree of conformity is still a vital ingredient in all of the candidates’ decisions to expand or transform their musical identity. Despite these differences, NMH appears to accommodate the candidates’ needs — but only if they have spoken up. For example, Candidate B shared his stubborn (and public) attempts to make the change happen:

It took me half a year .. but I finally got through to them. It’s just — and that is wonderful about NMH — if you complain enough, the opportunities start lining up. If you’re that guy, you know, standing in the administration every day, then ... If you want it enough, you’ll get it.

Candidate B

The idea that ‘if you want it enough, you’ll get it’ has been true for all of the candidates in this case study, though they had many different approaches to being ‘that guy’ (B). Candidate A stated that ‘I explored different ways of solving the problem’, and that ‘it all started with not wearing the appropriate concert attire’ (A). To her, ‘it helped to know that someone else had already done it’ (A), because ‘few musicians initiate this kind of transformation’ (A). This comment is worth noting, given that role models definitively can inspire identity development (3.2.2). Additionally, Candidate A was probably aware of the social risks because she had observed other students pursue the same transformation, at least in the public arena. The next thing she explored was to ‘play my own interpretations without listening to the teachers, and that was .. very scary’ (A). This fear is a testament to the teacher’s superiority, but could also be the result of only having seen the transformation of others from the outside. Despite of this fear, her teacher was not dismissive of her creative attempts. In fact, Candidate A stated that he ‘was interested, and he supported me’ (A), and then illustrated the reaction:

My teachers were very curious, because they are .. the successful stories you hear about, you know, famous musicians. But I honestly think they found it interesting that someone didn’t want that, and rather wanted ... something else.

Candidate A

Several of the candidates expressed similar stories about the importance of their teacher’s acceptance. Candidate F stated that ‘my teacher was very open-minded’, and then added that ‘he gave me a lot of input that I’m still able to use, and he had no .. personal agenda, that I
was going to become «this» or «that»’ (F). The comment about a ‘personal agenda’ is in itself interesting because such an agenda neglects the student’s autonomy, and could potentially be one of the reasons why students decide to drop out. Further, Candidate F claimed that ‘I was upfront about my purpose, and he got it’ (F), indicating that speaking up about personal needs is key to creating dialogue with the teacher. Candidate K, on the other hand, changed teacher in order to meet the understanding that he needed. He claimed that ‘it was absolutely crucial for me in order to stay motivated that I got lessons with him that year, because he understood the desire for interdisciplinary projects’ (K). He then elaborated on that experience:

Our lessons were about playing the instrument, not the discipline itself, and that was a lot of fun and very interesting to me. Plus, he is one of the best, really, so to meet that understanding from him was great.

Candidate K

His statement reveals how he managed to escape the social norms of the discipline through the new teacher (and the status of that teacher), and several candidates shared similar stories. Candidate I, for example, pursued a new discipline in order to escape the social expectations of her environment. Once the change had taken place, she explained how it was ‘almost like they let go of those .. conventions .. because the music was so different’ (I). The pressure to conform had vanished, and she ended up feeling empowered. Candidate L also experienced a liberating transformation by pursuing a new discipline, and expressed that ‘I didn’t feel like I was skilled when I started over, and that was kind of liberating .. because I felt like I could focus on the musical expression more’ (L). She then added that ‘I really want to give praise to those teachers and the other students for taking me so seriously’ (L). Her praise reflects the social support she was given in the new discipline:

The whole project was kind of like .. I jumped into it with both feet. I just went for it. It was almost impossible to withdraw once I had jumped, and I think that the others thought it was fun to witness. They sort of cheered me on. That was amazing, because I would never have experienced that in my old discipline.

Candidate L

Could it be that the candidates’ new social status makes it easier for them to navigate the environment on their own terms?\textsuperscript{46} The research findings indicate that all of the candidates

\textsuperscript{46} This repositioning was for example exercised by Candidate J, as demonstrated in 5.2.1.
felt empowered by their new musical identity, and that once they spoke up, they received support from the institution as well as the environment. However, several of the candidates met initial resistance to their desired identity, which is why many of them decided to change directions in the first place. Candidate J also mentioned that one of his friends did not receive support, and decided to drop out instead. His friend had ‘wanted to play a repertoire that wasn’t .. that she couldn’t do in that discipline .. so she quit’ (J). It could be interesting for further research to investigate if the hindrance of a musician’s autonomy is one of the reasons why music students decide to drop out of their studies, given that it is one of the main reasons for changing directions.

5.4.2 Their discoveries

What did the candidates gain from their change? In short, the needs that went unmet in the former discipline are now being met in the new discipline. While some candidates wanted to transform their musical identity and others wanted to expand it, the common features of the change was a desire for autonomy, ownership and exploration. Candidate H expressed that ‘I wanted to create the music .. on my own, you know, from scratch .. and to listen to something that was my own creation .. from the outside, and not .. well .. play something that someone else had created from scratch’ (H). This statement portrays all three features, and the need to create ‘from scratch’ is now met in his new discipline. When Candidate A was asked why her change was worth it, she gave a longer description of her new reality:

This is mine. It’s no one else’s. No one else … owns the rights to me or what I do … in small and big ways. So, first of all: I’m playing my own stuff, and that’s a big change and very exciting. And also, no one else … can tell me what to do or how to do or when to do or where to do … There are no rules in my new world, and in my old one there were only rules .. that I gave myself. I am definitively not saying that my previous discipline is the … If we have some .. limitations, they exist only in our heads.

Candidate A

Her statement aligns with the three main features, but the most interesting part of it is the mention of her ‘limitations’ (A). While the research findings undoubtedly have shown that there are strong social norms at NMH that can be perceived as limiting to the candidates, it has also been found that the academy is modern and supportive of creative endeavors. If the limitations are given to the candidates by themselves as the result of perceived social risks

47 These features were also the core values of their musical identity, defined in 5.1.1.
within their environment (field), then the candidates’ changes may illustrate an emancipation that shifts the window of musical discourse to their advantage. This idea was described in Candidate D’s experience as well, when he stated that the biggest change was, in fact, ‘the discovery that .. you can actually do exactly what you want’ (D). This was further explained:

Perhaps the biggest difference is the feeling. The feeling that .. I could spend my time and my resources on .. doing what I want to. Maybe it’s more the feeling I had .. rather than the actual circumstances ... And that certainly helps ’cause I do everything on my own. That’s what makes a difference.

Candidate D

Candidate D is thinking out loud in this statement, wondering if it was the ‘feeling’ or the ‘actual circumstances’ that caused his new-found freedom, the ‘discovery’ that he was free to do whatever he wanted to. A similar question was raised by Candidate J, who jokingly stated that ‘maybe I’ve gotten older?’ (J). He explained that ‘when you first enrol you’re so cool and want to do as much music as you can, you want to put yourself out there’. He then added that ‘now that I’ve been around for some time, I’ve become more relaxed about it all’ (J). The fact that he emphasized social status in the context of his earlier years at NMH aligns with the rest of the findings of the case study, and is surely another element in the equation. It might be that older students feel more confident than the younger students, because they have more experience or a more established identity. This was suggested by Candidate L (5.2.3), who also expressed that some of her limitations were internal:

To me, the instrument has always been associated with .. being conscientious. I’ve sort of always been decent, and I got good grades .. my instrument was no exception. I lost some of my self confidence when I started studying at NMH, because the musical me had somehow always been associated with achievement. And then I got sick of myself and started thinking «why is that my focus?», «what is driving me?», «why is it so important to please them?». So it felt great to do something .. that wasn’t connected to that focus .. to do something poorly. It made it easier for me .. to explore the other sides.

Candidate L

Being able to explore music was the reason why Candidate L changed directions, and she later expressed that a wonderful component of her new discipline was to ‘work with .. people that are alike, that share your thoughts, and .. across genres’ (L). This mutual self-indulgence...

---

48 Emancipation is here understood as the ‘resistance and ability to challenge the current system and structures of power’ (Helfter and Ilari 2015, p. 151).
(5.1.2), even if it was mentioned less as a motivator for changing directions, was still seen as an essential part of being a musician in the case study and should be taken into consideration. The candidates’ needs to meet acceptance, respect and understanding in their change, may all point to the need for mutual self-indulgence. Their emphasis on social status and belonging may illustrate conscientiousness, even though Candidate L was the only candidate who used the term. In fact, a gradual transition from conscientiousness to independence has been found to be a typical developmental pattern for musicians (discussed in 6.1.4), and correlates with many of the experiences that have been illustrated in this subchapter.

5.4.3 Their suggestions

The final section of this chapter will voice the opinions of the candidates. In light of the discoveries that have been portrayed in this chapter, it is profitable for their suggestions to be further discussed in chapter 6 in the context of the reality gap that has been brought forward by scholars. The real-world experiences of the candidates from NMH suggest that there should be established a discipline dedicated to the freelancing musician. While some of the candidates also admitted that ‘it’s hard to know how institutionalized an institution should be. What curriculum, how much practice, what kind of repertoire, what musical styles .. those things’ (F), most of the candidates emphasized areas such as collaboration, management and experimentation as relevant needs for their future careers. Candidate B expressed that this was lacking when he studied at the academy:

What I truly missed during my study period at the academy was a discipline that .. pointed in the direction of a freelancing life, like entrepreneurship or chamber music. I would have loved that, because that’s the stuff that I’ve been doing as a freelancing musician .. to make a living without having a permanent job.

Candidate B

Candidate B further stated that ‘I think that it’s important to everyone that the curriculum is shared .. the same traditions, in the beginning’ (B), but that it later was important for the students to ‘actively explore different teachers and disciplines .. in order to choose what’s most interesting to them’ (B). A similar statement was given by Candidate J, who claimed that the most ideal framework would be ‘to find a good balance between .. preserving the tradition, and sort of .. at the same time reach out to other institutions and musicians or artists that are outside of your environment’ (J). He then added that ‘I’m very fond of the institution, and I think it’s important to study and to understand the past and to dive deep .. but at the
same time .. it’s equally as important to .. create’ (J). When asked why, he explained that his career depended on it:

You have to network .. meet people and contact institutions and .. arrange all of it on your own, which is very tiresome and .. if you haven’t been doing it along the way, I think a lot of people will get scared.

Candidate J

These suggestions are all well-meant (and even advocate a reasonable balance between contrasting elements such as expression and technique, innovation and tradition etc), but they still introduce a set of issues: How will the restructuring of the teacher/apprentice relationship be received? How should the assessment of musical creativity be managed? How will the expanded structure of the institution itself and the delegation of resources work? While such questions have no definite answers, they are neither irrelevant nor completely unanswered. The teacher/apprentice relationship has already been restructured in some institutions with good results (e.g. Olthuis 2015), and studies have long indicated that most students respond positively when given more creative freedom (e.g. Bennett 2014; Burwell 2005; Brändström 1998). While the assessment of creativity is challenging because of its cultural meanings, the hindrance of it is ironic given that all music is the result of reincarnated social norms and the mediation of these (2.1.2). The balance between tradition and novelty was emphasized by the candidates, yet they also consistently stressed the significance of the freelancing musician.

NMH should have a discipline that focuses on the freelancing musician .. where there is more space for experimentation. Because there are lots of, I am quite sure of this, aspiring musicians that want to freelance .. instead of working in a permanent ensemble. And this can only happen if NMH re-evaluates their entrance exams.

Candidate C

The candidates have suggested that the entrance exams often require the knowledge and performance of standard repertoire, and several of them actually expressed that they did not want to pursue a master’s degree at NMH as a consequence of this. However, a restructuring would not happen in isolation, and no suggestions were offered as to how the domino effect would play out. Tønsberg (2007), on the other hand, has discussed the struggles that emerged when rhythmic music was introduced at a(nother) Norwegian conservatoire where the culture was dominated by the classical canon, and the many challenges that arose when changes are to be implemented as a new discipline. Because NMH has already introduced several new
study programs in recent years (1.2.1), perhaps the time is ripe for introducing a discipline dedicated to the freelancing musician, as the candidates have suggested. If not, then smaller adjustments such as encouraging students to explore their autonomy (e.g. González-Moreno 2014) and envision their future (e.g. Bennett et al. 2015) could improve conditions radically by moving the window of musical discourse to a more creative atmosphere, in both field and domain. Candidate J further stated that ‘it’s very good for each class .. or discipline .. that there’s some variety in it, to challenge each other and teach each other, work together on projects’ (J). Candidate F similarly expressed that it was important for students to be able to focus on their own projects in order to prepare for their future careers, as well as to create a sense of belonging:

I think that one solution is giving students the choice. If the student feels like «okay, I know what I want to do», then that student could be given more space to do that. And also ask the students those questions earlier in their studies. But on the other hand, I also believe that it’s beneficial and necessary to structure the disciplines. Not just because of curriculum or technical stuff, but in order for students to share experiences.

Candidate F

In sum, the research findings suggest that social norms affect music students because their social status is important to their future careers. It is therefore plausible that interdisciplinary activities could allow students to develop collaborative skills and creative thinking that many of them will need in their future as freelancing musicians, and should therefore be a priority to higher music education institutions. This notion, that students need more creativity in their studies, will be discussed and contrasted with research on the topic in the next chapter.
6 Discussion

While chapter 5 accounted for the experiences, beliefs and ideas of the interview candidates, chapter 6 will elaborate on the implications of these findings in the context of relevant research on higher music education. In the first subchapter, the key findings of the case study will be presented, and the ‘interdisciplinary musician’ will be introduced. Second, some of the misconceptions that affect students in higher music education will be presented, as well as how they came to be and why their repercussions are now being challenged. Third, the claims and suggestions related to the call for creativity will be presented in the context of the reality gap (between misconceptions in higher music education and the multi-faceted working life). Finally, there will be a discussion around how creating dialogue between staff and students may offer an increased understanding not only of students’ needs and aspirations, but the possibilities and restrictions of current research.

6.1 Negotiating identities

What is truly interesting about identity is that once you feel at home, you don’t need to define it anymore.

Candidate C

The research findings from the ‘interdisciplinary musician’ case study indicated three key findings to discuss further: the ‘musician’s autonomy’ (person), the ‘artistic image’ (field), and the ‘window of musical discourse’ (domain). The first key finding represents the dynamic of the systems model, where the person’s creative endeavors are judged by the field, and the domain is the source of creative opportunities and restrictions (3.1.1). In other words, while NMH (domain) was found to be supportive of creative endeavors (at least more so than not), some of the candidates (person) experienced that they were limited by the social expectations, whether this was caused by the actual environment or not (field). However, once they had changed directions, they were liberated from these thoughts and found that the environment was supportive of their needs after all. This is why the ‘window’ has been relevant, because it is a tool for understanding the diverse domains and fields in their musical world.
6.1.1 The ‘musician’s autonomy’

The specialized nature of higher music education can lead to the social requirement that students should ‘live in it all the time’ (A) in order to prove their ‘worthiness’ (J) of being a musician. It is therefore an interesting finding that music students in some ways are taught to conform to the musical expressions that are sought after and given value in their fields by the creative hierarchies in their domains. The research findings have also suggested that some of the candidates even were hindered in developing their musical autonomy and creativity as a consequence of these norms, and that this hindrance was a significant reason why they chose to change directions. However, other candidates did not express any need to reject the norms, but rather to indulge in a sense of fluency.\textsuperscript{49} The ability to adapt to new fields and domains was a need portrayed by Candidate F (among others):

I have to say that even though I’ve changed directions and chosen to explore another discipline . . . my main focus has always been to blur the lines between such categories, and to build bridges instead of saying «now I play this, now I play that», you know? To me it’s all just music, really.

Candidate F

This idea of adaptability was commonly found in the expansion of the candidates’ musical identities, where the desire to explore and experiment with new music was their strongest motivator (and surely one of the main attributes of the interdisciplinary music student). The coexistence of multiple identities is found in for example music education students (e.g. Freer and Bennett 2012) and performing composers (e.g. Davidson and Smith 1997), yet the notion that ‘music students need to explore multiple possible futures’ has only recently appeared in research on higher music education (Bennett 2014, p. 241). Even at a modern academy such as NMH, there is a clear lack in alternatives for students who actually aspire to career paths that are becoming more and more relevant, and this contradiction in value can lead students to doubt their self worth and experience identity paradoxes. However, despite the fact that higher music education needs to develop relevant framework and curriculum for the changing job market, the research findings also indicate that students are able to find creative solutions in order to pursue a freelancing career, and that encouraging this behaviour could be the first step towards a more creative education (e.g. Bennett 2014; González-Moreno 2014).

\textsuperscript{49} Haddon and Burnard (2015) suggest that fluency could be applied to higher music education as ‘the ways in which musicians can draw on their self-awareness and interpersonal skill to work comfortably in any context through moving from one persona to another’ (p. 271).
All of the candidates decided to change directions independently of social expectations, and were therefore intrinsically motivated to do so. Autonomy was portrayed as a significant need by all candidates, and several candidates also shared stories about experiencing flow.\textsuperscript{50} The \textit{autotelic personality}, where ‘an individual who generally does things for their own sake, rather than in order to achieve some later external goal’ (Csikszentmihalyi 1997, p. 117), was therefore displayed by many of the candidates, which in turn indicates that they are \textit{field-independent} (discussed in 6.1.4). However, while the hypothesis was that the candidates were intrinsically motivated to change directions (and this has been found to be true), it has also been interesting to discover that their social status influenced their decision making process. All candidates unanimously expressed the need to balance their personal and social identity, a finding that makes sense, given that a strong network is vital for musical success (e.g. Creech \textit{et al.} 2014; Moore \textit{et al.} 2003).

\textbf{6.1.2 The ‘artistic image’}

One of the most interesting questions from the research findings is how art is defined and valued in the various fields at NMH.\textsuperscript{51} The fact that one candidate considered her discipline not to offer an art education at all could indicate that art was not only judged differently, but also defined in different terms. Further, because the diverse hierarchies of creativity were also portrayed to value musical \textit{creation} differently (as opposed to musical aesthetics), the identity paradoxes in some candidates were more related to the hindrance of autonomy than a dislike of the valued musical expressions. After all, we ‘describe the musical experience we value in terms of authenticity’ (Frith 1996, p. 121), and it could therefore be that the candidates either had a stronger pull towards intrinsic motivation and their own autonomy than other students, or that they simply valued a different way of creating and experiencing music. Although art is unquestionably defined and judged in various ways by the different fields and domains, the candidates valued art in a surprisingly similar manner:

\begin{quote}
It doesn’t matter what kind of expression it is, I just think it’s important that music has that function, and art in general too, being able to challenge people with new impulses, to make them think ... They can hate it or love it, as long as .. the boundaries are pushed a little bit.
\end{quote}

\begin{flushright}
Candidate F
\end{flushright}

\textsuperscript{50} Although the word itself was not used by the candidates, it was expressed through substitutes such as freedom, ownership, personal, exploration, experimentation, creation, expression etc.

\textsuperscript{51} Art was found to be judged differently by the different environments at NMH (and in Oslo).
The candidates’ desire to explore music was often accompanied by the need to challenge (and to be challenged) through art. However, many fields value a musical expression that falls within well-established traditions over music that pushes boundaries (e.g. González-Moreno 2014), and it is important to keep in mind that such competitive environments, where students are led to strive for an ‘artistic image’ (I) through the recreation of musical repertoire in order to be ‘worthy’ (J) of being a musician, do not lack value in an academic setting. The field itself is only doing its job as the gatekeeper of values, and has a significant function in that it for example preserves a well of musical repertoire for the domains. The danger occurs when other musical expressions or creative processes are considered to be ‘special’ (A), and the social expectations lead to the hindrance of relevant future careers. This contradiction in value can pressure students into proving themselves ‘worthy’ in order to maintain their social status, even when it is unnecessary:

I didn’t feel like it was something that I needed to do .. you know? It wasn’t like a career move, or «I’m not succeeding in this discipline, therefore-» and I was very concerned with proving that to people the first year after I’d changed directions, that «I’m good enough in the other discipline, that’s not the-» .. e .. And it meant a lot to me that people didn’t think that about me. But now it’s like «if they believe that, let them», and it’s completely irrelevant to me what they think.

Candidate L

An interesting finding in this context is how the internal pressure to maintain an artistic image (as illustrated above by Candidate L) was ‘let go’ (D) by the candidates. This act of emancipation (5.4.2) was dependent on themselves because the perceived restrictions were described as being their ‘own limitations’ (A). It is also conceivable that any student with a background from another discipline is going to stand out as an ‘immigrant’ to the new discipline, and that the deliberate choice to acquire breadth alters the social expectations of specialization in the field. However, these hypotheses depend on the nature of the discipline as well as on the profile of the institution, and it is plausible that NMH is more encouraging of creative behavior than the average institution, given its vision to be ‘Europe’s most modern institution within higher music education’ (Norges Musikkhøgskole 2014, 29.07). It is also possible that the fields have changed during the last five years as a consequence of NMH’s changes, and that students experience other social norms today. Still, many of the candidates endured severe identity paradoxes as the result of the fields rather than the domain itself, and so these findings should not be dismissed.
It is also interesting to note that the female candidates experienced more resistance than most of their male counterparts prior to their change. It appears as though their process were longer and more intense regardless of their discipline, which may be connected to the general lack of female role models in music (e.g. Green 2012; Gaunt and Hallam 2009). In fact, half of the female candidates mentioned that it was hard for them to find an identity in the social landscape in certain disciplines precisely because of this (5.2.3), thus suggesting that female students may encounter added obstacles due to social expectations. This could be the reason why the female candidates hesitated for a longer period of time before speaking up about their needs and aspirations, a finding that also aligns with other studies on teacher/student relationships in higher music education (e.g. Zhukov). As a concluding remark, Candidate C’s portrayal of her previous identity paradox:

Now that things are sorted out, it seems unproblematic and small. But I remember vividly how .. hard it was .. when I was in the middle of it all. It was such an intense feeling. «This is your life. What are you going to do about it?»

Candidate C

6.1.3 The ‘window of musical discourse’

There is a hidden curriculum at NMH that consists of ‘the skills, knowledge and values that are not directly intended in the written curriculum’ (Jørgensen 2009, p. 181). Although the field is considered to be the gatekeeper of the domain’s values, the social nature of music and the diversity of both fields and domains in higher music education can make it difficult for students to know what is ‘right and wrong’ (I). While one of the candidates stated that curriculum and reality did not add up (B),52 other candidates mentioned that the teachers had the power to decide what was important in (and out of) the curriculum (5.3.2). These findings suggest that the pairs of fields and domains are influencing each other, while at the same time separate from other fields and domains. Interdisciplinary student projects could therefore be beneficial in order to address social norms that might no longer serve the domains, such as the process of entrance exams (5.4.3), given that the assessment of music creation and performance has been portrayed to vary in the diverse fields and domains. Research on higher music education has also indicated that entrance examinations are conducted in varied ways, yet ‘no studies have been carried out on the diversity’ of these processes (Jørgensen 2009, p.

---

52 In other words, the field’s and the domain’s values did not add up in reality because the academy was becoming modern before the environment had caught up (as illustrated in 5.4.2).
These factors may be why the candidates displayed a strong alertness of institutional culture, and have tried to position themselves accordingly, as portrayed by Candidate G:

If you go to the extreme, and only create music that you know will sell because ‘that’s what the reviewers like and I’ll just play like that’, then, yeah, you’ve sold out a little. But on the other end of the spectrum, you would create music that only you like, and that can easily get a little isolated because people don’t get what you’re doing or why your music is like that. So you need to find a balance between the two.

Candidate G

The balance between the musical autonomy and social expectations of the candidates has been a reoccurring topic in this case study, and it is relevant because it highlights the need to study how creativity is taught in higher music education. While creative performance needs to be more thoroughly researched, the demands to reconcile technical perfection and creative self-expression in music are increasing (González-Moreno 2014). After all, one cannot exist without the other, because technical and expressive features coexist in both the creation and the practice of music (Davidson et al. 1997, p. 195). It is therefore interesting to note that several of the candidates expressed that their discipline focused more on ‘technical stuff’ (L) than what they wished for. While the findings of this case study suggest that the mastery misconception was one of the main reasons for changing directions, it was also found that one candidate changed directions in order to improve technically. This contrasts the most common experience, where the candidates changed directions in order to be allowed more creative freedom. Here is a typical portrayal of their met needs:

I love it. There’s never any pressure around technique. No stress concerning rules. Because it’s my own thing. I’m creating the boundaries. And the challenges are more connected to anticipating the reactions of others and adjusting the music accordingly. But you don’t have to care, really, because you can do something else if you want to.

Candidate K

The statement points to another relevant finding: the window of musical discourse (3.3.1; 5.2.2). While it has been found to be common for students to anticipate the reactions of others in order to gain social status and public recognition, the findings also indicate that musical creation was valued differently by many of the candidates. The window of musical discourse can therefore offer more room for experimentation with boundaries, and even lead students to create their own by moving the window to their advantage. Even though NMH was found to
be modern and open-minded, earlier studies of the academy have portrayed similar trends as this case study have. For example, social norms have led music education students to practice more than what was expected of them (e.g. Jørgensen 2000), and teachers have been found to be culturally influenced in the ways that they teach (e.g. Nerland 2007). This indicates that the institutional culture will probably not change overnight, and that the candidates are right to be responsive to the culture that they are part of.

It’s that fine balance between genious and crazy, somehow. If you love doing your own thing, and you don’t care at all what anyone else thinks and you don’t need any recognition or career, then by all means, go right ahad.

Candidate F

6.1.4 The interdisciplinary musician

The key findings tell us something about the needs of the interdisciplinary music student (person), the norms that hinder desired exploration (field), and that support from higher music education is necessary (domain). According to the research findings, such music students are motivated by experiencing flow, ownership, and autonomy. These motivators indicate field-independence, an autotelic personality, and a strong intrinsic motivation. All of these traits also align with other typical characteristics of ‘creative people’, such as being independent, confident, non-conformist, persistent, and unconventional (González-Moreno 2014, p. 89).

However, while the creative person is typically portrayed to be a rule-breaker, the findings of this case study illustrate that the interdisciplinary music student is more affected by social norms than one might have expected. In fact, all of the candidates were well acquainted with the rules before breaking them, which is a common developmental pattern for musicians, according to Kemp (1997). He claims that ‘young musicians tend to display high levels of conscientiousness’, while more mature musicians have ‘a tendency to reject social norms’ (p. 31). This pattern is also a portrayal of moving from field-dependence to field-independence, where aspiring musicians are becoming increasingly more aware of their needs, feelings, and attributes (ibid., p. 30). Field-independent students are often strongly influenced by external structures for learning, while field-independent students ‘rely on internal cues’ (Jørgensen

53 While this finding makes sense, it is still worth noting because it confirms that the myth of the starving artist is a misconception. Being ‘genius’ is very much decided by social factors, as will be discussed in 6.2.1.
2009, p. 77). The creative musician, therefore, is characterized as field-independent because of the desire to find ‘an independent voice’, as illustrated by González-Moreno (2014):

For creative musicians, meaning musicians who explore multiple forms of music making, through musical independence and originality, the motivation to create new performances is intrinsic to their personal interest.


One of the central research questions in this thesis has therefore been ‘the degree to which the education of musicians allows or encourages them to be free-thinking, autonomous, and flexible’ (Kemp 1997, p. 31). While the findings of this study have been both positive (5.4.2) and negative (5.3.2) in this area, the social norms and musical ideologies are clear obstacles to the development of creativity (6.2). In fact, a majority of the candidates decided to change directions because they experienced tension in their environment that hindered their creative development. Similar tension in students’ learning environment has also been found by other scholars (e.g. González-Moreno 2014; Burt and Mills 2006), and could be one of the reasons why students decide to drop out of higher music education (Kemp 1997). This is reasonable considering the great impact that social hierarchies have on students (e.g. Creech et al. 2008; Moore et al. 2003). It could also be why ‘extracurricular interdisciplinary collaboration’ has been found to serve as an ‘incubator away from the constraints and complications of formal studies’ (Dobson 2015, p. 78), where the student gets to explore freely without having to pay attention to a specific hierarchy of creativity.

According to the findings of this case study, music students become interdisciplinary for different reasons. There was a clear distinction between the group of candidates who changed directions in order to explore a new field (and thereby expanded their musical identities), and the group that changed directions as an act of emancipation (and consequently transformed their musical identities).54 That said, both groups were found to display a desire for ‘fluency’, described by Haddon and Burnard (2015) as ‘the ways in which musicians can draw on their self-awareness and interpersonal skill to work comfortably in any context through moving from one persona to another’ (p. 271). This ‘multi-membership’, in which students ‘engage in more than one social interaction to form their identity’ (Rowley et al. 2015, p. 242), has been found to be the trademark of the interdisciplinary musician in this study. Further, because music students need to develop portfolio careers, multiple creativities, and inventiveness also

54 The difference between an expanded and a transformed musical identity is accounted for in 5.0.
in non-musical contexts, then engaging in ‘fluency exercises’ (e.g. interdisciplinary projects) should be one of the future priorities for higher music education institutions. This has already begun at NMH, where one goal is that music students ‘are specialized in one area, and at the same time able to work with other artistic processes’ (Jensen 2017, 27.03).

Music graduates are far from alone in this development (Bennett 2014), yet there are many unique challenges in the musical field. Because of the diverse creative hierarchies, the notion of emancipation is interesting because it is the ‘ability to challenge the current system and structures of power’ (Helfter and Ilari 2015, p. 151), which is what most of the candidates did (by liberating themselves from their previous discipline). Here I would like to introduce an idea: if extracurricular interdisciplinary collaboration can free students from the constraints of their formal studies (Dobson 2015), then perhaps students experience a sense of freedom, not only because the hierarchies have changed but because they are perceived as an ‘immigrant’ to their new discipline and therefore play by different rules? This ‘integration’ is worth looking into, given that students will need to adjust to new hierarchies. Because creativity is valued differently, the new ‘principles of originality’ will have to be integrated:

... classical composers are not more inventive than improvising jazz performers; rather, the musicians in these different worlds create according to different principles of collaboration, originality, expressiveness, and so on.

Frith (2011, p. 70)

Although there were many shared traits among the candidates, their background was one of the separating elements that appeared to influence their transition greatly. While candidates with fluid backgrounds tended to expand their musical identity, other candidates were used to more rigid hierarchies and therefore transformed their musical identity in order to be creative on their own terms. However, even in this difference there is a shared tendency: creative role models equals creative endeavors. One crucial point, therefore, is to bring more creative role models into higher music education, in particular for female students. Another point is how higher music education can develop ‘safe environments’ for all students (e.g. Olthuis 2015; Bennett et al. 2015; Bennett 2014), regardless of their musical background, by creating more dialogue around what music is and how it is valued.

55 For example, one of the candidates expressed that she was allowed to prioritize differently because of her unusual background in the new discipline (5.4.2).
6.2 Misconceptions

All music students have been exposed to pre-college music education. In fact, the beliefs of music education have not only been conveyed to music students but to every single child in school. In order to understand why music scholars are championing the importance of creativities in higher music education these days, it is therefore necessary to know how the current beliefs came to be established, what their repercussions were, why they still exist, and why they are being challenged. The chosen misconceptions — the mastery misconception, the notion of the ‘gifted’, the institutionalized teacher/apprentice relationship, and inequalities in gender roles — have all emerged from the ideology of autonomy and can therefore be traced back to the romantic ‘myth of the starving artist’ (Bain 2005). They have, in other words, emerged from the institutionalization of music history where musical ideals have been reincarnated in music education. Schooling, then, is the guardian of music history through the indoctrination of children, in which society is taught what rules to play by and how to value music in adulthood. Green (2012) elaborates on this phenomenon:

Schooling helps to perpetuate existing ideologies, assimilate ideological challenges, and produce new ideologies in line with changing economic and social conditions. Formal education imbues children with self-images, expectations, and achievement orientations that correspond in various ways to their existing social situations, guiding them toward adult values and roles.

Green (2012, p. 264)

According to Green (2010), the values in music education are evident ‘not only from what is included in the curriculum, nor only from the way it is included, but also from what is not included’ (p. 29). Even when new music is included in the curriculum, ‘value hierarchies and canonization processes continue to operate, only across different styles’ (Green 2012, p. 268). It is therefore the institutionalization of music, not the specific reincarnated styles, that has been criticized (as argued in 2.2.2). However, while music education is constantly adapting to new developments (e.g. technological advancements, new genres), some of the ideals are so engrained in the social norms that they have been (and still are being) seriously challenged by the creative agenda. Green (2012) claims that ‘formal music education for all is considered a luxury, but perhaps it has been a mixed blessing’ (pp. 272-273). This subchapter will explore the ‘mixed blessing’ component of music education by uncovering some of the dominating misconceptions, and their connection to students in higher music education.
6.2.1 The myth

The source of the misconceptions is the myth of the starving artist, the ‘romantic view of individual creativity’ (Burnard and Haddon, p. 3). The myth stems from the Romantic era, when people who demonstrated ‘extreme creative ability’ were called genius (Bennett et al. 2015, p. 30), and the artist was portrayed as ‘a Bohemian rebel, outsider and social critic who sacrificed status, money and material comfort for the supposed freedom this afforded the imaginative spirit to pursue individual creative expression’ (Bain 2005, pp. 28-29). The idea that one should sacrifice oneself for the arts was also found in this case study, yet the myth contradicts the modern understanding of creativity as multiple and culturally constructed. While creative people are still described as ‘independent, confident, non-conformist’ and so forth (González-Moreno 2014, p. 89), the myth itself is a misconception because it relies on an understanding of creativity as singular, handed from the ‘muse’ to the ‘genius’:

Historically linked and limited definitions of high-art orthodoxies exalt the romantic view of individual creativity. The romantic conception of a singular creativity embedded in certain cultural hierarchies offers the idea of a «great musician», a genius figure, having a «divine spark» which serves to separate the great artist from ordinary musical mortals — an artist who is inspired and through whom the muse speaks.

Burnard and Haddon (2015, pp. 3-4).

As portrayed above, the idea that the ‘genius’ was separate from the ordinary due to a special connection with the ‘muse’ does not align with the modern definition of creativity. Still, the myth has been perpetuated in music education as part of the ideology of autonomy, and is often referred to today as musical ‘giftedness’ or ‘talent’ (e.g. McPherson & Williamon 2006). The status of the myth is of such strength that music students still strive for an ‘artistic image’ (despite the fact that the degree of ‘greatness’ was determined by cultural hierarchies already in the Romantic era). The modernized myth is also why many parents often confuse musical ability with a display of ‘genius’, and tend to expect ‘far less from children in respect of their musical development than, say, in reading or mathematics’ (Lawrence 1975, p. 11).

---

56 The word ‘genius’ is based on genesis, ‘the starting of something usually out of nothing’. The people called genius were therefore displaying this ability (Bennett et al. 2015, p. 30).

57 Portrayed as the ‘artistic image’ that students desired in order to prove their ‘worthiness’ (5.3.2).

58 This was also portrayed in a study by Freer and Bennett (2012) on the multiple identities of music education students. One of the interviewees stated that: ‘A musician is someone who creates music. A true musician, however, is someone who does this and would be lost without it’ (p. 280).
An interesting paradox in this context is therefore that the myth honors the non-conformist artist, yet the desire to become such an artist is a display of conformity, as illustrated by Bain (2005):

> By variously resisting and internalizing tailored versions of reality, artists can attempt to position themselves within the profession while scripting the degree of conformity they intend to display to it. For group membership demands some degree of consistency in what individual members do in practice, such that every member can independently ‘pull off’ their occupational identity.

Bain (2005, p. 42)

The artistic image could be referred to as the ‘occupational identity’ that music students in certain disciplines try to ‘pull off’, in particular when institutionalization has led to canon formation and specific hierarchies of creativity. One by-product of this is the emergence of the mastery misconception, manifested in the classical canon as the insistence on perfecting the musical works of former genius composers. While the myth of the starving artist and the mastery misconception both honor the autonomy of the artist, the latter is an institutionalized preservation of the artist’s autonomy in which the musical work is recreated, perfected and fetishized. The preservation of the myth has therefore led to a creative hierarchy where the dead composer is at the top of the chain, and the performing musician serves as an extension of the genius that once was. Frith (2011) explains this outcome by stating that music ‘is the result of institutional practices in which some musicians have authority over others; creativity is both an explanation and justification of that authority’ (p. 67). The orchestra is used as an example of an institutional practice which has a fixed hierarchy of creativity:

> Music authority is materialized in the score, which provides instructions to the musicians as to what to play. There is still room for interpretation, of course (a written note is not the same thing as produced sound), but for orchestral performances, at least, this is under the secondary authority of the conductor … For classical musicians whose training is individualized (they learn musical performance as a form of self-expression), playing in an orchestra is a somewhat contradictory experience.

Frith (2011, p. 66)

---

59 Other musical disciplines may idealize different versions of reality (rather than the ‘artistic image’), or in other words, conform to a different window of musical discourse (3.2.1; 5.2.2; 6.1.3).

60 This distinction (the ideology of autonomy vs original the myth) was also found in this case study, portrayed as the difference between ‘the autonomy of music and the autonomy of musicians’ (4.1.3).
Frith’s comment about the musician’s ‘contradictory experience’ in the orchestra is on point,\textsuperscript{61} and in alignment with his claim that some musicians ‘have more creative roles than others’ (2011, p. 67). Due to the superior dominance of the creative hierarchies in music education, musical creativity has been ‘largely associated with improvisation or composition … and less so with expressive or communicative performance of composed works’ (Creech et al. 2014, p. 318). This tendency is currently challenged by the creative agenda because it ‘underplays the importance of creative thinking and creative expression’ by favoring the development of advanced technical skills (Hargreaves et al. 2012, pp. 130-131), making the musician an ‘artisan’ (as opposed to an artist). While this ‘artisan’ approach to teaching and learning music is not unsuitable for music students, the neglect of creativity is. Even though scholars have long agreed that technique and expression coexist in music (Davidson et al. 1997, p. 195), creativity in music performance has only recently received more attention as a result of the creative agenda (González-Moreno 2014).

If the development of musical creativity has been unjustly put aside in music education in favor of developing advanced technical skills, as several authors suggest (e.g. Burnard 2014a, 2014b; González-Moreno 2014; Garnett 2014; Hargreaves et al. 2012; McPherson & Hallam 2009; Webster 2009; McPherson & Williamon 2006; and many more), then why has creative music performance not been prioritized? While creativity has been studied in areas such as composition and improvisation, Clarke (2011) reminds us that ‘not all musical performance takes creativity in any form as its aim’ (p. 17), and that expression can also be described as the ‘transformation of, or a departure from, some kind of norm’ (p. 19). In fact, expression is influenced ‘by gestures which pre-exist in other non-musical domains of human activity (such as motion, vocalizations of emotion)’ (Davidson et al. 1997, p. 196), just as creativity is continuously shaped by cultural codes. Studying the diverse hierarchies of creativity, rather than dismissing them, could therefore lead to greater insight into musical creativities.

\textbf{6.2.2 Repercussions}

The remaining misconceptions (the gifted, the teacher/apprentice relationship, and gender roles) are repercussions of the mastery misconception and the ideology of autonomy. Even though there has been a shift in paradigm, from teaching music in a specialist approach to a generalist approach in which the child’s musical view is the focus (Webster 2009), the myth

\textsuperscript{61}In fact, the ‘contradictory experience’ of losing creative freedom was also expressed by many of the candidates in this case study, although not only in the context of orchestral music (5.3.3).
is still widely known due to its historic role in the arts in Western societies (Bain 2005). Even though this ‘shift’ has been implemented in music education over several decades,\footnote{A shift towards a more inclusive music education was initially triggered by the creative movement in the 1970s, supported by music teachers in the 1980s and 90s (Green 2012), and then supplemented by advancements in neurological studies (Hallam 2006).} it is not until our understanding of creativity is altered that the misconceptions will vanish for good. However, there is now a general agreement among scholars that skilled musical behavior can be achieved by everyone, and that the differences in musical abilities are mainly caused by environmental issues rather than a lack of genius (e.g. Clarke \textit{et al.} 2010; Hargreaves and North 2008). This agreement is founded on an increasing amount of research on the topic, for example in neurological studies where it has been suggested that humans as a species are musical because our brain structures respond similarly to musical stimulus, and ‘exposure to music and engagement with it improve measured musicality’ (Hallam 2006, p. 106). Given that this research is fairly recent, there can be no conclusion as to whether the observable differences in musical development ‘are the sole result of genetic inheritance, learning or an interaction between the two’ until new methodologies and technologies are invented (ibid., p. 96). Musicality has therefore been immensely debated and been given various definitions, while the myth appears to have survived both movements and research findings.

This literature matters to higher music education because it proves that the myth, in which the starving artist is innately genius, is false. It is a misconception of musicality that has the power to lead aspiring musicians to think of themselves as ‘unmusical’ (e.g. Hargreaves \textit{et al.} 2012; Hallam 2006; Lamont 2002), which in turn could lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy and drop-out \footnote{The debate on nature (genetics) vs nurture (environment) in musical development is accounted for in for example McPherson and Williamson (2006) and Hallam (2006).}. The myth may still be a valuable portrayal of desired qualities which could inspire musicians to be dedicated to their profession (plus, the role of genetics in musical development is still being debated),\footnote{The debate on nature (genetics) vs nurture (environment) in musical development is accounted for in for example McPherson and Williamson (2006) and Hallam (2006).} but this does not change any of its detrimental facts. For example, most people think of musical achievement as the result of musical talent that can only be possessed by the ‘gifted’, and are unaware of how musical skills are developed because engaging in music is a minority interest and activity (Davidson \textit{et al.} 1997, p. 189). Further, higher music education institutions are usually regarded as offering quality ‘simply because of their eminence and restricted access’ (Jørgensen 2009, p. 185), yet this nature might undermine the more creative types because they are forced into activities that hinder
their musical autonomy (e.g. standard repertoire in entrance exams). In order for multiple creativities to be developed and for interdisciplinary projects to take place in higher music education, students cannot think of themselves as ‘predestined’ to be gifted in one specific discipline because this limited view of musicality could disrupt any attempt to understand the creative hierarchies of other disciplines. The notion of the ‘gifted’, therefore, is destructive if its portrayal of musical development stands uncorrected.

As argued, the reincarnated myth selects the ‘gifted’ (and simultaneously weeds out the ‘unmusical’) children by the means of established norms and policies in music education. The students who enroll in higher music education are therefore often the most technically skilled musicians, but are they the most creative? Research has implied that students are exposed to more technique than creativity in their instrumental lessons, and that teachers are the ‘talkers’ while students are expected to be the ‘doers’ (e.g. Karlsson and Juslin 2008; Young et al. 2003). This aligns with the research findings of this case study (4.3.2), and illustrates that the teacher/apprentice relationship still serves a role in higher music education. Jørgensen (2009) has given an overview of similar studies where it is indicated that students desire a balance between technique and expression in their instrumental lessons, yet ‘personal responsibility and freedom in learning is not welcomed by all students’ (Jørgensen 2009, pp. 106-107). While the former statement echoes the findings already mentioned above, the latter suggests that some students actually prefer listening to their teacher over taking creative risks. If so, how will these students adjust to the changes in higher music education, not to mention their professional career? Fortunately, most students responded positively to when given creative freedom (ibid.), and a case study by González-Moreno (2014) confirms this tendency:

… most of the participants perceived a lack of autonomy and independence, and even experienced teachers’ rejections of their performance innovations; this tension is dictated by a strong emphasis on technique and weak attention to exploration and creative expression, as reported by most of the students.

González-Moreno (2014, p. 94)

Moreover, González-Moreno claims that the ‘teaching and learning processes in music performance in universities and conservatoires have typically been centred on developing technical skills, while less importance has been given to an adequate balance of musical

64 This was expressed by several of the candidates in this case study (5.3.1), and was also argued by Kemp (1997) already two decades ago (see quotation in 2.1.3).

65 As argued in 2.1.3, the ‘talents’ are usually selected on the basis of their instrumental skills.
creativity and technique’ (p. 90). This statement clearly portrays the mastery misconception,\textsuperscript{66} and González-Moreno further explains that both teachers and students are ‘likely to feel pressure to achieve performance goals during lesson time so that emphasis is given to time-efficiency’ (p. 91). Could the mention of ‘time-efficiency’ be pointing to educational policies brought on by governmental regulations (2.2)? If so, then the mastery misconception could be linked to a bigger issue than the teacher/apprentice relationship.

\textbf{6.2.3 Gender roles}

The last misconception to be discussed here, gender roles, has surfaced steadily as part of the other repercussions: the myth of the starving artist has been perpetuated by the ideology of autonomy in music education as ‘facts’ of music history, a history that has been largely dominated by men (e.g. Citron 2000; Battersby 1990). Due to the institutionalization of music there is an overwhelming amount of male role models, and consequently a lack of female role models for aspiring musicians (e.g. Gaunt and Hallam 2009; O’Neill 1997). Although there are no reliable gender differences in musical ability, and there was an increasing interest in the topic during the latter half of the twentieth century (2.1.1), female musicians are still subjected to discrimination. For example, women’s work are sometimes automatically viewed as less worthy than a man’s work (Hargreaves and North 2008, p. 26), which could explain why a survey of the largest American orchestras found that female composers only accounted for 1.8 percent of the performed pieces in the 2014-2015 concert season (O’Bannon 2017).\textsuperscript{67} These numbers are not unusual for orchestral repertoire, given its dependence on historic music, yet the effort to include women is clearly lacking. According to Battersby (1990), an effort to focus on female role models in the arts is a necessary reconstruction of the past in order to adjust the perception of women’s art:

\begin{quote}
Men would not have needed to make silence a virtue for women unless women talked — and unless men were afraid that women would be heard. Men would not have insisted that creativity is a male prerogative unless women created — and unless men were afraid that women’s creations would be taken seriously.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{66} The rejection of performance innovations (5.3.2) and a lack of autonomy (5.3.1) were also findings in this case study.

\textsuperscript{67} While the 1.8 percent accounted for the total repertoire, there was still only a 14.3 percent inclusion of female composers when the number accounted for living composers (O’Bannon 2017).
Battersby’s claim indicates that women have been active in the arts but dismissed by male authorities, and a study by Goldin and Rouse (2000) on orchestra auditions suggested that this reality is fairly recent.\footnote{In fact, similar debates around an imbalance between genders still exist, for example in terms of female conductors (Elman 2015, 21.11) and music festivals (Ryste 2008, 24.06).} They found that switching to blind auditions (so that the gender of the musician was not visible) could ‘explain 30 percent of the increase in the proportion female among new hires and possibly 25 percent of the increase in the percentage female in the orchestras from 1970 to 1996’ (p. 738). The increasing number of female musicians in the music profession has taken place in tandem with the increase of female music students. According to Jørgensen (2009), NMH has ‘about 60% females and 40% males, which is a total reversal of the situation over the last 20 years’ (pp. 47-48). It was therefore peculiar to find that the female candidates in this case study stated that it was hard for them to find an identity because some of the disciplines were dominated by men (5.2.3). Though, if the male ‘genius’ artist is the source of the ideology of autonomy, and ‘women have had to depend upon assumptions other than that of their own tradition to understand the place and function of their contribution’ (Citron 2000, p. 61), then their identity paradoxes could be the result of entering more creative environments. The odds are, unfortunately, that their new discipline would be dominated by men. Further, if the majority of students at NMH are female (yet the lack of female role models in certain disciplines is still apparent), then their change would not only be a statement in terms of discipline but also in terms of gender.

This reflection aligns with findings from studies on higher music education, because it has been found that there is, in fact, a distinct shortage of women in certain disciplines. There are for example fewer women in jazz programs (McKeage 2004), and they are less confident than men when learning improvisations (Wehr-Flowers 2006). Turning to composition, it has been found that many teachers in general education ‘declare that girls possess little ability for composition, tend to compose by «merely» following rules or doing what they are told, and lack imagination and creative spark’ (Green 2012, p. 269). In music performance students, studies have suggested that women tend to be more compliant, while men disagree more with their teachers (Zhukob 2007). Given the shared tendencies of these studies, it is evident that if female students are to be viewed as musically creative in their future careers, then the quest for role models has to be prioritized — in particular in the more creative disciplines. There is, however, a lack of creative role models in general, and the next subchapter will explore how scholars are confronting of the reality gap.
6.3 The reality gap

The candidates who transformed their musical identity did not only experience conflict between their own musical preferences and those of the environment, but also between their future career and the ideals of their former discipline. The freelancing musician needs to build online communities and to create individual projects (Burnard 2014a), yet higher music education does not teach students the creative skills that are necessary for this reality. In fact, the creative achievements in out-of-school settings can even be ‘highly problematic’ and neglected due to established norms (Burnard 2006, p. 356), which could be one reason why ‘interdisciplinary and digital creativities are more often practiced outside mainstream higher education sectors’ (Burnard 2014b, p. 78). Higher music education, therefore, needs to equip music students with interdisciplinary skills and attributes in order to meet the realities of the future job market (e.g. Haddon and Burnard 2015), and so that students develop ‘creativities to face uncertainty with confidence’ (Bennett 2014, p. 238). The encouragement to embrace interdisciplinary work is central to the call for creativity in all higher education (2.2). According to Jackson (2006), the ways in which students ‘smash’ and ‘create’ ideas during their studies are important not only to the individual needs of students in higher education, but for creating a society that is built on creative drive:

As teachers, we both lead and stay behind. This is not a process embedded in a three- or four-year programme me, but should be an attitude we live each day. For we pass on masterpieces everyday and it is for the young artists to select among those pieces, the ones they want to smash and incorporate into their own work and identity. And from the moment we as teachers and higher education institutes can accept young artists to smash our masterpieces, knowing they do not smash us, neither our quest nor the outcome, but see and honour their smashing as the expression of the authentic human drive to create and re-create, as we have smashed and created in our own lives. From that moment we will be free as educators/teachers and universities to start our real teaching.


There are, however, other obstacles to the development of creativities in higher music education than misconceptions. First, the content, methods and reception of creative teaching and learning are still unclear, and second, the ways in which creativity is to be assessed has to be carefully considered before it is implemented. Because creativity is culturally constructed, students’ creative ideas may even be restricted if a creative exclusion was to take place (e.g. Burnard 2006). An increased focus on creativity could be destructive in this way (6.3.2).
6.3.1 The multifaceted working life

It is recognized that multiple creativities are required for ‘the successful development of a musician’ (Rowley et al. 2015, p. 241), and that many successful musicians are music entrepreneurs (Burnard and Haddon 2015, p. 3) or ‘ideas people’ who ‘do more than engage in mimesis or imitation’ (Burnard 2014b, p. 80). Technological innovations have created new arenas for music performance, distribution and reception (Jørgensen 2009, p. 164), and the internet has consequently become ‘the medium through which musical culture increasingly organizes itself’ (Burnard 2014a, p. 4). Because of these realities, scholars are arguing that the modern musician needs to be ‘adaptable’, and to perceive change as ‘both an opportunity and a challenge’, to ‘bridge the divide between tradition and innovation’, and to ‘move within a multiplicity of musical networks’ (Burnard and Haddon 2015, p. 3). Similar characteristics of the modern musician is shared by Bennett (2014):

… musicians everywhere create, market, and distribute their own music, taking advantage of new technologies to develop new audiences, ideas, and ways of working … They perform in traditional and new settings. They develop their own opportunities and self-manage their careers and career development. Graduates need to be intellectually, emotionally, politically, and socially ready for this multifaceted working life.

Bennett (2014, p. 236)

As stated, graduates need to be ready for their future ‘multifaceted working life’, or in other words, their interdisciplinary careers. One of the interesting notions brought forward here is that musicians need to balance tradition and innovation (Burnard and Haddon 2015; Bennett 2014).\(^69\) This is particularly important to note because the creative agenda does not intend to eliminate tradition, but rather to achieve a better balance between creative thinking and technical skills in higher music education. While the teaching of creativity is ‘a relatively unexplored area’ (Bennett et al. 2015, p. 34), some methods have been implemented in higher music education already, such as courses where students build personalized portfolio careers (e.g. Rowley et al. 2015; Bennett 2014) or develop entrepreneurial skills (Haddon and Burnard 2015). These methods are also helpful in terms of networking,\(^70\) because the internet has increased musicians’ innovativeness by offering more connectivity and fluidity in the

---

\(^69\) The research findings of this case study (and the candidates) have suggested that this balance is key to the development of relevant study programs that are supportive of sustainable future careers (5.4.3).

\(^70\) This was also found to be true for the candidates in this case study, and several of them had wanted more networking opportunities during their study period (5.4.3).
music industries. This is another noteworthy element from the literature, and is certainly one reason why there has been an increase in amateur creativity (Burnard 2014a).\textsuperscript{71} Despite the emphasis on developing creativities, Burnard (2014b) also argues that ‘being creative is not enough to flourish as a musician’ (p. 80). She further explains that in order for music students to be sufficiently equipped for the changing job market, they also need to develop qualities such as ‘inventiveness’ and ‘imagination’.\textsuperscript{72}

The peculiar thing that makes musicians consider themselves to be creative can be musicality, but is also inventiveness, the discovery of newness, and enabling and enacting new reflective practices with imagination and originality … Musicians also need and rely on musicianship to maximize opportunities to imagine and enact new practices, to create new structures, new forms, to inspire new thinking and playing and unprecedented performances that endure and become in turn ‘precendents’ that encourage and provide durable patterns of creative activity.

Burnard (2014b, p. 80)

The qualities described above are referred to in the context of entrepreneurialism. Haddon and Burnard (2015) explain that ‘while students may engage in many self-directed creative projects and initiatives, they may not be profit-minded’ (p. 269). However, even scholars do not yet understand the full workings of the changing industries (Bennett 2014), and one of the challenges is therefore selecting the content for entrepreneurial courses. It has been proposed that relevant topics could be the ‘knowledge of small business operationalization, legal and social responsibilities, marketing and promotion’, as well as ‘independent and collaborative learning and reflective pracices’ (Haddon and Burnard 2015, p. 265). According to Jørgensen (2009), many students say that ‘these are definitely courses that they would have wanted the institutions to offer’ (p. 165).\textsuperscript{73} Haddon and Burnard (2015) have also suggested that in order to grasp the complexity of the music industries, future research should look into ‘the extent to which graduate expectations, creative entrepreneurial initiatives and musical autonomy might

\textsuperscript{71} Some aspiring musicians might not even want to study music because most of the current study programs do not properly prepare music students for an interdisciplinary career. This was found in the case study, where some of the candidates did not pursue a master’s degree because they would gain more from working on their career in out-of-school context (5.4.3).

\textsuperscript{72} Burnard’s (2014b) comment on creativity (p. 80) is about musical creativity (given that imagination and inventiveness are also seen as creative traits).

\textsuperscript{73} The relevance of and desire for entrepreneurial courses was also emphasized by the candidates in this case study (5.4.3).
map on to the economic constructs of the communities in which they are working’ (p. 270). This could certainly help students develop sustainable careers.\textsuperscript{74}

A framework that has already proven to be useful in the development of entrepreneurship is the ‘portfolio career’.\textsuperscript{75} This concept refers to a career in which a diversity of professional activities are combined, and often relies on the development of non-musical skills such as ‘reflection, responsiveness and the ability to work collaboratively, as well as to be innovative and entrepreneurial’ (Helfter and Ilari 2015, p. 137). Developing portfolios already in higher music education could therefore raise students’ career awareness by engaging in ‘problem-solving, decision-making, reflection, organization and critical thinking’, and provide a better understanding of career creativities (Rowley \textit{et al.} 2015, p. 245). This was also pointed out by one of the candidates (in 5.4.3), who stated that ‘if you haven’t been doing it along the way [in your studies], I think a lot of people [graduates] will get scared’ (J). Thus if higher music education is to prepare students for their future careers in the multi-faceted working life, then recognizing the many benefits of introducing portfolio careers could be a starting point.

\textbf{6.3.2 The question of assessment}

Because the reality gap is one of the underlying reasons why music students decide to change directions during their studies, the challenge for higher music education institutions is to develop framework for engaging in creativities that recognizes both the individual needs of the student (person), forced governmental regulations (domain), and the recommendations of the creativity agenda as well as the environment of higher music education institutions (field). This balance is important to achieve because it has been found that there is a lack of dialogue between students and teachers. For example, teachers ‘can spend considerable time debating how creativities can be perceived in assessment situations’, yet this often takes place ‘without understanding what students say about creativity’ (Bennett \textit{et al.} 2015, p. 34). Students, on the other hand, often plan their musical performances ‘with a careful eye on the assessment criteria’ (Creech \textit{et al.} 2014, p. 327), and may consequently withdraw from taking creative risks because this is associated with ‘reputational danger’ (Bennett \textit{et al.} 2015, p. 23). In light

\textsuperscript{74} A better understanding of economy and music industries could indeed help music students in their transition to a professional working life, as was indicated in this case study (5.4.3). Further, because the candidates had little interest in money (5.1.3), it could in fact be vital for a making a living.

\textsuperscript{75} The concept of ‘portfolio careers’ is equivalent to the ‘freelancing career’ that has been described in this case study. In fact, this was the most desired lifestyle among the candidates (5.1.3), and several of them suggested that NMH should teach students the necessary skills for this career path (5.4.3).
of such findings, it has been suggested by scholars that students may feel more encouraged to explore entrepreneurial and creative behaviors if this is modelled by their teachers (Burnard and Haddon 2015, p. 268). However, if a specific idea of creativity is modelled, then students might conform to their teachers’ ideas of creativity instead of exploring their own, and it is therefore important that a dialogue around creativity is created between students and their teachers, as illustrated by Bennett (2014):

Music educators must adopt multiple frames of creativity in order to deliver education and training that will meet the needs of graduates. These creativities include creative pedagogies that encourage students to redefine the term ‘musician’ for themselves; creative partnerships for the collaborative delivery of core professional skills and competencies; and creative learners who explore individual strengths and talents, and the intrinsic and extrinsic influences driving their passion for music.

Bennett (2014, p. 240)

In other words, one single framework for developing creativities will not work in order to meet the needs of students. There are too many disciplines (that is, domains and fields) and individual ideas of creativity (person). Musical creativity is additionally often viewed as an ‘addition of something new to existing practice’ (Creech et al. 2014, p. 322),76 and so it is essential that the assessment of creativity is carefully implemented in order not to result in ‘creative exclusion’, as ‘a lack of opportunities for creative choice’ (Burnard 2006, p. 357). If creativity becomes institutionalized (and consequently normative) instead of supportive of students’ creative endeavors, then its assessment may ‘ignore the performer’s reflective voice’ and accordingly miss the point (Creech et al. 2014, p. 328). However, because creativity is a cultural construct there will always be some norms to the perception of it, and it is therefore conceivable that adopting ‘multiple frames of creativity’, as suggested by Bennett (2014), is one way of achieving dialogue.

The last area to be considered in this subchapter is how connectivity is acknowledged by higher music education, primarily in the context of technology and social media. According to Jørgensen (2009), ‘international competition and preparation of our students for the world market is one of the challenges for our programs’ (p. 164). Even though this could lead to more competition in an already competitive environment (5.2.3), globalization also leads to

---

76 This understanding of musical creativity can be connected to the idea of ‘recreation’, the emphasis that some disciplines put on recreating music in new and innovative ways by ‘building on the past knowledge and recasting it for the future’ (Bennett et al. 2015, p. 23).
The fact that musicians are able to distribute their music on the internet is in truth empowering (Burnard 2014b), and the integration of music technology will therefore influence many students and potentially influence their careers positively. Because scholars are advocating the use of music technology in elementary school, where ‘even the youngest children’ can compose music and ‘play along’ (Webster and Hickey 2006, p. 383), it seems inevitable that music students will eventually demand an increased focus on technology in higher music education.

With this in mind, the question of assessment is relevant to technological developments in general, but its significance is evident in how it will come to define creativity in higher music education. According to King (2015), music technology ‘has the potential to be one of the most innovative areas in higher music education’, because it involves scientific knowledge as well as creative music making (p. 205). This was also suggested by the candidates in this case study through statements about networking on social media and online distribution of music. However, it is not the full understanding of new technologies or the most popular mediums for networking that are crucial when addressing the current reality gap. Rather, it is how the assessment of such interchangeable content will be able to prepare music students for the multi-faceted working life they are about to enter, so that they are able to adapt to this ever-changing landscape.

6.4 Moving the window

A concern for creativity that is grown from the perceptions and insights of each student, rather than the minds of their teachers, would be inclusive and would embrace the needs, interests and unique identities of all students.

Jackson (2006, p. 207)

If music students are indeed becoming more interdisciplinary by pursuing creative career paths, then how can higher music education address the reality gap between misconceptions (6.2) and the changing market (6.3) in a way that still aligns with its institutionalized nature (2.2)? As Jackson (2006) points out, a key element to this is to embrace the ‘perceptions and insights of each student’, and to ‘accept young artists to smash our masterpieces’. One way of

---

77 One example of this is the collaborative Master for New Audiences and Innovative Practice (NAIP) that NMH is a part of (NAIP 2017; Norges Musikkhøgskole 2014, 04.12).
doing just that without having to answer to governmental authorities, is to internally regulate the hidden curriculum within the institutions (6.1.3). If music teachers start encouraging the development of students’ exploration and innovation in music, then it would be much easier for students to share their personal ideas and to display musical autonomy in the presence of authority figures. Given that most students are concerned with doing well and achieving an artistic image, such modelling could be one of the best motivators for them to pursue musical autonomy rather than strive for social affirmation in an effort to do ‘the right thing’ (5.2.2). This is particularly important in terms of gender roles, given that there is a clear lack of role models for female students due to the dominance of men in creative disciplines. It is therefore necessary that higher music education develops an understanding of the diverse hierarchies of creativity, rather than dismissing them, if creativity is to be properly implemented and if the needs of each student are to be met.

Music students are highly attuned to the social hierarchies in higher music education and the rules they are taught to play by, and can experience reputational danger when they express new ideas. The need for safe environments (as opposed to hostile or competitive) is therefore a necessity in order for them to develop creativities, in particular if they recognize that their idea is at the edge of the window. According to Haddon and Burnard (2015), this ‘fragility’ needs to be addressed by music educators, as well as how students experience the coexistence of their fragility and ‘expectations of professional strength’ (p. 271). There could be greater dialogue between students and their teachers, so that students are allowed to ‘have a role in the very creation’ of the assessment criteria, about what is ‘most valued in performance’, and in this way encouraging and supporting them in their development as ‘autonomous and self-regulated artists’ (Creech et al. 2014, p. 327). If students and teachers discuss and negotiate musical choices together, then there is one element that needs to be in place: for the student to feel safe. This notion of ‘safe space’ was mentioned by many of the scholars already referred to (e.g. Olthius 2015; Haddon and Burnard 2015; Bennet et al. 2015).

Music students need to explore multiple possible futures, especially the unorthodox ones, in the light of their passion for music, and to do so with the support of peers and mentors. This requires educational spaces that are safe environments in which exploration can occur unhindered. The issue of safety is particularly important when opening conversations with students about possible selves, because these selves may never have been voiced to others and may contravene the expected or usual career trajectories.

Bennett (2014, p. 241)
As explained by Bennett (2014), the safe space allows for exploration to occur unhindered. It therefore appears as though the candidates in this case study experienced not only a lack of alternatives but also a safe space in which the alternatives could have been discussed. Bennett further adds that it is important that teachers engage ‘students in discussion and listening to their responses without bias’ (p. 242). Although research on drop-outs has been a neglected area in research (e.g. McPherson and Hallam 2009), some studies have indicated that drop-outs tend to withdraw from studying music when their musical self is ‘threatened’ (Jørgensen 2009, p. 100). If this withdrawal is a consequence of the neglect of creative thinking, as has been suggested in this case study, then the assessment of creativity needs to be addressed in higher music education in a way that does not lead to creative exclusion.

... assessment of creativity may, if structured so as to encompass ongoing reflection, evaluation and regulation of the relationship between the concepts, skills and performance, have the potential to foster rather than inhibit creative practice, and to validate the creative process.

Creech, Lopez-Real, Paterson and Sherry (2014, p. 332)

Moving the window of musical discourse means recognizing hierarchical structures within the diverse disciplines in higher music education, and being able to challenge the boundaries. This can be taught to students by the means of interdisciplinary projects (where students have to collaborate across disciplines) or innovative practices such as entrepreneurship or portfolio careers (where students are challenged to create their own projects). Because students already predict how their musical ideas will be received by envisioning a ‘disciplinary «box»’ (Freer and Bennett, p. 279), moving the window is neither unfamiliar nor uncalled for. Moreover, if multiple creativities are understood as the ‘ideals and aspirations’ of individuals and society (Burnard 2014b, p. 77), then moving the window can be the result of a changing individual, or the result of a changing field. Music can build bridges in this way, but it can also reinforce hierarchies and lead to alienation (Heltter and Ilari 2015, p. 139). Teaching creativity is therefore always — in particular because of the social power of music — ultimately a question of values, and needs to be addressed as such.
7 Conclusions

The purpose of this thesis has been to investigate why some music students change directions during their study period at the Norwegian Academy of Music, and to analyze how this trend aligns with larger societal issues. With the use of the systems model of creativity, it has been possible to connect the dots between the individual needs of students, the social expectations of their environment, and the resources available to them in their educational institution. The hypothesis was that ‘some students are artists trapped in an artisan’s study’, and this has been found to be true. However, while most of the candidates confirmed the hypothesis due to their musical transformation, the remaining group of candidates shared a different narrative. All candidates brought attention to the interplay between their personal needs and the educational policies of NMH, as well as to how they were preparing for their future freelancing careers independently. Before moving into the key findings of the case study, some of the pathways that could serve further research will be presented.

This thesis started with the observation of a trend at the Norwegian Academy of Music seven years ago. Because the candidates of this case study have changed directions within the last five years, they have most likely been influenced by the emerging trend in the same time period as I observed it. Given that there have been many institutional changes in recent years, it could therefore be interesting for further research to do a follow-up study at the academy in order to investigate how current students are experiencing the trend. I also want to propose that research on innovative female musicians needs to take place. It could be profitable to study students’ perceptions of female ‘genius’, in order to better understand how gender roles work in more creative environments. It could similarly be interesting to investigate whether a hindrance of students’ autonomy in higher music education is a common reason why students decide to drop out of their studies, given that this was indicated in the findings of this study. Considering that the findings also suggested that female students experience severe identity paradoxes and encounter more resistance in their creative endeavors than male students, it is also possible that a majority of the drop-outs with this reasoning would be female.

78 This is confirming because the majority’s musical transformation was from a more technical to a more artistic discipline. While the minority group’s narrative did not correlate with the hypothesis, it was still reflected in both groups (as the exploration of a new discipline due to an intrinsic interest).
Another area that would lead to greater insight on student creativities (and that has already started to gain recognition), is how introducing extracurricular interdisciplinary activities in higher music education could help students develop creatively. Courses that offer more room for experimentation (e.g. music production), could liberate students from the constraints of their main discipline, and this ‘emancipation’, in which an altered state of mind sets them free from the accustomed social norms, is worth looking into in further research. Because the myth of the starving artist has been reinforced through the institutionalization of music, such activities could potentially release some of the obsessive musical ‘perfection’ that dominates certain disciplines in higher music education. The importance of creating ‘safe spaces’, where students are met with compassion rather than prejudice, has therefore been advocated by music scholars, and the findings of this case study indicate that this would be beneficial for students. The attributes of these findings are elaborated on next.

The ‘interdisciplinary musician’ case study has resulted in a compact overview of research findings, yet there are three key findings that stand out: the *musician’s autonomy* (person), the *artistic image* (field), and the *window of musical discourse* (domain). This set illustrates the reality that most candidates experienced during their studies. Their student life was described as being dominated by social norms and musical ideologies, yet the candidates realized after they had changed directions that these factors were mostly *perceived* barriers (as opposed to real obstacles), given that the academy was supportive of their transitions in the end. Even though there was some resistance to their change, it was harder for the candidates to struggle with the decision to change than to actually take the leap. As Candidate D explained, he had experienced ‘the discovery that .. you can actually do exactly what you want’ (D). The candidates therefore managed to liberate themselves from social norms by changing their attitude and perspective. An altered state of mind had made all the difference. However, as Csikszentmihalyi (1997) states, ‘a person cannot be creative in a domain to which he or she is not exposed’ (p. 29). It is therefore essential that higher music education engages students in a diversity of domains if students are to develop creativities. As Csikszentmihalyi notes:

> Perhaps the most important implication of the systems model is that the level of creativity in a given place at a given time does not depend only on the amount of individual creativity. It depends just as much on how well suited the respective domains and fields are to the recognition and diffusion of novel ideas. This can make a great deal of practical difference to efforts for enhancing creativity.

Csikszentmihalyi (1997, p. 31)
This brings me back to the macro level: Even though NMH is perceived to be modern and supportive, there are still several misconceptions present that need to be addressed. The rise in amateur creativity in the market, and the parallel insistence on developing entrepreneurship in higher music education, could therefore alter the ways music students define musicianship and consequently lead to changes in musical ideologies. If there is a redefinition of the music profession in the future as a result of the creative agenda, then new generations of aspiring musicians will need to embrace an understanding of creativity that is multiple and adaptable, as opposed to singular and ‘mythical’. However, although the amount of research on students’ creative needs has increased over the last decades, this literature is positioned in a complex web of social norms, institutional policies and resources, and the demands of a market that has yet to be fully understood. What is agreed upon among scholars (and that was also found in the research findings), is that creativity needs to be taught in a reflective manner.

The micro and macro levels of this thesis meet in the implementation and assessment of creativity. If students are to develop not only musical creativities, but also inventiveness and imagination, then there needs to be created more dialogue around musical values and ideals in higher music education. This change in perspective is what the trends presented here are really about: the encouragement and liberation of creative endeavors.
Bibliography

List of references


Gandre, J. (2001). And then there were seven: A historical case study of the seven independent American conservatoires of music that survived the twentieth century. Ed.D., The University of Nebraska — Lincoln. DAI-A 62/10, 3251, Apr 2002.


**Internet articles**


Appendices

Appendix 1
The model of synthesis

The window of musical discourse

Radical — Acceptable — Popular — Acceptable — Radical

Field
Environment

Hegemonies
Norms
Ideologies

Policy

Domain
Institution

Exploration

Musical

Individual
Person

Social
Public
Private

Extrinsic
Status

Extrinsic
Recognition

Intrinsic
Autonomy

Motivation
Appendix 2
The model of background

Appendix 3 (next page)
Confirmation from NSD
TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 03.04.2016. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

48182 The Suffering Musician: Negotiating Identities in Music Education
Behandlingsansvarlig Universitetet i Oslo, ved institusjonens øverste leder
Daglig ansvarlig Kyle Ross Devine
Student Veronica Ski-Berg

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.


Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 05.12.2016, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Vigdis Namtvedt Kvalheim

Kjersti Haugstvedt
Kontaktperson: Kjersti Haugstvedt tlf: 55 58 29 53

Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.

Informasjonsskrivet til utvalget er godt utformet.

Personvernombudet forutsetter at opplysninger om tredjepersoner anonymiseres ved transkribering.

Personvernombudet legger til grunn at forsker etterfølger Universitetet i Oslo sine retningslinjer for datasikkerhet.

Forventet prosjektslutt er 05.12.2016. Innsamlede opplysninger anonymiseres. Anonymisering innebærer å bearbeide datamaterialet slik at ingen enkeltpersoner kan gjenkjennes. Det gjøres ved å:
- slette direkte personopplysninger (som navn/koblingsnøkkel)
- slette/omskrive indirekte personopplysninger
- slette lydopptak

Enkeltpersoner vil ikke kunne identifiseres i oppgaven.
Information Regarding Participation In Research Project

The Interdisciplinary Musician:
Negotiating Identities in Higher Music Education

Background and purpose
The purpose of this study is to explore if there is any collision between the expectations of music students in higher music education and their personal preferences. Are there any denominators in the students’ responses as to why they have changed directions during their studies? What needs are going unmet, and how do they relate to questions of identity? Is there any correlation between the students’ reasoning and current research in this field?

The study will be executed as part of my master’s thesis at the Institute of Musicology at the University of Oslo. All participants must have changed directions (musically) during their study at the Norwegian Academy of Music (NMH). This target group is currently a minority among the music students, and the participants will therefore be selected through fieldwork at the academy.

What does participation in the study entail?
The participation in this study will include a qualitative interview. The questions will be directed at the participant’s background, thoughts, and experiences in relation to their change as a music student. The interview will be semi-structured, and no personal data will be collected outside of the executed interview. The interview will last approximately 30-45 minutes, but the session in its whole will be completed within a time frame of 60 minutes.

What happens to the gathered information?
All gathered information will be treated as anonymous. If a third person is mentioned (e.g. a teacher), this information will not be included if the person in question is recognizable. All participants will get the opportunity to approve the content and the interpretations before the study is published.

The study will be completed in May 2017. All personal data will be treated confidentially both during and after the process. Recordings from the interview and other sensitive information will be stored in an external hard drive without internet access for an indefinite period. It is solely the project’s manager and supervisor that have access to this material during the process.
**What does it mean to volunteer?**
It is voluntary to participate in this study, and you have the option of withdrawing your former consent at any time without giving a reason. If you decide to withdraw, all of your personal data will immediately be anonymized. Further, you will have the opportunity to approve the content of your contribution and the interpretations of it before the study is published.

**Questions and contact information**
If you have any questions regarding this case study, contact the project manager Veronica Ski-Berg (tlf 481 555 03) or supervisor Kyle Devine (tlf 228 540 60).

This case study has been reported to Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS.

---

**Consent for participation in the study**

I have received the information about this study, and want to participate

__________________________________________________________________________

(Signed by project participant, date)
Appendix 5
Interview guide
(English translation) Research Interview Guide

The Interdisciplinary Musician: Negotiating Identities in Higher Music Education

About the interview
The participation in this study will include a qualitative interview. The questions will be directed at the participant’s background, thoughts, and experiences in relation to their change as a music student. The interview will be semi-structured, and no personal data will be collected outside of the executed interview. The interview will last approximately 30-45 minutes, but the session in its whole will be completed within a time frame of 60 minutes.

Theme and construction
The master’s thesis will explore if there is a collision between the personal preferences and the external expectations of music students. Are there any denominators in the students’ responses as to why they have changed directions during their studies? What needs are going unmet, and how do they relate to questions of identity? Is there any correlation between the students’ reasoning and current research in this field?

3 main themes will be explored:
1) Identifying as a musician
2) Changing directions as a musician
3) Exploring identities as a musician

Relevant questions
- What image comes to your mind when you hear the word ‘musician’? (1)
- Why did you decide to become a musician? (1)
- What is the difference between a happy musician and an unhappy musician? (1)
- Why did you change directions during your study? (2)
- What reactions did you receive afterwards? (friends, teachers etc) (2)
- What needs are you getting met now that previously went unmet? (2)
- Do you know other musicians that have changed directions during their studies? (2)
- Have you tried on different identities as a musician in order to get here? (3)
- What kind of musician do you feel that others want you to be? (3)
- What kind of musician do you personally wish to be? (3)
- How will you define your musical identity today? (3)

The three themes will be the frame of the semi-structured interview. However, new questions may be asked, and not all proposed questions will be included.