"GOOD WORKS" WITH BENEFITS: USING APPLIED ETHNOMUSICOLOGY AND PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH IN BENEFIT CONCERT PRODUCTION AT THE UNITARIAN CHURCH OF VANCOUVER

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by

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ABSTRACT

Within the rather limited applied ethnomusicology literature, what are lacking are methodological summations (how does one practice applied ethnomusicology and what are the implications of doing so?), as well as documented applied research wherein researchers have been or continues to be members of the community in which they are working. By documenting and critiquing the production of a benefit concert in partnership with the Unitarian Church of Vancouver, it has been my intention to contribute to this limited area of study by providing a process-oriented thesis investigating an applied project in a community of which I am a part. In so doing, the ways ethnomusicologists may practically contribute their skills to community-based education and social justice actions, and the ways such initiatives might be effectively represented through scholarly writings, will be explored.

Further, this thesis endeavors to respond to a set of questions that are raised when ethnomusicologists, musicians and community organizations are engaged in relationships of assistance with marginalized and disenfranchised members of the community: When do we help? How do we help? Why do we help? What kind of dialogues are we engaging in with those we are assisting? When is help desired, and when is it not? How can we re-think our processes, motivations, and communication techniques so that benefit events may become as respectful and reciprocal as possible? And finally, how can all participants both help and be helped? Though these questions have not been definitively answered, and though I have stated that responses will be project- and community-specific, the consideration of the issues they raise is of utmost importance in cultivating reciprocal and respectful benefit concert production techniques.

Finally, the results of applying ethnomusicology in church communities, the methods that were utilized, and the participatory nature of this work approach will be thoroughly examined and critiqued, resulting in recommendations for the development of this form of applied ethnomusicological research.

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INTRODUCTION

Though existing applied ethnomusicology literature is limited, research and writings thus far are strong ideological and theoretical statements made by its practitioners, and rather open-ended definitions of what this approach entails. What I have found to be lacking are methodological summations: How does one practice applied ethnomusicology and what are the implications of doing so?

Though a growing number of ethnomusicological studies are being undertaken by scholars indigenous to the cultures and communities in which they are conducting research, in the sub-discipline of applied ethnomusicology, applied research wherein the researcher has been or continues to be a member of the community is also limited. It is my intention to contribute to these under-developed areas of study by providing a process-oriented documentation of an applied project in a community of which I am a part. In so doing, the ways ethnomusicologists may practically contribute their skills to community-based education and social justice actions, and the ways such initiatives might be effectively represented through scholarly writings, will be explored.

I initiated this research because the musically and socio-politically-infused benefit concert culture that I had been participating in for several years in Vancouver was fascinating to me, and I believed it merited inquiry and consideration. I was also motivated by a strong desire to apply ethnomusicological skills directly in my own community. Further, through personal and professional experiences, I had become interested in the Unitarian Universalist Church and, more specifically, the Unitarian Church of Vancouver (UCV), a community where social justice initiatives are often undertaken, and where more often than not, music is used as a primary tool. I have attempted to bring these three areas of interest together in this research project.

When I began formulating my research proposal, I felt very open, curious, and excited to observe the process and its results. I did not believe I held expectations that might colour my interpretations. My research would consist of co-producing a benefit concert with a religious community of which I had been a part intermittently for several years. Two musical groups of which I was currently a member would perform at this concert. Colleagues, friends and family members would eventually become involved to varying degrees. I would find myself questioning the work and the communities to which I felt myself most connected. Despite the fact that I knew how deeply invested I was in the research community, I believed that I had no preconceived notions about the results at which I would arrive, that I would be able to be objective enough to think critically about my colleagues and my own musical and

socio-political practices, and that I would be able to write honestly about the process and its results. It was not until well into the research that I discovered how challenging this would actually be.

The concert was completed and I was three months into the analysis of data and well into my writing when I realized that I hadn't been addressing the issues in each chapter to the degree that I believed I should. When considering why this might be occurring, I came to several conclusions. Early on in the research I decided to focus my discussion primarily on methodology. While preparing for the concert, I was frustrated by the fact that I had not been able to locate a detailed example of how ethnomusicologists have worked with community organizations in concert development. Such writings could have provided me with examples of methodological approaches. Though I had been involved in benefit concert production in the past, this was my first attempt as a researcher. I wanted to hear from other applied ethnomusicologists about how they had approached concert production, not only as producers and performers (as I had done in the past), but also as scholars interested in examining and critiquing the process and the results. As I was not able to locate these resources, I often felt alone in the undertaking, working mostly through trial and error. For this reason, I thought that providing a detailed methodological example in my thesis would be beneficial to future applied research projects. In the first few months of writing, this was my focus; however, I began to realize that the scope of my focus was too narrow. I could not provide a methodological summation while ignoring the issues that the approach had raised.

That week I had a follow-up interview with one of the musicians who performed at the concert. A refugee from West Africa, he had fled his country of birth after being imprisoned for writing "political" music. Having been previously assisted by the Unitarian Church of Vancouver's Refugee Committee, he was asked to participate in this fundraiser. In hindsight, I realize that I went into this interview anticipating the answers I would receive, and believing that I knew which questions would stimulate the most provocative and interesting responses. I was not prepared for what occurred. I reflected on this conversation in my journal:

> *About halfway through the interview I asked Peter to reflect upon the accessibility of the concert. Did he have family and friends attend? "I was alone that day," he responded. I was concerned about whether or not the event's price, location, and content had been accessible to his family, friends, and colleagues. As a way of investigating this concern, I asked him about his community in Vancouver. Who did he consider as his "community"? He did not answer right away. "I think people here like to help. It's a helpful community," he said. I was expecting him to describe the people who had become a part of his new Vancouver-based community; however, he responded by first addressing the intentions and the motivations of community members. Continuing, he said, "Everyone*

has his own experience... and I have my own experience. Sometimes it's too much. Even if they want to help you... Sometimes you have to keep your privacy too... Sometime[s] it happen[s] if the communication is not perfect. You have to know when to say yes, and when to say no... Sometimes you say 'no' for it, and they keep asking you the same thing." I realized as he was speaking that although he was referring to the Vancouver community generally, he was also speaking specifically about the Refugee Committee at the church. I had not anticipated this kind of response. It took me a moment to register what he was saying. But then I felt something begin to shift inside of me. I began to see something that had been sitting right in front of me the whole time... I just wasn't ready to see it. Peter shared with me the other side of his gratitude, and simultaneously, the other side of the committee's and my own attempts at assisting others - the side that is not often discussed. He described his feelings of not being able to always choose whether or not he and his family receive assistance. He expressed concern that he does not always receive the privacy he desires. I recognized that the fear of sounding ungrateful made these comments difficult for him to say, and he weighed each sentence out before he said it. He and his family are alive. They might not have been if assistance from groups such as the Refugee Committee had not been available. He knows this, and he clearly feels indebted. He does not question the heartfelt intentions of those who were involved in planning this event. He feels gratitude; however, in this moment he was also able to be honest about some of the potential emotional repercussions of being assisted in such a way. As I sat with Peter, I realized that I have perceived him as "the helped" and "the assisted." And though it is tremendously difficult to admit to myself, I have considered myself, the committees, the audience who attended the concert, and the non-refugee musicians "the helpers." Before this moment, I had considered the implications of being involved in community-based forms of musical benefit work; however, in a few moments of deepened understanding and humility, I began to see the complexity of such an undertaking. In my mind, I passed over all the benefit concerts and fundraisers I had participated in. I thought about who was helping, and who was being helped. And I wondered how many "Peters" there have been feeling gratitude and thankfulness, and yet losing, in a way, their autonomy of choice. Questions flooded my mind... When do we help? How do we help? Why do we help? What kind of dialogues are we engaging in with those whom we are assisting? When is help desired, and when is it not? Both the church and the musical community I am a part of are self-defining "helping communities." Whether they are actually perceived as a part of one's religious, socio-political, or creative practice, these questions must be considered. I realized in this moment that if we are to continue to do this work, we must respond to this feedback by re-thinking our processes, motivations, and communication techniques, so that these events become as respectful and reciprocal as possible, so that all participants can both help and be helped. (February 2, 2007)

This moment occurred late in the research process. I had not anticipated this question initiating such a large shift in my understanding and writing focus. This moment clarified what was primarily motivating my research. As ethnomusicologists and musicians, as members of a community and as citizens: *When do we help? How do we help? Why do we help? What kind of dialogues are we engaging in with those with whom we are assisting? When is help desired, and when is it not?* Further, how can we

re-think our processes, motivations, and communication techniques, so that these events may become as respectful and reciprocal as possible? And finally, *how can all participants both help and be helped?*

Through community-based projects, such as the one I undertook, relationships are established between "helpers" and "the helped," between "activists" and the "disenfranchised," between "those who have" and "those who have not." The implications of involving oneself as a researcher, organizer, or performer in a benefit concert context demand considerable thought. Though I have observed many positive results from the concert we organized, power imbalances, misrepresentations, appropriation of experience, and the re-enforcement of non-reciprocal relationships of assistance were also encouraged. By acknowledging and considering these challenges, it is my hope that a healthier and more inclusive approach may be cultivated for future projects.

Chapter One of this thesis establishes both a historical and a contemporary context for the applied project that was undertaken. It reviews literature on the application of ethnomusicology, and provides an overview of the Unitarian Universalist (UU) tradition, the presence of music and social justice work in this religious tradition, as well as the committees and musicians who were involved. By describing in detail the development, planning and execution of the concert, Chapter Two offers a detailed overview of the Participatory Action Research methodological approach that was used and its implications. Further, the content of the concert will be described, with an emphasis placed on the musical practices of the refugee musicians who participated. Chapter Three explores the intentions and expectations of the concert participants, and the ways in which they impacted the planning process and the concert. In Chapter Four, the representational practices implemented during the production and execution of the concert will be explored, and their implications addressed. And finally, in Chapter Five, the results of the research will be summarized and recommendations will be made for the continuation of applied research in future studies.

CHAPTER ONE

RESEARCH CONTEXTS, APPROACHES AND PARTICIPANTS

In this chapter, I will explore the contexts in which this applied research project occurred. The personal circumstances that drew me to this area of study, the relevant academic literature, the congregation and committees with whom I worked, and the musicians who participated in the concert, will all be introduced and examined. Each will provide an analytical lens with which to interpret the data.

THE RESEARCHER'S CONTEXT(S)

When I entered into graduate studies in ethnomusicology, I was a member of two vocal ensembles, both of which practiced primarily *a cappella* repertoire from sacred and secular vocal music traditions including West and South African, Cuban, North American First Nations, and African-American gospel musics. Though the repertoire is very diverse, these groups are similar in that they consistently participate in community-outreach events and benefit concerts. After two years of participating in such events with these musical ensembles, I had experienced many profound moments, both musically and socio-politically. As a result, I viewed "the benefit concert" as a powerful and effective tool in community-based social justice actions. Previous experiences taught me that benefit concerts could act as an effective tool for community organizations to raise money for important local initiatives. In these instances, I had also witnessed connections established between audience and performers through the sharing of music. This often resulted in participants expressing common concerns about issues in their community and the larger world community, and further, encouraged those present to make personal and collective commitments towards working towards eliminating the issues of concern. Through the involvement of informed speakers, who provided information and offered proactive tools to the audience, I had also observed public education and awareness grow during benefit concerts. I desired to work with this expressive and socio-political form and to further understand it.

As I did my graduate coursework, I began to realize that I was interested in exploring the ways in which I might apply ethnomusicological theories and methodologies to community-based music projects. Though I was generally interested in the music of social justice movements and benefit concert culture, the way I wished to engage with these areas of study was through direct application and

participation. By practicing this form of ethnomusicological work during my graduate studies research, I hoped to develop skills that I might apply in future work-related projects.

These aforementioned interests were further ignited through my experiences of attending and working for the Unitarian Church of Vancouver (UCV) intermittently for several years. The UCV's congregation is primarily focused on community service and social justice work. Its musical tradition and practices are also reflective of its members' ideological and socio-political stances. My personal involvement with the denomination started as a child, when my Mother began attending a small, largely lay-lead, congregation. I did not regularly attend the church services with her; however, I began getting involved with occasional youth group events as an adolescent. It was not until I was a young adult that my involvement increased. During my undergraduate studies at Simon Fraser University, I spent one summer working at the UCV as the Assistant to the Minister of Religious Education. My duties included developing curriculum for the children's programming and facilitating weekly arts activities and games for children of families attending the services. A few years later, I met Rev. Dr. Steven Epperson (the current Minister at the UCV). He offered me a short-term contract composing and arranging music for seasonal pageants that he was writing. One of these pageants (which I also directed) was based on the life and assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero[1]. The pageant, and its music, focused on Romero's commitment to non-violence, compassion and socio-political equality. This project impressed upon me how integral social justice work was to Rev. Epperson and the congregation's religious lives. My involvement with UCV has been both professional and personal. Over the years, I have not consistently attended services, and at the time of my research, I had never been a member of the UCV or any other Unitarian congregation; however, I do consider myself invested in, and a part of, this religious community.

Informed by my experiences as a musician, I was aware of an established benefit concert culture in Vancouver, BC. In this community I had witnessed local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and musicians work cooperatively to develop concerts that aimed to fundraise for particular "causes," while simultaneously providing an opportunity for public discussion and education. I was interested in further researching this musical and socio-political practice in my community. As previously stated, along with my experiences participating in benefit concerts, I also had a pre-existing relationship with the Unitarian Church of Vancouver, a religious community committed to community outreach and social

[1] Archbishop Oscar Romero was assassinated in El Salvador on March 24, 1980, shortly after a homily he delivered. Romero preached a non-violent liberation theology, and advocated on behalf of the poor, and those affected by Civil War in El Salvador.

justice work. I was aware that the UCV had utilized benefit concerts in the past to raise money for the work of their committees and for other local NGOs. Researching and working alongside this particular community was a very compelling idea. Interested in using an applied ethnomusicological approach, I decided to put forward a proposal to work collaboratively with the Refugee Committee (RC) and the Social Justice Committee (SJC) at the Unitarian Church of Vancouver. Resulting in the production of a benefit concert, this collaborative project would aim to raise money to help support the committees' ongoing projects. At the same time, my interest in further researching local musicians' involvement in benefit concerts inspired my decision to approach the two vocal ensembles with whom I had a pre-existing working relationship, to participate in the concert that myself and these committees would organize in the fall of 2006.

It is the development process, resulting event, and the issues each raised that have informed this thesis. In the following sections I will investigate the areas of study that have influenced my research and further examine the contexts in which the benefit concert occurred.

APPLIED ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

Debates are ongoing regarding the distinction that is often drawn between ethnomusicology and applied ethnomusicology. Ursula Hemetek (2006) summarizes the argument as follows: Many believe that drawing a line between ethnomusicology and applied ethnomusicology is a redundant practice, as "everything ethnomusicologists do is applied to a certain extent" (36). For example, teaching, publishing, and presenting research results may all be considered an application of skills and knowledge that might benefit "culture bearers." Though this is a valid argument, throughout my research project, I have found there to be issues and considerations pertaining specifically to the direct and collaborative application of ethnomusicology within a community. For this reason, though they are undeniably inter-connected, it is useful to consider applied ethnomusicology as distinct from ethnomusicology.

Ethnomusicologist Martha Ellen Davis (1992) has described applied ethnomusicology as the undertaking of projects with culture bearers of a community with the intention of conserving and promoting the development of living music traditions, and thus "reinforcing a respect for one's own culture.... [by] providing [the] mechanisms, structures, and means to do so..." (361). The culture bearers define the project themselves, as well as the role the ethnomusicologist is to play. Projects are undertaken primarily to cultivate reciprocity. Davis believes that the integration of knowledge

acquisition and its transformation into solutions to practical problems is, in fact, a part of ethnomusicologists' ethical mandate.

A distinction is drawn between "applied" and "public sector" in the field of folklore. Although the work that applied ethnomusicologists undertake is often similar to that of applied folklorists, this distinction is not present in ethnomusicology. Michael Owen Jones (1994) understands applied folklore studies to be:

> [A field that] ethically utilizes concepts, methods, and theories from the discipline of folklore studies as well as its own specialization to provide information, the formulation of policy, or the initiation of direct action in order to produce change or stability in behaviour, culture, or the circumstances of people's lives including environment and technology. (13)

Jones emphasizes that "applied folklore" involves the use of folklore methodology and theory to generate solutions to practical problems. This can involve the folklorist in policy development. Though applied ethnomusicologists may indeed work in policy development, the literature I have investigated does not address this area of focus. Should applied ethnomusicologists choose to contribute to academic research, and work within the area of policy development, both applied folklorists (such as Jones) and applied anthropologists (Ervin, 2005) offer useful and informative guidelines.

In order to further distinguish between areas of focus in applied folklore, the term "public sector" is often used. Jones writes:

> Because so many folklorists are now employed by government agencies and not-for-profits geared toward providing arts, educational, and cultural services to the general public, the notion of 'public sector' rather than applied folklore is appealing and seems appropriate. The sobriquet 'public sector' helps unify diverse programs, even if not all projects are funded with public monies, carried out by public agencies, or of benefit to the general public... (18)

Based on this definition, because I was working with a not-for-profit organization, the "Safe Haven" concert could be described as "public sector ethnomusicology." Within the discipline of folklore, some folklorists use the term "applied folklore" to more broadly describe the field, and "public sector folklore" to describe a more specific area of expertise. Still others, preferring the connotations of the word "public," exclusively use the term "public folklore." I believe that following this example from the discipline of folklore and creating titles such as "public sector ethnomusicology" would help differentiate and clarify areas of expertise and focus within the larger discipline of applied

ethnomusicology. This might help with further defining and understanding applied ethnomusicology and what it can entail.

As stated, academic works focused on applied ethnomusicology are limited. One of the reasons for this lacuna is that the discipline did much of its foundational development during the 1950s and early 1960s, a time marked by "a societal swing of the pendulum away from applied work" (Sheehy 1992: 325). Applied ethnomusicology advocate Angela Impey (2002) elaborates further on this issue by stating:

> Historically, there has always been something of an uncomfortable relationship between theoretical and applied fields in the human sciences, the subtext being that academia is superior to the theoretically unsophisticated and ethically problematic wanderings of applied work. (14)

This understanding of the "theoretically unsophisticated and ethically problematic" nature of the application of ethnomusicology permeates the literature in this field, and has lead to what practitioners have interpreted to be a de-valuing of applied work. In February 2007, while presenting on my research at a Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM) Pacific Northwest Chapter annual meeting, I spoke to an applied ethnomusicologist in attendance. He told me that in his experience, many in the discipline view applied ethnomusicology as peripheral work. Having experienced both the academic and public sectors of ethnomusicology, he believes that a greater value is placed on achieving employment in academic institutions. Public sector work is understood to be supplementary to one's academic career. However, like many other ethnomusicologists, he was currently working in the public sector, and viewed it as a viable and exciting choice for primary, rather than supplementary work. By fostering a dynamic interchange between both areas of the discipline, the current value system that marginalizes contributions made in the public sector might be re-evaluated. In so doing, thoughtful, critically-engaged exchange between ethnomusicologists who work primarily in public application, and those who do not, might be achieved.

Applied ethnomusicologist Daniel Sheehy (1992) also believes that the sub-discipline of applied ethnomusicology has been consistently under-represented in the larger discipline. He asserts, as do many scholars in the field, that there are historically-informed concerns regarding the use of applied ethnomusicology approaches. These concerns have been carried over from the 1930s and 1940s when American folk music specialists were observing an "alarming use of folk music by totalitarian states such as Nazi Germany for the purpose of instilling unquestioning obedience to the state" (324).

Anthropologist Alexander M. Ervin (2005) also emphasizes the need to consider the potential risks involved in utilizing applied approaches when he states:

> After… [WWII], theory and practice diverged for complex reasons. A basic reason was concern among academics that anthropology should avoid major societal interventions for fear of unintentionally doing serious damage to people. (6)

There is clearly a concern expressed by critics that "well-intentioned" applied ethnomusicological approaches might have unforeseen and damaging results. It is this concern that is often cited as the primary explanation behind the limited amount of applied research that is undertaken and documented. Though there are potential risks involved in utilizing anthropological and ethnomusicological interventions, I do not believe that this means that the approach itself should not be used. It can and should be practiced, consciously, and with care. This same fear of the misuse of research strategies can also be extended to non-applied approaches as well. Considering the potential ethical implications of any research undertaking (in both the academic and public sectors) is an essential step for researchers to take.

At times, applied ethnomusicologists engage in direct advocacy. Critics of this practice question the appropriateness of advocating for a particular position, asserting that by doing so, one is no longer an unbiased researcher; rather, one who is taking a particular stance concerning the socio-political issues facing the community in question. Ervin (2005) expands upon this concern, stating that critics of direct anthropological advocacy "doubt that practitioners of a science … devoted to describing and analyzing all of the behaviours and ideologies of humanity can choose one cause and advocate it to the exclusion of others" (142).

Applied ethnomusicologists invariably affect the communities in which they are working. That being the case, I believe that they have an obligation to fully implicate themselves by contributing, in any way possible, to the empowerment of community members. This level of engagement with a community and the issues it faces does not signify that an applied ethnomusicologist is personally selecting causes, while excluding all others. Instead, it signifies that she or he is responding to requests for assistance that have been put forward by the community in which he or she is working. Such requests are reflective of the community's needs, not the applied ethnomusicologist's personal, socio-political or ideological agenda. Further, if advocacy is carried out as a collaborative endeavour, the applied ethnomusicologist does not work in isolation; rather, the individuals affected by the issues collaborate with and inform the applied ethnomusicologist. Engaging in advocacy demands a great deal of consideration and a well-researched understanding of the issues being addressed. If this role is taken on responsibly, becoming an

advocate for a community's needs does not compromise the integrity of the research, or the researcher's position. As Davis (1992) asserted, reciprocity is an ethnomusicologist's ethical mandate. Though not always required or appropriate, advocating on behalf of community members, and their cultural practices, is one of the ways in which reciprocity can be cultivated between researchers and the communities in which they work.

As previously stated, what I have found to be lacking in the existing applied ethnomusicology literature are methodological summations: how does one practice applied ethnomusicology and what are the implications of doing so? As I was relatively new to the discipline and its application at the onset of my research, I found this lack of methodological resources discouraging. Anthropologists Myerhoff and Ruby (1982) respond to this concern by asking, "Why do most anthropologists identify themselves and their work as scientific yet often fail to describe adequately the methods employed in their research…?" (20). It was this lack of methodological guidance that inspired me to investigate alternative, yet complementary, options.

PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

In attempting to formulate a clearer sense of a methodological approach that might be effective in an applied ethnomusicology context, and that would encourage partnership and reciprocity between those in the research community and myself, I began to investigate Participatory Action Research (PAR) approaches. A developing emphasis in the social sciences on cultivating accountability towards the communities in which scholars work, returning "something of value… allow[ing] research products to be scrutinized…" (Ervin 2005: 230), and fostering collaboration, has lead to the development of various participatory styles of research. Ervin (2005) has described participatory research as the process of handing over more of the process and ownership of research to citizens' groups and local communities. An advocate of PAR, he believes that such research approaches should be "shaped democratically, relying much more on local, traditional knowledge and overlooked community strengths…" (219).

Over the years of application, PAR practitioners have developed guidelines and principles that they suggest researchers follow. Education scholar Budd Hall (1984) provides what he calls "the underlying principles" of participatory research:

1. Research should involve people in the entire process beginning with identification of the issues, through discussion of how to get information, to analysis and use of results in the context of action.

2. Research should result in some direct and positive benefits for those communities and people involved.
3. Research is a process of systematic creation of knowledge, which may or may not involve people who have been professionally trained as researchers.
4. Knowledge is deepened, enriched, and made more socially usable when it is produced collectively.
5. Research involves a combination of methods designed to facilitate social, cooperative, or collective production of knowledge.
6. Research, learning, and knowledge production are often aspects of the same intellectual processes in the context of action. (291-292)

Adding to these guidelines, PAR advocates Barnsley and Ellis (1992) emphasize the importance of the members of the community involved taking ownership of the process. They stipulate: "Researchers from outside the community may be called in… but the outside researcher must be committed to cooperating in the process… Their role is to help" (11). Further, they assert that the theoretical framework in which PAR is operating is one in which "theory and analysis [are built] from people's actual experience…" (17). As outlined by the referenced PAR practitioners, key concepts and goals that accompany this approach, and which are integral to the successful completion of PAR projects include: collaboration between the researcher and the community with whom they are working, collective ownership of knowledge production, collective control over the research process and interpretation of results, and positive changes occurring within the community as a result of the research.

Offering a different perspective, ethnomusicologist Angela Impey (2002) provides an honest statement concerning the challenges that can arise when this research model is used. She states:

> In advocating participatory research, so too am I mindful of the restrictions of this approach… processes can be frustratingly slow and time-consuming and often difficult to sustain. [There can be] an inclination [from] the researcher to shape research priorities and, for the sake of expediency, steer the processes. (22)

The "time-consuming" nature of this process, the threat of researcher intervention and the subsequent overriding by the researcher of the group process, are common concerns expressed by many PAR scholars. In Chapter Two, the researcher's ability to facilitate such an approach, regardless of his or her intentions, will be discussed. I will also consider how PAR is affected (both positively and negatively) by the resources, time availability and management approaches of participants, as well as the community's cultural and socio-political systems and values. PAR methodologies provide a solid and effective framework from which to depart; however, one cannot assume that they will transfer universally

to any given research context. As I found out in this particular project, PAR methods must be re-evaluated and re-shaped in response to the particular needs of the situation and the individuals involved.

INTEGRATING APPLIED ETHNOMUSICOLOGY AND PAR

As I hoped to integrate applied ethnomusicology and PAR, I searched out examples of other researchers' work that had endeavored to do the same. Angela Impey (2002) provided the only example I was able to locate in which an applied ethnomusicologist was explicitly working with PAR techniques. Impey explores the "operational interface between ethnomusicology, environmental conservation and sustainable development" (9) through her work in the Dukuduku Forests of South Africa. In her words, this research strived to "explore ways in which deep-rooted cultural wisdoms can be recast to generate an organizing paradigm for the sustainable custodianship of the environment," thus empowering communities to "participate more equitably in the development of the region" (9). In 2000, the Dukuduku Development and Tourism Association approached Impey to undertake a musical survey of the region and to assist in the development of a musical display that could be used in local cultural tourism initiatives. Concerned that eco-tourism initiatives would stress the already diminished community ties in the area, she was hesitant; however, she eventually accepted the position. She explains this choice as being directly related to the level of poverty and economic constraints the people faced by living in nationally-preserved lands. She believed cultural tourism initiatives were inevitable; therefore, she decided to become aware of the ways in which the project could stimulate dialogue, provide a platform for addressing identity issues and contribute to the community's economic development. Though Impey's project varies greatly from my own, it does provide an interesting example of ways in which applied ethnomusicology and PAR methodologies might be brought together and used in musical advocacy.

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND THE PROTESTANT CHRISTIAN CHURCH

As a means of situating this applied research project, and elaborating upon the relevance of applying ethnomusicology and PAR methods in this religious community, I will examine quite broadly the role of social action and politics in particular Christian denominations. While political scientist Daniel H. Levine (1986) addresses the negotiation between the integration and separation of politics and religion specifically in Latin America, his thoughts on this issue are useful in understanding a similar

negotiation that transpires throughout the UU movement. Levine views the perceived division between political and religious life in Latin America as false. He states:

> Questions about the politicization of religion arise from longstanding intellectual traditions, which make religion secondary to supposedly more immediate, real, or rational social, economic, or political forces… Religion cannot be isolated from social and political life: there is a constant dynamic interchange between them… Political commitment and action grow from religious motives and structures; politics and social change generally create pressures and urgent needs, and provide models, which spur reflection, organization and action in religion. (825)

Levine argues that although both religion and politics operate in what may often appear to be separate spheres, inspired by separate forces and ideologies, in fact, the two are interconnected in that the activities and movements in one resonate in and impact the other. This is particularly so with the Unitarian Church of Vancouver, where members view political, ethical, and spiritual ideologies and actions as interconnected.

Cultural anthropologist Marla F. Frederick (2003) examines the role of spirituality in the "cultural production of activism" (ix) specifically in the lives of African-American women living in poor, rural communities in the southern United States. She contends that in the southern Baptist tradition congregants' commitment and desire to be a part of "God's work" is enacted within the institution of the church at times, but more frequently occurs in their everyday lives away from the church. Spirituality, she asserts, embodies both the personal and the public areas of her informants' lives, and is enacted through communal worship but, even more significantly, through their actions in the world. In this particular religious community, Frederick has found that the integration of personal faith and socio-political ideologies has emerged directly in response to oppression and racism experienced by African-Americans. The African-American church has been a foundational institution from which organized protest has emerged.

Although I recognize that there are many cultural, ethnic, and socio-political differences between the southern Baptist African-American church and the UU denomination, I see strong parallels between the ways in which both enact their faith in the world. Further, a large number of UUs were involved in the American Civil Rights movement of the 50s and 60s, and continue to be active in anti-racism initiatives.

Political scientist Anna Greenberg (2000) discusses the potential that religious institutions hold for acting as agents of political mobilization and as intermediaries between the individual and the State. She contends that churches are political institutions as they:

> … Create shared space for community groups and provide services for the disadvantaged, reaching beyond the immediate needs of the congregation. They bolster these services through partnerships with state agencies, which in turn both creates opportunities to influence public policy and to make demands upon the state… (378)

This is so because, as Greenberg explains, religious institutions encompass both public and private life, encouraging social initiatives and the cultivation of private values. This is true of the UCV. Housing a food bank for single mothers, shelter and support services for refugees, and working in partnership with political and community organizations, the UCV reaches beyond its immediate congregation in alliance with the larger community. Building upon this understanding of the church as a religious, social and political institution, I will further explore the specific religious community in which I was working.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM, "GOOD WORKS," AND THE UCV

Explicit in the name itself, the UU faith tradition originally stems from two Christian traditions: Unitarianism and Universalism. Though distinct, the Unitarians and Universalists shared a liberal doctrine, which is what eventually brought them together in the merger of the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America in 1961.

Though conceptually its origins can be traced back further, the first official use of the term "Unitarian," according to Harry Scholefield and Paul Sawyer (1993), was in 1638, in Transylvania (at the time a province of the Austro-Hungarian Empire which became a part of Romania after WWI). At that time, Unitarianism referred to "those who believed in the toleration of other faiths and the unity of God" (8). Michael Servetus is acknowledged as one of the "forefathers" of Unitarianism. One of the earliest documented Reformation anti-Trinitarians, and judged a heretic, Servetus was burned at the stake in Geneva in 1553, with his "great theological opus, *The Restitution of Christianity*, tied to his thigh" (9). Giorgio Biandrata, an Italian refugee, founded the first documented anti-Trinitarian church in Poland, in 1565. Faustus Socinus later became the leader of the Polish anti-Trinitarians, known at that time as Socinians. From this time onward, Unitarianism continued to be practiced, evolving and migrating in the process. The origins of Unitarianism in North America can be traced back to the 18th century, when Unitarian ministers and leaders began to emigrate from Europe. The first official church in the United States was formed in Philadelphia in 1794.

Scholefield and Sawyer (1993) write, "scholars trace Universalism all the way back to the Alexandrian Christian School and the early church fathers, Clement of Alexandria and Origen in the third century" (8). Universalists have historically affirmed that the whole human race will be saved, and

is loved by God. A foundational statement called "Union," which addressed the nature of Universalism, was written by James Relly and printed in 1759 in England. John Murray (a colleague of Relly's) immigrated to North America and organized one of the first Universalist churches in Gloucester, MA. In 1786, Murray and other Universalists spearheaded a successful legal battle for religious freedom in Massachusetts: the "right to support the church and minister of their own choosing rather than pay taxes to support the Congregationalist churches of the Standing order" (12). Many of the events that most impacted the development of North American Unitarianism and Universalism occurred in Pennsylvania and New England in the second half of the eighteenth century, a time when ministers in the Congregational churches "sowed the seeds of a more rational and liberal interpretation of the Christian faith" (13).

Considering the history and development of both Unitarianism and Universalism and their official union in 1961, UCV's Minister Emeritus and theological scholar Phillip Hewett (1995) asserts that three major religious forces have been historically at work in the organized Unitarian movement: Christianity, humanism and universalism.[2] This statement underlines both the influences of Christian sources and the evolution of this religious tradition as it opened up to encompass a more ecumenical theological approach. In an interview with UCV's Parish Minister, Rev. Dr. Steven Epperson, I asked him to explain the motivation behind this ideological shift. He specified two different "angles" from which one might understand this development in the tradition:

> In the 1820s, 30s, 40s… primarily North American Unitarians… became really interested in world religions. They became convinced that Christianity was not the only valid religion… They reasoned that if all men and women throughout the whole course of history share a common humanity and share a common hunger, thirst for meaning and value in their lives, then they will have worked out in their own historical and cultural context, religious systems, institutions and ways of being spiritual and ethical beings, that would also perhaps provide valid, authoritative, compelling ways of working out social justice. So these people started reading Hindu scripture, they started reading the Koran, they started turning to Native spirituality, they started opening up to see what other people had to say about being just, compassionate human beings… They were of the opinion that there wasn't just one religion or one religious truth... If we are all sons and daughters of the same source, then that divine inspiration and creative human imagination would have created extraordinary alternative inspirational sources. So they started going all over looking for it. (September 7, 2006)

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[2] This first major influence was "inherited from the mainstream of Western religion." The second, he explains was expressed in the Renaissance "which ushered in the modern era and in the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century… and was reinforced by the rise of the sciences." The third, he tells us, was a "movement towards transcending the established boundaries of race, nationality and religious tradition, looking beyond particulars to the universal that is expressed through them" (327)

Secondly, Epperson explains:

> Universalists' believed that the most important thing about the divine was the attribute of love… the most important thing about God… is that God loves us all and we will all be saved. Now, if that's the case, then they were also really interested in what other religions around the world had to say about love, and about God and about what the path of religion, toward God and toward compassion and justice and love looked like. So Unitarians and Universalists independently, and also having things in common beginning about the 1820s through to about the 70s, 80s, 90s were… scholars and religious people who were in the vanguard in opening up the eyes and the interest of people in the west to the religions of the east, to Islam and to Native American spirituality. (ibid.)

This time of study and exploration of non-Christian religious traditions culminated in 1893 in Chicago at the World Parliament of Religion. This was the first officially recognized international meeting for the "world's religions." Epperson describes this as the first time that Christians, Zen Buddhists, and North American Aboriginal traditions (only a few of the traditions represented) sat down as equals, shared their ideologies, and openly learned from one another. The organizing body for this event included a significant number of Unitarians and Universalists.

Currently, the denomination's eclectic ideological stances, theological views, and covenants are represented by what they refer to as their guiding principles:

> *We the Member Congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, Covenant to Affirm and Promote:*
> The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
> Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;
> Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
> A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
> The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process in our congregations and in society at large;
> The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
> Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. (Buehrens, Church, 1998: xxiv-xxv)

These guiding principles are the only denomination-wide, generally accepted ideological stances. Differing from Christian Creed[3], these principles are entirely open to debate and personal re-interpretation. Theological debate and disagreement are encouraged throughout the denomination; therefore, these principles are consistently challenged and re-interpreted. The emphasis on personal interpretation can add to the difficulty most UUs experience when attempting to answer the question "what is it that we believe?" The principles do offer the most accurate representations of this

[3] Formal summaries of Christian beliefs, used liturgically.

denomination's theological stances. Sermons explore issues pertaining to all of the aforementioned principles and religious sources; however, very often it is social justice or "good works" that are at the core of the congregation's ideological beliefs and religious practices.

The Unitarian church of Vancouver was founded in 1909, though its current facilities were built in 1964. According to the church's website:

> UCV promotes a non-dogmatic exploration of spiritual, intellectual, and ethical growth. It has served the greater Vancouver community through advocacy for peace, social justice, civil rights, environmental stewardship, education, inter-faith dialogue and diversity, and by its commitment and support for women's issues and the gay and lesbian community. (UCV, 2005)

This statement re-affirms the guiding principles of the denomination while clarifying this congregation's particular emphasis. At the UCV, spiritual and intellectual growth, tolerance, compassion, and dialogue are deeply valued - qualities that often initiate social justice actions. Although there may be a difference between what a community professes and the actions it takes, my research and involvement in this community has confirmed that there are multiple actions taken by committees and members of the congregation that support this professed mandate.

Rev. Steven Epperson has reflected upon the Vancouver congregation's focus on "good works" and community-outreach, and the degree to which this fact influenced his decision to come to this congregation:

> One of the reasons I was attracted to this congregation was because of its history of trying to work out and make real social justice in the city of Vancouver, and in Canada. This is the place where Greenpeace started. Members of this congregation marched against nuclear weapons and against the war in Vietnam, and against the invasion of Iraq. We sponsor refugees, we try to bring people into this country and get them established and set up, we advocate for people who are going through the immigration process… We have lots of people in this congregation who are in the serving professions, social workers, teachers, and nurses… That is in some ways indicative of something. I don't usually have to get up on Sundays and say, "we need to be doing something more about social justice," because these people, that's how they live… I mean if anything, I am there to bless them and to support them, because it is also difficult work to do… So for me it's really at the core of who we are and what we want to see established. (September 7, 2006)

Epperson views social justice as the "core" of the UU faith, enacted throughout the church's history. I have quoted him at length because this understanding is fundamental to contextualizing this congregation's motivation for undertaking this benefit concert:

> Social justice has always been, as far as I understand, at the heart of the UU movement... Unitarianism was a religious movement that sprung out of that great Protestant reformation. It was comprised of... people who were very concerned about the health and well being of the religious life, and felt that things had gone fundamentally awry, and that the church had become corrupt, and religion wasn't doing what it was supposed to be doing... [The biblical sources they emphasized painted] first of all, a portrait of God that demanded and expected people to live out their religious life by being compassionate, by being patient, by being wise, and by being just... When [Unitarians] go to their major source of religious and ethical inspiration, they go to these passages... that say what's required of us, as full religious beings, as human beings is to establish justice... There has been woven through the whole history of Unitarianism, this profound emphasis upon religion, and authentic religion as really showing forth and manifesting a life of social justice, a life of action in concrete, just works. (ibid.)

This understanding of "good works" as an expression of faith is not only drawn from Biblical and Christian sources. Epperson explains the more recent UU sources that have also shaped the essentialness of "good works" in the UU tradition:

> ...If you turn to the Koran, or if you turn to the teachings of Confucius, or to Taoism, you will also find religions, and in their major spiritual sources, a profound emphasis upon people living a full religious and ethical life which includes searching for and trying to establish justice in their lives and in their society. (ibid.)

This is the fundamental understanding of self that members of this congregation and their Parish Minister hold: strong ethical, spiritual and socio-political beliefs that motivate the actions they take in and outside of their religious community. It is in this theoretical and theological framework that the concert was produced.

PROJECT INCEPTION

In April 2006, I began to develop ideas for an applied ethnomusicology project that would implement PAR methodologies and which might act as the topic and provide the content for my thesis. As stated, my previous relationship with the UCV, the areas of research that I hoped to address through the project, and the congregation and denomination's historical involvement in benefit work, were all factors that contributed to my final decision to put forward the proposal to this particular church.

Realizing that an attempt to involve the entire congregation would not be the most effective and most logistically feasible approach to producing an event such as this, I did some research into the variety of committees at the church. Discovering that there was both a Social Justice Committee and a Refugee Committee, and discovering also that both had undertaken fundraising events in the past, I

decided to approach both committees and, depending on the responses I received, would either proceed with members of one or both.

THE CHURCH COMMITTEES

The SJC and RC at the Unitarian Church of Vancouver formed and emerged out of the theological, theoretical and historical contexts of the larger denomination. I will provide a brief description of these two committees, descriptions that committee members themselves have created as educational and informative tools that they provide in flyer and brochure format. These are available at the church and widely distributed throughout the year, especially leading up to and during fundraising and political action events that they undertake. These statements act as examples of the ways in which these committees and their members identify themselves, create solidarity, articulate their shared intentions, values and beliefs, and create a sense of shared purpose that is manifested through the actions they undertake together.

The SJC uses a brochure/flyer format to educate the congregation and the larger community about their history, work and motivations (see Appendix 3). Participants in the "Vancouver Action milieu" since 1980, they have organized and initiated educational events, forums, community projects, and have worked alongside other community organizations, facilitating "public action" as the UCV's "social justice advocates." They also assert that they are committed to the following areas of social justice: peace, poverty, human rights, anti-racism, drug policy, globalization, aboriginal rights and access to public services. Further, they stipulate that their work is connected to and inspired by Unitarian principles. As we will see, the breadth of their interests differs from the singular focus of the Refugee Committee.

The RC uses a "fact sheet" format as a means of presenting themselves and the work they do to the congregation and the community at large (see Appendix 4). A United Nations-provided definition of what constitutes a refugee, statistics on refugees worldwide and information on the committee's past and present projects are some of the details provided on this information sheet. Also provided is the rationale for helping refugees. The first statement on this extensive list is: Unitarians help those in need. Similar to the SJC's form, this pamphlet is primarily aimed at Unitarians, and more specifically, UCV members. The committee members clearly believe that such a statement will be understood and supported by congregation members, and hopefully, feeling compelled by it, and believing it, members will join or financially assist the committee through regular donations. This sentiment is re-emphasized in the final

piece of information they provide, which lays out in point form, how a community and/or individuals might get involved in assisting refugees. Focusing primarily on financial donations and volunteering time and skills towards assisting refugee individuals and families, these points encourage active involvement from all members of the congregation.

THE UGC, THE SHIRLEYS, AND "GOOD WORKS"

I had been a member of the Universal Gospel Choir (UGC) and the Shirleys for two years before I commenced my studies in ethnomusicology. Both the UGC (an 85-voice community choir that sings both secular and sacred vocal music from many world traditions) and the Shirleys (an 8-voice a cappella women's ensemble, whose repertoire also includes many world vocal traditions) are actively involved in the benefit concert culture of Vancouver, devoting a portion of each season to volunteer performances. It was by consistently participating in these events, prior to undertaking this research, that I cultivated an interest in the meaning and application of music in socio-political contexts.

I discovered that there were many "cross-overs" between the UCV and the singing ensembles with which I had been involved. The socio-political ideologies and operational mandates of all three communities appeared to parallel one another. Both the UGC and the Shirleys are non-denominational and sing repertoire from many sacred traditions, similar to the multi-faith approach of the UCV. Both ensembles had been previously invited to perform in concerts at the UCV. I was therefore interested in bringing together these musical and spiritual communities in the research I would undertake.

To further situate these vocal ensembles, I will share the UGC's official biography, used in the concert program, and written by members of the choir:

> Under the direction of Brian Tate, this 85-voice Vancouver community choir brings the healing, regenerative, and uplifting power of the world's song traditions to a diverse audience. The UGC is known for its passion, commitment to musical authenticity, concern for the ecumenical spirit, and its commitment to the community-building power of shared song. Its eclectic repertoire reflects Cuban, African, African-American, Middle Eastern, and Aboriginal influences. Twenty years ago when the UGC was founded, its vision was to celebrate the beauty and common ground shared by spiritual traditions around the world. Although individual choir members have come and gone throughout the years, this vision continues to live on at the heart of the choir.

The UGC's creative and socio-political mandate includes an emphasis on community outreach. Elaborating further on this issue, their director, Brian Tate, explained to me why community outreach was of such relevance to the choir's identity and practice:

> The purpose of a lot of the music we do is about having an uplifting influence: giving people hope, giving people joy, giving people a way to grieve, a way to access their emotions, in a way that only music can, and there is something powerful about the voice, and about the words that go with that kind of music. So… everything we do is really designed for our audiences, and we make sure that they get an experience that will live with them… And the kind of people who really need those kinds of experiences, are not necessarily your average concert-goer… You know, it's people who are having hard times, that don't have social structure, that don't have jobs, that don't have families, that are on welfare, that are on drugs, that are on the street… They don't need someone preaching to them. They need to hear a message of hope, and possibility in music, and that is one of the things we can do… there's no agenda when we perform, we just show up with the music, and people have their own experience. It's also a way for them to take part and them to really be seen, and included in the performance. (August 30, 2006)

Tate views music as uniquely uplifting and believes that the major responsibility of the choir is to encourage that experience for their audiences. Although he is coming to his own conclusions that, in these concerts, audience are finally "seen" and "included," he does so after years of experience, having observed and received feedback from local residents confirming that this was indeed the nature of their experience.

In concert, Tate believes that the choir members benefit as greatly as the audience members. He explains:

> The choir benefits every time they sing… in a situation like a benefit, or in the downtown eastside, they also really get to feel in a small way, but I think an important way, they get to make a difference… that they are filling a desperate need in a social environment. (ibid.)

This "desperate need" refers back to previous comments made by Tate, regarding his views on the positive effects of annual community-outreach concerts on residents of Vancouver's downtown eastside. He asserts that choir members feel they are making a difference because they are contributing to a musical event at which residents of this community are encouraged to participate, vocalize, and contribute - an experience that Tate believes is not often available to marginalized individuals in this community.

Tate also specifically addresses the selection process that he and the choir go through when choosing to participate in benefit concerts. The most important thing in choosing an event, he explains, is "making sure it's an organization and a cause that we want to be a part of and get behind" (ibid.). Further, there are budgetary considerations involved. He, the piano accompanist, and any member of the band that sometimes accompanies the choir for bigger concert events, must be paid for their time. This is

worked into the annual budget. Part of the choir's mandate, and part of the stipulations that accompany the funding that they apply for and receive each year, is to make sure that they do a specific number of free or community-outreach concerts.

The Shirleys hold a similar socio-political mandate to that of the UGC. Interestingly, six out of the eight original members were either previously or currently members of the UGC at the time of the group's inception. Similar to the choir, the Shirleys' season includes a large number of benefit concerts that are decided upon through discussion and democratic consensus. There is a general commitment to volunteering time and skills toward organizations and communities (both locally and internationally) that are working for social justice. As the Shirleys is a women's group, and as much of the repertoire is reflective of women's experiences, it is often women-centered organizations that request their participation. The following is their bio, written by a group member, that expresses, more overtly than the UGC, a commitment to selecting repertoire and projects that speak to and support social justice initiatives:

> The Shirleys are an all-female a cappella octet that packs a real punch. And it's a punch that fights back against injustice, intolerance, hopelessness and despair. For the past three years, The Shirleys have been carefully selecting songs from around the world that reflect humanity's common hopes and aspirations for a better, more joyful world.
>
> The Shirleys will delight you with their humour, passion and enthusiasm. Inspired by groups such as *Sweet Honey in the Rock* and *Zap Mama*, The Shirleys wow audiences with their complex harmonies, original arrangements and the seven-plus languages they sing in!
>
> Originally formed for a one-time fundraising event, The Shirleys were so excited to work together that they just kept going. They have since performed for both the World Peace Forum and World Urban Forum; have co-produced a fundraiser for The Stephen Lewis Foundation (where they raised an astonishing $20,000!); have sung at the Harrison Festival for the Arts, The Mission Twilight Festival, Vox Fest, and are currently preparing a show about music as a force for social change as part of the Vancouver School Boards Art Starts program.
>
> Whether it is private parties, concert halls, festivals or fundraising galas The Shirleys are sure to entertain and uplift you.

Though the UGC and the Shirleys have similar social and musical mandates that emphasize community-outreach, they differ in many ways. Size (85 in the UGC compared to the eight Shirleys) is one significant difference. Secondly, the UGC's repertoire specifically draws on sacred music traditions, a large portion of which is African-American gospel. Though the Shirleys' repertoire includes some

sacred music, these genres do not make up the majority of their repertoire. Thirdly, the Shirleys is an all women ensemble, and often focuses its repertoire and community outreach on women's issues, whereas the UGC has both women and men as members, and does not emphasize gender issues. Further, the Shirleys share leadership, whereas the UGC has a paid director and assistant director. Finally, the UGC is a community choir, and members pay annual dues that enable much of the choir's functioning. The Shirleys are a professional group. Although they do take on benefit concerts, for a majority of their concerts they are paid to perform. Knowing about these ensembles, having them in mind for this concert, and knowing that they would likely be available to participate, was largely due to the fact that I was a member and had access to knowledge concerning both their mandates and schedules.

THE RESEARCHER AS "INSIDER": APPLYING REFLEXIVITY

Barbara Myerhoff and Jay Ruby (1982) have described reflexivity or "consciousness about being conscious; thinking about thinking," (1) as the "capacity of any system of signification to turn back upon itself, to make itself its own object by referring to itself: subject and object fuse" (1). According to these scholars, reflexive knowledge contains not only information, but also an awareness of how this information came into being, and the processes by which it was gathered.

Myerhoff and Ruby assert that all societies create opportunities to reflect upon themselves. Quoting anthropologist Victor Turner, they state that "the community… seeks to understand, portray, and then act on itself, in thought word and deed… public reflexivity takes on the shape of a performance" (17). Moments of community performance offer participants (community members, scholars, musicians, audience members) the opportunity to gain reflexive knowledge. This concept is complementary to PAR, which emphasizes the importance of research results being integrated into the community and interpreted by the participants. PAR can therefore initiate reflexive, community-governed knowledge production and interpretation.

Though a concern has been that reflexivity can lead to self-absorption and "navel gazing," genuine reflexivity would generate the exact opposite effect. As Myerhoff and Ruby emphasize, "reflexiveness does not leave the subject lost in its own concerns." Rather, it pulls one "toward the Other and away from isolated attentiveness toward oneself" (5). Ideally, reflexive knowledge can encourage awareness of community, our connection to and effect on others, the implications of our words and actions, and an awareness of the needs of others.

Thinking specifically of practicing reflexivity in one's religious community, folklorist William A. Wilson (1995) writes emphatically that though his position as a member of the religious group he studies may at times affect his interpretations, he believes that what he may lose from lack of detachment is greatly outweighed by what he gains from being a "knowledgeable insider" (14). By studying the religious communities of which we are a part, Wilson contends that scholars have the opportunity to share a more informed perspective of what it means to be a part of them. Otherwise, he contends, scholars will have "studied something other than what really exists and will have missed the religious emotional cores whose elucidation is the principal justification for our investigations" (20).

I have found that one of the benefits of working in my own religious community is that I already have a strongly developed sensibility about it. I am familiar with the ideology, the denomination's rituals, its folkways, its structure and modes of functioning. Secondly, with relative ease I was able to gain access to relevant information and was included in "insider" processes. It was not necessary for me to spend a significant amount of time learning about the community and meeting contacts, while slowly gaining people's trust and confidence. Thus the depth, breadth and accessibility of information that was available to me as a researcher was greatly increased by the fact that I was a member of the community.

One of the potential challenges that this accessibility could create might be the misuse of information or trust that was so generously shared with me; however, I believe that since I am a part of that community, I have a vested interest in its well-being. I have a clear sense of the repercussions and effects my work could have upon the congregation. Further, through the cultivation of a relationship with the committees, I have developed an understanding of the work that they do, and have dialogued and worked with individuals they have assisted and continue to assist. Therefore, I have also made it a priority to consider these individuals, their needs and the repercussions my work (and that of the committees) may have on them.

Rev. Steven Epperson refers to the nature of the UU denomination as "the constitutionally and institutionally unique" (September 7, 2006). In a conversation with Epperson, he spoke to me about the self-reflection that he believes is practiced by members of the congregation. "You are not an unselfconsciously embedded congregant," (ibid.) he said, referring to me specifically, and UUs generally. The very fabric of the denomination is based on the cultivation of self-awareness and critical thinking. One is not saved or damned by joining or leaving the faith. Children brought up in the church and adult members who arrive to it are encouraged to always be open, self-reflective and questioning of their ideology and beliefs. It is a faith based on learning about others' cultural and spiritual perspectives; one

that endeavors to create thoughtful and respectful discussion concerning the diversity of ideas presented. Epperson described it as giving congregants "distancing tools" (ibid.) in order to turn one's values on themselves, to consider them, and to evolve and adapt in relation to what one finds. He believes that UU is a unique faith because of the importance it places on self-reflection and critical thinking. He and many congregants expect and hope for debate and discussion after he gives a sermon. Though I am not suggesting that other faith traditions are devoid of such characteristics, I am emphasizing the prevalence of the practices in this particular religious community. Both clergy and congregants understand these concepts as fundamental to UU identity. For this reason, it felt particularly appropriate to conduct research in this religious community as a self-reflective insider.

METHODS

There were several research methods that I implemented throughout the production of this concert, many of which were based upon the PAR approach. I initiated contact with the church and its committees by developing a proposal (see Appendix 2) that overviewed my intentions and emphasized the point that I wished to create a benefit concert in collaboration with the committees, as peers, that would first and foremost serve their needs and enable a relationship based on reciprocity to be cultivated. Decisions from this point on, I asserted, would be made democratically and only those individuals interested in participating would proceed.

The most consistent research tool were joint meetings held between the SJC, RC and myself, during which the vast majority of the planning occurred (see Appendix 1 for a table of meetings). During these meetings, there was not an official facilitator designated; however, it was often the chair of the RC committee and myself who facilitated the discussion. During this time of planning I also conducted interviews with committee members, performers, the director of the UGC (Brian Tate) and the UCV's parish minister, Rev. Dr. Steven Epperson. A large majority of the information that was exchanged between concert participants occurred through emails; meetings were scheduled, responsibilities were delegated, advertising materials developed, rehearsals scheduled and set-lists confirmed, in this manner.

Also occurring over email was a participant feedback process that involved the circulation of a questionnaire that I developed (see Appendix 6). Included in this form were questions designed to initiate dialogue concerning the nature of participants' experiences. I chose to approach the feedback process in this way because committee members and performers all had very full schedules and finding

times where each group of individuals might all be available to meet and discuss the concert was problematic[4]. I continued by conducting post-concert interviews with the refugee musicians who performed and also, after the concert, I approached individual audience members to speak with them about their impressions of the concert.

I understood that it was essential to receive feedback from each concert participant; however, I came to realize that the methods used to receive this feedback would need to vary. I approached the larger groups (the RC, SJC and the vocal ensembles) differently than I did the refugee musicians, for several reasons. As previously stated, the schedules of the larger groups were very difficult to coordinate. Finding meeting times where all were able to attend was quite challenging. Further, to interview the majority of these groups' participants would have required close to one hundred interviews. I was not in a position to be able to carry out such a large undertaking. To select specific members' of each group to interview, while passing over the majority, did not feel like an appropriate choice either. Creating the survey form seemed to be a way to incorporate as many perspectives from as many participants as possible. The choice would be given to each person to provide feedback, and would be left to the individual to complete, or not. An important reason behind the choice to approach the refugee musicians individually was the focus of my thesis. I decided I wanted to write specifically about the experiences of the refugee musicians, and issues of power and representation. For this reason, I spent more time speaking with and considering the experiences and perspectives of José, Manuela, Jolin, and Peter (see Chapter Four).

I used a mini-disk recording device to document interviews and meetings, as well as a computer program that enabled me to do audio recording, all of which were later transcribed. The concert itself was video taped by a member of the UCV congregation who volunteered to take on this responsibility. Using the concert video recording, I later conducted a feedback interview with an audience member who had been in attendance, asking her to reflect back on some of the issues that arose during the concert, using the video as a reference.

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[4] Of the four most consistently involved committee members, three responded to the request for feedback - a strikingly different level of participation in post-production feedback than that of the performers. I had anticipated that it would be a relatively small percentage of the musicians who would involve themselves in the feedback process, but I did not anticipate how small this percentage would end up being. It was my hope that given the opportunity to reflect upon the event as individuals and respond at their convenience, the musicians would do so. After several requests for feedback that spanned over two months, I only received three (8.8 %) completed forms from UGC members and one (14.3 %) from the Shirleys. These response rates from the UGC and the Shirleys were remarkably low compared to the 57.1 % response rate from the committee members.

I did a great deal of journaling throughout this research process, a method I found very effective. This provided an opportunity to explore the research using creative writing techniques. It also allowed me to grapple with my work in uncensored, spontaneous, emotional and intuitive ways. This was particularly important as I was so personally and emotionally connected to and invested in the community with which I was working. I needed a space in which to acknowledge this component of the research.

I analyzed data in several ways. First of all, results were compared with the expectations and intentions put forward by participants (examined in Chapter Three). Discrepancies between results and the expectations and intentions were then considered. Secondly, after making observations during my research, I was able to analyze my work based on previous studies, locate discrepancies, and come to new conclusions (see Chapter Five). By documenting the planning process and the concert, I was able to analyze the results while considering the issues these scholars have raised in their writings. Finally, I conducted several interviews with participants in which we discussed the results of the data collected and the concert itself. I asked them to analyze the results and make suggestions, which they did. As this was a collaborative research process, I placed great value on the opinions and interpretations of the other participants and will include this information in the Chapter Five.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

By discussing previous applied ethnomusicology, PAR literature, the history and ideology of the UU denomination and the UCV congregation, as well as introducing the two musical groups I initially envisioned contributing to the benefit concert, it has been my intention to establish the context in which this research project was developed and executed.

Through a reflexive lens, the following chapters will describe and critique the project and its results in greater depth, investigating issues that arose through the process. Though I will be emphasizing the methodological approach that I used as a means of providing an example for future application, what is of primary importance in the following chapters is the examination of both the religiously and musically-founded "helping communities" represented in this case study. Through an evaluation of this event, I hope to discover the way this "helping" was enacted, the motivation behind it, and in so doing, consider how future attempts at creating respectful and reciprocal music-based benefit concerts can be fostered.

CHAPTER TWO

PLANNING AND EXECUTING THE CONCERT

In this chapter I will explore the organizational processes that led to the presentation of the benefit concert. The use of applied ethnomusicology and PAR methodologies raised challenging questions throughout the project. By addressing these questions, I hope to cultivate a deeper understanding of the ways in which applied ethnomusicology can be used as a research tool and as a way for ethnomusicologists to engage with and contribute to their communities.

By providing a description and analysis of the collective planning process and its resulting concert, it is my hope that a clear methodological example is formed, something that is currently lacking in applied ethnomusicology literature. Though it is important to contribute examples of application, I am also aware that one example cannot serve as a general format to be implemented in any community or under any set of circumstances. Therefore, the description that follows is meant to inspire discussion, and to act as a point of departure from which project-specific approaches might be further cultivated.

THE PROPOSAL

It was necessary to receive permission from a church representative before undertaking research at the UCV, therefore, while completing my coursework in St. John's in April 2006, I sent an email to the Parish Minister, Rev. Dr. Steven Epperson, proposing a partnership between myself and the Refugee and Social Justice Committees. He responded in favour of the idea, believing that both the church community and myself would benefit from a working partnership. Names and contact information for the RC and SJC chairs were provided to me, and I was welcomed in this new capacity as a researcher and concert producer. Shortly after, both committees responded in favour of working together on a concert. Upon my arrival back to Vancouver, I was invited to attend an RC meeting to pitch the idea in person.

At the first planning meeting (May 14th, 2006), I distributed a proposal to all the committee members in which I officially introduced myself, described my area of study, outlined my intentions, offered my services and officially proposed a partnership between either one or both of the committees and myself (see Appendix 2). The initial working agreement was between the committee members and myself; therefore, a relationship was established through this agreement, one that led me to believe the committees' needs were my first priority. As a facilitator, I assisted the committee members in meeting

their goals. In hindsight I realize that while I was supporting their work, the quality and level of attention I brought to the needs of other participants in this project (the musicians who performed, audience members and individuals these committees support) may have been affected. This is a challenging negotiation in the field of application, one that I have not found to be addressed in the PAR and applied ethnomusicology literature. Thus, we might begin to ask the questions: Whose needs and goals are considered the primary focus in collaborative projects? What does one do in instances where the needs of the community come into conflict with the needs of individuals with whom the community is interacting? I will investigate these questions later in this chapter, as well as in Chapters Three and Four. They should be considered at the outset of a working relationship between a researcher and a community organization, and addressed in the proposal that is initially put forth.

By the end of the first meeting, the date for the event was confirmed and booked for October 7, 2006. The theme and title were also selected. We decided that the event would be called "Safe Haven," as we believed it reflected the RC's focus on issues of safety, displacement and loss of home affecting refugee families. For the SJC, this theme addressed the safe and affordable housing initiatives currently underway in the downtown eastside of Vancouver. The title and theme reflected the socio-political issues each committee was currently addressing; thus, a stronger sense of cohesion between the committees was achieved.

PAR OR CONCERT PRODUCTION?

One could argue that both the planning and the execution of the "Safe Haven" project was not a pure example of PAR; rather, it was more of an example of an ethnomusicologist working with a community to produce a benefit concert. After considering the PAR literature in Chapter One, it is clear that PAR should involve community members collaboratively and democratically in the entire process, including the development of the research idea and approach. Committee members, musicians, and the individuals receiving assistance from the proceeds of the benefit concert were not involved in developing the concept for the concert or the research and planning approaches. Although it was my intention to share a collaborative development process with the committee members, I did not initially consider involving other participants in this capacity. I approached the SJC and the RC with a rather open-ended proposal that suggested a benefit concert be produced. The committee members immediately accepted this concept and planning proceeded.

Not all concert participants were involved in every stage of the development, nor were they involved in the decision-making. According to PAR, however, all the musicians and the individuals and organizations receiving assistance from the concert proceeds could (or should) have had an equal voice in the concert's development.

Based on this information, one might argue that this project was not strictly a PAR project; however, I will proceed in my analysis with the understanding that a modified and project-specific PAR process was utilized. The intention was for this project to be PAR, attempts were made for it to be so, and though major modifications were necessary and this project did not fit perfectly into the PAR models provided in the previous chapter, I will argue later in this chapter that PAR must be tailored to the specific needs of a community and re-interpreted according to the needs of those involved. From the beginning, I viewed the committees as my project partners, which in effect, excluded other participants. In hindsight, I understand that a more holistic approach might have been taken. Though not every concert participant might have chosen to participate in the entire process of planning and executing the concert, I understand that each participant could have equally contributed, and that I might have made this clearer.

NEGOTIATING ROLES

> *The musicians that I know in Vancouver, when they do a concert like this, they do everything... they plan, organize, sell tickets, make posters, find volunteers and perform. This is what I know, how I know it to be, and that's what I wanted to investigate... being everywhere, and doing everything. And though I know this is often how musicians in these situations operate, and I was trying to create an authentic representation of this process, maybe I also wasn't able to let go enough. Maybe I was too controlling.*
> (November 22, 2006)

When I wrote this journal entry, I was feeling overwhelmed by the choice I had made to so completely involve myself in the production and performance processes of this project. In this excerpt, I question the reasoning behind the choice to work in my own musical and spiritual community and to organize and perform in the resulting event. The reason I made this choice was because I had found this approach of "being everywhere and doing everything" to be quite common in my previous benefit concert experiences (both personally experienced and observed). Therefore, I felt my level of involvement was appropriate and would effectively represent the benefit concert culture of Vancouver. As the journal entry illustrates, although I believed this production style to be the most commonly used,

I was also aware that it could raise some challenging issues, and thought the implications of this work approach were important to investigate.

Why is this production style so common? To generalize, when a community organization decides to do a project like this, funding is often limited or non-existent, volunteers are hard to come by, and time and material resources are limited. Musicians who decide to participate in a benefit concert in their community are entirely affected by these conditions. When funding and resources are limited, creativity is necessary. One must often do much of the work oneself and become comfortable in doing so. It was not my intention at the onset of this project to be in such a leadership role; however, as I will elaborate, in our particular set of circumstances, I did become the general manager of the project.

One of the ways that I might have pulled back on the level of my involvement was by stepping out of the UGC performance. As there were roughly 50 of the 85 members performing in "Safe Haven," there were ample numbers in each section[5]; however, I did not choose to step out of the UGC set for several reasons. First of all, I am a member, and as such, I feel an obligation to participate in the events to which the choir commits. Secondly, a part of the reason the choir accepted this concert was to support me, one of their own, in a creative, academic, and socio-political undertaking. If I had not performed in "Safe Haven," I would have separated myself from the group. In a sense, I felt indebted to them for participating and did not feel comfortable requesting their involvement and then not contributing to the performance. Thirdly, as I have stated, one of my intentions was to conduct this research and document the resulting concert as a participant. Though it created extra work and more stress, I wished to capture the nature of this experience that is so common for many musicians.

The greatest challenge I faced in this process was the negotiation of being an organizer while handling the logistics of the performance. Two weeks before the concert, I was able to find a Stage Manager (SM) to oversee the management of the evening: facilitating the sound check; giving cues to performers; managing and working with the volunteers and front of house; and generally managing the flow of the night. As we neared the night itself, I felt the strain of managing the event, while also feeling pressed for time in terms of needing to focus my energies on performance preparations. This is an important consideration when choosing to take on so many roles in a concert. Delegation and work sharing are key to preventing major stresses, as is bringing on a SM as early in the process as possible.

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[5] This would not have been possible with the Shirleys, as there are only 8 members and the loss of one severely impacts the ensemble.

LEADERSHIP NEGOTIATIONS

A significant issue that arose throughout the event planning process was the negotiation of leadership. In a feedback statement, one RC member wrote that, "Delegation and leadership by Samantha was good" (October 12, 2006). An SJC member elaborated upon my involvement in the process by stating that, "Samantha provided the proper environment to facilitate the planning process and the success of the… concert was due to her vision and hard and inclusive work" (October 30, 2006). Further, at one planning meeting, an RC member stated that I was the producer of the event, and should be acknowledged as such during the concert itself. I was taken aback by this comment, and was of course very hesitant to be acknowledged as the producer. PAR advocates, Budd Hall (1984), Jan Barnsley and Diana Ellis (1992), are clear that outside researchers are meant to be helpers, facilitators, co-creators and colleagues to the entire community of participants. They also stress the importance of involving the group in all stages of the research and the collective production of knowledge. I was aware of these principles throughout the project. When I wrote my proposal to RC and SJC members, I emphasized that though this process would inform my thesis, it would not be *my* project, but rather, would belong to the group. I expressed my hope that the concert content would be developed through the sharing of ideas and work, and similarly, that leadership would be shared.

As we were planning the concert it became clear that the group had unofficially and unanimously decided that it was necessary to have a project manager. Again, unofficially and unanimously, I was selected to take on that role. Although there was a significant amount of work done by committee members, they consistently expressed gratitude that I was willing to help them by producing a concert to raise money for their work. I had been clear from the beginning that I had musical contacts and expertise upon which I was willing to draw. This encouraged the perception that I was a leader in this process. My intention was to co-produce the event and facilitate a collective planning process. Although this was achieved to a degree, the comments made by committee members reveal a very different perception of leadership, one that challenges some of the central PAR guidelines, outlined in Chapter One.

I have felt concerned that by taking on the level of leadership that I did, I may have undermined my PAR approach; however, I have come to realize that many of the logistics of the "Safe Haven" concert necessitated this choice. The members of the RC and SJC who volunteered, expressed both verbally and through their actions, a desire for more leadership. Often equated with extra work, effort and responsibility, taking on leadership can be perceived as an overwhelming option for volunteers who

already feel over-committed and stressed. Further, the musicians' demanding schedules did not allow for more involvement in the development of the concert or the research approach (something that is evident by the level of responses received in the post-concert feedback, examined in Chapter Three).

In Chapter One, I referenced a statement made by Angela Impey (2002), addressing some of the challenges of using PAR. Before I started this project, I was committed to using PAR as a research approach. I was aware of Impey's warning regarding the tendency for researchers to "steer the processes," (22) in order to save time. The reality of executing this research approach soon sunk in. To truly enact PAR guidelines is time and energy consuming. All participants are not always able or willing to fully engage in the process. They may decide as a group that expediency, delegation and leadership, are necessary. If this is the case, it is not always because they do not feel compelled to work in this manner; rather, the logistics of executing a project and the demands of the rest of their lives may limit their availability and levels of engagement.

In this case, we were able to work holding the idea of collective development and ownership in our minds, allowing it to materialize in as many ways as possible, while still responding to the immediate needs of the situation. Time, energy and resources were limited. After an initial phase of trying to encourage collaboration, I realized that as PAR stresses the importance of meeting the needs of the community, insisting that leadership be shared when the community did not wish it to be, would have gone against PAR principles.

COMMITTEE COMMITMENT

As I have stated, in the project proposal that I developed, I made sure to clarify that individuals from either committee could participate, that committees in their entirety were not obligated to participate, and that if one or the other of the committees was not able or interested, that I would be happy to work with just one (or portions thereof).

The negotiation of the level of each committee's involvement ended up taking focus early in the process, affecting the results. There were several reasons for this, one of which was that the membership of both committees was in flux at that time (members leaving or re-negotiating their commitment levels, especially in the SJC). This uncertainty carried through most of the process, illustrated by the following conversation:

> RC#1: So are there only… I'm just wondering who all from the Social Justice Committee is involved? Louise… Sarah, I guess is on both… David…
> SJC#1: We don't know… maybe Frank?

RC#2: No, Frank is far too busy…
RC#1: I'm just thinking [will there be] any other people… there that evening to help out with…
SJC#1: I can talk to some people if you tell me how many…
RC#1: Even two or three… set up, being at the table…
RC#3: Taking tickets…
RC#1: Helping out in the kitchen… Sarah you were going to be one person helping out in the kitchen, we need more than that… Yeah, so David, if you could find some kitchen helpers…[6]

(August 27, 2006)

In this exchange, one RC member is trying to clarify who from the SJC committee is actually going to be present the evening of the event and is requesting that there be more than was currently confirmed. Although one might assume that this was a conversation that occurred early on in the process, in fact, this was our second to last meeting.

After the concert was completed, one member wrote that she felt the planning process went fairly well; however, she felt that "more Refugee Committee people did work" (October 17, 2006). Another member added to this sentiment by stating that, "I would have preferred to have more people doing the work" (October 12, 2006). Although both committees were involved in planning the concert, throughout the concert preparations there were comments made (both directly and indirectly) that work distribution was not felt to be equal, which resulted early on in an attempt to clarify with SJC members whether or not they were able to actively participate in the process. Only one member officially responded, expressing a commitment to the project.

In that moment, we found ourselves in a bit of a predicament. The one member who responded told me that he had understood my offer to help as being extended to both committees. He was correct. This is how I had directed my research proposal. However, I had also specified that I would work with one or both of the committees, depending on levels of interest and availability. After he re-asserted his commitment, we found ourselves with an unequal ratio. We did not wish to exclude the SJC member who expressed genuine interest in participating; therefore, unofficially, the group as a whole decided to accept that the sharing of work would not be entirely equal. No one wanted to withdraw the original offer, or be exclusionary, and further, it was never directly addressed; therefore, as no other options were discussed or initiated, we moved ahead as planned. The money was still split equally, as that had been the initial agreement.

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[6] Pseudonyms have been used to represent committee members in all the excerpts taken from the meetings.

Unequal representation affected the planning process and the resulting concert. In the end, there was more ownership taken by the RC. The RC also had more consistent input on choices that were made along the way regarding advertising, ticket sales, concert structure, and the program. Needs pertaining to work-load and decision-making were not always equally met, as there were consistently more RC members involved. Even though equal representation was not achieved, the committee's financial needs were equally met through the sharing of the proceeds.

"VOLUNTEER-RUN"

At our third planning meeting the majority of the delegation of responsibilities occurred. At this time, we generated a list of tasks that needed to be completed. This list included: booking space (for the performance, display and food preparation areas); printing and selling tickets; designing and distributing the concert posters; locating volunteers; booking performers and acting as a liaison between the performers and the organizers; locating and preparing materials for a Master of Ceremonies; creating a program; and finding volunteers to bake food for the event.

A significant factor affecting delegation was that many participants were over-committed in the rest of their lives. As is often true in organizations run by volunteers, most of the committee members had jobs, family responsibilities and other commitments at the church; therefore, their time and resources were limited. Severely impacting the way work was assigned and taken on, what resulted was a poorly dispersed action plan. By the end of the meeting, a few people found themselves with a significant number of tasks, while others had very few.

PLANNING THE CONCERT CONTENT

During the following two summer months, official meetings were not held, as UCV committees break for the summer. Throughout this time I exchanged emails with committee members, and with one RC member in particular. She was in communication with refugee musicians and artisans with whom she had longstanding relationships. Each of these individuals and families had been, or continued to be, assisted by the RC. By the end of July, Guatemalan musicians José, Manuela and their son, Jolin, had been booked for the concert. Also confirmed to perform was Peter, a musician from West Africa. Each of these musicians had been previously assisted by the committee and had a relationship with its members. I sent the Universal Gospel Choir production committee and choir director (Brian Tate) a letter describing the event and its purpose (see Appendix 5). I approached the Shirleys with less

formality, during a rehearsal, providing them with the same information. Shortly after, I confirmed both groups' involvement. Technicians for the evening were confirmed, all of whom were volunteers from the church community who handled the sound for Sunday services and special events. By the end of the summer, I had also found volunteers for stage managing, ushering and front-of-house positions, most of whom were colleagues and friends interested in helping out.

With regards to the concert programming, discussion concerning which musicians might participate was limited. Peter, Manuela, José and Jolin had each participated in at least one RC fundraising event in the past. Someone suggested their names, but there was no discussion regarding whether or not they would be approached and what the implications of doing so might be. They were established contacts and their inclusion was an obvious choice to committee members. Similarly, after I mentioned my involvement with the UGC and the Shirleys, a discussion concerning the appropriateness or implications of their involvement was not conducted. Instead, heads nodded, excitement was expressed, and we reached immediate agreement.

I do not regret in the slightest that these musicians were involved; rather, I wish that further discussion had been carried out before invitations were made. Considering more deeply the repercussions of the concert programming might have been beneficial to us all. I will consider the implications of these particular musicians' involvement in Chapters Three and Four; however, at this time I will say that there were several reasons behind the selection of each group. With regards to the UGC and the Shirleys, as stated, their socio-political mandates were in alignment with the intentions of "Safe Haven," their repertoire was culturally diverse and they were both recognized and respected in the Vancouver community. Peter, Manuela, José and Jolin were all skilled musicians on the one hand, and on the other, they were directly connected to the issues being addressed by the RC committee. They brought a level of musical, cultural and socio-political authenticity to the event, something that will be discussed at length in the following chapters.

The hastiness of musical selection was the result of limited time and resources. Our meetings were brief, time was limited and there was no budget; therefore, the fact that we quite easily found a full concert worth of performances was exciting and a relief. Though organizers were aware of the musical styles and genres that would be represented, this was not their focus. Of more concern was audience turnout, raising funds and representing the committees in the concert itself.

PUBLICITY

Due to the lack of budget, publicity for the concert was minimal. The primary tool for promotion was a poster developed by a member of the RC and myself (see Chapter Four, 80). Promotion of the concert outside of the church community was not a major focus. Announcements were not posted in newspapers or in community flyers (to name a few of the available advertising options). Announcements were printed in the church bulletin and made during Sunday services, and tickets were sold after services for the four weeks leading up to the concert. I attempted to initiate a discussion of other advertising options, encouraging committee members to step forward to take on this responsibility. During the delegation process, I had taken on many responsibilities and did not feel that I could also take on the majority of the concert promotions. After a brief discussion of the importance of advertising, no one stepped forward to fill this position.

The choice to limit advertising to primarily the church congregation, illustrates concert organizers' belief that the majority of the support that the committees receive comes directly from the congregation. This advertising choice is representative of the ways in which the committees generally request the involvement of each congregant, impressing upon them that their undertakings are in alignment with Unitarian principles.

Directing concert promotion to the congregation did make sense. Previous fundraising experience demonstrated that the majority of the committees' support came from the church community. That said, their excitement over the involvement of the UGC and the Shirleys had been, in part, due to the fact that each had an established Vancouver fan base. The committees believed that these musicians would encourage turnout. There was an interest in reaching the larger Vancouver community expressed through their ratification of the larger vocal groups, and yet, they themselves did not push concert promotion outside of the church.

If it is only congregants who are asked to sustain the work of the committees time and time again, it is likely that support will wane. One runs the risk of placing consistent pressure upon the same small pool of supporters. Though congregants believe in the work of the committees, they are not always able to make financial contributions, and as a result, many experience donor fatigue. Further, by limiting advertisement to primarily the church community, committees maintain a level of insularity. Church members maintain high levels of dependence upon one another, and are less likely to cultivate connections with the larger community.

The poster and announcements were sent out through email lists and a small number of posters were hung around the city; however, there was a great deal more that could have been done. I do not believe this choice was based on a desire to keep non-congregants away from the event. I believe this choice was primarily made by default, as time and financial resources were limited. This, in part, reveals that committee members, while desiring to connect with their community, are accustomed to being primarily self-sufficient, relying on support being generated from the inside.

ATTENDANCE: CHANGING EXPECTATIONS

Due, in part, to the limited promotions that occurred, but also directly resulting from the date selection for the event, in the last few weeks leading up to the concert, there were not a large number of pre-sold tickets. As the concert was sponsored by two of the church committees, the UCV Sanctuary was a location that was free for us to use. The October 7th time slot was selected because it was a Saturday night in the vicinity of when we hoped to have the event take place, and even more relevant, it was a time when the space was available. Unfortunately, October 7th fell on the Saturday night of the Thanksgiving long-weekend, which affected the number of people able and willing to attend. Although the availability of free performance space is often limited and one must be flexible regarding the booking times, considering details such as holidays, long weekends and other major events taking place in the city, is important before making the choice of when to schedule a concert.

On the day of the event, I began to worry about the number of audience members who were slowly arriving. The Sanctuary seats roughly 350 people. Immediately before the concert began, there were approximately 100 people sitting in the pews. I went to warm up with the UGC and asked the director (Brian Tate) if I could address the group. The following is an excerpt taken from my journal, describing what occurred next:

> *I am standing before the choir, and I can feel myself on the edge of tears. I am exhausted from the intensity of work I have been doing leading up to this moment, while simultaneously, buzzing from the adrenaline that is coursing through my body. Everything, all the work and anticipation has come down to this moment, this night. I am afraid to tell them that there aren't as many people in the audience as I had hoped there would be, but I feel the need to talk to them about it before we go out on stage. They are my colleagues and I am so appreciative of their contributions. I am afraid that they will feel they have wasted their time... even though I know they won't be concerned by this fact and they understand the nature of these events (you can't always guarantee high attendance). So I tell them how much they are appreciated and that no matter how many people are there, that they are making a difference through their involvement. Because they are my colleagues, because I feel such responsibility for their involvement, because I*

am disappointed there isn't a full house, because I am tired and overwhelmed and nervous... in that moment I feel so vulnerable that I start to cry. Oh I don't want to! But here it comes. Brian puts his arm around me, and holds me out to the choir - presents me, in a way. He congratulates me and acknowledges the work I have done to prepare for this event. He tells me that he and the choir are proud of me and that they are honored to be there as participants. He says that I've done a good thing. Moments later, I am off again, to make sure everything is ready to go. I go to the Sanctuary, still worried about the number of people who are sitting there, but now feeling an unwavering foundation of support from the choir. Looking at the audience size, hoping for more people to come at the last minute, I notice we are two minutes away from the start of the concert. Suddenly I hear something. Turning to look, I see that the choir is streaming into the Sanctuary. They smile at me as they pass, or squeeze my hand, and they go and sit down and fill up the pews. There are about 50 of them. 50 more bums in seats! They came in to become a part of the audience, knowing this would make a huge impact on the audience energy and response. And they came in ready to be generous and engaged audience members. I am so moved by this generous and spontaneous act, because I know that they would normally stay backstage and warm-up until it is their time to go on. In that moment, I let go. I realize that it doesn't matter how many people are there, or how well it goes, or what anyone thinks. I realize that everyone who is present really wants to be. The concert will be what it will be and I remember that the unpredictability of performance is the exciting and terrifying nature of the beast. Still... I feel saddened by the number of tickets that have been bought. It is important how much money we raise, as we've put in so much work and this event is the primary fundraising event for both committees for the year. So this is the dichotomous reality I find myself in as the concert begins: letting go, trusting and allowing the concert to be whatever it will be, while simultaneously being very aware of the primary motivation behind it and aware of the impact that the number of paying audience members will have on meeting the goals we had set. (November 22, 2006)

I share such a lengthy description of the pre-concert frame of mind in which I found myself, and the events immediately leading up to the beginning of the concert, because these are some of the challenges that musicians and ethnomusicologists face when they are engaged in this process of benefit concert production. Clearly, selling tickets and raising money was the primary goal of the event; however, one's expectations concerning the money that will be raised, the number of people in attendance and the way the concert is received cannot always be met. For this reason, the process can be quite nerve racking for those who have invested large amounts of time and energy. Particularly in instances where one is working with colleagues, the resulting emotions can be very strong and deeply affect the nature of the experience. A fine balance must be struck between setting financial goals, meeting them (or not) and also understanding that the money raised is only one element of such an event. The quality of the experiences shared by all participants is a very important component of what may be achieved and cultivated through benefit concerts.

The impact that the choir's gesture of support had on me was substantial. In my mind, it represented the "coming together" that is possible at community-based events such as this, where, time and time again, I am struck by the generosity of the musicians, organizers and audience members. More often than not, it is feelings of solidarity and commitment to the issues being addressed that leads to a successful event, diverting potential disappointment (like a small audience turnout). In the end, those who attended "Safe Haven" did so because they made a conscious choice to contribute. Commitment to the issues being addressed, generosity with energy, money and time, and a desire to explore issues and be supportive of them through musical expression, are often driving forces that bring people together, resulting in moments such as the one I described. The UGC made a commitment to sing at the event; however, in that moment, they decided to make an extra contribution towards the success of the event that was not asked of them, but which they took upon themselves to enact. These "extra" generosities often become the most moving moments in benefit concerts.

SAFE HAVEN

The content of "Safe Haven" was culturally diverse, drawing on musical traditions from the United States and Canada, Guatemala, Cuba, Russia, and South and West Africa. Although a thorough analysis of the historical, social and musical contexts of each piece included in the concert, and the exploration of the musicians' traditional and innovative techniques would be compelling, it is outside the scope of this paper. I will, however, give a detailed description of particular musical components of this event, namely the music that was performed by the refugee musicians. The choice to focus on these particular musical traditions is not meant to downplay those presented by the UGC and the Shirleys. Instead, this focus will contribute to the discussions in Chapters Three and Four, regarding the refugee musicians' choice to participate in "Safe Haven," and the way they were represented at the event, and in concert promotions. As I was performing in this event, a member of the congregation videotaped the concert for me. The following description will draw on the footage from that recording, from my personal observations made during the concert and from information gathered during interviews with the performers after the concert had taken place.

The UU Connection

"Safe Haven" occurred in the Sanctuary of the UCV, reflecting five months of work undertaken by two of the church's community-outreach committees. As stated, the majority of the concert

advertising was directed toward the congregation, as well as participants' family, friends and colleagues. The audience, therefore, was largely composed of individuals with a direct connection to the church, the committees, and to a lesser degree, the musicians themselves. Although difficult to confirm, I believe there were a few audience members in attendance that did not have an affiliation with either the church or the musicians; rather, they came because they saw the posters. Of the 100 people in attendance, I recognized that the largest percentage was of individuals directly affiliated with the congregation.

Peter

Peter, a professional musician and refugee from West Africa, in his mid-twenties, played five songs at the beginning of the concert; a musical set that lasted roughly 15 minutes. As he is blind, at the beginning of his performance, he was assisted on stage. He took a seat that was placed in centre stage. He remained seated and was relatively still, other than tapping his foot to keep the time. He wore sunglasses, jeans, a t-shirt and jacket. Between each song he spoke briefly, introducing the song he was about to play. The only other comment he made was a short statement thanking the audience for attending. He asserted that they should be proud of coming out to help others who were struggling. When he completed his final song, he received enthusiastic applause as he was assisted off the stage. He took a seat in the front row, where he remained for the rest of the first half of the concert.

Before describing the music that Peter presented, I would like to elaborate upon the context in which his music was and continues to be formed. At Peter's request, I will withhold specific information regarding his country and culture of origin, although both were made public to the "Safe Haven" audience. The reasoning for this will be explained and considered at length in Chapter Four. In follow-up interviews that occurred after "Safe Haven," Peter asked that I simply identify him as being from West Africa. Growing up in a town (the closest urban centre to his family's village), he describes the musical traditions that he was exposed to as a fusion of "traditional" and "Occident-influenced" (February 2, 2006). He explained to me that "the traditional things [were] mostly in the village" (ibid.), whereas the town was heavily influenced by both Western European and American cultural artifacts and practices. Peter describes his musical process as one that draws on both his traditional culture and Western influences. "The culture thing, you can't avoid it" (ibid.), he explained to me. "You have it in your blood… Even if I sing in pop, you will see something for sure from my culture" (ibid.).

Peter describes the "traditional" music of his community as follows:

> ...In my culture we don't need amplifier or guitar to do it. People, we sit, we make a circle, a lot of people with drum, and we (*he claps*), you know... clapping, and the shaker, and even people shake here, like this (*he taps his chest and vocalizes a rhythm*). And you know you can dance for five hours... it's groovy. (ibid.)

However, Peter did not wish to spend a great deal of time talking about the traditional music of his culture. The reasoning behind this choice is complex, and implicates the traumas he experienced before he left West Africa. This will become clearer in Chapter Four.

Peter composes all of the music he performs. In so doing, he uses the range of musical influences he experienced growing up. Discussing one particular compositional process in which he engaged, he described his first album as a fusion of "Occidental" beat, or "soft hip hop," with one of his "old culture songs" (ibid.). He described the end result as original and very specific to his cultural influences.

Peter's music is inspired by very particular themes and experiences. He told me that through his music, he is a promoter of peace and freedom. For over ten years he has been writing songs that speak to the terrible socio-political realities that people face everyday. It was his musical compositions commenting on the current government in his country that lead to Peter's arrest, incarceration, torture and threats to his family's lives. When asked whether this kind of "political" music is common in his country, he said:

> You have to be careful. The dictatorship, they are still there. And you are not free there to talk about things. You have to control your tongue there. If not, you can get into trouble. It's not... free, to do things artistically. That's pretty sad, but it's true. (ibid.)

Peter notes that it is not only overtly political songs that are scrutinized: "Even sometimes you just talk about life" (ibid.), and you can place yourself in danger. He believes this has to do with the fact that although the government should be there to provide healthy and safe living conditions for their citizens, people observe that the government is not meeting these expectations. When artists address quality of life and the nature of people's experiences in their work, it speaks to the government's shortcomings. Peter remembers, "even if you are talking in general, they take it like you are talking to them... They want to make sure everyone is quiet and they can do whatever they want" (ibid.).

Indeed, although the songs Peter performed at "Safe Haven" made strong statements in opposition to war and injustice, he does not reference names of places or people. He does not set these songs in a specific time or period of history. In this way, they are timeless and accessible. His music

enables him to clearly express his opinions and feelings on these issues without being too explicit; however, this did not prevent the extremely oppositional stance the government in his native country took against his creative work. As will be discussed further in Chapter Four, Peter did not wish his name or native country to be made public, due to concerns for his family who are still living there. Biographical information, he felt, was too explicit to be shared. On the other hand, although his songs are honest, they are de-contextualized, rendering them somehow "safer." Even though his lyrics are not explicit, Peter knew they would still endanger him and his family. He consciously made this artistic and political choice to speak up. He describes himself as "the voice of no voices" (ibid.) and asserts that, even though it was dangerous, there was nothing that could stop him from acting. He felt compelled to speak.

This is the context in which Peter's music was initially formed. Having grown up in an urban centre in West Africa, Peter was forced to acquire the colonial language and culture, while witnessing the marginalization of traditional culture to rural villages. He then channeled these experiences and understandings of self into musical responses aimed at a government that neglects its people and who killed those who voiced opposition to its socio-political mandates. It was this complex cultural, socio-political and musical identity that Peter shared in the "Safe Haven" concert.

In each song, Peter played guitar and sang. His playing was unornamented, consisting of straightforward progressions and strumming patterns; his vocals were more elaborate and emotionally expressive. He sang in three languages: his first, indigenous language; French (his second language, which he began learning at age six in school); and English (his third language, acquired since he arrived in Canada in 2002).

The first song Peter performed was in English. It was a song he wrote to comfort and encourage individuals during times of struggle – a theme that carries through much of his music:

> Like a flower, I will like you.
> Like a star, I will shine on you.
> Like a sun, I will keep you warm.
> Why not, my friend? Just for you.
> You don't have to be sad – which cannot help anyway.
> You don't have to be sad – which cannot help anyway.
> Try to be strong, strong, stronger.

In his songs, Peter often speaks of encouragement, expresses compassion and considers the experiences of those who have faced great hardship, as he and his family have.

During a post-concert interview Peter described the second song he performed as one that addresses government-initiated acts of war. "For example, United States… went to war," he said, "and broke Iraq out. There's a lot of victims there" (ibid.). Referencing the lyrics of this piece he states that "While they are doing that, there are some kids right now without parents and they [are] crying. There are some parents now without kids because they were [killed]" (ibid.). The song questions the motivations of political leaders who go to war saying, "I want to cut that dictatorship… I want to cut him… to give you freedom," (ibid.) and he wonders what other motivations are really at work. As is common in Peter's music, in this song, he is "like the victim talking" (ibid.). Some of the most explicit lyrics are:

> You killed my mother.
> You killed my sisters.
> You killed my father.
> All my friends.
> I don't trust you.
> Parents were killed.
> Children are sorry.
> Children were killed.
> Parents are crying.
> Mr. Peace… I don't trust you.
> Mr. Peace, you can't give me no peace.
> Mr. Freedom, can't give me your freedom.

Peter's third song was written in French: "Elle Sourier Comme un Enfant" (She Smiles Like a Child). He explained to me that he once met a solitary girl, without parents, on a beach. Wishing to connect with this child, he approached her. Their conversation caused the girl to smile. In that moment, "sadness turned to happiness" (ibid.). He sings this song to remind people that children need compassion and care.

Peter introduced his final song as participatory. He began by asking the audience if they were ready to sing and many responded that they were. There was a tangible shift in the energy of the audience at this moment. There had been intense silence, stillness and perhaps even discomfort throughout Peter's performance; however, after he made this invitation, what appeared to be a more engaged connection was initiated between the performer and the audience. He asked them to repeat "elanyo ko ko" (spelled phonetically). Without further direction, he launched into playing his guitar. He sang out the phrase and right away, everyone began to sing along, initiated primarily by the other

singers sitting in the audience. They held this phrase while Peter moved between improvising and singing verses over top. I described this moment in my journal as follows:

> *Harmonies are formed. Clapping erupts. It is a wall of sound and rhythm and voices. My body relaxes. I see other bodies relaxing. And I think to myself, "Now it's happening." And to be honest, I don't know what "it" is. "It" is hard to describe. It's like the feeling of a performance coming alive because everyone in the room is engaged, connected and contributing. The wall that can sometimes form between performer and audience falls away. Our senses are awakened. We are singing this song like we've known it all our lives and Peter hasn't even told us what it means. But there is a collective joy in the room and a feeling of celebration. Peter's voice is lifting overtop of it all. He is matching the energy he is receiving. At the end of the song, there is huge applause. I feel like everyone is really present and together now. Relationship has been established.* (November 22, 2006)

As I captured in my journal, this song (which ended the first musical set of the concert) shifted the nature of the experience for participants, initiating a dialogue that was maintained throughout the rest of the concert. This song was written in Peter's indigenous language. "Elanyo, ko, ko" means "it's gonna be all right." Peter did not translate the meaning of the song at the time of his performance. It was later, during an interview, that he explained it to me:

> Why are you crying? Why are you sad? The life is just the same. It was that when our grand, grand, grand, grandparents living… Sometime[s] you will be sad. Sometime[s] you will be happy. Don't be too cold about it. It is just life. Sometime[s] you will wake up with sadness and sometime with happiness. It's just life. Good thing and sad thing is just life. We can't do anything about it. All we can say is that it is going to be all right. You will see some people crying and mean time, like two feet from there you will see other people laughing. (February 2, 2007)

When I first spoke to Peter about his song, I asked him if it was a "traditional" song. He answered, "Yes. I made it in my old language" (ibid.). Peter's understanding of what constitutes a "traditional" song is that it must be in the "traditional language" (ibid.). At first, I found this understanding of "traditional" surprising. In considering if further, I have found it to be a much more holistic and fluid definition, as it allows "traditional" to be understood as constantly developing and responding to contemporary experiences. If Peter writes a song that addresses his current situation (having fled his country of birth, undergoing the process of establishing a new life in Canada), and if this song is written in his first language, this new "traditional" song is a product of cultural and socio-political fusion, of changing landscapes and nationalities. Thus his tradition is never stagnant and develops to reflect the experiences that continue to define him. In our conversations, Peter also referred

to "old culture songs" (ibid.). These are songs he sang during visits back to his family's village. Though these two categories of songs are distinct, the boundaries between them are not fixed.[7]

The Universal Gospel Choir

The UGC performed immediately after Peter. Although I am focusing the discussion of the concert itself upon the refugee musicians, I will provide a brief summary of the repertoire the UGC performed. The first song of their 30-minute set was a traditional African-American gospel song called "Plenty Good Room," which was arranged by the director, Brian Tate. After a two-bar piano introduction, the choir began a syncopated movement sequence (a side step on beats one and three of each bar) along with a clap (on beats two and four). Almost immediately the audience joined in on the clap, which lasted throughout the piece. During the song, the audience was encouraged to join in by singing the repeated line, "Good room in my Father's Kingdom… Come on in and sit down," while the soloist improvised overtop.

Before starting the second piece, Tate stated:

> We're going to do a piece that was made famous back in the 70s. Interesting that we are doing this tonight because one of the themes this year for the choir, along with a mix of sacred music, is music of social justice. And some of the greatest songs of social justice that came out were in the early 70s and were in funk and R&B styles. So we are going to do a song now by the great group Sly and the Family Stone… So this is 'Everyday People'.

Immediately after this introduction, Tate invited the audience to join in by singing along or clapping. Again the choir established a syncopated step and clap. Two soloists traded off the verses. The third piece was a song written by Tate called "May I Be Still." Utilizing softer dynamics and a slower tempo, Tate hoped (as he expressed in the song's introduction) that it would create a reflective and meditative space. This was followed by another song in this musical style called "Contemplation Chants." This song included Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Jewish sacred texts and was accompanied by a member of the choir who is also a violinist.

Tate introduced the next song: "This Little Light of Mine." He explained that it was sung during the American Civil Rights riots, a time, he said, that was plagued by "voicelessness" and powerlessness

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[7] In some instances during our conversations, Peter might use these two terms interchangeably, not feeling it was necessary to distinguish between them.

in the black population. Singing protest songs such as this one, generated power, he asserted. He explained to the audience, "'this little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine'... [It means] this is my voice. I will not be stilled. That's what this song is about." The audience was invited to sing the melodic line, which acted as the call, while the choir sang a responding line in unison.

The choir's final song was a farewell song called "Kwaheri," a traditional song from Kenya and Tanzania, arranged by Tate. He stated in his introduction that it is sung at the end of gatherings and that it states, "Goodbye my friends, and if God wills it, we will meet again." This song was accompanied by choristers playing drum and cowbells, as well as a clapping part that the audience immediately took on which copied the foundational cowbell part.

José, Manuela and Jolin

The following is an adaptation of the biography that was printed in the program. It was modified (in length) and read out loud as a way of introducing José, Manuela and Jolin, who performed directly after the intermission:

> Originally from San Miguel, a town in the province of Huehuetenango, Guatemala, José attended school for several years before being hired to work on a linguistic project with American anthropologists creating a Spanish-Kanjob'al[8] dictionary. It was at this time that he and his family moved to Huehuetenango City. During the civil war in 1980, José's older brother, was "disappeared" (kidnapped and killed). In 1981, José and Manuela, also under threat, fled on foot with their two young daughters over the mountains north into Chiapas, Mexico, where they lived for five years. In 1986, the Mexican government began enforcing the re-settlement of Guatemalan refugees. Their choice: to return to Guatemala or find permanent residence elsewhere. In 1987, José and Manuela, along with four of José's siblings and their families, were settled in the Vancouver area, sponsored privately and by Citizenship & Immigration Canada.

During their performance, Manuela was wearing a brightly coloured, traditional indigenous Guatemalan shirt and skirt, and José was wearing a traditional shirt, with khaki slacks, and a tan-coloured, wide-brim hat. Sergio Navarrete Pellicer (2005), who has examined the marimba tradition of the Maya Achi of Rabinal, Baja Verapaz, Guatemala, makes an interesting point when he writes that a "manifestation of women's identification with Maya tradition is the wearing of the traditional dress" (127). Most women, he states, "take pride in the dress particular to their *municipio* (municipality), and in their own distinct embroidery and the brightly coloured patterns of their huipiles, some of which they

[8] This is José's first language, which is one of 23 indigenous Mayan languages that exist in Guatemala.

weave themselves" (ibid.). In comparison, "men were prohibited from wearing their traditional garb in the 1920s, possibly in an attempt to give the country's labour force a more modern appearance" (ibid.). This statement accurately describes Manuela and José's clothing for the performance. Interestingly, their teenage son, born and raised in Canada, wore a t-shirt and jeans.

I had not heard Manuela, José and Jolin play together before the "Safe Haven" concert. It was an RC member, with a longstanding relationship with the family, who was in communication with them before the concert, and who organized their involvement. I did not approach this performance with expectations and, as a result, was overwhelmed by my initial response:

> *During the performance, José would go over to the side of the stage and introduce each song before they played it, by simply stating its title. That's all. No explanation. Then he would walk back across the stage, and the three of them, without speaking, would begin to play. A unit. In synch. And the sound was so... penetrating... high and clear, like bells chiming. It was a wall of clear, bright, penetrating sound. And watching their arms lift and fall on the marimba... three sets of arms... all moving at different times... the tonal and rhythmic complexity was incredible. Though there was clearly a melodic line, it was not what stood out to me. I did not gravitate to it, as one often does when listening to a song. It was the quality of sound and the rhythm that I felt. It was like strong reeds hitting against each other... like singing bones. It got right inside me. Right into my bones and my blood. It was a completely visceral experience.* (November 22, 2006)

Manuela and Jolin each played with three mallets, two in one hand, and one in the other. The hand that held the two mallets varied, depending on the piece. The two mallets held in one hand would land at the same time, creating harmony and emphasizing a different rhythm from the solitary mallet. José played with two mallets; one in each hand, and differing from Jolin and Manuela's solid and repeated rhythmic phrases, often used trills and ornamentation.

Other than their arms, they did not move. Their eyes remained downcast on the surface of the instrument as they played. At the end of each piece, José walked to the microphone (placed stage right) to introduce the next song. It was difficult to understand his words at times because he did not always have his mouth close enough to the microphone, and his accent was quite strong. He spoke briefly, and made his way back to the marimba. In silence, the family would position themselves, and begin the next piece. At the end of the set they quickly moved the large marimba off stage while the MC introduced the final act.

After the concert, I did not speak with or receive feedback from José and Manuela's teenage son, Jolin. For this reason, for the remainder of the thesis, when I speak about these musicians, I will not

often refer to Jolin. I am referencing statements made only by his parents, José and Manuela, and therefore, I want to clarify that opinions expressed are theirs, and not necessarily his.

During an interview, José and Manuela described the music they play as "traditional." Each piece in their musical repertoire was composed by people in their village, a "long, long time ago," (February 10, 2007) and passed on aurally. Manuela told me that each of the hundreds of songs has a name. To give a clearer picture of the breadth of their repertoire, José informed me that one famous composer from his village wrote more than 500 songs. Each song in the canon fits into one of three themes, which he described as "happ[iness], sadness and religion" (ibid.). In stark contrast to the thematic content of Peter's music, José explained that marimba is not "political music" (ibid.). When I asked him about a piece that was performed at the concert, written by a man who had to leave Guatemala to go to Mexico as a refugee, and is finally able to return to his home, José was adamant that this instrumental musical composition does not address the socio-political experiences of this man. Instead, it is focused on, and is an expression of, his happiness at returning to Guatemala. He said that there are "political" musical genres in Guatemala, but they usually include vocals and guitar instrumentation.

When I spoke to José and Manuela after the concert, I learned more about the circumstances surrounding their learning to play the marimba. I was surprised to discover that they had not learned while they lived in Guatemala:

> Samantha: You never played marimba before you moved here?
> José and Manuela: No.
> José: In Guatemala, we don't have money to buy a marimba… When I come to Canada, somebody give me a small marimba… then we start to practice… I know many, many songs in my mind. I just remember. (February 10, 2007)

In their village, only those people who had sufficient money to buy a marimba were able to learn. Groups of men would often make the purchase collectively, teach themselves, and practice regularly together. Although they had observed others in their village for many years, José and Manuela were self-taught and learned to play in isolation, away from Guatemala.

They explained that the way the songs and this musical tradition are kept alive in an individual's memory, is through a physically enacted process:

> José: You know how you remember? You whistle. (*He whistles a melodic line*)
> Manuela: The people in my town, they make up music like that. (*She whistles another melodic line*) They do this when they go to fix the dinner, or go to cut wood… (ibid.)

For years, they whistled the tunes of hundreds of songs that they had learned in their village. In this way, they were able to remember the tunes until they were able to obtain a marimba in Canada and begin learning to play.

Pellicer (2005) describes the *son*[9] marimba as, "a long (7.08-foot) wooden keyboard instrument with large resonators played by three musicians (treble/melody, center/harmony, bass/rhythm), who perform on most musical occasions, secular and religious, to bring people together" (1). The marimba is both literally and figuratively referred to as female, although in Guatemala, the instrument is played exclusively by males, ranging in age from ten, to eighty. Historically, women have not been permitted to play:

> Music making is defined in terms of male and female complementarity: The female nature of the musical call, which is the offering itself, complements the exclusively male role of playing the music and delivering the offering… three…[male] musicians play one single instrument that is considered female… (62-3)

There is a great contradiction that exists within this tradition, and which must be negotiated. Women are considered the "conservers of tradition" (126), as they pass along customs, beliefs, and language to their children. It is this understanding of females' roles that has led to the association of the marimba as essentially female. Indeed, José and Manuela assert that they play this instrument to preserve not only a disappearing repertoire, but also their culture. However, as Pellicer writes, "on the one hand, a woman is valued and appreciated… on the other, she is feared because she 'calls' and 'pulls' a man toward sin and the pleasures of the flesh, endangering his will. Consequently, man tries to control her frequently through violence…" (ibid.). Although I did not hear José or Manuela speak of the marimba in such a way, or refer to it as "female," Pellicer states that the language that marimba players use in Guatemala to describe their relationship to the instrument, often relays this concept of the desire to control and dominate "her," the marimba. Preserver of culture and feared temptress to be controlled, marimba as female, yet untouched by women; the negotiations of power in the conflicting gendered roles are central to this musical tradition.

> Female and male attributes ascribed to instruments and parts of instruments follow the basic principle that female is to male as high is to low… The female or high-pitched tone is preferred because musicians claim that it produces 'more sound'; in other words, it can be more easily heard from afar. (63)

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[9] Pellicer describes this as a diatonic marimba used for *sones* (a traditional dance-music genre) repertoire. It has forty keys arranged in a diatonic scale.

Another potential contradiction that exists within this tradition is that although the higher-pitched tones are considered "female," the musical role of playing the higher treble/melody is the preferred position, and considered more powerful than the lower, masculine range. During the four songs they played, each between 3-5 minutes long (a standard length, José explained), three parts were played simultaneously on the instrument. Manuela consistently played on the lower tonal end of the marimba (bass/rhythm), José played a melodic line on the higher tonal end (treble/melody), and Jolin played in the tonal mid-range (centre/harmony), filling both the tonal and the physical space between his parents. Pellicer's assertion that the positional and tonal ranges on the marimba are associated with gender, and that the higher tones and the melody are preferred, was enacted in "Safe Haven." Traditionally, Manuela would not have been permitted to play the instrument, and it is therefore significant that she plays with her husband and son. However, the fact that José plays the higher tonal range and melody, their teenage son plays the mid-range and harmony and that Manuela plays the lower-range rhythm section, is fitting, according to the traditional musical and gendered value system.

The fact that this musical performance was family-based was striking to many of the observers. One audience member stated, "In North American culture, we don't do a lot of things like that as a family…" (February 17, 2007). Another audience member elaborated upon this concept by saying:

> The marimba band, I thought was cool because it was a family performance. I think that that is something that we can all really learn from… Many cultures outside of the North American experience have much more family solidarity in terms of the day to day living, so I thought that was an important piece that didn't set out to be that way, but you feel it when you see a kid who is a bit older… still connected to his parents and working to be involved in their expression. (February 15, 2007)

Because many audience members had never heard or seen music like this before, some concluded that it was a familial musical genre; however, as women are not permitted to play marimba in Guatemala, this is not the case. Her family's displacement made it possible for Manuela to study the instrument.

José and Manuela feel that it is of utmost importance that they continue to play this music, as they see this aural tradition being lost through an increase in what José refers to as "Mexican" and "American" musical influences in Guatemala. Their playing seems to be inspired by this desire to preserve. When Manuela explained that women cannot play marimba in Guatemala and that she is very unique, she smiled. This is something that gives her great joy and feelings of pride. José is proud too. He acknowledges his wife's skills and believes it is important to encourage women to participate in the production of marimba music. As a female marimba player living in Canada, Manuela is able to

actively contribute to this musical tradition's preservation, even though it is being carried out through innovation and adaptation. By contributing to the preservation of a cultural practice that she has been traditionally excluded from, Manuela is contributing to the belief, common in Guatemala, that women are conveyers and preservers of tradition. José and Manuela hope that Jolin will continue to play and will, in turn, teach his children, both girls and boys.

The Shirleys

The Shirleys opened their 30-minute set with a four-part arrangement of "I Didn't Raise My Boy to be a Soldier," a song written and popularized by lyricist Alfred Bryan and composer Al Piantadosi in 1915, in opposition to America's military and economic preparations for war. The next song was a South African piece called "Meadowlands" written by Strike Vilakazi in response to and in protest of the forced removal of black South Africans from their homes in Sophiatown (a neighbourhood in Johannesburg), and their relocation to an isolated internment community. The next song, "Senzenina," is a traditional South African song; however, it was used during and after the apartheid regime, and throughout the Truth and Reconciliation Trials. It translates to say, "What have we done? What have we done? We will all be together in the same place… in Heaven." The Shirleys continued with an arrangement of "Mountain Song" written by American singer-songwriter and political activist, Holly Near.[10] The next two songs were arrangements of a traditional Russian gypsy love song called "Ochi Chornya" and a traditional Afro-Cuban song, dedicated to the orisha (a goddess in the Santería religious tradition) Yemaya. The following song ("Soundbyte from Beijing") was written by Ysaye Barnwell of Sweet Honey in the Rock (a 6-voice a cappella African-American women's ensemble), in response to her experience of attending the International Women's conference that was held in Beijing, China in 1995. Upon her return to the United States, she was shocked to realize how little coverage the monumental event had received. Therefore, she wrote this song to bring more awareness to the event that had drawn 40,000 delegates from around the world and to the issues that had been addressed at the conference.

The final song of the Shirleys' set, and of the concert, was a Cuban song called "Oye Mi Amigo," which was introduced by the soloist as "a party song, [and] a song of celebration." The

[10] Though the selection and arrangement of this piece occurred before I had commenced my research, I discovered an interesting connection between this composer and the UU denomination. Holly Near is the composer of one of the UU hymns, "We Are a Gentle Angry People," included in the newest hymnal edition, printed in 1993.

audience was invited to participate by clapping and dancing, which occurred almost immediately after the song began. A standing ovation greeted the end of the piece, and so the Shirleys decided to do an encore: a song from Ghana called "Baba La Goombala" (spelled phonetically), in call and response style. Translated, the text states, "Now is the time for the harvest – the harvest of our souls." This is a song, according to the Shirley soloist who presented it, that "celebrates community, the creation of ideas, [and] of being together." She taught the three lines that are repeated throughout the song, and again encouraged participation through "clapping, stamping, hooting and hollering." The audience did respond to the invitation and stood up, clapped, and joined in.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has focused on both the developmental process of "Safe Haven" and its execution, as well as the musical content of the concert. Though the organizational process raised many questions and challenges, I have addressed those I found most pressing, those that impacted the nature and quality of this experience most deeply: a) the negotiation of roles I faced as a researcher and participant; b) the way leadership was negotiated between myself and the committees, and between committee members themselves; c) attempts to confirm and manage committee members' commitment levels; d) producing an event without funding and with volunteer participants; e) the process of planning the content of the concert; f) publicity, and finally; g) audience attendance and the shifting of expectations that occurred on the night of the concert. These challenges provide some primary areas of focus for researchers, musicians and event planners as they embark on producing other benefit concerts.

I also explored the concert itself, particularly the socio-political contexts of the musical practices of Peter, Manuela, José and Jolin. It is the nature of their experiences and the implications of their involvement in this concert that will be explored in the following two chapters.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS' INTENTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

Each individual and group that participated in the "Safe Haven" concert (i.e., planners, performers, audience members) did so for a variety of reasons. By examining the intentions and expectations that each person carried into the concert production, it becomes clear that they deeply affected not only the nature of the participants' experiences, but also informed the quality of their participation. The concert participants' intentions and expectations cannot be underestimated. Though often unstated, intentions and expectations inform our choices and the interpretation of what occurs in any given situation. Though personal and individual, intentions and expectations are shaped by shared worldviews, opinions, and ideological and socio-political stances.

It is important to acknowledge that for many of the participants, intentions and expectations shifted throughout the concert's development and execution. That being the case, at times participants were aligned with one another and at other times, they came into conflict. Whose intentions most impacted the process? How and under what circumstances were intentions revealed? In what ways did participants' intentions affect the process and its results? Why did intentions shift throughout the planning and execution of the event? By examining these questions, I hope to reveal some of the implications of participants' intentions and expectations on the "Safe Haven" concert.

"GOOD" INTENTIONS

In the following section I will consider the intentions of the committee members and musicians involved in "Safe Haven," each of whom I initially judged as having "good" intentions. To define intentions as "good" is an entirely individual and subjective interpretation; however, I believe it is an important element to consider, as it impacted the manner in which I was able to critique participants' involvement.

What do I mean by "good" intentions? I learned through interviews, casual conversations and a post-production feedback form (see Appendix 6) that participants chose to contribute to the production of this benefit concert because of a desire to assist others - to contribute their skills, time and energy to "helping" individuals and their community. They made this choice to get involved because of feelings of ethical obligation, personal conviction, and compassion for others. Though a problematic term to

define and apply, the concept of "good" intentions is regularly used in situations such as benefit concerts. It is therefore appropriate to unpack the term, and consider its influence.

In this case, we were working on a benefit concert to raise money and community awareness about refugee experiences and support services, as well as safe and affordable housing in the downtown eastside of Vancouver. Although the organizers and performers connected to a benefit concert may have "good" intentions, depending on the way these feelings are acted upon, such an event can result in valuable and empowering contributions to a community organization and the work it sustains, and can also reinforce power discrepancies, stereotypes and non-reciprocal relationships of assistance.

I have observed through my involvement in the benefit concert culture of Vancouver that both community organizations and the musicians involved are motivated by their personal, theological and socio-political beliefs, all stressing the importance of active involvement in local social justice fund- and awareness-raising projects. Their personal commitment to these undertakings are made evident in several ways: their repeated volunteer involvement, their membership in churches or other community organizations that place an emphasis on community outreach and social justice work, the time and energy they invest preparing for performances, and through an examination of the personal motivations that are written into biographies and group mandates. I also engaged in multiple discussions and conversations with both musical and church colleagues regarding their motivations for getting involved in benefit projects. The individuals I have worked with feel deeply compelled to do the concert development and performing that they do. They want to contribute their time, energy and skills to the assistance of others in their community. I have spoken at great length with many of the musicians I know who are consistently involved in benefit concerts, and this is what I hear, over and over again (see the list of musicians' motivations, 61-62). I ask myself the same questions and I come up with very similar responses.

In hindsight, I realize that I initially perceived the "good" intentions of the concert organizers and performers as the major motivational factors informing the production of "Safe Haven." I found that this one-sided understanding of intention was outweighing criticism that might have emerged in my analysis. When considering the work of the dedicated volunteers who organized and presented the concert, with limited budget and minimal promotion, it became hard for me to truly engage in critical analysis. At some level, I felt that if I did, my criticism might take away from the effort, commitment and sincerity that I perceived as integral to their work.

It took a conversation with Peter to help me move past this place of tentative analysis. I described this conversation at some length in the Introduction because it was this same moment with Peter that clarified for me that I could not focus my writing on methodology without considering its impact from different points of view. Similarly, it was Peter's comments on the "helpfulness" of the UCV community that pushed me out of my inability to think critically about the intentions of the concert organizers. Peter's comments may act as a reminder to musicians, applied ethnomusicologists and anyone working with community organizations involved in assisting others through fundraising projects. How do we help and what is our personal motivation? What kind of dialogues are we engaging in with those we are assisting? When is help desired, and when is it not? These are questions that may be addressed, in part, through an analysis of the participants' intentions and expectations.

During the planning of "Safe Haven" there was no dialogue amongst participants that addressed intentions and expectations. This was due, in part, to the fact that the majority of the people involved knew one another to varying degrees and had pre-existing working relationships. There was an unspoken understanding that the intentions of the organizers and the participants were sincere and heartfelt. Secondly, time was limited. As I addressed in Chapter Two, there was a strong desire amongst the organizers to plan the event as efficiently as possible. This was an approach that minimized time for discussion. Thirdly, after the concert was finished, there was a sense in the group that our "good" intentions and hard work had led to the successful completion of the concert, and there was pride taken in that. This sentiment made me hesitant to critique the process and the results.

"Good" intentions, however, may not always be perceived as such by those on the receiving end. In order to cultivate healthier practices and working relationships, we must be honest with ourselves about the ways in which others experience our intentions, how they conflict with their own, and further, the steps we can take to minimize these conflicts. Boundaries are drawn, enforced and contested in benefit concert production, between the "actors" or "helpers" and those who are "acted upon" or "helped." It is these boundaries that demand considerable thought.

In the following sections, the intentions and their results, as well as the negotiation of boundaries (specifically those pertaining to the involvement of the refugee musicians in the concert) will be investigated. In so doing, it is my hope that future benefit concert producers may cultivate healthier and more sustainable strategies for future projects.

THE RESEARCHER'S INTENTIONS

I entered this project informed by my personal beliefs concerning the importance of taking positive action in my community, and speaking out when I observe oppression, violence and inequity. This, coupled with a desire to contribute my musical skills to community-based projects that address pressing local and international issues, greatly informed my choice to carry out this project. Previous experiences had initiated for me an interest in further investigating the benefit concert culture in Vancouver. It was my intention to do so by directly participating in it, and exploring its processes from the inside.

I intended to help facilitate a positive and beneficial experience for the committees, which I hoped, in turn, would be felt by the individuals whom these committees supported. I knew that the committees were chronically concerned about financial support and seeking assistance in terms of fundraising and volunteers. I anticipated that an offer to assist in a fundraising event would be appreciated and committee members have confirmed for me that it was.

After preliminary research into PAR methodologies, I also felt inspired by the emphasis placed upon community-governed, -directed, and -facilitated research, and was motivated to work in such a way. I was hopeful that this approach would empower the UCV community and create an opportunity that might benefit all. I believed it would also enable me to directly apply the tools I had been cultivating in my ethnomusicology studies.

Although my expectations regarding the participants' benefits were generally met, they were not necessarily met to the degree I had anticipated. I expected the excitement and sense of possibility I felt to be equally present in the other participants. Indeed, these individuals volunteer their time to work on these committees because they feel a deep level of commitment towards them. All involved were willing to assist in the execution of the concert and desired to achieve positive results; however, this concert was only one component of the ongoing responsibilities each member maintains at any given time. This concert created added work for everyone involved. Committee members' time and energy were limited, which affected the concert results.

In contrast, this project was my central focus. Planning and executing "Safe Haven" constituted the fieldwork for my thesis. I had spent a great deal of time considering the possibilities for the concert, the theoretical and methodological issues that might arise, and the collective working relationships that might be cultivated. I realize now that I entered into this collaboration in a position of privilege. The realities experienced by those consistently working on the RC or SJC differ quite significantly from my

own. My expectations were reflective of my realities as a student. I was able to invest a great deal into this project. My research and writing process would be the bulk of my work for the coming months. This was not the case for committee members. The production of "Safe Haven" was one of many responsibilities held by each committee member.

In my experience, it is often the case that time and resources limit organizations and individuals who produce benefit concerts. Lack of funding, volunteers, time and space, are some of the challenges I have observed. Multi-tasking, flexibility and efficiency are elements that are often essential for the successful completion of these projects. Time set aside for development is often a luxury that cannot be afforded - something that I did not take into account before entering into this working relationship. As a result, my expectations concerning the work process were not met. Had I understood the committees' contexts before entering into this situation, I might have created more reasonable and realistic goals and expectations. When working in community-based applications of music and social justice actions, it is essential that individual and group intentions and expectations be expressed at the onset, and that subsequent action plans be representative of the group's situation as a whole, rather than reflective of just one or two of the participants' situations. In this way, disappointment and misunderstanding might be minimized.

My identity as a performer with two of the musical groups involved in the concert also impacted the intentions I brought to this process. Some might consider the involvement of these two groups questionable and the motivations behind the choice to include them, self-serving. Perhaps I wanted to have more exposure for the UGC and the Shirleys and this concert offered the perfect opportunity. Perhaps including my own musical groups might have compromised the "Safe Haven" project in some way by splitting my interests and focus too drastically, rendering me less accessible to the committees to whom I owed my full attention. Brian Tate (director of the UGC) alluded to this issue during the concert itself. He explained to the audience that I was a member of the UGC, a member of the Shirleys, and that I had co-organized the event. "How many hats can one person wear? We're just glad she had time to sing with us tonight," he laughed. Though he meant this comment in part as a joke and in part as a way to publicly acknowledge the work that I had put into the concert, some might take this comment as reflective of an inappropriate level of involvement.

Concerning the issue of whether I was seeking more exposure for my musical groups, I would respond by stating that both groups had a full roster of paid and volunteer events, regardless of whether or not they accepted this offer. I had access to the performance schedules of both groups, and can

honestly state that the decision to participate, made by the UGC and the Shirleys, was not strictly motivated by a desire to bring more exposure to the groups. It is often true that when a group participates in a concert, more public awareness is brought to its work; however, it is often not the primary motivation for musical groups to volunteer for a benefit concert. Further, as the musicians were not paid for their performance at "Safe Haven," community exposure is one of the only ways in which they may be compensated[11].

Also, in a situation such as this, where there is a limited budget and one is attempting to raise money, the use of pre-existing connections is absolutely necessary. In my Vancouver musical community, there are a significant number of benefit concerts that occur every year. Most musicians I know will pick and choose how many and in which ones they will participate. As we are figuratively "all in the same boat" at some moment in time (attempting to organize a concert, wanting to raise money, with no financial resources), there is an exchange that occurs in which one calls on musical connections, anticipating the call to be returned. Though this may simplify the issue too much (often the primary reason a group chooses to participate in an event is because they feel strongly about the issue being addressed), I do believe that the concept of reciprocity in community-wide musical endeavors is key to understanding my motivation for calling on my colleagues to perform at the event.

As mentioned, of more relevance to the motivation behind their choice to become involved were the groups' creative and socio-political mandates which stipulate that they will maintain active involvement in community outreach and benefit work. I knew of these mandates and knew that the organizers and the attending audience would appreciate the ways in which these values would be expressed during a concert. For this reason, the choice to include these groups felt appropriate.

SELECTING MUSICIANS

The committee members knew of my pre-existing relationship with the UGC and the Shirleys as, not only had I informed them, they had seen both of these groups perform before. Immediately after I mentioned the possibility of inviting them, they agreed that it was a wise choice. Though the committees agreed to include these groups for several reasons, including their musical abilities and their appropriateness for the concert, a large part of it had to do with the fact that these groups were willing to play for free and the committees believed that they could draw in a larger audience. The UGC and the

[11] It is not possible to determine the extent to which each group's performance might have increased their recognition in the community.

Shirleys are groups that are well recognized in the Vancouver community. They have an established fan base, upon which organizers were hoping to draw in order to increase attendance. By featuring groups that would be recognized in the community, it was assumed that the financial benefits would be higher.

The intentions behind the choice to invite Peter, José, Manuela and Jolin to perform differed. Each of these musicians had previously performed at RC fundraising events. At one of the first planning meetings, one of the RC members suggested we invite these musicians to participate in "Safe Haven." Viewed as a means of honoring an established relationship, of fostering reciprocal relationships between the committee and those whom they have assisted, and as a way of sharing these individuals' stories with the larger community, the reasoning behind the invitations extended to these musicians was multi-faceted, and was informed by committee members' intentions. By sharing the refugees' stories with the audience, it was hoped that the need for continued financial support would be emphasized, thus initiating further donations. The committees also believed that this inclusion would be an effective way of sharing cultural practices and generating inter-cultural dialogue and understanding.

One important issue to consider regarding the inclusion of Jolin, José, Manuela and Peter in this concert is potential power imbalances. The invitation extended to them was an attempt to diffuse imbalances that often emerge through relationships and interactions based on one group assisting another. Rather than solely relying on the UGC and the Shirleys, we believed a more reciprocal relationship between the RC and those whom they assist could be achieved through the participation of these musicians. Whether or not this goal was realized, and the ways it affected Peter, Manuela, Jolin and José, will be examined through an analysis of the feedback that they provided.

UGC AND SHIRLEYS' INTENTIONS

I will now examine the responses that I received from UGC and Shirley members concerning the motivations behind their involvement and the expectations that they held. As I stated, responses were limited, and cannot act as an accurate representation of each group's experience; however, they do provide some first-hand evidence concerning intention.

Based on the feedback, the motivational factors for getting involved in "Safe Haven" were as follows:

> The cause was laudable and fit into our plan to support worthy organizations through our Outreach Program.

> One of our members was sponsoring and promoting the event. We try to support our own members.
>
> The purpose of the concert seemed to be aligned with the way I interpret our choir's purpose – to find the common denominators of our experience as human beings through music, to celebrate our vastly rich and creative differences, to manifest our support and compassion to those in need and distress, to learn…
>
> I wanted to support what seemed like a unique event, organized by an energetic and dedicated young woman (Samantha) who I am getting to know through the choir. Though I wasn't familiar in detail with the work of the Refugee Committee, I have a general awareness of the Unitarian Church as humanist, non-judgmental and practical in the ways they try to elevate community and spiritual life. I have a perception of the church as decent and well intentioned. I appreciated the opportunity to support good works in the community in a way that folds naturally into my day-to-day activities.

To generalize, the respondents believe in contributing to social justice initiatives in the community and desire to support co-members in such endeavors. Further, "Safe Haven" was perceived as being in alignment with the musical groups' mandates. One UGC member referred the UCV's theological and socio-political views, and said that she desired to contribute to their "good works." Connecting with others, sharing experiences and cultural practices, and being compassionate to those involved in struggles was also listed as important factors. Another interesting point is brought to light in the following UGC member's comment:

> I don't choose which events the choir supports with one of our concerts. We have an elected Board that in the past has chosen, in my opinion, wisely. The choir members then sign-up if they wish to participate, which is his/her commitment to be there.

This approach differs from the Shirleys', who make each decision collectively through discussion and by consensus.

REFUGEE MUSICIANS' INTENTIONS

In the week after the concert, I spoke to José, Manuela and Peter about the intentions they brought to this event. Each expressed gratitude and appreciation for the work of the RC. Further, they expressed a commitment to "giving back" and contributing to the continuation of this committee's projects.

When I asked Manuela and José why they had chosen to perform in this event, they told me that they do not choose whether or not to play at RC fundraisers. "I have played at all the events that I have

been invited to, unless I was busy already," José wrote in his feedback. Opportunities to give back, and to assist others who are experiencing similar struggles that they themselves have been through, is very important to them. José explained, "I'm working. I don't need money" (February 10, 2007). Any funds he raises through musical performance he considers "extra" and he gives away to help others. José concludes, "We are happy to help, because we passed that time suffering. We remember" (ibid.). During an interview, I asked Peter about why he decided to participate in the event. He said that he viewed it as a good and positive thing, and that he felt it was important to donate his time to help the RC meet their goals. He emphasized that any time the church calls him, he is "present" (October 18, 2006).

It is important to consider whether feelings of obligation and indebtedness to the church negatively impacted these musicians' motivation, removing their choice of whether or not to become involved. I never observed committee members encouraging these sentiments. No one spoke of the refugee musicians' involvement as being "repayment." No one implied that the refugees "owed" the committee and they must therefore become involved. Further, there was no assumption made that Peter, Manuela, José or Jolin would participate without first checking with them, and asking if they were free and interested.

Based on the musicians' responses, I do not believe that their sense of obligation was the primary motivation behind their involvement. They were more emphatic about the exchange being one of reciprocity and empowerment in returning assistance that they themselves had received. I observed through conversation with them that "Safe Haven" gave them great feelings of satisfaction.

During an interview, Brian Tate provided an interesting perspective on the ways in which performance can function as a mode of encouraging reciprocity between those who are in attendance. He had in mind concerts in Vancouver's downtown eastside. Tate described the individuals who attend free annual concerts put on by the choir as "largely disenfranchised people [who have] fallen through the cracks" (August 30, 2006). Homelessness, drug addiction, prostitution and mental illness deeply impact the community where these concerts occur. Tate believes that many of the individuals in attendance have become invisible. "People simply don't see them, or people don't want to see them" (ibid.). He also views them as "dependent on everything: on hand-outs and on money" (ibid.). What he has observed is that these "invisible" members of the community, who become audience members, "get seen, they take up space and… we make sure they know it's important that they are there, [be]cause we need an audience and their voices are welcome and that clapping is welcome" (ibid.). In so doing, according to Tate, they get the opportunity to make a contribution to the concert experience.

Though Tate was describing a very different socio-musical occasion than "Safe Haven," it is interesting to consider the role of musical participation as an act of reciprocity. He believes that "hand-outs" promote imbalanced relationships in a community, between those who have and those who have not. By creating a physical, emotional and musical space where those boundaries are blurred and each person is responsible for contributing to the success of a concert, balanced and reciprocal interactions and relationships may be forged.

Reciprocity is important in promoting successful and ongoing musical benefit concerts. Though feelings of indebtedness in part motivated Manuela, Jolin, José and Peter's decision to participate in the concert, I did not observe their involvement as being exclusively motivated by these feelings. I observed, instead, the beginnings of an empowering and mutually beneficial exchange. I say "beginnings" because I see that though much was done to ensure reciprocal relationships were cultivated, I also see, and will discuss at length, that there were a significant number of challenges that arose related to empowerment and mutual benefit.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS' INTENTIONS

In an interview that took place after the concert, an audience member who was not a member of the church explained to me that she found the congregation's connection to the event to be tangible. She stated:

> ...[It appeared] that the concert [was created] out of a deeper overall commitment of the church... to be involved in social action and service. So it seemed to be really in conjunction with the values of the church, which is really important. Then the church can really own it more than if you just come in and impose this concert in a situation where people aren't necessarily looking for that kind of opportunity. I thought that was good, to just see that the people... who do belong there, I think feel[ing] an integration. Their values were in alignment with what you were trying to do. (February 15, 2007)

This audience member was aware of the values that are often expressed in the UU tradition and felt that "Safe Haven" was in alignment with those values. Committee members express that their work is an attempt to enact the principles held by their religious community; therefore, it was helpful to receive this feedback from an audience member. It helped confirm that, in her opinion, this particular intention of the committees was met.

Though the RC and the SJC were motivated by their belief in "good works" as a primary mode of enacting religious faith, both work on a different set of on-going projects, each of which carries with it differing needs and stresses. Therefore, committees had differing expectations and intentions that they

carried with them into this project. Finding a focus for the event that drew on each group's areas of interest was helpful in joining them in a sense of shared purpose; however, what could be felt throughout the process was that the stakes were high for each, and finding ways to meet differing goals, while sharing in the efforts, would be a challenge.

One SJC member wrote in his post-concert feedback that part of his motivation for working on this concert was that he wished to "facilitate the understanding of social issues through selected music pieces" (October 30, 2006). He explained this further by saying that in his opinion, "Emotions and social issues are… better explained with the use of selected music. The lyrics of some songs will produce an effect that many words won't" (ibid.). This understanding of music as an effective tool for transmitting feeling, belief and experience was echoed by the RC member who stated, "Hearing songs from other places and [reflecting on] other people's problems raises a lot of awareness and it is done in an entertaining way" (October 17, 2006). And another member stated, "Music, drama and story telling are a draw (entertainment factor) and create empathy without hitting people over their heads. [Audience] participation, e.g., with Peter and with the Universal Gospel Choir, was enjoyable… A teaspoon of sugar helps the medicine go down!" (October 12, 2006). All three of these committee members expressed a belief in the effectiveness of music, having cultivated this understanding through direct experience with benefit concerts. Historically, in the church community, these musical events have been an effective tool in both fundraising and educating the public about the work that they do.

As these comments reveal, the committee members intended to use music as a way of presenting issues and promoting their work in a more "enjoyable" manner. The music, according to the last RC member who was quoted, "sweetens" the experience for audience members. It renders fundraising events "entertaining," as well as educational, which in her mind is what draws the audience to the event. It would not be wise to "hit the audience over the head." The music makes "the medicine go down." Though she does not state this specifically, the "medicine" she is referring to is the informative and educational component of the event. This included facts concerning refugees' experiences and statistics about low-income housing in the downtown eastside, shared with the audience through the concert program, through committee speakers and through a guest speaker from a downtown eastside legal society (one of the recipients of the funds raised during "Safe Haven"). There is a belief held by these organizers that pleasure should be a part of the experience. A benefit concert should be pleasurable and educational - a challenging balance to strike. If it is not entertaining enough the audience will not enjoy it, and further, will not come back to future events, significantly cutting the committees' financial

support.

Considering this concern held by committee members, how does one do justice to the experiences of refugees by presenting issues honestly, while also maintaining the attention and energy of the audience? How does one approach the emotional content of an event respectfully and effectively? How much focus on "entertaining" is appropriate? How much information should be shared? The answers to these questions are entirely specific to the context in which one is working, and will shift accordingly. They are questions that should be posed at the outset of planning a benefit concert.

I received several other responses from RC members addressing slightly differing intentions for involvement in "Safe Haven." One member explained:

> These days, countries worldwide (especially developed countries) are clamping down on refugee migration, Canada being no exception, despite the fact that Canada has a legal obligation to protect refugees, having signed the 1951 United Nations *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees,* drawn up by the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, as well as the 1967 *Refugee Protocol.* Money is a paramount consideration to Refugee Committees now that refugees are increasingly refused status both here and abroad. When status is denied… lawyers must be hired. Other expenses are government fees and travel expenses, which must be borne either by refugees themselves or by sponsoring groups, and neither refugees nor churches are terribly rich! Besides raising money, the Refugee Committee must constantly promote to the congregation (and to anyone who will listen) the needs of the committee and, more importantly, of refugees themselves. Such concerts as this are excellent promotion. (October 12, 2006)

Providing a contemporary perspective on the limiting circumstances faced by the RC, this member focuses on the financial challenges of maintaining her work. Though she knows from experience that concerts are an effective tool in social justice work for a multitude of reasons, her primary goal was to raise money, enabling the work of the committee to continue.

DIFFERING INTENTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS: COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND MUSICIANS

In comparing the nature of the committee members' intentions and expectations with those of the performers, I have come to recognize some fundamental differences. These differences manifested in differing levels of engagement, responsibility and investment throughout the planning and execution of "Safe Haven."

The committee members and myself were colleagues in the concert's development. It was they whom I had initially approached regarding a working relationship. In many ways they "owned" the process and the concert, as it was developed in response to a financial need they were experiencing and

driven by a desire to promote their work. In contrast, the musicians were not producers of the event, rather contributors. Although their skills and time were invested in the event, they held no responsibility for its success. What they were responsible for was preparing their material beforehand, arriving on time for their sound check and performing their set. Although they believed strongly in the purpose of the concert, they were not personally involved in ongoing efforts in these socio-political areas. This would not be the case in instances where musicians produce events for organizations in which they are actively involved (i.e., had I been a member of the RC or SJC).

I believe that performing in concerts like "Safe Haven" is a beneficial practice for performers. I also acknowledge that there is a difference between ongoing and one-time only endeavors. They create very different levels of commitment and understanding. Musicians in this context have quite a different manner of engaging with an issue than members of community organizations who are involved in ongoing initiatives. It is one thing to show up for an event, perform a set of music and feel that you've made a contribution, and another to be there the next day, and the next, to continually chip away at the problem, far away from the excitement and outpouring of attention generated by a concert. Both levels of involvement are useful, but I recognize that they are very different. It is the ongoing work, energy, and focus that community-based socio-political organizations maintain, that often bring lasting change.

In this case, I was not simply a musician showing up on the day of the concert to do my set and leave. I was also involved in the production of the event. Through this process I learned a great deal about the individuals, issues, and struggles being addressed. This affected the nature of my experience and deepened my contribution in some ways; however, I was still a visitor to these committees. I do not wish to diminish my contributions or those of any of the musicians, non-committee volunteers, or audience members through this discussion. Each person has made an important contribution based on what they were willing and able to contribute at that time. We all have limited time and resources and must make these choices.

At the completion of the concert, I sought feedback from all performers. Peter, Manuela and José all provided written feedback. They also agreed to meet with me for interviews to further reflect upon the process and its results. To generalize, one can see that the UGC and the Shirleys' motivations differed quite strongly from those of José, Manuela and Peter's, a fact that may have contributed to a discrepancy in post-production involvement. Whereas the latter all expressed (to varying degrees) feelings of obligation and a desire to re-pay assistance, this was not the case for the UGC and the Shirleys. Instead, these musicians were aware that they were donating their time and their skills. This

creates an interesting distinction between the performers. One might interpret the UGC and the Shirleys' involvement in the concert as a favour to the committees, whereas Manuela, Peter and José were, in some ways, returning a favour. This was one of many concerts in which the vocal ensembles volunteer their time; they were there to make their contribution, and move on. On the other hand, when I asked Peter, Manuela and José for feedback, it was as if cooperating in this stage of the process was included in their contribution.

Another element that affected the nature of these performers' investment levels, and the intentions they brought to the event, was the differing relationships they had with the issues that were being addressed in "Safe Haven." As I have described, none of the UGC or the Shirleys were personally connected to refugee experiences or support services, nor were they immediately affected by affordable and safe housing initiatives in the downtown eastside. In contrast, Peter, José and Manuela were all deeply affected by their experiences as refugees. They were, in many ways, more personally invested than the organizers. Their intentions, the focus and the investment they brought with them to this concert, were all deeply impacted by this personal connection.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Intentions and expectations are not self-evident, and cannot be assumed or interpreted outside of their context. For these reasons I asked participants to consider, clarify and interpret their intentions and expectations as benefit concert participants, and have included the results in this chapter. As well as asking participants to be self-reflective in this manner, it has also been necessary to take the information and insights they shared, and consider them further, in relation to others' responses and my own. In so doing, I have clarified some important points:

- There is a tendency when considering benefit concert culture to shy away from criticism, especially when one understands the intentions of those involved to be "good." However, it is the responsibility of applied ethnomusicologists, musicians, community organizations, audience members (and anyone else contributing to this musical and socio-political practice) to both question and consider their intentions and the ways in which they affect those who are on the receiving end of the assistance.

- Generally speaking, the motivations and levels of investment in this process differed between the organizers and the musicians, as is often the case in benefit concert production. Though performers invest time, energy and skills into an event like "Safe Haven," upon completion, they move on to the next event and often, the next socio-political issue. In contrast, committee members are engaged

in ongoing work in these areas that are affected by the financial and educational results of the event.

- Though each musician's involvement in "Safe Haven" was in part a direct result of a desire to contribute to refugee services and low-income housing initiatives in Vancouver, Peter, Manuela, Jolin and José's choice to participate was motivated by their personal experiences as refugees. Wishing to give back to the committee that had assisted them and to families experiencing circumstances similar to their own, Peter, José, Jolin and Manuela were in effect, engaged in a relationship of reciprocity with the organizers of the event, whereas the UGC and the Shirleys were making a musical "donation."

At the beginning of this chapter, I posed several questions that I consider essential to cultivating a fuller understanding of the implications of intentions and expectations in benefit concert production. Though the answers to these questions may not always be straightforward, by considering them in relation to the context in which the research is being carried out, an important step is taken. The first of these questions was: Whose motivations most impacted the process? Though each individual's motivations affected this process in both subtle and powerful ways, in this case the organizers' motivations, rather than the musicians', most significantly shaped the organizational process. Secondly, I asked the question: How and under what circumstances were intentions revealed? In this case, I believe that intentions were revealed through post-concert questioning and through the actions that were taken by each participant (i.e., the choice to perform, the material selected and the performance itself). Finally I asked: Did intentions shift throughout the planning and execution of the event and if so, why? The shifts in intentions that occurred through this process occurred as a direct result of realizing the impact one's original intentions may have had, and modifying them. The clearest example of this was my own shift that occurred after I realized that I was challenged by the notion of critiquing the "good intentions" of participants. With the help of Peter, I was able to realize that I was not fully and honestly questioning the intentions of my colleagues and myself, and that in order to reach a more informed and balanced understanding, I needed to do so.

Each intention at work in this concert impacted the process as it informed the choices made by the organizers, the musical contributions of the musicians, and the relationships and communications that were established between participants. When intentions and expectations differ, there is a potential for miscommunication and disappointment to occur. Bringing awareness to the spectrum of intentions that existed throughout the production of "Safe Haven" can, instead, initiate understanding and dialogue,

leading to the cultivation of an organizational process that satisfies and feeds each person's commitment to the process and its results.

CHAPTER FOUR

REPRESENTATION

In this chapter the representational practices used in the promotion and execution of the "Safe Haven" concert will be examined. As a way of initiating this discussion, I will present the writings of several scholars whose work addresses issues of representation, specifically the representation of refugees and the Third World. From these works, I will move into an examination of three modes of representation that were used during the production of the concert: concert promotions, the concert structure and the musicians' personal narratives.

REPRESENTATION: OPPOSED BINARIES, KNOWLEDGE, AND POWER

Stuart Hall (1997) writes, "Meaning does not inhere *in* things, in the world. It is constructed, produced. It is the result of a signifying practice – a practice that *produces* meaning, that *makes things mean*" (24). Within culturally specific signifying practices, contested "circuits of meaning" (10) are constantly being forged and circulated. It is these contested cultural meanings that define us, and shape our identities. Hall asserts that they "define what is 'normal,' who belongs – and therefore, who is excluded. They are deeply inscribed in relations of power" (ibid.).

One of the ways in which culturally- and historically-specific meanings are organized is into "sharply opposed binaries or opposites" (ibid.). Though critics argue that this view of the organization of meaning is an over-simplified one, and though our understanding is often far more complex, opposition is common in both representational practices and our interpretation of them. Hall gives the examples of the opposing concepts of "male/female, black/white, rich/poor, gay/straight, young/old, and citizen/alien" (ibid.). During the production of "Safe Haven," understandings based on opposed binaries informed choices made regarding the representation of the refugee musicians. From the beginning of the planning process, an underlying subtext at work was "We" (the committees and the musicians) were helping "Them" (the refugees and residents of the downtown eastside). Further, performers were unofficially broken into two groups: the "refugee" musicians and the musicians (signifying the UGC and the Shirleys). This is how we distinguished between groups and individuals, how we made clear of whom we were speaking. The implications of this choice will be discussed later in the chapter, but it is important to acknowledge that understanding is often unconsciously or consciously organized into binary opposites, affecting the ways in which we relate to others.

Hall states that, "in certain historical moments, some people had more power to speak about some subjects than others… Models of representation… ought to focus on these broader issues of knowledge and power" (42). Representational practices used during the concert were developed and carried out by one group, although they most deeply affected another. The SJC and the RC chose the modes of representation discussed in this chapter (advertising, presentation of the musicians, and biographies). Although the most personal and sensitive information shared with the general public was biographical information pertaining to José, Manuela, Peter and Jolin, they had significantly less power in selecting and presenting the material. As I will discuss further, although organizers of "Safe Haven" were attempting to diffuse potential power imbalances, we were not always successful in doing so.

REPRESENTATIONS OF THE THIRD WORLD

Though political scientist Robert A. Hackett's (1989) work examines the representational practices used in Canadian news broadcasting, the issues he raises are very relevant when considering the context of a benefit concert. Hackett has extrapolated what he views as the dominant motifs used in the presentation of Third World news: social disorder (political violence, political subversion, military combat), flawed development (government corruption, human rights abuses, communism) and primitivism (exoticism, barbarism). He argues that North American broadcasting practices have fostered "anti-historical, mythic ways of seeing the Third World as 'the Other,' against which 'We' define ourselves as the peaceful, ordered, stable, ethical, humanitarian, capitalistic, industrialized and civilized West" (823-4).

Hackett has observed certain consequences as a result of representational practices, including the reinforcement of negative stereotypes that some Canadians hold about immigrants and refugees from the Third World. He notes one exception: "when the latter are portrayed as victims deserving of sympathy" (824). We are left with a dichotomous understanding of the people of the Third World. On one hand there is fear, resentment, anger and misunderstanding, and on the other, there is pity and sympathy. As Hackett suggests, in media representation, it is often the distinction drawn between "immigrant" and "refugee" that determines how the North American public will view the individual, family or community in question.

Catherine Besteman (1996) suggests that North American media representation practices are constantly "othering" the Third World. Reflecting on the representation of violence in Somalia in the early 90s, Besteman writes, "Rebels and bloodbaths, carnage and chaos; how were Americans to

understand the goings-on in a country most knew little about?" (121). By the end of 1991, the North American media, politicians and scholars had established and were promoting an understanding of the violence in Somalia that was not founded on accurate cultural and socio-political realities, thus promoting ongoing stereotypes of Somali culture. Viewing Somalis as "caught in a destructive spiral of 'tradition,'" Besteman argues, allowed North Americans to continue imagining them as "very different kinds of human beings, to pity them, and to feel safe." This perceived sense of safety was experienced because Americans "could never imagine kinship-based genocidal warfare happening *here*," and further, Somalia provided "a model for ethnic conflict among minorities, recent immigrants, and the underclass," (130) a model that enabled an even stronger disassociation amongst middle to upper class North Americans. The violence in media coverage is thus represented as innately "other" – perpetuated by those "poor people over there."

Moving from a discussion of broadcast media representational practices to those used specifically in development work, I will examine the work of anthropologist Arturo Escobar (1991) and his critique of development anthropology. Development anthropology is described as a sub-discipline in applied anthropology, one in which the anthropologist is working in agencies, organizations or on projects focused on the development of Third World populations. Escobar is highly critical of many of the approaches that have been used historically by development anthropologists. In his work, he advocates for and imagines alternatives. Escobar asserts that there has been a steady growth of anthropologists working in development projects since the mid-1970s. Anthropology was once a discipline that discouraged and limited applied intervention; however, Escobar believes that, in recent decades, there has been an increase in involvement of anthropologists in development agencies. This move away from direct intervention occurred at the same time as the creation of what he calls "the underdeveloped or less developed [human] species," resulting from "post-World War II development discourse" (660). Through colonially-influenced development practices, anthropology "extended modern European self-knowledge (as First World)… [while] recontain[ing], in the terrain of representation, the former colonies, now conceived as Third World" (661). Escobar believes that, for the most part, anthropologists have taken development discourse for granted. In so doing, they have accepted it as "normal," and have thus contributed to its naturalization.

Reflecting on the ways in which development anthropology might re-define itself, he suggests that rather than considering "development alternatives," we must instead consider "alternatives to development," which would include:

> … A rejection of the ethnocentric, patriarchal, and ecocidal character of development models; [and] a defense of pluralistic grassroots movements, in the belief that these movements… may be providing a new basis for transforming the structures and discourses of the modern developmentalist states in the Third World… (675)

Although Escobar tells us that the concept of development work is innately flawed and contributes to ongoing power imbalances and colonially-influenced representational practices, he does not question the impulse to assist in and advocate for socio-political change in struggling populations. He acknowledges that more and more researchers working in this field are recognizing the negative contributions development anthropology has made and the need to remedy this detrimental approach. He emphasizes the importance of "pluralistic grassroots movements" as a means of making the conceptual shifts necessary to re-write the naturalized discourses concerning development work. Such movements would engage with individuals locally who have first-hand experience, who live with the issues on a daily basis, and who are able to imagine and advocate for change. Similar to the PAR approaches explored in previous chapters, grassroots "alternatives to development" must be developed in response to the specific needs of the community. The power imbalances generated through development discourses may begin to shift through the effective implementation of alternative, collaborative and localized initiatives.

Anthropologist Liisa Malkki (1996) continues this critique of development anthropology, but focuses specifically on issues that arise in large scale, international humanitarian efforts undertaken to assist refugees. She points out that one of the major problems that occur is the "silencing of refugees," something that contributes to the understanding of refugees as those "poor people over there." Describing one of the effects of bureaucratized humanitarian interventions that are set in motion by large population displacements, she states:

> [They] leach out the histories and the politics of specific refugees' circumstances. Refugees stop being specific persons and become pure victims in general… this creates a context in which it is difficult for people in the refugee category to be approached as historical actors rather than simply as mute victims… in abstracting their predicaments from specific political, historical, cultural contexts – humanitarian practices tend to silence refugees. (378)

Malkki also asserts that through the implementation of such humanitarian efforts, problematic representational practices occur – practices that she believes promote standardized interventions that have the effect of:

> ...Producing anonymous corporeality and speechlessness... they tend to hide the political, or political-economic, connections that link the television viewers' own history with that of 'those poor people over there[12].' (389)

Malkki informs us that refugee experiences are very often represented outside of their specific historical and political contexts. Thus refugees are generally identified and lumped together as "victims," rather than individuals. "The viewers," or in the case of benefit concerts, the audience, is not presented with the historical and contemporary data that connects them to those who stand before them as refugees/victims.

This issue, which is confronted by Malkki, is also prevalent in benefit concert culture, something addressed by English scholar T.V. Reed (2005) who critiques the rise of "charity rocks" or "benefit rocks" (globally televised concerts, records and videos in the mid-1980s). Although benefit concerts were not a new concept at this time, the global scale of these events was unprecedented, Reed explains, and set off a wave of rock and roll activism that continues to this day. The largest and most monetarily successful "benefit rock" of that time was the "Live Aid" African famine relief concert of 1985.

The first stage of the famine relief project was organized by Irish rock musician Bob Geldof, and resulted in the song "Do They Know It's Christmas," which was performed and recorded by various British artists under the name Band Aid and released in 1984. This was followed shortly after by the release of "We Are the World" and finally, on July 13th 1985, the "huge and extremely financially successful Live Aid concerts held in London and Philadelphia, [both] telecast worldwide to more than 1.5 billion people" (159).

Reed specifically critiques the song "Do they Know It's Christmas" and the concert efforts more generally by stating:

> Even granting that there are a fair number of Christians in northern Africa, it is difficult to imagine a more culturally insensitive question to ask musically... Moreover, how likely is Christmas to be first on the minds of starving people? This dubious question typifies the narcissistic self-importance and ethnocentric disregard for cultural differences that permeate much of this project. (159)

He goes on to point out the absence of black artists in the British recording session, which, he believes, underscored an "emerging, no doubt unintended, racist message that the relief effort was about helpful whites helping helpless blacks" (159). In the lyrics of this song and throughout the concert itself, there was almost no discussion of the famine, and no one addressed "the relation of hunger to Western

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[12] Compare Calhoun 1995; Ferguson 1995, in press.

agricultural policy or the role played by First World manipulation of the economies of the Third World" (162). This echoes the statement made earlier by Malkki who asserted that it is often the case in humanitarian efforts that the connections, and in this case, the culpability of the First World are not addressed as assistance initiatives are undertaken. One may take from all of these academic works an understanding of the importance of actively working against standardized and disempowering representational practices when engaging in any form of benefit production or humanitarian efforts.

"SAFE HAVEN": A RESPONSE TO BENEFIT CONCERT CRITICISM

In the following section, the attempts that were made during the production of "Safe Haven" to foster reciprocal relationships of assistance and to counter potential "speechlessness" experienced by the refugee musicians', will be examined. Whether or not these attempts were successful will also be considered.

Every one of the committee members with whom I have worked had a genuine desire to give much needed assistance to families and individuals who find themselves in life-threatening situations by supporting their attempts to relocate to a country in which their immediate well-being is not threatened. RC members donate their time, energy and occasionally their homes (as is true of one member who has housed and cared for a young Eritrean woman). On several occasions I witnessed high emotions as they spoke of the situations in which millions of refugees live. This knowledge has triggered feelings of desperation for many, fueling their commitment to the committee's work; however, as discussed in the previous chapter, even "good" intentions, formed in part by strong emotions, can unintentionally cause harm. These intentions must therefore be considered, especially in situations where the representation and assistance of dispossessed and disenfranchised peoples are taking place.

I had read Escobar's (1991) suggested concept of "alternatives to development" prior to commencing this project, and I found that it influenced the way I thought about my work approach. The church committees are localized, grassroots organizations. They are run collectively, in response to the particular needs and goals that are developed by the group. Although the RC works alongside governmental agencies (especially when involved in assisting in the immigration process), the money they raise and the projects they undertake are internally governed and managed. For these reasons, the work this committee undertakes appears to be in alignment with Escobar's alternative vision.

As addressed in the previous chapter, because power imbalances in situations of assistance are common, organizers felt it was important to create as much reciprocity as possible. By sharing skills

and efforts, this power imbalance, though not entirely diminished, could at least be acknowledged and countered. This was one of the motivational factors behind the inclusion of individuals who had been and continue to be assisted by the RC. By them contributing to the concert, a relationship based on *mutual* assistance was fostered.

Concert organizers consciously made an attempt to involve refugees not only as a means of sharing responsibility and encouraging reciprocity, but also as a means of combating anonymity, corporeality and speechlessness. Rather than being presented generically as "refugees," Peter, Manuela, and José and Jolin's personal narratives were shared with the "Safe Haven" audience, verbally and in print, and further, performers were given the opportunity to address the audience during their set. Organizers hoped the narratives would augment the audience's understanding of these refugees' experiences and the need for support services, and encourage further involvement with the RC.

One important point brought to light in the previous section, but which was not directly addressed in "Safe Haven," was the tendency in benefit concerts for there to be a socio-political, historical, and economic disconnect between "the viewer" (the audience) and "those poor people over there" (the refugees being assisted). Although we hoped that sharing specific narratives would discourage anonymity and generalization, the accountability of Canadian and/or North American foreign policy upon the realities that impacted the refugee musicians in their native countries was not investigated within the concert setting. Instead, the national socio-political realities existing in their native countries before their arrival in Canada were shared with the audience, briefly, and without considering the larger, worldwide contexts in which these events unfolded. This is an area of benefit concert production that is very challenging to negotiate. How does one address the culpability of those in attendance who are attempting to make a positive contribution to "the cause"? One approach we might have taken in the "Safe Haven" concert could have been to incorporate information regarding Canada's involvement with the countries from which the refugees originated, in the program. For example, how does Canada directly or indirectly sanction the policies these governments carry out through economic trade? If this information had been provided to the audience, along with contact information for organizations and government officials who address these concerns, the audience in attendance might have had the opportunity to consider their personal connection to the realities faced by refugees, while simultaneously being offered an opportunity to take action. Considering ways in which to encourage feelings of accountability is a challenging, yet important component of benefit concert

production. It requires a great deal of research before the concert occurs and a great deal of thought in terms of how one might share such information in a non-accusatory, yet honest, fashion.

REPRESENTATION THROUGH PUBLICITY

Although reciprocal relationships were encouraged in the production of "Safe Haven," there was a discrepancy between the ways in which the choral groups and the refugee musicians were encouraged to contribute and how they were represented. This is clarified, in part, through an examination of the representational practices that were used in the promotion of the concert.

Both the UGC and the Shirleys had photographs (professionally produced) that they use in concert promotions, both in self-produced concerts and in situations where they are invited to participate in an event produced by an outside organization. In contrast, a member of the RC who had a longstanding relationship with Peter, Manuela and José took on the responsibility of locating photographs of these musicians to be included in the publicity. This RC member and I worked together to design and produce the poster that acted as our primary mode of advertising. We did not have a budget in place for creating posters; therefore, we were forced to work very simply. Creating a document in Microsoft Word, we inserted text and the photos. We then photocopied the poster in the church office, which allowed the production expenses to be absorbed by the committees' photocopying accounts. A few days prior to the deadline we had set for finishing the poster, the RC member told me that she did not have photos of Peter, José, Jolin and Manuela. The result was that we ended up producing a poster (see the following page) that only had photos of the UGC and the Shirleys.

As can be seen through an examination of the poster, the photos direct the viewer's gaze to the two vocal groups. They appear to be the "headliners" of the event. Peter and José's names do not stand out; rather, they are listed below the photos and take up less space. Further, directly below the photos is the word "and" under which are the names of the refugee musicians. The "and" leads one to believe that these last two groups are accompanying, or are in addition to, the choral groups, creating a hierarchical representation of participating musicians. Thus, by visually critiquing the poster, it becomes clear that the ways in which the UGC and the Shirleys are presented contributes to the perception that they are the "professional" musicians.[13]

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[13] Important to note is that I am using Peter's pseudonym throughout this thesis and have altered his personal information on the poster as well. This was not done at the time of the promotion of the concert. His real name and country of origin were displayed publicly. I had not taken on the responsibility of communicating with Peter, José and Manuela regarding the inclusion of their biographical information in

SAFE HAVEN

A Benefit Concert in Support of the Refugee and Social Justice Committees at the Unitarian Church

♫ *FEATURING* ♫

THE UNIVERSAL GOSPEL CHOIR
BRIAN TATE Music Director

The Shirleys

Songs of [West Africa] by Peter ******
And
José Juan and his Guatemalan marimba band!

OCTOBER 7th, 2006

Artisans and refreshments beginning at **6:00 pm**
Concert at **7:00pm**

UNITARIAN CHURCH OF VANCOUVER
949 – W. 49th Avenue, Vancouver (at Oak)

TICKETS - **At the door - Single $15, Family $25**

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the concert promotions. It was not until after the concert that I learned of Peter's desire to keep his biographical information private. The way this information was disclosed, and its implications, will be explored in the following sections.

The amount of work required to plan the concert, in combination with limited time and resources, all influenced the way the poster was created. Had we not been as rushed, and had I known earlier that there were not photos available for two of the four musical acts, I believe I would have approached the process differently. It was not until the post-production discussions with José, Manuela and Peter that I asked them if they would prefer having their photo in future concert promotions. All responded that they were not overly concerned by the lack of visual representation; however, they stated that if the money and resources permitted, it would be nice to have their photo included.

CONCERT FORMAT

The concert layout was developed quickly, taking only a portion of our second planning meeting to accomplish. In our first meeting, we had already made a collective decision that the UGC and the Shirleys would each be given 30 minutes to perform, whereas Peter would do a 15-20 minute set, as would Manuela, José and Jolin. We wanted time reserved for speakers from each committee at the concert; therefore, it was thought that four 30-minute sets would make the event too long. The musicians were not consulted about the length of set they would prefer. The committees made a decision, and then as they approached each group, they included the length of performance time that was being requested in the invitation.

Concert production is influenced by a need to create balance between sets and a need to make sure each half is an appropriate length. Programming "Safe Haven" involved anticipating the energy levels of each musical set and crafting a sort of energy flow, (i.e., moments of heightened sound and energy moving into moments of more reflective and softer sound). There were many factors that contributed to the decision to offer 30-minute sets to the UGC and the Shirleys, while only 15-minute sets to Peter and Manuela, José and Jolin. Though this was, in part, a choice shaped by the two-hour time frame, there were also aesthetic and creative considerations in terms of creating a cohesive flow of music throughout the concert. I had not heard or observed Peter, Manuela, José or Jolin play before the concert, which meant I was relying entirely on the RC members' descriptions of their musical content and performance styles. In the end, my knowledge of the UGC and Shirleys' repertoire, along with the RC members' knowledge of the refugee musicians' repertoire, were combined, resulting in, what we were informally told by audience members, was a good flow and selection of music.

Knowing that two 30-minute sets, as well as time allocated to committee speakers in each half of the concert would make the event far too long, it was decided that there should be one shorter set

and one longer one in each half. Although the UGC and the Shirleys differ, the fact that they are both vocal ensembles and have some similarities in musical styles and membership, led the producers to separate them, having the UGC in the first half and the Shirleys in the second. Further, it was thought that the groups that were larger in number, and thus had more bodies and schedules to coordinate, should be given longer time slots. The UGC is an 85-member choir. Although the group did not perform in its entirety at "Safe Haven," there were a large number of people volunteering their time for rehearsals, travel, and the performance itself. The Shirleys are the second largest group (having 8 members). There was a sense that by offering longer time slots to these larger groups, it might be "more worth their while" to invest in the preparatory process and performance. At the time, I thought this reasoning and decision-making was appropriate. In hindsight, I realize that it would have been wise to speak directly to the musicians before coming to a decision about each group's set length. The reality is that we were confined to a particular length of time for the concert, which did not allow for longer sets for each group. We did not want to cut down on the number of participants; therefore, we (the concert organizers) needed to find a solution. In future, however, I would speak with each participant, to ask them if they have preferences with regards to set lengths and placements and to address any concerns they might have before the format is set. In so doing, I imagine more respectful and open dialogue might be established between the organizers and the participants. Approaching the programming in such a way might also generate a final product that is more representational of *all* the participants' desires and vision.

PROFESSIONALISM

One of the direct results of advertising and concert programming choices was the effect it had on the audience's perceptions concerning the levels of the musicians' professionalism. After the production was over one audience member told me, "I think the Shirleys and the choir… people thought about them as more professional maybe… these are very rehearsed groups" (February 17, 2007). Although this audience member was drawing his own conclusions, I believe that the way the refugee musicians were promoted, and the length of their sets, in part influenced his interpretations.

Curious to further understand this interpretation of the difference in professionalism, I conducted a feedback interview with one of the audience members who, immediately following the concert, had made comments suggesting that she had viewed the musical groups differently. During our interview, we watched the video footage of the concert and then I asked her to reflect upon the visual "cues" that

had led her to believe that each group had varying levels of experience.

First we spoke about José, Manuela and Jolin. Her overall interpretation of them was that "they were real people on stage, they weren't performers… they didn't come across as people who are used to performing" (May 5, 2007). She felt that they were received differently from the other performers. "I felt [they received] a more enthusiastic welcome and I'm not sure if it was a forced, 'ok, we want to make sure that these people know they are welcome here,' whereas the Shirleys, it was more just appreciative of the music…" (ibid.). This individual interpreted the audience's response as being, in part, influenced by the fact that this group was a family of refugees and felt that they were first and foremost received as such. According to her, this fact may have influenced their welcome, whereas the other groups were largely received based on their musical and performance abilities.

She elaborated by saying, "I didn't expect them to be professionals. They were there because they were representing a group of people who have come over…" (ibid.). This statement illustrates one important element of the representation that was inadvertently achieved through the concert. The refugee musicians ended up "standing in" for all refugees. They represented "the refugee experience." Although Peter and José's families came to Canada under extremely different circumstances, countries, and cultural and socio-political contexts, this audience member perceived them as "representing a group of people who have come over." This is one of the pitfalls that Malkki (1996) cautions against: the anonymity and generalized suffering that can be re-enforced through the representation of refugees in humanitarian efforts. As stated, this was something that organizers attempted to avoid, but which we were clearly not entirely successful at achieving. This audience member stated that she had no expectations for the refugees to be professional musicians. Although she does not state that refugees cannot be professional musicians, the fact that she did not expect them to be is significant, and reflective of her interpretation of these musicians and their involvement in this event. She stated, "I'm guessing the RC had helped them in some way and that was why they were there" (ibid.). While she was watching José, Manuela and Jolin, she was under the impression that the reason they were there was because they had a pre-existing relationship with the RC. Though she did not question their musicianship, this was not what she saw as the primary motivator behind their involvement. Further, she explained, "If I hadn't known they were refugees, I probably would have been more critical… I would have expected a certain level of professionalism" (ibid.). Knowing of their previous refugee status and their connection to the RC, in effect, lowered her expectations of musicianship and professionalism.

This audience member provided a thorough explanation of why she did not interpret these musicians as professionals:

> It was [lack of] comfort on stage, it was talking in the microphone and walking away while you are still talking, it was adjusting the microphone but not really knowing how to do it… It makes it clear that you aren't professional if you don't know how to do it. And it didn't seem like there was a plan on what was going to be [said] in between songs, which is great, but it just feels more like real people and not professionals. [I saw it] in their faces, in their [lack of] comfort being on stage, eyes downcast a lot, comfortable as long as they were playing music… but the minute it was in between, talking or clapping, it looked a little bit more awkward… self-conscious… The father was [struggling] for words and gesturing to try and fill in the gaps, but we didn't always get it… Musically [José, Manuela and Jolin]… they were on it together, their precision was good… if I was just listening to the music… it was more presentation. (ibid.)

Interestingly, she judged their level of professionalism not on musical ability, but rather on stage etiquette, comfort and presentation style. Comfort and fluency with English most certainly affected José's comfort, in particular, as he was responsible for speaking in between the songs and introducing the material. Even when he and I spoke in our interview, I noticed a similar hesitancy and self-consciousness and felt it was mostly to do with his discomfort conversing in English. However, this audience member also points out physical behaviours (lack of eye contact and discomfort using the microphone) as reasons behind her interpretation of their lower level of professionalism. An interesting point that should be made is that physical behaviours such as eye contact, and performance etiquette and styles are culturally specific. This audience member was interpreting the lack of eye contact (and other physically exhibited behaviours) based on North American performance expectations, something she acknowledges in the following statement:

> The [UGC]… there's such a huge number of people that it has a certain effect on you… That many people in ordered lines, in tiers, in [sections], wearing the same costumes… It's obvious someone has purchased [them] which implies that it is an organization. The ease with which Brian (the director) grabs the microphone – he knows exactly what to say because he has said it a million times, he's so used to being on stage. Even the choir knows how to direct their attention, so while he is speaking they are all looking at him… Everybody knows how to stand while they are waiting… There's a certain North American stage etiquette that we as an audience… understand and recognize. There's a certain amount of eye contact and relationship between the audience and performers… there's ease in between pieces… entrances and exits, movement… (ibid.)

She clearly outlined for me the North American-based criteria by which she judged the choir as being more professional performers than José, Manuela and Jolin. This is an important point, as both José,

Manuela and Jolin, as well as Peter, have come from very different cultural contexts and the circumstances in which they have previously performed varies.

Critiquing the Shirleys' level of professionalism, she states:

> ...The strength of [their] voices... [They] know exactly what to do in between numbers... It's a more informal type of performance and yet it's professionally done, because of how the performance is run... [They]'ve obviously decided on the colour scheme [for clothing]. [They]'ve been on stage so many times that [they] just know the way it goes... Songs are well rehearsed. (ibid.)

She emphasized to me that she viewed the choir as more formal than the Shirleys, in costume, direction, presentation and choreography; however, in her mind, this did not mean that the Shirleys were less professional, only more informal.

Finally, she explained to me her interpretation of Peter's level of professionalism:

> Peter, I felt, was also more professional than the family. Mostly because in between pieces, I remember him telling stories... it was just comfortable. You had no doubt that he was not new to the stage... I think that had to do with language. I think he has maybe a better grasp of English than the family did... It was easier to understand him, so I don't know if he's been here longer maybe? Also the fact that [Peter] had CDs for sale[14]... And he looks like a North American musician... leather jacket and jeans... (ibid.)

Again, this audience member suggests that comfort with the language impacts a performer's abilities; however, she also provides examples of other influential criteria. She genuinely perceived Peter as professional in his performance. Although she knew he was a refugee, and was in part participating because of his relationship with the committee, she still interpreted that he was comfortable on stage. Also his clothing and the fact that he had a CD for sale made him more professional than José, Manuela and Jolin. This is one audience member's opinion. Although I recognize that it cannot be taken as representative of the views of the majority of those in attendance, I do think it offers an interesting interpretation of how musicians were received during the "Safe Haven" concert.

An SJC member gave me written feedback after the concert that reinforced this audience

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[14] The UGC has CDs but they were not selling them at the "Safe Haven" concert. The Shirleys have two demo recordings and are currently producing their first full-length CD. They did not sell their demos at "Safe Haven." Prior to the concert, I learned that Peter would be selling his CDs. I believe his choice to do so effectively created an opportunity for encouraging his musical work in the community. Further, as he was volunteering his time, it allowed Peter to make some money for his work as a musician. Finally, as there can often be an imbalance of power between those assisting (in this case, the RC) and those being assisted (in this case, Peter), by selling his CDs, I observed a more reciprocal exchange occurring. Peter was able to provide a product and receive a sum of money in exchange. This differs greatly from the experience of solely receiving financial assistance from the RC or volunteering his time as a performer.

member's statements. Referring to the UGC and the Shirleys he said, "We had great musicians volunteer their time" (October 30, 2006). An RC member wrote, "Samantha had access to two top-notch, popular choral groups who donated their time and talent and who drew in an audience" (October 12, 2006). She adds later on in her feedback, "I think having performers who were refugees from two different areas was good" (ibid.). Though each group made valuable contributions, there is a distinction drawn in this last statement: the choral groups brought in people, whereas the refugee musicians brought a level of first-hand experience to the event, also highly valued.

AUTHENTICITY

In reflecting upon "Safe Haven" with the participants, the concept of "authenticity" was mentioned several times. In order to effectively unpack this term, and understand its implication in relation to the representational practices used during the concert, I refer to James Clifford (1988). He asserts that, "claims to purity are in any event always subverted by the need to stage authenticity *in opposition to* external, often dominating alternatives." He continues by stating that, "If authenticity is relational, there can be no essence except as a political, cultural invention, a local tactic" (12). This understanding of authenticity as a cultural construct, created in response to, and in opposition of, "dominating alternatives," is helpful in interpreting the following points.

José, Jolin, Manuela and Peter are all skilled musicians and well respected by the UCV congregation; however, their involvement was, in part, motivated by organizers' desires to include performers who were refugees, and thus, personally connected to the issues addressed during "Safe Haven." An audience member I spoke to after the concert stated:

> Peter probably had the most… he was the most 'real' I felt, of the acts… because he was a refugee, and he had quite an amazing story to tell, so I felt like people really connected to him because he was the real deal. His music was… very real; like his lyrics were just out there… they said it like it was. However the next act really loosened everyone up, because the [UGC] was very fun. You know… Peter, he was not fun to have up there… he was more impactful… around the issues. (February 17, 2007)

In this statement there is a clear distinction drawn between the UGC and Peter. Peter is seen as "the real deal." He is considered to be genuinely informed and authentic, more so than the UGC. This perception of authenticity was fostered through the sharing of Peter's experiences as a refugee. Clearly Peter had first-hand knowledge, whereas the UGC members did not.

Although this individual valued Peter's contributions, he also felt that Peter was "not fun to have up there." Recalling a comment made by an RC member who believes that music helps the "medicine go down" (see Chapter Three, 65), in this situation, one could argue that Peter, José, Manuela and Jolin's performances may have been viewed, by some, as a part of the medicine that the UGC and Shirleys helped the audience ingest. They provided the fun and entertaining sections, while the refugee musicians provided education and validity. Although the UGC and the Shirleys both have repertoire that address important socio-political issues such as the Anti-Apartheid and the Civil Rights movements, these musicians are not first-hand participants in these struggles, which, distances them from the struggles they address through their music. The refugee musicians do not have that same distance; therefore, the potency and immediacy of their personal, socio-political circumstances resonated more deeply with the audience. To a degree, this discrepancy set the refugee musicians apart from the audience and from the other performers. Their stories were unsettling, to say the least. Their biographies were informative to the audience, but may have also challenged their comfort levels. Due to the fact that Peter, Manuela, José and Jolin's past experiences were emphasized so strongly, and the fact that they were markedly different than the majority of the audience's, a divide was created between them. This separation is noted in the following statement that was made by one of the Shirleys, "I felt the refugee musicians to be a bit isolated somehow…in their communities… I [thought] the listeners would be closer – more [on] equal ground – not…set at a distance."

Another audience member viewed Manuela and José as authentic because, "they chose to wear traditional clothing, whereas the[ir] son [Jolin] did not… It was an interesting choice… the parents wearing authentic clothing" (May 5, 2007). José and Manuela's clothing (as well as their physical appearance and accent) gave the audience visual evidence that they were indeed from Guatemala, and in part, corroborated the biographical information that was provided regarding the experiences they endured before arriving in Canada as refugees. Their clothing helped construct the audience's perception of them as authentic Guatemalan refugees. The fact that their son was in "Canadian" clothes, illustrated the cultural negotiation that their family is engaged in: maintaining their connection with Guatemalan identity and culture, while integrating into a new and diverse cultural context as Canadian citizens. Although they have lived in Canada for twenty years, this negotiation is ongoing and particularly evident when their Canadian-born son plays traditional marimba songs with them in concerts.

PERFORMER REPRESENTATION THROUGH PROGRAM BIOGRAPHIES

Raised through conversations I had with Peter, José and Manuela, was an issue directly related to what Malkki (1996) refers to as the "speechlessness" of refugees. Although it is essential that applied ethnomusicologists working with refugees be aware of this tendency to silence individual experience, it is also essential to realize that in attempting to work against "speechlessness," one runs the risk of appropriating and exposing others' stories without full consent – something that is no less harmful. An example of this phenomenon occurred during the production of "Safe Haven" where we used a particular representational practice: printing the musicians' biographical information in the concert program.

I collected biographies from the UGC and the Shirleys for the program, while an RC member supplied me with Peter, Manuela, Jolin and José's biographical information. Concerning the latter, the statements submitted to me emphasized the experiences they had had in fleeing their countries as refugees and described the processes they underwent to establish citizenship in Canada. Although their musical experiences were mentioned, they were not emphasized. As English is not the refugee musicians' first language, I assumed that their biographical information had been written with the help of committee members. In hindsight, I realize that I did not consider the content of their bios as carefully as I should have. It was not until I interviewed Peter after the concert that I realized some of the implications of the refugees' biographical content.

Peter has been blind since he was a child. I knew he had not read the program, but assumed that he knew the contents of the bio that was included on his behalf. When we began to discuss this issue, he asked me to read it to him. After I finished, he was silent for a moment. The following is the conversation that resulted:

> Peter: I don't know who… who signed this?
> Samantha: I don't know. I was going to ask you…
> Peter: Did you find this…where?
> Samantha: The Refugee Committee had this bio… I don't know if it was one used in a previous concert… and I was curious who wrote it?
> Peter: I don't know. I don't know. I have no idea… They know about me, so maybe somebody…
> *Pause.*
> Samantha: Just wrote it. Does that feel ok for you or would you prefer something different?
> Peter: I don't know… that's ah… it's ok. Everything there is true, right. It depend[s] what your project is focusing on. If your program is focusing just on music, then we don't need all those… Yeah, since I came here… my family is still there you know.

> People here don't understand it. They just keep putting all those… things… like refugee, and all those problem[s] that I used to have on paper. My family is still there and I don't want to put anybody in danger, you know?
> Samantha: Of course.
> Peter: Now everything we do… the Internet is just… we can see everywhere, you know…
> Samantha: Oh, I see.
> Peter: They hardly understand it, you know. I always feel like I have to close that page, and make a new life, but people here like a dark story, which I *hate*. I don't like that story… Like a sad page. I like to close that page quickly… and forget about it and look forward, right? But if those contents match to your project, just keep them… and do your project.
> *Pause.*
> Samantha: Because there isn't much information about your music in this biography.
> Peter: Yeah.
> Samantha: And it would be nice to hear more about your music experience…
> Peter: Right.
> Samantha: It is important for you to be discreet… have privacy… because of your family.
> Peter: Yes. For some reason I have to stop them… I'm ok. They spend money… they help me… help my family come… but they have to respect stuff.
> Samantha: Absolutely. I am sorry that I didn't know about this earlier…
> Peter: For example, somebody can just… if they want to make trouble…send that paper to [West Africa] today, and it can cause problem[s] for my family.
> Samantha: Yes.
> Peter: … I'm hiding here. *Pause.* I want to turn that page. It's hell, me listening to it… but people…
> Samantha: Want to dwell on it… on that part of your life…
> Peter: Yes. I don't know why… For example, if I have to meet somebody, they tell me, "Tell him everything about how you came to be here." But why should I tell them everything? Do I know something from that person? I don't want my life, like dark exposure… dark. This is my personal thing. My personal experience. (February 2, 2007)

Peter feels that he has lost the opportunity to be selective in the sharing of his personal narrative and expressed great concern over this fact. When we spoke, he was unsettled and frustrated primarily because his extended family is still living in West Africa. Further, by perpetually hearing the details of his story, by continually being considered first and foremost a "refugee," he finds it difficult to move on and start a new life. In his new community, he finds himself set apart by the experiences he endured and the emphasis that is placed on his past.

At one point in the conversation, Peter admitted feeling that because the Refugee Committee assisted him and his family, he must accept the ways in which his personal details are used as

promotional material. But at the same time, Peter was adamant that his narrative was being misused. I believe that it was his feelings of appreciation, his respect for the committee's work and his feelings of indebtedness that gave rise to his mixed response. Peter feels ambivalent: in exchange for assistance, he has lost autonomy over his story. He has tried and failed to communicate his opinions on these matters to the committee, but believes his feelings are perhaps lost in translation[15].

Peter's experience of the RC's promotional choices sharply contrasts with the committee's intentions. In the committee members' minds, sharing the details of Peter's life not only reinforced the urgency for financial support, but also educated the public about the need to support refugee services and about the socio-political struggles that many people face. The RC is trying to cultivate education, assistance, compassion and commitment in their church community and their city. The sharing of personal narratives initiated donations in the past, which enabled them to help Peter and his family. In turn, Peter's story became the perfect educational tool for the committee, and will hopefully lead to further possibilities to financially assist others in crisis. When questioned about the intentions behind using the refugees' biographical information as advertising for both the committee's work and the fundraising it undertakes, one RC member explained to me:

> The purpose of the Refugee Committee is to help refugees! To do that one must publicize the fact that millions of refugees exist in the world, why that is so, how they escaped from dangerous situations, what caused them to choose and/or come to Canada, how they have resettled and become part of Canada's rich fabric, what courageous good people they are, why Canada should welcome them (there are people even in our own congregation who doubt that we should help/encourage refugees-feel they are immigrants merely "jumping the queue"), what contributions refugees can and will make to our country, and finally how Canadians can help them. How better to do that than to tell individual stories, some of them unbelievably horrifying? In telling life stories in a setting such as the "Safe Haven" concert, of course the idea is to arouse sympathy and raise awareness of our need to help (and our need to raise money because it is expensive to help refugees). (May 9, 2007)

This RC member was also able to confirm the origins of Peter's biography. According to her, she updated it based on material provided by an individual whom she describes as Peter's "staunch devoted Canadian supporter." The biographical statement she wrote was an "attempt to arouse sympathy and obtain finances from church groups for him [and] his family, and had already been widely published" (ibid.). On the other hand, this RC member explained, the bio of José, Jolin and Manuela

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[15] I raised Peter's concerns in a meeting with committee members'. The results of this conversation will be discussed in Chapter Five.

was "strictly what they themselves gave me/approved of" (ibid.).

Manuela and José's opinions concerning the use of biographical information differed greatly from Peter's. When I asked José about his family's biography, he responded that he thought it was a good idea to share their story with the audience. "They want to hear about our history… and we can try to explain," (February 10, 2007) he said. He emphasized that he believed it was good for people to learn about what has happened in other parts of the world and for Canadians to understand the struggles that others face. He feels that education can lead to the cultivation of understanding and compassion.

Clearly, Peter, José and Manuela have very different perspectives on this issue. They have had very different experiences and their cultural contexts and worldviews differ. The length of time they have spent in Canada varies (five years for Peter and over twenty for José and Manuela's family). Further, the current socio-political situations in their countries of origin also differ. Peter told me that the dictatorship that existed when he fled his home is still active to this day, whereas the political situation has changed in Guatemala over the past two decades. All of these details contribute to their differing views on the sharing of personal narrative.

The focus of the biographical information that was used during the concert to represent the UGC and the Shirleys was different from José, Peter, Manuela, and Jolin's. The pre-written biographies I collected from the two vocal ensembles are used for concert programs, general promotions, and grant and festival applications. These biographies were written by members and focus entirely on their musical experiences and skills. Therefore, in the "Safe Haven" concert, the UGC and the Shirleys were presented first and foremost as musicians, whereas José, Manuela and Peter were presented first and foremost as "refugees." This created a division between the groups, one that was perceived by both audience members and musicians alike. The differing biographical content shaped the lens through which the audience encountered and received the musicians, influencing their understanding of each group's musical abilities. The fact that Peter, Jolin, Manuela and José's musicianship was not emphasized in their written and verbal introduction, played a part in the audience's reception of them.

During the concert, the Master of Ceremonies introduced each set with an abbreviated version of the groups' biography (see Chapter One, 21, 23, Chapter Two, 48). The content was not altered, only shortened for the sake of keeping to the concert's schedule. Not only did audience members read this information before and during the concert, but it was also reinforced verbally immediately before they observed the musicians perform. The program biographies (in both written and verbal form) directed the audience's attention to certain details. For the UGC and the Shirleys, the details included their

repertoire, musical experiences and skills, as well as their commitment to community-outreach. Although a small portion of Peter, José, Manuela and Jolin's biography introduced their musical experiences, the majority of the information focused on their personal traumas and the ways in which they had been assisted by the RC and other similar organizations. Therefore, not only were differing levels of professionalism re-enforced through the concert program, but also the roles of "helpers" (the UGC and the Shirleys) and "the helped" (Peter, Manuela, José and Jolin). It was clear that every musician playing in the concert was contributing; however, the fact that the Shirleys and the UGC had never been assisted in these ways did place them overall (along with the audience and committee members) into more clearly defined "helping" roles.

Although interpreted differently, the discrepancy between the levels of personal details disclosed to the audience, was felt by some in attendance, as well as a few of the other musicians. One audience member noticed the emphasis on presenting the refugee musicians' personal biographical information and felt the audience received it positively. In fact, she felt the need for even more information. Describing José, Manuela and Jolin's performance, she stated:

> The audience seemed to really like the talking between numbers. It helped them to connect with the musicians' situations. That seemed to be hard for the family that played together. Although the father would introduce the song, we wanted more. Who were these people? Why are they refugees? (February 4, 2007)

Although this audience member's curiosity stemmed from a desire to know more about the socio-political realities the musicians faced, her questions might be interpreted as inappropriate and unfair to Peter. José, Manuela and Jolin, on the other hand, feel comfortable with such a request for information.

As previously discussed, this same audience member also informed me that, in her opinion, "the audience received everyone well, but it seemed that they were more careful to receive the refugee groups in a positive, energetic way than they were the others" (ibid.). I believe these feelings of "carefulness" in interacting with the refugee musicians was, in part, encouraged by the biographical information that was shared with the audience. They were presented as individuals who had endured great traumas and suffering. Knowing this did impact the way others approached or interacted with them. The "carefulness" was in part a direct result of the perception that was created of these musicians as "victims," and as "fragile" or "damaged" in some way. Perhaps this information caused tentativeness in that there was a fear of "saying the wrong thing," and as a result, triggering a negative emotional response. Learning of the nature of these musicians' experiences as refugees may also have had the

effect of evoking pity and feelings of difference, and as a result, created distance and tentative interactions.

After the concert I reflected a great deal upon matters of difference and distance. Although I found it difficult to admit to myself, I realized that the way in which I had interacted with José, Manuela and Peter had been influenced by feelings of "otherness." I wrote in my journal:

> *I think I have been interacting with the refugee musicians as if they are delicate and wounded... When I first met Peter, I walked towards him, I shook his hand, and I spoke with him carefully. Though it is incredibly hard to admit to myself, I realize now that I was looking at him and seeing first and foremost his hurt, anger, and pain. Instead of seeing the person, I saw someone who has suffered. I saw someone who I wanted to support and help. And I did the same thing when I met Manuela and José. At some level I was stuck in just telling myself that we were doing this great thing, doing this benefit concert. But to benefit whom? To benefit them. We will help them. And I am shocked by this thought. At the same time, I recognize it, because it is so prevalent in benefit concert culture. And I know that it is the RC's intention (and my own by working with them) to help secure basic human rights like safety, food and shelter. It is an intention that I respect and I know that Peter and his family, and Manuela, José and their family have achieved these things, and I am so thankful that that is the case. But this power dynamic of "us" (meaning Canadians? People with power, wealth, knowledge, resources?) extending assistance to "those in need," when we feel compelled to do so... it is so problematic...* (November 22, 2006)

The feelings expressed in this journal entry are reflective of the power imbalances, which often occur in the benefit concert context, that re-affirm the differences between those attempting to assist, and those who have been or will be assisted. The realization concerning the ways in which their personal narratives were shared and how this affected my interactions with, and perceptions of these musicians, was a pivotal moment in the research process. Being honest with oneself in such a way is not easy and can feel quite unsettling; however, it is absolutely essential that this self-reflection be an integral component of an applied ethnomusicologist's process when working in benefit concert production. If it is not, cycles of power imbalances and unhealthy representational practices will be perpetuated. An important step to take now that I have examined and critiqued my work, and the work of my research colleagues, is to consider, the steps that might be taken to shape my future endeavours, and those of other applied ethnomusicologists. In Chapter Five, I will consider what practices might replace those used in this project that inadvertently fostered power imbalances.

APPROPRIATE REPRESENTATION

The representational practices used in the production and presentation of "Safe Haven" affected and contributed to the interpretation of each musical group by the audience, and amongst the musicians. As a result, power imbalances were at times established and maintained, affecting the quality of the relationships between "those who are assisting" and "those who are assisted." There were clearly divisions recognized by certain audience members and musicians (between the refugee musicians and the UGC and the Shirleys).

However, I do not wish to give the impression that this was the only way in which this event was experienced. Although the potentially harmful effects of participant representation are essential to consider, it is also important to acknowledge the efforts and the successes of the concert (including the representational practices that were effective). In order to do so, I will share a statement that I received from an audience member:

> As I was thinking about this whole concert… the solidarity of different groups… it reminded me of… I heard something on the radio… CBC… and this man had done a documentary on partition… you know, when Pakistan separated, and how many people had to relocate. He was an amazing man. And he said he was not into politics. He had not done this documentary to make a political stand, but at his age, he said, 'Clearly we have so little time. Our lives are very short, so we have no time for division.' I thought that was a great line, and I thought in a way, that's what your concert exemplified. There is no time for division, so it's really important for people to stand together about the issues that are important and to support other people, even if their backgrounds are different, or even if some of their values aren't common. You know, there is enough in common to just support the kind of integrity and sacredness of each person regardless of where they come from. I felt that was really evident in the music… (February 15, 2007)

This particular audience member did not experience the division that was earlier addressed, rather, a sense of participants working together, of strength in difference and of solidarity. She made sure to clarify for me that these feelings that she described did not mean that there was not "separateness" present in the concert. A fine balance must be struck, she told me, between the sharing of experience and separation. She described it as reflective of the ways in which "we deal with integration as a culture." She elaborated by stating:

> It's important for people to integrate. Like having everyone there in the same venue - that's important. But on the other hand, if everyone is too integrated, then you lose the singularity and uniqueness of each culture. And so I think that for the people who presented separately, that gives you an opportunity to really appreciate the singularity of their cultural expression… I felt that to have those other musicians do their own thing was really appropriate, and it gave you a feel of their particular cultural background, and

> how they wanted to express that. I just think it kind of set them apart… It's unrealistic… I mean they are apart. They are coming to this culture, and they aren't really feeling like part of the North American culture totally. They are feeling their own cultural heritage, and then trying to do that dance of joining and still maintaining their own uniqueness. (ibid.)

Although this audience member is addressing a different issue than that of the "othering" that occurred through the representation of the refugees and their experiences, I do feel that these comments lend another perspective to this analysis. Cultural and socio-political differences were noticed and yet they did not always lead to the perception of power imbalances in these particular relationships of assistance. There were no comments made by this observer indicative of an underlying perception of "*Us* helping *Them*." As noted, audience members experienced this event very differently. Some perceived musicians and concert organizers as connected, cooperative and equal, while others perceived more separateness and power imbalances. I would wager a guess that most experienced the concert as a mixture of both. Though I am not able to confirm the following, I would assume that the reason that there was such a breadth of perception is because each individual had had very different experiences with musical, inter-cultural and socio-political events. Each concert attendee arrived with a differing set of expectations for this concert and differing levels of exposure to similar events. Individuals' levels of awareness regarding issues facing refugees would have varied, as well as individuals' experiences with noticing and critiquing power discrepancies and representational practices. I am thankful that such a range of interpretation occurred, for, more often than not, a concert hall will be filled with a wide range of individuals, musical tastes, and socio-political leanings. Although I will continue to actively question the intentions and practices that were at work in this concert, I take the previous audience member's positive interpretation equally to heart, and will consider in the following chapter, the many ways in which the positive outcomes of this concert might be multiplied, and further cultivated in my future applied ethnomusicological endeavors.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Scholars who have addressed the representation of refugees and the Third World through humanitarian efforts, the media and benefit concert production caution applied ethnomusicologists of the potential harms that are possible. Hackett (1989) believes that the results of North American media representations of the Third World can include the reinforcement of negative stereotypes about immigrants and refugees. These representations show refugees as distinct from immigrants because they

are "victims deserving of sympathy" (824). Critiquing the patriarchal nature of development anthropology, Escobar (1991) advocates instead for the cultivation of "pluralistic grassroots movements." Liisa Malkki (1996) describes one of the effects of bureaucratized humanitarian interventions as the "silencing of refugees" and advocates for alternatives that counteract the tendency to ignore the specific socio-political, historical and economic contexts from which refugees have come. T.V. Reed (2005) illustrates the tendency in benefit concert culture for the First World organizers and performers to disassociate themselves from the issues they are addressing through their concerts. This denial of culpability reinforces the very practices that have contributed to the problems they wish to counteract through their creative and political work.

The production of "Safe Haven" was undertaken with these scholars' concerns and suggestions in mind. Although much was achieved, there were still power imbalances and inaccurate representations that occurred. Through the promotion and execution of the concert, the manner in which the refugee musicians were represented (the lack of photos on the poster, placement in the concert, length of musical set, inclusion of biographical information that one participant was not comfortable sharing) added to the perceptions of some audience members that levels of professionalism and authenticity between the musicians differed. Emphasizing Peter, José, Manuela and Jolin's experiences as refugees, led to several oppositional interpretations of the concert's results: 1) the concert was validated to an extent by their involvement, 2) instead of learning more generally about the struggle of refugees worldwide, the audience was able to personalize the information by hearing specific stories, and by meeting specific individuals, and 3) through this sharing of specific stories, distance and difference were also established between the refugee performers, the vocal groups, and the audience.

I understand why the concert organizers emphasized the experiences of the refugee performers. There was a genuine desire to share valuable information with the audience and inspire further participation in, and support for, the work of the RC. I also understand why this emphasis resulted in a perceived separation between the refugee musicians and the other concert participants. Although I think that their experiences are tremendously important to honour and share in this context (should they wish to share their stories), in focusing so much on their experiences as refugees, and less on their musicianship, power discrepancies were fostered, rather than countered. In fact, the refugee musicians were emphatically differentiated from the other participants in the concert. How can I learn from this experience, and how might I approach future projects differently? Firstly, I would encourage the RC and concert organizers in general, to spend time discussing with refugee musicians, the degree to which

their personal experiences ought to be focused upon during a benefit concert, and what the results of this focus might be. In the following and final chapter, I will elaborate further upon this recommendation, and put forward others that might encourage healthier and more informed development in the area of benefit concert production.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this final chapter, I will summarize the findings of the "Safe Haven" benefit concert research project. Further, I will consider the implications of these findings and the ways in which results of this project might offer insights into future applied ethnomusicological undertakings. From there I will move from a focus on analysis and interpretation into the final portion of this thesis: recommendations for future studies.

SUMMARY

Introduction

In the introduction to this thesis I suggested that applied research in the discipline of ethnomusicology has been limited. What are consistently lacking are detailed methodological summations. Further, although scholars indigenous to the cultures and communities in question undertake a growing number of ethnomusicological studies, there has been an absence of documented applied research projects wherein the researcher has been or continues to be a member of the community in which they are working. By embarking on this project, it was my intention to contribute to these two areas of limited documentation by providing a process-oriented thesis investigating an applied project in a community of which I was a part.

I concluded the introduction with a set of questions about benefit concert culture that informed the research process, the findings, and their interpretations. I asked the following: As ethnomusicologists, musicians, members of a community, as citizens, when do we help? How do we help? Why do we help? What kind of dialogues are we engaging in with those whom we are assisting? When is help desired and when is it not? Further, how can we re-think our processes, motivations, and communication techniques, so that these benefit events may become as respectful and reciprocal as possible? And finally, how can all the participants both help and be helped? I have not reached one particular set of responses to these questions; rather, I have concluded that the answers will consistently be community-, researcher-, and project-specific. The conclusions I have formulated, all of which are specific to the individuals and community I worked with, will be presented in the following sections.

Chapter One

In the first chapter, I began by situating myself as a researcher, musician and member of the religious community in question. I chose to work on this project because of an interest in and commitment to the Vancouver-based benefit concert culture with which I have been actively involved for several years. I believed that this local musical and socio-political practice merited inquiry and interpretation. Further, I wanted to explore the Unitarian Universalist church (and the UCV congregation specifically) as a community in which social justice initiatives are often undertaken, and more often than not, using music to achieve its goals. It was my intention to bring together each of these areas of inquiry in to one study, committed to exploring them through direct application and participation. I wanted to document and analyze the concert production as a member of the religious and musical groups involved, from an insider's perspective.

In order to situate this project in larger scholarly discourses, I provided a review of applied ethnomusicology literature. Drawing on these works, I interpreted applied ethnomusicology to be the direct involvement of the ethnomusicologist in presenting and advocating on behalf of musical traditions and those who practice them. This often involves the creation of "new" projects, conceived of and managed in part by the applied ethnomusicologist, alongside community members, created and maintained through direct response to the community's needs. I pointed out a distinction between "applied folklore" and "public sector folklore," and asserted that using more descriptive and specific terms in the field of applied ethnomusicology would help clarify and define the many forms that application can take, and the many roles and approaches that ethnomusicologists might undertake. As it stands, the term "applied ethnomusicology" is accurate and effective, and yet, perhaps too vague and challenging to define.

Wishing to locate and implement methodological approaches for this research, I investigated PAR literature. Key concepts and approaches outlined by PAR scholars included an emphasis on collaborative knowledge production, research process and interpretation of results. PAR is often insider-run and involves positive and direct results in the community. It was a merging of both applied ethnomusicology and PAR that I believed would best serve this research project.

Investigating the religious community in which "Safe Haven" was produced, I asserted that the UU religious tradition can be historically situated in the larger Protestant Christian church and thus, in its historical and contemporary stance on social justice and "good works." I examined a small number of writings that broadly addressed the merging of social justice, politics and Protestant Christian

religious faith, in which congregants' spiritual lives and religious practices are understood to be at times enacted in the institution of the church, but more frequently in their everyday lives away from the church.

The UU faith has evolved from its original Unitarian and Universalism Christian roots, and continues to draw on and integrate many of the other world religious traditions. Acceptance and respect for diversity of belief is woven into the fabric of the faith, as is an understanding of faith as enacted and created through personal choices and involvement in one's socio-political community. Both the RC and the SJC view their work as directly inspired by the UU guiding principles, and an integral component of their religious lives.

Finally, in Chapter One, I introduced two of the four ensembles that performed at the concert: the UGC and the Shirleys. It was previous musical experiences with these ensembles that informed my decision to pursue the development of a benefit concert in Vancouver in partnership with the UCV congregation. I entered into this project intending to suggest their involvement, as I knew that both their repertoire and socio-political stances resonated with the values and objectives of the SJC and RC, and the concert goals.

Chapter Two

I chose to work in my own musical and spiritual communities, organizing and performing in the resulting concert. This choice was made because, in my previous benefit concert experiences, I had found this approach of "being everywhere and doing everything" to be quite common. Therefore, I felt my level of involvement was appropriate and would effectively represent the realities of working on benefit concerts. In considering why this production style is so common, I came to several conclusions. When a community organization decides to do a benefit concert, more often than not funding is very limited or non-existent, volunteers are hard to come by, organizers are over-worked and under-paid (if at all), and time is generally limited. A musician who decides to participate is entirely affected by these issues. When funding and resources are limited, one must be creative in the way the organization of the event is executed. One must often do much of the work oneself, and must become adept at working in this manner.

In this chapter, I acknowledged that one could argue that the production and execution of "Safe Haven" was not a pure example of PAR, rather, it was one of an applied ethnomusicologist working with a community organization on concert production. Not every concert participant was involved in

every stage of the research process. Each concert participant and myself did not design the research collaboratively; rather, I approached the committees with the idea of a benefit concert, and they accepted it. I did not encourage the equal participation of every concert contributor. My understanding of the "community" in which I was working was too narrow, consisting entirely of the church committees, who were my concert co-producers. Individuals assisted by the committees were not involved in developing the event, nor were the musicians. I believed that working with one group of individuals on the development process would be more logistically feasible than trying to coordinate this same process with a significantly larger group. Although I did consider the needs of the musicians, had they been acknowledged as a part of the organizational community, and been involved in the decision-making process, methodology might have been modified to meet their specific needs. However, I also knew that the majority of the musicians would not be able to contribute to the concert's development, and would only expect to show up the night of, and do their performance. I considered these choices carefully beforehand, and I believed they were appropriate for this particular context. In hindsight I realize that I could have taken a more holistic approach. The fact that I did not challenges the notion that this project was conducted using PAR.

However, because the work we undertook was informed and shaped by PAR principles, and because my intention was to implement PAR, this project was an example of a modification of PAR. As the concert planning progressed, I realized that the reality of sustaining this approach would be difficult to achieve. Those involved were not always able or willing to fully engage in the process. The RC and the SJC decided as a group that expediency was necessary; therefore, leadership was often delegated or relegated to me. Time was not put aside for brainstorming and monthly meetings were carried out as quickly and efficiently as possible. Creating space for discussion was difficult to achieve, and thus, I felt as though a great deal of the concerns that arose during the planning were not addressed in the moment, but rather dealt with in the post-production feedback. In the eyes of the committee members, I was the producer of the event and they were assisting me, instead of my original concept to co-produce the concert. This was not because the RC and SJC did not feel compelled to work co-operatively; rather, the logistics of executing a project and the demands of the rest of their lives limited their availability and engagement levels. I did attempt, however, to encourage a collaborative process. I also came to the realization that every PAR project must be adapted to meet the needs of the community in question. PAR literature and guidelines provide a useful departure point, but are not effective in every context. I still feel strongly that it is a research ideal towards which I will continue to strive. The fact that it did

not entirely materialize in this case does not lead me to think that it is an ineffective approach. Instead, I believe that in order for the guidelines to be useful, they must be flexible and reinterpreted within the community context one is working.

One component of the planning process that impacted the results of "Safe Haven" was that the advertising for this concert was primarily directed at the UCV congregation. This was due, in large part, to the limited money available for advertising, and also because there were no participants who felt able to take on the responsibility of public advertising. As a result, the majority of the support that the committees received came directly from the congregation. This is what the committees have come to expect, based on previous fundraising experiences. However, there has been interest expressed in reaching the larger Vancouver community, something that widespread advertising for the event might have helped achieve.

The final component of Chapter Two was a detailed description of the concert itself, which focused primarily on the musical practices of José, Manuela, Jolin and Peter. Peter's musical compositions are reflective of both traditional and Western cultural influences. His work primarily addresses instances in which freedom and peace are threatened, and speaks to his experiences as a refugee. Although his songwriting is honest and expresses oppositional views to many of the socio-political realities faced by people throughout the world, he does not use specific names of places or people, nor reference periods of time. His music has thus enabled him to speak out, without directly implicating anyone in the process. I speculated that this might be why he was comfortable with sharing his music at the "Safe Haven" concert, whereas he was not comfortable with the personal and specific biographical information being presented on his behalf. Although one might assume that this forthright, yet non-specific, style of writing would permit him a level of creative and political freedom, in his native country, his songwriting was interpreted as a personal attack on the government, and initiated a sequence of events that led to threats against his life, and his family's. Peter asserts that regardless of the repercussions, he has always felt ethically compelled to musically address political and social issues of injustice.

On the other hand, Manuela and José do not describe their music as "political." They endeavor to conserve a traditional musical practice that they have witnessed deteriorate in the years since they left Guatemala. Not having enough money to buy a marimba before they arrived in Canada, they only learned to play years after leaving their native country. In the years between their departure and the beginning of their musical practice, they remembered the hundreds of melodies by whistling them as

they went about their daily routines. Although José and Manuela are committed to conserving this tradition, the way they do so is "non-traditional." Women were not permitted to play the marimba when they lived in Guatemala; however, Manuela now plays as regularly as her husband and son, demonstrating great satisfaction and pride in doing so. As many in the audience had never observed this form of music performed before, many interpreted it as being innately familial and inclusive of both genders. Thus benefit concerts that include performances from different cultural groups can foster inaccurate understandings of traditional musical practices. The audience believed that they were seeing an authentically Guatemalan performance. Instead, what they were observing was tradition and innovation in progress and the re-interpretation of what constitutes traditional (and the preservation of the traditional). Jolin, Manuela, and José maintain connections to their culture and history as Guatemalans, while also integrating as Canadian citizens. Their music does not explicitly address the socio-political issues that brought them to Canada and contributed to their refugee status; however, these experiences have shaped their musical practices and the way Vancouver audiences receive them.

Chapter Three

The third chapter examined the role of participant expectations and intentions on the planning process and the concert results. I have found that, for myself, the analysis of this particular benefit concert culture was deeply impacted by my understanding of the participants' intentions as being "good." This understanding initially made it difficult to critique the committees' and the musicians' intentions. However, once I recognized this challenge, I was able to address the problem, modifying the analysis of my research findings accordingly. Through the production of "Safe Haven," I have recognized the importance of the responsibility of applied ethnomusicologists, musicians, community organizations and audience members to consider their intentions and the ways in which they affect those who are on the receiving end of benefit concerts.

Something else that I have found to be true is that the motivations and levels of investment in this process differed between the organizers and the musicians. Although performers invest time, energy and skills into an event like "Safe Haven," upon completion, they move on to the next event. This is not the case for committee members, who are engaged in ongoing work and are affected by the results of the event.

Although each musician's involvement in "Safe Haven" was, in part, a direct result of a desire to contribute to refugee services and low-income housing initiatives in Vancouver, Peter, Manuela, Jolin

and José's choice to participate was also motivated by a personal connection to these issues. Wishing to give back to the committee that had assisted them and to families experiencing similar circumstances, Peter, José, Jolin and Manuela were, in effect, engaged in a relationship of reciprocity with the organizers of the event; the UGC and the Shirleys, on the other hand, were making a musical "donation." Although each of these motivations was entirely valid and heartfelt, the differences between them impacted the nature of each group's experience, creating a power discrepancy.

In this chapter, I also considered the question of whose intentions most impacted "Safe Haven," and concluded that, although each individual affected this process in both subtle and powerful ways, as the organizational process was to a large extent carried out without the input of the musicians, the concert was most significantly shaped by the organizers' intentions. They were the ones who controlled the planning process and made the choices that affected the musicians. As stated, this was not a process that directly involved the artists in conceptualizing and then manifesting the concert results; rather, after the committees made choices, the musicians were approached with these decisions in mind. Although I was a member of two of the performing groups and was able to represent them in the planning, a process in which producers and musicians truly worked collectively would have had different outcomes.

Although the producers held the most power in terms of shaping this event, each participant's intentions made an impact. Intentions informed the choices and musical contributions, shaped the relationships and communications, and in the end, determined the nature of each person's experience. When intentions and expectations differ, there is a potential for miscommunication and disappointment. Bringing awareness to the spectrum of intentions that existed while planning "Safe Haven" may initiate deeper understanding and dialogue in future projects. It is my hope that this might lead to the cultivation of an organizational process that satisfies and feeds each person's commitment to the concert and its results.

Chapter Four

Through an analysis of the representational practices used in the planning and execution of "Safe Haven," I found that they had both affected and contributed to the interpretation of each musical group by the audience, and amongst the musicians. As a result, power imbalances were, at times, established and maintained, affecting the quality of the relationships between those who were "assisting" and those were "assisted."

One example to which I paid particular attention in this chapter was the discovery that Peter was not informed of the contents of his biography that was shared at the concert, nor was he given the opportunity to modify or re-write it. During one of our interviews, he expressed great concern over the lack of autonomy that he is able to exert over how and when personal details concerning his experiences as a refugee are shared. The challenge appears to be that Peter and the RC have differing opinions regarding how to educate the public about their work and the individuals that they assist. Peter feels his story has become the RC's, to be used at their discretion, and the RC feels committed to continuing to help others like Peter, and in order to do so, must inform the public of the traumatic details of the refugees' experiences as a way of inspiring others to take action and get involved. They were not aware of his feelings on the matter, and as I will discuss later in the chapter, were very receptive to this information, making a commitment to preventing similar miscommunications from occurring again. Every participant in this project agrees on the importance of the RC's work. Therefore, what is of utmost importance is finding an approach to education and fundraising that is respectful of the needs of the refugees, while helping the committee meet their goals.

Although there was undoubtedly unequal power dynamics and control over representational practices, and although my analysis revealed that there was at least a partial belief amongst organizers and other participants that "They" were helping "Them" (specifically the refugees), what was revealed through conversations with Peter, José, and Manuela was another, no less significant, reality. Each of these musicians expressed a commitment to assisting others who are experiencing similar hardships by contributing their musical skills to benefit concerts. They spoke about giving back and making a contribution. They did not feel they were "helping" any less than the other musicians. So, even though some of the other concert participants did not observe equal power existing between all of the musicians, these three performers experienced a sense of solidarity and equality. It is easy to assume that individuals who have been disempowered and disenfranchised will continue to be so. In perceiving the refugee musicians as somehow innately less empowered and more indebted, one ignores and invalidates their experiences. This approach does not foster genuine collaboration and sharing, and can instead reinforce power imbalances. It is very important to acknowledge the level of choice and satisfaction these musicians felt about performing in "Safe Haven."

I concluded the chapter with a piece of feedback that an audience member offered: she believed that each musical group was included in the concert in a respectful manner. She observed the musicians and the committee members working in solidarity. The differing cultural and musical practices were

presented in a way that empowered and honored all, she asserted. This was useful feedback for us to receive, as those were our intentions. It is important to acknowledge the successes in projects like "Safe Haven," as well as to critique the challenges. Knowing what works and how choices were received is helpful and may be applied to future projects.

Although there is much to be refined and cultivated in future projects with respect to creating reciprocal, balanced, democratic and respectful working relationships between community organizations, musicians, and individuals in the community who are assisted, unofficial and official responses from the audience who was in attendance illustrate that the concert was generally viewed as a success. Many believed that "Safe Haven" was a positive example of solidarity and cooperation in working both cross-culturally and across socio-political and economic boundaries that are often drawn between individuals living in urban communities such as Vancouver.

Project Benefits

Adding to the comments in the previous chapter, made by an audience member who viewed the concert as a success (see 94), I will now consider some of the overall benefits that resulted from this project. A guiding principle set forth by Budd Hall (1984) regarding the effectiveness of PAR application is the following: "Research should result in some direct and positive benefits for those communities and people involved" (291-292). A similar concept exists in applied ethnomusicology methodology. Davis (1992) insists on the importance of reciprocity being cultivated between the researcher and the community in which the research is occurring. Therefore, according to both PAR and applied ethnomusicology principles, at the end of the research process it is desirable that all involved have benefited.

I have benefited from this experience. I was invited into the committees, treated as an honorary member, and although new to the work they undertake, was entrusted with a leadership role in their largest fundraising event of the year. I was able to document the production and, although time allocated to feedback and interpretation was limited, when I requested statements from members, I received them in a very timely fashion. I was invited to document meetings, discussions, planning sessions, and the performance. I also discovered new insights and skills in applied ethnomusicology and PAR, was able to develop my community music and benefit concert production skills (an area of work I hope to pursue), and communication and leadership skills, to name a few. I acknowledge the gifts this community has offered me and feel appreciative.

It is equally important to consider whether community members feel they have benefited from this collaboration. Each of the musical participants expressed feelings of having benefited from the experience. The primary reason for this response appeared to be connected to feeling good about the fact that their musical skills, time and energy had contributed to supporting the work of these committees. In this way, they felt their music was contributing to positive community initiatives by helping raise awareness about (and funds for) refugee support services and affordable and safe housing initiatives in the Vancouver downtown eastside. Peter, Manuela and José felt that some of the benefits they received had to do with giving back to an organization that had assisted them, and in so doing, helping others going through similar struggles. Even though Peter expressed concern over the way his story was presented through this concert, he continued to assert that he is a part of this community and is there to help in any way he can.

Both committees have expressed their opinion that they benefited both financially and through greater exposure. It was an opportunity to share their work and the motivations behind it with the community. The RC and SJC experience ongoing stress, due in part to the amount of money needed to run their projects, and also due to the fact that they feel under-staffed and over-worked. Therefore, opportunities to address the congregation and the larger Vancouver community offer them a chance to let people know what they are working on, hopefully resulting in increased financial support and volunteers.

Although it is difficult to anticipate the results of an applied research project, an important step to take before commencing is to weigh the potential benefits with the potential costs (money, emotions, time and energy, to name a few) and then decide whether the benefits will, at the very least, match the costs, and whether there is the potential to exceed them.

One RC member stated that she was unsure whether the amount of work that had been required to create this concert was worth the funds that were generated. In the end, the concert raised $1,767.88. This was split between the two committees, equaling $883.94 each. Although this amount is indisputably better than nothing, considering that the planning occurred over five months (at varying levels of intensity), and considering the amount of money necessary to maintain the committees' projects, if one was to look purely at financial gain, it is arguable whether the concert was a viable undertaking. The Refugee Committee partially supports several families, which includes hiring lawyers to handle the legalities of immigration. The money needed to do this work is substantial. Although the $883.94 will not go far in covering their expenses, it is nearly a thousand dollars they would not have

had without the concert.

If one considers the opportunity for committee exposure that the concert created, the benefits are not so easily assessed. Had there been money in place for advertising and had we been able to book the concert space for a different weekend, we may have had more people attend. A risk that one takes when planning a concert is that the audience turnout will not be high. Regardless of advertising or scheduling, there is always the potential that numbers will be disappointingly low. I believe this is a risk worth taking. Committee members appear to be in agreement, as they have requested that I work with them again in the future.

Evaluating the benefits of a benefit concert is not always straightforward. Each situation will vary in terms of the amount of emphasis that should be placed on any one of the concert results. For example, perhaps when working on a particular concert, the community would decide that it was absolutely necessary to make a minimum of $5,000.00 to make the concert a worthwhile undertaking. In other cases, $500 might feel like a highly beneficial amount of money, meeting the goals of the group's current undertakings. Others still might be happy with any sum of money that is generated. They might feel the primary goal of the event should be education and the creation of dialogue in the community. Usually the community in question will have goals that sit somewhere in this spectrum. It is important to clarify these goals and evaluate to the best of one's ability the feasibility of meeting them before commencing. In hindsight, I realize that there was not adequate discussion regarding goals for the concert. Each committee felt a strong need for both financial and exposure-related benefits; however, we were not specific enough in setting goals to meet these needs. We did not discuss an amount of money that we hoped to raise; rather, we spoke more generally about wanting to raise "lots" of money. Although one runs the risk of being disappointed if specific financial goals are set, and not met, I still believe that in creating realistic goals, the community benefits, regardless of the results. In so doing, the group dreams, imagines, and organizes together. The steps needed to meet the goals are also specified at this stage. It is a valuable practice, and I believe that the very act of goal setting, brings the group closer to the possibility of meeting those goals.

Applied ethnomusicologists and PAR practitioners have put forward theories concerning the importance of creating reciprocal relationships with community members through applied projects. They point out that there are potential risks involved as well, namely the misuse of power through the exploitation of culture bearers. "Safe Haven" provided an opportunity to test these theories. Although the results have been varied and sometimes unexpected, they have also been overwhelmingly positive. I

believe that relationships grounded in reciprocity and respect become easier to achieve than one might anticipate. I refer specifically to the Vancouver benefit concert culture context, of which I have been a part. Although there were indisputably unbalanced power dynamics present in this project, and although not everyone's voice was as equally represented, there was a remarkable willingness to address these issues once they were brought to light. The individuals I have encountered are involved in this volunteer work because they are interested in extending compassion to others. It is true that, at times, volunteer work can become self-serving in that individuals wish to feel good about themselves, and are thus compelled to help others; however, I have witnessed only what I interpret as genuine concern and openness. Reciprocity and respectful collaboration are essential in making this work approach successful. It takes time, awareness and commitment on everyone's part to achieve such a reality. Other than limited time and resources, and differing opinions concerning the representation of the refugee musicians, I have experienced no other major obstacles that would render this ideal impossible to achieve. I cannot emphasize enough that each applied project requires a different set of expectations and approaches. Limiting the concepts of "reciprocity" or "collaboration" to one particular understanding will blind the researcher and the community to significant accomplishments and knowledge along the way. There is not one correct way to approach this work. Each project is as individual as the people involved in its execution.

I will conclude the summation of this project's benefits with a theoretical perspective I have cultivated throughout this process: applied ethnomusicology can and does lend itself to direct, community-based social justice actions. Although imperfect and ever-evolving, projects such as "Safe Haven" provide an opportunity for ethnomusicologists to make themselves known in their communities, while investing their skills and training into the people, events, institutions and structures that shape their immediate world. The integration of academic research and direct application is not only possible, but necessary in more fully connecting our discipline with the world in which it engages. Although historically the academic and applied realms of ethnomusicology have struggled to integrate, I have found that attempting to do so has brought to my own work a sense of immediacy and relevance. In so doing, I have felt my training, both theoretical and methodological, come to life in the present, in my immediate community, through direct application and interaction.

The Final Step: Concluding Meeting With "Safe Haven" Organizers

Several months after "Safe Haven" had been completed, feedback had been received and analyzed, and post-concert interviews had been conducted, I attended a meeting with the heads of the SJC and the RC to summarize the concert results, review the feedback and consider, as a group, recommendations for future projects. It was at this time that I shared comments and suggestions put forward by the musicians with committee members. I explained to RC members Peter's feelings about the publication of his biographical information. Though at first they were surprised by his reaction, they were also immediately and genuinely regretful that he had experienced these concerns during the concert. They also expressed relief to have heard about Peter's discomfort, and felt it was unfortunate that they did not know sooner. We discussed in great detail exactly what his concerns had been, especially the potential repercussions of sharing his biographical information with the general public, and how this might impact Peter's immediate family still living in West Africa. Peter had been concerned for their safety, especially with the ease with which information is shared over the internet. The committee members who were present at this meeting were emphatic that Peter's concerns be addressed, and made a commitment to discourage similar issues in future projects. They decided that one of the ways in which to avoid Peter's concerns in the future would be to *always* review with participants the contents of their biography before publicizing it, even if the biography has been used in the past. Further, it was agreed that asking each participant how they would like to be introduced and represented during the concert would be an important step to take prior to future events.

This was a rewarding moment for me, as I was able to witness actions being taken in response to feedback and recommendations. In my mind, this meeting was one of the most important steps in the production process, as it offered us a chance to reflect as a group on the results of our efforts, to critique, and to consider future approaches. I recommend taking the time to complete the applied research process in this way. In so doing, the community in question may integrate the results not only into their work, but also into the dynamics and communications of the group itself.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I will conclude this thesis by continuing with recommendations for future applied ethnomusicology projects. As was emphasized by the PAR scholars cited in Chapter One, an important stage in the PAR process is the interpretation of the results by the research participants, and then the integration of this knowledge back into the community in which the research has taken place. For this

reason, I will be including recommendations put forward not only by myself, but also by the other participants. This is also why I cannot emphasize enough the importance of the final meeting that took place with the concert organizers, at which point each person was able to interpret the results of the concert and put forward solid recommendations.

Each of the following recommendations resulted from the work that each of us took on, and is our own individual and collective interpretation of the results. It is my hope that these suggestions will be considered by future researchers, contributing to the cultivation of applied ethnomusicology by providing tactics for the promotion of healthier relationships between researchers, musicians and community organizations.

Who Makes Recommendations?

I must re-iterate that not every research participant voiced his or her personal recommendations for future work. As Stuart Hall (1997) asserted, those who have been silenced, either literally or figuratively, will often not feel empowered to speak, or to represent themselves. With this in mind, it is significant to consider who was not personally able to critique the concert production and its results.

When asked to offer suggestions for future projects, the 8.8% of the UGC and the 14.3% of the Shirleys who responded to my request for feedback, did so, whereas José, Manuela and Peter did not, with one exception. Peter did speak with me about his discomfort with the use of his personal information in the promotion of the event; however, he did not make suggestions regarding the ways in which this issue might be rectified. In terms of evaluating the results and imagining the ways in which events like this might be structured and executed in the future, none of the refugee musicians immediately offered ideas. As will be evident in the following sections, the other musicians were quite comfortable giving feedback and ideas. When asked questions regarding the way this event unfolded, José, Peter and Manuela responded generally in favour of repeating what had been done in this project. However, when asked specific questions such as "would you prefer a longer musical set in future concerts?," they answered with a yes or no. Suggestions were not offered without very specific questions being asked of them.

There are many possible reasons for why these musicians did not immediately offer suggestions to me. For one, not being as comfortable conversing in English might have affected exchanges such as these. Also, giving suggestions and constructive criticism is not always considered appropriate cross-culturally. Further, as I addressed at length in Chapter Three, the fact that there is a level of

indebtedness influencing these musicians' choices to be involved might add to their hesitancy to critique the results, whereas the UGC and the Shirleys, all colleagues of mine, might feel less hesitant to give constructive criticism. I am sure that the reasoning behind the choice to not critique is multi-faceted. It is important to make note of the imbalance of feedback before considering the following statements. Although they will not be representational of each participant's experience, they will offer some insight into the ways in which the community in question wishes to integrate the research findings into future projects.

PAR: Project-Specific

As previously stated, I entered this project with expectations regarding the way the PAR research approach should unfold. These expectations were not entirely met. I have since come to a more holistic understanding of the implementation of these methods. Despite the fact that PAR practitioners have established guidelines and principles, there is not one correct way to put them into practice. Instead, each set of circumstances demands a project-specific re-writing and re-interpretation.

In response to the detailed examination of the development of this concert, I would recommend to future applied ethnomusicologists that before commencing a project, an assessment of the needs of the group, along with their available levels of skills, commitment, time and energy be made. At this point, realistic expectations and goals reflective of the particular context in which the researcher will be working might be established.

I made the point that this project was arguably not a pure implementation of PAR, rather, an attempt to implement and interpret the PAR guidelines. I would recommend considering ways in which this approach might be more flexible, and thus more feasible for communities to embrace and execute. This approach is time consuming. It requires the commitment of all involved to the entire process, from the inception to the interpretation of the results. Often individuals and communities of people are pressed for time and over-committed. Groups could potentially shy away from this approach, based on the demands of its guidelines. By limiting the concept of PAR to the guidelines outlined in Chapter One, one runs the risk of ignoring what is possible within any given research context. Many important contributions and insights could be lost by holding fast to a rigid definition, and excluding all other interpretations of and attempts at PAR. It is important to strive towards these ideals; however, to dismiss the attempts that do not meet these guidelines would be unfortunate. At times the collective needs of the group may lean towards the minimization of collaboration, emphasizing instead the

necessity for a single leader to organize and delegate. Open and honest discussion with all involved may be the first step in addressing concerns regarding the logistics and appropriateness of applying this form of research in a community. For example, by discussing the schedules and availability of the project participants, and assessing their commitment levels, one might tailor the goals of the project according to this information. If everyone is able to honestly and clearly state his or her level of commitment, realistic expectations can be formed. Otherwise, the group might run into issues around sharing the workload and meeting responsibilities. What is important to understand is that methodologies and guiding principles are only ideas outside of their application. Learning to be adaptable and responsive to the context in which I was working, led me to re-define my ideas of what collaborative work can entail.

One Committee or Two?

As I explained in the first chapter, my motivation for approaching both UCV committees to work on this project had to do with the fact that I had no pre-existing relationships with either; however, I knew that each group had presented benefit concerts in the past. I was also interested in supporting the work of both committees and anticipated that the more individuals that were involved, the more efficiently and successfully the concert could be organized.

At the time of sending the proposal to each committee, I was not aware of their status, how many members each possessed, or their current workloads. I soon discovered that the RC had more members that were willing and able to consistently involve themselves in the planning of this event. Although I do not wish to suggest that the SJC did not contribute, proportionally, the RC took on more of the responsibilities involved in planning the event.

One RC member made the recommendation that "not splitting with another group might help and I think we would still have drawn the same crowd." The RC committee had done benefit concerts on its own in the past, and in those instances, had been able to double their income. I believe that they agreed to work with the SJC because they believed it would be a good partnership, but also because the collaboration was suggested in the offer that I put forward.

In the future, I would recommend that the researcher or concert producer approach one committee (or community organization) first, and wait to see how it responds. If it responds favourably, one might consider sticking with just one group. Alternatively, one might approach both committees and inquire into whether or not they would be interested in working collaboratively with other church committees on a fundraising project, before deciding to approach multiple committees. Undeniably, the

concept of "the more the merrier" (or in this case, the more workers, the easier it is to get the job done) makes a good deal of sense; however, often situations and working dynamics are complicated by involving larger quantities of people and needs. Especially in instances where resources are limited, working with one group can simplify the scheduling, leadership, delegation and development processes.

Another option that I have considered is that the funds that are raised could be split according to the percentage of work undertaken by each committee; however, with this suggestion, I can see problems emerging, as there might be disagreement between the committees about which had contributed more. Further, the audience attending the concert is under the impression that the money is being equally split between the committees; therefore, if that is not what occurs, their monetary contributions are made under false pretenses.

Considering all of these variables, I would recommend that each researcher and applied ethnomusicologist consider the implications of whom they are approaching and whether or not including more participants would create greater ease throughout the project and better results, or might complicate and hinder the project's execution.

Setting Goals

I would recommend to future researchers and applied ethnomusicologists that time is taken at the beginning to set very specific goals regarding the results each participant wishes to achieve. The more specific the goals are, the clearer the group can be on what it is they are attempting to achieve as a collective, and the more likely it is that these goals will be met. When specific goals are formed, the entire collective is aware of them and may commit themselves to their execution. By taking the time to consider and discuss the implications of project goals and potential benefits, an informed decision might be reached regarding whether or not to pursue a particular project. This discussion, coupled with an honest assessment of participants' availability, commitment levels, skills and energy, are essential steps to take before the applied research project begins.

In this case, I was not certain as to what was realistically achievable, which kept me from initiating goal-setting. I was not sure how much money we could raise, how big an audience might attend, how much awareness building might be achieved, and what kind of working relationship we might be able to cultivate. I was generally hopeful and had personal goals and expectations; however, I was not aware of the goals of each committee regarding the amount of money they would like to raise. I

think goal-setting is an important step, and sets up solid parameters with which to critique the results. When goals are not clear, often results are not clear.

Speaking directly to the experience of the musicians and goal setting, one UGC member wrote in her feedback that she would have liked to have been aware of more "...specific goals of the concert in advance, [and] possibly [received] some specific guidance [regarding] how... the choir... might work to support/achieve these goals." This was the only musician who expressed a desire to be aware of the specific concert goals. Although it may not have directly impacted the way they contributed, if we had had more precise goals that we could have shared with the musicians, it may have enhanced their experiences in some ways. Instead of saying, "We want to raise lots of money for the RC and the SJC," we could have said, "We are working towards a goal of $_____." The number of audience members needed to meet that goal could then have been determined, encouraging musicians and organizers alike to meet that quota.

Involvement from Affected Communities

One very interesting recommendation put forward by an SJC member was to "allocate more time before the event and involve more volunteers from affected communities in the promotion of the event" (October 30, 2006). My interpretation of this comment is that, as we were raising funds and awareness for both refugee services and affordable housing in the downtown eastside of Vancouver, finding ways to integrate individuals from those communities as holistically and respectfully as possible, would have been a positive step to take. Although this SJC member was pleased with the fact that refugee musicians were performing in the concert, he felt that there were further steps that could have been taken in order to encourage a more balanced presence and level of participation.

Should further steps be taken to cultivate genuine inclusion, care would need to be taken. The committees might approach organizations and collectives from these communities, asking first whether or not there is interest in getting involved in such an event, and depending on their responses, inquiring into how they would like to be involved. For example, there was a speaker from a particular downtown eastside organization working on affordable housing legislation who addressed the audience the evening of the concert. Perhaps individuals who are affected by such legislation might also like to address the audience or present information leading up to and during the concert. Perhaps these individuals might like to play music, read a written piece, or show photographs of their community. These are only a few ideas; however, they begin to paint a picture of possibilities that might exist for further integration

between the researcher, concert producers, church committees and the communities and individuals they endeavor to assist.

Concert Promotions

Another recommendation put forward by participants has to do with concert promotions. In a conversation with an audience member, he suggested more advertising:

> I know it was advertised [primarily] to the church… To get a wider audience, you need to not just focus on the church. I know that sometimes people in churches feel like they are always giving, like, 'oh people in the church are doing this and we've got to support it…' So it's nice to get help from other sources as well. (February 17, 2007)

An SJC member affirmed these sentiments when he stated, "more time was needed for proper promotion in the community at large" (October 30, 2006).

It is true that this particular church community is quite self-sufficient. It is not due to a lack of desire to connect with the larger community; rather, it comes from congregants' desires to support the ongoing initiatives taken on by other members of the church. However, if it is only congregants who are asked to sustain the work of the committees time and time again, it is likely that support will wane. Congregants do support projects like "Safe Haven," but they are not always able to make ongoing financial contributions.

Further, by limiting the advertisement to primarily the church community, committees maintain a level of insularity. The RC and the SJC will carry out community-outreach projects and contribute to local organizations, using the funds raised by the concert. This puts the congregation as a whole in direct contact with the larger Vancouver community. That being the case, making more of an effort to invite non-UCV individuals to attend makes a great deal of sense. While working on a social justice project in the church, one is usually correct in assuming that other members will be in alignment with the undertaking and will offer support. It is important to the members of this community to work together, sharing their values and ideals, creating a sense of solidarity and support; however, as the local concerns this concert addressed affect the greater Vancouver community, it is also important to be inclusive and cultivate relationships with other community organizations and religious institutions.

In future projects involving the production of a concert raising money for local social justice groups, regardless of budget, advertising in the larger community should be prioritized. As Anna Greenberg (2000) has stated, churches are social, political and religious institutions. Churches have a responsibility to acknowledge their connection to their community, and initiate dialogue and

relationships of reciprocity with those they live with and assist. Advertising for the "good works" the congregation is undertaking may be an effective first step to reaching out to the larger community.

Date Selection

In terms of the timing of the benefit, there was a consensus among participants and audience members that it should have occurred on another weekend, not on the Thanksgiving holiday. One RC member told me in her post-concert feedback, "If I had my druthers the date would [have] been [different], when most people would be free both to attend and/or to help" (October 12, 2006). She believes that the date affected not only the attendance, but also committee member availability. Although there is no way to be certain, it is likely that had we secured another Saturday night, one that did not fall on the Thanksgiving weekend, that a larger turnout of audience members might have attended.

A UGC singer agreed with this concern. However, in her feedback, she also expressed another perspective on the appropriateness of the date that was selected:

> Thanksgiving is maybe a good context for this kind of event… The potential benefits of this timing might have been capitalized on to a greater extent (a good way to share our gratitude at Thanksgiving), in the concert promotion. I know that personally I was glad to be participating in this event at Thanksgiving. (January 2, 2007)

She suggests that during the promotions of this event there was a potential to make use of the fact that the concert was happening on the Thanksgiving weekend. We might have used this information in our promotional materials, suggesting that by attending this concert, the audience would have the opportunity to give thanks by giving to others. Should a benefit concert be scheduled on a holiday weekend, it is advisable to promote the event as an option for families and friends to attend together as a part of their celebrations. This is one way in which the booking we were able to make might have worked more in our favour.

Representational Practices

In response to the critique that I offered in Chapter Four of the representational practices used during this concert, there are several recommendations that I will put forward at this time.

Firstly, under no circumstances should biographical information be used without direct consultation with the individual it represents. Biographical statements that had been used in the past were edited and modified for this concert. As they were used in the past, it was assumed it would be

fine to do so again. José and Manuela had previously approved of the contents of their bio; however, Peter had not. It is important to check with participants that they are fully aware of the content of the materials being used, and further, give them the opportunity to alter these materials. Even if Peter felt fine in the past with his story being shared, he may have had a change of heart since then, and should have every right to modify the details of his bio at any time.

During the promotions of this event, we were highly affected by time and financial constraints, which led to a quick and frugal approach. Allocating time to discuss the promotion of the event is important, as this time and consideration could lead to recognition of promotional inconsistencies ahead of time. We might have made sure to locate photos of Peter, Jolin, Manuela and José, if we had had the chance to really discuss this option with them.

And finally, in response to the feedback that I received from Peter, Manuela and José, it is clear that there is no hard and fast rule concerning how individuals wish to be represented, not only in the promotion of events, but also in the concerts. In this case, José and Manuela wanted the details of their story to be shared, whereas Peter did not. The fact that these musicians were presented not only in the program, but introduced verbally prior to their performance, intensified the results of this representational choice. For Peter, it further contributed to his discomfort, whereas for Manuela and José, their pre-performance introduction reinforced their intentions to share their personal experiences. With an awareness of these differing opinions, each set of needs might be addressed in the same concert. For example, José and Manuela could have included their biographies, and spoken about their experiences during the concert. In contrast, Peter could have limited his biographical information in the program, and highlighted instead his experiences as a professional musician. He could have still stated that he was a refugee and could have emphasized the importance of supporting the work of the RC, but he could have done so without providing specific details. In this way, each musician could have demonstrated his or her commitment to the issues being addressed, but done so in a way that felt comfortable.

There was a distinction drawn between the performers of "Safe Haven," which was in part due to the emphasis placed upon José, Manuela and Peter's status as refugees. The two vocal groups, on the other hand, were presented as musicians. These differing representations were fostered through the focus of their biographical materials, as well as the placement and length of the acts. Peter, José and Manuela all agreed that they would be happy to play for longer in future concerts. Each of them mentioned 30 minutes as a possibility, as opposed to the 15-20 minutes they had been allocated. In

future, discussing with the musicians the length of set that they would prefer beforehand is advisable. It is important to select the wording carefully before engaging in this conversation. Instead of asking, "Would you mind playing for 15 minutes at the concert?" to which they would likely respond politely, "Yes, that is fine," it might be more effective to ask, "How long would you like to play at the concert?" In wording the question in this way, they might be more inclined to respond honestly, rather than just agreeing in an attempt to be polite. Further, as the set lengths are being negotiated, it is important that each musician be informed of the length of sets the other performers have been offered or have selected.

I recommend that in future benefit concert production, great care be taken to clarify the needs of each group and individual, and that the implications of the ways in which they are represented be consciously and carefully considered. Detailed conversations must be held wherein these issues are addressed and the space to respond is created. Perhaps Peter did not feel immediately comfortable in requesting that his biographical materials be altered. He was visibly torn between feeling indebted to the RC and objecting to the way his story was told. However, when the space was created, he was willing and able to share this conflict, giving concert producers the opportunity to take this new awareness into future benefit concerts.

Musical Collaboration

Several of the musicians recommended that in future benefit concerts an opportunity be created for all of the performers to collaborate in some way. In written feedback, one singer suggested:

> In thinking about it, a joint performance piece by all the musicians might have been one way of integrating our experience as musicians and human beings – something we could have put together relatively easily with a bit of advance prep and/or practice during the warm-up. I really don't know if it would have been logistically possible, or if it would have helped bridge our experiences… (January 2, 2007)

As a musician living and working in Vancouver, BC, there is an incredible amount of cultural diversity, something that is reflected in the city's musical communities, including the benefit concert culture. Musical fusion and cross-cultural performance groups abound in this city. Musical collaboration provides an exciting and often mutually beneficial opportunity for musicians to dialogue and share traditions and practices with one another.

At the same time, musical collaboration in the context of a benefit concert is challenging to materialize. Although it is a fine idea to create a piece of music to which each musician contributes, in this case, it was not feasible. First of all, it would have been very difficult to schedule a rehearsal that

everyone was able to attend. This is especially true because the musicians were volunteering their time and were all involved in many other projects. Further, we had such a variety of musical traditions represented (West African, Guatemalan marimba, African-American gospel, Afro-Cuban, funk and pop) that to find a piece that worked for each musician would have been a challenge. It might have been interpreted by the audience and the musicians as forced, not an organic fusion. On the other hand, had we been able to book a time when this suggested piece could have been created, it might have been well received and been a powerful experience for all involved.

One option that might be pursued in future projects is collaborative improvisation, weaving together the musical and idiomatic features of each musical tradition represented in the concert. It would probably be necessary to set aside some time before the concert for musicians to hear one another play, to establish some parameters, and do some improv with one another beforehand. Further, to make it work, each musician would need to be willing to do it and comfortable with the musical form.

The important thing to remember for future projects is that the choice to create collaboration and fusion in the concert itself is not just a creative and musical choice, but also a socio-political one. The effects of this choice on each musician, their comfort and interest levels and the logistics of doing so should be considered with all the participants before a decision is reached.

Maintaining Working Relationships

Finally, I would like to address the question of whether or not the researcher should maintain a working relationship with the community and the participants involved in an applied ethnomusicology project and, if so, how it should be done. The answer to this question will differ depending on the situation and will be impacted by whether or not the researcher is a member of, or has an ongoing relationship with, the community in question. In this case, I had a relationship with the church congregation and two of the four musical groups. A member of the SJC wrote to me in his concert feedback form:

> Our Committee is definitely interested in hosting a similar event next year. We do believe that by working together with the Refugee Committee, Samantha, community volunteers and capitalizing on the success of the October 7 event, our opportunity for a bigger success next year will be greatly enhanced. (October 30, 2006)

As is expressed by this committee member, a benefit to maintaining a working relationship in the community is that one may learn from previous experiences and continually improve the research approach and results. This consistency would also encourage the cultivation of richer, ongoing

relationships between ethnomusicologists and the communities in which they live.

There are of course challenges that emerge in attempting to consistently work with particular community groups. One might not always be able to work on every project, especially when this work would be done on a volunteer basis. It is difficult to balance the desire to volunteer one's time and energies with needing to make an income. Benefit concert production is often a labour of love, one in which everyone involved is working without pay. As an applied ethnomusicologist and a musician, it is one's task to evaluate the number of projects one can take on at any given time. At times it may be wiser to say no to a particular event, if the alternative is to not be able to fully engage with the project. This is one of the many challenges faced by applied ethnomusicologists working in benefit concert production, but which hopefully becomes more manageable as time progresses and experience accumulates.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

TIME TABLE OF MEETINGS

Meeting Details	Date
Initial emails suggesting work partnership sent to Parish Minister and Committee Chairs	Early April 2006
First planning meeting with interested SJC and RC members • Research proposals were distributed to each potential participant and discussed	May 14, 2006
Second planning meeting • One RC member in attendance • Goals and objectives were discussed • An incomplete list of responsibilities was Generated	June 18, 2006
Third planning meeting with RC and SJC members • Held during the official RC monthly meeting time slot • Added to and began delegating the list of responsibilities • Final meeting before the summer break	June 25, 2006
Fourth planning meeting with RC and SJC members • First meeting back from the summer break • Completed the delegation of tasks and began to Finalize the details.	August 27, 2006
Final Planning Meeting with SJC and RC members • Reviewed what had been completed, and clarified what remained t complete. • Went over the schedule for the day of the event.	September 24, 2006

** Though not represented on this table, it is important to note that meetings and communications consistently occurred over the phone, through emails, and during rehearsals, between the committee members, musicians and myself (April - October 7, 2006) during the planning of the "Safe Haven" concert.*

APPENDIX 2

PROPOSAL LETTER TO CHURCH COMMITTEES

To the social justice and Refugee Committee members of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver,

I wish to offer my services as a musician, researcher, and community arts facilitator to both the social justice and Refugee Committees, in hopes that we might work collaboratively to create a project/benefit concert/community event in the fall of 2006.

I am currently a graduate student in ethnomusicology. I have focused my research this past year on the role of music in social justice movements, and the ways in which members of many religious traditions have been motivated by their faith to get involved in these movements. I greatly respect that the UCV's principles place such an emphasis on actively participating in local and international social justice issues, and that there is such a strong musical tradition in this community. I also have an established relationship with many of the members of this congregation (as I worked last year developing music for two pageants and in the summer of 2001 as the Assistant to the Minister of Religious Education). Also, I have attended the church at various times throughout the years. For these reasons I have felt compelled by the possibility of working with the committees on a project that might serve the needs of the church community and which might also serve as a research focus for my thesis.

What I propose is that through a collaborative process, interested committee and congregational members meet to brainstorm, plan, and create a project that uses (but is not limited to) music, and that connects, speaks to and/or raises awareness of (and perhaps funds for) a social justice/community issue that the church is interested in supporting. I have chosen a participatory approach for my thesis research; an approach that places an emphasis on collective ownership and stewardship of the research and/or community project undertaken. This means I have no preconceived ideas of what this project should be, that the specifics of the project will be developed by and for the group, and that each participant (including myself) would be actively involved in creating and shaping the group's vision of the project.

I am hoping to document this process for academic purposes, which could entail recording of meetings, discussions, and the event itself, as well as interviews with participants, none of which would occur before I received consent from all those involved.

I realize that committee members have many ongoing responsibilities and commitments, and it is not my wish to burden them with another project; rather, I wish to assist in executing an event that the committees themselves wish to do, and feel would be of value.

As July and August are often difficult months in which to meet regularly, I would hope that preliminary meetings could be held before then to discuss these ideas further, pose and answer questions, and begin the brainstorming process. I am happy to answer any questions that interested committee members may have at this time. I deeply appreciate your consideration of this proposal, encourage you to consider whether or not you wish to be a part of the planning and production of an event, and ask that after you have had the chance to consider and make a decision, that you contact me at your leisure.

Whoever is involved and however this process unfolds, I am quite certain much can be achieved!

Sincerely,

Samantha Fletcher

APPENDIX 3

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE BROCHURE

UNITARIAN CHURCH OF VANCOUVER
949 West 49th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 2T1
Phone (604) 261-7204 • Fax (604) 261-7205
e-mail: ucv.office@unitarians.ca

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE (SJC)

The Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver is committed to the application of Unitarian Principles and Social Justice throughout all aspects of the Vancouver Community

The Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver has been an active participant of the Vancouver Social Action milieu since 1980, organizing educational events and forums on issues of social concern for the congregation, initiating/supporting projects with other community networks and coalitions, and facilitating public action as our congregation's social justice advocates.

The Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver has the following goals:

- encourage education in the congregation on social justice issues that challenge our Unitarian principles
- ask the Congregation, Minister, and Board of Trustees to join us in taking responsibility for social action consistent with our Unitarian principles
- consider social issues and facilitate opportunities for church members and the community at large to take public action as the Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver

The Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver is committed to the following areas of social justice: peace, poverty, human rights, anti-racism, drug policy, globalization, aboriginal rights and access to public services.

The Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver focuses on different social issues every month and organizes public forums, educational sessions and social action campaigns to engage the Congregation in these issues. We also value the work with community networks and coalitions.

The Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver meets at the Hewett Centre (949 West 49th Avenue and Oak St., Vancouver) the 4th Monday of each month at 7 pm.

APPENDIX 4

UCV REFUGEE COMMITTEE FACT SHEET

A CONVENTION REFUGEE IS

"Any person who by reason of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of the person's nationality and is unable or, by reason of that fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or, not having a country of nationality, is outside the country of the person's former habitual residence and is unable or, by reason of that fear, is unwilling to return to that country." (U.N.)

REFUGEE NUMBERS

Estimated

- **20 – 40 million refugees world wide outside their countries of origin**
- **20 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) hiding inside own countries**

"The lack of security remains endemic, camps have been infiltrated by armed elements, refugees are intercepted, denied entry or forcibly returned, are unable to gain access to asylum procedures, are not given papers."
UNHCR protection report.

IN THE PAST WE HAVE

- *Sponsored refugees from overseas*
- Assisted refugees already here with
  -volunteer E.S.L. teaching
  -furnishing apartments
  -medical/dental
  -finances

THIS YEAR WE ARE

- Jointly sponsoring a young Eritrean refugee woman[16], through the Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS) program of Citizenship & Immigration Canada (CIC)
- Co-sponsoring a family of Afghan refugees
- Supporting a woman formerly of Burundi, in her sponsorship of her sister and nephew, who are refugees in Kenya
- Assisting the family of a West African refugee, now permanent resident.
- Aiding Vancouver Burma Round Table

[16] All the names of refugees have been removed for discretionary purposes.

- Raising funds to help refugees
- Advocating on behalf of refugees

COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN OF REFUGEES WE HAVE SPONSORED OR HELPED

PAST TO PRESENT: Viet Nam, Central America, Burma, Afghanistan, Mexico, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Serbia, Togo, Eritrea, Burundi

MEMBER OF: Vancouver Interfaith Refugee Committee

WHY HELP REFUGEES?

- Unitarians help those in need
- Refugees need our help
- Refugees are in danger in their own countries and cannot return
- Refugees contribute much to Canada
- Refugees enrich our own lives

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Please see over leaf.

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER?

- *Regular meetings are once a month except in summer.*
- *Call the UCV at 604-261-7204.*

"I heard everything but could do nothing. I was powerless."
A Congolese farmer describing the massacre of his wife, eight children, and two brothers by gunmen.

"The paramilitaries told us if we didn't leave they would make us kneel down, rape us and massacre us."
A Colombian Indian villager.

HELPING REFUGEES: WHAT CAN WE DO AS INDIVIDUALS AND AS A COMMUNITY?

1. Join the UCV Refugee Committee.
2. Donate to the UCV Sheilah Thompson Refugee Fund.
3. Donate directly to the UCV Refugee Committee. ("The Unitarian Church of Vancouver", memo "For Refugee Committee".)
4. Volunteer at Immigrant Services Society or Welcome House, 530 Drake Street, Vancouver, 604-684-7498.

5. Volunteer to become an English homebound tutor and friend.
6. *Support the Inland Refugee Society, now Vancouver Refugee Service Alliance, #212, 96 E. Broadway (at Quebec), 604-873-6660, with household goods, clothing or money.*
7. Contribute to a refugee individual or family or a Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS) candidate. In February 2005 the UCV Refugee Committee received a JAS refugee.
8. Look at everything we take for granted in our society and figure out if you have the skills and will to assist a new immigrant or refugee. It does take commitment and energy, but, with enough cooperation, it is not impossible!
9. Be aware of racial biases that lead licensing authorities and companies to discount the skills of new immigrants.
10. Ask to volunteer at inner city schools to tutor, mentor or read to immigrant students.
11. Neighbourhood centres have literacy classes for immigrants: can you volunteer to tutor there?
12. The majority of new immigrants to Canada (both people of colour and Caucasian) seldom have any social contacts outside their countrymen. Can you make a point of meeting them? Do you greet them now?

SHEILAH THOMPSON REFUGEE FUND

Sheilah Thompson served UCV in a number of ways: she was once Chair of the Refugee Committee and later President of the UCV Board. She established the Sheilah Thompson Refugee Fund to enable congregation members, friends and family to give financial support to refugees from any of three categories: 1) privately sponsored from abroad, 2) Joint Assistance Sponsorships wherein we collaborate with Citizenship & Immigration (CIC), or 3) refugee claimants who arrive at our border and claim refugee status from within Canada. Since 1998, bits of the fund have gone, for example, to defray costs of medical or dental work, or for English workbooks, or toward travel for refugees arriving from overseas. In 2006, we are using money from the Fund to supplement the living allowance paid by CIC to our JAS refugee from Eritrea, and to help her repay her travel loan. We are also drawing from the Fund to assist refugees from Burundi living in Kenya.

We sincerely thank all of you who maintain your faithful support to the Fund. Sponsoring—indeed just helping—refugees is costly and the Fund is unavoidably being depleted. Without your generosity, the Refugee Committee cannot continue its work.

For a tax receipt:

On an envelope, write "Sheilah Thompson Refugee Fund" – include your name & address. Cheques are payable to "Unitarian Church of Vancouver" with memo "for Sheilah Thompson Refugee Fund".

"We can't take in 30 million refugees but we *can* help one."

REFUGEE FACTS

Refugee or Immigrant? The simple difference is that an immigrant chooses to move to another country; a refugee is forced to flee to another country.

Who decides who is a refugee? Governments establish status determination procedures to decide a person's legal standing and rights in accordance with their own legal systems and with advice from United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

How does one distinguish between a refugee and economic migrant? An economic migrant leaves a country voluntarily to seek a better life, and, should s/he return home, would again receive protection of their government. Refugees flee because of threat of persecution.

Can a draft evader be a refugee? Every country has the right to ask its citizens to bear arms in periods of national emergency. However, citizens should have the right to conscientious objection. In cases where the option of CO is not observed or where a conflict violates international norms, draft evaders **may** be considered eligible for refugee status.

Can a war criminal be a refugee? Persons who have committed war crimes, including terrorism, are **specifically excluded** from the protection accorded to refugees. During a mass exodus, however, it is difficult to separate perpetrator from victim. Violators have been known to live side-by-side with their victims in huge refugee camps established in neighbouring countries—very frightening for the true refugees.

"He sat down in the grass and began to weep. He was home. But it was unrecognizable."

APPENDIX 5

PROPOSAL LETTER TO THE UNIVERSAL GOSPEL CHOIR

Dear members of the UGC production committee,

Thank you very much for considering the participation of the UGC in the benefit concert, "SAFE HAVEN" which I am co-producing with the Refugee and Social Justice Committees at the Unitarian Church of Vancouver on October 7th, 2006. The proceeds raised by this concert will go to supporting the work that these two church-based, not-for-profit committees are undertaking in the coming year. The Refugee Committee is currently jointly sponsoring a young Eritrean refugee woman through the Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS) program of Citizenship & Immigration Canada (CIC), co-sponsoring a family of Afghan refugees, supporting a woman formerly of Burundi, in her sponsorship of her sister and nephew, who are refugees in Kenya, assisting the family of blind Togolese refugee, now permanent resident, aiding Vancouver Burma Round Table, and are hiring a lawyer who is currently advocating on behalf of these refugees. The Social Justice Committee will be focusing their work this year on affordable and safe housing in the downtown eastside.

At this time, we are still in the process of finalizing the details of the event, but we are anticipating a 7pm start time. I would like to ask the UGC to perform a 30-minute set at the end of the evening (roughly 8:30pm). There will be a room in Hewitt Hall (across from the Sanctuary) where the choir can be warming-up and gathering beforehand. There will be microphones available for Brian and soloists. There is a piano in the space that can be used. I am available to discuss technical issues, as well as the content and focus of the event in further details as the date approaches. Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to telephone or email me any time.

I can't thank you enough for your interest in and availability for this event. It is incredibly exciting to have the support of such an outstanding, passionate and committed musical community as the UGC!

Sincerely,

Samantha Fletcher

APPENDIX 6

Safe Haven Post-Production Feedback Form

Name:
Phone Number:
Address:
Email:
What was your role in the "Safe Haven" concert?:

1. What was your personal and/or musical group's motivation for getting involved in performing in the "Safe Haven" concert event?

2. Did you hold any expectations regarding your involvement in the event itself or the results of the event when we started this process? If so, what were they? Were these expectations met?

3. How did you feel about the actual event, i.e. how it was managed and how it was received?

4. What worked well in this project?

5. Do you feel that music-based events are effective ways of raising money and awareness for and about the work you do on your committee? Why or why not?

6. Do you have any other comments to share?

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