

### **Self-As Composer** Exploring Composition & Self-Identity in Choral Music

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### "If we want children to be musicians, they should be musicians from the start"

Upitis, 1991



"If we want children to be composers, they should be composers from the start"



• Self-Identity (Hoffman & Carter, 2012



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- Ownership & Agency (Bolden, 2009; Gould, 2006; McGillen, 2004; Stavrou, 2013; Wiggins, 2016)



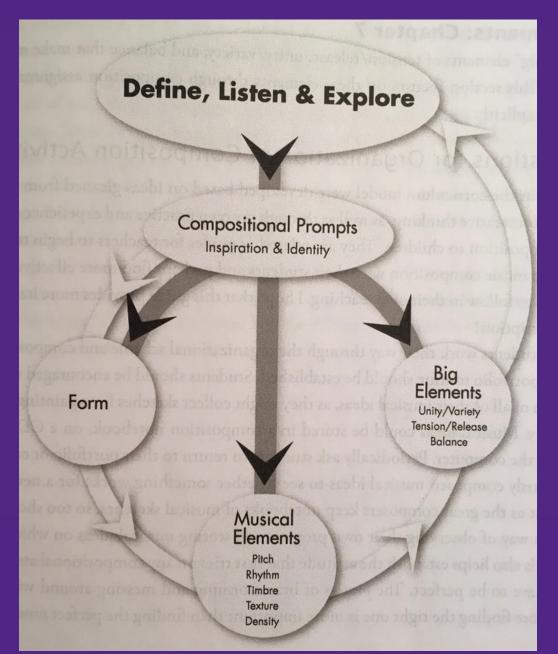
- Self-Identity (Hoffman & Carter, 2012
- Ownership & Agency (Bolden, 2009; Gould, 2006; McGillen, 2004; Stavrou, 2013; Wiggins, 2016)
- Participatory Music Making (Turino, 2008)









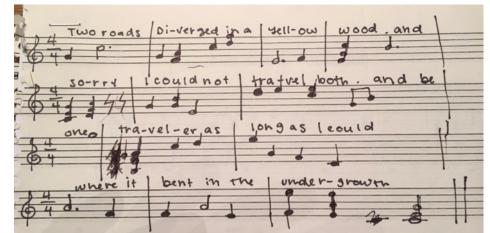


Hickey, 2012

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### **Interwoven with Repertoire**

- Challenge Warmups
- New Variations
- New Phrase Endings
- Rhythmic compositions



- Original harmonies for existing melodies
- Original compositions based on the mood, form, or melody of an existing piece

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### Interdisciplinary

- Greatest American Spoken Word Project
- Holocaust Poetry Compositions
- Composing to Artwork



Hopper, Nighthawks, 1942



### **Stand Alone Compositions**

- Soundscapes
- Commercial Jingles
- Silent Film Scores
- Alternative Notation

sum-times 1-e	
sometimes I	7
close my eyes	1
and go to a place	1
where there is no mate, no way	
where people never say	
MECHE OR	
it's never too late	1
Mayole strate x startes	SOLATE
then I open my eyes	>
I realize	
there's no escape Harmony	
the trigger gets pulled (	
time Flies then dies	$\wedge$
and it's another day	
but nothing's the same	
Once in subile real	
there will be a time	4
mign where you can't hold on any more	Enorus
1 & seed in your mind by	
+ that grows and grows & grows & Banka	
then burns to the ground	
	AN COM
Contraction of the second seco	
1000	
Myou Peel it in your stornach	1
it chills you to the bone of	
and that's when you know i	1
H's time to let go 0	1 martin
	111



# Pressures from Without



# Student Agency



I like composing because I have control. The decisions are mine to make, the music does what I want it to do. There's no right answer. My opinion matters...It's not, like, school...it's just me making things.

-Evan



We just thought it was cool to learn about the Torres Strait Islands and we love the song, but we wanted to add a percussion line, so we decided to listen to different performances and then wrote our own. The coolest part was when the rest of the choir wanted us to lead the song.

-Andrea



### Self-As-Creator



We had a breakthrough when we were exploring because we stopped thinking about the music from band. We stopped thinking about guarter notes and stuff and we decided to just be like whatever, the sky is the limit, you know? We actually TALKED to each other...and then, it really felt like that was when we became composers and now I think about all the music we sing and play like a composer, not just like a performer. -Jana



I know lots of people in choir didn't think we'd choose the lullabye, but, like, I have a little brother and I sing him to sleep...and it's not like I sing Kanye when I want him to go to bed, but the Iullabies I know are boring, so I thought I could compose one and then my brother could see that I could write music and that's cool....it's not just a song I learned at school...it's one I made...it's one I'm proud of.

-Jonathan



### **Implications for Practice**

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- Students need to be taken seriously as creative music\_makers / composers
- Composition curriculum should weave school practices with "real world" experiences
- Composition can and should be foundational in performance\_based classrooms



# To whom are we listening?





# Western

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