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Framework: Design Web

Design 10:

Title:

My vision for the creation of

The Oxford Art Ensemble



Tools used:

Action points of the Design Web, functions-systems-elements, input-output analysis, need behind the need, needs cluster, 8 forms of capital, optimizing systems, visual representation, Permaculture principles and ethics.

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Introduction and Function

I will use this design to connect better with L. Macnamara's book "Cultural Emergence" and I will make frequent references to the book when using her concepts. I will reference this as (*concept* L.M. P. x

Creating **The Oxford Art Ensemble** is my next ambition after completing the Diploma in Permaculture. This design is very much about where I want to put my energy for the years to come. With much frustration have I been in an artistic deadlock for some years now, not knowing how to link my music making with the message I find most pressing: climate change and its broader context. Finally the penny dropped a week ago in a conversation with a friend.

This is a **quick design**, done in one week. So many aspects of this project will unfold through collective processes and therefore can't be designed now. What can happen now however, is to design a vision, to communicate that vision to a team of potential collaborators, to design clarity around aspirations and initial procedures, to design and realise a prototype showcase to get the ball rolling and to hand in a strong application for funding

This design will focus on 2 eligibility questions in regards to the Arts Council funding application:

1. **Do you have a clear idea of what your project is about and what you want it to achieve?**
2. **Do you know who your project is for, how they will experience it and have you thought about how you will reach them?**

Create a small, DIY, music led arts collective, which explores various approaches to improvisation but which can also perform set pieces.

The name rightly suggests that I am taking inspiration from **The Art Ensemble Chicago**, a collective of multi-instrumentalists, exploring guided and free improvisation in the 70s and 80s. Not only does this format integrate many of my personal artistic interests, it also presents the city of Oxford with a showcase and a commitment to aesthetic risk taking it presently lacks.

One challenge of such a collective would be *to find its place in our cultural context*, in our time of deep crisis. Giving this crisis a voice, is my ultimate vision for this project, while creating inclusive community, practice compassion and acceptance and learn much in the process.

“Cultural Emergence” has helped me understand, that in this process, I need to extend my own cultural parameters and address my internalized limiting beliefs.

Laptop artist:
audio and visuals

Musicians+voice
artist

Writer, speaker,
poet

Vision

Performance Philosophy:(*define values* L.M. P.120)

Heartfelt, validate experience, non-judgmental, compassionate, political, activism, DIY, approachable, unpolished, adaptable, celebrating humanity.

The imported audio and visuals would be pre-set, while the music is improvised and hence unpredictable. Each performance might explore a theme like *ambiguity around climate change , injustice, stagnation, procrastination, paralysis, ambiguity, cognitive dissonance, paradigm shift, cognitive dissonance, land, rivers, Oxford, racism, hope, local community, responsibility, history, forgiveness, refugees, consumerism, advertising, living crisis, health, crises in general, the noisy world.*

One of the groups message would be to explore in what way the issue of climate change is overwhelming , how we can't grasp it *without fright or fight* and how we stagnate in addressing it for **political, economic, cultural, historic and psychological reasons.** (*disrupt cultural patterns, naming the culture we want* L.M. P.120)

Performance concepts for music improvisation

- Layering of elements(music, voice art, visual art): tension, disorientation, complexity, hovering
- Sound painting style conducting
- Image led road map
- Storytelling
- Free improve
- Ceremony/ritual/intention/celebration
- Spoken word and musical back drop, interactions or interludes
- Silent film with improvised music
- Display program points on screen
- Adaptability: tailor performance to the theme of an event
- Honouring entry and exit (ritualistic): the circle, artistic family
- Guest appearances: word, music, dance puppet, youth, other culture,
- Mindful element: safety and kindness, arriving fully
- Performers move beyond their self focus towards a greater good
- Sound journeying, de-stress, deep listening
- Explore the deeper meaning of celebration
- Think tank among artists

Ideas 2

Tasks within the project: (*clarify responsibilities* L.M. P.120)

Musician, writer, sound artist, visual artist, fundraiser, stage manager and venue liaise, host, PR person (documentation, promo output), road manager, booking agent, admin (gig logistics, payroll) stage crew, sound engineer, driver/roady, business planner, overall manager artistic director.

Ideas 3

Experience for the artist: “Belong, support, shine, stir”

free expression, heartfelt interaction, taking a step towards authenticity (here, now), communicate between inner and outer world, give emergence to change, unpredictability, discovery mind set, inquisitive into self and other, courage to fail, constant compromise, clear logistics and communication container, get paid.

Experience for the audience:

Immersive, enchantment, ceremonial, ritual, kind and open hearted, simplicity, feeling connected, inclusivity and welcome, a gentle window into the unknown, celebratory of local community, empowerment to be the change you want to see as well as to demand the change you want to see from those responsible. Explore concepts for audience participation.

Who is the audience: theatre, museums, galleries and music audience, festivals, community events, avant-garde scene, climate activism scene.

People Care:

- Create a project that orientates people during these times of multi-layered crisis.
- Give people hope in humanity
- Connect people
- Frame a number of activist demands artistically so their need can be felt experientially by the audience

Earth Care:

- Care for the biosphere and social justice can not be separated
- Paradigm shift towards care for the environment is the main aim of this project

Ethics

Fair Share:

- This is a local, not for profit initiative
- Artistic ownership will be shared among participants
- This project aims to be of service in the community
- This project aims to give a platform to marginalized voices

Helps

Personal motivation and purpose: this project integrates a range of my artistic interests into a sense making output.

- My experience in improvisation: music, word, movement
- The opportunity for me to play the rhythms I like
- Stewardship over a collective
- The adaptability and resilience of a improve project in regards to delivering shows (people are more exchangeable, different constellations are desirable)
- An opportunity to meet other artist in Oxford by having something to offer them
- Opportunity to step into dialogue with arts institutions
- Be a connector
- Practice non judgmentality and compassion.
- Opportunity to challenge my own playing skills
- Reason to do research and pick and choose inspiration from other acts
- Earn an income in an interesting way
- Apply myself and deliver a powerful message
- Opportunity to give directions but not dictate
- Opportunity to give people a stage.

Artistic resources:

- My own playing level and ability to improvise
- My instruments
- My experience working in bands over the years

Contacts:

Paula and her networks in social justice

Writers David G., Jo Hamilton, Musicians, venues, sound engineers, rehearsal spaces, connection to London, Step Change alumni, Roddy, London Improv scene, Amaara, Alex,

Andy and his networks in Oxford
Other well connected individuals in Oxford: Emma W., Lois M., Transition by design, Peter W., Steve B., Lynn T., Lakica, Nick Lunch, Raws, Uncomfortable Oxford Tours, Spin jazz players, Oxford Improvisers

Limits:

(recalibrate priorities L.M. P.120)

Who do I need to know:

- Laptop artists both audio and visual, film makers, web designer, camera people, sound artists, dj,
- Manager, promoter,
- Suitable venues , theatres, community settings
- youth organisations,
- writers, poets, dance troupes, other improvisers,
- a mentor,
- London arts organisations,
- funders,
- admin person

What I need to learn:

Inner skills:

- liaise and connect people
- communicate artistic vision
- soft leadership
- ability to just go back to being a musician
- lead rehearsals and shape forward motion
- create an ethos and spirit

Outer skills:

- get funding
- admin, finances
- get gigs, prepare gigs, admin gigs
- transport
- liaise with venues
- contracts
- legality, bureaucracy

Systems fulfilling this function and general elements

A. Artists:

musicians
voice artists, speakers
writers
laptop artist

C. Contacts:

have a mentor
venues
arts organisations
funders

B. Learning:

How to run an arts organisation
how to make my attitude towards
arts management more
positive

how to manage a team
which venues in Oxford apply
how do they book acts
how to best approach them
how to discuss potential collaboration
where to find and identify potential
funders

D. Delegate:

team member
professionally hired service.

Pattern

Helpful:

- I am confident in exploring the artistic aspect of the project, as I can imagine the stage experience and atmosphere during performance.
- I am an ideas person able to communicate an artistic vision to a team
- Oxford is a small place so my current contacts go a long way
- I can establish a good container for a team through clear communication
- I am interested in meeting interesting people

Unhelpful pattern(*Limiting Beliefs* , L.M. P.120)

- I tend to dislike most project management tasks, which do not involve face to face contact with real people but instead involve time online, bureaucracy, rigid guidelines and formalities.
- I have internalised a fear response to online admin and research,
- 'arts talk' unrelated to actual artistic experience passes me by and just doesn't register in my memory.
- I find it soul destroying to do small talk and fake interest in order to make my way into a network of useful contacts
- In a small place like Oxford, if you burn a bridge or make a mistake it is more unforgiving
- I m a pleaser type person, I shy away from difficult decisions and hate to disappoint people.
- I am not a good multi-tasker and am very susceptible to stress

1. Tend to your personal culture:

I feel a strong need to first of all accept myself and my limitations and preferences before engaging on this journey. I have a disposition to *blame myself for everything I don't know*, to do a lot of internal 'shoulding'. To spot this destructive spiral without judgement along the process requires me to stay mindful and accept myself.

Principles (L.M. P.275)

Artistically, improvisation is about vulnerability, imperfection, self-care and acceptance of the moment as it is. It is orchestrated mindfulness, which in turn leads us towards a ceremonial/ritualised performance framing philosophy. How to integrate mindfulness, grounding, presence and acceptance into our performances is an interesting challenge in today's noisy world. We tend to withdraw into our inner selves when trying to be more mindful because our outer space has been hijacked by commercialism and bragging. Therefore our performances aspire to a ceremonial component in as much as we want people to feel safe to open up their hearts, and to feel and accept the ambiguity of our current socio-political-economic paradigm by witnessing a group of performers holding an unpredictable space and filling it with critical thinking.

2. Honour the wisdom within:

We live in a culture of disembodiment and the academic heavyweight champion Oxford is the most disembodied place I have ever experienced. We rely on our capacity to think our way out of problems. **Unfortunately, our thinking has been submerged in layers of double standards and cognitive dissonances for as long as we can remember.**

3. Use the intelligence of cooperating hearts:

I want to stay alone with this project idea for as little time as possible. I have learnt from doing the PC diploma that I struggle to identify areas where I need help and to look for that help. Forming a team early on will start this project as a group process at the very beginning and bring in more expertise and helpful connections.

4. Weave unity + the body knows

I am now more interested in creating an artistic ethos of unity in an arts collective, rather than getting my own artistic preferences met. My body knows that this aspiration is coming from a place of healing (weave unity).

5. Be attentive to shifts, openings and opportunities:

I strongly believe in the artistic vision of OAE. Therefore, I am confident that as soon as I start implementing my research, doors will open and opportunities of learning will arise. These will shift my initial understanding of what's possible.

6. Leave space for emergence:

This is not only the main principle behind the intention of improvisation but also the main principle of the ensemble's set up. I want it to grow organically (slow solutions, trust the process, use emergence to support emergence) and I see my role more along the lines of 'hosting this collective experiment', rather than designing it in detail. Still, I need to have my *house in order* for my invitation to the artist to come across convincingly.

Principles 2

7. Make progress visible

This is a fundamental principle for running any arts collective: all members need to sense that there is a forward motion, that the project has a direction and that someone takes on the role of moving things towards it, of checking in with people, of creating opportunity and of making fresh artistic suggestions. To make progress visible in our case, we need to

- document (record/film) rehearsals
- prepare for a prototype showcase
- hand in a funding application
- bring in interesting suggestions for our rehearsals
- make all participants and special guest feel a) welcome, b) appreciated and c) free to bring in their authentic strengths
- celebrate achievement

8. Discover abundance

This principle sums up an important learning experience for artists who don't feel fully at ease with improvisation yet. Musicians who have mainly performed set material in the past need to become aware that they have access to an abundance of valuable artistic choices within their playing vocabulary, as long as they are not suffocated by concepts of *being good, impressing others with technique or being better than....*

The hope of this project is that by discovering our artistic abundance we can take our audience along with us, share our vulnerability and fragility, our journey of navigating our performance choices through an overwhelming pool of possibilities. Embodying this artistic honesty and combining it with a spoken or sung narrative of protest, I hope that our audiences will feel a potential for emergence in their hearts, a gentle empowerment and a sense that

- a) they are not alone in facing the crisis
- b) they are not helpless
- c) a better world is possible as well as more enjoyable

Principles 4

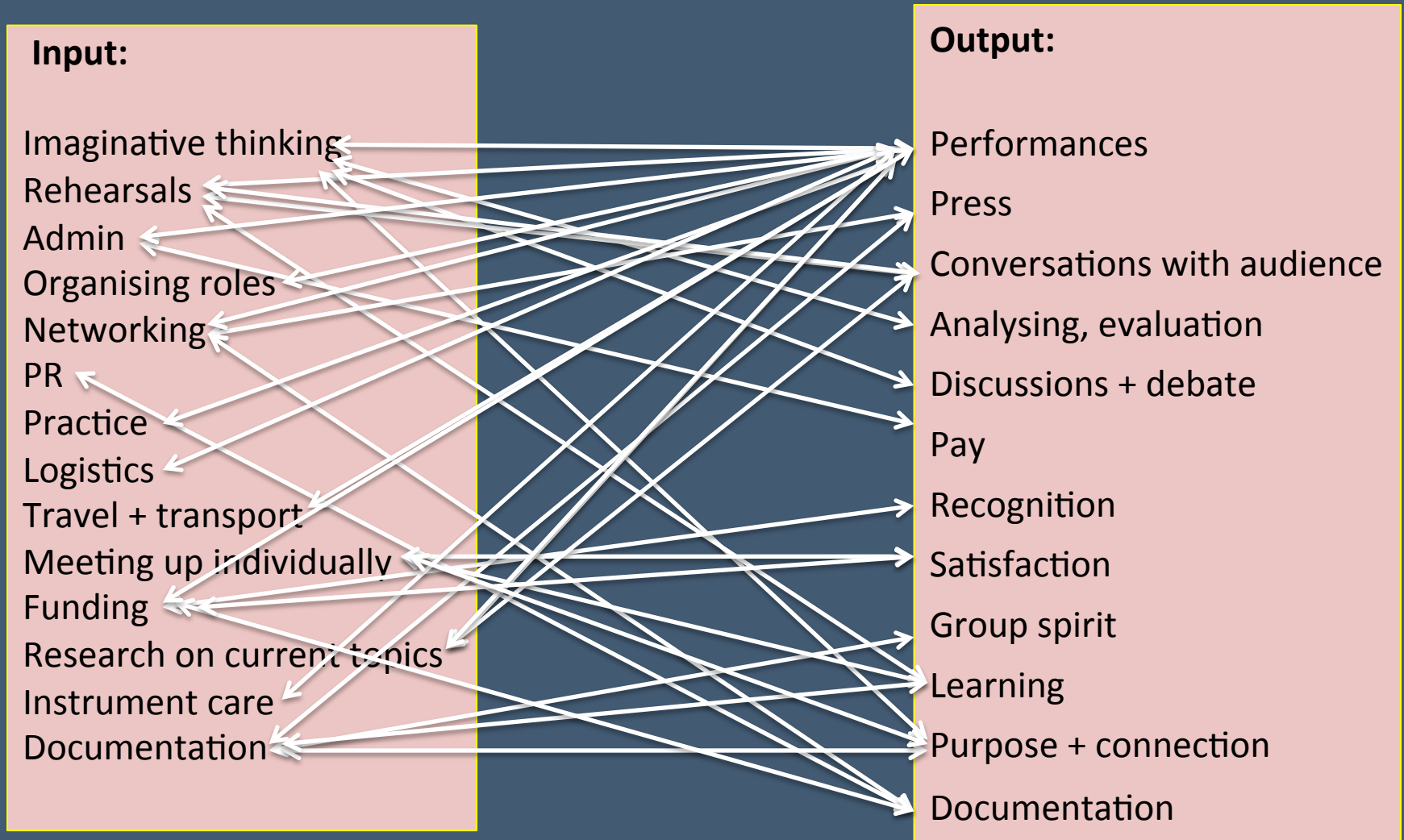
9. Principles for strengthening co-operation (L.M.P. 282)

- a) Empower the group to explore new territory
- b) Bring energy into the system
- c) Release control

These 3 principles cover the way I see my role in this project.

- a) refers to my facilitation of different approaches to improvisation, leading to new and unforeseen sound scapes.
- b) refers to me getting funding for the project, creating performance opportunities, get some PR, have a web site, schedule and lead rehearsal
- c) refers to the need of not making this 'my' project but to collaborate artistically on eye level and to let the creative process choose its own direction.

Input Output Analysis



Input output analysis

Obvious outcomes:

- Performances are the main output, they inform the entire project
- Most outputs re-inform their inputs: strong web of connections is already in place i.e. Imaginative thinking is informed by many outputs and becomes an output itself

Not so obvious outcomes:

- Rehearsals are really the bedrock of the collective in terms of how we perceive ourselves. Organising rehearsals well and making them enjoyable is much more important in a group that improvises.
- Documentation plays a crucial role and is both input and output for many elements
- Meeting up with participants individually builds an important foundation for the collective.

Reflecting on needs:

Integration

Core needs for me to accomplish my vision + need behind the need

(phrased as verbs, not nouns) L.M. P.147f.)

- a) get funding: being able to offer the participants a yield, validation and also be able to expect professionalism in return. Obtain a yield myself, afford my time
- b) create at least one prototype performance straight away: experience our project and presenting to a real audience, get feedback, see if the ideas work, how we come across
- c) communicate my ideas to those interested in joining the project: Put the cards on the table, see how people respond and who wants to join, get feedback,
- d) research other musicians who might also be interested: broaden the pool of musicians I have access to and make people curious, get the word out so others talk about the project
- e) get a mentor: have a reference point for questions, learn from a person and not the internet, gain a solid contact in the industry, learn to prioritize.

These are my primary goals for the first phase in order to get the project going.

Asking WYH (L.M. P.148)

- need to apply myself
- need to connect people
- need to steer artistic expression
- need for validation
- need for income
- need for output for my own musical ideas

L.M.'s list of needs that apply to me:

- increase leadership skills
- learning new skills
- finding my purpose and life path
- increase self-esteem
- increase positive internal dialogue
- energizing myself
- setting boundaries
- maintain focus

Integration 2

The need behind the need

L.M.'s list of needs that apply to the group:

- harvesting group wisdom
- increase connection
- contribute to regenerative culture
- generate income
- marketing
- having effective meetings
- clarifying group culture

Main need clusters in relation the Ethan C. Roland : 8 Forms of Capital



Figure 1

Needs

Financial:

Funding,
Marketing
Income

Spiritual:

- Apply myself,
- finding my purpose
- maintain focus

Cultural:

Connect people
Steer artistic expression
Clarifying group culture
Contribute to regenerative culture
Widen the pool of potential performers
Express my own artistic ideas

Experiential:

Have a mentor
Maintain focus

Social:

Communicate+ share vision+ ideas.
Increase leadership skills
Setting boundaries
Having effective meetings

Living:

Create at least one prototype performance
Validation
Learning new skills
Increase self esteem
Increase positive internal dialogue

All of the above:

Harvesting group wisdom
Increase connection
Contribute to regenerative culture

Distilling this down to 7 core needs:

Harvest group wisdom

Regenerative

Making connections

Needs

Funding +
income

Purpose

Stimulate debate

Self expression

Explore other ideas of how to meet these needs

Regenerative Culture:

- incorporate a mindfulness aspect into the performance set up
- make improve interesting but also accessible to audiences
- create an inviting and inclusive atmosphere in the stage-audience relationship
- show our own fragility
- don't bombard people with solutions, don't add to the noise

Harvest Group wisdom:

- give space and encouragement
- try to spot moments when artists impose limits onto themselves
- validate and acknowledge the tension between inner and outer artistic realm

Exploration +
Composition



Listening +
responding

Making connections:

Being available, consistent, open, caring and encouraging

Give impulses, build containers, accept feedback and maintain a view on the bigger picture

Self expression:

- just play and relinquish responsibility

Stimulate debate:

- facilitate a voluntary debating platform for the performers
- in our performances get the nuances right between:
- **opening the heart**
- **hold a safe space of care**
- **inspire**
- **inform**
- **celebrate**

Other Ideas 2

Funding/income:

- research funding opportunities
- fulfil requirements
- hand in funding application
-

Purpose:

- get into the habit of checking in with myself to assess whether I have gone off track or whether some detail has hijacked my energy.
- Purpose is usually not verbalised between musicians. Be open when it shines through in the way people engage and give gratitude to peoples input.

Making connection:

- meet up with David
- organise meeting between David and AJ
- ask AJ if he would like David to come on 21st Feb
- meet Usha
- approach 3 people for mentorship

Other ideas 3

Funding:

- start with Arts Council application and reflect on eligibility requirements
- research other funding bodies

Regenerative culture:

start with our artist collective by offering to share my deeper motivations for putting this together. Communicate vision and offer a space for discussing it. This needs to happen away from the instruments and the rehearsal space.

Harvest group wisdom:

- facilitate a well structured rehearsal
- record the rehearsal on 21.2.
- acknowledge people's responses to my vision as well as their time to engage with it, and open it up for people to share their inspirations.

Self expression:

create a rehearsal framework that
a) feels safe for people to stretch and
b) has space for exploration and communication build in

Stimulate debate:

- this needs to grow organically and for now I need to frame it.
- ask for feedback on what to focus on next time, what possibilities people would like to explore further. I will suggest running through the 4 action learning questions after the session.

Optimising systems:

Synergies and flows between systems:

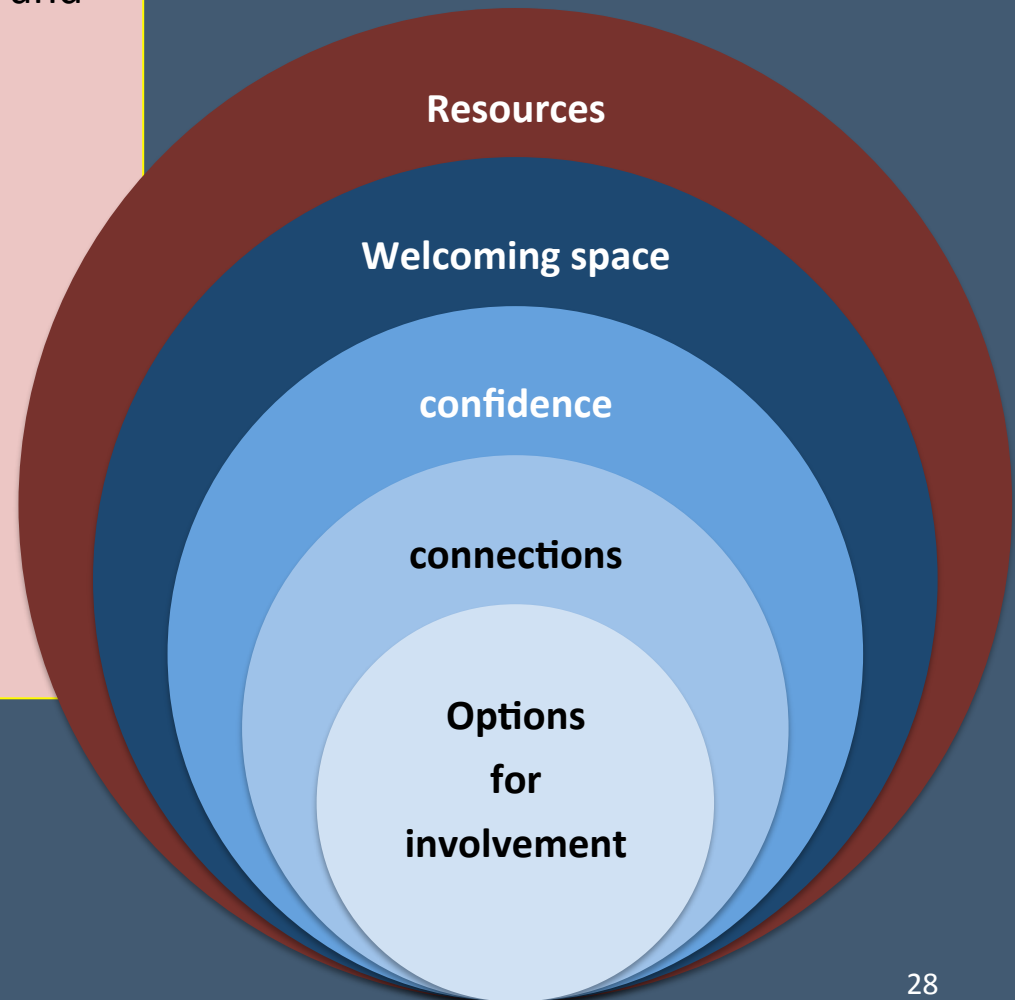
- The more resources I present the group (funding, mentorship, a first gig) the more they'll be willing to engage in debate, self-expression and harvest group wisdom.
- Facilitating a well thought through rehearsal gives musicians confidence that they are not wasting their time. The better we play together the better we can talk together afterwards.
- Suggest a basic involvement structure: Invite musicians to build a relationship with my current concept in their own time: become a core member , or just be a musician we can call on for gigs.
- Research other funding bodies: the group might have resources in that regard
- Collective wisdom harvesting is dependent on self-expression. At this stage the emphasis needs to be on self-expression in order to infuse the group with dynamic energy. It is important not to place any expectations onto the group at this point as musicians are easily put off by group dynamics before they are invested in the group process. Therefore, the best strategy at this point is build strong individual relationships, to meet up in 2s and 3s and to be consistent.

Visual representation of the design:

Key concepts:

- Accumulate **resources**
- Build musicians **confidence** artistically and logistically
- Provide a **welcoming space** for ideas
- Provide **options** for engagement
- **Connections**: Meet up in 2s and 3s.

I see these concepts relate to each other in a hierarchical order of immersion:



This list of potential challenges is solely based on my experience in the field and is therefore my current projection of potential difficulties:

- People clash with each other, artistically or in world view
- I get bogged down by boring admin or by chasing people
- Funding gets rejected
- We reach an artistic deadlock and don't know how to move forward
- Participants find all this 'worthy vision' stuff a bit overwhelming and feel suffocated
- A participant gets overly enthusiastic and offers too much input
- A participant goes into diva mode and develops tunnel vision
- A participant dominates meetings and puts off the collective.
- It is a challenge to know when to apply clear leadership versus hands off open space.
- Outer forces (venues, promoters etc.) act unprofessionally and hence complicate decision making in the group leading to tensions.

Move to action:

A few decisions have already been taken and implemented at this point:

- offer David G. to become a writer / speaker for the project
- meet up with AJ and discuss his vocal ideas
- schedule a rehearsal for 21st Feb and announce my project idea to the group
- apply to Marmalade Festival in April 23 to prototype a showcase and present the project
- meet up with Usha, the festival organiser and discuss concept for our participation
- buy the web domain for the project
- design an approach to improvisation using visual images, transitions and cues. Represent AJ's and David's ideas in that rehearsal.
- Sent out 2 emails to inquire about mentorship.

Next steps: Now – Feb 21st

- Find a mentor or at least get some questions answered
- Create a conversation between David, AJ and Mila in order to complement each other.
- We will know by early Feb whether we have a showcase in April. This would be a great opportunity as the arts-social change network in Oxford will be present at the event.
- I am compiling more and more contacts in Oxford, contact them to see what will emerge.
- Identify the venues in Oxford suitable to this collective and invite them down to the showcase in April.
- Find a laptop artist, either audio or visual or both.
- Put in a funding bit
- Set up record and filming of the rehearsal

Period 21.Feb – April

- Evaluate the situation after the rehearsal on Feb 21. Who is on board, who isn't, when shall we have the next rehearsal, did the format work well enough to repeat it.
- Continuity: organise a follow up event not too long after to show organise 3 pieces for the showcase with AJ, Mila and David fronting.
- Define personnel for showcase and schedule rehearsal shortly beforehand
- Organise someone to film the showcase
-

After April:

- Deliver follow up event in a visually engaging context and document
- Interview the performers.
- Compile all footage gathered so far into a show-reel and send to local festival organisers: Wilderness, Oxford story telling festival etc.
- Get some testimonials
- Research local events we could tag onto: ORFC

... *capitalize on one moment of success to lead to another (L.M. P.159)*

- I will need to find the right moment to start making the project's momentum less dependent on me. Having funding would greatly help with that.
- I need to monitor who 'believes' in the project and bring in that energy. I have had good experiences in running a project with a core group of 3 leaders. Can I replicate that here?
- Should the delegation of tasks not work well, I will need to be prepared to step back in.
- Slowly it should become clear what roles different individuals enjoy taking on and we might develop a pattern of cooperation.
- From that point onwards I would see my role more in either strengthening or rocking that pattern, as well as in bringing in more musical ideas. (tuning into the beat and creating our own complementary flow alongside L.M. P.157)
- Being open to the non-linear emergent outcomes of this design and being responsive to the arising needs and opportunities.
- We will need to define our ambitions for a determined time frame and assess our capacity to respond to influx
- Review our momentum builders and momentum stoppers (L.M.P. 158)



Appreciation

We created a very basic web site: www.oxfordartensemble.co.uk

We had 4 rehearsal and 2 meetings before our first performance on April 14th in the Burton Taylor Studio in Oxford as part of Marmalade Festival. We performed to a sold out theatre (well, it was a free event...) and 3 friends stepped in to help us on sound, camera and image projections.

Performance footage go to: Youtube: Oxford Art Ensemble Sinnerman

For me this take on Nina Simone's classic encapsulates much of what I had envisioned for the project:

- We created a very unique rendition through a collective process, we all feel ownership over this piece
- We tweaked this rendition till the last minute, it was a risk and felt fresh and authentic.
- We delivered a political message in a heartfelt way.

In the week following the gig a smaller group of us performed in London as part of 'The Big One'. A few days after we held a meeting and went through the 4 questions (see notes in appendix). For me the overall out come was:

- Everyone involved wants to continue and saw the performance as a success
- Some musicians have not found their voice yet in the format.
- improvisation does not come naturally to everyone.
- Some players felt slightly marginalized during the process of getting ready for this performance.
- People are not sure about the project's name.

- After the meeting we paused. I was exhausted and needed time to reflect on my role in the collective. How this group of artists is going to evolve isn't clear at all yet, especially as in the run up to the performance I needed to take on more artistic leadership than I would have liked, just to save time. I acknowledged this in the meeting.
- We now have the option of
 - a) going with the collective creativity and let this project grow organically
 - b) stay committed to my initial vision for the project and hence I would remain the overall artistic director or
 - c) find some type of compromise between the two approaches.
- We ended our pause on June 2nd and held a jam at my house, which led to a few new ideas on how to combine electronic elements with acoustic instrumentation. As a result the next band rehearsal is scheduled June 8th. In this rehearsal we have decided to give stage to the two musicians who felt particularly marginalized, for each to lead on a piece.
- After performing 3 pieces in April we need to add at least 4 more pieces to our repertoire for a full evening program.
- I will also suggest to organize a follow up performance to showcase new material.
- After financing the entire process until now, all band members have agreed to share the cost of the rehearsals from now on.

Pause

Evaluation: Achieving the aims of this design

as they are listed in the Introduction (p.3) and Vision (p.4.)

- Design a vision: **yes**
- Communicate that vision: **yes, both to our audience and to the artists. However it remains to be seen whether everyone agrees with my vision in the long run.**

- Clarity around initial procedures: **yes**
- Design and realize a prototype showcase: **yes**
- Hand in a strong funding application: **not yet**

1. Do you have a clear idea of what your project is about and what you want it to achieve?

Yes, much clearer through the experience of rehearsing, experimenting, performing and group analysis. The foundation is laid for the collective to reflect on process, both artistically as well as on how we are run. At this point it isn't clear who will take on leadership roles as I give others more space. I think we will need 2 more performances before we can see patterns of engagement emerge. Artistically, our version of Sinnerman achieved my vision of 'what this project is about' and the audience's response confirmed to me, that this type of project makes a valued cultural contribution to Oxford.

2. Do you know who your project is for, how they will experience it and have you thought about how you will reach them?

It has become clear that we are an adaptable outfit and therefore can address different audiences: theatre venues, festival venues, protest stages, concert venues, cultural centres.

At this point we don't yet have a PR strategy. This strategy will depend on whether we stick with my vision or become a more organic collective.

23.1.

This design is rich in ideas. I felt the need to store all this thinking in the design for future reference. I will adapt this write up to share with the artists of the ensemble.

Going through the Design Web provides a different set of tools, especially the tools in the 'Integration' section of 'Cultural Emergence' made me gain clarity on my needs for this project and the needs within it. I did an input – output analysis which initially felt very superficial, however it did make me tweak some nuances.

21.1.

Working through the integration chapter in 'Cultural Emergence' and reflecting on needs, I realized that my thinking around needs (what's required) was very much stuck reflecting on 'what I need to be able to do to move this forward'.

Slowly my thinking opened up towards seeing and validating the need for this project within the cultural landscape here in Oxford.

I think this initial approach on just reflecting on '*what's required of me*' as a need, comes from a place of fear, of scarcity and not abundance thinking.

This reflects a spiritual aspiration of mine: focusing on my personal requirements still feels like coming from a place of ego, whereas seeing the broader richness of what's possible motivates me to face the unknown, as I can envision a positive outcome which is much broader and much richer than my personal journey.

This is the first time I apply the Design Webs principles. I found them very insightful while I eventually wished I had also incorporated a few Holmgren principles i.e. maximising edge, integrate rather than segregate or slow solutions.

After focusing on land based designs, it is quite a relief to design an area where I feel more self-resourced and where subjective perception is equally valid to 'objective' observation. The need for 'survey' of '*what is*' is so much more fluid in a people based design

- a) because it unfolds and shows itself over time and
- b) it depends on interpretation, perception and above all on setting certain boundaries of what one considers important to the overall project.

Having said that, I immediately wonder whether all of that isn't also the case in a land based design, which is equally 'cultural' if we think about the infinite amount of connections of living beings between elements and systems. More reason to make less of a distinction between the two.